

NO/DAW/DF

29th January, 1962.

Doug Reed, Esq.,
Concrete Ltd.,
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34, Opton Lane,
Forest Gate,
London, E.7.

Dear Doug,

Thank you for sending the leaflets against the Greater London Council (General Powers) Bill, with its provisions for the licensing of sex establishments. We distributed some of these but they are now, alas, somewhat inappropriate, since the final draft was deposited in Parliament on November 27th and is now virtually out of the G.L.C.'s hands.

We did manage to get some concessions after our written representations against the Bill, which condemned the whole concept of licences for sex shops per se, and strongly attacked nearly every clause in it. The G.L.C.'s officials and representatives of the London Boroughs Association had subsequently asked us to meet them at their Parliamentary Agents' offices on January 5th, to discuss the Bill further in detail and consider possible amendments during its passage through Parliament. However, as you know, the Government then, quite out of the blue, announced, on December 22nd, that it was to introduce very similar legislative measures by adding them to the Report Stage of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, so that they would apply to the whole country, instead of to Greater London only. This was quite contrary to the Home Secretary's statement last year that they would await the outcome of any G.L.C. measures and carefully monitor them before extending them outside London. We were greatly angered by this development because, whereas with the G.L.C. Bill we could petition against it in Parliament, since it was a Private Bill, the Local Government Bill, being Government legislation, such a course of action would be denied us, if the G.L.C. withdrew their Bill, as is widely expected they will do. Consequently I immediately telephoned the Home Office who readily agreed to "take over" the meeting we were originally to have with the G.L.C. and London Boroughs' Association and, on January 5th, I, our solicitor, Ted Goodman, and our counsel, barrister Nigel Ley, spent nearly two and a half hours with Home Office officials going through the proposed G.L.C. measures line by line and clause by clause.

The Home Office telephoned me this morning to tell me that the amendments had now been decided and were included in today's Commons Order Paper and will be debated there next Wednesday. By using this hasty manoeuvre, the Home Office has effectively denied us our rightful opportunity of making proper

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representations to M.P.s, which we believe to be thoroughly disgraceful. However, Ted Goodman and I will be in the House on Wednesday to hear the debate.

Meantime the G.L.C. have still not decided whether to withdraw their Bill, or rather that part of it which relates to the licensing of sex establishments. Since the deadline for petitioners is 30th January (tomorrow) we have taken the precaution of already depositing our Petition against their Bill at the House of Commons and I completed the paper work on Monday last. I enclose herewith a copy of our Petition for your information.

I am also enclosing a copy of a letter I wrote to the Luton "Herald" in response to a letter a curate had had published in reply to one from your colleague Mr. Richards. As you will see from the copy of the letter I had from the editor, my letter was not published because he said it was too long. I felt unable to accept his invitation to submit one of no more than 400 words, since I could not have properly answered all the points he made in his much longer letter. Instead I have sent a copy of my original letter direct to the curate and invited his comments on it.

I regret to say that our coffers are again empty but Ron Coleman did, indeed, send his cheque for £200, as you indicated he would in your earlier letter. With postage going up again to 15¹/₂p per letter from Monday, one wonders where it will all end. However we must and, of course, will keep on fighting.

With very best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

David Webb,
Organiser,
National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts

P.S. I read Mr. Richards' excellent letter in
'the Daily Telegraph' and his reply to Bryan
Burnings' letter with great interest.

Encs.