

COPY FOR D. WEBB.

14, Thackeray Manor,
Manor Park Road,
Sutton,
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SM1 4AH.

21st July, 1983.

The Secretary,
Press Council Appointments
Commission,
1, Salisbury Square,
London, E.C.4.

Dear Sir,

MR. DAVID WEBB

I wish to propose Mr. David Webb, of 15 Sloane Court West, Chelsea, London, SW3 4PD, as a candidate for one of the forthcoming vacancies on the Press Council.

I believe Mr. Webb is eminently suited to this task. He is an actor by profession and has had a long career in all three entertainment media, stage, film and television, with a heavy emphasis on television, in which he has made over seven hundred appearances for all the major TV companies and the BBC.

Mr. Webb was born in Luton, Bedfordshire in 1931 and educated at Luton Grammar School, of which he is a former Head Boy. After leaving school he spent two years national service as an instructor in the Royal Army Educational Corps (R.A.E.C.) from 1950 to 1952, and then trained for an acting career at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, graduating in 1954.

In 1976, Mr. Webb, a staunch advocate of the freedom of expression, founded the National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts (N.C.R.O.P.A.), a non-party political, law reform organisation which prepagates the doctrine of the right of every adult to see, read and hear whatever he or she chooses for him or herself, whilst at the same time retaining certain limited measures for the "protection" of those who do not wish to be forcibly affronted by material that they would deem offensive, and for the "protection" of children. Mr. Webb has been the director of the N.C.R.O.P.A. since its inception, in a purely voluntary capacity and devotes a great deal of his spare time to it. In carrying out these duties, Mr. Webb, although not a journalist, has gained considerable experience in dealing with the press. He has, however, written many articles and given many talks on the censorship issue on behalf of the N.C.R.O.P.A., as well as television and radio interviews and discussions.

In 1981 Mr. Webb led a delegation from the N.C.R.O.P.A. Committee, including myself, to the Home Office for personal discussions with the then Home Secretary, Mr. William Whitelaw. Since then, a number of meetings with Home Office officials have taken place in which we discussed various Government legislative proposals appertaining to censorship in detail.

Until 1982, Mr. Webb was connected with a small publishing house, U. Edcall & Company Ltd., which specialises in para-medical publications and in 1980 he was associate editor of the "Health Education Index", a definitive reference work for all health educators. He is also a former member of the Council of the British Actors' Equity Association, the governing body of the actors' trade union.

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Although he is not, and never has been, a member of any political party, Mr. Webb was a candidate for the Finchley Parliamentary Constituency in the recent general election on 9th June, standing as an independent on an anti-censorship/Reform of Obscene Publications Acts 'ticket'.

I feel that someone with Mr. Webb's wide experience with and involvement in the different media, his innate sense of justice and fair play, coupled with a devotion to freedom and tolerance, and, most importantly, his passionate pursuit of the truth, make him an eminently suitable choice for a member of your council, deciding, as is its brief, what is and is not acceptable in press media. He would thus bring a wise liberalism (with a small 'l') to its councils and add proper balance thereto.

Finally I should add that Mr. Webb does consent to his nomination for this post and would agree to serve on the Press Council if so appointed. (His home telephone number is 01-730 9537).

Yours faithfully,

Edward A.C. Goodman, LL.B.(Sol.)

London 22/6/83
Press Council places

Members of the public are being sought to serve on the Press Council, the watchdog committee which investigates complaints against newspapers and magazines.

Half the 36-strong committee consists of people from all walks of life except those connected with journalism. The other half is made up of journalists, editors and publishers. The new chairman, Sir

Zelman Cowen, QC, the former governor-general of Australia, takes over in September.

Nominations from any individual or organisation should be sent to the secretary, Press Council Appointments Commission, 1 Salisbury Square, London EC 4, by July 22. Members serve for three years, and unless some of those due to stand down are reappointed, there will be seven vacancies.