

THE

AUTUMN 1990

VIEWER AND LISTENER

CAMPAIGN TO OUTLAW PORNOGRAPHY

Millions of signatures needed on National VALA's new petition!


"The most callous and long lasting crime adults commit against children" is how Tim Tate, author of "Child Pornography", describes child sexual abuse. Many of these abused children never reach the age of 15, dying of illness, suicide or are even murdered in the making of so-called "snuff movies".

National VALA is determined to do everything possible to end this vile trade. The tightening up of our present Obscene Publications Act is absolutely vital and the first priority.

We are already much encouraged by the fact that both the Archbishop of Wales and the Archbishop of Cardiff have promised us that they will send out copies of the petition to all the parishes in their Archdiocese. Such initiatives challenge each one of us to think creatively how we can play our part.

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CONVENTION —1991—

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and

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4.00pm — 5.00pm

**FULL DETAILS OF
THE PROGRAMME
IN NEXT ISSUE**

**Make a Note of
the Date Now!**



DAVID MELLOR, QC MP

FLASHBACK TO CONVENTION 1990

David Mellor, QC MP, speaking about tightening up the law against pornography said:

“ I do not think we should shirk the challenge — we do not shirk it — but I do say to you, please do not think that just because we take our time over considering these matters, it's because we lack the will or resolve, it's because it is very very difficult. Quite obviously there are things that one wants to do about pornography. Let me say straight away, all pornography is damaging. Child pornography is abhorrent and disgusting and is something that we must not permit to become a common feature of our society. ”

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THE CHALLENGE IS TO EVERYONE

The failure of the Obscene Publications Act gave impetus to a number of campaigns in which National VALA was deeply involved and which resulted in the passing of the Protection of Children Act, the Indecent Displays Act and the Video Recordings Act. Welcome as these laws are, it becomes daily more obvious that serious problems remain. The removal of trade barriers between Britain and Europe in 1992 will considerably exacerbate the situation and something has to be done NOW. Hence the launching by National VALA of The Campaign to Outlaw Pornography. We appeal for your help in making it an outstanding success. Nothing less than millions of signatures will make the necessary impact upon Parliament.

If anyone has any doubt about the need for this Campaign we could remind you that in July this year Scotland Yard revealed that they were investigating the murders of young boys in the making of pornographic "snuff" movies and that a special squad was probing the disappearance of young boys over a six year period. It was understood that at least six boys were killed on film after being sexually abused to provide entertainment for perverts.

The whole tragic problem is again highlighted by the story (*Daily Telegraph* 4/9/90) of the 26 year old father who pleaded guilty of having regularly raped his 2½ year old daughter after being influenced by pornographic videos.

But tragically, there is nothing new in all this. As long ago as 1986 the Conference of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers and the Commission of Human Rights, meeting in Stockholm, were told that "one million children, some as young as three or four years old, are traded on the international pornography market every year."

The *Sunday Express* 12/8/90 reported that "thousands of videotapes of films showing naked children as young as two have already been exported and mailed to sex shops and paedophile cells across Europe and the United States."

As Fred Harrison reported in *The European* 4/5/90 "Three years ago 100 children were abducted from their village in the Netherlands and taken to Amsterdam where they were sexually abused. Their humiliation was filmed and distributed to child pornographers across Europe by a gang who made millions from the children's debasement."

And the urgency is underlined by the activities of people like the 70 year old Beate Rotermund, the co-owner of Europe's largest sex company with an annual turnover of 181 million dollars. She is quoted as saying that she is looking forward to 1992 as she "hopes the European obscenity laws will be harmonised to help the porn trade". In other words that Britain's obscenity laws will be brought into line with the more lax European ones!

We truly believe that, if we miss this opportunity to put pressure on the Government to introduce effective law, then events could well overtake us and, with the pressure of the European situation, there may not be another chance. Time is of the essence. The challenge is to everyone of us. If we respond with all our resources of time, energy and, where possible, finance, we shall achieve results beyond our expectations.

Pornographers Unite

Leading publishers of soft-pornographic magazines are to launch what they call an "education campaign" to counter moves towards strengthening the law on obscenity.

A "committee" of companies including the Paul Raymond organisation, publishers of Men Only, Escort, Club International and the Model Directory, and Northern and Shell, which publishes Penthouse and Forum, intends to rally support among readers and distributors.

It plans television appearances, "endorsement" by sympathetic celebrities, petitions to Downing Street and the placing of "sympathetic" newspaper articles.

Members are already visiting distributors who are reluctant to handle pornography and newsagents who have expressed either moral repugnance or fear of attack from lobbyists.

Leading retailers, such as WH Smith, have already restricted the range of girlie magazines they stock but are worried that children under 18 can still gain access.

The pro-pornography campaign, which is designed to deflect any moves towards restricting the sale of pornography, including the suggestion that it be allowed only in licensed sex shops, comes as the Home Office prepares to publish research on pornography and its links with sexual violence.

The committee of soft porn publishers are alarmed at the tendency of newsagents to cover potentially offensive magazines in opaque wrappings, obscuring the cover picture while showing the title.

PUBLIC OPINION

In March 1990 COSMOPOLITAN magazine published the results of a reader survey:

- 95% of respondents believe that some forms of pornography should be curbed.
- 85% believe that pornography leads to sexual violence.
- One third had been raped or sexually assaulted and, in 28% of cases, pornography was used.
- More than a quarter of those who encountered pornography under the age of 12 had had sex under the age of 16.

Supt Michael Hames, head of New Scotland Yard's Obscene Publications squad (*The Times* 3/8/90) spoke of the "rising tide of child pornography" and went on "It has been shown that the vast majority of murderers, serial rapists and child molesters have pornography. If you listen to the tape of the murderer Ted Bundy on the eve of his electrocution, he speaks about the role which pornography had played in the crimes he committed. He said it was central."

SINCE OKLAHOMA CITY BEGAN IN 1984 TO SHUT DOWN 150 PORNOGRAPHY OUTLETS AND PROSTITUTION RINGS, THE F.B.I.'S 1989 CRIME REPORT SHOWS A DECREASE OF 26% IN RAPE FIGURES. IN THE REST OF THE STATE WHERE NO SIMILAR EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE, RAPE CASES INCREASED BY 20.8%.

PORNOGRAPHY - SOME QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

■ **“Isn't there already law on obscenity? Why do we need more?”**

The present Obscene Publications Act 1959 has been rendered ineffective and is capable of controlling only the most extreme material. The intention of Parliament in 1959 was to strengthen the law against pornography. The availability of pornography is now so widespread that it is obvious that the law is failing to fulfil Parliament's intention. Lord Denning, when Master of the Rolls, said “Unfortunately this legislation against pornography seems to have misfired. Experience has shown that much material — which at first sight would appear pornographic in the extreme — HAS ESCAPED THE REACH OF THE LAW”.

■ **“I have the right to read pornography if I want to. Why do you insist on taking away my freedom?”**

In a civilised society everyone has to forego some freedoms for the benefits of others. By outlawing pornography the risk of sexual attacks on women and sexual abuse of children is greatly reduced and ensures greater freedom for everyone.

■ **“Isn't it true that in Denmark the law on pornography was repealed and the figures for sex crime collapsed?”**

No! The opposite is true. At the same

“Pornography is often used to entice other youngsters into child sex abuse. Children will be shown pornography involving other children so that they can be told it might be alright because other children do it and seem to enjoy it.”

Mr Jim Harding Director NSPCC at launch of Annual Report 12/3/90.

time in Denmark ELEVEN categories of sex crime were abolished. Of course figures for sex crime collapsed — without law there can be no crime! Figures for serious sex crime — rape and attempted rape — have steadily risen year after year.

■ **“Doesn't pornography offer a 'safety valve' for some people who might otherwise rape someone?”**

No. The opposite is true. Pornography eventually fails to satisfy the user and actually encourages the 'rape myth', that is, the belief that women want to be raped and that resistance to rape is really an encouragement. If pornography acts as a 'safety valve' why is it that the number of sex attacks continues to rise year after year whilst at the same time ever more magazines, showing ever more extreme material, are available?

PORNOGRAPHY IS BIG BUSINESS.

In Britain it grosses at least £500 million each year, in Europe at least £3 billion, and in the USA \$10 billion — more than the film and music industries combined.

ACTION!

- Sign the C.O.P. Petition. Take copies and ask others to sign.
- Organise 'sign ins' at your local church, or in the high street or at your local community centre or anywhere locally where people congregate.
- Write to local newspapers urging public support and offer copies of the petition form to readers.
- Write to your Member of Parliament, The Home Secretary and the Prime Minister urging that Government ACTION be taken without delay.
- Complain, tactfully, to shop keepers where pornography is on display and on sale. Perhaps threaten to boycott the shop.
- Organise public events such as peaceful picketing with banners and placards outside shops selling pornography. Use these events to collect signatures. Inform your local newspapers and local radio stations.

THAT'S A GOOD LETTER!

Doubtful conclusions about TV violence

Sir-In your report "No link between TV and violence say the viewers" (July 13) you quote Dr David Docherty, the Broadcasting Standards Council's research director, as saying: "If television has a powerful effect on attitudes, it should operate in similar ways on most people vulnerable to its influences."

If ever there was a simplistic statement this is surely it. There was no allowance made for age, temperament, experience, background, education, in fact for all those things which make everyone different.

In any case, we understood that the purpose of the Broadcasting Standards Council was to be the voice of the viewers and not the voice of the professional researchers who often work from a committed standpoint.

On the question of whether there is a link between televised/filmed violence and social violence it is depressing to find these researchers adopting what can only be described as a thoroughly outdated approach. The real question is not whether members of the public think that violent television causes violent behaviour but whether there is evidence that it does.

There are now internationally, more than 1,000 pieces of research demonstrating such a link, the most recent (1989) carried out by the University

of Washington School of Medicine. This found that "television is a factor in approximately 10,000 homicides each year in the United States. While TV clearly is not the sole cause of violence in our society, and there are many other contributing factors, hypothetically if television did not exist there would be 10,000 fewer homicides a year".

Other research carried out, for instance, in Latin America, Sweden, New Zealand and Hong Kong finds similar links. And, of course, the "Clockwork Orange" syndrome in which "copy cat" apparel and vicious violence followed the film whenever it was shown, was arguably the most vivid example of the impact and effect of such films.

This report seems to suggest that because "public opinion" is not conclusive on this issue nothing can/should be done about violent entertainment. May I suggest that the Broadcasting Standards Council might better spend its resources on a continuous survey of actual programming including a regular assessment of violent crime statistics, rather than on academic work of this sort which leads nowhere.

MARY WHITEHOUSE
President, National Viewers'
and Listeners' Association
Colchester, Essex

Daily Telegraph 16/7/90

Screen violence impact on society

From Mr Richard Reddy

Sir, Over the past few years there has been some controversy over the effect that violence portrayed on television and in movies has on our society.

I lived and worked, as manager of engineering for an oil company, for five years among the various island peoples of Micronesia and the northern Marianas with an approximate population of 300,000 scattered over three million square miles of ocean. Each island group has its own distinct culture, but they share a common ancestry.

The region became a UN trust after liberation from the Japanese, under the protectorate of the US, and gained independent-nation status about two years ago. Under the trusteeship and as a condition of their nation status, the US provided financial aid to each island group. Each used the money in different ways, mostly on promoting commerce and public-works projects.

The island of Kosrae is characterised by gentle people. Five years ago there was no crime of any kind, the culture strictly controlled by the chiefs and extended family system.

They decided to use their funds to become "progressive" and develop commerce. Along with that came television, video cassette recorders and video tapes. As the local entrepreneurs responded to market demand, and the market, after seeing a few violent tapes, insisted on more of it, violent films began to dominate the videos.

Within a short time violent acts began to appear in what

used to be a peaceful population with no history of civil disorder. In addition to interpersonal violence and that against property one particular incident stands out: a group took exception to a decision that the attorney general made, broke into his house, tied him up, urinated on him and then burned his house down.

On another island, Yap, a teenage boy was killed when two youths jumped out of the jungle and attacked him as they were, according to officials, acting out a horror movie.

In contrast, the people of Ulithi atoll, about 2,000 of them scattered across a number of islands, about 100 miles from Yap, have decided to maintain their traditional culture. They ban violent and pornographic videos and they have no violence or deviation from their traditional sexual norms. They help each other with the same community spirit that used to dominate Kosrae.

When one wants to determine the effect a particular outside stimulus will have on a particular society, one locates smaller, simpler societies and studies the effect that stimulus has on these less complicated "models". Kosrae and Ulithi are both part of the same country with common ancestry, but each made a different decision regarding violent videos. Violence displaced Kosrae's traditional peace within a two-year period. There is still no violence on Ulithi.

Faithfully yours,
RICHARD REDDY,
As from: 8028 Del Caverna,
Scottsdale, Arizona, USA.
July 24. *The Times* 28/7/90

RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

We are most grateful to those of our members who renew their subscriptions promptly at the first time of asking. Thank you so much.

The increase in postal charges on 17th September will significantly increase National VALA's costs overall but the issue of further subscription reminders is an ill afforded expense and cuts resources that are needed elsewhere.

Please help us to keep costs down.

The challenge of our work continues and our need for donations to meet campaign costs is as great as ever.

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