David Kennington

NC/DAW/DP 19th January 1983

John Carlisle, Esq., M.P.,
House of Commons,
London, SW1A 0AA.

Dear Mr. Carlisle,

Thank you for your letter of 17th January. I apologise for not enclosing one of our promotional leaflets with my letter of 12th January and am remedying that omission now.

Your refusal to answer the very pertinent questions I put to you on behalf of the N.C.R.O.P.A.,concerning your disparaging comments about Channel 4 TV, is, I believe, both discourteous and irresponsible for an elected representative to our country's national legislative assembly.

You first refused to answer because of a totally unwarranted assertion that the tone of my original letter was "dictatorial". You now continue that refusal on equally spurious accusations about remarks I made about you in the local press. I have a copy of the article in the Luton Evening Post-Echo to which, I assume, you refer. It merely reports the contents of my first letter to yourself, together with a few additional remarks I had made to the reporter. This amounted to nothing more than what is generally accepted as 'fair comment' - or do you wish to curtail free speech and censor the press as well? Shame on you. I thought M.P.s had thicker skins.

There is only one possible interpretation left for me to place on the extraordinary attitude you have taken up over this matter and it is that your emotive outburst against Channel 4 is indefensible and that you are simply unable to give logical, cogent answers to the ten questions I put to you which would not be diametrically opposed to official Conservative Party philosophy and policy.

I am, however, gratified to learn that your repressive outlook is not shared by the authorities and that your hysterical please for Channel 4's licence to be withdrawn by the Home Secretary or the I.B.A. have been very properly ignored. The Home Secretary's private secretary has written to me thus:-

> "The Home Secretary, like his successive predecessors, maintains the broadcasting policy which assures the Authority its independence; and there could be no question of him taking action to interfere with the Authority's operation of and responsibility for the new service."

...../continued

Answering my letter to Lord Thomson, the Chairman of the I.B.A., who is abroad at present, Mr. Colin Shaw, the I.B.A.'s Director of Television writes thus:-

"Channel 4 is required by Parliament to provide a service of distinctiveness, innovation and experiment. It is also required to contain programmes for tastes and interests not generally covered by I.T.V. ..... The I.B.A. has no doubt that Channel 4 has the ability to provide the service demanded of it by Parliament."

Yours sincerely,

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

Copies to: Mr. Jeremy Isaacs, Chief Executive Channel 4 TV,
The Editor, Luton Evening Post-Echo,
The Editor, The Luton News.

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