

Excerpts (red highlights added) from:

New Zealand Parliamentary Debate (Hansard) - 08 February 2005

Films, Videos, And Publications Classification Amendment Bill – Second Reading

Hon PHIL GOFF (Minister of Justice): I move, *That the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Amendment Bill be now read a second time.* The principal Act was passed around 11 years ago, and most of its fundamentals remain sound.

.....
The Internet has become the prime vehicle for the worldwide proliferation of child pornography...That fact is recognised by Interpol. It is recognised by **organisations like ... Stop Demand Foundation.**

...
I have to say that I utterly reject some ignorant Australian journalist writing for *Time* magazine questioning whether this country is a haven for pornographers. I quote from one of the most respected anti-pornography campaigners in this country, **Denise Ritchie,**

...
JUDITH COLLINS (National—Clevedon): the Minister has listened to the pleas of ACT MP Deborah Coddington and of **Denise Ritchie**... He has listened and he has decided that, yes, our laws about the possession of child pornography should be at least the same as those of our comparable neighbour, Australia, and of Canada. But that is the least of it.

...
The Minister has told us tonight how much he thinks of **Denise Ritchie**, who runs .. **Stop Demand Foundation**, for whom I also have a very high regard. He has told us how much he thinks of her, but he was not thinking much of her when she asked this House not to do the things we did with the prostitution reform legislation, because of the fears of having younger people driven into and kept in crimes of prostitution.

...
I would like to close by saying that I support the changes the Minister says he will make. We have not actually seen them, of course; he only says he will make them. He said so today only after **Denise Ritchie** got on the phone to people in this House and told us what the changes to the bill should be, after Deborah Coddington came to this House and told us what should be done, and after *Time* magazine pointed out that this Minister and this Government have made our country a particularly soft option for paedophiles.

DIANNE YATES (Labour—Hamilton East): ... As has been mentioned, right through the whole process—both the inquiry and the bill—we have had submissions from people such as **Denise Ritchie** ... and other people who are concerned with the welfare of children. They have made extensive submissions to ensure that we are dealing not only with the child sex-abuse images, but that we protect the children who are used to produce these images. We think that it is right and fair that the penalties should be increased.

PETER BROWN (Deputy Leader—NZ First): I would like to make it quite clear from the outset that New Zealand First does support this bill...

I know I talk for my colleagues when I say that we are very delighted that the Minister has taken on board the information that has been conveyed to us by **Denise Ritchie**, and that he will toughen up on the penalty regime. That is a large part of our criticism of this bill. It is one significant criticism that we have—that the bill, as it has come back from the Government Administration Committee, is not tough enough in terms of penalties. Perhaps for the enlightenment of Mr Worth, I would like to ask why the two National Party members on that committee did not pick up that the UK and Canada are tougher than we will be under the provisions of this bill, nor that Australia will be toughening up its legislation. Maybe they—

LARRY BALDOCK (United Future):

There were a number of press releases over the holidays, if anyone was monitoring them, and a number of those came from my colleague Marc Alexander, who has been our representative on the select committee. He raised the issue with the Government members and urged them to bring the bill on to the Order Paper so that it could be dealt with. **Denise Ritchie** also made a number of statements about how appalling it was that we were not dealing with this legislation. So it is really no surprise that it has suddenly appeared for us to debate in the House today.

...
I join others in commending **Denise Ritchie** and others like her from the **Stop Demand Foundation**...- for the work they do opposing and fighting child pornography. What a horror it is for a child to be caught as a sex slave. What an awful, awful lifestyle! I have walked in some of those places in Asia and have seen some of the images of children being kept in cages for exploitation by foreign visitors, and it is an unspeakable horror.

I commend the Minister for responding to **Denise Ritchie's** appeals for an increase in sentencing. However, I had to agree with Judith Collins when she asked why he did not also listen to the woman whom he had such regard for in his speech today when she and many others warned about what would happen to our society if the prostitution law reform legislation was passed, or what would happen to young people when there was no clear distinction in that law between being under age and over age, and when we were not even prepared to allow the police to ask for proof of identity so they could do their job of protecting young people more effectively. That is a very good case of what is happening in our society as the lines are becoming blurred.

SHANE ARDERN (National—Taranaki-King Country):

...
I also congratulate the Minister on accepting the advice of **Denise Ritchie**. I shall answer some of the questions as to why the committee itself did not come to that conclusion. The bottom line is that we looked at an enormous amount of information. We did not ask whether we were harmonising with like-minded countries on this particular penalty, and, with the benefit of hindsight, perhaps we should have. But having said that, **Denise Ritchie and her group, Stop Demand**, brought that to the attention of the Minister. The Minister has accepted the recommendations they brought forward, and I congratulate him on that.

...
Bill read a second time.

The House adjourned at 9.59 p.m.