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CENSORED

# NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE REFORM OF THE OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS ACTS

# N C R O P A

HON DIRECTOR - David Webb, 15 Sloane Court West, Chelsea, London SW3 4TD - Tel: 01-730 9537

COMMITTEE - David Kennington Litt.D., Gerald Fowler, M.A.Hon., F.A.B.E.,  
E.A.C. Goodman, LL.B.(Sol), Clifford Hanley, Pamela Manson, Eric E. Miller,  
Dr. Christine Pickard, M.B., Ch.B. Elizabeth Goodfellow BA, Alexander Barrie AADipl, MAIE

The N.C.R.O.P.A. is affiliated to the National Council for Civil Liberties

NO/DAW/DP

29th March, 1987

Gerald Howarth, Esq., M.P.,  
House of Commons,  
London, SW1A 0AA.

*Gerald Howarth*

On behalf of Mr. Goodman and myself, and indeed the NCROPA, may I thank you very much for your courteous welcome at the House of Commons last Thursday and for giving us the opportunity of discussing your private member's Bill and putting forward some of our views on it to you personally.

As the meeting clearly underlined, and most regrettably from our standpoint, our separate views on how the Obscene Publications Acts should be reformed, have very little in common. As we emphasised, we believe that there is only one direction in which the O.P. Acts (and other relevant censorship Acts) should be amended, and that is in the direction of liberalisation - and drastic liberalisation at that. Since your Bill aims to legislate in the opposite direction and we find its implications horrifying, we are unable to find any merit in it whatsoever.

Therefore, being completely at variance with your Bill's provisions and the principles upon which it is based, we are hard-pressed to suggest any specific modifications to it, other than its complete withdrawal. Apart from the incorporation of the Director of Public Prosecutions' consent to prosecutions being extended to all offences covered by the Bill (i.e. those involving publications of all kinds as well as radio and television broadcasting), and which might serve as some kind of possible safeguard against frivolous or vexatious litigation, we have no further suggestions to make at this stage. If the Bill makes progress and gets its Second Reading on Friday, we will thereafter submit a detailed critique for your consideration prior to the Committee Stage.

I am sorry there is obviously so much disparity between our respective views, especially since the stance you are taking on this issue seems so completely at variance with those two much-loved fundamental Conservative philosophies viz. the freedom of choice and the freedom of the individual. We shall still hope, therefore, that you will re-consider your line of thinking on this matter and that a change of heart will follow, even at this late stage.

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Once again, many thanks for seeing and welcoming us on 26th March - and we hope that your dental problems have now been satisfactorily resolved.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Webb", written over a horizontal line.

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