

COMMUNITY STANDARDS ASSOCIATION

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Tremore Manor
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PL30 5JT

6 July 1982

Dear Member,

FILMS

Pressure from local cinema managers and half-hearted attitudes about censorship have helped to break up the Cornwall Film Censorship Panel during the past six months. The situation with the six district/borough councils is now as follows:-

Restormel Borough Council was the first to withdraw from the Panel. The Leisure Services Committee has set up a film censorship working party. This has allowed in "The Exorcist" (X) and "Life of Brian" (AA), previously banned throughout Cornwall. It has banned "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre".

Kerrier accepts all British Board of Film Censors' ratings, but in withdrawing from the Panel adopted the proposal by our Chairman, Cllr. Jeffery, that the Association of District Councils urge the government to establish a national film censorship body, independent of the cinema industry and replacing the BBFC.

Penwith decided (a) to support the disbanding of the Panel, (b) to accept all BBFC certificated films, (c) to press the Association of District Councils to establish a statutory film censorship board, and (d) to review the position in a year.

Carrick has supported the continuation of the Panel.

North Cornwall withdrew from the Cornwall Panel, advocated the setting up of an independent national film censorship panel and is at present debating whether or not to establish its own district council film censorship body. (We understand that as the result of Mills v. L.C.C. 1925, Kings Bench 213, local authorities must retain the right to review.)

Caradon (with no cinemas in its area) has withdrawn from the Panel, but also urges the Association of District Councils to press for an independent film censorship panel and wants Mr. Robert Hicks, MP, to fight for stronger obscenity laws.

We are grateful to Councillor Salter (Chairman of the Cornwall Film Censorship Panel) and his colleagues for their work. During its 7-year life the Panel prevented 12 of the worst films from being shown in Cornwall by simply notifying cinema managers that those films must first be seen by the Panel. We deplore the independent action which resulted in one council bringing the work to an end. We deplore the pressure brought against district councillors by the cinema interest to frustrate any genuine local restraint upon what public cinemas are showing. We note that Mr. Salter received 540 letters and telephone calls urging the Panel to ban the film "Life of Brian" (AA), (a parody on the life of Christ), and only 38 supporting the showing of the film. A brief letter of thanks from members to Mr. Salter and his colleagues (22 Trevellis Park, Station Road, Liskeard) would be appropriate.

Our campaigning has not been wasted. All Cornwall is fully aware of the problems of film censorship and of the lapsed BBFC standards.

It is important that letters be sent to the Association of District Councils (Cornwall branch), Luxstowe House, Liskeard, PL14 3DZ, along the following lines:-

- (a) Sorry Panel has been disbanded.
- (b) Glad you are urging the setting up of a statutory national film censorship panel replacing the BBFC.
- (c) Tightening up of obscenity law is essential to deal with all kind of obscene, violent and sadistic material.
- (d) Broadcasting should be brought under a strengthened obscenity law.

Send a copy to your MP and to the Home Office, Whitehall, London SW1.

MARKS & SPENCERS AND THE BROOK ADVISORY CENTRES

Members are aware of the Brook Advisory Centres which interview young girls below the age of consent and without parental knowledge and in the great majority of cases issue them with contraceptives.

We are concerned to learn that Marks & Spencers have promised a grant of £4,500 a year to the Brook Advisory Centres.

Recommended Action Write to Marks & Spencer Ltd., St. Michael House, Baker Street, London W.1, deploring this object of their benevolence, explaining that parental care and responsibility are undermined by agencies such as the Brook and that contraceptive education is everywhere associated with increase in teenage pregnancies.

VIDEO-TAPES

Video-tapes depicting barbaric cruelty are now freely and increasingly available to children as to adults. The most modern marketing techniques are being used to increase sales. The government needs to act at once. MPs are said to be anxious. But are they anxious enough to see that action is taken? Write to your MP expressing deep concern and calling for drastic action. For instance:-

"Dear Mr., I am seriously concerned about sadistic video-tapes. Could you please let me know what action is being taken by the government to prohibit their distribution? Yours sincerely, "

OTHER NEWS

Mr. Robert Hicks, MP, has told one of our members who went to discuss CSA issues with him that he appreciated receiving information from Cornwall's CSA, which he would not otherwise receive.

It was a privilege to be invited to speak at the National VALA Annual Convention at All Souls, Langham Place, in March. A cassette tape of Mrs. Mary Whitehouse's afternoon speech and of mine is available from National VALA, Ardleigh, Colchester, Essex, CO7 7RH, price £2.25.

In February I took part in a "Controversy" programme on Television South West, in which Miss Barbara Smoker contended that God did not exist.

I am so grateful to all those who have supported this work by prayer, by giving and by letter-writing. To those who are encouraging their friends to become members of CSA or to form a CSA in their own district or town, may I say that we have always had the funds to do what we needed to do and have usually spent only £500 - £600 per annum. Having said this I would add that our subscription remains at £1.00 per annum (50p for senior citizens and those under 18) and members' donations have made us financially viable, under God.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Ann Whitaker, M.A. (Miss)

Hon. Secretary

P.S. If you have not yet paid your subscription for 1982, your remittance would be appreciated.

FOR CSAs and OTHER LOCAL GROUPS receiving copies of this letter, I should be very