

## CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP

### NATIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.45, Tuesday, 30th March, 1999 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Present: Ted Goodman (Chair), Kent Boulton, John Irving, Steve King, Basil Stein, Mary Hayward. As prospective new members: Dave Bird, Chris Hardman.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mark Taha.
2. Mary to contact Neville and ask whether he still wished to remain a member of Council. Dave and Chris to decide during the meeting whether they wished to become Council members. Members' claims for expenses to be brought to the next meeting.
3. The minutes of last meeting were signed as correct.
4. Chair's Report.

Ted had had a reply from the BBFC which came to rather a brush-off. However, they are planning more public meetings and the new director has said that material classified 18R should be more explicit.

Ted had no reply to his first letter to the Dept. of Culture. His second letter was more factual and did get a reply.

6 satellite TV channels have been banned in the UK. (Norway has banned one Swedish one.) Agreed any delegation to the Dept. should include at least one satellite TV watcher. (Basil has cable and C5. Steve has access to C5. Chris Hardman ~~has~~ satellite.) Basil had been watching the series Queer As Folk which was complained of by gay groups for a story-line about under-age sex. Basil to contact Stephen Twigg, MP for Enfield and 'out' about Chris Smith banning Rendezvous, including gay programmes.

Needed: a full list of who has access to/is interested in which media and areas of censorship.

Ted had been writing to local authorities about table-dancing. The LAs have found that they can't ban it altogether, so they impose restrictions. (Info. from reports in the Daily Sport.) A recent decision (within last 2 weeks) means that the club cannot be held responsible if dancers turn out to be prostitutes. Chris Hardman agreed to contact the Sport and ask what the regulations are ie. the model byelaws being used.

5. Mary to attend Liberty AGM as CAC delegate. Motion on banning of satellite channels sent in.

6. CAC needs MPs with safe seats. Evan Harris (LibDem, Oxford W.) was sympathetic but backed off, possibly because he was in a marginal seat. MPs appeared on the C5 Sex and Shopping series.

PTO

Ted had written to Austin Mitchell (known to be mainly anti-censorship) and to Harry Cohen (Lab., Leyton & Wanstead) who had fought off a local bill to further restrict sex shops in City of Westminster (ie. Soho).

Note: Chris Hardman said 2 Soho sex shops closed recently and it was not clear whether Westminster intended to increase or decrease the number. Mary to write to them.

Ted to write to Diana Organ (Lab., Forest of Dean).

Council members to bring other suggestions to next meeting.

No decision on whether to contact MEPs after the May elections.

7. Ted asked why prostitution and pornography had not been included in the review of sex offences and got a rebuff.

8. Mary pointed out that there were markedly increased restrictions on reporting in the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Bill. Chris Hardman to find out from the Parliamentary Press Office how far the Bill has got and let her and Steve know.

9. Governments in general, and the US in particular, want to control encryption on the net, using the excuse of 'crime prevention', which would include publication of porn. Overseas dissident material is placed at risk.

Note: under ~~Section 160~~ of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 <sup>public order - 1994</sup> child porn includes computer generated images of people who only look under 16. <sup>34 (section 7)</sup>

Internet providers are held responsible for content. Dave Bird offered to report to the next meeting.

Mary reported that rental of a fax line would cost £100 a year and the machine itself roughly £200.

Dave Bird said that when Sir John Foster's report on the Church of Scientology was put on the web (including their manuals on harassment and smears) the Scientologists complained, but Parliamentary reports must be reproduced in full and the site maintainer told them so.

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An alternative venue to be discussed next meeting.

Next agenda to include discussion of press coverage.

10. Next meeting - June, preferably 1st week.

Dave Bird and Chris Hardman agreed to become Council members.

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