

NATIONAL VIEWERS' AND LISTENERS' ASSOCIATION

APRIL 1980

A Personal Letter From The Hon. Gen. Secretary.

Dear Friends,

You will no doubt be surprised to receive this single sheet in place of the usual 'Viewer & Listener' and we do, of course, owe you an explanation. That can be given in a few words - we have at this time cash flow problems and for that reason this sheet comes in lieu of both the Spring and Summer issues but full publication of The Viewer & Listener will resume in October.

Each issue of The Viewer & Listener now costs between £1,200 - £1,300. This sum includes printing, distribution to send-out centres and the postage involved in sending a copy free to each of our members. As you will be aware our membership fee stands at 50p and this is now being completely used up simply in the production/distribution of our paper.

Our other expenses are very great - £6,000 per year is needed to pay the salary of John Beyer our Organising Secretary, and the wages of our secretarial assistants. As I think you know, all other work - and that is a very great deal - is carried out on a voluntary basis and it is true to say that this Association works on an income which amounts to only a fraction of that on which many other organisations work. We are not, and cannot be a charity because we are involved in working to effect legal changes through Parliament. We are therefore solely dependent upon gifts additional to our subscriptions to meet our obligations and expand our work and would be most grateful for any additional help you can give in this way.

We are now deeply involved with the REPORT OF THE WILLIAMS COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE OF THE OBSCENITY LAWS. You will recall that this recommends that all legal constraints over the written word should be repealed and that hardcore pornography - including bestiality! - be made legal and sold in separate shops. National VAIA has the great privilege and responsibility of handling Dr. John Court's vital manuscript in which he challenges in detail and scrupulously this very permissive Report. This has to be published, the Home Secretary is waiting to see it, and we are facing the challenge of getting the information it contains to Parliament and to the public.

All this will make enormous demands on our physical and financial resources and it is against the realities of this present campaign - arguably

the most important of all we have conducted - that the decision has been made to cut back on our expenditure. We hope you will see this decision as a positive rather than a negative one and will do all you can in every way to ensure that this particular battle is won.

N.B. National VALA has already seen the Home Secretary and expressed our concern to him.

National VALA was instrumental - with the practical assistance of Sir Bernard Braine M.P. - in obtaining an assurance from the Home Secretary that all written submissions to the Williams Committee should be placed in the Public Records Office for England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. A very important step forward!

With best wishes and many thanks for all your support,

Yours very sincerely,

Mary Whitehouse.

ANNUAL CONVENTION MAY 17th 1980

You will already be aware that MR. JAMES ANDERTON, CHIEF CONSTABLE OF GREATER MANCHESTER will be our GUEST SPEAKER on this occasion. He and MARY WHITEHOUSE will speak in the morning. We believe that Mr. Anderton may well take this opportunity of expressing for the first time his own reactions to the Williams Report. Press, radio and television are being invited to cover this occasion and as what he has to say always attracts wide media coverage it is of the utmost importance that the hall is full. WILL YOU PLEASE MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO ATTEND - this is one of the very practical things you can do to support our current campaign to expose the dangers implicit in the Williams recommendations.

CHANGE OF PROGRAMME

Kenneth Robinson is now, unfortunately, unable to be with us. But DON MACLEAN, the comedian who has "launched a one-man campaign to stamp out bad language on television and in the theatre" (Birmingham Evening Mail) will be with us for the day and will speak.

We hope also that Kirstyn Macauley who sang so beautifully at the Glasgow meeting will be with us.

MEMO TO ORGANISERS OF "SURVIVAL IN THE 80'S!" MEETINGS

We would very much like to hear from someone who organised each of these meetings during the Afternoon Session. Will you please do your best to see that your Group is represented at the Convention. Perhaps a car load could share the expense?