

Jimmy Kimmel returns, calls FCC chairman an embarrassment to Republicans

"I don't think I've ever said this before, but Ted Cruz is right," Kimmel said last night.

After quoting Carr's "easy way or the hard way" threat, Kimmel called it "a direct violation of the First Amendment" and "not a particularly intelligent threat to make in public. Ted Cruz said he sounded like a mafioso, although I don't know. If you want to hear a mob boss make a threat like that, you have to hide a microphone in a deli and park outside in a van with a tape recorder all night long. This genius said it on a podcast."

Kimmel pointed out that in 2022, Carr wrote a post saying that "political satire is one of the oldest and most important forms of free speech. It challenges those in power while using humor to draw more people in to the discussion. That's why people in influential positions have always targeted it for censorship."

Kimmel had Robert De Niro on for a bit in which the star of *Goodfellas* and other mafia movies portrayed an unnamed FCC chairman. De Niro's FCC chair told Kimmel that speech "ain't free no more, we're charging by the word now." Speech praising Trump is free but speech criticizing him will cost "a couple of fingers, maybe a tooth... I'll be watching you, Kimmel. Maybe not on ABC, that's up to you."

Kimmel's show still isn't airing on the 66 ABC affiliates operated by Sinclair and Nexstar, which chose to replace

Kimmel with other programming. "After almost 23 years on the air, we're suddenly not being broadcast in 20 percent of the country," Kimmel said.

Trump furious about Kimmel return

Kimmel was suspended last week after a monologue in which he said, "We hit some new lows over the weekend with the MAGA gang desperately trying to characterize this kid who murdered Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them and with everything they can to score political points from it."

Kimmel said last night that "it was never my intention to make light of the murder of a young man," or "to blame any specific group for the actions of what was obviously a deeply disturbed individual. That was really the opposite of the point I was trying to make. But I understand that to some that felt either ill-timed or unclear or maybe both."

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