

~~CENSORED~~

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM  
OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

**N C R O P A**

**FIGHTING SEXUAL CENSORSHIP**

HONORARY DIRECTOR - David Webb, R.A.D.A. Dip., 15 Sloane Court West, Chelsea, London, SW3 4TD - Tel: 071-730 9537

NO/DAW/DP

17th June 1991

Sir Peter Imbert,  
Chief Commissioner,  
Metropolitan Police,  
New Scotland Yard,  
Broadway,  
London,  
SW1H 0BG.

*Sir Peter,*

The National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts (NCROPA) protests, most strongly, about the recent seizure by officers of your force of 12000 copies of a record album by the U.S. 'rap' group "Niggas with Attitude", from its UK distributor Island Records.

Britain is supposed to be a 'free society' wherein freedom of expression is an inherent and essential part. The police officers under your command are doing the 'public interest' a grave disservice by persisting in carrying out this kind of dangerously repressive operation. At a time when you are spear-heading a campaign to improve police/public relations and change a large part of the public's present unhappy perception of the police, activities of this kind by your Obscene Publications Branch can serve no other purpose than to alienate the public's affections still further.

Moreover, such activities highlight the glaring disparity between what you obviously consider appropriate police discretionary responses to incidents, and what the public (viz. the members of the NCROPA) considers appropriate. I have especially in mind the recent response I had from Sir John Dellow, your deputy whilst you were away, regarding my refused requests for police action over participants in boxing matches, involving 'consenting' adults - sometimes not even adults! - assaulting each other. (The letter from Assistant Commissioner Hunt, dated 9th April refers). This was, of course, in the wake of the Court ruling in the, albeit disgraceful, 'Operation Spanner' trial at the Old Bailey last year, which also involved 'consenting' adults 'assaulting' each other!

In addition it is doubly depressing that such authoritarian suppression of the right to free expression should be continuing during the final run-up to the arrival of the Single European Market in 1992 when inter-state trade barriers are supposed to be coming down (the seized 'rap' record is freely available in other EC countries, as well as the U.S.A., even though the Florida state authorities did try unsuccessfully to suppress it), and when the harmonisation of our laws is a declared aim. Even more ironic is that, since the demise of the totalitarian régimes of most of the former Communist, 'Eastern Bloc' countries in Europe, the kind of draconian, repressive state censorship to which

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COMMITTEE - Alexander Barrie, A.A.Dipl, M.A.I.E.; Professor Gerald Fowler, M.A. (Hons.), F.A.B.E.; Ted Goodman, LL.B. (Sol.); Clifford Hanley; David Kennington, M.A. (Hons.), Litt.D., B.A. (Psy.); Isabel Koprowski, B.A.; Eric E. Miller; Tuppy Owens, B.Sc., Dip.H.S.; Dr. Christine Pickard, M.B., Ch.B

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we, almost uniquely, are still subject here in the U.K., has been abandoned by them and in this respect their freedom/<sup>now</sup> by far exceeds ours!

Finally, when the U.K. is in the grip of great recession and when all the agencies of Government, especially the police, are bemoaning the shortfall in both 'cash' and manpower, it is a quite unjustified waste of precious police resources to deploy them in such unnecessary, unwanted (by the majority) and absurd enterprises. As a matter of urgency, therefore, we ask you to re-consider your operational priorities and consign any provisions for such fatuous waste of police time to the trash-can. You may well be of the opinion that that is where "Niggas with Attitude" records should end up. In any 'free society' it is far too dangerous to entrust such a decision to the state. It must be left to the individual.

Yours sincerely,



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

Copies to: The Rt. Hon. Kenneth Baker, M.P., Home Secretary  
The Chairman, Island Records Ltd.  
"Niggas with Attitude"  
The Chairman, The British Phonographic Industry Ltd.