

CAMPAIGN

CENSORSHIP

AGAINST

(THE DEFENCE OF LITERATURE AND THE ARTS SOCIETY)
18 Brewer Street, London W1R 4AS Telephone: 01-439 7827/8

PLEASE REPLY TO:-

23 Budgen Drive
Redhill Surrey RH1 2QB
8th May 2000

To: Guy Phelps
Head of Drama & Entertainment
Independent TV Commission
33 Foley Street, London W1P 7LB

Dear Mr Phelps,

TASTE AND DECENCY

Thank you for your letter of the 4th and enclosure. The discrepancy between the research quoted by you and us appears to be caused by the fact that yours did not specifically refer to encrypted material. In any event, although the British as a whole are still somewhat insular and narrow-minded, there would be no public outcry in this country if satellite channels ceased to be proscribed. Viewer acceptance of the sexually explicit "Private Parts" terrestrial television programmes in February demonstrates this. No other European country feels the need to proscribe satellite television channels, not even the Republic of Ireland!

In addition there is the question of uniform standards in this country. In August 1999 the Video Appeals Committee ruled that actual (as opposed to simulated) copulation could be depicted on R18 video recordings. These are restricted to sale in adults-only sex-shops and are thus analogous to encrypted television material. It is illogical and unacceptable for different standards to apply to broadcast and video material, both of which are shown on television screens in private homes. Magazines depicting actual copulation are also now lawfully sold in sex-shops, because of recent jury decisions in test cases that in such circumstances the material is not obscene. (Nothing is illegal in itself under the Obscene Publications Act. It depends on the circumstances of publication).

PTO

Page 2

In any event the majority has no right to suppress freedom of expression by and for a minority. As John Stuart Mill stated : "If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind."

Democracy entails respect for the human rights of minorities (including freedom of expression), not tyranny by the "brute majority" (as Dr Jinnah described it). Most people in the United Kingdom support the death penalty, but that does not mean it should be imposed-because it would deprive people of the human right to life. Therefore, even if it believes that the majority of the British population want draconian censorship of a type that exists nowhere else in Europe, the ITC should cease requesting satellite television proscription orders from the Government because they deny freedom of expression to consenting adults. Please formally consider this request on its merits.

Yours for freedom of expression,

Clr E Goodman
Chair of CAC

23 Garden Drive

Redhill, Surrey

CR1 200

0181 871 2000