FROM: Phyllis Schlafly

68 FAIRMOUNT, ALTON, ILLINOIS 62002 (618) 462-5415

RELEASE: June 14, 1984

NEW WEAPONS IN THE PORNOGRAPHY BATTLE

President Ronald Reagan signed the Child Protection Act into law on May 21, 1984 -- a new Federal law designed to wipe out the evil of child pornography. This was a great day for all those who believe in fundamental decency, and a rewarding day for all those who have been working for the passage of this law since the opportunity was opened up by the Supreme Court decision in New York v. Ferber on July 2, 1982.

As the President said that day in the Rose Garden, "There is no one lower or more vicious than a person who would profit from the abuse of children, whether by using them in pornographic material or by encouraging their sexual abuse by distributing this material." The 1982 Ferber decision combined with the 1984 statute constitute a stunning affirmation by our society that there is NO First Amendment right to take pictures of children in pornographic poses.

Child pornography is the use of children under age 18 in pictures, books or films to perform sex acts, or to pose in lewd positions or circumstances. The new Federal statute increases penalties on offenders tenfold, and gives prosecutors the additional power to get wiretaps and to seize pornographers' profits, pictures and equipment.

The most important feature of the new law is that prosecutors no longer have to prove that the pornography meets the exotic Supreme Court definition of obscenity. All they have to do is to prove that the child photographed is under age 18.

President Reagan's signing of the Child Protection Act, whose main provision has already been upheld by the Supreme Court in the Ferber case, thus puts all three branches of our government on record as repudiating those self-proclaimed "civil libertarians" who have been asserting a "constitutional right" of the dregs of humanity to lead children into lives of sin and depravity.

The American people have had enough of the liberal lawyers who wove a web of "freedom of press" and "civil liberties" slogans which exposed children naked in front of the commercial cameras filming their private little parts and unnatural acts, while clothing their exploiters in the sacred mantle of the First Amendment.

Three weeks earlier, on May 1, the Mayor of Indianapolis signed into law an ordinance sponsored by Councilwoman Beulah Coughenour to give that city a new weapon to fight adult pornography. It deals with pornography as a civil rights problem and opens the way for private lawsuits to protect the rights of women.

The uniqueness of the Indianapolis ordinance shepherded to passage by pro-family leader Mrs. Coughenour is its "finding" about the nature and effect of pornography: "Pornography is a discriminatory practice based on sex because its effect is to deny women equal opportunities in society. Pornography is central in creating and maintaining sex as a basis for discrimination. Pornography is a systematic practice of exploitation and subordination based on sex which differentially harms women.

"The bigotry and contempt it promotes, with the acts of aggression it fosters, harm women's opportunities for equality of rights in employment, education, access to and use of public accommodations, and acquisition of real property, and contribute significantly to restricting women in particular from full exercise of citizenship and participation in public life, including in neighborhoods."

Lest one think that we are merely talking about "calendar art" or "girlie magazines," here is how the Indianapolis ordinance defines pornography: "The sexually explicit subordination of women, graphically depicted, whether in pictures or in words, that includes one or more of the following: (1) Women are presented as sexual objects who enjoy pain or humiliation; or (2) Women are presented as sexual objects who experience sexual pleasure in being raped; or (3) Women are presented as sexual objects tied up or cut up or mutilated or bruised or physically hurt, or as dismembered or truncated or fragmented or severed into body parts; or (4) Women are presented being penetrated by objects or animals; or (5) Women are presented in scenarios of degradation, injury, abasement, torture, shown as filthy or inferior, bleeding, bruised, or hurt in a context that makes these conditions sexual."

An hour after the Indianapolis ordinance became law, a Federal district judge issued a preliminary injunction prohibiting its enforcement until the lawsuit is resolved. The liberals can be expected to continue to defend the free press of pornographers to degrade women as much as they choose.

But now that our society has fashioned the tools to eliminate the sexploitation and sex-violent abuse of children, the next step is to do the same for women.