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Dear David Webb,

I heard you on the radio yesterday evening, and, although I wanted to get through and give you some support, I was unable to do so. I thought however you might like to hear some observations and a few facts which are always useful.

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE was withdrawn from circulation by Stanley Kubrick because he had received death threats against his children if he didn't do so.

The American lady who expressed such concern about children. Why isn't she in the USA seeking to get their ludicrous rating system amended under which any "R" rated film, (which includes 99.9% of all films classified "18" over here) can be seen by children of any age provided they are accompanied by an adult. Exactly the same as our old "A" certificate)

As you so rightly said (and this was the first occasion I've heard somebody other than myself point this out) "snuff" movies don't exist. I think myself that this whole urban myth reveals more about the morbid machinations of the minds of people who cite them. It's almost as if they wanted them to exist!

If we are such a bastion of democracy as the enemies of free-thought like to insist, why are censors' certificates not forced to clearly show the exact amount of footage that has been deleted from a film to conform to the "requirements" of the category, and similarly all advertising material? Then the consumer would have this precious "choice" we keep hearing about. Films are quite free to promise everything and deliver little.

I saw in today's "Guardian" a piece about the BBFC, and enclosed the letter I faxed about it. I shall be surprised if they print it.

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What sort of censors do we have that classify the Compassion In World Farming cinema advertisement as an "18" (I got our local Council to change it to a "U"!) and want their fixed term contracts extended because they can't be depraved and corrupted, but we can?

Why is it that when one debates film censorship (as I often have) the argument always breaks down into what children might see? No matter how one spells it out that one supports classification? (If anything, I'd sometimes be a mite less generous with the "PG" and "15" than the BBFC - Margaret Ford was interviewed last year in "The Independent" saying how traumatised as a child she was by THE WIZARD OF OZ and SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS, and yet she worked at the Board during the time that both these originally classified "A" films were reclassified as "U"! So much for child concern!)

The Board will never let me see their reports, and put every obstacle they can in my way of trying to find out what cuts they have made on films. Guy Phelps used to programme the Ipswich Film Theatre years ago, and now works for the Board despite their "rule" that anyone who has ever worked in any capacity whatsoever for the film industry cannot work as an examiners.....

Anyway, I wish you well with you campaign, and as I'm sure you've already discovered, it's a battle against ignorance, philistinism and that uniquely British form of pious hypocrisy, and secrecy. Roll on a Freedom of Information Act!

Yours sincerely,

Dave Godin

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The Editor,
The Guardian.

Dear Sir,

Thirteen people, hired to engage in censorship work which is subject to neither public scrutiny nor accountability, complain to "The Guardian" when their fixed term contracts duly come to an end. That they should then seek to extend their lucrative employment, (for which they all quite happily signed an authoritarian confidentiality pledge), with the disingenuous claim that they want to carry on censoring in the cause freedom, shows to a breath-taking degree the extent to which Orwellian double-think has firmly entered into British consciousness.