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Letter to Roger J. Traynor to Protest R. Peter Straus' Appointment to the National News Council

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May 21, 1973

Hon. Roger Traynor
Hastings College of Law
University of California
198 McAllister St.
San Francisco, California

Dear Judge Traynor:

This is to voice my protest on the appointment of R. Peter Straus as a member of the National News Council. I'm sure the Harvard Lampoon will include this among their choices for the year. Of all the people in the world for a fair-minded council, this selection is unique.

I have been a listener to WMCA for years. On occasion I will tune in -- especially the Barry Gray Show -- and for years he has been paranoid about Richard Nixon. He's been saying the country is going to the dogs; he's called the president a "fink"; he's had Alger Hiss on his program and virtually held his hand.

I would say 99% of the time the political discussions especially are recruited from people of his own political persuasion. There is no one from the other side to combat the views (prejudiced of course) expressed by himself. I was surprised one night to find a Professor Leonard of, I believe, Iona College, New Rochelle, New York. I really sympathized with him, he was one (for Nixon) against 4 or 5 opponents opposite. And this instance was really exceptional; it's usually all of Mr. Gray's persuasion. Mr. Gray also boasts of the fact that his program is "x-rated" after 10 o'clock. The filfth that emanates from it is hard to take. One wonders why the FTC doesn't enter the picture.

Then, too, there is a radical named Malachy McCourt who is employed Saturday and Sunday nights. He blasts the Catholic Church openly; has played a song called the "Vatican Rag" and in general is openly disrespectful of the Church. I am no longer a Catholic but I believe no one has the right to use such dissemination to air his views, regardless of the feelings of

listeners. He's of the same political thought as was Sean O'Casey, continues to blast the president, leaves the lines open to left-wing listeners to air their views and generally is obnoxious. It may be of interest to note that Pete Hammill (won't vouch for that spelling), a writer on the Post, on the Barry Gray program with author Victor Lasky, referred to WMCA as the "pinko" station, whereupon Lasky stated "you said it, not I."

The one man who stands out as eminently fair is Long John Nebel, who has the 12 - 5 A.M. program. I don't believe he has made one statement about Watergate. He's always been a fair man and doesn't want to express his views prematurely. He's the man who should be on your Council, not R. Peter Straus. Of course the latter is the bearer of a great and distinguished name which he has slightly tarnished in the opinion of many.

Barry Gray threatens that you'll be hearing Watergate ad infinitum on his program. Do listen in some night, or ask others who may have the opportunity, and see if my views are correct.

Respectfully yours,

Marion Muller