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BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE



28 July 1989

CONFIDENTIAL

Richard Wilding
Review of Arts Funding Structure
105 Piccadilly
London
W1V 0AU

Dear Richard,

Thank you for meeting with me on Monday 24th July 1989. I am sorry that we were short of time but I am sure that we covered most of the ground that was necessary.

I thought I might just write and confirm that it is my view that the second of the two options you outlined in your letter to me of 10th July 1989 is the one which we think is most appropriate. In the circumstances, we feel that the Arts Council should confine itself to promoting the use of film, broadcasting, and video to enlarge access to the arts in pursuit of its Royal Charter obligations. The BFI should take overall responsibility for film as an art form and should co-fund the Regional Arts Associations accordingly. This view was confirmed by the meeting which I went on to which was to discuss the Cooper and Lybrand's Report on film, video and broadcasting opportunities within the Arts Council. This is proposing that the Arts Council should take a £1.5m initiative to increase the amount of arts programming shown on television. If it goes successfully, this plan would require a reordering of priorities in that department, in any case.

We talked briefly about the BFI's ability to re-order funding priorities in the light of the possible change in the number of RAAs and I confirmed that while we would want to do this anyway, it would certainly be of assistance if you are intending to make recommendations about the number of RAAs. We feel that a spending allocation based more closely on a per capita population base would be something which we would like to work for and would intend so in the context of two other factors:

- (a) That we wish to retain approximately 50% of our regional funding for use on national

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CBE
Director
Wilf Stevenson



infrastructural funding both for cinema exhibition and for workshop activities designed to increase local production, training and access in the regions.

(b) That we merge the current direct grants (made available to us as a result of the abolition of the metropolitan authorities) so that all our funding is seen as a unity, increasingly geared towards incentive funding which has proved to be successful in the film and television areas.

We hope that this arrangement will be satisfactory for film and broadcasting interests in the regions. We are conscious that it varies from the model which is likely to be adopted for the Arts Council and RAAs. We do this, however, on the basis that we feel strongly about the specific character of film, video and television which have a characteristic impetus and address which sometimes dictate different structures and alliances. The BFI is concerned with activities on the cusp between culture and a capital intensive and technologically developing industry.

We hope very much to increase our contacts with the Arts Council formally through regular officer meetings and I also hope that we will be able to include RAA Directors more effectively in our work. I already meet twice a year with them on a formal basis and I would like to think of appointing at least one RAA Director to the Board of Governors in the not too distant future.

I hope very much that this is helpful. I look forward to having further information about your proposals in due course.

With best wishes
yours sincerely

Wilf Stevenson
Director

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