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Author(s)	Derek Malcolm
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INDIA 1984

Half-Truth

Ardh satya

2.30 NFT1

also Thu 22 Nov, 2.30 NFT1

Director: Govind Nihalani

Production Company: Neo Films Associates

Producers: Manmohan Shetty, Pradeep Upoor

Screenplay: Vijay Tendulkar

Based on a story by: Sri Da Panvalkar

Photography (Eastman Colour): Govind Nihalani

Editor: Renu Saluja

Art Director: C S Bhali

Music: Ajit Verman

Export Agent: Neo Films Associates, G/2 Everest, Tardeo, Bombay 400 034

Leading Players: Om Puri, Smita Patil, Amrish Puri, Naseeruddin Shah, Shafi Inamdar

Running Time: 130 mins

Festivals: Bombay, Berlin, Karlovy Vary

Nihalani's film, on its surface the *Dirty Harry* of India, is in fact of rather more significance. It is the first time an Indian film-maker has faced square-on the widespread corruption among the forces of law and order, and dared to suggest that among the reasons lie the socio-cultural backgrounds of the police themselves and the sexual ambivalence of Indian men towards women. Such taboos are not often spoken of in popular films, but *Half-Truth* was so spectacular a success that, in some cities, tickets were selling on the black market for ten times their original price. Om Puri plays a policeman who tries to arrest a known criminal and is utterly humiliated by the ease with which the man escapes justice. He turns to drink, almost losing his gentle woman friend (Smita Patil) and shocking his authoritarian father. He also resorts to violence. Nihalani's powerful and angry film broke more barriers than we in the West might think.—*Derek Malcolm.*