FILM CENSORSHIP

THE CINEMA AND
THE WILLIAMS COMMITTEE

A Talk given by R. S. Camplin, General Secretary of Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association at the Association of Independent Cinemas Seminar on 7th February 1978

The Williams Committee is a committee under the Chairmanship of Professor Bernard Williams, appointed by the Home Secretary, on 13th July 1977, to review the laws relating to obscenity and film censorship. Its terms of reference are:—

> **"to review the laws concerning obscenity, indecency and violence in publications, displays and entertainments in England and Wales, except in the field of broadcasting, and to review the arrangements for film censorship in England and Wales; and to make recommendations."**

I am very much indebted to Hugh Orr for the invitation he sent me to talk to the Seminar today on the subject of film censorship, or, more precisely, the Cinema and the Williams Committee.

What I have to say will, I think, break down conveniently into three sections, which might loosely be described as (1) ancient history, (2) recent history and (3) where do we go from here?

Ancient history, in film censorship terms, starts with the Cinematograph Act of 1909. The Act had a long title as follows:– "An Act to Make Better Provision for Securing Safety at Cinematograph and Other Exhibitions" and it provided that an "exhibition of moving pictures should not be given by means of a cinematograph employing inflammable film except on premises licensed for the purpose by the County Council". It went on to say that "The County Council may grant licences on such terms and conditions as the Council may by the respective licences determine".

Now this was an Act for securing safety and the Scots, who have always taken a logical view of things, did so in this case, so much so that North of the Border the terms and conditions had to be concerned with safety and there was no film censorship in Scotland until much later.

However, in England and Wales, the matter was tested in the Courts (it was in 1911) and, as the Act said that County Councils could grant licences on such terms and conditions as they determined, then if they determined that there should be a censorship condition, then a censorship condition there should be.

Thus, film censorship came into being and the power to decide whether a film could or could not be shown in a cinema rested with the County Councils though, as they were freely able to delegate their powers to subsidiary councils or committees, film censorship in practice frequently became the responsibility of the Watch Committee or even of the local fire brigade.

To avoid the need to submit films to all local licensing authorities, the industry soon set up a British Board of Film Censors. I need not go into details; the matter is admirably dealt with in John Trevelyan's book "What the Censor Saw", published in October 1973.

In 1932, a Sunday Entertainments Act was passed, giving County Councils the right to allow cinemas to be opened on Sundays, subject to such conditions as the County Council "think fit to impose".

a licence or in granting/

Thus, both the 1909 Act, although supposed to be for securing safety, and the 1932 Act, allowed the County Council to lay virtually any condition in granting/the right to open on Sunday and, as I have said, in England and Wales, the Courts held that censorship conditions could properly be laid.

It was not until 1952 that an Act was passed (Cinematograph Act 1952) giving cinema owners a right of appeal against unreasonable conditions in a licence. It seems that up to that date any condition could be laid and there was no appeal. This Act was also necessary because the 1909 Act only covered cinematograph exhibitions involving inflammable film and by 1952 non flam film was becoming common.

The new definition of "cinematograph exhibition" was very wide covering virtually any projected moving picture whether or not the use of film was involved. As an interesting aside The Telekinema of the 1951 Festival of Britain avoided the need for a licence by showing only non-inflammable film.

The 1952 Act also brought Scotland under control by the slightly devious means of including under "minor amendments" a change in the title of the 1909 Act from "An Act for Securing Safety Etc.", to "An Act for Regulating Etc.".

But perhaps the most important change, in terms of what we are discussing today, brought about by the 1952 Act, was that while leaving undisturbed the established discretionary right of local licensing authorities to censor films for adults, it laid a new duty (that is an obligation as distinct from a discretion) on them to prohibit the admission of children (legally the under 16's) to cinemas showing material designated as unsuitable by the licensing authority or, and this is interesting, "by such other body as may be specified in the licence". This must be a reference to the British Board of Film Censors, it could hardly mean anything else. So we have what amounts to statutory recognition of the Board's existence and a statutory duty to censor films for children.

Ancient history, as I referred to it in my opening, ends with the Sunday Cinema Act, 1972, for which we must, I think, claim sole parenthood, which abolished the Sunday Levy and put the Sunday opening of cinemas onto a more reasonable basis. Regrettably this Act, like the 1932 Act, did not apply in Scotland. In England and Wales it had the effect of killing conditions peculiar to Sunday, like no "X"

films on Sunday, such conditions would I think be held to be unreasonable.

Recent history really starts with the Local Government Act of 1972. This Act, which was a major overhaul of local government in Great Britain, transferred the responsibility for licensing cinemas from County Councils to District Councils. This made perfect sense from the point of view of the trade, as the County Councils other than the Greater London Council had usually delegated their powers, and there was no doubt that, if there was to be film censorship arising out of cinema licensing, it should be exercised by the most local of the local authorities, i.e. the District Council. And for this purpose the Greater London Council was deemed to be a District Council.

However, the Nationwide Festival of Light seized upon this opportunity to circularise all the new District Councils, inviting them to put conditions into cinematograph licences requiring cinema proprietors to give the District Councils prior notification of any "X" certificate films that they intended to show. It was the view of the Festival of Light that many "X" certificate films were unsuitable for exhibition and, in support of this view, they enclosed with their circular a typescript from perhaps the most censorable section of the sound track of "LAST TANGO IN PARIS", which, read in isolation and out of context, could have worried District Councils in some instances, bearing in mind that they were coming new to the function of film censorship.

As a result a minority of District Councils sought to impose a pre-notification condition on cinema proprietors and, although this was strongly resisted, it took the winning of three Crown Court cases in England, two of them with

costs against the local authority, and one Sherriff Court Case in Scotland, to convince some District Councils that the advice they had received was not really very sound.

Attempts to complicate the issue also arose with various prosecutions under the Vagrancy Acts, all of which failed. The Vagrancy Acts were concerned with display in a public place, which clearly did not include a display inside a cinema. There was also a private prosecution, of United Artists, in respect of the film "LAST TANGO IN PARIS" under the Obscene Publications Act. The case came on at the Old Bailey in November, 1974 and the prosecution was, for all practical purposes, unsuccessful. A cinematograph exhibition could not, in any case, be attacked under the Obscene Publications Act and the attack in this case was against the distributor for presumably, attempting to deprave and corrupt the exhibitor – not really very plausible.

It was about this time, however, that a number of fresh happenings occurred. In August 1974 the Law Commission published their Working Paper No. 57. Now, the Law Commission, presumably as the result of the case of the Shrewsbury Martyrs, (doubtless you will remember the building site pickets who were charged with conspiracy) had been asked to review the law of conspiracy and included in Working Paper No. 57 was a proposal not only to abolish the offence of conspiracy to corrupt public morals, but also to abolish the related common law offences.

Where necessary, fresh statute law was proposed and in the case of the film, the Law Commission was proposing to recommend that the Obscene Publications Act should be extended to apply to all cinematograph exhibitions

other than those given on premises licensed under the Cinematograph Acts

The proposal to treat premises licensed under the Cinematograph Acts differently, probably arose from the knowledge that local authorities were exercising their powers of censorship. But about the same time, the Film Viewing Board of the Greater London Council proposed, and the Council itself debated, that the Council should give up their discretionary powers of deciding on the suitability of films for exhibition to adults.

Had these two proposals been brought into force at the same time, a state of unprecedented anarchy could have arisen in licensed cinemas in Greater London with the common law abolished, no statute law applying and the local authority exercising no control.

The film industry proposed strongly to the GLC that they should not give up these powers, or at least should not contemplate doing so until a proper body of law had been formulated by Parliament, and the GLC in full Council threw out the proposal by the narrow margin of 50 votes to 44, with 3 abstentions and 9 absentees.

It seemed to us at CEA that something had to be done about this and a draft of proposals designed to claim for the cinema a legal status similar to that acquired by the theatre under the Theatres Act, 1968 was put before and adopted by CEA's Finance and General Purposes Committee in April, 1975.

If a reminder of the urgency of the problem were necessary, it was rapidly provided by the conviction of both the exhibitor and the cinema manager in June 1975 at common

law for exhibiting the film "MORE ABOUT THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE". The offence of which they were found guilty was the common law offence of indecency. The film itself had been refused a certificate by the British Board of Film Censors but given a local certificate "X" by the Greater London Council.

Meanwhile, CEA discussed its proposals with Kinematograph Renters' Society, Association of Independent Cinemas and Film Production Association and an industry memorandum was drawn up, dated 30th September, 1975 and submitted to the Law Commission. In summary, the associations proposed:—

(i) The extension to all cinematograph exhibitions of the relevant parts of the existing legislation applicable to theatres, namely:—
  (a) a definition of obscenity, Theatres Act, 1968, Section 2 (1)
  (b) the elimination of common law and similar offences, Section 2 (4)
  (c) the defence of the public good, Section 3 ,
  (d) the restriction on institution of proceedings, Section 8 (i.e. prosecutions without the consent of Director of Public Prosecutions.)

(ii) the abolition of the discretionary powers of local authorities to censor films for adults

(iii) the continuation of the function of the British Board of Film Censors as a classifying body in respect of films for exhibition to persons under 18 (where local authorities' powers of censorship would continue) and as an advisory body in respect of the certification of films for exhibition to adults.

(iv) a law to make it an offence for a person under 18 to seek to gain admittance to cinematograph exhibitions to adults.

Bobby Furber, solicitor to the Kinematograph Renters' Society and I, went to see the Law Commission on 23rd October 1975 and while they made it clear that the cinema licensing powers of local authorities were not within their terms of reference, (they were only concerned with aspects of the law relating to conspiracy) they listened most sympathetically to our proposals for the abolition of the common law and for the application to the cinema of the law that had applied to the theatre since 1968.

On the 20th November, 1975 the Presidents of CEA and Kinematograph Renters' Society met with Lord Harlech and James Ferman in order to seek the Board's support for the position which it was hoped that Furber and I had achieved with the Law Commission. Lord Harlech and Mr. Ferman gave the Presidents their full support.

Further evidence of the need for statutory clarification came from the Court of Appeal which held, in March 1976, that the Greater London Council was in the wrong in using the "deprave and corrupt" test of obscenity instead of the common law test in its Rules of Management. But the Greater London Council was only in the wrong so long as the common law applied to the cinema.

On 17th March 1976 the Law Commission Report was published and in relation to film it was almost precisely in accordance with what the industry had asked for. I say almost precisely. The only difference was that whereas we had asked that the Director of Public Prosecution's consent be required for any prosecution, the Law Commission

proposal limited this to exhibitions on premises licensed under the 1909 Act or given by non-profitmaking bodies, for instance film societies.

We waited expectantly for the Queen's Speech later in that year, there being good precedents for assuming that a Report of this nature from a body as authoritative as the Law Commission would be rapidly translated into legislation. In fact, Mr. Jenkins at the time he was Home Secretary had indicated as much in a statement made in the House of Commons on 14th October, 1975. Referring to the Law Commission Report he had said "When it is received and considered, the Government intend to introduce without delay comprehensive legislation to reform this branch of the law".

It therefore seemed a major setback when it appeared from the Queen's Speech that, while the Government intended to legislate on Parts I and II of the Law Commission Report dealing respectively with conspiracy and trespass, it appeared that they had decided not to proceed with Part III, which dealt with offences against public morals and decency and which proposed the solutions which we sought for the cinema.

It appeared to be a fait accompli. The Minutes of the meeting of the All Industry Censorship Committee for the 29th November 1976 record that Mr. Ferman (Secretary of the British Board of Film Censors) summarised the position with regard to the Law Commission's Report that cinematograph exhibitions should be brought under the Obscene Publications Act. It was, he said, becoming apparent that the present Government, due to lack of time and heavy commitments in the House, did not propose to consider

Part III of the Report and therefore would not bring in legislation to cover cinematograph exhibitions and therefore any prosecutions would remain under the common law.

Some of us were most unhappy about this and decided to see if it would be possible to press Government further and in this connection, Sir Harold Wilson was most helpful in restating the views of the industry in letters to the Home Secretary, a correspondence published in the CEA Annual Report for 1976.

On 21st January, 1977, a meeting was held, the first for a very long time, of the Cinema Consultative Committee of the British Board of Film Censors, a Committee composed of local authority associations and film industry associations. The Government decision not to legislate on Part III of the Law Commission Report was on the Agenda and I pressed the meeting to pass a resolution deploring this.

We had recently learned of the Home Office intention to set up a committee to undertake a fundamental review of the law in this field and, while we could welcome this, it seemed to me that it was quite wrong to leave the cinema alone subject to the common law during the long period the committee might be sitting. Lord Harlech, who was in the Chair, suggested that a resolution should be drafted, for approval by all the organisations present at the meeting and for subsequent submission to the Home Secretary, and this was agreed unanimously. I propose to quote the resolution that was finally agreed by the constituent bodies in full, because I believe it was one of the most important milestones in our eventual achievement of the abolition of the common law affecting cinemas:-

RESOLUTION OF THE CINEMA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE FOR FORWARDING TO THE HOME SECRETARY

The Cinema Consultative Committee, convened under the auspices of the British Board of Film Censors on Friday, 21st January 1977, and including representatives of the British film industry and of all local authority associations in the United Kingdom:—

(1) Notes with regret the failure of the government to introduce legislation along the lines proposed by the Law Commission in Part III of their "Draft Conspiracy Criminal Law Reform Bill;"

(2) Notes the announcement by the Home Office that a committee is to be appointed to undertake a fundamental review of the laws in the field of obscenity, indecency and censorship;

(3) Urges HM Government not to postpone, during the deliberations of this committee, the introduction of immediate legislation to provide for the cinema parity of treatment with the theatre in relation to the criminal law;

(4) Suggests that such parity of treatment between cinema and theatre is a necessary pre-condition of the fundamental review proposed by the Home Office, it being unreasonable to leave the cinema in its present uncertain state during the lengthy period of time that such a fundamental review of the law is likely to take.

Approved unanimously and the wording confirmed by representatives of the following associations:

Association of County Councils
Association of District Councils
Association of Metropolitan Authorities
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
Belfast City Council
Greater London Council
Association of Independent Cinemas
Association of Independent Producers
Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association
Film Production Association of Great Britain
Independent Film Distributors Association
Kinematograph Renters' Society
British Board of Film Censors

(Signed)
HARLECH

5th May 1977

Lord Harlech sent this resolution to the Home Secretary on 5th May 1977 and sent with it his own covering letter, which concluded with the words "I very much hope that the strong and unanimous view of the Cinema Consultative Committee on this matter will be taken into consideration in your planning of further legislation in this field".

While the Government appeared to remain unmoved by these protests, the Opposition, at the Committee Stage of the Debate on the Criminal Law Bill, moved amendments which would have had the effect of bringing the whole of Part III of the Law Commission's Report onto the Statute Book. The Government, not being prepared to go that far, offered, if these amendments were withdrawn, to bring forward a new clause at the Report Stage to deal with the question of the cinema.

This was done and section 53 of the Criminal Law Act is now on the Statute Book and came into legal force last 1st December. It does in fact precisely what we set out to achieve, that is to say:—

- (i) to apply the Obscene Publications Act to all cinematograph exhibitions, thus subjecting the film to the test of obscenity applicable to books, magazines, literature and the theatre, namely whether the effect of the article taken as a whole is to tend to deprave and corrupt persons likely to read, hear or see the matter contained in it;
- (ii) to abolish the common law, using the text lifted from the Theatres Act, which is a more comprehensive abolition than the one contained in the Obscene Publications Act;
- (iii) to give to the cinema the defence of the "public good" hitherto available to the theatre, slightly different to the one applicable to books and publications, and
- (iv) to require the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions before a prosecution can be taken under the Obscene Publications Act or before material can be seized, this last point referring only to films of a width not less than 16mm, in order not to hamper the work of the Police in dealing with material on 8mm film.

I said earlier that the Law Commission proposed that the Director of Public Prosecution's consent to a prosecution should only be required for exhibitions on licensed premises or by non-profitmaking bodies – this the Home Office found too wide, and the decision to grant the benefit of this protection only to films of 16mm or wider gauge naturally followed. It remains a matter of regret that the Criminal Law Act does not apply to Scotland, this will have to be remedied and the sooner the better.

Where Do We Go From Here?

So this now brings us to the position that the first four aims in the memorandum of 30th September 1975 have been achieved and the remaining three points remain to be dealt with. At the risk of boring you, I will repeat them. They are:—

- (i) the abolition of the discretionary powers of local authorities to censor films for adults;
- (ii) the continuation of the function of the British Board of Film Censors as a classifying body in respect of films for exhibition to persons under 18 (where local authorities' powers of censorship would continue) and as an advisory body in respect of the certification of films for exhibition to adults;

(iii) a law to make it an offence for a person under 18 to seek to gain admittance to cinematograph exhibitions to adults.

These points, which were all in the original CEA draft of April 1975 and also in the memorandum sent to the Law Commission, were not dealt with by the Criminal Law Act.

The first point is clearly the most important and the one for which one would hope there would be the maximum general support. We have not had a censor of books in peace time in this country since 1695 and we have not had a censor of stage plays since 1968.

By censorship we mean what the Americans admirably refer to as "prior restraint". The abolition of censorship, that is to say the abolition of prior restraint does not mean that you have freedom to do anything, it merely means that you are subjected to prosecution and possible conviction after the event, and the public at large, through reports in the press or attendance in court in the public gallery, have the opportunity of knowing that the matter of conviction or otherwise was decided in public, in the Courts, before a jury. Censorship, on the other hand, means that a decision is taken in private, behind closed doors, as to whether the public may or may not be allowed to see or to hear a certain thing and the public are, by and large, entitled to no information as to why it was held to be unsuitable for them, nor is any public test of the process available.

I would have thought it was unarguable today that this position, which has obtained for books for nearly three hundred years, obtained for the theatre since the abolition

of the Lord Chamberlain's powers in 1968, should equally obtain in the cinema today.

But there will be opposition. I have even heard it said that prior restraint has to exist for the film, because it is different to the theatre, because it can use techniques such as the close-up to make the material have a greater impact on the viewer. This really is nonsense. The true position is that if what could be held not to deprave and corrupt, when shown in the theatre, appeared to have a greater tendency to deprave and corrupt because it was shown in close-up in the cinema, then the cinema is the more likely to be convicted.

Therefore the cinema, because it has these techniques available to it, must be extra careful if it is to stay within the law.

And what are the alternatives? The continuation of the present system under which local authorities take on the responsibility is really quite unsatisfactory. When District Councillors are elected, they are not elected by the public with their quality as likely film censors in mind and there are few areas that I can think of more unsuited to a decision making process based on the personal and the idiosyncratic views of those elected representatives of the people who, for some particular reason, seek to interest themselves in this subject of film censorship.

I can best illustrate the practical problems in the present system by referring back to the three Crown Court cases in England and the case in Scotland. These involved successful appeals by exhibitors against proposed conditions of licence, requiring pre-notification of film programmes, which the Courts held to be unreasonable. The first thing

that needs to be said is that the fact that there had to be so many such cases suggests unreasonable behaviour on the part of the District Councils concerned. Decisions of individual Crown Courts do not create precedents for other Crown Courts but nevertheless the general principle in each case was clearly the same. Secondly, all the appeals had been taken very reluctantly (because of the inevitably high costs involved) and were preceded by protracted negotiations which amply demonstrated the fact that the proposed conditions of licence were intolerable. Again our pleas were disregarded and treated as of no account, the cases proceeded, the costs mounted and had in the end to be met by local rate-payers. The final irony was perhaps that included among the local rate-payers by whom these costs had to be met were the local exhibitors who theoretically had won these appeals!

Finally, these cases represent only the tip of a very large and expensive iceberg. Since the advent of the Local Government Act, 1972, detailed negotiations, in many cases culminating in meetings, have taken place with about seventy District Councils, over one sixth of the number of District Councils in the country and as they all differed slightly in their demands, very considerable time and resources have had to be expended in resolving them.

These discussions still continue although there are heartening signs that at last the light is beginning to dawn that film censorship is a dangerous area in which to operate for local authorities and some are beginning to acknowledge that they would like to disengage.

It remains true however that while the power is there certain District Councillors will seek to involve their authorities in this highly subjective and emotional area which is

quite outside the framework of their normal activities. The question then has to be answered, "if it is not to be done by the local authorities, who can claim to possess the wisdom necessary to forbid adult consumption of thoughts and ideas without granting to the adults in the community a right to know what it is they have been deprived of and why?"

No. We must do our best to convince the Williams Committee that the cinema deserves parallel treatment with the theatre. If it be argued that to do this would release a flood of pornographic material upon the public, then the test of what is obscene must be too lax. If it is, then the argument must be that the test must be corrected. I am expressing no view one way or another as to whether the tendency to deprave and corrupt is the right test, as to whether it is too lax or as to whether it is too stringent.

But if it is wrong, it must be amended for the book, the magazine, the theatre and the cinema, which should all be treated alike. It is intolerable if a position is to remain that books, magazines and the theatre may be allowed to operate under an unsatisfactory obscenity test and the unsatisfactory nature of that test be used as an excuse to perpetuate the anachronism of censorship for the cinema.

The commercial argument in favour of censorship on the other hand is the sense of certainty that it brings to the purveyor of commercial entertainment material as to whether his material can be publicly exhibited without interference either from local censors or from the Police. It is not unnatural, for the commercial world, even to hanker after Government censorship, a State censorship, which

would affirm the right of the public to see that which had been passed for public exhibition and to see it without public interference.

However undesirable this may be, for general social reasons (and the words "State censorship" have a singularly unpleasant political ring), the reasons why it is canvassed are perfectly understandable.

And it is for this reason that the second of the industry's proposals is put forward, namely, that the British Board of Film Censors should continue in existence to issue a category certificate for films approved by them as suitable for exhibition to adults. In any case, there will have to be some continuation of the issue of categories to films for exhibition to persons under 18, as there is no suggestion being put forward that the present law should be altered insofar as it requires local authorities to exercise a jurisdiction in respect of films exhibited to children (16 years old in the statute, 18 years old in practice). If, while it continues to do this, the Board were to issue certificates as to the suitability of a film for exhibition to adults, then there is a reasonable presumption, if both the Board and the Director of Public Prosecutions exercise a proper sense of responsibility and approach the subject with a similar understanding of what the statute says, that films so passed will never be proceeded against in the courts. After all, the new legislation contains that element that is parallel to the theatre but not to the book, namely, that no prosecutions can take place except with the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Assuming the Board continues to give a certificate to films considered by the Board as suitable for exhibition to adults and the Board is careful not to give a certificate to a film

where it considers the Director of Public Prosecutions might consent to a prosecution then there will in practice be a degree of certainty to the commercial distributor and exhibitor that films so passed will be immune from prosecution. And if they are not, something is wrong, because there should be, before convictions take place, a safety valve area that is beyond the area where the Board's certificates have been granted yet within the area where convictions do not arise.

The first group of films to fall into this safety area will be films refused a certificate by the British Board of Film Censors, which in the view of the Director of Public Prosecutions do not merit prosecution. There may not be many of these, but there are likely to be some. Beyond this group of films are the films where the Director of Public Prosecutions has authorised prosecution and which have ended in acquittal and only after that come the films where prosecution has been authorised by the Director of Public Prosecutions and convictions obtained. What I am saying is supported by our experience in two recent cases. The first related to the film "MORE ABOUT THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE" which I have referred to previously. In this case the film was refused a certificate by the British Board of Film Censors. The Director of Public Prosecutions undertook the prosecution and convictions followed. The second relates to an earlier film called "THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE". It was granted a certificate by the British Board of Film Censors. It was the subject of a private prosecution by Mr. Raymond Blackburn. The Director of Public Prosecutions was invited to take over the prosecution but declined. The trial proceeded and an acquittal followed, with costs to the defendants out of the public purse. These cases were at common law, which was always a bit of a

lottery. Under the Obscene Publications Act, where a proper defence is available the sense of certainty would be greater.

So the system the industry is proposing lends itself to the sort of level of commercial certainty that the commercial world requires, while at the same time permitting any distributor or exhibitor to seek to exhibit films which have been refused a certificate by the British Board of Film Censors. But they will be doing so with their eyes open and in the knowledge that they might have to defend an action in respect of that film. And only by a body of law built up as the result of such actions, can the public really know where they stand in the matter of what they are allowed to see and what they are not allowed to see and an adult public is surely entitled to this information.

Lastly, the relatively small point about people under age seeking to gain admission to film exhibitions designated as unsuitable for them. This is not an important matter in the field of the public interest but it is a reasonable request from the point of view of the manager of the cinema on whom the brunt of this question of age falls. At the moment anybody can try to get in, however young. The manager is fair game and only he commits an offence if anything goes wrong. All the film industry is asking for here is to be given the same consideration that the licensed house has under the licensing laws governing the supply of alcoholic liquor in the country. Surely this is no more than reasonable.

Finally, may I again thank Hugh Orr for giving me this opportunity of talking to you. May I thank all colleagues in the industry for the help they have given in getting us as far as we have in the abolition of the common law etc. and

a particular thank you to Lord Harlech and James Ferman for the sterling work they did at the Committee Stage of the Criminal Law Bill. Without them the final amendment at Report Stage might never have been achieved.

I hope we can now look forward with confidence to the Williams Committee granting our remaining requests. But they will not be granted unless we work for them. There are strong pressure groups in opposition, so a lot remains to be done.

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