

TV row group face North concert ban

THE Sex Pistols punk rock group—at the centre of the television swearing storm — may be banned from playing at Newcastle City Hall.

Meanwhile, interviewer Bill Grundy was last night suspended for two weeks by Thames Television, after angry viewers complained of four-letter words during an interview with the group.

Thames also reprimanded those responsible for the Sex Pistols appearance on

the company's "Today" teatime show on Wednesday.

Mr. Grundy's suspension means he will not appear on any of the company's shows, although he was due to front another edition of the "Today" programme this evening.

The statement from Thames came soon after Rank Leisure Services announced it was notifying promoters of the group's current tour that it was cancelling Sex Pistols' appearance at Bournemouth next Tuesday.

Appearances at Preston and Lancaster have also been cancelled.

Doubt

There is doubt over whether Sunday night's concert in Newcastle featuring the group will go ahead.

City Hall manager Mr. Bob Brown said the concert was cancelled.

But later Coun. Arthur Stabler, chairman of the city's arts and recreation committee, said it would go on, if they were given firm assurances about the band's conduct.

The concert promoters said they had given assurances but the matter was "in limbo."

A Thames Television spokesman said of the programme row: "Precisely what measures have been taken is a confidential matter between us and our staff."

"But the director of programmes, Mr. Jeremy Isaacs, has expressed his views firmly to all on the "Today" programme, describing last night's incident as "a gross error of judgment" caused by "inexcusably sloppy journalism."

A Thames spokesman earlier said that some viewers had said they felt sorry for Mr. Grundy.

"He was clearly embarrassed by these people and they appreciated what he was trying to do—to show what a disagreeable lot of lads they were, and they

thought he was right to do so."

Angry viewers jammed the 12 lines to the studio switchboard after the programme and Thames broadcast an apology that was repeated last night.

But Ray Mawby, Tory M.P. for Totnes, claimed it appeared Mr. Grundy was inciting the group. He would be lodging a formal protest with Lady Plowden, chairman of the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

Before his interview with Thames' current affairs controller, John Edwards, Mr. Grundy said: "The object of the exercise was to prove that these louts were a foul-mouthed set of yobs. That is what it proved."

The group — at the forefront of the punk rock craze whose followers wear outlandish clothes and make-up — have already caused controversy at their concerts.

Billed

They are billed to appear at Newcastle with three other leading punk rock bands as part of a nationwide tour, but only a handful of tickets had been sold by yesterday.

Coun. Stabler said: "The show is cancelled, until we get firm assurances that there will be no trouble at the concert and that the band will not incite trouble."

"We must have these assurances. If I thought there was going to be any tomfoolery they would not be allowed in the place."

Mr. Tim Parsons, of the four promoters, Endeale Associates of Birmingham, said: "We sincerely hope the show will go on."

"We have given firm assurances. I cannot emphasise enough how I feel this has been blown up out of all proportion."

"All the people concerned, including the band, regret what happened on the television. On stage, they do not incite or offend they are just a straightforward band out to give enjoyment."

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