

CENSORSHIP: IN A 'FREE' SOCIETY?

There are, we must admit, many reasons to be *offended* by or to *disagree* with the content of various publications, movies, or television and radio programs. But whenever individuals feel personally *threatened* by what other people read, publish, or broadcast, it seems that the only solution ever entertained to resolve their perceived threat is by asking for government intervention --- *censorship* --- a 'solution' welcomed by governments ever eager to extend their control over the citizenry.

But is the perceived threat *real*? Can the simple *expression* of ideas, opinions, or lifestyles pose a genuine threat to the safety of individuals in society?

We think not.

The world is replete with potentially dangerous people, ideas, and opinions. But history has proven that *potentially* dangerous ideas only become a *real* danger to citizens when governments become active in attempts to enforce or ban the acceptance of those ideas. Such was the case with publications like *Mein Kampf*, *Das Kapital* and yes, even the *Bible* --- publications which have yet to be banned for the carnage that has been attributed to them at various times throughout history.

Freedom involves taking a risk that there will always be some abuse of it, but knowing that the environment of freedom for all is the most valuable (and *necessary*) social condition. Otherwise, we'll have *tyranny*, which guarantees oppression for everyone under the *pretext* of 'protecting' certain interest groups.

The issue here is choice. The power to abolish what we *don't* like is the same power that can abolish the material we *do* like --- and it's an eventuality that occurs every time censorship is accepted as a legitimate function of government.

(over)

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Those who still believe that it is possible to confine censorship to specific areas of thought or depiction (i.e., sex) should take a closer look at today's reality --- virtually every conceivable form of communication in this country is controlled by some level of government in some manner: television, radio, newspapers, religious opinion, record albums, units of measurement, language, political advertising, telephone rates, the mail, sexually-oriented matter, rock videos, film, crime comics, satellite reception, 'lifestyle' advertising, etc., etc., etc...

And what's the government *justification* for all this media control?

'We're not trying to *protect* anyone,' (!!) says Ontario Censor Board Chairman Mary Brown, 'our purpose is simply to *enforce community standards*.'

What Mary Brown has confessed to us in no uncertain terms goes much further than the simple admission that individuals in Ontario have been denied their rights to freedom of speech and association --- it means that certain selected minorities within society have been categorically denied their right to express *disagreement with majority opinion*. Unfortunately, as happens with all censorship attempts, things like 'community' standards always become *government* standards, and the word 'enforce' always refers to the application of (legal) *force*.

We think that the basis of any free society is having the right to disagree in a peaceful manner without the fear of political persecution --- no matter *how* unpopular a person's point of view may be.

Freedom Party believes that the *purpose of government* is to *protect* your freedom of choice, *not* to restrict it.

If you want to make your own choices rather than have those choices taken from you by often well-meaning but always ill-advised interest groups and politicians, then *choose Freedom Party* before even *that* choice may be taken from you. After all, freedom of choice is what we're all about!

FREEDOM PARTY OF ONTARIO

P.O. BOX 2214, STN. 'A',

LONDON, ONTARIO

N6A 4E3

(519) 433-8612

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