

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP

NATIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.45, Thursday, 24th June, 1999 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Present: Ted Goodman (Chair), Dave Bird, Kent Boulton, Chris Hardman, Steve King, Basil Stein, Mary Hayward. As observers: Martin Poulter, Mazin Zeki.

1. There were no apologies for absence.

Mary Hayward had had no reply from Neville Hunnings.

2. The minutes of last meeting were corrected and signed.

Basil Stein had not yet seen Stephen Twigg to speak to about banning of the Rendevious channel.

NCCL said that our motion had missed their deadline.

Mary Hayward had written to Westminster City Council about sex shops - no reply yet.

Basil Stein had written to the Home Secretary about the proposal to make it illegal in London to post cards in telephone boxes offering sexual services - no reply.

Dave Bird reported that the complained-of chapter had been removed from the web report on Scientology but it has cropped up on sites in other countries. The site provider may move to Canada.

3. Chair's Report.

Ted Goodman had corresponded with Duval of the BBFC. Duval's guidelines will not allow sexual explicitness in 18R or any 18 either in the cinema or on video. "Images of real sex must be brief and justified by context". No video certificate for *Al No Corrida*. The guidelines are wrong because they mis-apply the law. Chris Hardman to send a copy of the Video Appeals Committee adjudication on *Making Whoopee* to Basil Stein and Basil to write to Duval next, liaising with Ted.

The new Scottish parliament will not control film censorship in Scotland. Ted Goodman to copy details to Mary Hayward.

Note: under the Cinemas Act, 1985, cinema comes under the Home Office, not the Dept. of Culture.

Alan Simpson, Broadcasting Policy Division, Dept. of Culture, had said that government policy is not to allow 'pornography' in any medium. Ted Goodman to write to the Department again and ask him when and where this decision was made and report back to Council. If the reply is unsatisfactory Chris Hardman to take over the correspondence.

PTO

Two new sex channels, Torrid and Amore, had been being advertised since April and are likely to be proscribed. Chris Hardman to try to publicise CAC opposition to proscription orders in cable and satellite magazines, clearing what he arranges with Ted Goodman and letting Mary Hayward know what he has done.

Thanks to Chris Hardman for the plug in Better Satellite.

Mary Hayward to write to the NUJ and point out that listing banned satellite channels is illegal, copy to Chris Hardman.

The SFC had become diverted from its original remit onto law reform in general, eg. legalisation of cannabis.

4. Table-dancing.

Chris Hardman had talked to the Sport about regulations for table-dancing but got nothing definite. Ted Goodman reported that Croydon Council licensing committee turned down a licence for table-dancing but an appeal to the magistrates was successful. (Also massage parlours had been licensed in Edinburgh and Sheffield.) A Southampton footballer lost the licence for his club, possibly because of 'lesbian acts' appearing, possibly because 'neighbours' complained. Mary Hayward to check local paper for details.

5. Contacts with MPs.

No replies from Austin Mitchell, Harry Cohen, Diana Organ. Ted Goodman wrote to Bob Marshall Andrews (Lab, Medway) - no reply, and to Paul Flynn (Lab, Newport West) who is more interested in reform of the drug laws. He also wrote to one from each main party out of the MPs who protested about the Freedom of Information Bill. Basil Stein has a copy of a guide to MPs.

6. Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Bill.

Some provisions dropped. Journalists are fighting the censorship proposals. Mary Hayward asked for any press reports on this to be sent to her so that she can write and tell the reporters CAC supports them.

7. Internet control.

Dave Bird reported that the Scientologists had lost the recent libel case. The lady libelled won £50,000 and costs. He thought that some of his fellow scientology-watchers were potential CAC members.

The police want to make it a criminal offence to refuse to de-encrypt material on the internet. They also want to forbid the use of 'long key' encryption (= elaborate codes which take a long time to break). Chris Hardman to send Mary Hayward copies of press reports on this.

Mary Hayward to check her file of Index on Censorship for items on internet control internationally and send to Dave Bird.

Dave Bird to report on internet control to next meeting.

8. Publicity and recruitment.

Dave Bird to report on getting CAC a web site. The site could include CAC briefings and student enquirers with coursework could then be referred to that. His provider is 'demon', a subsidiary of Scottish Telecom. He pays £10 a month to the provider, spends about £200 a year all told.

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Dave Bird to send Mary Hayward details of the Campaign Against Censorship Of The Internet In Britain.

Mary Hayward asked for help in compiling a CAC newsletter to be sent to members and prospective members and, we hope, put on the web too. She pointed out that in order to recruit and keep members we must have something to give them in return for their subscriptions.

9. Other business.

Mazin Zeki asked for more support for Liberty/NCCL. Mary Hayward to take CAC leaflets to the AGM.

Guidelines on expenses to be discussed at next meeting.

Treasurer's report to be reinstated as an item on the agenda.

10. Date of next meeting - towards end September.