

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP

NATIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.45, Tuesday, 8th December, 1998 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Present: Ted Goodman (Chair), John Irving, Mark Taha, Mary Hayward.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Kent Boulton, Steve King and Basil Stein.
2. A short silence in memory of Eric Miller, loyal supporter and very hard worker in spite of poor health for many years. Ted attended the funeral for CAC.
3. Chair's Report.

There had been a Panorama programme on efforts by the Met. police and Customs to enforce censorship laws (with input from the BBFC) and their attempts to synchronise their standards.

Notes: Clubs and Vice Squad = Obscene Publications Squad

Video Recordings Act 1984 & Cinemas Act 1985 - under the Criminal Justice Act 1988 prosecution needs the consent of the Attorney General if the work has been passed by the BBFC.

See Customs Consolidation Act 1876 (yes, 18!) and Customs Management Act 1979 for 'indecent' material.

Ted had written to the new director of the BBFC introducing CAC.

Mary and Ted apologised for the lack of meetings this year and hoped to do better next.

Ted invited Council members to suggest names of possibly sympathetic MPs to be contacted.

4. CAC is protesting about the banning of European porn channels (most recently French station 'Erotica'). The official line is 'because children'. (Press release from Dept. of Culture, Media and Sport.) However, we did get a reply and hope to arrange a meeting later. Needs a delegate with access to satellite TV.

NB. Minister for Film, Broadcasting and Tourism has no say on the BBFC as video censor - comes under the Home Office.

5. Ted, Mark and John all attended BBFC public relations meetings. Ted heard the new president say that cuts should be signalled on the boxes of videos.

6. The Dept. of Trade is drafting new regulations for control of the internet. John to identify the correct place to send to for a copy.

7. Dave Bird and Chris Hardman, prospective Council members, to be invited to next meeting. Dave has a website, but will need to be advised that any material posted for CAC would have to be referred to Ted or Mary first, to check that it accurately represents our position.

PTO

8. Mary to investigate costs of installing a fax machine.

Liberty affiliation to be renewed, though Mary reported that FAC are no longer affiliated.

Liberty are backing MI5 whistleblower David Shayler.

Freedom of Information Bill shelved for this year. (Is that a surprise?)

Discussion of placing an ad. in Tuppy Owens' SFC newsletter. Mary to write to her. Wording of ad. must be approved by Council.

9. Next meeting - March, exact date to be fixed.