

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP

NATIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.45, Friday, 6th July, 2007 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL.

Present: Ted Goodman (Chair), Nigel Meek, Brian Seager, Basil Stein, Mary Hayward. (Ted Goodman was delayed, Nigel Meek chaired in his absence.) Sean Gabb as observer.

1. Apologies for absence from Mark Taha.

2. The Minutes of the November 2006 meeting were signed as correct.

3. Matters Arising

With reference to possession of illegal images, what is the legal definition of "downloading" on a computer? Mr. Goodman to be asked to find out.

4. Balances

HSBC - £531.99

Alliance & Leicester - £168.69

Abbey - £4, 775.34

Resolved: Signatories for the Campaign's accounts to be 1) Mary Hayward, 2) E.A.C. Goodman, 3) Mark Taha.

Discussion of how to increase membership and income and raise the Campaign's profile. Suggestions: enlarged mailing list, more press releases, compile (from by-lines) a list of reporters likely to give CAC favourable coverage.

Mrs. Hayward pointed out that FAC seems to be having problems too.

5. Members' Reports

Mr. Meek drew CAC's attention to a report in The Times (6th July p.18) of EU proposals to censor bomb-making ideas on the internet.

He also provided a written report of the SFC conference in April, drawing special attention to a speech by John Lovatt of the Spanner Trust about proposals to outlaw "extreme pornography" and its likely effect on SM practitioners.

Mrs. Hayward pointed out that the Operation Ore campaign against child pornography had ended up targeting people who had not accessed the material in question but were victims of credit card fraud and suggested that the same thing might happen again under any new legislation.

6. "Extreme pornography"

The driving forces behind the proposals appear to be both the anti-porn feminists and evangelical Christians.

Mr. Meek and Mr. Seager were opposed to any support for amendments to legislation in Parliament, even if designed to provide safeguards. (Mr. Gabb agreed, saying that support for amendments loses credibility.) A vote on whether CAC should support amendments was inconclusive; 2 for, 2 against, 1 abstention.

Mrs. Hayward suggested that the hope was that people would not defend themselves when charged.

So far, there was no date for the Bill (Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill) second reading.

Mr. Goodman (now present) had attended a meeting of Backlash and supplied them with CAC's comments on the "extreme pornography" clauses of the Bill.

7. Chairman's Report

Mr. Goodman had also written to the BBFC about banning of video games and to TV producers about self-censorship - pixillated images after 9pm.

8. Agreed that a statement about the Satanic Verses affair - still surfacing from time to time - should be published in the newsletter when the occasion arises.

9. Website

Mr. Meek reported that the website receives approximately 400 hits a month and some of these are downloading. Both the content and the appearance of the site need updating. He said that the Society for Individual Freedom paid £1100-1200 for a re-design for their site.

10. Date of next meeting

14th September (provisional).