



INDEPENDENT BROADCASTING AUTHORITY

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JOHN WHITNEY Director General

2nd October 1985

John R. O'Connell

Thank you for your letter of 18th September about the Channel 4 programme "Visions: Brazil - Cinema, Sex and the Generals", with which you enclosed a copy of your letter of 17th September to Lord Thomson. He is at present abroad and I am therefore replying on his behalf as well as my own.

Your letter to Lord Thomson criticised the IBA's decision to ask for changes to the original "Visions: Brazil - Cinema, Sex and the Generals" programme scheduled for 19th June. You will be aware that the rescheduled transmission of 18th September was also cancelled.

The IBA has a statutory duty under the Broadcasting Act to satisfy itself that, so far as possible, the programmes broadcast by the Authority include nothing which offends against good taste or decency or is likely to be offensive to public feeling. Whatever you may think of this obligation, it is one imposed by Parliament and which the Authority is bound to carry out to the best of its ability. You may wish to include the Broadcasting Act within the scope of your campaign, but I do not, with respect, think it is appropriate or reasonable for you to criticise the Authority or its staff for performing a duty which is at present the law of the land.

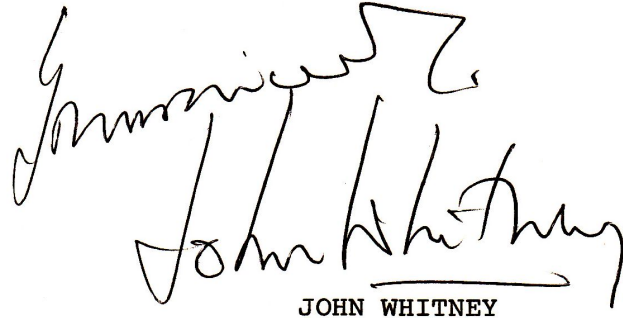
In the case of the "Visions: Brazil - Cinema, Sex and the Generals" programme the IBA regrets that it was not possible to reach agreement with Channel 4 on a mutually acceptable programme. IBA staff however believed it could be done, and asked for only three changes to the original film, lasting less than a minute altogether, in a .../

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43 minute programme. All of these were in the Brazilian film extracts proposed; no cuts were ever contemplated in the commentary of the original film or in any of the statements made by the interviewees. I will not burden you with further detail of our discussions with Channel 4 (which are summarized in a letter to The Guardian of 18th September from the IBA's Director of Television, David Glencross - copy enclosed), except to assure you that our view remains that the cuts required would not have significantly affected viewers' understanding of the main points and issues raised in the programme.

Thank you for letting us have your views.


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