

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP

NATIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.45, Friday, 3rd November, 2006 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL.

Present: Ted Goodman (Chair), Nigel Meek, Brian Seager, Basil Stein, Mark Taha, Mary Hayward.

1. There were no apologies for absence.

2. The Minutes of the June 2006 meeting were signed with one change.

3. Matters Arising

Advertising - Mark Taha to draft a policy statement on restrictions on advertising of legal products, eg junk food.

4. Balances

HSBC - £303.97

Alliance & Leicester - £138.69

Total raised from mailshot (subscriptions and donations) £148.50

5. Chairman's Report

Ted Goodman had written to the new Home Office minister pointing out that the "extreme pornography" proposals might criminalise classical and christian iconography.

6. Members' Reports

Brian Seager supplied a very full written report of the Sexual Freedom Coalition conference. A copy to be filed as an annex to these minutes.

Mary Hayward reported that CAC's briefing on blasphemy law had been published verbatim in a booklet for use in secondary schools. (The Censorship Debate, issues series number 121, Independence Educational Publishers, no price given)

7. 'Extreme' pornography

There were 397 responses to the Home Office consultation document. CAC's was number 217. The organisations responding were mostly in favour of censorship, the individuals mostly against. CAC is not mentioned by name in the report. The BBFC sounds worried. One lawyers' group suggested extending the Obscene Publications Act. The proposals will probably go ahead but with some defences and safeguards; we'll have to wait and see which ones.

Nigel Meek and/or Mark Taha to attend the Backlash meeting on 22nd November.

Basil Stein pointed out that ever since possession alone of any material was criminalized (Criminal Justice Act, 1988), the current proposals - and any others that may follow - were just waiting to happen. Downloading images from a website is equal to creating them and therefore if the images are illegal, so is downloading. Hits on the site are not illegal but could become so.

8. The veil issue

Mary Hayward had prepared a draft statement to be discussed at the next meeting.

9. Newsletter, membership, website

For postal reasons the next issue of the newsletter would be 8 pages of A5.

Nigel Meek reported that the majority of members had not been heard from. Agreed that since general meetings are restricted to paid-up members only (people who have renewed, people who pay by standing order and sponsors), non-payers should be notified of the intention to hold a general meeting and invited to renew if they want to

attend. Nigel Meek to prepare a draft of the invitation. This would be a separate mailing from the newsletter. People and organisations on the mailing list receive the newsletter only. The suggestion that observers be allowed to attend a general meeting was rejected.

Nigel Meek also reported on the (increasing) number of hits on the CAC website. A copy of the column chart to be filed as an annex to these minutes. Most hits come through Google and most do not go further than the front page, but in October about 90 out of about 370 did go further; 10-30 each for different pages. He said that for best results we need to commission someone to design a website and that he might be able to get advice on who to ask. (Estimated cost £400-£600.) The Council agreed unanimously that he should make enquiries.

There was a unanimous and enthusiastic vote of thanks to Nigel Meek for his work on the newsletter and the website.

10. There was no other business.

11. Date of next meeting - not fixed.