

Sex Pistols face the bullet

By MICHAEL WALTERS
City Editor

SEX Pistols, Britain's most notorious punk rock group, could lose their record contract if they continue to say nasty words in public.

But they would probably be able to keep £40,000 already pledged to them by the entertainment giant EMI.

Sir John Read, EMI's chairman said the television interview given to Sex Pistols last week was "disgraceful" and his company would decide within a week whether or not to break the contract.

Earlier Sir John had told shareholders, who had passed an elaborate security check to gain admittance to the EMI annual meeting in London, that Sex Pistols was the only punk rock group under a direct recording contract with EMI Records.

Whether any more of their records were released would have to be carefully considered.

Sir John said the group had behaved satisfactorily as recording artists. But he warned that EMI should not set itself up as a public censor, but did seek to encourage restraint.

After being told that the group had made unpleasant references to the Queen at a concert in Leeds last night, he asked staff to investigate.

It would not help the group when it came to reviewing the contract, he added.

One shareholder, having heard a prepared statement from Sir John, suggested that EMI should not be party to the permissiveness invading people's homes.

The company should take a lead against it, he said, and cancel the contract with Sex Pistols.

While Sex Pistols renounce the old-established ruse of hunt the headline, it appears, not only will they attract a volume of publicity sufficient to answer the dreams of most record promoters, but could also benefit by forcing EMI to withdraw their support.

Sir John admitted that the £40,000 contract consisted of advances to meet expenses and cash to be paid to the group.

If EMI broke the contract, he said, the company would probably be liable for breaching the two-year deal.