



1 October 1996

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Dear Joan,

Thanks for your call this morning to follow up on the development report that I received towards the end of last week. I have been digesting it before and after your call.

Of course, we will meet shortly to discuss your work and its findings but I have to say that, on a first impression, I found the development report rather disappointing. If I were putting the worst, rather than the best, reading on the result I would have to declare that all we have discovered is that the tests have a slightly greater margin of error than it is already admitted that they do - and that on a pretty small sample. And that this is mostly down to one particular test kit. And I don't really feel that this difficulty is ameliorated by telling the story in the manner of "We were really depressed by these results until we called up X etc. etc.!" I think this is more in the nature of journalistic camouflage than investigative discovery.

Put in a nutshell, is not the problem as follows:

- While we may be able to demonstrate that the different testing procedures are not fully consistent between themselves, is it not the case that in only one case was a positive later deemed to be a negative? All the indeterminates in the world won't help us here: if they ain't positive, the story doesn't stand up in the form it was proposed to us.
- And what has happened to all the 'Lifestyle' component of this story? What you had us believe was that a gay would test differently if he walked in with a girlfriend than if he sported 'gay uniform'. What's happened to all that and to the possible comparison between urban and not-so-urban test centres?

All in all, you can see that I wasn't over-impressed by what I read. However it might be best if - as a second attempt - rather than suggest to us the possible script and running order of a film, you went back to a much closer analysis of the tests. Is this the best we can do? Did we do something wrong? If so, what?

Cont/...

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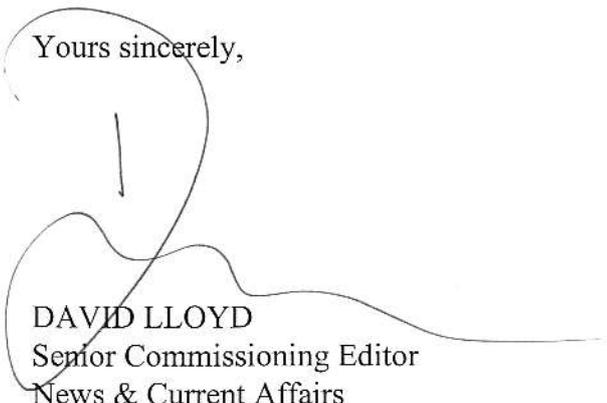
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I look forward to your customarily feisty response.

Yours sincerely,



DAVID LLOYD
Senior Commissioning Editor
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