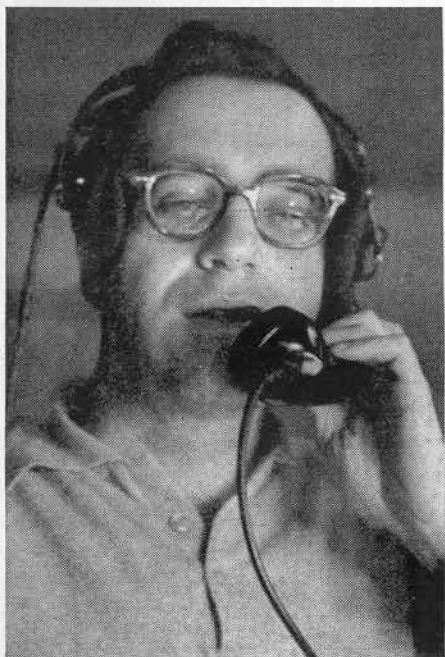


The Night People

People who sweat out an ordinary, humdrum existence make up a world ever at war with "night people." This is the opinion advanced by a late-hour New Jersey disk jockey named Jean (after Victor Hugo's Jean Valjean) Shepherd, 33, whose burgeoning radio audience (estimated at 400,000) is largely a cult of Shepherd zealots.

For six months, soft-spoken Record-Spinner Shepherd fired off occasional jazz salvos 4½ hours a night, seven nights a week, for Mutual's WOR (blanketing 13 states). But Shepherd's main weapon against the "day people" was a wacky, stream-of-consciousness monologue, e.g., discussing the vital role of the "Flexible Flyer sled in the U.S. cultural renaissance," the difficulties of explaining Coney Island to a scientist from Venus, the



Roy Schatt

DISC JOCKEY SHEPHERD
A Sweetheart in time.

socio-anthropological facts behind wearing paper hats at parties.

Well Regimented. Last month the "smug, righteous" day people, as Shepherd calls them, closed ranks: WOR declared Shepherd "noncommercial" and sacked him, thus setting off a clangor of protest heard halfway across the land. Next day the chain gave him a week's reprieve. Then Shepherd tried a hard-sell on the first commercial product that popped into mind, Sweetheart Soap (which had never been a WOR sponsor). He was abruptly cut off the air and fired again. Announced WOR: "We cannot permit such poor judgment to continue uncontrolled." Just as abruptly, WOR ate its words. Sweetheart Soap rewarded Shepherd's free plug by offering to sponsor him on a weekly show. This week Shepherd was filling WOR's hottest spot: Sunday, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Compared to the tired cheeriness of many disk jockeys, Shepherd's offbeat

humor is refreshing. Much of his talk is pure doubletalk, but some is shrewd, if cockeyed, comment from an educated comic (B.A., Maryland U.; M.A. in psychology, Indiana). The greatest thing America has to fear, he avers, is "creeping meatballism," i.e., "the adulation of all that is mediocre—the 'nothings' in the world that have become fads." In the day people v. night people conflict, the night people are in danger because the day folk—who "live in an endless welter of train schedules, memo pads and red tape"—are so well regimented.

Turbulent, Turgid. As an elaborate gag, Shepherd began booming last month a purely imaginary historical novel—a "turbulent, turgid, tempestuous" composite of "Frank Yerby, Kathleen Windsor and Norman Vincent Peale." The book was first conceived as a hoax to shatter the faith of day people in their own "book lists." Shepherd urged fans to canvass shops for the nonexistent title *I, Libertine*, ascribed to "non-author than" Frederick R. Ewing, "well-remembered for his BBC talks" on 18th century erotica. By noon next day, one Manhattan store had received some 30 orders. The title mysteriously appeared on Boston's list of banned books. Enterprising Publisher Ian Ballantine quickly had publicity-prone Shepherd ghostwrite such a book (with Fantasy-Fiction Writer Theodore Sturgeon). Some 30 days later they served up an 18th century creampuff ("'*Gadzooks, quoth I, 'but here's a saucy bawd!'*"') dedicated to night people.

Eyeing WOR's slippery prize, ABC recently offered Shepherd a "too-early" coast-to-coast time slot. Turning it down, he warned ominously: "Once I infiltrate the daytime world, it is doomed!"

Program Preview

For the week starting Thursday, Sept. 27. Times are E.D.T., subject to change.

TELEVISION

Person to Person (Fri. 10:30 p.m., CBS). Ed Murrow visits the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Artist Jon Whitcomb.

Jackie Gleason Show (Sat. 8 p.m., CBS). New comedy-variety hour, with Audrey Meadows.

Perry Como Show (Sat. 8 p.m., NBC). **Esther Williams Aqua Spectacle** (Sat. 9 p.m., NBC). TV's first water show.

Steve Allen Show (Sun. 8 p.m., NBC). With Claudette Colbert, Mickey Rooney. **Ed Sullivan Show** (Sun. 8 p.m., CBS). With Joyce Grenfell, Lucille Ball.

Stanley (Mon. 8:30 p.m., NBC). New comedy series, starring Buddy Hackett.

Herb Shriner Show (Tues. 9 p.m., CBS). Guests: Red Skelton and Jackie Gleason.

The Adventures of Hiram Holliday (Wed. 8 p.m., NBC). New comedy series, with Wally Cox.

RADIO

Bob Hope Show (Fri. 8 p.m., NBC). Guest: Rosemary Clooney.

Democratic National Committee (Fri. 8:30 p.m., CBS). Adlai Stevenson from Milwaukee.