

Adult films and young audiences ^

THE SECRETARY for Home Affairs, Mr Denis Bray, stated that parents should be responsible for what their children may or may not see. In other words, the Government will do nothing to protect them. Such indifference also shows in the Government's lack of action to protect cinema audiences from greedy distributors. Indeed, it joins in actively to aggravate everyone by censoring films left and right.

Requiring a person to show his ID card (if his appearance necessitates proof) when purchasing a ticket and entering a cinema is a simple procedure. If

larger countries can cope with such a law, I am sure with just a bit of conviction, Hongkong can do the same, and even more effectively.

New legislation regarding films would surely disturb the dust and cobwebs, but it is high time that there be some action to prevent children from seeing adult films, and to permit adults to see what they wish.

At present, a minor can enter any cinema he wishes on his own. It does not appear that the Government is enacting any laws to change that. Saying that a child can see whatever he wishes so long as he can find an adult to accompany

him is not saying anything at all.

I disagree with Mr Bray that there are practical reasons and problems of enforcement to prevent a minor from seeing an adult film. Is it more practical to check whether each child is accompanied by an adult? (Imagine a cinema foyer or entrance without adults that a minor cannot follow.) Or will the situation be so ridiculous that no enforcement is necessary, therefore practical for the Government?

If parents can decide what is suitable for their children to see, why not for themselves? It is accepted that censorship is sometimes used to maintain political stability, but I fail to see the purpose of keeping Hongkong in the moral prejudices of the last decade by censoring non-political films.

Adding a few people to the board of censors will not make censorship any more justified or representative, for no committee can decide what I may or may not wish to see in a movie.

I suggest that censors review a film only to give it one of four ratings: (a) Suitable for general viewing, (b) Suitable for adults only, (c) Suitable for adults only (with scenes of moderate sex,) or (with scenes of moderate violence.), (d) Suitable for adults only (with numerous scenes of sex,) or (with numerous scenes of violence.)

This informs the public exactly what can be expected from a film. Censors should not impose their own tastes on anyone else. They should only give their opinions as guide-lines. Each person can then decide what he is prepared to see on the screen, and children will be protected.

Finally, a word of thanks to the censors and Cinema International Corporation for their concern for my visual welfare. However, I would rather that they did not

think of themselves as superior to Francis Ford Coppola in cutting their own version of Godfather Part II. (The cuts greatly disrupted the impact of the movie, its editing rhythm, its music, its dialogue, its directorial style, all these elements apparently regarded by censors and distributors to be unimportant.)

It would be worth the admission price if the movie was left intact so that the audience could understand what was going on.

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