

davidwebb

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15, Sloane Court West,
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8th October, 1985.

Dr. Neville March Hunnings,
11, Russell Hill,
Purley,
Surrey, CR2 2JB.

COPY

Dear Neville,

You already know the views of the N.C.R.O.P.A. regarding your acceptance of membership of the Video Appeals Committee which were conveyed to you in my letter of 4th September. I am now writing to you in a personal capacity as an individual member of the Campaign Against Censorship, of which you are Chairman.

I must say that I find it inconceivable that any supporter of an anti-censorship campaign would wish to be seen to be part of or even assisting in the operation and implementation of the Video Recordings Act, however minimal their involvement may be. As you and all the other C.A.C. Committee members have so consistently and properly declared, ever since this intolerable piece of repressive legislation was first mooted, this is as blatant a censorship statute as it could possibly be.

In July 1985 you wrote an excellent article about the Bill, before it became the Act, on which I heartily congratulated you and in which you ruthlessly and systematically exposed its dishonest introduction, its dishonest intentions, its dishonest drafting and its utterly dishonest title. "Above all", you wrote, "it displayed an unusual degree of intellectual and political dishonesty", and you went on to say that "it clearly represents a classic censorship scheme". In other words, you regarded the Bill as an out-and-out censorship measure and certainly one which would be quite unacceptable to anyone claiming to be actively involved in fighting censorship.

As a member of the Executive Committee of the C.A.C. you presumably endorsed the publication of the circular, in November 1983, which was sent to all M.P.s, and headed "Why We Oppose the Video Recordings Bill". The C.A.C.'s opposition to the Bill, as set down in that document, was unequivocal. "Pre-censorship is itself an evil for it entrusts to our governors the power to determine what we shall know". By accepting a paid position whereby you become an integral part of the machinery for operating that pre-censorship, and furthermore of which you claim so strongly to disapprove, you become part of that evil.

It is transparently obvious why the B.B.F.C. has been so keen to recruit a nucleus of supposed 'liberals' for its Appeals Committee. It desperately needs the Act to work for its own selfish ends. Every time its disputed classifications and prohibitions run into trouble - and they will! - it can conveniently pass the buck to its own scandalously self-appointed Appeals Committee and point out its

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window-dressed 'liberality' as redressing the balance.

I regard any member of the Campaign Against Censorship who has given, is giving or intends to give the slightest help or support to this iniquitous piece of legislation, other than minimum legal compliance with its provisions, as a hypocrite, a traitor to the anti-censorship cause and an enemy of the C.A.C. I would regard any member of its executive committee so acting as even more disgraceful, and for its chairman so to do would be utterly outrageous. I believe your continuing in office side by side being a member of the Video Appeals Committee is quite unthinkable. There will be an impossible conflict of interest and the two positions will be quite irreconcilable. I would have no option other than to demand your resignation. The C.A.C.'s credibility is already fairly shaky and has already suffered a series of important setbacks. It did itself no favours over the Antony Grey confrontation. Its President resigned because he thought it ineffective. Its former Chairman resigned. Its Treasurer resigned, and two of its 'sponsors' had to be forced to resign because they were exposed as hypocrites. If you allow yourself to be 'bought off' by the Establishment enemy, it will damage the C.A.C.'s credibility even more seriously. I beg you not to do it. We shall never win the battle against censorship unless we stop equivocating, stand rigidly by our principles and remain united. Please reconsider.

Yours sincerely,

David Webb

Copies to:- Mrs. Fanny Cockerell,
Ms. Mary Hayward,
Dr. David Kerr,
~~Mr. Ian Wells,~~
Mr. E.A.C. Goodman,
Mr. Arnold Rosen,
Mr. John Calder,
[redacted], Mr. John Lyons
Mr. Eric Miller,
Mr. Michael Dawe.