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FCC Acts Favorably On Petition

The Federal Communications Commission at a meeting in Washington, D.C. on March 12 ordered broadcasters to listen to all groups that are significant elements within their service areas, including lesbians and gay men and the handicapped.

Acting on a petition filed in 1977 by the National Gay Task Force and 143 gay organizations from all 50 states, the Commission ruled that broadcasters must listen to the concerns of gay organizations to determine what community needs should be addressed in programming.

But the Commission said that stations are not obligated to seek out gay or handicapped groups. These or other significant community groups must make themselves known to a broadcaster. The broadcaster then decides whether that

element is significant in the community.

Once a broadcaster decides that the group is significant in its service area, the station will be obligated to contact representatives of the group in future ascertainment surveys.

The FCC requires broadcast license holders to ascertain the problems, needs and interests of significant elements within their broadcast service areas.

In 1976, a checklist of 19 community elements was established. They were: agriculture; business; charities; civic, neighborhood and fraternal organizations, consumer services; culture; education; environment; government; labor; military; minority and ethnic groups;

(FCC, cont. p. 10)

Local Pickets Wash "Windows"

About 25 lesbians and several gay men from the Durham area picketed the movie Windows at the Center Theatre in Durham during the one-week March run of the film.

The movie by United Artists/TransAmerica portrays actress Talia Shire as a "psychotic" lesbian who hires a man to rape a straight woman she is interested in, presumably to convert her to lesbianism.

Picketers carried signs such as "Smash Windows" and "Women Don't Rape Women, Men Do" and distributed leaflets to all interested people going into either movie at the twin Center Theatres.

The leaflet described the movie "as a vicious distortion of lesbianism and female friendships." It said the moral of the movie is a warning against women forming friendships with other women and a message that lesbians are to be feared.

The leaflet concludes by asking movie goers not to support Hollywood's "vicious stereotypes" of gays.

Theatre manager Crockett Webb in a

story in The North Carolina Anvil (March 14, 1980) said he was under contract to show the movie but that he would not have run it had he known what it was about.

"I've tried to explain that it was not my doing; it was booked by the home office (ABC Theatres) in Florida," he said.

On the opening night in Chapel Hill on March 21, demonstrators leafletted in front of the triple Plaza Theatres.

Only 15 people attended the four showings of the movie on opening day, according to Plaza Theatres manager Larry Johnson.

Protestors in both cities said they were particularly opposed to the violence against women portrayed in the film.

One Chapel Hill demonstrator spoke about an incident earlier in the week in which a woman was raped at knife-point in mid-afternoon while jogging on the (UNC-CH) campus. "Hollywood ennobles such violence against women with movies like Windows," she said.