

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE CONWAY HALL
RED LION SQUARE, LONDON WC1 at 7.00 p.m. on 21st NOVEMBER 1991

PRESENT: DAVID WEBB (Hon. Director), ALEXANDER BARRIE, EDWARD GOODMAN,
ANNE JANSEN, and TUPPY OWENS.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Isabel Koprowski (because of work commitments), David Kennington (because of illness) and Eric Miller (because of domestic problems)

2. Welcome to New Committee Member

On behalf of the Committee, the Hon. Director welcomed new Committee Member Anne Jansen and introduced her to the other members present.

3. Minutes of Last Committee Meeting Held on 5th December 1990

These were read and approved. The Director explained how the meeting of 24th April 1991 was inquorate and therefore abandoned.

4. Matters Arising From Minutes of Last Meeting

There were no matters arising directly from the last Minutes but the Director stressed the importance of attendance at Committee Meetings to obviate the waste of time, money and energy on inquorate meetings like that in April.

5. Director's Report

Amongst other matters, largely appertaining to his vast correspondence, the Director described his attendance at the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association 'Fringe' meetings at the Conservative Party Conference at Blackpool in October. He pointed out that he had recruited three new members there and was lodging an official complaint to the Police Complaints Authority about the participation of Superintendent Michael Hames of the Obscene Publications Dept. at Scotland Yard. Such activities were clearly a breach of Police Regulations.

The Director also said that he had attended other 'fringe' meetings including the Stonewall reception (the campaigning organisation for 'gay' and Lesbian Rights).

He mentioned some of the publications received including "Skin Two" which gives the NCROPA a listing on a regular basis.

A 'rap' record by the pop group 'Niggers with Attitude' had been seized from the distributors' warehouse (20,000copies) by the Metropolitan Police O.P. Squad. He had written letters to the Met. Police Commissioner, Sir Peter Imbert, the D.P.P., the Managing Director of the record company and the pop group themselves.

He explained how a new woman member from Devon who runs a contact magazine had keenly, but somewhat misguidedly, photo-copied our

leaflets and inserted them without prior permission in her publications; and had also supplied 'copy' about the NCROPA for inclusion in a computer 'Bulletin Board' run by a multi-national company. He explained that there was presently intense police interest in this type of activity which was being monitored closely and investigated. It was not in the NCROPA's best interests - or his own! - to become inadvertently connected (or at least seen to be) with those who were possibly openly breaking the law, however much we deplore that law and would wish to have it changed.

The Director also gave a progress report on his appeal against a Customs Consolidation Act forfeiture of videotape cassettes he brought back from Holland. The Director's report was not completed because other business was discussed.

6. Reports From Other Committee Members

Alexander Barrie presented a draft NCROPA advertisement for consideration. It was agreed that a decision about the wording and publicity would be taken at the next Committee Meeting. Mr. Barrie also recommended the distribution of NCROPA leaflets at Universities. His suggestion that future Committee Meetings should be held at lunch-time in a restaurant had a mixed reception. Anne Jansen offered her home in Bethnal Green as an alternative venue.

Tuppy Owens described her attendance at the 'Burning the Fly' conference on censorship at Newcastle University on 5th and 6th October. She praised the contribution there of an American Organisation known as "Conne tion". She said this year's Sex Maniac's Ball, which she organises for charity, had passed off without interference from the police, despite calls for same in the press last year. Ms. Owens praised the recent Feminists Against Censorship seminar on what type of erotica appeals to women. The consensus had been that they wanted explicit material. She commended the views expressed there by the feminist publishers called "What She Wants" and by Naomi Salaman.

Ms. Owens reported that a lesbian organisation called "Labia" was concerned about savage prison sentences being imposed on women convicted of sexual offences. An 18 year old girl, who had made lesbian advances to younger females had just received six years imprisonment. Another woman who had made heterosexual advances to male minors had received three months. She also reported that W.H. Smith, the booksellers, had now agreed to stock her 'Sex Maniac's Diary'!

Anne Jansen reported on her attendance at a three day conference of the bisexual group. She has been commissioned by a American publisher to write a "pornographic" novel; has given a talk about her sexual proclivities at her synagogue; and proposes to set up a video-tape archival library.

Ted Goodman talked about recent legal developments.

7. Financial Report

There is £619.81 in the NCROPA's current account and £3175.77 in the NCROPA deposit current.

8. Future Strategy and Further Action

The Director has sent a copy of NCROPA's 'Freedom of Expression' Bill to all Members of Parliament (20 in all) who were successful in the recent ballot for Private Members' Bills.

It was agreed that preparations be made for a NCROPA Petition, a NCROPA pamphlet on the present state of the law and a NCROPA banner.

9. Any Other Business

It was agreed that a division of labour between Committee Members was necessary to relieve pressure on the Honorary Director. At the next Committee Meeting people will be asked to volunteer for specific types of work and for media monitoring.

10. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that it should be early next year (1992).



Honorary Director

10th November 1992.