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Clubs & Groups:

Adult Holiday Club
Arcadia
Black Perverts Network
Bound and Gagged
Chameleons
Garden of Delight, Dublin
Hedonism
The Firm
Kentucky Woman
Mostly Harmless
Priaean Circle
Rude Food Dining Club
Red Stripe Club
Scottish Hellfire Club
The Sex Maniac's Ball
S/M Bisexuals
S/M Dykes
Torture Garden
Club WideWorld, USA
Club Whiplash

Law reform/Pressure groups:

Cal-ACT
Campaign Against Censorship
Conservatives Against Sex Censorship
COYOTE
Disablement in the City
Freedom First
The Eros Foundation, Australia
The Invisible Language
Society, Amsterdam
Israel Rehabilitation Society
ISWFACE
Integration Trust
Libertarian Alliance
National Campaign for the
Reform of the Obscene
Publications Acts
The Naturist Society
Outrage, Northern Ireland
SM Pride
The Spanner Trust
Society of Swingers

Organisations:

Black Widow's Web, Sweden
Cul D'Or magazine
Delectus Books
Fetish Times
Flash Productions
Forum magazine
Guilfin
Head magazine
K W Clothing Co
The Lifestyles Organisation
Marquis
Paramour magazine
Olympia Press
Paradiso
The Private Case
Regulation
SchlagZeilen Hamburg
Scenario
Shh!
Spectator, San Francisco
Starkers
Ann Summers
Sussex Mailbox
Miss Vera's Academy for
Boys who want to be Girls

*Ted our final letter for your info.
Tuppy*



Sexual Freedom Coalition

Su McLean-Tooke
The Home Office
Sentencing and Offences Unit
50 Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9AT

16th March 1999

Dear Su McLean-Tooke,

"A Review of Sexual Offences"

Thank you for your letter of 25th January 1999, enclosing leaflets explaining your Review, which we are making available to our members.

We endorse and wholeheartedly adopt the view in your leaflet that sex offences mirror the attitude of society to sex roles, behaviour and orientation.

Unfortunately the law does not reflect these changing and developing attitudes. It continues to discriminate against minorities with particular orientations and interests. Society's attitudes have changed — the law has yet to do so.

People who practice consensual sadomasochism need to be able to mark and pierce each other without rendering themselves liable for prosecution under the Offences Against the Person Act of 1861. In other words, consent should be a defence, as recommended in the Law Commission Consultation Paper # 134.

We wish to ask on what basis you selected the laws to be reviewed, and why you decided to omit the decriminalisation of prostitution and legalisation of pornography, when these are the areas of massive current concern, media attention and popular campaigns?

We have not heard or read of massive complaints or campaigns against the laws on rape, assault or sexual exploitation and "flashing" but, as you well know, there is an overwhelming public desire to get rid of the sexual censorship

PO BOX 42B
London W1A 4ZB

info line: 0171 460 1979
Fax: 0171 493 4479
e-mail: sfc.org.uk

AIMS

- promote pansexual freedom, mutual tolerance & safer sex
- teach individuals, the media and authorities to reverse sexual pleasure
- encourage mutual support of and between other adult sexual freedom campaigns, sex clubs and groups
- reform the sex laws which inhibit the sexual freedom of all consenting adults

we have in Britain today, allow prostitutes to work in safety, and lose the 1751 Disorderly Houses Act.

The Law Commission has already recommended the abolition of the Common Law Offences of Blasphemous libel, Blasphemy, Conduct calculated or intended to corrupt public morals, Conspiracy to corrupt public morals, Conspiracy to outrage public morals, Keeping a disorderly house, Obscene libel, Outraging public decency and Public exhibition of indecent activities, pictures and things.

We refer you to the Sexual Freedom Bill enclosed, compiled by our experts in 1997, which outlines the reforms which we think are well overdue in order to give British adults the same freedom to enjoy consensual adult activities as citizens of most other countries.

We recognise that not all of these concerns are within the scope of your review. Your leaflet states, however, that "the law needs to be able to reflect today's knowledge" to ensure that "sexual offences and penalties . . . meet the needs of society today."

We feel strongly that all these areas where the law attempts to regulate sexual expression fall squarely within your stated intention. We would ask that some memorandum or rider is incorporated into your final report to place these views on record.

The particular laws we would like to comment on are those which seek to criminalise a wide range of consenting adult homosexual behaviour for which there is no equivalent heterosexual offence. These are:-

- soliciting (cruising and chatting up men)
- procuring (aiding and abetting homosexual acts)
- gross indecency (often involving discreet acts in parks where the only witnesses are police)
- the "in private" rule (which makes gay sex involving more than two men illegal).

All these consensual acts carry top sentences of two years jail.

Moreover, the Sexual Offences Register is unfortunately not limited to oppressive antisocial behaviour like rape and paedophilia, but includes gay offences for which there is no heterosexual equivalent. This should be changed.

We wish to see a repeal of Section 28 of the Local Government Act, used to deny Council funding and support for their gay communities. We are also aware of many other laws which discriminate against gays: there's a need for legal acknowledgement of partners so that "next of kin" can be the gay partner, affecting the inheritance of property, life insurance and pensions. Fostering and adoption policies need to be non-discriminatory. Discrimination against gays exists in sex education in schools, and asylum and immigration adjudications. HM Customs need to adopt one set of rules on the importation of sexually explicit imagery, and donor insemination services and military regulations should not be discriminatory.

The fact is that these laws discriminate against homosexuals. The law relating to consensual sado-masochism has already been identified by the Law Commission as overdue for reform. We ask you to consider whether these laws breach various rights guaranteed under the European Convention of Human Rights, and thus the Human Rights Act.

We draw your attention specifically to Article 8, the right to private life, as well as Articles 10 (freedom of expression), and 11 (assembly and association). We would urge you to recommend legislation restoring individuals' rights to sexual self-expression.

We would be pleased to continue to participate in this review and would be happy to form part of a reference group if you wished.

I should add that I spend most of my time concerned with the sexual rights of disabled people, some of whom are homosexual, and am anxious to see that their needs are met in any changes of the law.

I am sending you a copy of this letter on white paper so that it can be photocopied, and also a version on disk (Apple Word 5.0)

I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Tuppy Owens
(on behalf of the Steering Committee of the SFC)