

~~CENSORED~~

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM
OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

N C R O P A

FIGHTING SEXUAL CENSORSHIP

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NO/DAW/DP

28th January 1993

Sir Ivan Lawrence, QC, MP,
Chairman,
Home Affairs Select Committee,
House of Commons,
Westminster,
London,
SW1A 0AA.



Sexually-Explicit Material, Freedom of Expression
and Euro Trans- Frontier Broadcasting

In the 20th January edition of the "Daily Mail", referring to the "Red Hot Dutch" type of sexually-explicit TV programmes which Continental Television are currently transmitting from mainland Europe, you are quoted as saying that "The British people don't want this."

On the contrary, the British people - a great many of them - do want this - and other kinds of sexually-explicit material which is quite rightly, and justly, legally available in virtually all other EC member states, but which the authoritarian, 'nannyist' UK Government still archaically and doggedly refuses to allow its state-oppressed citizens.

With respect, you and the Government are wildly out-of-touch with the views of the ordinary 'man (or woman)-in-the-street' here if you think there is something basically different about him from his fellow EC citizens. He (or she) is just as passionately interested in 'sex' here as elsewhere. The only difference here is the colossal hypocrisy and guilt which engulfs the subject. Our European partners have a much more open, honest and healthier attitude towards 'sex' which we - and especially our Parliamentarians - would do well to emulate.

There is nothing shameful about 'sex'. 'Sex' and the pursuit of 'sex' is a perfectly natural, human phenomenon, and it follows, therefore, that publications about 'sex' (whether in book, magazine, film, video or TV programme form) will also naturally arouse a similar enthusiastic response. That something so natural, which gives so many so much harmless pleasure in other countries, should be for-

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bidden to the people of this censor-obsessed country is not merely regrettable, but a national disgrace. Whatever happened to freedom here? - to the UK's originating commitment to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and the European Convention on Human Rights in 1950? Whatever happened to 'Article 19' and 'Article 10' and the UK's shamefully hypocritical and subsequently blatantly dishonoured pledge to the both of them? Whatever happened to 'freedom of the individual', 'freedom of choice' and 'freedom of the market-place', the supposed, much-proclaimed cornerstone of Conservative Party philosophy?

Moreover, even if the vast majority of the British people did not want sexually-orientated material (which I do not for one moment accept), it would still be quite wrong in principle to deny even the tiniest minority their right to 'freedom of expression'- their right to choose for themselves what they see, read and hear. Minorities, too, have rights and when an intolerant, oppressive majority denies them those rights, that is tyranny.

Please rethink you position on this issue of fundamental principle as a matter of urgency.

Finally I am enclosing herewith a copy of my letter (dated 25th January) to the Secretary of State for National Heritage for your and the Select Committee on Home Affairs' information. On behalf of the NCROPA, I have also written to all 17 European Community Commissioners in Brussels, as well as the individual Heads of Government of all other EC member states.

I shall look forward to receiving your response to the contents of this letter at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



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

P.S. For your further information I am also enclosing a copy of the NCROPA's promotional leaflet which sets out our aims and aspirations.

DW.

Enclosures