

MORALITY FORUM UPDATE

January 2003

Morality Forum Action

Some Good Victories

By John O'Neill

So, another Christmas has passed and a new year begun. I pray that the first was a joyful time for you and that the second will be fulfilling and rewarding. We at Morality Forum intend to expand on our victories of 2002 and we hope that you will be encouraged to take a stand against the erosion of moral and social standards in your community.

At the beginning of the last year, we were surprised by the quality and volume of support we received when we stood up for good values. We go into 2003 with the certainty that such support is normal and just waiting for someone to take a lead. Bye and large people are fed up with corruption, drugs, promiscuity and violence.

"Strippers are out as pub goes upmarket,"

So read one headline in the Harrow Observer. In part the article read, "The Fornax and Firkin in South Harrow will re-open as the Fornax after refurbishment. --- 'The publicity from the strip nights gave us a bad name', said the landlady, 'everyone got the impression it was a bit seedy.'"

In November an article appeared in the Harrow Observer under the headline "Protest at nude dance club bid." In part the article read, "But people living nearby have voiced their concern about such events attracting a crowd which will cause trouble.

The Oscar Wilde was renowned as an Edgware trouble spot and police were called to a number of incidents. In May, refugee Fetah Marku was murdered in a nearby car park after an argument about a girl in the pub.

Everyone had a go

Myra Stephens, chairman of the Canons Park Estate Association, said table dancing would cause even more trouble. "It is extremely upsetting," she added, "---- the likelihood is that more problems will arise from drinking and fighting."

Leaders of the local Jewish community, the Hindu Temple and the main Anglican Church, all joined

with Morality Forum to make the views of decent people known to the council. 1,640 signatures were obtained on a petition in very short order. Councillors praised us for having the courage to speak out and several wrote letters to me expressing support. In December I received a letter of thanks from a Harrow councillor together with a copy of a letter from the Chief Environmental Health Officer explaining that the application had been withdrawn.

Your local councillor will always appreciate hearing your opinion.

Going National!

We managed several small demonstrations at the Houses of Parliament, which were quite successful. Because of these we met a number of media people and politicians, had members interviewed on radio and one of our families appeared on the Kilroy programme. I have spoken on phone-in programmes a number of times. There are quite a few of these, including local ones, and it is a good way of making our point to thousands of potential supporters.

Off the shelves

Tesco have stopped offering the 'Morning-after' pill and I am sure that this is the result of the SPUC signature campaign. We have come to the conclusion that it is very effective to leaflet an area first and then follow up with the petition. Many people are eager to sign when they know what it is for.

We must never underestimate the power of public opinion even in this over-regulated age. If we don't speak out, politicians, councillors, church leaders and other citizens will not even know that there is a public opinion!

Pick up your pen, take up the telephone, help with the petition, make the voice of reason heard and we can definitely replace the present corruption with better values and attitudes.

May you all find harmony, peace and goodness in 2003 and beyond.