

New York Newsday - August, 1989

Feds Seize Radio Pirates' Gear

COMBINED NEWS SERVICES

On July 6, around 7 a.m., U.S. marshals and agents of the FCC entered the Sixth Street home in Brooklyn of Perry Cavalieri (pirate "Jim Nasium" to his listeners) and took away the equipment of pirate station "WHOT."

Using a four-wheeled bloodhound — a van equipped with radio-tracking equipment — investigators continued to pinpoint what they say were the sources of unlicensed broadcasts being heard in the wee hours, usually on weekends, over 91.5 FM and 91.9 FM.

For Cavalieri, the July bust was his third. In 1976, and again in 1979, when he was 21, agents muted a pirate station that he and friends operated on 1620 AM out of Cavalieri's bedroom, then in a Coney Island housing project.

Although the U.S. attorney's office in Brooklyn, which obtained the seizure warrants, may yet seek fines from the two men, it has not filed charges so far. Confiscating the radio equipment may seem effective punishment as it is.

"We hope that these actions send a message to future would-be pirate radio operators," said Andrew J. Maloney, U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York. "Unlicensed radio operators cannot disregard federal authority."

This time, Cavalieri is fighting back. He has filed a claim for the equipment being held by the FCC in the agency's lower Manhattan offices because it "was rightfully possessed and owned" by him "and was wrongfully seized." He denies the feds' charge that the equipment was used "on and after June 4" to make illegal radio broadcasts.

The FCC maintains that unlicensed broadcasts on 91.9 FM can cause "harmful interference" to authorized signals close by on the dial and "depending on the quality . . . of the unauthorized equipment being used for the illegal broadcasts, has the potential to cause harmful interference to authorized radio broadcasts all across the FM spectrum, as well as to other types of radio and television transmissions."

New York Daily News - August, 1989

Feds Shut Down Pirate WHOT

Federal agents shut down pirate radio station WHOT in an early-morning raid on July 7. The popular station was located in Brooklyn and had been in operation for nine years. No word on whether any charges will be filed against the operators.