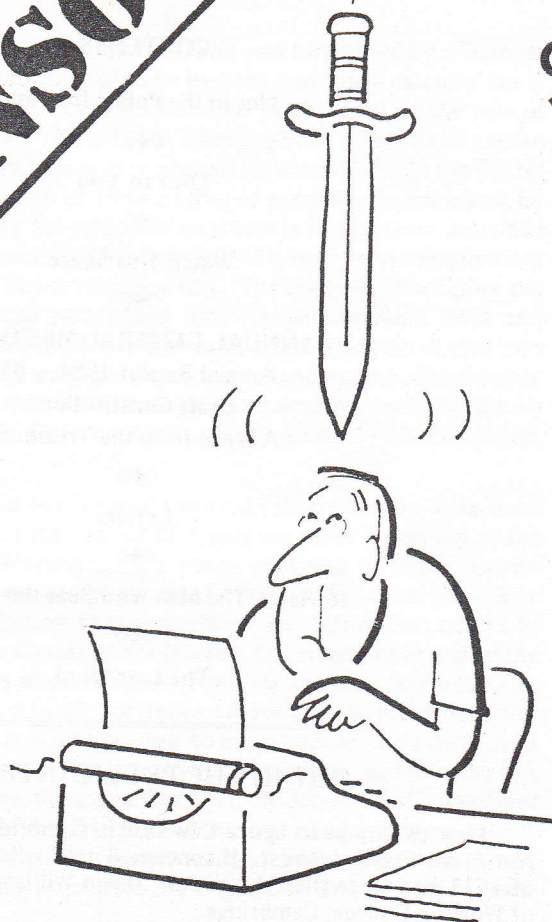


SPRING 1985

UNCENSORED

9



Ben Shailor

JOURNAL OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP
formerly DEFENCE OF LITERATURE AND THE ARTS SOCIETY

25p

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NOT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Over twenty years ago, a Law Don in Cambridge wrote a book entitled *Not in the Public Interest*. It concerned itself with the Official Secrets Act of 1911 and since then the author, David Williams, has become President of Wolfson College, Cambridge.

The last year has been one in which the sentiment expressed by those in Government that certain matters are 'not in the public interest' will come as no surprise. At the time of writing this editorial, the Prime Minister has refused to permit any members of the Security Forces to appear before a Parliamentary Select Committee. The role of Parliament in protecting the liberties of the subject has been brought into disrepute from one decade to another on account of the use, some people would say mis-use, of the Official Secrets Act and, in particular, Section 2. One does

not have to be a member of the National Council for Civil Liberties to know that many people are concerned at what is happening in our society as information becomes more susceptible to gathering, classification and storage and, at the same time, remains as inaccessible as ever on account of the fact that it is said by those who rule over us to be 'not in the public interest'.

In 1915 a steamship called the *Lusitania* was torpedoed by a German submarine. There was an explosion in its hold and, only recently has it been learned, the ship was carrying munitions in disregard of the role of neutral states in wartime. The delay in allowing such a fact to be known must surely be on account of a wish to prevent embarrassment to the British Government. In the Autumn of 1984 a series of programmes broadcast by the BBC and subsequently the subject of an article in *The Listener* described how the Special Operations Executive may, in 1941, have been compromised by a traitor at its Baker Street Headquarters. The question of whether the entire Dutch Underground parachuted into Holland between 1941 and 1944 died in vain was raised. The relatives of those who parachuted into Holland and were rounded up immediately upon landing and subsequently executed might expect that their feelings and memories could be shown greater respect by those in Government by revealing exactly what occurred.

This year has seen the challenge to the established order by leaks from two public servants, one a member of MIS, and the other a member of the Ministry of Defence. Whatever one's views on those in public service who reveal publicly secrets, one must accept that the Government will be embarrassed by the suggestion that observation and infiltration occurs to such organisations as The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament as well as the suggestion that there was dissemination of mis-information to Parliament. The writer has some sympathy for those whose task is to protect this country against attack. It is idle to seek to superimpose one's own views upon those in Government. The question of censorship is, however, just as pressing as ever because there is a fear that the secrecy in Government is not primarily to protect this country in the event of attack from outside nor is it to prevent its decline through infiltration by Communists and others but merely in order to protect the reputation and respect of those in power.

The Campaign Against Censorship, virtually single-handedly with a handful of members of the House of Lords, fought the Video Recordings Bill. It is now an Act of Parliament and those who sowed the harvest will now reap the whirlwind of confusion which that Act of Censorship will surely bring in the future.

Arnold Rosen

OVER TO YOU

Looking at our Future

All our readers will have seen and, we trust, enjoyed the brilliant cartoon on the front cover of this issue of *Uncensored*. We are most indebted to the artist, Ben Shailo of the *Daily Telegraph* for his creation, and to our Press Agent, Michael Dawe, who made it possible. We are planning a publicity campaign in the near future, of which this cartoon will be a feature.

From the scores of favourable responses received by our Treasurer when he circulated our members and sponsors at the time of the emergence of the C.A.C. from the ashes of D.L.A.S., we know that the goodwill is there. Our membership is holding up; our funds are holding up. We also have some welcome donations.

But, in spite of repeated pleas in *Uncensored*, we are not getting the membership participation that we would like and which is necessary to continue and increase our work.

The membership of our Council stands at eleven. With the exception of John Calder (the original inspiration of D.L.A.S.) who has been unable to attend any meetings, all the other members have attended with a regularity which is almost phenomenal, especially given the fact so many of them live outside London: our Secretary in Southampton, Eric Miller, our valuable Monitor, in Reading, and John Lyons, our youngest member, in Birmingham. Each of them has now found his niche and is valiantly playing his part.



The Editor wishes to use this opportunity publicly to thank all our contributors, particularly those outside our Council, as well as the Council members for all their help.

In the fourteen years of the existence of D.L.A.S. there were five issues of *Uncensored*. We have now reached No. 9 and hope to produce three or four each year in the future. We are particularly grateful to our Monitors who supply us with such a plethora of material. Neville Hunnings, of the European Law Centre, keeps us regularly posted with items of Current Interest both at home and abroad, of which we are only able to publish a small selection (any member wanting fuller details can receive them from C.A.C.). Our Librarian and General Monitor, Ted Goodman, provides us with so many newspaper clippings that we shall soon need a new room to put them in. Arnold Rosen is responsible for drafting a Constitution — which is generally considered necessary to the legal functioning of any serious public body — and Neville Hunnings provided us with our "Working Structure", a blueprint for an ideal, active and vigorous C.A.C., which would be splendid if we had the manpower to implement it.

So once again, it's Over to You, our readers, our members. What can we do to get you to help us? How can we make our work more effective? How can we recruit new members, start Branches, expand our

activities (a theme most dear to the heart of John Lyons) and finally end with an office and staff and the kind of organisational set-up our enthusiastic Chairman dreams about?

The first thing is: Come to our next A.G.M. on May 9th and discuss all the possibilities. The attendance last year was woefully small. This time we hope it will be vastly improved.

In addition to the many aspects (controversial and otherwise) of C.A.C. to be considered; we have arranged to have a lecture open to the public — the first, we hope, of many lectures arranged by C.A.C.

Our Guest Speaker this month will be award-winning reporter from BBC *Panorama*, Michael Cockerell, who has shown himself on various occasions as unafraid to tackle vital, if controversial subjects.



WATCH THIS SPACE

Current Items of Interest to C.A.C.

Memo re. AIDS

On 18 Feb 85 LBC broadcast a programme about AIDS. It revealed that the disease originated among animals in the Republic of Zaire in Central Africa. It manifested itself as African Swine Disease and Green Monkey Disease. It was transmitted to Africans indulging in bestiality c1973. It was carried by migrants across the Atlantic to Haiti c1980. New York gays holidaying there brought it to the USA c1981. However only one in ten people exposed to it are infected. The campaign "beware a queer's beer" is therefore unjustified. Help can be obtained from the Terrence Higgins Trust.

April 15. *Morals of Violence in Arts*. Article by Dr David Taylor — the flip side of the Censorship Debate over the Video Recordings Bill — published in *University Quarterly*.

Sources Close to the Prime Minister by Michael Cockerell, Peter Hennessey and David Walker, described as the Story of the News Manipulators, published by Macmillans last year at £9.95 goes into paperback on April 6. It was reviewed in *Uncensored* No 8 by Lord Jenkins, former Minister of the Arts, under the title *Lapdogs or Watchdogs*. The Penguin version has a new chapter by Michael Cockerell, who is the Guest Speaker at our AGM (q.v.) this year.

Life of Brian, already shown on general release, scheduled for screening by IBA, withdrawn because it was feared that some people might find it offensive.

In the Pipeline

Proposed legislation to outlaw all experiments on foetuses. Also to make agencies promoting surrogate motherhood illegal. Are these genuine 'concern for the unborn' or part of a neurotic hatred of sex in all its manifestations?

Proposed bill against Kerb Crawling. Ostensibly this is meant to protect women. But would it? Surprisingly perhaps, not only the Collective of Prostitutes but also Women Against Rape are bitterly opposed to it and see it as another inroad on personal liberty, which could have very dangerous side effects.

Omega Books were before Great Yarmouth magistrates on 10 Dec 84 under Obscene Publications Act for import of 5,000 copies of *Japanese Eroticism*, collection of Japanese artistic prints, seized June 29th. They intend to defend in depth, using "very eminent figures from the art world who have agreed to testify on our behalf."

Publishing News 7 Dec 84

Death of Lord Harlech, President of British Board of Film Censors, on 26 Jan 85. Obituary in *The Times*, 28 Jan 85.

Plan by Channel 4 to broadcast daily a dramatised account of the trial of Clive Ponting under Official Secrets Act using actors banned by Mr Justice McCowan under s.4(2) Contempt of Court Act until jury has returned verdict because of substantial risk of prejudice to the administration of justice. Programme went ahead nonetheless but with reporters, not actors, reading the selected parts of the trial transcripts. *The Times* 29 Jan 85

Gay's the Word

Details of charges brought by Customs and Excise on 21 Nov 84 against directors of Gay's the Word bookshop and, in one instance, the assistant manager: (a) "Being knowingly concerned in the fraudulent evasion of the prohibition imposed by s.42 of the Customs Consolidation Act 1876 on importation of certain indecent or obscene books" contrary to s.171(4) of Customs and Excise Management Act 1979; (b) Conspiring contrary to s.1 of Criminal Law Act 1977 "fraudulently to evade the prohibition on importation of indecent or obscene material imposed by s.42 of the Customs Consolidation Act 1876 that being an offence contrary to s.170(2) of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979". *Bookseller* Dec 84

Hearing at Clerkenwell Magistrates Court 7 Jan 85 adjourned by agreement to prepare for full committal hearing in late spring or early summer.

Bookseller 12 Jan 85

Video retailers are lobbying for an amnesty from prosecution for any video nasty offence committed before 31 Dec 83.

Variety 12 Dec 84

Evil Dead trial at Snaresbrook Crown Court 25 Jul 85 against Palace Video, Nik Powell its chairman and Palace Virgin Gold its distributor, under s.2 Obscene Publications Act. Acquitted by juries at Peterborough and Croydon Crown Courts. On 16 Jan 85 the owner of MCD Video Play was acquitted of charges regarding it. Although some dealers have been convicted, the recent run of acquittals led Palace Video to ask the Attorney-General to review the case and for the title to be removed from the 'successfully prosecuted' section of the DPP's list and placed in the 'prosecution pending' section.

Screen International 2 Feb 85

Family and Youth Concern Society (national membership of 20,000 claimed) has mounted a 'pilot project' in Birmingham aimed at discouraging booksellers from stocking titles it considers immoral and contemptuous of the Court of Appeal ruling in 'Gillick'. Hudsons bookshop agreed to withdraw two books: *Make It Happy* by Jane Cousins and *Talking Sex* by Miriam Stoppard. Mrs Christine Kelly, chairman of the society's Midlands branch, believes the books' advice to children on contraception is against the spirit of the 'Gillick' judgment.

Bookseller 26 Jan 85

Abroad

Paris court dismissed action against Jean-Luc Godard's film *Hail Mary* (? *Ave Maria*?) which features a basketball-playing teenager as Virgin Mary and scenes showing Mary naked with taxi-driver boy friend Joseph. Action brought by two lay Roman Catholic associations. Held that film did not warrant censorship or banning: "Nothing in this film makes it pornographic or particularly obscene".

The Times 29 Jan 85

Italian private radio station read extracts from pornographic magazine which was publicly available lawfully (but not on open display). Court held that if the magazine is lawfully sold, broadcasting its contents is no different and therefore is also lawful. The citizen who wants to enjoy its contents has to take the positive step of buying the magazine or tuning in to the station broadcasting it.

Cinema d'Oggi 19 Dec 84

Swedish Attorney-General (Justitiekansler) received request from US authorities to open inquiry on sale of child pornography from Sweden to USA. Problem that USA has rigid age limit of 18 for end of childhood; Sweden more pragmatic in relation to child pornography and youths of 16 - 17 normally not regarded as children. In borderline cases, maturity also relevant in Sweden.

Svenska Dagbladet 30 Jan 85

Norwegian women's group, Centre Women (Senterkvinnene) urge censorship of videos as soon as possible along lines of existing film censorship. Refer to new UK video law.

Aftenposten 29 Jan 85

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP

*To all our Members and Sponsors:
you are invited to attend our*

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

on

Thursday 9th May 1985

at

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1
(ample free parking)

at 6.30 pm

Free Refreshments available from 6.00 pm

Followed at 7.45 pm by

C. A. C. ANNUAL LECTURE

open to the public

MICHAEL COCKERELL

of Panorama

one of TV's top reporters

part author of "Sources Close to the Prime Minister"

on

Politicians and the Media —
The Hidden Censorship?

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE C.A.C.

AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of the 1984 Annual General Meeting
- 2 Matters arising from the Minutes
- 3 Annual Report
- 4 Adoption of Accounts
- 5 *Uncensored*
- 6 Election of Officers
- 7 Election of Auditor
- 8 Resolutions, if any
- 9 Any other business

Members of the present Council have agreed to stand for re-election. Other nominations should be sent to the Secretary, 25 Middleton Close, Fareham, Hants., or may be made from the floor.



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held at the House of Commons at 7.00 pm on 15th May 1984

Sir Roy Shaw (President) took the Chair. There were 15 members present.

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the recalled Special General Meeting held on 17th May 1983 were read and approved.

2 Matters Arising

- 2.1 The proceedings against books dealing with drugs were still in progress.
- 2.2 Debate on the draft Constitution was postponed. Agreed Council to examine the cost of circulating copies to members and holding a postal ballot.

3 President's Address

The President addressed the meeting. He said that the pressures on those working in the arts to practise self-censorship continued as well as pressure from outside. He believed that society would be far better served by educating people's tastes than by suppressing the tasteless. He saw 'eternal vigilance' as the task of bodies like C.A.C.

4 Annual Report

- 4.1 Commenting on the Annual Report, the Chairman said that although it was now becoming known, C.A.C. must continue to promote itself and its cause. It was unfortunate that support for free speech from the Left of politics had declined.

- 4.2 Mr. David Webb pointed out that some previous supporters had shown themselves not merely indifferent but hostile over the Video Recordings Bill, including Lord Norwich and Ms. Margaret Beckett, whom he wished to see excluded from the list of sponsors. The Council agreed to examine their cases further.

- 4.3 Mr. Arnold Rosen wished to see a division made between the 'introspective' (i.e. chiefly administrative) and the 'extrospective' work of the Council.

- 4.4 Lord Winstanley said that the fight against the Video Recordings Bill had been severely hampered because MPs had been misled by propaganda and because debates had been arranged for Fridays when many were not able to be present.

5 Treasurer's Report

- 5.1 The Treasurer reported that the bulk of the Campaign's funds had been placed in a Building Society account and the current account transferred from the Midland Bank to National Giro. These moves should make funds easier to administer and provide a better rate of interest. The Council had slightly underspent its budget but expected to spend more in the coming year. He hoped to see increased recruitment and more fund-raising.

- 5.2 Tribute was paid to the Chairman's leadership and to the Treasurer's hard work over many years.

6 Election of Officers and Council

- 6.1 The present Council had agreed to serve again and there were no further nominations. It was therefore re-elected.
- 6.2 Agreed that a working party on Parliamentary liaison should be set up and Lord Winstanley agreed to serve on this.

7 Other Business

- 7.1 It was agreed that the Campaign should consider renewing D.L.A.S.'s affiliation to the National Council for Civil Liberties. Other cases of affiliation to be decided on their merits.
- 7.2 Mr. Wells paid tribute to the members who had taken the trouble to attend and hoped for a better attendance in 1985.

Mary Hayward
Hon. Secretary

Any queries about the accuracy of these Minutes should be sent immediately to the Secretary, 25 Middleton Close, Fareham, Hants.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP

ANNUAL REPORT 1984 – 85

The conversion of the Defence of Literature and the Arts Society to the Campaign Against Censorship took place over two years ago. The interest expressed by some forty supporters at that meeting in the House of Commons, and subsequently by many others in correspondence, has been sustained by the work of the National Council. Unfortunately, it has not been reflected in active participation by the members who voted to continue the work of D.L.A.S., much less in the recruitment of new members to build a strong defence against the assaults of the thought-controllers.

Annual General Meeting 1984

The scene was set once again in a Committee Room of the House of Commons but the attendance compared with the regenerative meeting in 1982 was discouraging. The National Council, led by Sir Roy Shaw as President of the Campaign, was there in force but few others came to encourage or to criticise. Despite this, the members of the National Council have maintained their regular monthly meetings with the same lively informative and constructive discussions as before but with no new signs of that reawakening of activity by others which in the end provides the vital element for inspiration and growth.

The Organisation of the Campaign

The limited manpower resources of the Campaign have been devoted for most of the year to the fight against the Video Recordings Bill (now an Act of Parliament). The Campaign Against Censorship sought every opportunity to point out the weakness of the case for censorship of video-tapes and — perhaps of greater significance — the serious dangers to intellectual liberty inherent in the Bill. We were rewarded with several television and radio appearances and a number of printed contributions, for which a special debt of gratitude is owed to Neville March Hunnings. Informed and compelling attacks on this, the most vicious Government restriction of private and public access to information and expression for centuries, continued as it passed through the House of Lords, thanks to Lord Houghton of Sowerby and Lord Jenkins of Putney. Their reward was, sadly, the contumely of their fellow peers and a small private dinner given by all members of the National Council as a mark of appreciation for their valiant efforts — a dinner which Lord Jenkins was unhappily prevented by illness from sharing with us.

Sadly, too, our President resigned at the end of 1984. A long period of ill health had denied him the opportunities for active leadership he had expected — and had denied the Campaign the benefits of his guidance which could have proved so valuable during our most testing months. We are sorry to part company from him and wish him a full and speedy recovery.

Some compensation for his departure has been found in the recruitment to the National Council of Michael Dawe as Public Relations Officer. His special experience in journalism and his dedication to the objectives of the Campaign have proved a valuable addition to the resources of skills and talents we can call on.

We are none the less paying a heavy organisational price for our concentration on the Video Recordings Bill. Not one member of the National Council has failed to play an active part in the projects and schemes we have devised and implemented, but our talents are too few in number, however vast in dimensions they may be. We still dream of one day having a central office with a telephone and a paid secretary to answer it.

The National Council has attempted to find solutions for a virtually intractable problem. On the one hand the growing threats of more and still more censorship take up all the resources we have, leaving little or none for the more humdrum demands of membership recruitment and organisation. On the other, the Campaign will face a limited life expectancy unless more effort is devoted to these unexciting but vital matters.

"Uncensored"

Thanks to the indefatigable Fanny Cockerell, three issues of *Uncensored* have been compiled, printed and distributed during the past twelve months. It remains the communication channel without which the Campaign could not function to even its present limited extent. Its contents form a catalogue of threats and events calling for the attention of the Campaign and providing formidable evidence of justification for our continued existence.

In many cases, *Uncensored* lists the actions undertaken by the National Council to fight off these attacks. Apart from the Video Recordings Bill, we have dealt with *inter alia*, the astonishing misuse of the Obscene Publications Act to prosecute sellers of books dealing with drugs, their uses and misuses, the refusal of the Independent Broadcasting Authority to permit the transmission of "The Life of Brian", a comedy biography of a Christlike anti-hero seen and enjoyed by several million people in their local cinemas, and the reawakening of police and customs action against so-called "Gay Bookshops".

Relationships with Other Organisations

We have friendly and constructive relationships with the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, the Freedom of Information Campaign, the National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts, the Index on Censorship and the National Council for Civil Liberties, to which we have decided to affiliate.

The Year Ahead

The future grows more daunting as the evil of thought control grows more indistinguishable from political censorship. These dangers were always recognised by the loyal members of D.L.A.S. who engineered its rebirth as the Campaign Against Censorship.

It is a measure of our challenge that the dangers are greater and more readily recognised today than when we were revitalised. It is a measure of our success that we survive, determined to maintain and expand our campaign, the only wide-ranging campaign against censorship in Britain.

David Kerr
Chairman of Council

DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST CENSORSHIP

- 1 The name of the association shall be the Campaign Against Censorship (herein-after called the Campaign).
- 2 i) The objects of the Campaign shall be to promote freedom of expression in all its forms and to combat restrictions on that freedom and on its exercise.
- ii) In carrying out its objects, the Campaign shall have regard to the following Guiding Principles:
 - (a) The right to obtain and impart knowledge
 - (b) Freedom from censorship
 - (c) Freedom for creative artists to present their perceptions, interpretations and ideas
 - (d) Support for victims of censorship without discrimination on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, politics or religion.
- iii) The Campaign shall have all necessary powers to act in furtherance of its objects.
- 3 Membership of the Campaign shall be of two kinds:
 - (a) Individual members
 - (b) Corporate members.
- 4 Individual membership shall be open to all persons aged eighteen and over irrespective of political party, nationality, religious opinion, race, colour, sex or sexual orientation.
- 5 The Council shall have the right for good and sufficient reason to terminate the membership of an individual or corporate member provided that the individual member or person representing the corporate member shall have the right to be heard by the Council before a decision.
- 6 All members and corporate members shall pay such subscriptions as the Council may from time to time determine.
- 7 Subject to the limitations set out in Clause 9 hereof, the policy and general management of the affairs of the Campaign shall be directed by a National Council (herein referred to as the Council) which shall meet not less than four times a year.
The Council shall consist of:
 - (a) Such members or representatives of corporate members, to be elected from among and by themselves at the annual general meeting not fewer than three in number
 - (b) President, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor of *Uncensored*, and not fewer than three other members as referred to in (a) above
 - (c) In addition the Council may co-opt further members who shall be members of the Campaign provided that the number of co-opted members shall not exceed one-third of the total number of members of the Council as defined above. All members of the Council shall retire annually but shall be eligible to be appointed or co-opted again. The Council shall have power to appoint such committees as it may from time to time decide and may determine their powers and terms of reference.
- 8 i) The annual general meeting shall elect a President, a Treasurer and such other officers of the Campaign such as an honorary Secretary as it may from time to time determine. The Council shall elect its Chairman and such other officers as it may from time to time determine.
- ii) The Council shall have the power to appoint and dismiss a (paid) Secretary and such other employees of the Campaign as it may from time to time determine.

- 9 Once in each calendar year, not more than 15 months apart, the Council shall convene an annual general meeting of the association, which all individual members and representatives of the corporate members shall be entitled to attend, for the purpose of receiving the annual report of the Council and the annual audited statement of accounts; of appointing honorary officers of the association; of accepting resignations of members of the Council; of electing representatives of full members to serve the Council; of appointing an auditor or auditors; of making recommendations to the Council and, whenever necessary, of voting on proposals to amend this constitution in accordance with Clause 15 hereof.
- 10 The Chairman of the Council or the Secretary may at any time at their discretion, and shall within twenty-one days of receiving written request so to do signed by not less than twenty members having the power to vote and giving reasons for the request, call a special general meeting of the association for the purpose of altering the constitution in accordance with Clause 15 hereof or of considering any matter which may be referred to them by the Council or for any other purpose as defined in reasons for the request.
- 11 i) Subject to the provisions of Clause 15, all questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote thereat. No member shall exercise more than one vote but in the case of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have second or casting vote.
- ii) One-third of the members shall form a quorum at meetings of the Council, and any other committee. Twenty members shall form a quorum at general meetings of the Campaign.
- iii) Minute books shall be kept by the association, the Council, and all other committees and the appropriate Secretary shall enter therein a record of all proceedings and resolutions.
- 12 i) All monies raised by or on behalf of the association shall be applied to further the objects of the association and for no other purpose.
- ii) The honorary Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the association.
- iii) The accounts shall be audited at least once a year by an auditor or auditors who shall be appointed at the annual general meetings.
- iv) An audited statement of accounts for the last financial year shall be submitted by the Council to the annual general meeting.
- 13 The title of all or any real property which may be acquired by or for the purposes of the Campaign shall be vested in trustees who shall be appointed by the Council and who shall enter into a deed of trust setting forth the purposes and conditions under which they hold the said property in trust for the Campaign. The number of trustees shall not be less than three nor more than .
- 14 If the Council by a simple majority decides at any time that on the grounds of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Campaign it shall call a meeting of all members of the association who have the power to vote of which meeting not less than twenty-one days notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed thereat) shall be posted to members. If such decision shall be confirmed by a simple majority of those present and voting at such meeting the Council shall have power to dispose of the assets held by or in the name of the Campaign. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be applied by the Council towards such purposes as may be *Cy Pres*.
- 15 i) Any proposal to alter this constitution must be delivered in writing to the Secretary of the Campaign not less than twenty-eight days before the date of the Council meeting at which it is first to be considered and in any case not later than 1st April in any calendar year.
- ii) Any proposed alteration will first require the consideration by a simple majority of members of the Council.

- iii) Any alteration to this constitution requires a two-thirds majority of individual members and representatives of the corporate bodies present and voting at a general meeting.
- iv) Notice of each such meeting must have been given in accordance with normal procedure but not less than fourteen days prior to the meeting in question and giving the wording of the proposed alteration.

Any proposed alteration to Clause 2 of this constitution shall require to be ratified by simple majority of the membership consenting by postal vote.

If trustees have been appointed in accordance with Clause 13 hereof, an alteration shall not be made without the knowledge and consent of the trustees, but such consent shall not be unreasonably withheld by them.

Signed
(signature of chairman)

Chairman

Signed



A WORD FROM THE TREASURER

Being Treasurer of C.A.C. (and its predecessors) for twenty years has been fascinating, not least because of the hundreds of letters I have received in that time, only a handful have been about money. Certainly, most have included a cheque, increased a Bankers Order or asked for a Deed of Covenant Form, but queries about how we spend your money have been few.

So, whilst it is uneconomic to send accounts to every member who cannot attend our AGMs, if any member would like a copy I will be happy to send one upon request.

I would like to thank all members for their faithful support, and especially the recent donors of £99 and £250. These generous donations will enable us to widen the scope of our information sheets, full details of which should appear in the near future.

In addition to my perennial plea to use Bankers Orders to renew subscriptions and to recruit new members, an extra plea. If you move, please let our Secretary know; sadly we lose some ten members a year this way.

Ian Wells

[The accounts will be presented at the AGM. Ed. *Uncensored*]



NATIONAL COUNCIL

Chairman: Dr David Kerr Vice-Chairman/Editor: Fanny Cockerell

Secretary: Mary Hayward Treasurer: Ian Wells

Legal Adviser/Media Monitor: Edward Goodman

Other Legal Advisers: Neville March Hunnings, Arnold Rosen

Council Members: John Calder, John Lyons, Eric Miller Press Officer: Michael Dawe

LETTERS

To the Editor of *Uncensored*

If in Doubt — Be Warned

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your friendly reviews of my two books in your Autumn 1984 edition of *Uncensored*, which I have recently seen. I thought you might be interested in the following true story.

I was asked late last year to act as expert witness in a case at Cardiff Crown Court, where a Video Shop Owner was being prosecuted for possessing copies of *I Spit on Your Grave* and *Nightmares in a Damaged Brain*. When the case came to Court in November — two years after the initial police raid on the shop — the prosecution withdrew charges just five minutes before the jury was to be called. The judge was plainly irritated, and was obviously none too happy that the case was being abandoned. When it became clear that there simply was no case to answer (the shop owner had had the films in a locked cupboard, withdrawn from the shop, all the time!), he summoned the defendant to the bar, to acquit him — and proceeded to lecture him as if he had been guilty. "You have a special responsibility to society", the man was told; and in relation to any video that comes into his shop "IF IT'S DOUBTFUL, IT'S DIRTY".

I invite your readers to let their minds rest on the implications of that *total* reversal of a principle of "English justice".

Keep up your good work.

Best wishes,

Martin Barker

Bristol Polytechnic
Fishponds, Bristol

A letter to *The Times*

I.B.A. Banning "The Life of Brian"

Dear Sir,

As press officer for the Campaign Against Censorship I had expected my first letter of 1985 to be a protest against some misguided censorship of a video nasty or the bizarre banning of a book.

Astonishingly I find myself penning this letter on the subject of that old chestnut, religious bigotry. The banning of *The Life of Brian* needs some comment. Have we learnt nothing in the last 2000 years?

Surely if Christianity cannot come to terms with Monty Python and needs to hide behind the skirts of the I.B.A. then it is not the durable, sensible faith that many believe it to be. Whether the film is good or bad is not at issue. I.B.A. seem to be banning the film because they consider it to be in poor taste. I would point out that the film has been shown all round the world and has not left more than a mild ripple of criticism in its wake.

How dare the I.B.A., or anyone else for that matter, presume to tell us what we may or may not view. Cannot the consumer be trusted to turn the T.V. off?

Maybe more people may now realise that censorship is a form of subtle manipulation and we must be on our guard against such ludicrous authoritarianism as displayed by the I.B.A. in this matter.

Is the shadow of Big Brother to remain with us in 1985?

Yours sincerely,

Michael Dawe

C.A.C.,
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Review:

THE MAN WHO BEAT THE SYSTEM

David Leigh: *HIGH TIME: the Life and Times of Howard Marks*

Heinemann £9.95

Oxonian iconoclasts; bizarre adventures in exotic places; peculiar arrangements with the secret service; suitcases full of stupefying sums; cannabis to-ing and fro-ing by the ton; idiocy and corruption in officialdom; courtroom drama. These are some of the ingredients in David Leigh's new book. But this is no novel, unless we accept William Burroughs' half-serious observation that the past is fiction.

Mr Leigh has written an astute, witty, hilarious memoir of Howard Marks, the hash-smuggling tycoon and ex MI6 agent whose real crime was to beat the system. Over the years, occasional newspaper reports have given tantalizing glimpses of this complex and much-misunderstood friend of mine, but the whole picture emerges only now. David Leigh not only supplies a meticulously-researched account of Howard's life and times; *High Time* should also be seen as authentic, living social history which is important but which has been poorly documented. All the events in the book are reported objectively and without moralism.

The narrative begins at Balliol College in the mid-1960s. Like heaven, Oxford is a state of mind; and this was certainly so at that time, with its (perhaps unprecedented and unsurpassed) concatenation of original, diverse, highly talented individuals. It was then and there that the 'counter-culture' in Britain was nurtured. We were certainly enjoying ourselves; but, more importantly, we were objecting to the irrationality of law and of accepted practice. We took LSD, which had not yet been made illegal, far more in a genuine spirit of enquiry

than for amusement. We saw that Oxford itself was and is a con-trick, the biggest open secret of our time, where it was practically impossible not to get a degree despite three or four years' pleasant partying and a week or two of token work. Howard Marks discovered this early: like many, he was appalled by institutionalised privilege. Unlike most, he never became bourgeois, never helped to perpetuate Oxford's aristocratic ethos.

Howard became a large-scale importer of cannabis: like almost all such dealers, he refused to handle hard drugs even though they were more lucrative and less bulky. It is a measure of those who were involved with his escapades, of their mutual respect, that years elapsed before he came to the notice of the police. David Leigh reports, correctly, that Howard was hired by another Balliol man to work for British Intelligence. That this is not wholly preposterous is indicated by the case of the anarchist ex-agent Peter Edge, who this month came in 'from the cold' to *The Observer*.

As a clinical pharmacologist, I have long realised the futility of all the efforts which have been made to eliminate the use of cannabis, a relatively mild psychotropic agent whose many therapeutic applications are just beginning to be discovered or rediscovered. This futility, and the mindless obsessions which the subject of cannabis engenders among politicians and law enforcers, are amply demonstrated here.

Leigh tells the truth about all this and much more. Even in the authoritarian 80s, this truth will eventually

set us free; but it will also seriously embarrass members of the establishment, judges, police officers, secret agents, whose folly, venality, double standards and mind-boggling hypocrisy are laid bare in this book. These attributes are made all the clearer for their implicitness.

The author of *High Time* has made a few minor slips, such as in the spelling of certain names of participants. He does not, I believe, quite understand how the psychedelic experience is

qualitatively different from the effects of most euphorogenic substances. Yet, for the most part, his vision is unneringly accurate. At this juncture in our history, when specious anti-drug crusades make facile political capital and even more unspeakable restrictions are imposed on our fundamental freedoms, when good old British humbug remains entrenched; it is more urgent than ever for us to remember the lessons of the 60s. And we can start by reading David Leigh's book.

Terence Duquesne



THE LAST WORD

on the Video Recordings Act

In the late summer of 1940 my first son was born in the City of London, just as the Blitz started on the Capital. After thirty-six hours of labour, punctuated by sirens whistling and bombs falling, he finally arrived.

Husband's comment: "*Well now, that's over. Now all we have to do is to bring him up.*"

I was reminded of this when contemplating the future of the Video Recordings Act (opposition to which has taken so much of our time and energy).

Not that it had a particularly difficult or dangerous passage. On the contrary. Little could have been easier. Conceived as a protector of the young, rushed through with minimal opposition, out of sentimentality by self-righteous hypocrisy, it reached the statute book in less time than the gestation period of a human infant. Nevertheless, even this included scores of committee meetings, amendments, exceptions, exceptions to exceptions; in the Upper House, it had to face and defeat 22 amendments from Lord Houghton and Lord Jenkins. Also, in the final months, protest meetings, resolutions by various bodies, letters to the press.

In July it had become law.

ALL that now remained was to implement it.



The Campaign Against Censorship, together with other opponents to the Act, daily growing in number, waited anxiously. Announcements appeared in the press to appoint the necessary censors.

Soon after, action would begin.

We are still waiting.

The Areopagitica Educational Trust, whose chairman is Enid Wistrich, former chairman of D.L.A.S., have recently published the results of their very carefully researched survey into children's TV viewing, which make complete nonsense of the emotional "80% of under six-year-olds regularly watch TV Nasties"; which was flung at a gullible public last year (rather in the manner of the now totally discredited "Babies for Burning" in a former anti-abortion debate).

The A.E. Trust were preparing a programme with Cobden Trust to watch over the progress of the Act in action, and to monitor its results. A committee was set up with representatives of NCROPA, C.A.C., The A.E. Trust, The Society for Education for Film and TV, the Cobden Trust, the Videogram Association, the Video Traders' Association, Oxford Polytechnic Research Unit and Lord Houghton, to make representations, if necessary, on the working of the Video Recordings Act and publish their findings. A public meeting was in preparation, planned for early March when the Act would begin to be in operation.

It is still waiting for the call.

We have been informed that the Act is not likely to come into force till next summer.

Interesting.

We are constantly hearing from people who blindly supported the Bill in the first case, moved by their concern for children (who are barely mentioned in the final Act) without realising its full implications.

Apart from the main arguments against it, we have constantly stressed that the Act would prove clumsy and unworkable. Since it covers not only existing videos but every film, and video, in existence — let alone potential ones, including films already given certificates and television programmes already screened and seen by millions, the task is indeed a mammoth one and likely to take many years.

Last summer the Act was born. Can it now survive?



It is not the intention here to reiterate the many and telling arguments, ideological and practical, against the Video Recordings Act. They have been made by C.A.C. members and others on television and radio, in articles in *Uncensored*, *The Freethinker*, *Plan* and other journals, and letters in the daily press; in resolutions carried by large majorities at the National Council for Civil Liberties, Actors Equity, The Progressive League; in meetings organised by C.A.C., Index Against Censorship, Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, Freedom of Information, and other bodies, and of course in the House of Lords and the House of Commons. In our opposition to the Bill we have not been alone.

But we have not been effective. The BIG LIE, the Sentimental Horror Story, is remembered when details of rational argument are forgotten. Therefore, in a situation which has become more fluid than we had dared to hope, a few relevant points might be worth considering and two articles in particular which appeared in serious periodicals, may be worth mentioning.

A few weeks ago Neville March Hunnings gave a talk to the Progressive League about the work of the C.A.C. and the implications of the Video Recordings Act. It was a profound and thoughtful lecture and the audience were deeply impressed.

Nevertheless in the serious and relevant discussion which followed several people brought up the questions of children and video 'nasties' which they had obviously found very disturbing, although the motion against the Bill had been passed almost unanimously at a previous A.G.M.

Having listened to Neville's answers, the doubters, we are happy to say, were completely won over.

How many other people would there be, even among our own members or sponsors, in the same situation?



A Question of Censorship

"It is not only a Bill, of a very extraordinary nature, but it has been brought in at a most extraordinary season, and pushed with most extraordinary despatch . . ."

"Such a law ought to be maturely considered, and every clause, every sentence, nay, every word of it, well weighed and examined, lest under some of those methods presumed or pretended to be necessary for restraining licentiousness, a power should lie concealed, which might be afterwards made use of for giving a dangerous wound to liberty . . ."

Where, would you imagine, does this quotation originally come from? From our Chairman? Our former President? The Secretary of N.C.C.L.? Lord Houghton, perhaps?

All wrong! As historians will know, it was a pronouncement made about the Playhouse Bill by the Earl of Chesterfield in 1737, at the time when Censorship of the Theatre was first mooted.

In spite of these brave words the censorship was introduced, and it took us nearly two hundred years to get rid of it. There has been no other Act of this kind for some two hundred years. Will it take us this long to abolish the present one?



The above quotation is the opening of an impressive essay by Neville Hunnings, to whom we in the C.A.C. owe so much. It is published in the journal *Sight and Sound* and we would urge all our readers to read it (a copy of the article can be obtained from C.A.C.)

The Morality of Violence in Art

Another quite remarkable article which we have received is being published in the current issue of the Oxford University Quarterly (and can also be obtained, free, from C.A.C.).

Although being concerned to a large extent with Graham Bright's Bill, it goes far beyond the confines of the Bill and deals with the whole subject in a wider context. Reminding us that children are brought up on the Greek classics, which are imbued with violence, often of the most horrific kind, and on Shakespearean tragedies to which the same applies, David Taylor, an Oxford professor, looks at the whole problem of violence and aggression in ourselves and how far its expression in Art is a necessary safety valve. When it takes extreme forms, clearly in response to some kind of demand, is the answer to be found in ruthless suppression or might this not turn out to be a dangerous boomerang?

This article has serious implications which need careful consideration.

Fanny Cockerell

What CAC does

The Campaign is in the front line of the struggle against censorship in Britain and the ever-active groups working to restrict our freedom of speech and expression. It gives help and advice to those who fall foul of the existing censorship law.

Members of the Campaign appear in TV and radio programmes and speak at meetings, conferences and debates on censorship issues.

The Campaign assists parliamentarians of all major parties by keeping them informed on matters related to censorship, and submits evidence to official committees. If you are in agreement with our aims and would like to join the Campaign please complete and return the slip below.

I support the aims of the Campaign Against Censorship

Please enrol me as a member

Name :

Address:

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Subscription enclosed £ (minimum £5.00 per annum
or £2.50 p.a. for students and senior citizens. Any larger sum
would of course be welcomed)

*I do not wish to become a member but enclose a donation of
£*

Please return this form to
The Treasurer, 12 Glebehyrst, Sanderstead, Surrey.