

Prime Minister

REFORM OF THE OBSCENITY LEGISLATION

The attached letter from Dick Nugent asks you to receive him, and one or two others - including Dr Finnis, the Reader at Law at Oxford - to discuss the reform of the Obscene Publications Act 1959.

I am sure that it would be worth your while to see this group, particularly as they have succeeded in drafting, with the help of Dr Finnis, a quite convincing amending Bill - of which I have been given a sight and in which you will, I think, be interested. It will, of course, be available for you to see before a meeting materialises.

You will want to bear in mind Home Office responsibilities and sensibilities in this field. It would be no use trying to divert Dick Nugent seeing the Home Office in the first instance: he (and I) were callers there when Roy Jenkins was Home Secretary, and we got short shrift in trying to argue for a less "wet" Williams Committee. I am sure that Dick Nugent wants to see you because he has no confidence in the official ethos at the Home Office in regard to obscenity law reform.

But to maintain the balance you could either ask Leon Brittan to join you in meeting this group (which might strengthen his hand beneficially at the Home Office); or you could ask the Home Office to evaluate, in advance, Dick Nugent's efforts at drafting an amending Bill as part of your background briefing for the meeting; or you could take both these options.

How would you like us to proceed?

MICHAEL ALISON

MA

Agreed - I hope  
he will agree to  
Leon being present  
15.12 83 MB



December 12th. 1983.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.  
The Prime Minister,  
10, Downing Street,  
London, S. W. 1.

R3

My dear Margaret.

I am writing to ask if you would receive a small group to discuss with you the comprehensive reform of the Obscene Publications Act 1959.

I have myself taken a close interest in this matter for some years, as you will know. I would bring with me Tony Halsbury, who has been my partner in crime when we have taken our modest initiatives in our House. The other two members of our party would be Dr. John Finnis, Reader in Law in the University of Oxford and Mr. Raymond Johnston, Research and Education Director of CARE Trust (Christian Action Research and Education), a body which has specialised in this field for some years and was formerly known as the Nationwide Festival of Light.

With the approach of the new media dimension of Cable T.V., this subject assumes an even greater importance, so I hope you will feel able to see us.

We would, of course, be willing to attend for a meeting on a date and time to suit your convenience.

With kind regards  
Yours ever  
D. N.