

CAMPAIGN

CENSORSHIP

AGAINST

(THE DEFENCE OF LITERATURE AND THE ARTS SOCIETY)

PLEASE REPLY TO:-

23 Budgen Drive  
Redhill Surrey RH1 2QB  
1st January 1999

To: Dept For Culture  
Broadcasting Policy Division  
2 Cockspur Street, London SWY 5DH  
Ref: T097 33857

Dear Stephanie Legg

RE: PROSCRIBING OF EUROTICA RENDEZ-VOUS TELEVISION

Thank you for your letter of the 15th September 1998 which we have carefully considered. It raises important issues.

(1) No other European country proscribes this television channel. This suggests that other jurisdictions are less fearful of children seeing it and that the Secretary of State has a very low opinion of the judgment of British parents.

(2) Jacques Lang, when he was socialist French Minister of Culture, declared that the State has no right to prevent citizens from seeing what they want. In sharp contrast, the British Labour Secretary of State considers that, since this channel transmits material which he considers unsuitable for children, therefore all adults in the United Kingdom should be prevented from seeing it.

(3) The Secretary of State, to his credit, frequently advocated freedom of expression when he was in opposition, but his present action is inconsistent with that ideal.

(4) The Secretary of State is following an identical policy to that of his Tory predecessor (providing evidence for those cynics who believe that nothing changes, whichever Party is in office.).

(5) We note that, when reaching his decision, the Secretary of State considered only the views of the ITC. Any organisation established with the purpose of discovering unsuitable material will inevitably find it (especially if, as is the case here, there is self-interest in limiting foreign competition).

(6) Given that this channel already has 100,000 subscribers in the United Kingdom, the proscription is likely to increase interest and lead to a black market in smartcards which will be highly profitable to criminals.

It is significant that, while the countries of Eastern Europe are abolishing State censorship, Britain is extending it even further without even any proper consultation.

We await answers to these points

Yours for freedom of expression.