

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP

NATIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00, Friday, 10th December, 1999 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Present: Ted Goodman (Chair), Dave Bird, Chris Hardman, John Irving, Steve King, Basil Stein, Mark Taha, Mary Hayward.

Prospective Council member: Damian Steer.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Kent Boulton. He has the Council's best wishes for a speedy recovery.

2. The minutes of last meeting were signed as correct.

3. Matters arising:

i. No reply from Westminster City Council on sex shop policy.

ii. Phone box cards - Basil Stein had been sent a free copy of the Home Office report. To write to them, copy to Mary Hayward.

iii. No reply from the NUJ on satellite channel listings.

iv. Ted Goodman met Chris Smith at a Labour conference fringe meeting. Mr. Smith agreed that he or his deputy, Janet Anderson, would meet representatives from CAC. Mary Hayward wrote about arrangements, no reply yet.

v. Mary Hayward had written to members of the Select Committee on Culture.

vi. No other suggestions for MPs to contact.

vii. The judicial review arising from the Video Appeals Committee decision was likely to be in late January/early February. Damian Steer agreed to attend for CAC.

viii. Dave Bird and Steve King attended the conference on internet encryption. Dave Bird said that he had made the point that the intelligence services have too much money and too much time on their hands. The Communications Bill will contain proposals on interception and surveillance, some of which may infringe the European Convention (privacy). Dave Bird to keep an eye on the parliamentary website (www.parliament.gov.uk) for the Bill when published.

ix. Ted Goodman to meet the secretary of the ACPO in January by appointment.

4. BBFC roadshow - reports:

London - Ted Goodman attended and had done a written report.

Bristol - Chris Hardman attended, also his friend Martin Poulter who had sent a very good report to Mary Hayward for CAC. She had written to thank him.

Norwich - Dave Bird to ask for a report from his friend Yvonne Tasker.

FTO

Newcastle - Ted Goodman reported, via a friend of his who attended, that the BBFC had admitted that the feedback from the meetings showed far less worry about sexual content than they expected.

5. BBFC guidelines - CAC comments. The draft prepared by Ted Goodman and Mary Hayward was further amended and approved. Mary Hayward to incorporate the amendments and send it.

6. Balances: HSEC - £174.68p, Girobank - £50.91p

7. Mailing list - 519

8. Other business:

i. Basil Stein pointed out that it was not clear from recent cases whether 'possession' of indecent photographs of children (Protection of Children Act 1978 and Criminal Justice Act 1988) included having them in a computer whether or not they had been downloaded.

(Note: defences to a charge of possession are: 1. didn't know it was there

2. lawful excuse

3. tried to get rid of it.)

ii. Mary Hayward had heard from FAC that anti-porn campaigners in Edinburgh had had a bonfire of magazines. She had agreed to endorse FAC's statement on the incident on behalf of CAC.

iii. Mary Hayward pointed out that the Terrorism Bill might have censorship implications. She would scan the Bill for relevant provisions.

iv. A fatwa had been issued in the UK against a British playwright for a play which depicted Jesus as homosexual. Those concerned had not seen the play.

v. Dave Bird wanted to arrange to obtain software which can scan press cuttings and reproduce them on a website.

9. Date of next meeting - late January.

Damian Steer to become a member of Council.