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Writer Hopes Elvis Will Just Go Away

By CHARLES MERCER

NEW YORK (AP)—An open letter to Steve Allen:

Dear Steve:

Word comes to this department that you're planning to book Elvis Presley, the hysterical shouter of rock 'n' roll, for your second regular weekly NBC-TV show Sunday evening, July 1. Why?

Until now I've refrained from joining in the chorus of public and critical condemnation of Presley's primitive exhibition on the Milton Berle show a couple of weeks ago. My theory is that characters like Presley thrive on a bad press.

FOOLISH IDEA

Obviously, however, my thinking that something unpleasant would go away if ignored was wishful and foolish. For now, so soon, you apparently plan to bring Elvis Presley back to a national television network to titillate teenage girls and cause numbskull boys to imitate him.

I'm not taking a moral stand in this case. Better watchdogs than I already have bayed a warning and the patrols are out.

My purpose in asking why you're booking Presley has another basis. Your television career has been marked by a high sense of humor and a great respect for talent. Presley certainly is not funny—though that is not my complaint against him. My argument against his appearance is simply lack of talent. I can't for the life of me see why you want to have such an untalented guy on your program.

A very small but very noisy minority of the immature have been infected in recent years by the digga-boom convulsions known as rock 'n' roll. There is no talent involved in their rigorous efforts at self-torture.

Possibly you feel that Presley should put on one of his performances on your program because he is somehow an "American phenomenon." There are lots of American phenomena. One, for example, is Niagara Falls. You could train TV cameras on the Falls for five minutes and you'd have a phenomenon all right—but you wouldn't have much of an audience left. Because the Falls, for television purposes, are untalented and noisy and all wet.

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Tel Aviv, Israel, hosted the 1956 Congress of Mediterranean Citrus Growers.

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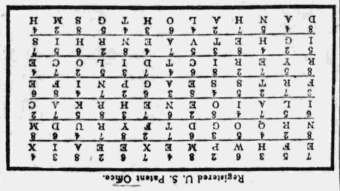
Wishing Well



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BETTER ENGLISH

1. What is wrong with this sentence? "Why not add up the column of figures?"

2. What is the correct pronunciation of "passe"?

3. Which one of these words is misspelled? Cincinnati, Caribean, Philippine, Copenhagen.

4. What does the word "itinerary" mean?

5. What is a word beginning with ar that means "warm; passionate; eager"?

ANSWERS

1. Omit "up." 2. Pronounce pa-say, accent second syllable. 3. Caribbean. 4. Of or pertaining to a route or journey; a record of a journey. "The salesman submitted his itinerary to his home office." 5. Ardent.

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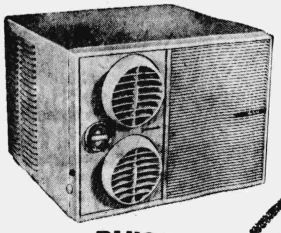

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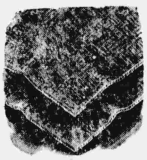

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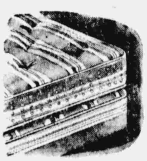

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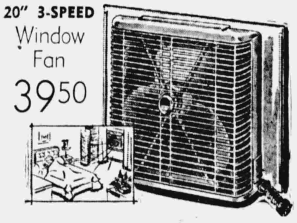

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