

~~GENCENSORED~~

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

NCROPA

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The N.C.R.O.P.A. is affiliated to the National Council for Civil Liberties

NO/DAW/DP

31st October 1989

The Rt. Hon. David Waddington, QC, MP,
Secretary of State for the Home Department,
Home Office,
50, Queen Anne's Gate,
London, SW1H 9AT.

Dear Secretary of State,

On behalf of the National Campaign for the Reform of the Obscene Publications Acts (NCROPA), may I congratulate you on your appointment as Secretary of State for the Home Department.

The NCROPA is, as I hope you know, a law-reform organisation campaigning for comprehensive changes to the U.K.'s draconian, puritanical and out-moded censorship legislation, which would bring us into line with most other so-called 'free' Western World countries who have long since been prudent, just and adult enough to dispense with the repressive and 'nannyist' kind of restrictions to which we in this country are still severely and solely subject.

The NCROPA was founded in 1976 but, during the intervening 13 years, we have witnessed, not just the retention of the 1976 'status quo', but the systematic extension of and addition to the then already existing and totally unacceptable state censorship legislation, by the introduction of ever more and even harsher parliamentary measures. This is intolerable in what is supposed to be a 'free society'. Moreover it is also in direct conflict with the recommendations of the 1979 Home Office Committee on Obscenity and Film Censorship (the Williams Committee) and which a predecessor, the then Mr. William Whitelaw, presented to the House of Commons on 28th November 1979. That a whole decade should have passed without any action whatsoever being taken on this important and comprehensive report by a highly distinguished Government appointed Committee, whose findings were unanimous, is a disgrace.

Furthermore, successive Tory Governments' subsequent refusals to take such liberating action over this period, directly conflict with basic Conservative Party philosophy, the cornerstone of which is the 'freedom of the individual', 'freedom of choice' and 'the freedom of the market-place'.

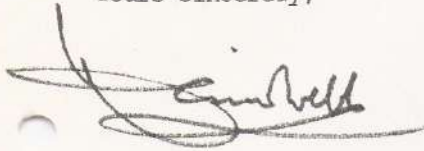
The NCROPA very much hopes, therefore, that during your tenure of office, you will acknowledge the great inconsistency in policy this issue exposes and will be courageous and righteous enough to remedy this gross illogicality and injustice by introducing the necessary, appropriate reforming legislation which your three predecessors in that high and important office so spinelessly shunned.

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It is an incontrovertible fact that the U.K. now has more state censorship than virtually any other country of the 'free' Western World. That is a situation which is completely untenable in what is claimed to be "the mother of the free" and it cannot be allowed to continue. The NCROPA therefore, respectfully, requests an urgent meeting with you so that we can convey our deep concern and discuss our views with you face to face. Perhaps you would be kind enough to let us know whether or not you agree to such a meeting and, if so, when it could take place.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'David Webb', with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the name.

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