

~~CENSORED~~

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REPEAL
OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

N C R O P A

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COMMITTEE — Lord Norwich, Clement Freud, M.P., Dr. Brian Richards, Clifford Hanley, Eric Miller, William J. Wright,
Bernard Brick, John Sussams, G.T. Fowler, MP., Dr. Chrstine Pickard,
E.A.C. Goodman, LL.B.(Sol.), Pamela Manson.

12th October 1977.

NO/DAW/DP

date

DRAFT FOR

(92) DUPLICATED LETTERS TO G.L. Council

~~TEXT~~

I am writing to express the NATIONAL CAMPAIGN, FOR THE REPEAL OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS' extreme concern about the action at present being carried out in the name of the Great London Council by a small minority of its members who can only be described as extreme puritan fanatics. Their avowed aim to "clean up London" will not only deprive millions of Londoners and visitors to London of their chosen entertainment but also, in the process, deny them their basic human right to see, read and hear whatever they choose for themselves.

We understand that the action now being carried out by the police at the request of these ~~the~~ Councillors has not even been debated and voted on by the full Council and will not be so until 18th October. It is deplorable that a small caucus of Councillors, all members of a political party which constantly campaigns on a platform of ^{the}freedom of the individual and private enterprise, should have set themselves up as self-appointed guardians of Londoners' morals. and censor supremos. N.C.R.O.P.A. is non-^{party}political but attracts support from people of all political persuasions including ^{many}Conservative voters who are appalled by what their elected members are perpetrating.

As you no doubt know, the Home Secretary has set up a Government Committee of Inquiry into Censorship, Obscenity and Violence under the Chairmanship of Professor Bernard Williams. It is expected to take at least two years to complete its deliberations. For this reason alone, any pro-censorship campaign by the G.L.C. and the police should have at least awaited the outcome of that inquiry. ~~before~~ The following ninety word telegram was sent to the Homes Secretary on 6th October:*

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"THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REPEAL OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS IS APPALLED BY LAST NIGHT'S MASS POLICE RAIDS ON FOURTEEN LONDON CINEMA CLUBS. SUCH AN UNPRECEDENTED ACT OF AUTHORITARIANISM PERSECUTION IN A SUPPOSEDLY FREE SOCIETY WILL FILL ALL LIBERAL MINDS WITH REVULSION. THAT SUCH ACTION SHOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN WHILST THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO CENSORSHIP AND OBSCENITY IS STILL SITTING IS SCANDALOUS AND A PRESUMPTUOUS PRE-EMPTING OF ITS FINDINGS. WE DEMAND THAT THE GOVERNMENT ACTS IMMEDIATELY TO SAFEGUARD OUR EVER DIMINISHING LIBERTIES.

~~DAVID WEBB, ORGANISER, N.C.R.O.P.A."~~

The United Kingdom is a signatory to the European Convention on Human Rights. The G.L.C. and the police actions I've here mentioned are a contravention of Article 10 of that Convention (and also of Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights). Article 10 states that:-

"Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers"

It is, I think, particularly relevant to mention here that, last Saturday, 8th October, 6,250 policemen were on duty in Greater Manchester, at a cost of £250,000, to protect the individual freedom of one man, carrying a placard bearing the words "Defend British free speech from Red terrorism", to march through the streets. Here in London, however, scores of policemen are constantly on duty to prevent the individual freedom of 7,000,000 Londoners. It is a verifiable fact that we already have the strictest censorship laws of nearly all the other countries of so-called free, Western Europe, and also most of the U.S.A., yet the G.L.C. deems it necessary to make them even more draconian - even though its leader, Mr. Horace Cutler opposes such measures; at least, that is what he said in a letter to one of our Committee members on 18th September.

Please vote against any proposed action by the G.L.C. to increase censorship and curb the freedom of the individual. We hope, too, that you will do more than that by becoming an active supporter of our campaign. An application form ~~WMI~~ is enclosed which we hope you will feel bound to complete but, in any case, we would like to hear your comments on this extremely important issue.

Yours sincerely,

David Webb

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