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David Webb,
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5th February, 1981

Dear David,

You wrote me some time ago criticising something I said on the Anglia Television programme "Enterprise". I laughingly referred to our more "explicit" imitators as being "gynaecological". What I was attempting to convey was the notion that more explicit magazines frequently photographed women in a way that you might expect their organs to be photographed for a medical text book, as opposed to a book which is attempting to be titillating or erotic. However, I take your point and in the future will use the word "explicit" when I get into a similar discussion.

By the way, you probably read in the paper that I opposed the motion "A Licence for Pornography is a Denial of Freedom" at the Oxford Union in a debate with Mary Whitehouse. I regret to say that I lost although it was close.

I am very much interested in joining NCROPA and I am enclosing my personal cheque for £25 to support your work.

After hearing Mary Whitehouse and her supporters I got the distinct impression that there is a lack of appreciation of freedom and a danger of increasing censorship in this country.

I am pleased to note that Lord Norwich is a member of your Committee and was wondering if the Eric Miller mentioned on your Committee is the late Sir Eric Miller?

Cont'd....

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I am enclosing a copy of my material for the Oxford debate. I didn't stick strictly to my script but deviated where I thought certain things might sound better when spoken. I am afraid that one place where I did not deviate is where I give full vent to the material comparing Mary Whitehouse's dream of a theocratic state with the Ayatollah Khomeini's and I am afraid this little bit of rudeness cost me the decision as people felt sorry for the dear lady who was, at that point, practically in tears.

In fact, it was at that point in my presentation that Mrs. Whitehouse's defender, Mr. Smythe, the barrister (who was, as you know, the prosecuting barrister in the "Romans in Britain" case and who also prosecuted Gay News on the criminal blasphemy charge) leapt to his feet and asked if I was making a personal attack on Mary Whitehouse which, of course, I denied. He then asked if what I was calling for was a total abolition of all censorship and, true to my principles, I told him that is exactly what I was calling for. That, as you may imagine, didn't help. Very few people I'm afraid are willing to accept that idea.

I did not need to go that far as that was not the subject of the debate. In fact, virtually everybody on the proposing side maintained that some pornography was, of course, quite permissible and allowable. This would suggest that everybody was, in a sense, opposing the motion. (Only by saying that one favoured a complete abolition of pornography would one truly be supporting the motion).

At any rate, I am hopeful that I will get an opportunity for a return match with Mrs. Whitehouse and I think I now know the form well enough to guarantee that I will be victorious on the next outing.

Supporting me on the motion was Mr. Nicholas De Jongh who was a delightful speaker and I would very much like to have him on my side if I ever do get a rematch. One of the things he used in his own presentation is the enclosed letter which Ken Tynan wrote some years ago. I am enclosing two copies of the letter as I would very much like to you to forward one copy to Lord Norwich. I think he might find it hilarious enough to use in the next "Christmas Crackers" that he produces. Please pass it along and tell him how much I enjoyed his book.

Very truly yours

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Victor A. Lownes".

Victor A. Lownes
Chairman & Managing Director

Enc.

an object'—well, the human body is by definition a material object, and the foundation of happy fucking, I would have thought, is to accept it as such, which is much less easy, in our shame-ridden society, than it sounds. If two people regard each other as desirable sexual objects, they are halfway to mutual fulfilment: it is the pre-condition from which all else flows. (I have, incidentally, my own rather different objection to obsessive eroticism: namely, that it is extremely time-consuming. This is true not only by day but also when we are asleep. Perhaps it would help if one of Lord Longford's disciples were to compose a letter on the subject to *The Times*:

Dear Sir,

I hope I am not a prude, but I feel compelled to lodge a protest against the ever-increasing flood of obscenity in dreams. Many of my friends have been as shocked and sickened as myself by the filth that is poured out nightly as soon as our eyes are closed. It is certainly not my idea of 'home entertainment'.

Night after night, the most disgraceful scenes of perversion and bestiality are perpetrated behind my eyelids. In the past week alone, I counted six rapes, one of them involving a woman old enough to be my mother (indeed, I thought at the time it *was* my mother), and four sadistic orgies, during which appalling liberties were taken with members of the Royal family.

Things have come to a pretty pass when a law-abiding citizen cannot drop off for a few minutes without being forced to witness such edifying spectacles as last night's episode, in which a senior Palace official was seen ravishing the elderly lady I mentioned before—and wearing my old school blazer to do it. I presume that this is what our hippie students would call 'social comment'. It looked to me more like the work of a three-year-old sex maniac.

It is imperative that official action should be taken to curb these exhibitions of smut. Could the government not consider imposing—at least for a trial period—a three-night sleeping week?

Yours sincerely,
"TREAD SOFTLY")