

~~GENCENSURED~~

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM
OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

N C R O P A

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COMMITTEE – The Viscount Norwich, F.R.S.L., Gerald Fowler, M.A.Hon., F.A.B.E.,
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The N.C.R.O.P.A. is affiliated to the National Council for Civil Liberties

IN PARLIAMENT,
HOUSE OF COMMONS,
SESSION 1981-82

GREATER LONDON COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) (NO. 2) BILL

PETITION

Against Part III of the Bill (Provisions Relating to the
Licensing by Borough Councils of Sex Establishments - on
Merits - Praying to be heard by Counsel, &c.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Parliament assembled

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE NATIONAL
CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM OF THE OBSCENE
PUBLICATIONS ACTS (Hereinafter referred
to as the N.C.R.O.P.A.).

SHEWETH as follows:-

1. A Bill (hereinafter referred to as "the Bill") has been introduced into and is now pending in your Honourable House intituled "A Bill to confer further powers upon the Greater London Council and other authorities; and for other purposes".

continued/.....

2. Part III of this Bill refers to provisions relating to the licensing by Borough Councils of Sex Establishments.

3. Your Petitioners, the N.C.R.O.P.A., are a national organisation, whose members and supporters oppose censorship for adults, except where it is necessary in the interests of state security or where actual human physical harm might result without it. The N.C.R.O.P.A. is thus campaigning for the reform of the Obscene Publications Acts and a number of other related and relevant Acts, which would achieve such an aim by the introduction of the kind of sweeping, liberalising, comprehensive legislative measures largely recommended by the Home Office Committee on Obscenity and Film Censorship (the Williams Committee) in their Report (H.M.S.O. November 1979), but with certain major reservations and additions to that Report.

The N.C.R.O.P.A. was founded in April 1976 and is administered by a voluntary Committee, none of whose members has what may be termed as a vested interest in any business or commercial enterprise which could in any way be regarded as a potential material beneficiary in the event of the achievement of the N.C.R.O.P.A.'s objectives. It has a membership of more than five hundred individual members and more than two hundred and thirty thousand members of affiliated societies, groups or organisations. It is a completely independent, freedom-fighting law reform organisation and both non-party political and non-sectarian.

4. Your Petitioners object to all the provisions of Part III of the Bill and allege that the rights and interests of their members in the Greater London area in particular, and all other supporters of freedom of speech and expression in this country in general, will be injuriously affected thereby.

5. Your Petitioners are in total opposition to the whole concept of licences for sex establishments.

6. Although the provisions of Part III of the Bill in essence appear to be regulatory, your Petitioners believe them to be, in fact, prohibitory. This is because of their repressively draconian and authoritarian content.

7. Notwithstanding your Petitioners' outright objection to the licensing of sex oriented premises per se, and thus to Part III of the Bill in its entirety, they are especially extremely concerned by many specific clauses in the Bill which would confer frighteningly wide and intolerable powers on local

authorities which could easily be abused and used for purposes other than environmental and planning control (that is regulatory) like, for example, censorship (that is, prohibitory). This would directly and adversely affect your Petitioners' members' and supporters' interests and their right to individual freedom of choice.

8. The curtailment of freedom of speech and freedom of expression which would undoubtedly result from the implementation of these measures contained in the Bill would not only be totally alien to the concept of what the citizens of the United Kingdom have come, rightly, to expect of a supposedly "free society", that is the freedom of the individual, but also in direct contravention of both the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (Articles eighteen and nineteen) and the European Convention on Human Rights (Articles nine and ten), and your Petitioners necessarily reject them.

YOUR PETITIONERS therefore humbly pray your Honourable House that Part III of the Bill may not pass into law and that they may be heard by themselves, their Counsel or Agents in support of the allegations of this Petition against all clauses of this Part of the Bill, both generally and specifically as may be necessary for their protection and the protection of those whom they represent and their supporters and that your Petitioners may have such other relief in the premises as to your Honourable House may seem meet.

AND your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

For and on behalf of the NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM OF THE
OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS (N.C.R.O.P.A.)

E.A.C. Goodman.

E.A.C. Goodman, LL.B.,
Solicitor and Agent for
the Petitioners.

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GREATER LONDON COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) (NO.2) BILL

PETITION

of

THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM OF THE
OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

AGAINST, BY COUNSEL, &C.

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