

**TRYING TO DRAW THE LINE ON ART;
OR
ANYBODY FOR A CUP OF HEMLOCK ?**

In view of the fact that the political and economic thinking in People's Republic of China (PRC), today, is akin to the thought processes, prevalent throughout the United States in the 1920s, one must expect a somewhat immature thought process within the PRC Government, a thought process that, in the current tide of political, economic and moralistic concepts, held sacred in the Western World, it may be considered more than a little regressive.

And it follows that such PRC Governmental thought processes would cascade down to the majority of the 1.30 billion human population of the PRC, at least, with regard to those hundreds of millions of PRC residents who have never been exposed to modern Western thought and moralistic values.

The Chief Executive of The Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the PRC, Mr Tung Chee Hwa, explained this situation, recently, in the United States, on his official visit to California.

He said, among other things, that, while the United States was the envy of the world, *“but sometimes, in the kindness of your heart, you (meaning the thought processes, prevalent throughout the United States, today) like other people to immediately have what you (meaning the Government of the United States) have, today. What we, always, have to remember is that countries are different.”*

This elucidation of present-day, Chinese thought, as the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, explains a great deal.

And it is, clearly, the reason for some of the more-recent decisions by the HKSAR's Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority (TELA).

TELA announced, recently, that, along with the HKSAR Police Force and the HKSAR Customs and Excise Department, it was intention of the HKSAR Government to stop the proliferation of obscene and indecent Video Cassette Discs (VCDs).

Something in the neighbourhood of 600 black spots, throughout the HKSAR, will be targeted, initially, according to the Commissioner of TELA, Mr Eddy Chan Yuk Tak.

Evidently, according to TELA Commissioner Chan, there are about 3,600 shops, selling VCDs in the HKSAR.

He said: *“VCDs are becoming more popular, and discs, containing pornographic material, are easily accessible by people under 18 (years of age). That is why it will be the focus of our operation. This year's campaign will target retail outlets, selling pornographic VCDs as well as suspected wholesale or manufacturing workshops. We are now addressing the problem as people, under 18 (years of age), are affected by the proliferation of indecent articles.”*

TELA Commissioner Chan, no doubt, has realised that the Internet, unlike the alleged proliferation of, what he considers to be obscene, indecent and objectionable (the last-named is a TARGET assumption) VCDs -- at least, objectionable to those members of the HKSAR society, below the age of 18 years -- is proliferation gone mad in respect of displays of the feminine anatomy, completely unadorned.

Four of the juiciest sites, where one may view all kinds of things, from animals, being masturbated by models, to fornication with goats and what-have-you, to gangbangs, to lesbians, doing their things, to homosexual encounters, are:

[HTTP://newpic.com](http://newpic.com)

[HTTP://sex.com](http://sex.com)

[HTTP://peekshows.com](http://peekshows.com)

[HTTP://extremehardcoresex.com/sex](http://extremehardcoresex.com/sex)

Unless the HKSAR Government is willing to enact laws to ban the use of the Personal Computer, for use with the Internet, TELA Commissioner Chan's position, to stamp out what he, and his followers, consider to be obscene and indecent displays of human flesh, may well be frustrated.

One does not have to be a computer expert to know how to print, or to make a copy, of something that is freely available on the Internet.

Then, there are those indecent terms: 'Fuck'; 'cunt'; 'prick'; 'shit'; and, perhaps, even, 'suck'. All of these words may be found in the dictionary.

What is to be done about obscene, indecent and objectionable words, which pop up on the Internet?

In a series of interviews with some prominent Chinese intellectuals, in a number of off-the-cuff conversations (TARGET has agreed not to publish names), certain similar statements kept on recurring: *“Maybe we can't stop everything, but we have to try something (to keep smut away from the children of the HKSAR) “If the police did not try to catch killers, even when they failed to catch (all) the culprits, should the police stop trying (to catch killers)? “Look, you can't have a referendum about everything. There comes a time when you have to delegate responsibility to somebody to safeguard society's moral standards “Just because you may be anti-Communist or anti-China, it does not follow that everything that China or the Communists do is wrong “I.*

Who Will Be Responsible ?

TELA is an HKSAR-appointed, statutory body. It is responsible for censoring motion pictures, and, generally, deciding what is to be considered objectionable and unobjectionable, as far as the HKSAR society is concerned.

Since the Government of the HKSAR is appointed by the PRC Government, one way or another, it follows that members of TELA, appointed by the HKSAR Government, must be viewed as political appointments.

And it follows, logically, that a TELA appointment is selected for his or her views with regard to the current climate of morality and political thought in the PRC.

The motion picture, *Sand Pebbles*, was banned from being viewed in Hongkong due to it being considered objectionable, politically.

The classic motion picture, *Deep Throat*, in which actress Linda Lovelace, demonstrates, on camera, her ability to perform fellatio and cunnilingus, as well as ordinary fornication, rocked the United States when it was first viewed, nationally, more than 3 decades ago, has been banned from viewing in the HKSAR and, by the looks of things, shall always be banned.

But the Supreme Court of the United States, all Justices of which are political appointees, has determined that acting, of the likes of Linda Lovelace, is an art form and, as such, it would be Unconstitutional (contrary to the Constitution of the United States of America, that is) to proscribe its viewing.

If the depiction of the human anatomy, be it a male's anatomy or a female's anatomy, regardless of that depiction and regardless of whether or not the depiction was singly or in a group, mixed or solely one sex, has no social benefit and appeals to the prurient interests of society, in general, then it used to be considered obscene.

The key was the term, *“exceeding reasonable limits,”* when describing what was depicted as to be considered obscene, in Western thought.

Today, however, the US Supreme Court refuses to make any determinations as to what is to be considered obscene and what is not obscene because it is held that a judicial door, which is ajar, is a door through which all manner of horrors may gain entrance.

In the deep south of the United States, where the Church plays a dominant role in society, laying down rules by which the population must follow, or ostracising a member of society for failing to follow the Church's ruling on a subject, the Church has failed in all its attempts to bring about legislation in order to ban the proliferation of what TELA Commissioner Chan is, presently, proposing.

The HKSAR won a somewhat enviable reputation, internationally, when, some years ago, the Government banned the viewing of a copy of Michelangelo's famous 14-foot marble statue of David, the symbol of Florence, Italy – because it showed the Biblical character as having a penis, in all its glory.

In the international art world, in the corridors of nearly every institution of higher learning in the Western World, notwithstanding every medical school in the world, the banning of a miniature of David was laughable because Pope Julius II had commissioned Michelangelo (1475 – 1564) to paint frescoes on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome (1508 – 1512).

And the frescoes, the most famous of which was *“God Separating Light from Darkness”* and *“The Creation of Adam,”* showed nothing but naked bodies.

In defense of depicting his creations as being *“naked in their glory,”* Michelangelo is said to have remarked to his patron, Pope Julius II, that he did not think that God created man, being fully clothed.

Such was the excellence of this Italian artist, in demonstrating, among other things, his masterly knowledge and understanding of the human anatomy and movement, that it changed the course of Western art – forever.

Auguste Rodin (1840 – 1917) produced sculptures and paintings, which, like those of Michelangelo, will endure forever. And, like Michelangelo, many of Rodin's works of art were of men and women – in the nude.

Nearly all of his most famous works, *“The Kiss,” “The Thinker,”* and *“Andromeda,”* are nudes.

Would the HKSAR Government dare to ban Rodin's paintings and sketches, as are shown in the Musée Rodin publication, entitled, *“Die Erotischen Öfen (The Erotica),”* of Auguste Rodin?

The sketches, contained in this 110-page art book, are of men and women, all naked and in every possible pose, from lying on their stomachs to imitating the position of a copulating couple.

Pubic hair is in abundance, TELA Commissioner Chan should note should he view this art book in the Urban Council Library at City Hall.

Last Wednesday, July 28, it was reported that TELA had requested the Obscene Articles Tribunal to look, carefully, into the wordings of 6 Chinese novels, all of which give graphic descriptions of lovemaking scenes.

There appears to be some concern that these novels may be available to the youth of the HKSAR.

A spokesperson for TELA has informed the world that, henceforth, HKSAR public libraries will adopt a new set of guidelines so that, when libraries acquire new books, the library authority will not cross the line – of what is to be considered objectionable and what is considered acceptable literature.

Of course, there is that little anomaly, which appears to cut across TELA Commissioner Chan's mandate when he ruled, on Wednesday, July 14, that guides to HKSAR prostitutes, contained in the popular newspaper, *Apple Daily*, were suitable for all ages.

TELA Commissioner Chan has gone on record as stating that he had no idea as to the reason that the Obscene Articles Tribunal made its ruling on the guides to prostitutes in Mongkok.

This type of advertisement has been in existence in numerous newspapers, published in Hongkong, for many decades. They, normally, go along the lines as follows:

“If you go to this apartment in Portland Street and ask for “Betty of the Big Boobsí, you will find a willing receptacle for your lust. Betty is the sweetest thing to eat since the invention of sugar cane. Suck it and see.”

Of course, every prostitute in the Portland Street bordello would agree to answer to the name, “Betty of the Big Boobsí.

But the point is that this type of advertisement, sometimes couched as a PR handout, has been published for many decades, now.

It was never deemed to be a corrupting influence on the youth of the HKSAR in the past. At least, no known police action was taken to stamp it out.

For what reason, now, as the HKSAR approaches the new millennium, should such advertisement be deemed objectionable?

Socrates, a 5th Century Greek philosopher, was accused and found guilty of neglecting the gods of the state and corrupting the youth of Athens: He made them think for themselves and this was said to have been leading the youth away from the sacred principles of the then Greek concept of democracy.

Socrates was executed by being forced to drink the poison, hemlock, even though he could have escaped with the help of his friends who implored him to live.

The question: Who will be asked to drink a cup of hemlock in the HKSAR?

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