

MINUTES OF THE NCROPA COMMITTEE MEETING OF 26th JULY 1988 HELD AT
15 SLOANE COURT WEST, CHELSEA, LONDON SW3 4TD

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Isabel Koprowski and Eric Miller. The meeting expressed its sympathy for Mr. Miller's continuing illness and extended good wishes for a swift recovery.

2. The Late Pamela Manson

The Director reported on his attendance, on behalf of the NCROPA, at Pamela's Funeral at Willesden Jewish Cemetery on 23rd March. He read a letter from her sister thanking the NCROPA for its donation of £35.00 to the Stars' Organisation for Spastics, Pamela's favourite charity. He also read her obituary from the "Equity Journal". The Committee expressed its profound regret at the loss of Pamela Manson through a sudden and untimely death, which had robbed the Committee of a valuable and active colleague and the NCROPA and the anti-censorship cause of a devoted champion, who would be greatly missed.

3. Recruitment of New Council Members

Appreciation of Isabel Koprowski's recent acceptance of Committee membership was duly recorded, especially as she is now editor of "Penthouse" magazine as well as "Forum".

A number of names of both sexes were suggested as possible Committee candidates. It was agreed that the Director should be left to pursue discreet soundings of their suitability and agreement-in-principle to serve.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 1987 were read and approved. The Director explained the reasons for the long time lapse since a full Committee meeting had been held. They mostly concerned personal matters or illness affecting several members and in particular the Director.

5. Matters Arising

It was decided that the Director should approach Lord Houghton (one of the NCROPA's most consistent and eminent supporters) after his 90th birthday on August 11th, to suggest and arrange a private celebration of the event with him.

It was noted that the Director was in continuing friendly contact with Norman Abbott, Director of the British Videogram Association.

Recent press releases by the Director on behalf of the NCROPA were also noted.

6. Members' General Meeting

The Director explained the reasons why there had not been a General Meeting last year. The main problem had been that one of NCROPA's sponsors had not been forthcoming with its promised contribution towards the costs of the meeting until the end of the year. It was decided that there must be a general meeting this year and that it would be held in October at Conway Hall, Holborn. It was decided to aim for the 11th to 13th October, or as soon thereafter as is practicable.

7. Director's Report

The Director assured the Committee that he was doing everything possible to

ensure that the publication of "NCROPA IN ACTION" would be ready for distribution to members before the General Meeting in October. It would detail NCROPA's activities, as much as space would allow, since the General Meeting in 1986.

David Kennington enquired about members of the public requesting help from the NCROPA. The Director said that more and more requests were being received, from those who had fallen foul of the O.P. Acts or other related censorship laws, mostly with regard to mail order purchases or sales of video recordings. He expected even more now that the NCROPA was listed in the London telephone directory. He explained that callers were always allowed to remain anonymous if they wished, but unfortunately, once their present pressing predicaments were resolved, they often made no further contact and forgot all about the NCROPA.

The Director gave details of NCROPA's opposition to Clause 28 of the Local Government Bill and of how Lord Houghton had helped in the House of Lords debates, which he had attended. He mentioned his contact with OLGA (Organisation for Lesbian and Gay Action) and of the briefing material they had sent and exchanges of information that had been made.

NCROPA's opposition activities to Clare Short's Bill to ban 'Page 3 Pictures' in newspapers were given. NCROPA had an ally here in Conservative M.P. Jerry Hayes, and the Labour front-bench spokesman on Home Affairs, Robin Corbett M.P., after NCROPA representations, had modified his declared support for the Bill.

NCROPA opposition to Terry Lewis's Telephone Talkabout Abolition Bill and the clause in the Criminal Justice Bill outlawing mere possession of indecent pictures of children under sixteen was also explained.

NCROPA had received a review copy of the book called "Porn Gold" from publishers Faber & Faber. Both David Webb and Ted Goodman had (separately) been interviewed by its authors David Hebditch and Nick Anning when they were researching this book but neither had been given an acknowledgement in it. Alexander Barrie was asked to review it for "NCROPA IN ACTION" and agreed to do so. Other publications received included "Violence on Television: What the Viewers Think", a new survey from the I.B.A. and "The Sex Maniacs' Diary" from Editor and Publisher Tuppy Owens.

The Director had attended a 'Monday Club' talk given by the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd MP, at the House of Commons on June 28th, as the guest of NCROPA member Mark Taha, and had been able to question Mr. Hurd about the conflict between purported Conservative Party philosophy of freedom of individual choice and its imposition of draconian censorship restrictions in reality. He had also attended a public debate at the Central Hall Westminster between the two contenders for the Social & Liberal Democrats Party leadership, Paddy Ashdown MP and Alan Beith MP and had also questioned them on censorship views.

The Director gave an account of the experiences of the NCROPA delegation to the NCCL AGM and Conference held in April at Buxton, Derbyshire and of the now familiar feminist opposition to NCROPA motions. He expressed NCROPA's determination to tackle them head-on and expose their fallacious arguments, even if the NCCL Executive Committee were nervous of doing so, as they should do, for themselves.

Lack of time prevented the Director from giving a full resumé of many of the NCROPA activities and correspondences.

8. Request From Jeremy Pender for NCROPA Briefing Material

Mr. Pender was a very keen and active supporter who very much wanted to become more involved personally on the political front. He had had long discussions over the telephone with David Webb and was seeking briefing material on particular issues of concern to the NCROPA, as and when they occurred. The Director

applauded Mr. Pender's suggestion and enthusiasm but feared that he, personally, was simply unable to find time to fulfil Mr. Pender's requirements. There were a number of issues which NCROPA prepared printed responses to in the natural course of pursuing the campaign. Material on those would not be too difficult to supply, but he just hadn't the time to prepare briefing notes on everything. Ted Goodman agreed to help in his request and to have his address and telephone number passed to Mr. Pender for future consultation.


9. Any Other Business

It was decided that there should be another Committee Meeting before the Members' General Meeting, to prepare the agenda and make final arrangements.

David Kennington reported on his attendance, as a NCROPA observer, at the preliminary hearing at Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court of the prosecution of artist Richard Gibson for "outraging public decency" by displaying one of his works in an art gallery.

10. Date of Next Committee Meeting

It was agreed that the next Committee Meeting should be in the latter part of September.


Hon. Director.
29/9/88