INDEPENDENT FILM-MAKERS ASSOCIATION

The National Executive thank the following:
West Midlands IPA for their hosting of the AGM
Jan Worth, Conference Organiser
Simon Blanchard, National Organiser, stepping down shortly.


Welcome on behalf of the National Executive to the 5th National Conference of the Independent Film-makers Association.
The report will consider the year's activity from two stand-points;
1; The internal administration of the association.
2; A brief account of the state of progress on various decisions taken at last year's AGM.

1) Internal Developments

a) At a previous AGM the decision was taken to end the election of the National Executive (NE) at AGMs. This practice had been felt to introduce a London bias as London was and is the largest branch and many of its members are more widely known. The practice since has been for each region to delegate two members, one of whom must be a woman. This has worked well this year, after last year's conference (Nottingham, April) the executive met in June for a National meeting on funding, then again in August in London.

Before the regional conference at Warwick University in September we met again and since then have had eight NE meetings including two in Birmingham in the last month. The changeover to monthly meetings was felt to be necessary in order for the Exec to try and ensure a central direction for the IFA, which otherwise threatened to become a set of dispersed regional branches and policy sub-groups. This has now begun to work, we judge, but there are two problems.

i) The executive is over-doing it - meeting eg. 8 times in the last 6 mths.

ii) The executive may have a central grasp of what's going on but there is a danger of inadequate and undemocratic decision making if the membership is not finding out what's going on, not feeding in views and not having access to information from and to the NE as the central body acting between conferences. This is not a criticism of regional secretaries but information and minutes are not being circulated soon enough through the regional branches and delegates to the NE are having difficulties presenting a considered regional opinion at NE meetings.

A single procedural innovation is needed and we suggest:
The NE should hold six-weekly meetings with regional branches meeting once in the middle of that period.

The cycle of national information should then reach branches with time for each branch to develop their views and feed them back to the NE thereby ensuring proper synchronisation.

During the plenary session dates of the forthcoming NE will be announced on a 6 weekly cycle. We would request regional branch secretaries to try to schedule their meetings with an eye to this timetable, perhaps on a 3 weekly cycle. Overall however we feel that the technical aspect of the NE has improved this year: regularity of meetings, adequacy of minutes etc. and this has enabled the substantive work of the Exec. to improve.

Two additional (personal) thoughts for consideration for regional branches when choosing their NE delegates:

i) the continuity of the pair who go to Nat Exec meetings is desirable—they should be able to serve for a year if possible.

ii) Perhaps one should be the regional secretary.

b) Membership

Membership stands at almost 200 (190) As Gerard Tiernay says in his background paper 95 (almost half) are London branch members. The IFA now has branches in London, Merseyside, the North-West, the North-East, South Wales, the West and South-West, East Midlands, West Midlands and Yorkshire.

Of these, Merseyside, South Wales and Yorkshire are new branches set up since last AGM. There is also a group of film workers in Hull who have recently approached the National Organiser (NO) so there may be a new branch in Hull.

The largest out of London branches are the East Midlands and South Wales and both of these are grouped around a facility.

The New Cinema Film Workshop, The Midland Group—Nottingham
The Film Workshop—Chapter Arts—Cardiff.

The membership secretary—Paul Willemans—has recently resigned after a period of doing the job. We thank him very much. The Exec in now looking for a new membership secretary.

There is a problem over giving exact numbers of the membership. People join at all different times of the year (which is good but administratively awkward). Memberships need renewing at all different times of the year. We suggest introducing a scheme to synchronise membership renewals, so that by Sept. 1982 everyone's membership renewal will fall due on Sept 1, so that the Membership Sec. can always know where he or she stands.

c) Administration and Finance

Since the last AGM the Association has moved offices. We are renting office space in the offices of The Other Cinema distribution at 79, Wardour St, London. The new 'phone number is 01-439 0460. There is an answerphone so it is always worth phoning. There is a desk, filing cabinets for central records so at last we have stable office space for a long time to come.

We have also received a sizable sum from the BFI for this financial year at last, it was less than we asked for (£22,000) but nearly £10,000 (£9,750).

We're therefore on a more stable footing but we are NOT guaranteed an equivalent grant next year (BFI are not legally allowed to guarantee that) but there is every chance that we shall...

This money enables us to employ one full-time worker as National Organiser. This year, Simon Blanchard has been working as Nat. Org. paid for half the week each week. We had hoped to employ 2 workers one London based and the other regionally based outside London but the money awarded by the BFI won't cover for this. Simon will continue to work part-time for some weeks after this conference to complete the conference report and other administrative details arising from the conference.

Over the summer we shall appoint the full-time organiser, and he or she will begin work on September 1st 1981. (salary: £6,250)

The National Executive would like conferences endorsement for the following employment procedure:

There should be an employment sub-committee of the NE.

The interviewing panel should consist of at least the three following people:
- the former holder of the post - Simon Blanchard
- one member of the NE
- an interested party, possible outside the IFA, e.g., a trade union officer.

The committee will process the applications, overview and make the appointment
There will be a standing committee to work out with the relevant Trade Union official the exact terms & conditions of employment, and keep them under review. We hope to avoid the problems of the recent Screen employment controversies.

Our extraordinary debt-originally £1,500 is now down to £340. We thank everybody who contributed to the fund.

Overall finance and admin. position is better than it's ever been.

d) Legal Status

To consolidate this improved financial and admin. situation, we need to settle on a defined legal status. This has become especially important since we are now as an Association about to become the employer of a full-time worker. At last conference, the Exec with the assistance of Artlaw presented 2 possible models of the legal entity that the IFA could adopt. But the AGM reached a deadlock and both proposals fell. However conference did instruct the Exec. to investigate "the possibility of registration under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, as a Friendly Society."

This we have done, and on Sunday morning in the 10.30 session led by Ingrid Sinclair, we should formally decided what to do.

The Exec. however recommends the legal status proposal for the following reasons:

A one-off, not annually renewable payment of £179 will convert us into a legal entity:-

- whose constitution acquires legally recognised status
- without financial liability by our officers if things go wrong
- able to lease premises, buy equipment and employ staff

SUMMARY

Internal communications still need improving

There has only been one newsletter this year

Regional branch meetings should try and synchronise with the NE.
National Executive Report: Birmingham 1981 (cont)

2) External Issues
This report will be kept brief as we anticipate information in the following sessions which will be minuted and circulated. But it is necessary to report back on the progress on the resolutions passed by last year's conference.

a) Funding
Out of last year's conference came a day-long brainstorming session on funding held in Nottingham in June out of this became articulated the idea of a specific fund for regional production.
(A different kind of funding, not one-off process funding, facility funding.)
At the Regional Conference in October (Warwick Univ) the IFA with the ACTT in conjunction stressed with some strength (made a big impact) the need for a Regional Production Fund. The BFI have since, within the Distribution Division committed a mole-hill £60,000. The method of administering the fund suggested by a combined IFA/ACTT/CoRRAA proposal was accepted. (see report of that meeting)

b) The Production Board
It was requested that the Nat. Exec should monitor the Production Board this year.

Our new representative was accepted onto the board in March 1981: Fizzy Oppe
There has been a comparatively satisfactory outcome to this year's allocations with two thirds of the major awards going to IFA members.

BUT there are disturbing shifts in policy;

a) Are Channel 4 dictating artistic policy
b) 'big budget' tendency.
A different approach to budgets will indicate a different kind of film.
Both shifts are reinforced by the strong TV representation on the new board which is to be chaired by Verity Lambert.

c) Unionisation
The Executive were instructed to investigate with the ACTT: "the possible terms and forms of ACTT membership for IFA members"
Some IFA members are already in the ACTT whilst others are members of teaching and journalists unions.
The IFA union liaison committee met frequently during the year with the ACTT Independent Film sub-committee.
National Executive Report: Birmingham 1981 (cont)

The creation of the ACTT Independent Film Sub-Committee (IFS-C) in 1979 had indicated the film-workers union's growing interest in regularising the industry both defensively to ensure that lower wage rates on grant-aided production could never be used to undercut members in the commercial industry; and offensively in the hope of improving renumeration for film-workers on grant-aid productions.

Out of London members have joined regional sections of the Film Production branch (eg NE; Yorkshire-most active)

There have been problems with forming a section in the East Midlands.

ACTT IFS-C now about to move within the union to get established a separate London Region Independent Film Section for London independent filmmakers ('it will take a while to go through')

We recommend reading Paul Morrison's paper 'London Region and the ACTT'.

Paul is London IFA, ACTT IFS-C.

There have been some complaints over the slowness of developments in unionisation. But we have come a long way already since last year, and the will is not lacking from the ACTT IFS-C. Also this year has seen growing co-operation between IFA representatives & ACTT reps in various quarters. eg. BFI Regional Conference, new BFI Regional Consultative Committee.

This was the major mandate given to the NE by last year's conference and we are on the road to success which represents a major achievement of the year.

(See minutes of Alan Fountains session)

d) The Fourth Channel

The other major item pre-occupying the Association over the last year has been the Fourth Channel. (See minutes of 4th Channel session)

The creation of the Regional Production Fund, Production Board developments, Unionisation and Channel 4 have been the dominating infrastructure issues for British Independent film-making over the past year with which the Exec has been preoccupied.

Additional issues to take on board this coming year:

the video-cassette revolution (Alternative video exchanges)

alliances with other cultural workers

threats of cuts (Currently standstill)

democratisation of arts funding (Implicit in our nominations of Prod. Board delegates)
The paper took the following form
1) Historical synopsis
2) Applications to the 4th Channel - Mechanics
   - Issues
3) Further considerations.

Jonathan Curling and Anne Cottringer are resigning from the 4th Channel
Working Party to work on film productions. The IFA needs two new convenors.

1) Historical Synopsis
IFA and the 4th Channel Group met to propose the Foundation Proposal to the
IBA (Independent Broadcasting Association). Later this proposal was returned to
the IFA who were asked to wait until constitution of 4th Channel was more
clearly organised.
Lobbying of certain members of the newly elected 4th Channel Panel principally
Jeremy Isaacs and Edmund Dell, they felt Foundation to be unnecessarily
bureaucratic.
Foundation Proposal on agenda of Channel 4 IBA meeting held (eventually) in
March 1981.
Jan. 16th. Open meeting J. Isaacs reported quite large amounts of time (20%)
would be given to independent productions. Announced IPPA would not be sole
negotiating body (IPPA to deal with contractual arrangements with 4th Channel).
Larger 4th Channel Group reconvened to discuss policies not covered by IPPA.
Open meeting at the ICA to discuss new policy paper. IFA present and the 4th
Channel Group is re-launched. There is a suggestion that the 4th Channel Group
Convenor/ICA television officer might act as public monitoring body.
J. Isaacs replied to IFA in response to Foundation Proposal. Announced £250,000
to be spent on the Independent sector (not the £7m that the Foundation asked
for) in the following way.
1) Workshop grants, though no guarantee of broadcasting funded work.
2) Two video centres, one in and one out of London.
3) One-off production grants to independent filmmakers of merit.
4) A sympathetic commissioning editor. Three IFA members interviewed amongst
   others.
4th Channel report-back (cont)

Should the IFA reply to this rather patronising offer/proposal?

2) Applications
   a) Mechanics
      1st April-1st June for applications for 'prestige' productions (£120,000 per episode, drama, serials etc.)
      1st August-1st October for applications for 'actuality' programmes (current affairs, documentary)
      Broadcasting starts Autumn 1982.
   b) Issues
      i) BFI/Channel 4 Productions
         Channel 4 has and will put money (about 4 budget to some BFI Production Board Productions. What kind of effects is this going to have on the Production Board and by the same token the independent filmmaking sector. Is it the BFI who should be administering these funds and can a film production fund begin to produce for television without radically changing policy. Changes to the board have already occurred and this will alter the Board's policy—note the strong representation of TV personnel on the new board (Verity Lambert—chairperson, Ken Trodd)
         See Peter Sainsbury's article on funding for an indication of BFI forms of producership:
         BFI as financing body—production produced outside the BFI
         BFI as financing body—production produced through collaboration of BFI and filmmakers.
         BFI as producer—working with a commissioned director.
         All these different forms of production will need separately negotiated contracts.
      ii) Regional Production Fund/Channel 4 Productions
         How will the £60,000 in the RPF be administered. Tony Smith has suggested it as 'seed money' to draw Channel 4 money. Would this be one of the 'sympathetic' commissioning editors duties?
      iii) Individual Applications to Channel 4
         Through Commissioning editors. A track record of a relation to a production base will be important as Channel 4 will not act as a production company. This may be problematic for both production bases and individuals.
iii)(cont) The form of contract most appropriate to individuals will probably the IPPA model for independent filmmakers.

iv) Bursaries

Isaacs has not made clear what he means by this or how it might be administered. It will probably be a lump sum for an on-going production group.

3) Further Considerations
i) A sum of money will be spent on video facilities. This will be spent out of the £250,000.

ii) At a day event on production facilities held at the IBA, the standard of facilities was discussed at length. There is a paper available from the IBA.

iii) The 4th Channel working party has proposed to make a video tape to send to Regional Production Workshops containing information about the mechanics of applications to the 4th Channel. The IFA will work with the 4th Channel to produce this.

iv) The IFA has considered joining IPPA but has found it could only 'federate'. This is expensive and the IFA are unhappy about "federation" so

A Cottringer will join as an individual member to report back info. IPPA is based at Micheal Peacock's Video Arts. (IPPA=Independent Programme Producers Association)

v) Would we rather see the £2 million directed through the BFI or would we rather see it invested in the hands of the commissioning editor?

vi) When Channel 4 approaches individual members of the IFA to buy work, how will this effect ACTT negotiations? How will the union want to organise payment especially for films made outside of the ACTT Code of Practice? Will money be back paid and where will it go?

a) to the filmmaker
b) to the RAA producer
c) to the union (benevolent fund)

vii) How are filmmakers to deal with money originating from 4th Channel sources? Channel 4 is going to want copyright if they put money into independents work? The IFA has always argued that copyright should reside with the filmmaker.
Channel 4 report-back (cont.)

2vii (cont)
The present IFA convenors of the 4th Channel Group would like the IFA to endorse setting up a working party to research the contract negotiations because IPPA will probably not pursue these areas of contract possibilities.

Discussion

Roger Buck NE/IFA: I) The ACTT and the 4th Channel
There are two ACTT codes of practice; one negotiated by the BFI before the second RAA one. This could prove anomalous.
Secondly, vis the buying of existing material by the 4th Channel. Filmmakers who have had some experience of this have suggested that costs should be based on full commercial agreements less the sum that the funding body had originally put in. Residuals should then go to crews and actors.
Thirdly, the Code of Practice in relation to 4th Channel money will apply only to productions solely funded by the state. Co-productions with the 4th Channel will be required to be paid full commercial rates and Code of Practice will not apply. The accounting system for commissioned work will be £x prod. costs  
+10% overheads
+10% fee

Accounting system for already existing work is unclear. So far Channel 4 are offering prices a little better than the BBC

Alan Fountain EM/IFA
This year’s co-produced Channel 4/BFI films have not as yet been negotiated with the ACTT. They are at present budgetted under the Code of Practice not on commercial rates. The Board were assured that this was satisfactory to the union but this doesn’t now seem to be true.
If Channel 4 have this 2 rates of pay—will it not adversely effect the state-funded sector’s chances of making a sale?

Frank Challenger WM/IFA
Did the union intend to press for extra discretionary funding for funds to be paid out by Channel 4 for already existing films made without proper Code of Practice crewing rates? If films were not properly crewed & there is therefore no-one to pay, in the past this residual money has gone to the union benevolent fund. Is there no way that this money could go back to the independent sector?
Unidentified person
Taking up Alan's point. This year's prod. board films haven't been budgeted on commercial rates and there will not be enough money for them to be made as this year's budget will not cover ACTT crewing requirements etc. We need clarification on crewing requirements for prod. board films (Channel 4).

Jan Worth London
Should the crew when given jobs that are advertised, be able to apply for Union tickets? At present under the Code of Practice (BFI) this may not take place.

Roger Buck
ACTT may well want this. But in the past, for instance full-time educators working on crews would not be eligible for a ticket. If they are on a crew should they get tickets?

John Ellis London
What is the IFAs position on this $2 million? How do we want it administered? The IFA must move fast. We must get J. Isaac to explain his position more clearly.

The chair asked for motions to be handed in for a further discussion later in the conference.

The Birmingham women and Childrens Film Consortium, a local group who distribute and discuss film within women's groups in Birmingham, presented a request that conference should endorse a letter to the regional censor and film-officer protesting to the film "Dressed to Kill being shown for a week at the local RFT. They informed the conference that there would be two pickets during the following week. It was suggested that they come back at 2pm when conference could vote on whether to sign the letter.
IFAGM 30th May 1981: Birmingham
Workshops, Production Groups and Exhibition Strategies
Panel: Sue Clayton, Jo Davies, Mary-Pat Leece
Chair: Pizzy Uppe
Minutes: Marion Dain

Before the session started the Birmingham Women's Film Consortium read out their letter which had been amended over lunch and was now to be sent to the film-officer at Cannon Hill Arts Centre. The letter read as follows:
"We would like to protest at the showing of the film "Dressed to Kill" at the Cannon Hill Arts Centre.

We feel that a cinema that receives funding from the Arts Council should not be showing films available on general release which depict male violence against women without the necessary contextualization of the issues involved."

A vote was taken as to whether the IFA supported the letter and would put their name to it. The vote was carried For 57 Against 4.

There was some request for a discussion about why some people had voted against.

The chair moved that the discussion should take place in the plenary session and there were no objections from the floor.

Introduction to the Session: the Chair

1) The session on workshop practice and exhibition strategies were connected and both subjects had in the past drawn extensively on two IFA theoretical premises: 'social practice' & 'integrated practice'. It was time to reconsider the definitions of both phrases. Did the concept of 'integrated practice' tend to collapse 'production practice' and 'exhibition practice' into the same area?

Sue Clayton (Lutia)

Speaking to the paper that London workshops had put together, the object of the session was to exchange information and summarise some problems.

The London workshops were often seen to be better equipped and better off financially than the regional workshops. It was also seen that production groups tended to dominate workshop equipment.

In the regions workshops often have a large membership who use the equipment and the workshop as a facility, or place to learn. This characterization is confusing.

The idea of generating income from equipment seen as desirable is financially 'not-on' in most workshops experience in London. Should waging of production groups therefore be a priority? Or should the accessibility of workshops be the priority? In which case who is going to maintain equipment and how should they be paid?

Mary-Pat Leece (4 Corners)

The term 'workshop' production is not coherent. e.g. Jeremy Isaacs will have a different understanding though what that might be is not clear. The aims
of the workshop and the method of working associated with it as understood until a few years ago are now being marginalised. For instance J.Isaacs concept of a workshop associated with a bursary. Just how do grant giving bodies see workshops as a greenhouse for experimental talent. But £20,000 for example given a code of practice will not go very far. This means that films are being made with only a very little money. This means that 4Channel and other grant giving bodies see work emanating from workshops as little 'big-time'. If workshops are going to be open access resource centres, small sums of money are totally inadequate.

Jo Davies (4 Corners)

In the last year 4 Corners have done two productions emanating from 4 Corners itself but since has worked out numerous proposals

Discussion

Frank Abbott (E.Mid) E.Midlands hire out equipment but hire charges are not seen as a financial base to be relied on in the long term. Workshop practice has developed in many different ways-in a vacuum-autonomously. Now the vacuum is affected by new developments. eg 4th Channel. It is important to define workshop practice so that new input does not destroy and distort workshop practice except the practice of low wages.

Sue Clayton

How does the fact that Frank has production money (BFI) affect the workshop. Is there more money going through it? If so how does that money affect wages?

Frank Abbott

Wages are based on the RAA Code of Practice which is the safest way to ensure continuity. All equipment money and hire of eg editing space goes into the workshop to boost capital.

Alan Fountains (E.Mid)

The Nottingham workshop is the only resource for independent filmmakers in the region (E.Mid) therefore it does have to be open to anyone who wants to use the equipment. The RAA is responsible for paying someone to maintain the equipment, work with the community etc. The workshop therefore has to cover a wide spectrum for the few 'casual individuals' as well as the production groups who have a more on-going relationship with the funding mechanisms. Many papers have been written for funding bodies about what workshops are and do and now funding bodies have developed some strange ideas about what workshops are.

Mary-Pat Leece

If the Reg Prod Fund had £600,000 could the E.Midlands support open access, the production, plus exhibition which seem to be the scope of demand encompassed in the idea of workshop practice.

Alan Fountains

No way that a workshop could be funded in that way as this would be to high. Perhaps larger, looser groups could be constituted.

Jeff Baggott (E.Mid)

Prod grps could become independent of the workshop though the workshop could provide 2 workers as a liaison base for the prod grps.

Pete Bainbridge (North West)

How far is community access work within the province of filmmaking? Are only filmmakers part of this constituency?
Roger Shannon (West Midlands)
B’ham situation is very different from 4 corners, M’chester, E. Midlands. Within a Channel 4 context it was seen as a workshop unit. Not a strong access line in production more-so in exhibition. Filmmakers do, maybe, a WEA course in filmmaking and come back to the workshop — and the expertise and resources are paid for by the LEA. All kinds of people use the equipment. Birmingham now needs training weekends rather than a continual ebb and flow.
Sue Clayton
Personnel have to be as available as the equipment—the danger being that workshop personnel are likely to be exploited by production units.

Unidentified person
1) Whilst the IFA was talking to the 4th Channel it became apparent that their use of the term 'workshop' was synonymous with 'production unit'.
2) Within 4th Channel Working Party — this distortion of the term raised the question of the exploitation of a film for broadcast or cinema exhibition, and also how historically the term 'workshop' signifies the notion of an integrated practice.

Mike Leggett (Bristol)
The BFI are setting up a major film and television centre at the Watershed in Bristol: a partnership through Bristol Arts Centre and South West Arts. The BFI have decided that new centre for Brtistols integrated practice should become "The Watershed—which in practice is to re-define their area of activity. The production may continue through Bristol Co-Ops, facilities, whilst editing eg goes to the Watershed. The co-op's practice therefore becomes very vulnerable.

Pizzy Oppe (East Midlands)
Should we perhaps form a motion for strategy around workshops. What should be done where budgets are being cut and where places are being taken over as in Bristol?

Alan Fountain (East Midlands)
People need to be clear about what they can do in their own situation & use that in order to get funding. A tight definition could be restricting. Schlacke (Cinemaction)
There is a discrimination in social practice. How is this carried by what institutions?

Sue Clayton
Proposed that a group could be set up to design a new way of funding & budgeting, so that workshop costs are not collapsed into production costs.
Exhibition Strategies:
Paper presented by Roger Buck (N.East)'Proposal for a Working Party on Film and Television Exhibition' written by E. Midlands, North East & W. Midlands IFA.
Chair: F. Oppe (E. Midlands) Minutes: G. Tierney (London)
Saturday 30th May 3 p.m.

1) Introduction
The following points and the accompanying paper should serve to consolidate IFA policy on film and TV exhibition. Nothing should be read as advocating an exemplary practice nor a necessarily counter-practice, rather a recognition of diversity. The proposals are before conference at this point for historical reasons including amongst others the production of a BFI Distribution Department paper entitled 'Towards a National Exhibition Policy' which has not been endorsed at a recent meeting of the BFI new Regional Consultative Committee despite some of its proposers/supporters wanting it passed by the BFI Governors. Roger further stressed that as a result of our historical position we should not simply respond to this paper but aim to consolidate our position on 'social practice' and the 'social practice' of the IFA.

2) The BFI paper: some comments
The paper looks at the histories and inadequacies of the Regional Film Theatre movement, finding it too 'atomistic' and argues for a national integrated policy. It does also make reference to smaller 'social space' places (e.g. The Side, The New Cinema) but only whilst characterising deficiencies in the RFT movement, not as a positive example of new work or as a conception of integrated practice as the IFA might see it. The paper proposes three types of venue as aims:

a) integrated centres with study and documentary resources, TV & Video facilities (Watershed in Bristol, Tyneside RFT, B'ham Arts Lab, Cinema City in Norwich and new venues)

b) full-time venues including existing RFTs - programmed and served by the BFI under contract.

c) part-time and mix-use venues, also programmed by and served by the BFI. What this lacks is our approach which takes into account the decline in commercial cinema, growth of easy access video and other potentially enormous questionss around the future of the cinema. The paper remained tiec
Exhibition Strategies cont.

to a conception of 'art house exhibition'.
In relation to production funding we are in a state of transition, and
should note the moves towards centralisation (TV4, Reg. Prod. Fund) which may
lead to an endorsement of film practices from the central funding bodies,
leading to increased funding for production (further approval) and the film
product becoming part of a 'touring grid'. This may increase audiences for
independent film but is it what the IFA would consider as part of a
radical exhibition practice.

3) The IFA and Exhibition
If we want to define exhibition and cinema as a 'social practice' we must
change IFA thinking on exhibition as a non-creative area. Exhibition has
changed and we must try and consolidate and exchange our experiences.
If we try to define 'Independent Cinema' as an entity, we must strengthen
the notion of 'social spaces' in relation to our demands on funding bodies
and develop a stronger profile in relation to exhibition.
It is important to be aware of the existence of patterns of discrimination
and the denial of certain voices in the film and t.v. industries so that
when faced with arguments such as that put forward by Isaacs at the
regional conference concerning the so called impossibility of a cinema
of social practice in relation to television, we can draw on our experience
of direct relations with film that have served to draw together an analysis
of aesthetic, political and cultural questions to argue that e.g. Channel 4
should be an outlet for people.
Finally the composition of a working party as suggested in the IFA paper
should be open to questions and suggestions from the floor.

4) Comments from the floor.
Rod Stoneman (S. West): it appeared from discussion at the Reg. Con. Committee
that the 3 categories of venue were not fixed but possible modes of
production. This provided a good position to work from, we could prevent our
practices as necessarily belonging in the third category, and stop
marginalisation. Secondly, many people including members of the IFA had
successfully used the 'grid/packages' concept, so we shouldn't knock it too
easily.
Exhibition Strategies. cont.

Schlake (London) raised and Alan Sprung (W. Mid) elaborated on a case of local newspaper pressure intervening in the running of the Coventry Socialist Film Club when the club showed some films about N. Ireland, with smears about taxpayers money etc etc.

Roger Shannon (W. Mid) pointed out that the IFA needs shared information on how different groups exhibit their own films both at their own bases and presented nationally. This included the question of presenting other groups' films and how to arrange programming of issues on the left without simply having 'issue screenings' all the time.

Steve Neale (E. Mid) pointed out that we must respond to the BFI piece for the next regional conference, and suggested that an addition to that effect be placed on the original motion. The addition read: 'AN IMMEDIATE TASK OF THIS PARTY WILL BE TO PRODUCE A RESPONSE TO THE BFI PAPER TO BE GIVEN AT THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE.' This was passed and became part of the amended motion.

Frank Abbot (E. Mid) hoped that the process of thinking about and working in exhibition would give life to film-making, to be seen as part of the process of production, that non-filmmakers be included on the working party and that we consider interaction between film and television.

Schlake (London) argued that this was a far reaching issue for the IFA and that the motion was too ambiguous—it lacked reference to the notion of 'discrimination in social practice'. This was elaborated on for some time.

The eventual motion read: 'CONFERENCE CALLS FOR THE SETTING UP OF AN EXHIBITION WORKING PARTY TO CONSOLIDATE IFA POLICY ON FILM AND TELEVISION EXHIBITION WITH REGARD TO ITS CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT AND ALSO WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE DIMENSION OF DISCRIMINATION IN SOCIAL PRACTICE THE RAPIDLY CHANGING ECONOMICS OF EXHIBITION, AND COUNTERED BY THE EXPERIENCE GAINED BY WORKSHOP PRACTICE. AN IMMEDIATE TASK OF THIS PARTY WILL BE TO PRODUCE A RESPONSE TO THE BFI PAPER TO BE GIVEN AT THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE.' This motion was passed.

Nick Eaton spoke to the second motion from the E. Midlands. He referred to the resolution passed at last year's conference that we join with other progressive cultural workers and arrange a conference on attituded to Channel 4. This was never followed up. It was necessary to confront this in a wider context not specific to the Fourth Channel. If we were to move forward we needed contact with other progressive cultural workers and organising a conference in 1982 on problems of the left in media and
Exhibition Strategies (cont)

strategies to take, was a step in this direction.
A discussion followed on whether the IPA had the resources to organise such a conference, whether the regions should take on the task and present experiences at the next AGM, if the conference was national would the 'grass roots' aspect of organisation and contacts be lost.
The motion and any redrafts were postponed until the plenary session.
A motion drafted by Mike Legget (West) & Alan Fountain (E, Mid) on circulation of information around Channel 4 and other areas was to be taken either at the session on the ACTT or in the plenary session.
The matter of the working party on exhibition was to be taken up by the national Executive.
Saturday 30th May 1981

Report from the IFA/ACTT liaison committee

Speakers: Alan Fountain & Jan Worth

Chair:

Minutes: Paul Marris

Alan Fountain:

At last year's conference there was considerable discussion on the IFAs relation to the ACTT. The conference was deeply divided. The Executive was instructed to advance in three areas:

1) representation on the ACTT independent film sub-committee (ACTT IFS-C)
2) to "investigate terms and forms of ACTT membership for IFA members"
3) to recommend that regional branches encourage their RAAs to adopt the code of practice.

The IFA/ACTT Liaison Committee, on behalf of the Nat. Exec., considers that after a rocky start, relations with the ACTT are good, and on a number of occasions (eg. regional conference) have been both politically and pragmatically fruitful.

It is necessary to deepen and strengthen our relationship with the ACTT.

1) ACTT IFS-C

At first, ACTT was resistance to strengthening representation on the IFS-C because:

a) feared an IFA flooding

b) IFA address to ACTT has seemed to want to be on the grounds of settling terms for the union, which the ACTT cannot accept from an outside body nor can this be a reciprocal arrangement (the ACTT has never sought to dictate to IFA over its internal affairs)

Eventually, Paul Morrison, IFA London Region and ACTT member, was co-opted onto the IFS-C which is what we want, the IFA, wanted—-a London member (As out of London members were on it) IFA ACTT Liaison committee would like to continue to see the strengthening of the ACTT IFS-C with IFA members, especially as union recruitment of ind. film makers grown.

11) ACTT membership for IFA members

Needs to be seen in 2 contexts:

a) IFA members are increasingly going to need ACTT tickets to continue working. (TV4 etc.)
b) ACTT cannot open it's doors to all IFA members

Internal organisation of ACTT in London has made it hardest for them to recruit Independent film makers in London.

There have been problems too in the Midlands. In E. Midlands, ACTT could not find sufficient existing members (50) constitutionally required to set up a Regional Section. The attempt to set up, then, a Midlands (W & E) branch foundered when too few people showed up to a meeting in Birmingham.

The situation in London is now looking rosy, with intended moves by the ACTT to set up a London Region Independent film branch—see Paul Morrison's paper 'London Region and the ACTT'. Details still need to be sorted out, & the IFA will want to feed in to ACTT the needs and desires of London region members to the ACT as it undertakes to set this up.

After the last conference, it became clear that the rest of the union knew very little about the work of the union's IFSC. But IFSC eventually went to Film Production branch, and received endorsement for it's work. This is very significant. Film workers in other branches of the industry are being made aware of issues around independent film.

Delays in some region over unionising regional ind-film-makers.

Justifiable impatience over this as expressed in Simon Hartog's paper. But IFA ACTT Liaison Committee is confident that these problems will be resolved by the ACTT

111) Code of Practice

ACTT has been very tentative in its implementation of the Code of Practice. It has cautioned RAAs not to enter into agreements they cannot fulfill. Problems: eg. E. Mid RAa where the Film Officer is committed to the adequate waging of film-makers.

Only £10-12000 prod. funds means film panels cannot in any real sense fulfill the Code.

In recent funding reshuffles, RAAs have come out worst. This weakens the particularity of the Code to some extent. But the Code enables IFA & ACTT to fight together for decent remuneration for film-makers with RFP & TV4 developments in funding, the Code needs to be re-examined.

4: Regional Production Fund

Creation of RFP is something of a victory for the alliance between the ACTT & IFA, with events at BFI Regional Conference, Univ. of Warwick.

Jointly promoted motion calling for substantiated recognition of regional production was passed by conference.

ACTT IFSC's members and more specifically, some of the full-time officers have begun to recognise what independent film practice is.

Alliance between IFA and ACTT on BFI's RCC has led to improved developments esp. over power relations governing the setting up of the RFP.

ACTT Annual Conference
ACTT Annual Conference

At the ACTT Annual Conference this year, the union pledged itself to fight for a definite proportion of TV4 airtime to be devoted to broadcasting ind. film made under the Code of Practice. Again this indicates the degree of optimism one can have over ACTT/IFA relations.

Conclusion
IFA/ACTT Liaison sub-committee wants to say that there has been a marked improvement and progress has been made since last conference in IFA/ACTT relations. This alliance has become an indispensable basis for the future of independent film. There will be problems to be negotiated of course.

IFA debates can not be carried into the ACTT. In the event the IFA has lost a clear notion of its own identity or autonomy. Pragmatically, the separateness of our organisations has enabled the alliance to have double representations on certain committees.

The IFA can only carry on through taking it's project into TV4 with the strongest possible alliance with the ACTT; to create the greatest degree of freedom inside Channel 4.

Channel 4
IFA must engage immediately into Channel 4

IFA must engage immediately into the sorts of responses that TV4 requires.

Contracts and agreements to be made with Channel 4 on the showing of independ. films are in an infantile state. Isaacs would appear to be leaving the negotiations of such contracts to the 'Independent' Commissioning Editor when appointed.

Motion 1
The London region of the IFA should organise a day of discussion in relation to the ACTT. IFU-C's proposal to establish a London Region Independent Film Section. (All IFA members to be invited)
Proposal: Alan Fountain, Seconder: Jan Worth.

Motion 2
National Executive to appoint rep.s to open up a full range of issues regarding Channel 4's relation to independent production.

Points of information

Rob Birkett
i) What will be the effect of internal ACTT restructuring on the rest of the union?

ii) What is the attitude to joining up fee charges?

Rogers Buck (Exec. C'ttee of Northern Regional Section)
Regional sections may become wider in their membership. ED. TUCH branch will be dissolved and members joined into regional sections. Possibly northern section welcomes that possibility of an active relationship with people working in the educational sector.

Simon Hartog
Commitment to restructuring
Simon Hartog
Commitment to restructuring the ACTT has been reiterated by Conference, but the specific aims (abolishing Kodak members and BBC members) have now been dropped.

Roger Buck
ACTT will now be organising 'non broadcast video sector'. Previously only organised video workers if their material was for transmission. This may have implications for the independent sector.

Mike Legget
In Bristol area, active ACTT members want to organise on a regional basis across grades. But progress is always slow inside ACTT, and lab members in particular are resistant.

Simon Hartog
Inside ACTT, there is a battle between Television shops and Film shops for control of regional sections.

On motion 1
Jan Worth
This day of discussion will ensure IFA/ACTT Liaison Cttee receives precise instructions.

Jo Davis
Query whether London Region Independent Shop already set-up?
Motion 1 almost unanimously passed.

On motion 2
Simon Hartog
The negotiating situation is so complex. Should the IFA begin an employers negotiation with the ACTT at this point?

Person Unknown
Motion 2 is very broad. It doesn't have a specific content for IFA representation to take to the ACTT.

Alan Fountain
Agreed. Motion withdrawn.

Motion 2 Channel 4 Bursaries
The IFA recommends that the £250,000 annual contribution from Channel 4 for the independent sector should be administered by the BFI RPF rather than by a single commissioning editor.
Prop. John Ellis Sec. Rod Stonesman.

John Ellis:
The RPF now has a certain representational structure, and the IFA has representation from the sector & pessimistic about putting ones confidence in the judgement of a single nice guy.

Mike Leggett
More confident about Alan or John getting the job than a BFI RPF, & until we know whether either has been approached, we should not adopt this motion.
Paul Willeman
Always choose committees rather than individuals of good will.

John Ellis
Clarified to say that he meant TV4 millionaire to be transferred to control of RPF

Alan Fountain
For the first address from the IFA to TV4 to be 'give the money to the BFI' is insanity.

Rod Stoneman
The structure of the new RPF is not a threat to us and much better than TV4.

Simon Hartog
Best that could be hoped for is that TV4 accepts the RPF as an advisory committee.

John Ellis withdrew the motion on the grounds that it was already policy.

Roger Shannon
The tenor of the clause on BFI as advisory has already been accepted by the RCC.

Frank Challenger
The best that can be done is that the RCC's acceptance of that clause be brought to the attention of Isaacs when IFA TV4 working party meets him.

Motion 4
Postponed until plenary.

Motion 5
"This conference notes the withdrawal of funds from the Manchester Film and Video panel...... (see motions passed.)"

Prop. Peter Bainbridge Sec. Sylvia Sprung
Motion 5 passed.

Minutes Paul Harris.
AGM: Sunday 31st May 1981: 11 a.m

Legal Status

Speaker: Ingrid Sinclair
Chair: Roland Denning

This session entailed a detailed examination of the constitution of a Friendly Society. Rule numbers refer to the corresponding numbers on the constitution drawn up by Ingrid and the registrar that was circulated at the conference.

1) Ingrid led a discussion on the rules as outlined in the paper.
2) Ingrid elucidated on subscription and publication fees.
3) There was a discussion on problematic points
   a) 10% - what proportion of the membership is required as a constitutable decision making group (at for example an AGM)?
   b) 17% - an amendment of the rules require 1/2 of the membership.
   c) Query on the status of independence/autonomy with regard to the role of the registrar as being able to overall IFA affairs - a plea to bear the question of independence in mind.
   d) 10% - suggestion of an amendment to help protect delegate status in relation to each regional group - 'one half of the membership or the delegated individuals'
   e) The pragmatic aspect of an incorporation was stressed. The need to have the IFA free to employ and to hold onto it's own autonomy.
   f) Question of the possibility of one outraged individual being able to go to the registrar and thereby invalidate a constituted group.
   g) Does Friendly Society status invalidate the possibility of Charity Status? Charity Status had been ruled out at the last AGM because of the political nature of the political nature of the association.
4) There was a comment from the floor expressing the inadequacy of the discussion and suggesting that the constitution needed careful, extensive discussion. There was a discussion of how much the constitution need be adhered to, and it was pointed out that political manoeuvres need not necessarily be to our advantage - the idea of an implicit and a legal constitution is dangerous.

5) Simon Blanchard (London) suggested that regional groups discuss the paper and that the Nat. Exec. discuss it and set up a day to make decisions, having written a paper of recommendations.
6) Paul Willemann proposed the following motion.
   "This conference recommends that the IFA adopt the rules and any amendments thereto, subject to consultation between the Nat. Exec. & Reg. branches, as discussed at the AGM, for incorporation as a Friendly Society. The conference empowers the Nat. Exec. to further amend the rules as necessary within the general principles agreed at the AGM."
   seconded: Simon Blanchard. motion carried
1. National Organiser: Rod Stoneman summarised for John Ellis the thinking behind his motion:

"Recognising that at this stage in its development the IFA needs a full-time organiser who will reflect and develop the activist nature of the organisation; that the job should be seen as a short-term political commitment rather than a secure career.

WE PROPOSE that the job should be offered with a two year contract with the possibility of reapplication. Applications from job sharers should be encouraged. That within these parameters the job should be made as secure as possible by

a) the clearest possible definition of terms of employment and job description

b) responsibility to a stable sub-committee of the National Executive"

Mick Eaton pointed out that job sharing might lead to a lower wage to each and also suggested that the 2 year period should be flexible on the basis of projects underway. This was agreed. It was agreed that the job could be terminable prior to the 2 years & that the IFA couldn't guarantee 2 years of employment.

Alan Fountain took issue with the bias in favour of job-sharing, because of a) inadequate money available b) if people job share they tend to get exploited time-wise, etc.

The motion was changed to "job-shares applications will be accepted". The motion was then put by John Ellis and seconded by Rod Stoneman. The motion was carried as amended.

It was decided that the present National Organiser, 4 members of the National Executive, and one coopted person should make up the Employment Committee.

2. IFA Policy & Alliances: Simon Blanchard spoke to his paper and the 2 motions related to it:

a) "This conference, in the light of the Campaign for Press Freedom's AGM decision to make broadcasting an integral part of its work, and in the light of the CPF's work to date, recommends that:

1) IFA regional groups affiliate to the CPF

2) Individual IFA members join the CPF

3) The IFA as a whole brings forward its history and present policies & activities for discussion and - where appropriate - action within the CPF"

As a member of the CPF, Simon Blanchard had been pressing the campaign to involve itself more formally in broadcasting (many of the members of the CPF steering committee worked in broadcasting, and the CPF Bulletin 'Free Press' regularly carried pieces on TV, Radio etc) - this it had now done.

It was agreed that the IFA's work on Channel 4 should be written up for the CPF Bulletin. It was pointed out that the CPF was a properly constituted organisation along labour mobt lines, and the IFA could have a considerable presence if it wanted to.

b) "This conference recommends that the incoming National Executive should give attention, as circumstances allow, to developing policies and activities in the following areas:

1) The proposals & work done by the IFA in relation to the establishment of a British Film Authority
2) Audio-visual education, broadly conceived
3) To extending the links between the IFA and other unions apart from the ACTT, especially at the rank & file level
4) The existing and potential role of local govt in the support of independent cinema
5) The democratisation of, and the level of resources allocated to, the arts in the UK
6) The need to counter-act the centralising, anti-democratic and metropolitan imposed conceptions of 'regionalism' and 'regional film culture'

Simon Blanchard pointed to the lack of recent work by the IFA on the film industry/BFA area, and suggested that the IFA needed to produce an up-to-date policy statement on this issue. Alan Fountain said that this was urgent, and related closely to points 4, 5, 6 of the motion, which provided a context in which the BFA idea could be properly & productively considered.
Paul Willemen suggested rephrasing point 2 to 'the need to transform film and TV culture along the lines described in the proposal for a Working Party on Film & TV Exhibition already discussed at the AGM'. This was accepted.
Simon Blanchard pointed out that it would be worth the IFA holding a day event on what it meant by/wanted to change in 'education'. Pizzy Oppe said that the BFI were suggesting a dossier on teaching film & video, and anyone interested should contact Malcolm Allen at East Midlands Arts. There was a general discussion of the issues raised by points 3 to 6 of the second motion, ie contact with unions like Equity, Musicians Union; redirection of GLC arts policy & the Association of Metropolitan Authorities; a response to the forthcoming Select Committee report on arts funding.
Alan Fountain proposed to amend the beginning of motion b) to read 'incoming National Executive and the newly appointed National Organiser' to give the points more weight and ensure their being taken up. This was seconded by Anne Cottreller. It was also agreed to delete 'as circumstances allow' for the same reasons.
The two motions were put by Simon Blanchard and seconded by Mick Eaton. They were both then passed.
Chair: Roland Denning
Minutes were taken by Mandy Rose.
Plenary Session
Chair: Mike Leggett
Minutes: Jon Fisher

Motion 1
"In the light of adverse press coverage of the Coventry Socialist Film Club etc. (see motions passed"
Geoff Baggott: this seems uncontroversial—I'll pass it over to Frank for the background.
Frank Challenger
Two films about Ireland criticised in Coventry Evening Telegraph (editorial: public money going to propaganda; West Midlands Arts said that they did not fund political activities but it was implicit in the extra info. being asked for from the film society that there may be a problem. It is not tactically a good idea to send a letter at this point; but keep it on file. We'll keep Nat. Exec. informed.
Motion passed unanimously in favour.

Motion 2
"All IFA production groups particularly those intending to exhibit through the 4th Channel, circulate information, preferably through a regular IFA publication, describing film production in which they are currently engaged or which are being planned.

Mike Leggett
'Made in the UK' from Bristol sent out mailing which has apparently been received—general need for production groups to keep in closer contact than in the past.

Mick Eaton
Is the phase 'Particularly those intending to exhibit through Fourth Channel is this necessary.

Mike Leggett
4th Channel will make available funds on a scale not experienced before. May get one group played off against another. Thus links will have to be stronger.

Roland Denning:
production groups should circulate to each regional secretary.

Mike Leggett
Need to put the onus more on the membership.

R. Denning
Each production group communicate via IFA publication or regional secretaries.

MOTION PASSED: UNANIMOUS IN FAVOUR,
MOTION 3

"Conference instructs each regional group to organise conferences/meetings of left cultural
groups with a view to exploring the possibilities of co-ordinating joint activities and
collaborative organisational structures"

Mick Eaton: Proposer—This formulation of the motion puts the onus back on the regions.

Mike Leggett: include "and to report back to next years AGM"

Amendment agreed.

Passed unanimously.

Motion 4 (as passed)

Conference instructs the Executive Committee to establish the appropriate structures to;

a) develop policy on Channel 4 with specific reference to a response to Jeremy Isaac's proposal
   for funding independent film and video, and an investigation of contractual relations between
   independent film-makers and Channel 4.

b) Begin discussion with the ACTT about the terms and conditions of independent film production
   purchase and broadcast on Channel 4 and the amount of non-commercial independent film which
   will be broadcast by the Channel. These matters must be treated with urgency, and the Executive
   Committee draw on existing sub-committee structures to accomplish this task.

At the discussion yesterday on Channel 4 Jan and Alan put forward a vague motion—this is more
specific—a response to Isaacs proposals and also a way of developing our ideas.

—developing discussions with ACTT as written, they should take on cultural ideas and ar
arguments that IPA has been making.

Simon Blanchard

Are we still pushing the idea of the Foundation does the above mean leave out the Foundation.

Person unknown

Would still be possible to push Foundation, but rather Utopian.

Simon Blanchard

Could have done more background work on Foundation, if next Labour government would be useful

to keep developing proposals in relation to BFA.

Motion passed unanimously in favour.
Motion 5
Felicity Oppe

This motion needs amendment, a lot needs to be done to ensure that Channel 4 productions done under union agreement. Motion doesn't make a specific request of anyone.

Alan Fountain

Conference can only call on our representatives to talk to ACTT so as to get filmmakers representatives to meet.

Jan Worth

We must stress that this is not an attack on the ACTT.

Felicity Oppe

We need to rewrite the motion.

Conference waited whilst motion was rewritten.

Motion passed unanimously. "Conference notes that the terms and conditions under which the three Production Board/Channel 4 co-productions are to be made is unclear and request that, through the IFA/ACTT Liaison Committee, representatives of the film-makers be present at the relevant meetings between the ACTT and the Production Department. Conference also insists that the EPI maintain its commitment to the financing and completion of these films."

ROLAND Denning reported on the European Federation of Film and Video Directors. Britain was represented, he said, by the IFA (R. Denning) AIP (Sophie Ballachet) and Joseph Losey. Most other countries only had one rep. Not very much to do with IFA practices or policy. The conference was very 'auteur' orientated and entitled 'Freedom = Creativity'. The organisation works on the reputation of certain member directors with big reputation in film direction. Dealing with principles of copywrite, remaining with the 'auteur'. Copy of a drafted paper (in French) with the IFA. We have not as yet joined FERRA but it could be a good source of information. We need to ratify the statutes - which could be done through the Nat. Exec.

F. Oppe

Did you get a chance to speak?

R. Denning.

Yes - said the IFA represented a new film culture - that the aims of FERRA were becoming increasingly redundant. The response was - yes in Germany we too have many young film makers who make low budget movies, some of which are quite successful."
Have we been asked to pay the £100?
Not yet—let's wait until we've been asked. As it is its a good way to send IFA members abroad for a few days. It's a very culturally prestigious event—paid for by Rome City Council. The next conference is on TV, Cinema and New Technology.
A vote of thanks was proposed to the organizers of the conference especially Jan, Yugeshe, Roger and Simon Blanchard.
There then followed a discussion about 'Dressed to Kill.' F. Oppe reminded the conference that a specific request had been made by a member to have a discussion especially since some member had voted against sending or signing the letter. The letter was read out:
To Cannon Hill Arts Centre.
To the Film Officer
We would like to protest at the showing of Dressed to Kill at the Cannon Hill Arts Centre. We feel that a cinema which receives funding from the Arts Council should not be showing films available on general release which depict male violence against women without the necessary contextualisation of the issues involved.
F. Oppe
There are an increasing number of violent attacks on women at all women conferences. I'm not sure that we should devote all our energies at issues of images of violence, we should prioritise other ways of attacking the problem. Would the IFA support be as readily given if a women was attacked?
Simon Blanchard
Role of women in the IFA. What happened to the women's group in London;
Marion Bain
Extremely politically dubious of men demanding autonomous organisation from women in mixed organisations. Symptomatic of a recuperative drive.
Simon B
Not suggesting this but raising it in a general way since previous attempt have been made.
Mandy Rose
Dubious of supporting picket on representation of violence. Representation of passivity is also a problem. Just what is the relationship between reality and representation.
F. Oppe
Not sure that the IFA is the best forum for this kind of discussion. Scale of representations from mild to severe in terms of pornography is a bad theoretical base. Discussion of theoretical issues are current within and around the Women's Liberation Movement.
Jan Worth

This is arrogant of us. They are a local group who may have a whole programme of activity. They just asked us to show solidarity.

Roger Shannon

Background. Workers try to build discussion groups around representations of women in the cinema. From this particular campaign about films being shown locally discussion has developed. Thus conference was asked to support this. This is not the only politics that the group is involved in.

F. Oppe

It is not arrogant to say there are disagreements around this issue. I want to know why the IFA does support this issue.

Alan Fountain

There has been support for pickets against right wing films carrying the dominant ideology. Support people who want to fight against the representations of themselves, even if they aren't experts in representation. There is a danger of rarification and cutting off if we always say 'we must discuss this complex issue'.

Marion Bain

Can see a case if there is an existing campaign which relates to a film, but can't see why 'Dressed to Kill' in particular was singled out. It is another thriller. Unless we are going to take on the whole thriller genre. I understood that the controversy around D.to.K originated around the fact that a female protagonist's explicit sexuality was situated as transgression and therefore punished by a brutal and fatal stabbing. This was the focus of feminist anger which seems to have got lost in the B'ham action.

Alan Fountain

I agree with you—what films do you picket—lots of films probably.

F. Oppe

The opposition to D.to.K is as much historical as anything in that it was being shown in Leeds the same weekend as a Women against violence against Women conference which was the same weekend that Peter Sutcliffe murdered Jacqueline Hill. There was an attack on the cinema showing the film by women at the conference. Similar activity was initiated in California because of the reviews that the film was getting (how artistically brilliant it is etc.) There is an obvious problem of reviews justifying craft but ignoring politics.

Mick Eaton

No discussion was allowed yesterday. We should have discussed the issue before voting.
Rod Stoneman

It's good to have this type of discussion that is usually reserved for issues around the union. Immediate action and theoretical questions don't necessarily conflict.

F. Oppe

Regret that it wasn't discussed more at the time. The political context of such action is important.

Heather Powell

In Birmingham there was a squat on behalf of Women's Aid, lets people involved. Similarly with this. Thus more happening than just pickets.

Mike Leggett

IFA traditionally deals with Arts Centres and Arts Councils so our responsibility is to reaffirm our engagement with those activities. (irresponsible state activities)

Marion Dain

Therefore Mike Leggett's point is about the lack of exhibition practice at this particular cinema.

Frank Challenger

Useful in this case because the cinema won't have thought much about these issues.

Mick Eaton

I would really have liked to have known that before—we needed more relevant information before voting—should be noted in relation to standing orders—National Executive—please note.

Procedure should be followed.

Roger Shannon

Either this letter gets sent as it is or it gets reworded.

F. Oppe

Don't think we can do that. It would amount to over-ruling the vote. This has been valuable, but I would like to see a general motion about the IFA position on violence against women. The fact that we probably couldn't formulate one seems to point to a certain contradiction.

Anne Cottringer

I support Fizzie. We need to minute things that came out of this meeting to give a general expression of the feeling of the meeting. Maybe precise minutes could go to the group that wanted the letter sent.

Conference was officially declared finished.