



**COMMITTEE ON
BROADCASTING & INFORMATION MEDIA**

**Report on
Documentary Films
and Newsreels**

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING

Report
of the Committee on
Broadcasting and Information Media

on

Documentary Films

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DOCUMENTARY FILMS AND NEWS REELS

INTRODUCTORY

In pursuance of our plan of taking up one medium of mass communication at a time for study and report, broadly in the order of their relative importance, we took up the Films Division after making our report on 'Radio and Television'.

2. We do not wish to overload this report with the considerations we have earlier indicated for giving high priority to the development of media of mass communication. The achievement of major objectives of our developing economy, self-sufficiency in foodgrains, self-reliance in economic growth, a massive spread of family planning, popularising scientific knowledge and promoting emotional integration, would only be possible if the necessary knowledge, skill and information are conveyed to our people with imagination and appeal by the massive use of media of mass communication. We would only stress the importance of films in this process of communication and of the persuasive quality of visual presentation in enlisting the willing participation of our people in the great transformation on which the country is embarked.

3. It is generally acknowledged that television is the most effective medium of mass appeal. But until its advent and development, it was equally acknowledged that the documentaries and other films with an educational motif were among the best available instruments of mass communication. It was this realisation that led Lenin to say that, of all arts, the cinema was the most important for communicating to the people the ideals and objectives of the State. It was again on this realisation that India revived the Films Division after independence. Successive Prime Ministers have also stressed the role of the film in national development. But, as in the case of other media of mass communication, its natural growth has been retarded by insufficient awareness, inadequate resources and organisational deficiencies. It is to the study of these problems that we have applied ourselves in this report.

4. We were assisted in our work by Shri J.S. Bhownagary, our Consultant. His knowledge and experience of this medium both in India and abroad proved to be invaluable to us. We also benefited by our discussions with the Chairman of the Film Advisory Board, officials of the Films Division and other witnesses, mainly from the Film world. To one and all of them we are deeply indebted.

5. In the sections that follow, we first give a brief history of the short film in India and the present activities of the Films Division; we then examine its working and problems, and, finally, we make our recommendations for its

reorganisation. However, in doing so, we have taken into account the present financial difficulties and have given a perspective plan which should be realised in a period of five to ten years. Meanwhile we have suggested how best the present resources can be augmented and utilised in a more purposeful and effective way.

PART -- I

THE SHORT FILM IN INDIA

6. It was as early as 1896 that certain films, which could correctly be described as actuality films, were shown. These films were shot in India by certain foreign film concerns. Thereafter, what might be considered the beginning of the Indian news reel was made with shots taken of various typical events, notably the arrival of Dr. Paranjpe from England in 1901, the Durbar celebrating the Coronation of King Edward VII in 1903, the visit of King George V and Queen Mary to India in 1911, and the cremation of Lokmanya Tilak in 1920. In fact, it is to these early efforts to record topical events that we owe the shots still available of the history of the National Movement and the life of Mahatma Gandhi. There were no organised efforts to produce news reels at this stage but a few private film companies did produce news reels spasmodically.

7. With the documentary film movement taking root in the West, a few films were made in India on such subjects as the production of steel and sugar. These films gave the people an awareness of the importance of the film as a medium for communication and education. Even class-room films were attempted in those early years by the Motion Picture Society of India, formed in 1931, which obtained and distributed educational films in different parts of the country. Shortage of funds and various other difficulties made it impossible for them to go very far with this venture.

8. The motion picture industry in India, however, was alive to the need for documentary films and news reels and the Indian Motion Picture Conventions, held under the auspices of the Motion Picture Society of India in 1935 and 1936, discussed the matter at length. The convention of 1936 passed a resolution urging the Government of India to make the exhibition of Indian educational shorts and Indian news reels compulsory by legislation in every cinema programme. It was hoped that this would give the necessary impetus to the production of such films in the country.

9. The Motion Picture Congress of 1939, held to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of the Indian film, included a special session on educational films in order to draw Government's attention to the importance of producing educational and

information films. Delegates at the Congress also urged Government to recognise the necessity for an Indian news reel and sought its cooperation in the project.

10. As in the case of Radio, it was the Second World War which induced the Government of India to make greater use of the film for publicity for the War effort. In June 1940 a Film Advisory Board was set up in Bombay with representatives of Indian and foreign film interest, with an auxiliary of the Board in Calcutta. Besides producing a few films on its own and encouraging the production of films by others to promote the War effort, the Board also distributed foreign shorts with commentaries in Indian languages. To begin with, the showing of films was voluntary, but the results were not promising. In 1943 the activities of the Board were taken over by Government and the Unit 'Information Films of India' was set up as a part of the Government Department of Information and Broadcasting. The showing of films approved by Government was made compulsory and cinema houses were required to pay rates ranging from Rs.2.50 to Rs.3.00 per week.

11. Government also became involved in the production of news reels. In 1940 a contract was made with 20th Century for making Indian language dubbings of British Movietone News. Later, items of Indian interest, shot in India, were added and news reels were released under the title 'Indian Movietone News'. In 1943 Government took over the production of news reels and renamed them 'Indian News Parade', and a small cartoon film unit was also established.

12. Another unit which started production of educational films during the same period was the Army Film Unit, later named 'The Combined Kinematograph Services'. Started in 1941, this organisation made films mainly for the training of Servicemen. Recruitment films, propaganda films, security films, and others of this nature were their field of interest.

13. Although the accent during the War years was on films dealing with the War, a number of other films were also made during this period and some of these obtained international recognition both during and after the War. These war-time organisations undoubtedly paved the way for a documentary film movement in the country and also provided considerable training and experience to a number of technicians to specialise in the production of news reels and documentary films. Some of these technicians are still active in the documentary movement in India, and some are still in the employ of the Films Division.

14. When War ended, the Central Legislature demanded the closing down of Information Films of India which was regarded as a propaganda agency of a foreign government and, in 1946, the Unit was closed down along with the Indian News Parade and the Combined Kinematograph Services of the Defence

Department. The assets of Information Films of India were taken over by a private concern which tried to run the Indian News Parade for a time, but had to give up for financial reasons.

15. It was only after the attainment of independence that the National Government revived the organisation for the production and distribution of documentary films and news reels as a medium of education and information. It was thus that the Films Division came into being in Bombay in 1948.

PART - II

THE FILMS DIVISION

16. This Division is the central film producing organisation of the Government of India functioning under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. It is responsible for the production and distribution of news reels, documentary films and other films required by Government for information, educational and training purposes.

17. The Division is a subordinate office of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and works under a Controller, who, as head of the Department, controls and directs its production and distribution activities. The head of the Films Division has been an officer of the Indian Administrative Service since 1958. Formerly the head of the Films Division was himself a film producer.

18. The chart at the end of this report gives the present organisation of the Films Division. As may be seen from it, there are three main wings:

- (A) Production,
- (B) Distribution and
- (C) Administration.

(A) Production

19. The Films Division started with a modest programme of 28 films a year including news reels. This programme has gradually expanded over the years and today the Division produces about 170 films in a year. This means an average of more than three films a week.

20. Broadly speaking, the Films Division produces the following types of films, which include cartoons:

- (i) Documentary films for exhibition in cinema houses in India;
- (ii) Short films for exhibition by mobile vans in rural and industrial areas;

- (iii) Films for instructional, teaching and training purposes;
- (iv) Actuality films on the visits of foreign dignitaries to India and of Indian dignitaries to foreign countries;
- (v) Films for being shown abroad (for external publicity, for tourism, for export promotion, etc.);
- (vi) News reels.

21. Most of these films are made in English and 12 Indian languages. The Films Division is now one of the largest short film producing organisations in the world. It supplies about 40,000 prints of its films for commercial and non-commercial distribution a year and about 25 million people see its documentaries or news reels every week.

22. All the documentary production units are located in Bombay. The units go out on location for shooting and recording whenever necessary. For the production of news reels, 14 cameramen, known as News reel Officers, are posted in different parts of the country.

23. The Production Wing is in the charge of a Chief Producer who is assisted in all production matters by a Deputy Chief Producer and five Producers. This Wing is further divided into three main Sections:

- (1) Documentary Production,
- (ii) Cartoon Production and
- (iii) News Reel Section.

24. (1) Documentaries: The production of documentary films is undertaken on the basis of suggestions and requests received from the Ministries and Departments and organisations of the Government of India and of the State Governments. The subjects are discussed and selected at an inter-Ministries meeting every year and the annual production programme is finalised by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in consultation with other Ministries. There is a demand for many more films than the Division is able to produce at present.

25. The bulk of the production is undertaken by the Films Division through its own units, but about 25 per cent of the total production is assigned to outside producers on an approved panel. A Panel Committee consisting of two senior officers of the Films Division and one eminent producer from the private film industry scrutinises the applications received from outside producers and makes recommendations to the Government on the composition of the panel.

26. The assignment of films to private producers is now made by one of three permissible methods as under:

- (a) by inviting tenders from producers on the approved panel and assigning the films to the lowest tenderer,
- (b) by inviting tenders from a limited number of producers on the panel, or
- (c) by assigning a film to a producer after direct negotiations. In this case the Ministry's approval is necessary.

Till recently the main reliance was on the first method.

27. For the production of documentaries through its own staff, the Films Division's Producers supervise the work of six or seven Directors/Deputy Directors each. Films are assigned to Producers and Directors by the Chief Producer. The script of the film, sometimes written by the Director or occasionally by an outsider, is invariably based on data made available by the Ministry or Department of the Government which sponsors the film. There are two regular script-writers on the staff as well. Each Director is expected to produce about four films every year.

28. (ii) Cartoon Production: A full-fledged cartoon film unit was set up in 1956 under the guidance of an expert from the Walt Disney Studio, who was loaned to the Films Division under the Technical Co-operation Scheme. This unit is now under the charge of an Officer of the Films Division. It had produced about 18 cartoon films by the end of 1965.

29. (iii) News Reel Section: This Section is headed by the Producer (News reel) under the overall supervision of the Chief Producer. It has 14 cameramen distributed throughout the country. The cameramen collect material for the news reels either on their own initiative or under the direction of the Chief Producer, or on the request of the Ministries, Government Departments, State Governments and Information Officers. They supply material to Headquarters in Bombay which makes the selection for inclusion in the weekly news reel.

30. Foreign news coverage is obtained from 26 well-known news reel organisations through exchange arrangements.

31. For overseas coverage a monthly edition of the news reel is compiled and supplied to Indian Missions abroad.

32. All documentaries and news reels are produced in 13 languages for distribution to cinemas. Some training and instructional films are also produced in a smaller number of languages, depending on the demand from the sponsoring authorities.

33. The Films Division has participated in film festivals and competitions in India and abroad and several of its films have won national and international awards.

(B) Distribution

34. This Wing, which functions under the Officer-in-charge of Distribution, is concerned with the commercial and non-commercial distribution of documentaries and news reels produced by the Films Division. There is a head office at Bombay and six branches at Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Lucknow, Nagpur and Sikandarabad.

35. Under the compulsory exhibition scheme 5,456 cinema houses in the country are obliged by law to exhibit films approved by the Central Government, on the recommendations of the Film Advisory Board, and have entered into an agreement with the Films Division for the regular supply of weekly news reels and documentary films for exhibition. They are charged rental at one per cent of their net weekly collections subject to a minimum of Rs.2.50 levied from those cinema houses whose collections do not exceed Rs.500. Rentals are collected in advance every month on the basis of earnings of the previous year.

36. About 100 prints of a documentary film and 100 prints of the news reel in 13 languages are released weekly to 200 'first run' cinema houses. Supply is reversed in the following week and those cinema houses which got a news reel in the first week get a documentary in the following week and vice versa. The 'first run' cinema houses pass on the prints to 'second run' cinema houses who, in turn, pass them to others and the circuit is completed in about a year.

37. Prints of documentary films, approved by the External Affairs Ministry, intended to project India's image in foreign countries, are supplied to about 82 Missions abroad at rates prescribed for Government Departments.

38. Prints are also sold to private parties and agreements are entered into for commercial exploitation of documentaries and news reels in India and, to a very small extent, abroad.

39. Instructional, training and teaching films, as also films for export promotion and tourism, are made only for their sponsors, who have to purchase at least 12 prints of each film in each language version at prescribed rates.

40. The Films Division also sells stock shots from its films to State Governments and to private parties, film producers, etc., at rates prescribed by the Government.

41. A prescribed number of documentaries and news reels are supplied to the State Governments and to the Director of Field Publicity and some other governmental organisations free of cost for exhibition through mobile vans and through a few projector centres. The number of these prints amounts to approximately 12,000 a year. All the films are made available in 13 languages. Prints of films are supplied for non-commercial use to Government Departments, educational institutions, etc., at a concessional rate prescribed by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

42. Films made by the State Governments of West Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, which have their own film units, are released through the Films Division to the cinema houses either in the State concerned or on an all-India basis according to the advice of the Film Advisory Board. For such releases the State Governments are paid the actual revenue earned by the Films Division after recovery of distribution charges. In the case of certain films made on a cost-sharing basis with the State Governments, the Films Division distributes these and shares the revenue with the State Government concerned.

(C) Administration

43. As mentioned earlier, the Films Division is a subordinate office of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the powers delegated to the head of the Division correspond to those of the heads of other subordinate offices of the Government.

44. The staff of the Films Division is recruited directly through the Union Public Service Commission in respect of its senior technical posts, but certain posts are included in the Central Information Service. These are filled by a Board in the Ministry and the staff is transferred from one unit of the Ministry to another according to administrative convenience.

45. There is also a category of staff artists, as in the case of All India Radio. These are musicians who perform in the Films Division's orchestra, title-artists and commentary-speakers. They are on short-term contracts of three years' duration.

FINANCE

46. The finances for the Films Division are appropriated annually by Parliament. The revenue earned by the Division by sale of films and rentals from the cinema houses, etc., is credited to the Consolidated Fund of India. The amounts spent and earned between 1960-61 and 1964-65 are given below:-

	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
1960-61	5,505,519	9,657,355
1961-62	6,793,966	10,750,547
1962-63	7,472,482	10,541,917
1963-64	8,345,313	10,332,495
1964-65	9,498,011	10,796,242

PART - III

THE PROBLEMS

47. We have heard a great deal of criticism of the organisation and working of the Films Division and we have received many worth-while suggestions for improvement. The focal point has been the quality of the films produced. We deal first with this basic question, around which all others revolve.

48. The main points made were: First, the documentaries contain largely propaganda material for Government and its activities. Secondly, they do not pose faithfully the problems and needs of the country and provoke constructive thinking. Thirdly, the films are conceived poorly and executed indifferently; they bear the impress of films made in the thirties. Fourthly, they lack value and interest as those making them do not feel involved in their ideology and purpose. Fifthly, because of the imperfection of their visual treatment there is undue reliance on the commentary to explain what is being portrayed. And, sixthly, sufficient importance is not given to music and sound and to their harmonisation with the picture itself.

49. We consider that there is substance in the criticism we have heard and we proceed to offer our observations on the points mentioned. A study of the list of documentaries produced in any one year does not lend support to the suggestion that they cover only governmental activities. They deal with a variety of subjects and seek to propagate many new ideas. Nor do we wholly agree with the view that the films should not have propaganda value or should be divorced from the activities of Government. In a developing country, the *raison d'être* of the Films Division is to propagate the aims, and portray the activities and achievements of a Welfare State. But this does not imply that the films should depict largely the activities of the political leaders and the meetings and projects in which they participate. It is necessary that the objectives of the planning effort should be presented with subtlety, able to hold the attention and make an impact on the viewing public. They should be provocative and pose a challenge to the community, motivating it to participate in the endeavour to alleviate poverty, hunger and disease and to eradicate wrong attitudes and beliefs. They should portray the realities of life, pose the problems boldly, pin-point the

deficiencies and bring into focus the role the community can play in transforming the face of India materially and spiritually.

50. We are, however, in agreement with the view that because of organisational defects the documentaries are produced mechanically and disinterestedly, making them dull and uninteresting. Their treatment is often superficial and the absence of humour and satire is a contributory factor. Also the pattern of documentaries has now become so stereotyped that they lack drama and suspense. It is easy to anticipate sequences and conclusions. We consider that documentaries must concentrate on the visual impact, as in the days of the silent movie, when words were unnecessary and action was all important. The spoken word, to the extent required, should come from participants and not, as far as possible, from a commentator. The commentaries also do not flow smoothly nor are they spontaneous.

51. The general observations we have offered apply equally to news reels. An additional criticism is that News Reviews report too many meetings, opening ceremonies, religious festivals, etc., ignoring the topicality and news value of matters incorporated. The treatment is superficial. There is not enough human interest and there is little visual variety. Lastly, the coverage of events is also generally late, revealing a lack of initiative and enterprise. We suggest later in the report a reorientation, with justification for it.

52. We have come to the conclusion that the documentaries have not produced the impact intended and of which they are capable. While some of the documentaries produced are excellent and have won international recognition, the general coverage is poor and does not compare favourably with that in other countries. In a country like India, with its proud dramatic heritage and rich tradition in visual representation, this is all the more regrettable. We feel that in the anxiety to produce a large number of films, quality is being sacrificed to quantity. The demands are large but the resources are limited and to stall the move to create separate units by the Ministries, the Films Division is taking on work which it is beyond its capability to cope with. Production gets delayed and the purpose in view defeated, adding strength to the clamour for departmental units. We discuss this in the context of training and other films for the Defence Ministry and films needed by the Ministry of External Affairs. We would only stress here, what should be obvious, that there is little purpose in making a large number of indifferent films and that available resources should be husbanded and used for making a smaller number of quality films on a selective basis.

53. It is also necessary to distinguish between audiences and audiences. While there should be films for general showing, such as films relating to national integration and other questions of general importance and interest, other documentaries should be designed separately for urban and rural audiences. For example, a film on road sense and traffic problems can be of little value to rural viewers; conversely, a film on the use of fertilisers would be of little interest to urban audiences.

54. There is also a justifiable complaint that the number of prints made is so small that even a news reel takes a year and even more to complete the circuit. And we have heard with dismay that no films were released to the Field Publicity Units for five months in the years 1964-65 and 1965-66; there is apprehension that the situation may worsen in the coming months. We fail to appreciate the utility of maintaining these units and starving them of the material which provides the justification for their creation and retention. And we find even less justification for the Films Division itself if the rural community is to be neglected and by-passed in the production, distribution and exhibition of documentaries. It is in their involvement and in their regeneration that the future progress of the country lies.

55. We now proceed to examine the basic causes which come in the way of improving the quality of films other than those already discussed.

56. Resources: The malaise of all media of mass communications is the inadequacy of financial support. The Films Division is no exception. This financial deficiency reacts on the quality of its production in many ways. We discuss the more important ones.

57. The basic material for making documentaries and news reels is raw film. As there is no indigenous production of raw film, it has necessarily to be imported and it is also expensive. (The Hindustan Photo Films was established in 1960-61, but it has not gone into production yet.) Therefore, there is the need to economise on its use, and, a general ratio of consumption has been prescribed for all films made. The ratio laid down is four to one; in other words, a producer can expose four times the quantity of film actually used in the final version. The question is whether the ratio is realistic and can be adhered to in all cases in making a good and presentable film. Realising the rigidity of the ratio, a dispensation has been given to the Controller to relax the limit when necessary. But, in view of the budgetary and foreign exchange difficulties, he is naturally inclined to do so only in very exceptional cases.

58. Our Consultant informs us that in the more advanced countries the ratio of consumption is as high as fifteen to one, and even twentyfive to one for documentary films. Whatever be the accepted norm in countries with larger resources

and ready access to raw material, we have to ensure economy in the consumption of raw film. Consumption depends on the subject, the style of filming, the imagination of the Director, and largely on the thoroughness with which a documentary has been planned and the extent to which the producer, director, cameraman, editor, and all others involved, participate as a team in all stages of the making of the film. We have heard in evidence that often enough changes are made in a film at various stages, including at the final editing stage, and even after its viewing by the Film Advisory Board. This waste of time, material and effort can be minimised by better coordination.

59. The script of a film is usually prepared without the script-writer and director concerned visiting the location where the film is to be shot. This results in considerable waste as the script has to be re-written when the team actually goes to shoot on location. The present time-consuming process of constant revision is obviously uneconomic. We consider that wherever possible, script-writers should be allowed to visit the location before preparing the material.

60. Twenty-five per cent of the total documentaries produced by the Films Division are made by producers outside the organisation. We regret to say that the quality of this production is not high, sometimes not even up to the standard of films produced by the Division. Examining the reasons, we found that outside producers are selected on the basis of competitive tendering, the usual practice being to accept the lowest tender. It is obvious that in a creative art, the producer and the quality of his earlier productions which should be the determining factors. The present system makes the better documentary producers disinclined to tender and the choice has to be made from amongst the ones who are prepared to accept uneconomic rates just to obtain work. The average rate obtained by competitive tenders is between Rs.18 and Rs.20 per foot of film produced. We are informed by the cost accountant of the Films Division that the average cost of making a documentary film is Rs.21,000. The cost per foot naturally varies considerably from film to film and ranges between Rs.8 and Rs.50. The rate thrown up by competitive tenders is thus uneconomic and it is not possible to expect quality production.

[tender system can have no place. It is the merit of the

61. Independent documentary producers have complained that under the present system cinema houses are compelled to show only documentaries released by the Films Division and, therefore they have to seek its patronage and be subject to its vagaries. This is not conducive to the growth of talent or its sustenance. That this art has not died out is due to the fact that public sector and private undertakings make use of independent producers, pay them well, and what is more important, do not generally interfere with or seek to improve their ideas in the making of the films.

62. They have also complained that while the Films Division gets its quota of raw film and other requirements they have to make purchases in the black market adding to their difficulties in keeping within the rates which have now come to be established for outside work in the Films Division.

63. Rates of payment to all categories engaged on ad hoc basis by the Films Division are extremely low. A director engaged for a film receives a fee varying from Rs.1,500 to Rs.2,500 whereas a competent director would command a fee of Rs.5,000 or even more elsewhere. As a result, top-ranking directors are not attracted to work in the Films Division. Similarly, the fees offered to script-writers are Rs.500 per reel to newcomers and Rs.1,500 to others. This again is insufficient to enlist competent script-writers. We were told that Rs.1,500 should be the minimum. The Films Division also depends on outside commentary writers. This is as it should be to give variety. The fee offered, being Rs.150 to Rs.200 for a reel which, incidentally is the same as for reading the commentary, does not attract good commentators. A fee of Rs.400 was considered reasonable by the present Chief Commentary Writer.

64. The payment by footage is also an irrational arrangement. It encourages the producers to make their films unnecessarily long. The rate of payment does not take into account the many factors which go into the making of a film. There are variations in cost and time taken for making different types of films. Secondly, some films are shot in studios, others in outside locations. Obviously, they cannot be treated uniformly.

65. Before 1947 a number of independent producers used to make short films but, since then, the terms and conditions imposed, which we have briefly mentioned, have become so restrictive that many producers have discontinued making documentary films for the Films Division. Better rates are offered by foreign agencies and by the private sector. A few independent producers still co-operate with the Films Division because of their idealistic involvement with this medium and some because of the prestige value of a release by the Films Division which should bring assignments from others. We consider that the development of this important medium should be encouraged by Government by making a larger use of independent producers and by relating payment for a film not to its length but to what it would have cost the Films Division itself to make it. A larger use of independent producers would also ease the load on the Films Division and make it possible to produce documentaries within a more reasonable time, thus meeting the complaint of the sponsoring authorities.

66. We would recommend that in employing independent producers the unsuitable system of tenders should be given up and selection should be made on the proved aptitude of a particular producer for a particular film. We would also

suggest that a new producer should be given the opportunity to produce a film on trial. It would give encouragement and also enlarge the field of choice.

67. We understand that a number of films take, for one reason or another, as long as four to five years to make and that there are quite a few such in the pipeline. There is disinclination to abandon a picture whose completion would no longer serve any purpose and scarce resources are thus wasted in a futile pursuit.

68. Lastly, we should refer to complaints of inordinate delay in making payments for work done; sometimes months elapse before payment is made after a film has been accepted. Many producers do not have resources either to make a film or subsequently to wait for the payment. We suggest that since banks do not give advances for making films, a system of progress payment should be instituted. Twenty-five per cent of the contracted amount should be paid on signing the contract, another twenty-five per cent on approval of the rough cut, twenty-five per cent after approval by the Central Board of Film Censors, and the remaining twenty-five per cent on delivery. We understand that in a few cases advance payments were agreed to but a bank guarantee was demanded which made it difficult for the producers to avail themselves of the relaxation made. The payment to script-writers, commentators and others should also be made within a fortnight of completion of their work.

69. The present arrangements for financing the Films Division are not satisfactory; there is no direct link between receipts attributable to its productions and the appropriations made to it. A more rational method would be for the subvention from the Central Revenues to be related and expressed as a percentage of revenues. But it has not been so. For example, in 1961-62, the net allocation from Central Revenues was about Rs.40 lakhs but this has been progressively reduced to Rs.12.50 lakhs in 1964-65. The receipts in 1961-62 were about Rs.68 lakhs and the total appropriation was Rs.1 crore and 8 lakhs. In 1964-65, the receipts had risen to about Rs.95 lakhs but the appropriation had remained constant at Rs.1 crore and 8 lakhs. The departmental budget bears the cost of supply of films to State Governments, to the Directorate of Field Publicity and to other organisations. If these were charged for, or even notional figures of receipts added, the Division would have produced a surplus.

70. The disturbing feature is that the budget allocation has remained more or less constant over the years despite increases in the cost of raw films, in making and processing them, and increases in dearness and other allowances. The allocation has not been adjusted to take account even of the incidence of annual increments. The increased revenues reflect increased activity. Yet the expenditure has been held down. The only conclusion is that the present level

of production has been reached by sacrificing quality. Because of paucity of resources, the Division was even unable to fulfil orders for prints to the tune of Rs.5 lakhs in each of the last two years. We consider that the net subvention from Central Revenues should now be fixed as a percentage of the Division's own receipts and should be of the order of about 50 per cent. The Films Division should also get credit for supplies which are made without charge now.

71. There is a certain basic minimum of equipment essential for satisfactory film production. But the Films Division does not today possess even this minimum. There is only one camera in good working condition for filming and recording synchronised dialogues, speeches and interviews on location. According to an estimate, at least 45 such cameras are required for the present output in place of the one available. Whereas in other countries light-weight portable sound cameras are used, the Films Division has none of this type. Its solitary possession is unwieldy and also obsolete.

72. There are 16 cameras for documentary films of which nine are more than 10 years old and have outlived their useful life. There are thus only seven cameras which are in good condition for the use of 14 cameramen. We were informed that the Central Documentary Studio in Moscow has 250 cameras for 150 cameramen. We cannot obviously attain this standard, nor is this necessary, but it is obvious that the essential minimum number should be provided in the interest of quality and economy in time, effort and money. It should not in any case be fewer than the number of cameramen employed, with a small reserve.

73. The shortage of foreign exchange has compelled the Division to use an unsuitable type of raw film. We were told by a number of our expert witnesses that both for black and white and colour films, the film available from rupee-payment countries is not as good as from other sources. Films made on this film, which the Division has perforce to use, do not last as long as those made on better quality film. Considering that documentary films have to be shown extensively and over a long period of time it is uneconomical to make them on raw film which deteriorates rapidly. Negatives on superior film, shot in 1949, are still usable while negatives shot in 1958 on the inferior film have already become unusable.

74. The lack of foreign exchange has also been responsible for the continued use of optical film for the preparation of sound tracks instead of magnetic tapes which are far more efficient and less expensive in the long run. An initial expenditure of Rs.6 lakhs, with a foreign exchange component of Rs.2.3 lakhs (pre-devaluation), is required for a complete switch-over from the optical to the magnetic. This switch-over would enable the Films Division to save approximately Rs.2.75 lakhs a year thus recouping the capital expenditure within a period of three years.

75. The table given below, which gives foreign exchange demanded, the amounts allotted and actually released makes an interesting study:

Year	Foreign exchange asked for	Foreign exchange allotted	Foreign exchange released
		(RUPEES IN LAKHS)	
1962	6.50	6.28	5.28
1962-63	9.63	5.68	5.16
1963-64	8.35	6.85	5.52
1964-65	9.50	4.39	2.03
1965-66	19.67	2.00	0.277

76. Facilities and Equipment: The quality of the films made is also conditioned by the environs in which they are conceived and produced. It is axiomatic that any organisation, let alone a creative one, must have the essentials necessary for its work, must have a minimum of accommodation, equipment and other ancillary facilities to function satisfactorily. We regret to say that we found the Division deficient in all. We deal with the major disabilities and suggest how best they can be met.

77. Accommodation: The Division is housed in rented quarters acquired in 1960. The main building is beyond repair and was so declared by the Central Public Works Department six years ago. Yet it continues to house the administrative and other offices. Though the immediate danger of the roof caving in has been temporarily averted by putting up props, the risk to life and property remains. We were appalled by the prevailing conditions in which it is neither possible to give the staff elbow-room and hygienic conditions of work nor to arrange essential facilities for the storage of valuable material and equipment. Even the Producers and Directors are accommodated in ill-ventilated, half-partitioned, small ^{little} cubicles where movement is difficult and concentration impossible.

78. Several temporary structures have been added from time to time but they are wholly unsuitable for the purposes intended. Perhaps the idea was that money spent on elaborate improvisation in the present accommodation would be a waste because a new building was planned which would provide the needed facilities and amenities. But it is now certain that the new building will not be ready for several years. It is imperative, therefore, that certain steps should be taken to protect valuable material and equipment from further deterioration and decay.

79. No retiring room exists in the present premises even though many members of the staff work till very late. This reveals lack of elementary consideration. We recommend that a retiring room be immediately provided.

80. Laboratory: The Films Division is one of the largest documentary units in the world. Yet, it is not equipped even to process its own films. Technical quality largely depends on the quality of processing. At present this work is farmed out to commercial laboratories at an expenditure of more than Rs.10 lakhs a year.

81. The selection of laboratories is made by inviting applications which are screened by a Committee. Those on the panel are invited for negotiations. Having regard to the volume of processing work involved, a reduction below the normal rates is usually secured. The laboratories, we were told, do not give sufficient care and attention to the Films Division's work, nor do they adhere to the time schedule when more remunerative commercial work eventuates. There is hardly any supervision and check by the Films Division; this is also a contributory cause for indifferent work. Action against them for delinquency involves litigation and is difficult to resort to.

82. Processing of certain types of films through private laboratories involves a security risk, particularly films relating to the Ministry of Defence. While the laboratories co-operate in completing the processing in good time in an emergency, the absence of a laboratory causes delay and during the Indo-Pak conflict, the inability to process films necessitated a system of clearing films made by foreign cameramen which involved considerable security risk. These drawbacks can be eliminated by having a laboratory and locating it conveniently at Delhi.

83. On all these counts, we recommend that the Division should be equipped with a laboratory of its own. The Controller estimates that the capital cost of a fully equipped laboratory would be approximately of the order of Rs.65 lakhs. This is not a very large sum having regard to the benefits which would accrue. It would also make the Unit a self-contained one, embracing a function essential for making quality films.

84. A contrary view has been expressed by some witnesses. They consider that the establishment of a departmental laboratory would be uneconomic. As it would have to be equipped for peak-loading, it would necessarily have capacity to spare at other times and unless this is utilised the processing costs would rise. We do not, however, see any difficulty in accepting outside work on a commercial basis, whenever it is possible to do so.

85. We understand that the Defence Ministry is seriously considering the setting up of a laboratory of its own so that films made by it for training and other educational purposes can be got ready in better time than is possible now. This could also help in clearing films made by foreign cameramen and other organisations in the country. We suggest that the possibility of setting up a joint organisation be now explored.

86. Library: It was to be expected that a Unit engaged in producing news reels and documentaries over a period of 15 years would have a well-equipped and well-organised library of films, its own and those received from other sources, properly indexed and protected. We were surprised that it was not so. In the course of our visit we found spools of films stocked one on top of the other, along with walls of the rooms, exposed to heat and humidity. In these conditions, it would take a great deal of any editor's or director's time to locate shots and scenes required for a film and, when he does locate the films, it is not always certain that the material will be usable. It is obvious that in the interest of economy itself the library should be in a position to provide quickly the material needed.

87. The vaults, where many films are stored, are not air-conditioned. The small amount needed to provide air-conditioning must be a small proportion of the loss already incurred and continuing to be incurred of valuable material. There seems to be a lack of a sense of proportion and priority. We were disappointed when the Controller expressed his inability to effect any improvements until the new building had been constructed.

88. We must add that Television as it grows in India will also require many of the films already made and their protection will mean a saving of several lakhs of rupees. We urge, therefore, that immediate steps should be taken to safeguard the future by providing the small capital outlay needed in the purchase of air-conditioning equipment.

89. The Library is also not properly staffed. The Librarian himself, though qualified, has had no previous experience in a film library. He also complains that his five assistants are not qualified even to classify the material. We should like to stress that if a systematic classification of both used and unused material were now to be made, a large number of stock shots could be used by the Films Division itself and also sold to private industry and organisations, both in India and abroad, for which we understand considerable demand exists. We recommend that the reorganisation of the library should be taken up on a priority basis.

90. Maintenance: The Division possesses expensive equipment but has no satisfactory arrangement for its storage and maintenance. It has no workshop worth the name. This causes delays and sometimes upsets production schedules.

91. A trolley crane costing approximately Rs.66,000 donated by the Technical Co-operation Mission of the United States Government has not been utilised to the extent possible, we were told, because of certain difficulties in maintenance. We are assured that steps are now being taken to put it into operation. The failure to provide proper storage for expensive equipment is very serious. We have seen for ourselves the deterioration which has occurred in expensive camera lenses and other equally expensive equipment. Such equipment needs to be stored, when not in use, in an air-conditioned and de-humidified room in any climate, more so in the humid heat of Bombay. As in the case of films, so in the case of equipment, the small expenditure in providing air-conditioning has been resisted without regard to the damage caused to expensive material. It does not cost much to air-condition a room and we consider that this should be done immediately to prevent further deterioration of available equipment and to protect new acquisitions.

92. Research and Reference: The Division has neither a good reference library nor has it a research organisation needed to provide material which would give depth to the films and make the material they incorporate authentic. The Controller informed us that with two research assistants at his disposal, no worth-while study can be organised. He had represented the matter to Government, but without success. We consider that the research section should be suitably strengthened.

93. Music and Sound Effects: Music and sound effects make or mar a film, yet enough attention and resources have not been given to their development. The music section is under-staffed and under-paid. There are ten musicians on the pay roll who are employed on contract. They complain, as do the commentary speakers, that though the staff artists of All India Radio have recently been given certain privileges and facilities, they have received no such consideration and encouragement. Though on contract, the musicians are allowed to take up outside assignments. Presumably, this unusual dispensation obtains because they are not adequately remunerated. Casual outside assignments are well-paid. Often, for a single performance a musician receives more than he receives in a month from the Division. Thus the musicians are constantly on the look-out for such assignments to the detriment of their normal duties. The Director complains that he is unable to enforce attendance at rehearsals, recordings, etc., unless the present dispensation which allows acceptance of outside work is withdrawn. This can only be done if pay scales are suitably adjusted.

94. There is no separate music studio, not even a separate rehearsal room. Rehearsals and recordings have to be arranged in one of the multi-purpose studios when available. The acoustics of the studio are also unsatisfactory. The stock of the few musical instruments in the Division's possession

is deteriorating because there is no arrangement for its proper storage. There is only one Music Director with an Assistant to undertake the almost impossible task of composing, rehearsing and recording of music for three films a week.

95. We were disappointed to hear that there is hardly any collaboration between the Director of a film and the Music Director in the selection and composition of suitable music for each film. It is usual to call upon the Music Director to provide the music a day or so after the editing of the film has been completed. This accounts for the complaints regarding the quality of back-ground music, both in the documentaries and news reels.

Production Planning

96. The present method of drawing up the production programme for the year is to invite suggestions from the various Ministries and Departments of Government. These are discussed at an inter-Ministerial meeting once a year at which the Controller and the Chief Producer are present. We were informed that the Ministries are not always represented at a sufficiently senior level at these meetings. The junior officers who attend are not in a position to take decisions or agree to deletions or modifications.

97. As the Ministries do not have to bear the cost, they usually make excessive demands for films on subjects suitable and unsuitable and usually get their demands accepted. To give but one example, a film on Nilokheri was commissioned in 1965-66 and released for general showing in 1966. As a result the approved programme is beyond the capacity of the Division to produce. And it includes subjects which are not suitable for visual presentation despite protests of the Films Division.

98. Once the production of a film has been agreed to, the responsibility for providing back-ground material and for approving the script devolves upon the sponsoring Ministry. It is not always that the necessary material is made readily available and, invariably, delays occur in the approval of scripts. It was suggested to us that if the Director, selected to make a film, could come up to Delhi for selecting his own material, the process of collecting it would be considerably speeded up. This suggestion deserves consideration.

99. We have heard complaints that the Consultants, appointed by a Ministry to assist and liaise, take upon themselves virtually the role of the producer. They issue detailed instructions on the concept and construction of the film, and the Films Division is hardly ever in a position to resist these somewhat amateurish intrusions.

100. In the interests of making a good documentary, it is necessary that the role of the Consultants should be circumscribed and defined. Making a film is a sophisticated art best left to specialists to present the subject given in the light of their experience and expertise. As a documentary is 'the creative interpretation of reality', it is obvious the producer should have freedom and discretion to make the film according to his own concept of treatment the subject needs.

101. The dull and drab presentation of facts and figures, which the Consultants insist upon, often defeats the very purpose for which the film is being made. The Films Division on its part is unhappy that it has to produce a film of indifferent appeal and quality and has to bear the brunt of public criticism for the lapses of others.

102. When we asked the Controller and Chief Producer why they readily accepted a position in which they had surrendered their judgment and sacrificed their reputation, the explanation was that they had become wiser by experience. They had taken up the differences between them and the sponsoring Ministries with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting time and again but had not received any encouragement or redress. On the contrary, they had been pulled up for delaying the pictures by such references. Secondly, the cost of making a film increases if shooting is interrupted. The Division could not face such erosion of its resources which impinged on its ability to make the number of films assigned. It is in this situation that the Division had accepted a situation which was bound to tarnish its image.

103. There is nothing inherently wrong in the system of Consultants. It should in fact be a useful institution. But the Consultants' responsibilities must end with providing material and information and approving the factual content of the script. They should be prevented from undue interest and interference thereafter and in no event allowed to revise the script or alter the treatment after the picture has been made. We enter this caveat as instances have been brought to our notice where even the scripts earlier approved were materially altered at the final viewing of the film.

104. We would also advocate that in addition to sponsored films, the Producers of the Films Division should be allowed to make at least a dozen films on subjects of their choice. Creative artists should be given scope to express themselves without being placed in a strait-jacket both in regard to subjects and their treatment. They should also be encouraged to suggest subjects which are of general interest and are ideal for visual presentation.

105. Directives: Despite improvements in recent months, the news reels continue to give undue importance to official functions and activities. The Films Division explained in extenuation that suggestions from Delhi for inclusion of items, whether they have any news value or human interest or not, could not be disregarded. This sets the general pattern of the news reels with or without such suggestions. There is also a directive on the nature of items to be included and the treatment to be given to them. While the directive is generally unexceptionable, the Films Division finds itself in a quandary to interpret the proviso that it should not cover events 'in a way which may prejudice the interests of the Government of India or a State Government generally'. When a doubt arises and the Films Division seeks the guidance of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, no directive is forthcoming in clear and precise terms. This has induced the Producer to be cautious and circumspect and to exclude items which should not come within the ambit of the restriction imposed. Some events of importance, mostly of a political nature, thus come to be ignored.

106. Centralised Production: News reels and documentary films both suffer from the present system of centralised production. In the case of news reels, the putting together of shots taken by cameramen located at different centres does not satisfy audiences throughout the country. Likewise the lack of local colour and appeal in documentary films considerably diminishes their utility and motivating capacity. This is an important matter to which we refer when discussing the re-organisation of the Division.

Compulsory showing of Films

107. In Part II we have already described the procedure for supplying documentaries and news reels to the 5,456 cinema houses in the country on payment, by them, of rentals based on their weekly collections.

108. The exhibitors and distributors, both individually and collectively, protested against the present 'imposition'. We do not, however, agree that the compulsory showing should be given up. If this were to be done, the justification and the need for the Films Division would disappear. We do not also agree that the small levy is of any consequence to those who complain. Many cinema houses are in a position to make a greater contribution to sustain an activity which is beneficial to the community at large. Improvements in the quality and the supply of fresh and up-to-date news reels and documentaries, which we discuss later, would undoubtedly mitigate the complaint.

109. The charge has also been made by independent producers, exhibitors and distributors, that its present monopoly of distribution of documentary films insulates the Films Division from competition, through which along it would receive impetus to improve the quality of its output. As a condition of licensing of cinema houses,

they have to sign contracts for showing a short film every week of the year. As the Films Division is the only unit in a position to offer a comprehensive contract, the cinema houses enter into an agreement with it. This prevents independent producers from negotiating the sale of their own production. A quarter of the Films Division's production which is distributed to them has to be made to order and does not incorporate their ideas on a subject of their own choice. Only six films made independently by them are purchased on a selective basis by the Films Division for release. We would recommend that this quota should be doubled. The choice of the films to be purchased should not be left to the Films Division as at present, but to the cinema houses. This would only be possible if the terms of contract between the Films Division and the cinema houses are suitably revised. This adjustment would give the independent producers an opportunity to sell their films and the exhibitors a choice in purchase. The revenue foregone should not be appreciable as the purchase price would provide an offset.

110. Another suggestion is that if the length of feature films were to be reduced and a general duration of about two hours prescribed, it would give impetus to the making and showing of short films. On the one hand, it would conserve raw film in short supply, and on the other it would give a shot in the arm to independent documentary producers and improve the quality of their work in a highly competitive market.

111. We should also like to suggest that the documentary films produced for cinema houses must vary according to the nature of the audiences. One of the difficulties at present is that a documentary suitable for sophisticated audiences is also shown to others and vice versa because of the present distribution arrangements. It will mean making more documentary films if metropolitan cinemas are to be provided with different types of documentaries from cinema houses in the districts and in the rural areas, but this is an inescapable item of expenditure, if the documentary movement in the country is to develop and if the films are to play the role for which they are intended.

112. There is one variation of this idea which commends itself to us and which has been suggested by some of our witnesses. If it is not possible in the immediate future to make different films for different types of cinema houses, at least the cinema houses should have the possibility of choosing the films they would show from some of the older documentaries produced by the Films Division which have not become out of date and which would be worth showing again. The Distribution Section of the Films Division should be able to present to the cinema houses not only the annual programme for the coming year but also the list of the old films from which they could select in preference to one of the new films

if they desire. It was suggested that to discourage the use of some of the more glamorous documentaries too frequently, rentals may be varied from film to film. They may be classified into three or four categories and the rentals to be paid may be fixed according to their popularity. In this way Government would not lose any of the revenue it now earns from the rentals from cinema houses. At the same time, it would allow cinema houses to select films according to the tastes of their respective audiences.

113. Public Relations: The publicity unit is headed by a Public Relations Officer drawn from the Central Information Service; he is not under the administrative control of the Films Division. He had two publicity assistants who are mainly employed on clerical and other routine duties.

114. With an organisation of this character it is not surprising that there is hardly any publicity of the activities of the Films Division; even the showing of award-winning documentaries is not highlighted and publicised and no posters or stills are put out to draw attention to the films produced. The preview of documentaries arranged every month has become a routine affair, a mere showing of the films. Nothing is done to interest the audience in the theme, treatment and purpose of the films. The Producers and Directors are not even introduced, let alone being given the opportunity of being interviewed by the press representatives present. This routine treatment is given also to films which have won national and international awards. This is a discouragement to those responsible for making the films.

115. The success of the documentary movement in Great Britain was due not only to the merit of the films produced but also to the press and other publicity undertaken by outstanding film personalities. The technical staff of the Films Division and others interested should be similarly encouraged to write and speak about documentary films and their place in social education.

116. We also feel that a journal to promote film craft, particularly for short films, is necessary. This should not be just a house magazine but one of general interest with contributions from outstanding film personalities, both Indian and foreign.

117. Approval of Films: Both the Films Division and independent producers complained that the intervention of the Film Advisory Board is often prejudicial to the production of documentaries of merit. In approving films for release, the Board not infrequently asks for alteration or deletion of shots, revision of commentaries and modification of other technical details. It costs both money and time to carry out the instructions of the Board. But this aspect apart, it is

seldom that the original concept of a film is realised. The producer feels unhappy but he has no remedies available to him. He has to bear the brunt of adverse criticism when, we are told, the blame lies elsewhere.

118. Another grievance is that the classification given in the Government notification has been rigidly drawn up and is equally rigidly applied. There have been cases, a recent one was cited, where excellent films had been rejected as they could not be brought within the definition of any of the categories laid down.

119. Yet another complaint is that the Film Advisory Board passes films for general release unimaginatively; some of these have no universal interest. For example, films on the use of fertilisers for increasing productivity were shown in cinema houses even in metropolitan cities.

120. The general complaint of the producers is that when the sponsors have approved a film and the Central Board of Film Censors has also passed it for showing, why should it have to cross the formidable hurdle of the Film Advisory Board?

121. In view of the seriousness of the complaint, we considered it advisable to go into the functions and working of the Film Advisory Board. In this examination, we obtained the willing co-operation of Shri M.C. Bhat, the Chairman of the Board. He gave us the genesis of the Board and an outline of the way in which it functions.

122. Exhibitors had at one time questioned the authority of the Government to compel them to show a film every week and pay a levy of one per cent on their earnings. The legal difficulties were overcome by setting up an autonomous Board by notification to advise Government on films which should be released for compulsory showing.

123. The Board receives applications from the Films Division and other producers giving details of the films they want to show. They are viewed by the Board on a given day every week; first to decide whether they can be placed in any of the categories enumerated in the notification; secondly, to review the treatment of the subject in the films and suggest alterations if necessary. These have to be made before approval is accorded. To eliminate the complaint that the Board acts arbitrarily, the practice has now been introduced to invite the producer to be present at the viewing of his film. The Board discusses the rationale of its suggestions with him and either accepts or rejects his representations. Shri Bhat admitted that the Board's review is comprehensive and covers all aspects of the films produced. But he claimed that the Board has made a significant contribution in improving the tone and quality of documentaries. It is true that there are sometimes difficulties in classifying a film as a documentary, but this happens rarely.

124. We have considered the complaint in the light of Shri Bhat's observations and find that many of them are sustainable. Examining the notification on the constitution and charter of the Board, we concluded that the Board was given the limited role of determining the suitability of films for being classified as scientific films, films intended for educational purposes, films for dealing with news and current events or a documentary film (vide Rules 1 and 12 of the Resolution contained in the Information and Broadcasting Ministry's Notification No.1/29/58-FP dated the 15th February 1959) and recommending their release. But it was not made the arbiter of their quality and presentation. We do not also consider that the interposition of a third authority in the process of approval is either necessary or appropriate. We would in any case recommend that the Board should have in its composition a leavening of people with artistic perception and technical competence.

125. Evaluation: An important reason given for the indifferent appeal of the documentaries is that there are no arrangements or attempts for ascertaining the reactions of the audience. A systematic evaluation of the popularity of a documentary is a complicated and expensive exercise and we have no easy solution to suggest. In the case of rural audiences, however, particularly of shows organised by the Field Publicity staff, it should not be difficult to reach a reasonable judgment. The size of the audience in relation to population, its participation in the discussion that should follow, and a random questioning of viewers should provide an index. This would be a valuable guide in selecting the themes more judiciously and, what is more, in presenting them more attractively.

DISTRIBUTION

126. It would be convenient to discuss the distribution of films under two broad heads:-

- (a) The distribution to cinema houses for compulsory exhibition.
- (2) The supply to the Field Publicity Directorate, the State Governments and others for free showings to urban and rural audiences.

127. There have been persistent complaints that the number of prints made of a film is so small that its timely exhibition in both theatrical and non-theatrical circuits cannot be arranged. A related issue is that because of many other limitations even the films available cannot be effectively utilised. This often defeats the very purpose for which films are made at considerable cost and effort.

128. We have earlier mentioned that in its anxiety to meet unrealistic targets, the Division is inclined to sacrifice quality for quantity. We would much rather that a smaller number of quality films were made and a larger number of prints. We have already touched upon the discontent which arises from the small number of prints released. It is obvious that news reels shown long after they are made - extending to 52 weeks - cannot remain topical and have either value or appeal. As a witness put it, the news reel on floods in Orissa was being shown at a time when the State was facing acute drought and scarcity conditions. Secondly, after a number of showings in different places involving also constant packing and travel, the films are hardly ever in a condition for satisfactory viewing.

129. A contributory cause of delay is the present distribution system. Despatches are now arranged through six branches. The Films Division considers that with two additional branches, at Bangalore and at Delhi, it should organise quicker distribution.

130. Cinema Houses: The representatives of the Indian Motion Pictures Distributors' Association and the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association who appeared before us justifiably complained that old news reels do not interest audiences even in small towns and villages, yet the small exhibitors have to pay one per cent of their net takings for the doubtful privilege of showing them. One suggestion is that they should be released from the obligation to pay a rental. It is difficult to estimate the financial effect of this exemption. We consider that the possibility of exempting the cinema shows in villages should be examined. The financial loss is not likely to be significant. The more important suggestion by them and others is that news reels should not take more than six weeks to complete the circuit and documentaries fifteen weeks.

131. The Films Division, however, explained that to do so it would need additional resources of Rs.77 lakhs (pre-devaluation). The rentals being of a fixed nature, there would be no compensating additional revenues to offset the cost. It seems, therefore, that no improvement in the present schedule is possible without a much larger appropriation. The position will worsen if the expected annual increase in the number of cinema houses of 200 to 300 a year comes to be realised. We do not see how in the present economic situation additional resources can be provided. With certain adjustments we discuss later, the position can, however, be improved.

132. Free shows: The important point remains of the use of the films for the main purpose for which they are made. 12,000 prints in all are supplied free of charge for non-commercial showing. This implies that a single print is supplied for showing to over 25 lakhs of the population.

On the estimate that not more than 200 persons view a film at one showing, it would take 12,000 projections to reach the population intended. Since the life of a print, even when made on excellent film and used carefully, is about 200 showings, the film can at best be effectively used for about 40,000 people only.

133. General Plan-publicity films are supplied to State Governments at the rate of one print to cover ten districts. This is even worse and barely touches the fringe of the population, both urban and rural.

134. We discussed this question at length with the Director of Field Publicity of the Government of India. On him devolves the responsibility for organising the showing of films to the rural community on a massive scale. The points he made deserve enumeration.

(1) The small number of prints limits the opportunities for large-scale showing of films. Only 10 per cent of the people can see the films.

(2) The projection points in the Information ^{are} Centres set up by the Union and State Governments or small in number. Their importance lies in the fact that the mobile field publicity units have a limited reach. They can organise shows only in villages which have motorable roads. At best they can cover only a population of five lakhs.

(3) The district information centres of the State Governments have many functions. The showing of films is considered only a small part of their assignment. It is imperative that there should be centres at block level. Though the importance of this has been stressed time and again, no plan for their gradual establishment has yet been considered.

(4) The Films Division is unable to make films for special demands. This disability arises from its strained financial resources. It has not even succeeded in making films suggested to it by the Central Committee for policy guidance and co-ordination of Border publicity.

(5) Whenever there is need for economy, the first casualty is prints for the non-theatrical circuit. (We have earlier mentioned that no supplies were made to the Director, Field Publicity, for five months in both the years 1964-65 and 1965-66 as a measure of economy).

(6) Only a copy of the Integrated Plan-Publicity films is supplied to a field unit. A copy of other films such as general publicity films, Indian News Reviews, instructional, teaching and training films is not supplied.

(7) The 16 mm. version of 35 mm. films takes months to make, often as long as a year.

(8) The Films Division produces films in 13 languages, but there are millions of people who speak other languages and dialects. There is thus no effective communication with them. Yet, these are the communities, isolated from the main stream of national life, which are most in need of education and entertainment. This is particularly true of the tribal people who live in the border regions of the country. We are told that given the opportunity and resources the field units can provide suitable commentaries in many more than the 13 languages. This suggestion has not been acted upon.

(9) The centralised production of films makes them unsuitable for universal showing. The regional audiences want to see films with familiar landscapes, costumes, faces, etc. Decentralisation is necessary to give local colour to documentaries. This alone would provide interest and give the impact intended.

(10) Filmstrips and Cartoons are both effective and popular in rural areas, but they are hardly ever made available for rural viewing.

135. State Governments endorse the analysis given by the Director of Field Publicity. They consider that the availability of prints is the focal point of any improvement contemplated. Some of them would be content with the doubling of the number of prints made, others consider that the print order should be increased to provide at least one print to each district.

136. The arrangement for non-theatrical showing in urban areas is no less unsatisfactory. In the case of schools, colleges, factories, adult educational centres and similar institutions no organised attempt has been made for showing documentaries which would enlarge their horizon and contribute towards knowledge and information material to their pursuits in life.

137. We would stress the point that there should be greater co-ordination between the Directorate of Field Publicity and the State Governments' film units. They should fulfil a complementary role. Without this collaboration, an enlargement of rural and urban showing cannot be organised. Right from the outset we have been impressed with the need for co-ordination and harmonisation of media of mass communications for furthering national objectives. We have been equally impressed with the need for using more extensively the State agencies for the purpose. While reserving this for fuller study and treatment in a subsequent report, we would stress here that in the field of visual publicity, it would be more purposeful if the States' field publicity organisations were given primary responsibility.

The blurring of responsibility and overlap of functions under the present arrangement of two independent organisations running in parallel is neither economical nor effective. We would urge a strengthening of local agencies, if need be with subventions from the Centres.

Projection

138. The supply of a larger number of prints would go a long way in the better utilization of existing facilities for their projection but we do not consider that the number of projection units is sufficient for giving the coverage needed.

139. The recent trend is to use 8 mm. films for educational and other purposes and even for rural showing. The films are cheaper to make and the projectors are also inexpensive. A professor of Columbia University on a visit to the country showed us 8 mm. film in cassettes and a small projector of the size of a box camera which could be operated even by a child of five. Such a projector is estimated to cost round about Rs. 500. The only snag is that it has no sound track and can show films to small audiences only. We understand, however, that the possibility of projection on a large screen is being explored and the problem is likely to be soon resolved.

140. The representatives of the Film Federation do not support the idea. In their view, 8 mm. film is only slightly less expensive and 16 mm. projectors are also now being transistorised. It would be prudent to wait until the economics of the 8 mm. projector has been fully established.

141. As far as we could ascertain, the type of equipment is not the major hindrance. The problem is how to organise the showing of films in rural areas. One suggestion is that there should be projection theatres in villages or groups of villages with a population of 5,000 and more. Inexpensive constructions of asbestos or galvanised iron sheets upon on three sides and covered on the side with the viewing screen should not cost more than Rs. 10,000. Including the cost of the sound projector, each such unit could be set up at a cost of about Rs. 15,000. These theatres could be used as community centres and for recreational purposes. It should not be difficult to train a person in the village to operate the projector and a small library of short and entertainment films could also be established with films already available. A small admission fee should make the scheme self-supporting. This suggestion is based on the experience in the Soviet Union where 1,50,000 such theatres have already been established.

142. We are conscious of the fact that the question of viewing facilities by themselves would serve no useful purpose unless satisfactory arrangements are made to keep them supplied with films for regular and organised showing. This should be possible if our basic recommendation that

the number of prints made should be considerably increased, even by reducing the number of films, should this become necessary, is accepted.

143. Another important point is that the showing of instructional and educational films by themselves will not be attractive enough. An element of entertainment should be added by showing suitable feature films along with the documentaries. The Films Division should be able to produce feature films of educational value and social impact.

144. Lastly, there is the need to train people in the use of the film and in the maintenance of projectors. The Film Institute of India has already proposed that there should be a separate specialised training course for the purpose. We endorse this proposal. As in the case of Farm Forums of All India Radio, there should be organised discussions after the showing of the film. Trained workers should provide valuable guidance to the Films Division on the impact of the films on the audience. The field workers of the Directorate of Field Publicity and State Government employees would all benefit by such training.

PART IV - REORGANISATION

The Structure

145. Many of the difficulties and shortcomings we have discussed arise because of the status of the Films Division in the official hierarchy and the unsuitability of the rules regulating its activities. These are inter-related issues.

146. The Films Division is a 'subordinate' office of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Its status is inferior to that of an 'attached' office which All India Radio is. There are certain limitations inherent in this classification which can be offset to an extent by delegation of powers. Under the present dispensation, the extent to which delegation can be made is conditioned by the status of the head of the organisation and not his responsibilities. As a result, the Controller has not been delegated sufficient authority even for the day to day working of the Division; nor does it seem possible.

147. This brings us to the question whether a set of rules and regulations should not be drawn up to suit the requirements of a creative medium like the Films Division. Meanwhile, relief should be afforded by requiring the Controller to interpret existing rules in a liberal manner, consistent with their spirit but not on a narrow literal reading. We were told that the rules are susceptible of such treatment and that a few of the past Controllers had done so and facilitated the work of the Division.

148. Many witnesses, including some departmental ones, feel that even where it is possible to delegate sufficient authority, it would not equip the Films Division with that flexibility it needs to grow in stature and competence better to fulfil its primary role as an important medium of mass communication. They consider that salvation lies in giving it a corporate form and hold out the Canadian National Film Board as the model. Apart from the fact that the contents of the autonomy of this board are not as extensive as those of conventional autonomous corporations, it has to be considered whether the Films Division lends itself to this treatment. We should also enter a caveat; the corporations in the country have not developed real autonomy. A change of form for the sake of change which would dilute accountability without compensating advantages has little meaning. In the case of Radio and Television we have given our concept of the constitution and provision of resources which if acted upon would make the corporations national in character and independent of subventions. It would be difficult, if not impossible at present, to place the Films Division on par with all India Radio. First, the documentaries have to be designed with social and educational objectives to project them with imagination and appeal and to motivate people to participate in the great drama of transformation. In this process a modicum of control and direction by the Government is inescapable. There is thus a distinction between the roles of radio and television and documentaries. Secondly, the Films Division is a small unit in comparison with other Government departments and activities. With a budget of only Rs. 1.10 crores, it is difficult to contemplate autonomous corporate status for a body of this size. It would only add to the burden of management and encroach upon its exiguous resources.

149. We give later in this presentation an outline of the Canadian Board and also discuss the possibility of the Films Division being reconstituted on this pattern at some future date. But we should mention first the various other suggestions made and examine if any of them is suitable.

150. An alternative to an autonomous corporation has been proposed by some as a temporary expedient. They feel that it would improve matters if the Division were to be given the structure and autonomy enjoyed by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research or Atomic Energy Commission. These are self-contained organisations with necessary financial authority in the utilisation of the appropriations made.

151. The second suggestion is that while there should be a board, fully autonomous or semi-autonomous, it should have under its control several production units with necessary autonomy in technical and financial matters. These production units competing to secure the reserved time of the cinema houses for the screening of documentaries and news reels should result in considerable improvement in the quality of production. This pattern, it is claimed, has been successfully exploited in Poland.

152. Yet another suggestion is that there should be an autonomous board which would farm out the films to be made to independent units on a selective basis. This would facilitate the production of specialised films of quality. This is the system which is in operation in some countries. We heard even the impractical proposition that an autonomous film board should be formed to compete with the present Films Division.

153. We consider that all these suggestions are more theoretical than practical. There can be no universality in determining the structure of the non-administrative activities of Government. Each has to be examined individually, keeping in view its purpose in designing the apparatus which would foster its growth best. We were also told that the Children's Film Society, an autonomous body, has not been able to produce films any better than those produced by the Films Division. This experience cannot be brushed aside lightly in considering structural changes in the Films Division.

154. The retention of this unit as an entity under the aegis of Government gains support also from the fact that no witness, not even those representing the private film industry, suggested that the making of documentary films be handed over to the private film industry. Discussions were concentrated on the nature and quantum of governmental control.

155. We should now refer briefly to the constitution and working of the National Film Board of Canada. According to the Film Act of 1939, the National Film Board, consisting of seven members, including three Government officials and three private citizens, was set up under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Trade and Commerce. The Chief Executive Officer was the Government Film Commissioner. It was his duty to co-ordinate all government film activity, advise Government departments on the production and distribution of films, and act as an intermediary between the departments and the Government's Motion Picture Bureau, which was the unit for both production and distribution of films. During the Second World War the publicity requirements made it necessary to transfer the Government Motion Picture Bureau to the National Film Board, which thus also became responsible for the production and distribution of films. The Act was amended in 1952 and the Minister was released from the responsibility of direct participation in the deliberations of the Film Board. The number of members was increased to nine; besides the Film Commissioner, who became the Chief Executive and Chairman, three other officials and five private citizens representing different regions of Canada constitute the board. It operates under the control and direction of a Minister, but he does not have any direct responsibility for its working.

156. The National Film Board of Canada has been responsible for the production of some of the most outstanding documentary films in the world and it is rightly regarded as a model organisation not only for this country, but for several others. It is not however financially self-supporting. Its income from sales, royalties, etc., is considerably less than its expenditure. The Government of Canada subsidises its activities to the extent of approximately \$ 7,000,000 a year. This is because Government regards the activities of the Film Board as of great value in the education of the Canadian people and in projecting the image of Canada abroad.

157. We consider that a reorganisation on the lines of the Canadian Board should be contemplated, but the time is perhaps not yet. This evolution should take place when the activities of the Division have expanded considerably and enough resources allocated to it on the realisation that visual presentation is not only more effective but has a more abiding motivating impact than most other media of mass communication. We would suggest that the position should be reviewed at the end of ten years.

158. We limit our examination to how best the present resources should be utilised to project and publicise the activities, programmes and policies of society more effectively. We consider that this would only be possible if the Controller were to be given the necessary latitude by revising the rules suitably.

159. Obviously he must have the authority to engage staff according to the requirements of the medium without obligation to draw them from any particular source; he should have the freedom to allocate resources at his disposal in the most useful manner with the assistance of a Financial Adviser of some status who should help in eliminating the delays and difficulties which now plague the Films Division. The Controller should also have complete freedom in all technical matters to implement the programme of production approved by Government. All this would be possible if the status of the Controller is suitably upgraded and he is given a financial adviser empowered to take decisions. We would stress again that the authority the Controller and the various echelons need should be provided by framing a suitable set of rules and regulations.

160. It should also be enjoined that the sponsoring Ministries should not interfere with the concept and construction of the films they demand and be content with providing background material and approving the script. References to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, more particularly on technical questions, should be drastically reduced. The Ministry is not technically equipped and is not, therefore, competent to give decisions on technical questions. Sometimes an over-zealous officer imposes his views and this affects the quality of the films. In any case, references are time-consuming and cost money and should be kept down to the minimum.

161. Many views were expressed on the source from which the Controller should be drawn. Should he be an administrator or should he be a film-maker? The producers in the Films Division and several other witnesses were of the opinion that the head should be a film personality or at least a person with a professional background in films or a related activity, such as, journalism, advertising, radio, etc. They emphasise that if the head of the Division does not understand films it is hardly possible for him to give necessary leadership in ideas and techniques. An administrator, even when endowed with imagination and the creative impulse, is a bird of passage without a sense of belonging and attachment to the medium.

162. At one time the head of the Films Division was a film man, but in 1958 the Government felt that administration was being badly neglected and appointed an I.A.S. Officer as Controller, a practice which continues. This has resulted, it is alleged, in the Division giving far more importance to the observance of rules and regulations than the production of good films. Even within the framework of the Government rules, their imaginative interpretation would abate the rigours but this would be possible only if the head was familiar with the techniques and needs of film-making.

163. A contrary view was held by some independent film producers. They felt that a good administrator was likely to be more independent and have a broader outlook than a producer. Secondly, a producer was likely to impose his views and interfere with aspects of technical production, sapping the initiative of the staff involved. This might occasion disharmony and even disputes which would be reflected in the concept and quality of pictures made.

164. We feel that it is not possible to be dogmatic on a question like this. It is the individual that matters and not the environment from which he comes. But it seems more likely that there is a better chance of finding the right type of individual to provide the right type of leadership from the film or related professions than from the administrative services. If an administrator is chosen he should not be keeping one eye constantly open to opportunities of advancement elsewhere. He should make his career in the Division itself with status and salary suitably adjusted from time to time in relation to his prospective position in the service to which he belongs.

165. The Films Division has been loaded with many functions extraneous to its responsibility for producing and distributing documentaries and news reels. It is consulted on the working of various other national film institutions, such as the Film Institute of India at Poona, the Film Finance Corporation, the Children's Film Society, the Film Consultative Committee and also required to organise festivals. It is asked to advise on many matters concerning the film industry as a whole. We consider that the Films Division should not be involved in activities unconnected with its charter to produce and distribute films.

166. The personnel of the Films Division complain that their energy and time are thus being dissipated to the detriment of their normal functions. The country undoubtedly needs a high level authority to guide and control the film industry but the Films Division should not be the organ chosen for this nor is it equipped to assume this role. The Patil Committee had recommended that a National Film Council should be formed and that the Film Consultative Committee should be developed into this national body. This step has yet to be taken. We commend the acceptance and implementation of this suggestion.

167. We have mentioned earlier that a few ministries are dissatisfied with delays and difficulties in getting films produced according to their requirements. The Defence Ministry is actively considering the setting up of its own unit because it cannot get even its training films produced on schedule. Though we well understand the impatience of the sponsoring Ministries, we advise against the creation of departmental units. It would result in duplication of effort and dilution in the quality of production. It would be much better if resources needed for speeding up production and improving quality were to be made available by the sponsoring Ministries to the Films Division. We discuss the question of the payments that should accrue to the Films Division for its services to the sponsoring Ministries in a later section on finances.

STAFF

168. The focal point of criticism is the personnel policy of the Films Division. We are obviously not in a position nor called upon to provide a blue-print for the future staff structure and we would content ourselves with making suggestions in matters basic to the functioning of the Films Division.

169. Recruitment: The senior technical staff of the Films Division is recruited by the Union Public Service Commission according to its usual procedures. While we do not wish to disturb this channel of recruitment, we would recommend that the field of choice in future should be young graduates who have a keen visual sense. They should be put through an intensive course of training in the Film Institute at Poona and given, subsequently, in-service training. An ad hoc appointment may be made occasionally when needed.

170. There have also been complaints that the inclusion of certain categories of staff in the Central Information Service has resulted in a deterioration in the quality of production. The visual medium of films is hardly akin to press publicity or the publication of books and pamphlets. It is specialised art needing specialised knowledge and skill. This cannot be provided by officers of the Central Information Service whose posting and retention in the media

units are in any case determined by exigencies of the service. There is thus no continuity and any aptitude an officer acquires is lost to the Division when the officer is transferred from it. This is a matter which requires careful consideration. Having constituted a service it may be difficult to disband it. Pending its reorganisation, limiting its use for information and publicity purposes, we would suggest as an expedient that a selection of those who have a visual sense should be made and compartmentalised in the Division.

171. We understand that the Films Division had represented to the Ministry that the specialised posts of script-writers, commentary writers, news reel producers and others should be withdrawn from the Central Information Service but this representation has been rejected by the Government. We were also told that a few CIS officers posted to the Films Division found that they were not equipped for the specialised work of the Division and were honest enough to ask Government for a re-transfer. The Board has been unable to fill certain vacancies for several years. All this lends weight to the suggestion we have made.

172. Training: The setting up of the Film Institute is a landmark in the history of film-making in India and it should in future be the breeding and recruiting ground for all film-makers. The Institute has introduced a comprehensive course of training covering the six essential branches of film-making:

- (i) Screen-play,
- (ii) Direction,
- (iii) Motion-picture photography,
- (iv) Sound recording and Sound engineering,
- (v) Editing and
- (vi) Acting.

The course is of two years' duration and provides facilities for practical application of theoretical knowledge acquired. At the end of the course, those who qualify are fully equipped for employment in their specialised fields of study. We were happy to hear, not only from the staff of the Films Division, but also from independent producers and critics that the Institute is doing excellent work and the training it imparts is of considerable value to the film industry as a whole. It is strange, therefore, that while the industry recruits the diploma-holders of the Institute, the Films Division has not appointed even one in the last five years. We were told that there are certain procedural and technical difficulties in appointing them. We cannot understand how it can be so. This matter needs looking into.

173. We understand that a scheme of apprenticeship for diploma-holders was initiated about a year ago, but due to paucity of funds the Films Division could not give any work to them for six months. Finally, when they were given the opportunity to make a film, its quality conformed to a high

professional standard. But we hear that the scheme is now going to be abandoned. This seems inexplicable. The obvious answer is to absorb them against existing vacancies and give them further in-service training. There should also be a training and leave reserve to accommodate a few supernumeraries.

174. Norm of Production: Every Director is required to produce at least four films a year. Unlike an industrial unit where a minimum production quota can be determined on a time and motion study, a creative art is not susceptible of this mechanical treatment. The production time and technique of a film depend on its nature and complexity. While it may well be within the capability of a Director to produce eight films or even more of a certain type in a year, he may well take months, even a year, in making a different type of film, involving also shooting in different locations dispersed throughout the country. We consider, therefore, that this unrealistic requirement should be scrapped and it should be left to the Chief Producer, in allocating a film, to prescribe also its time schedule. We understand that on the representation of the staff the previous Minister had agreed to reduce the quota to three. We feel that this is not a rational basis for either representation or decision.

Staffing Pattern and Pay Scales

175. It is unfortunate that there is no harmony between the administrative and production staff. Stresses and strains are visible even to casual visitors. Unless they work as a team, neither efficiency nor economy can result. Then, there is the inevitable complaint of inadequacy of pay scales and the irrational grading of posts. There is substance in these complaints. In the film world there is flexibility in the use of technical personnel. A cameraman, for example, functions as a director as well, and a director as a script-writer in addition. This flexibility is not only conducive to economy but an encouragement to creative talent and production of better pictures. Initiative and improvisation should be stimulated and rewarded and there should be infusion of new people and a turn over of staff to give life and colour to the organisation.

176. Subject to these general observations, we proceed to deal with the specific problems which came to our notice. The production staff complain that the Films Division is administration-oriented; greater importance is given to filling in of various forms and conforming to other trivial formalities. The basic problem is the unsuitability of the rules and regulations and the hesitation of administrative staff to interpret them in a liberal way lest it should run into audit and other difficulties. We would stress once again that a special set of rules should be drawn up appropriate to the needs of this medium. This will enable production staff to devote time and energy to its legitimate duties and not get involved in routine administrative processes as now. The revision we suggest would be facilitated if the

higher technical staff were asked to make suggestions for rationalisation. It knows where the shoe pinches and its considered views should be useful in undertaking a revision. Once the technical staff is divested of administrative functions and given necessary discretion and authority the present discord would largely disappear.

177. There are certain posts in the Films Division which have been incorrectly designated giving rise to frustration in the staff concerned. One example is the post of Assistant to Directors. These officers when recruited were given the assurance that they would be trained in the technique of direction and blossom in course of time into directors themselves. This assurance has never been honoured and mainly clerical duties have been entrusted to them. Considering that the scale of pay of the posts is Rs.250 to Rs.380 and the work mainly clerical and managerial, it is difficult to comprehend how they were given expectations which could not be realised, and if realised would not have been in the interest of the organisation itself. The Controller agreed that the posts should be re-designated and converted into those of 'unit managers'. This addition to the existing cadre would enable the use of this category on location and at headquarters to deal with problems that arise in producing a film. Those who have the qualities of a film maker should be given the opportunity to develop by re-assignment to other duties.

178. In this small organisation, there are as many as 37 pay scales, excluding Class IV, to accommodate staff classified into 81 different categories, excluding again those tenented by officers drawn from the Central Information Service. Thirty-one of these categories have no avenues of further promotion open to them. Twenty-one pay scales are so short that officers encadred reach the maximum in a period of a few years and stagnate thereafter for want of opportunities of advancement. Obviously this cannot give satisfaction to the employees and efficiency to the organisation.

179. This is bad enough but the pay scales also do not reflect the relative responsibilities of different posts. For example, editors are paid much less than cameramen though it is universally recognised that they have a vital role in shaping the films into quality production; they should appropriately be equated with directors. Similarly, the gap in pay between cameramen and directors cannot be justified by their comparative responsibilities. The Controller has proposed rationalisation, reducing the scales to 16 from 37, providing also appropriate channels of promotion. We trust that this will receive proper consideration. It would be a sound principle to group together posts with the same weight of responsibility irrespective of the nature of duties and designations.

Contd....40/-

180. It has also been said that rationalisation and readjustment of functions would throw up some staff as surplus to requirements and the resulting savings would facilitate an overdue revision of pay scales within the resources of the Division. This suggestion seems tenable and we commend it for acceptance.

181. We heard the somewhat unusual suggestion that producers are not needed in the Films Division and the directors are quite capable of producing films without the supervision of a producer. In the film world such a suggestion would be anathema. Going more deeply into the matter, we found that this suggestion has been made, as at present the producer category is treated merely as a promotion channel for directors. In a sense, the 'producer' in the Division is a misnomer and some of them do not have attributes to function as such. While the category of producer must be retained, it should cease to be treated as a channel of promotion. People with experience and vision, able to inculcate a team spirit, give confidence and bring out the best in the technical team, should hereafter be appointed as producers.

182. There is also an anomaly inasmuch as the Producer in charge of news reels is paid less than other Producers though his responsibilities are no less than theirs. This is because the post is borne on a particular grade of the Central Information Service. This anomaly should be removed and the officer, from whichever source drawn, given equality of treatment.

SPECIALISATION

183. It is hardly necessary to stress that specialisation is an imperative in any creative medium, more so in film-making. Yet the structure of the Films Division militates against the development of expertise. Officers in different categories with equivalent responsibilities are differently remunerated and have necessarily to be moved from one category to another to give them higher pay. To give again the example of editors, they are equal in technical value to a director. If they were on a comparable scale there would be no need to change their field of work and no tendency to defect to the commercial film industry. With the adjustment of pay scales on the lines suggested by the Films Division, it should be possible to provide for specialisation in camera work, editing and directing. This would also bring greater harmony and the irritating feeling of subordination would disappear.

184. 'Area' specialisation is another matter which needs attention. For example, a film on an agricultural subject should best be entrusted to a director who has some knowledge of farming. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics this plan has been tried out with great success. This would

imply that the recruitment policy of the Films Division should be adjusted and graduates with scientific engineering and agricultural degrees with a visual sense should be recruited, trained in the Film Institute and given an assignment in the unit responsible for making the specialised films. It might even be useful to have a military officer to assist in producing training and other films needed for the defence services.

185. Apart from the rationalisation of pay scales and provision for specialisation, there should be flexibility in deploying staff. It should be possible, even an advantage, to utilise staff for allied duties at different times. There are undoubtedly limitations in this use but a scheme should be devised by which the technical people are made more versatile. For example, the director-cameraman combination is not unusual and, for certain types of films, it is preferable to have this fusion. Similarly, the director-editor combination is feasible; in fact, in many documentary units abroad a director edits his own film. This plan would give economy in man-power but what is more it would give better pictures.

186. Both the Directors in the Division and those invited from outside complained that they were not given proper consideration and importance. A director is given no control over his material and there is constant interference in his technical work with the result that the director's concept of a film is very seldom realised. Because of these discouragements and impediments, the directors lose initiative and are content to work mechanically. Often they do not even study the subject of the film or take account of the psychology of the audience. The monopoly which the Division enjoys is another factor, which unless controlled would make the directors indifferent to the quality of the films they produce. A substitute has to be found for the stimulus of competition. It has been suggested that this might be provided by instituting a scheme of cash awards. The shooting team which gives economy in the use of scarce raw film and produces a film on or ahead of schedule should be given a cash prize provided of course the quality of the film is fully up to standard. Such a scheme should also prove to be more economical in the long run.

187. It is accepted on all hands that a creative medium to retain and enhance its appeal must have infusion of fresh blood and impact of new ideas and techniques from time to time. We have earlier said that the creative impulse of directors, producers, editors and cameramen has to be harmonised to produce a worth-while picture. But it is also necessary to inject into this stream a new element to vitalise the effort. Lack of diversity and the monotony of producing the same type of films debilitate the creative urge. It is for this reason also that there should be a turn over of the technical staff.

188. But this should be done in a planned way. It would be best to substitute contract appointment for permanent employment. Only fifty per cent of the technical staff should be on the permanent list or indefinite contract, forming the core of the organisation. The other fifty per cent should be on short-term renewable contracts of three years' duration. It has been suggested that no one should be retained beyond six years. This may sound harsh but a palliative would be the absorption of a few outstanding ones into the permanent core. Without this proviso the purpose of short-term contracts should be defeated. The Chairman of the Film Advisory Board was in agreement with this view and considered that this reconstitution would give a new look to the organisation.

189. It may be argued that the system of appointing directors on contract was tried out but abandoned as it proved to be a failure. We have examined this question to ascertain why a practice, normal in the film world, proved unworkable in the Films Division. The reasons were two-fold: the contracts were extended even upto 12 years in some cases. This did not give continuity or benefits of Government service. Secondly, the remuneration offered was unattractive. The Division could not retain the competent directors and it was thought that permanent employment would induce some to remain with the Division. This is the genesis of the present permanent structure of the Unit. Under our scheme all the technical services will have a leavening of talent drawn from the theatre and film world, radio and television artists, advertising agencies and journalists. They would enrich the Films Division and would return to their old or new avocations with a wider knowledge and a new perception.

190. We also consider that the work of writing scripts and commentaries should be largely farmed out. When a director is unable to write his own script, it should be entrusted to one outside the organisation. This would introduce variety and a more imaginative concept and treatment of the theme. In the interest of the film industry, the availability of script writers should be enlarged. Similar considerations apply to the writing of commentaries.

191. To sum up, in the words of our Consultant:

"A film is made collectively. Film making is both an art and an industry and yet so much depends on the individual. An understanding of these facts can alone bring a full realisation of the very high complexity of the process of film production - film being more complex than any other medium of communication - print, graphics, still photographs, radio, even television. More specialist contributions are needed for film-writing; visualisation in space-time sequences; inspired camera work; sound recording of actual sounds, composed sounds, words and mixing these together

into a rich structure to fit the visuals; laboratory processing, editing, both visual and sound; blending all these elements together to form a well-rhythmed, strongly constructed, flowing entity in space and time - the entire structure to be psychologically informed, from the seed idea stage to the completed product, by the end-result one wishes to achieve through the perception, often sub-conscious, of the audience. A film can be said to be well directed, shot and edited when its flow is such that the audience does not realise that it is a series of short picture sequences strung together so skilfully that the tricks of the trade are entirely disguised. Only thus can a film move. And only through moving an audience, will a film achieve any depth of information or motivation. Working through implication is, therefore, paramount in any effort to guide the thought processes and emotions of the viewer. All these factors are innate in the nature of the film. The viewer is transferred from one world, his own, to another. This happens so completely that those undergoing the experience accept it sub-liminally and without critical awareness. The responsibility of the film-maker is, therefore, great."

DECENTRALISATION

192. It remains to consider whether the centralised structure of the Films Division and its location at Bombay equip it to fulfil its assigned role satisfactorily. For one thing, the Films Division has become unwieldy and slow in movement; for another, it is unable to produce enough films with regional appeal.

193. The current practice is to prepare a documentary at a convenient location with dialogue and commentary in English and send copies of it to each region, merely dubbing it in the regional language. Even a film of general interest say, one on the temples of India, loses its value in this treatment. It holds the interest of only those who can follow the dialogues and commentaries. A film made to educate and motivate people, say, to practice family planning, is much less effective if its background of landscapes, faces and costumes is not familiar. These are acknowledged deficiencies but beyond the resources of the Films Division to remove, even to mitigate.

194. The disability to create local interest extends, to a more limited extent, to the news reels. They portray events of national importance and present to the audience the happenings in the wider world of India but they do not have a regional orientation. Just as in the case of All India Radio there is the need of a local news bulletin to supplement the national one, so in the case of news reels there is the need to have a newsreel depicting local events. It is, however, not possible to organise this unless adequate resources are made available and the concept of the Films Division changes and structural adjustments are made to give it a new look and purpose.

188. But this should be done in a planned way. It would be best to substitute contract appointment for permanent employment. Only fifty per cent of the technical staff should be on the permanent list or indefinite contract, forming the core of the organisation. The other fifty per cent should be on short-term renewable contracts of three years' duration. It has been suggested that no one should be retained beyond six years. This may sound harsh but a palliative would be the absorption of a few outstanding ones into the permanent core. Without this proviso the purpose of short-term contracts could be defeated. The Chairman of the Film Advisory Board was in agreement with this view and considered that this reconstitution would give a new look to the organisation.

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191. To sum up, in the words of our Consultants:

"A film is made collectively. Film making is both an art and an industry and yet so much depends on the individual. An understanding of these facts can alone bring a full realisation of the very high complexity of the process of film production - film being more complex than any other medium of communication - print, graphics, still photographs, radio, even television. More specialist contributions are needed for film-writing; visualisation in space-time sequences; inspired camera work; sound recording of actual sounds, composed sounds, words and mixing these together

into a rich structure to fit the visuals; laboratory processing, editing, both visual and sound; blending all these elements together to form a well-rhythmed, strongly constructed, flowing entity in space and time - the entire structure to be psychologically informed, from the seed idea stage to the completed product, by the end-result one wishes to achieve through the perception, often sub-conscious, of the audience. A film can be said to be well directed, shot and edited when its flow is such that the audience does not realise that it is a series of short picture sequences strung together so skilfully that the tricks of the trade are entirely disguised. Only thus can a film move. And only through moving an audience, will a film achieve any depth of information or motivation. Working through implication is, therefore, paramount in any effort to guide the thought processes and emotions of the viewer. All these factors are innate in the nature of the film. The viewer is transferred from one world, his own, to another. This happens so completely that those undergoing the experience accept it sub-liminally and without critical awareness. The responsibility of the film-maker is, therefore, great."

DECENTRALISATION

192. It remains to consider whether the centralised structure of the Films Division and its location at Bombay equip it to fulfil its assigned role satisfactorily. For one thing, the Films Division has become unwieldy and slow in movement; for another, it is unable to produce enough films with regional appeal.

193. The current practice is to prepare a documentary at a convenient location with dialogue and commentary in English and send copies of it/each region, merely dubbing it in the regional language. Even a film of general interest say, one on the temples of India, loses its value in this treatment. It holds the interest of only those who can follow the dialogues and commentaries. A film made to educate and motivate people, say, to practice family planning, is much less effective if its background of landscapes, faces and costumes is not familiar. These are acknowledged deficiencies but beyond the resources of the Films Division to remove, even to mitigate.

194. The disability to create local interest extends, to a more limited extent, to the news reels. They portray events of national importance and present to the audience the happenings in the wider world of India but they do not have a regional orientation. Just as in the case of All India Radio there is the need of a local news bulletin to supplement the national one, so in the case of news reels there is the need to have a newsreel depicting local events. It is, however, not possible to organise this unless adequate resources are made available and the concept of the Films Division changes and structural adjustments are made to give it a new look and purpose.

195. In a country as large and varied, inhabited by communities with different traditions, customs and social habits, speaking different languages and dialects, a documentary should have audience identification to produce the maximum impact. The ideal would be to have documentaries prepared separately for each State though the motif may be the same. The news reels too should be an amalgam of national and local events. But the Films Division, in its present situation, cannot prepare for this rational evolution. Some of the State Governments have their own film units but they are more concerned with presenting topical events involving Ministers rather than to make good the deficiency in presenting films of educational and social value suited to the needs of the local community.

196. One suggestion, which we endorse, is that regional units should be set up at Delhi, Calcutta and Madras in addition to the existing one at Bombay. They should be controlled and co-ordinated by a revamped Films Division. A unit at Delhi would, for example, be a great help to the sponsoring Ministries; it would speed up production and give economy in travelling and other incidental expenses. It should also scotch the move to set up departmental units. This is a suggestion which accords with our own conclusions.

197. The question is what should be the scope and nature of production of the regional units. Should they be functional or be general purpose units? Opinion is divided on this issue. One view is that decentralisation should be on a functional basis. This implies that there would be an allocation of films such as news reels, training films, educational films, cartoons and general purpose films to different units. For example, the Madras unit might be allotted educational and scientific films to make; the Delhi unit the news reels, training films for the Defence Ministry and films for the External Affairs Ministry; and the Calcutta unit the residue. It is claimed that the functional units would be more economical, provide specialisation and improve quality.

198. We do not accept this suggestion or its logic. Whether they are functional or general, the units will have to be provided with the necessary staff and equipment. There would be no particular advantage in making them functional and removing thereby the possibility of making a comparative assessment of their performance. There would be no logic either in giving one unit a particular range of subjects in preference to another. This does not imply that specialised productions like cartoons, the Central News Gazette, etc. should be regionalised.

199. As the units would be under the overall control of the Films Division at Bombay, the Chief Producer would have the discretion to allot films to Directors of his choice wherever located. In this determination, he would naturally

take into consideration whether a particular film should be better shot in a particular region than another. This principle would apply to films intended for general release. But films needing local colour, though forming part of a national campaign, should be made regionally. It would imply making four, or even more, separate films but they would confirm in outline and concept to a pre-determined prototype adjusted in detail to suit local needs and conditions. It is then and then only that a film show on the use, say, of fertilisers would motivate the regional community. This would also introduce a competitive spirit in the units which would be reflected in better production.

200. The four zonal units should produce news reels for exhibition in cinema houses in their zone for three weeks in the month. In the fourth week, all cinema houses in the country should be required to show an all-India news gazette which would include only items of all India interest. In the three weekly zonal news reels, items of all India interest would also figure according to their topical interest and importance. This should be the first step towards the ultimate aim of providing each State with a news reels of its own.

201. With this re-orientation it should be possible to arrange the pooling of resources of State units, where they exist, with those of the regional units. In any event, there should be effective co-ordination to make the best use of available resources.

202. It would be prudent also to anticipate the requirements of the news reel for the proposed television service. At present the Films Division supplies its own weekly news reel for television, adding certain material, mainly on sports. In other countries daily news reels on television have compelled cinema houses to show a different type of news reel, something more in the nature of a news magazine. It would be best to prepare for this changeover in the next few years. To start with, the television and the news reel units should work together, pooling their manpower and production facilities.

203. We are conscious that to implement our recommendation a larger appropriation would be needed but we reiterate that the main purpose of obtaining a return in the shape of educating and mobilising human resources commensurate with the money and effort invested cannot be realised without major changes. At the risk of being repetitive, we stress that if resources do not permit a smaller number of films should be made on the principle we have advocated of partial regionalisation of production.

204. Our plan should be phased and the unit at Delhi should be given priority for reasons already given. In the interim there should be a greater attention to regional

disparities and needs, more particularly, in the production of films for rural showing. Until regional units can be set up, shooting teams should be allocated regionally to make special films separately on subjects accepted for a countrywide national campaign.

205. The question of approval of the films for release remains. If the role of the Film Advisory Board is only to classify films, it should be possible to use the State Film Advisory Boards for passing films for local showing. Otherwise, some arrangements for co-ordination will have to be effected. This may be provided by a member of the Central Board being appointed to the regional Boards.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASPECT

206. In the constitutional scheme of division of power, the Union is responsible for censorship of films and the State for cinematography and the licensing of cinema houses. The Centre's power is largely negative. It can ban the showing of a film or demand excisions before release. The States' power is more positive; in licensing cinema houses it can impose conditions, and it can issue directives otherwise. It is by invoking this right at the request of the Central Government that the States have compelled all exhibitors to show a documentary or news reel every week in the year and to pay a rental. It has also enabled the Films Division to become the sole distributor of such films whether made by itself or by others.

207. Some of the States have now established their own film units and others are likely to follow suit. They make a few news reels and a smaller number of documentaries. They have to avail of the services of the Films Division for showing these films in cinema houses in their own States and for recovery of rentals. So far this arrangement has worked satisfactorily. But as the States develop their units and produce a larger number of films to take up more and more of the reserved time, they will cut into the scope of the Films Division for showing films made by it. This is a situation likely to arise in future.

208. It is true that films made locally in a local language will be far more effective than the films made by the Films Division. Nonetheless, the Films Division's role of presenting themes of national importance and of opening up a window to the wider world must not be allowed to wither. Education and information through these films must, therefore, be a combined effort. There should be a basic understanding with the States which makes it possible to obtain an equitable allocation of time between the two. When this stage has been reached in the development of the documentary movement, the Films Division should confine its production to films needed by the Central Ministries and others, for their own purposes, and guide the making of films relating to a national campaign regionally in accordance with a theme and concept centrally

worked out. Meanwhile, there should be greater co-ordination between the Films Division and the States which have their own film units to prevent duplication and overlap.

FINANCE

209. A film unit set up with a definite social purpose cannot be self-supporting even by the device adopted in India nor should its activities be kept within its own revenue yield.

210. We have in the analysis, given earlier, shown that the present gap of Rs.12 lakhs between expenditure and revenue would have been wiped out if the system of free supplies was discontinued and credit taken for a notional value. But to make the Films Division a more efficient and effective instrument of mass communications, it has to be provided with much larger resources than are available now.

211. In the present financial difficulties, it is unlikely that appropriation from the Consolidated Fund to the Films Division will be increased. In fact, economy cuts continue to be imposed, and in a period of rising costs generally and in imports in particular. This would make it difficult if not impossible for the Films Division to maintain its current level of activities.

212. We do not appreciate why the Films Division should be called upon to bear the cost of films made at the request of Ministries or for supply to State Governments and the Directorate of Field Publicity. The production schedule grows longer as the demands of the Ministries increase. In the comfortable knowledge that their budgets are not affected, the Ministries are inclined to propose a larger number of films than they really need. Even after the pruning down at the annual review, the Ministries get away with a number of films which are of doubtful utility, for which no distribution pattern has been worked out. Thus often films are made at great cost and hardly ever used. If the Ministries' budgets are made to bear the incidence of production and distribution cost of films, their demands are likely to be more realistic.

213. The Films Division is the handmaiden of many Ministries. It makes films at their behest but the cost of production is borne by the Films Division; it receives credit only for the number of prints it supplies, subject to a minimum prescribed. For Plan publicity, credits even for prints are not afforded.

214. The budget of the Films Division should only bear the cost of producing news reels and documentaries which it releases to the cinema houses and for which a rental of one per cent of net earnings is charged. The bare cost of issues to State Governments and Field Publicity Organisations at the

present level of supplies is about Rs.15 lakhs a year. The recovery of this alone will make the Films Division viable. If the cost of other special films not released to the cinema houses is similarly credited to the Films Division, it will have resources to replace its outworn equipment, improve studio and other facilities and the service conditions of its employees. We consider that this concept of a service department should now be adopted. We should add that while the incidence of charges falling on individual Ministries, State Governments and others would be small, the accretions to the resources of the Division would be substantial.

215. Pari Passu with this revision of financial relations, we have also considered how the Films Division could augment its resources. There are several ways of doing this. The first is undertaking the production of television films both for All India Radio and for sale to overseas television networks. When Television expands in India, as it inevitably must, its controlling authority should be able to make extensive use of the films made by the Films Division. Similarly, if the Films Division were to be reorganised and equipped to supply films to foreign television systems they might discontinue the sending out of special teams at considerable cost for making films in India. It is true this would involve some initial expenditure but it would be recouped in a short time and the receipts would be in welcome foreign currencies.

216. Secondly, a sustained effort should be made to exploit the sale of films in foreign markets. We were told that there is considerable demand for educational and other films about India in the United States of America and elsewhere but nothing has been done to ascertain and meet those demands. A sum of Rs.42,000 was earned by the Films Division last year without any such effort. With proper publicity and the co-operation of our Missions abroad, the foreign exchange earning potential of the Films Division could, we told, be raised to at least Rs.5 lakhs a year.

217. A great deal more effort and better organisation of distribution will be necessary. It might mean some initial expenditure on staff, etc. but this will be more than made up by additional revenues. It would be unrealistic to view the additional expenditure by itself without taking account of its revenue potential.

218. Here we must say a few words about the free showing of films in foreign countries. Government's decision to allow it on television networks has resulted in a decline in revenue from Rs.27,319 in 1963-64 to Rs.8,605 in 1964-65. By earmarking a limited number of special films for free shows and others for sale, it should be possible to reconcile the two purposes of publicity and earning revenue.

219. Thirdly, if small theatres are established at suitable locations for showing documentary films and news reels, there would be a steady and appreciable income from admission fees. This experiment should be tried out in the supermarket at New Delhi where there is a large congregation of people.

220. Fourthly, the vast amount of unused material in the archives of the Division should be utilised at profit in selling stock shots, and making television and other films from them.

221. We feel confident that if our recommendations for budgetary changes and the raising of additional revenues are acted upon, the Films Division will be able to implement many of the suggestions we have made for the expansion of its activities and improving the quality of its production.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANISATION

222. We appreciate that until such time as larger resources become available, either through direct appropriations or by payments from the Ministries and others out of their budget grants for services rendered, or a combination of both, it would be purposeless to discuss modernisation and expansion. We have, however, earlier in the report drawn attention to deficiencies and have broadly indicated the lines on which future development should take place. We add a few additional points which should also be considered at the appropriate time.

223. First, the Films Division should be provided with a well-equipped and well-staffed research and planning cell. It is indeed strange that one of the world's biggest units for producing documentaries does not have at its disposal such an essential facility.

224. Secondly, the Films Division should produce a monthly news magazine in which a subject of national importance should be treated in depth to provide information and arouse interest.

225. Thirdly, it should make films for Television. The Films Division has expressed its inability to produce television films for All India Radio. According to our Consultant the Division has the ability to do so but not the resources. The Films Division should in fact be looked upon as a breeding ground for the future Television network. The training of personnel should be initiated at this stage, if the Television units which are expected to come up in the Fourth Plan, are to be manned by experienced staff. Sound engineers in the Films Division may prove to be better equipped to deal with the needs of Television than radio engineers. Similarly, Film technicians experienced in editing, script writing, photography, etc., are better fitted for the Television service than radio personnel. Even now the proposal to increase the time of the Television service from the Delhi Centre will need film more extensively.

226. A time may well come when the major activity of the Films Division as elsewhere will be to produce material for the Television service which should replace gradually the present expedient of mobile film units and projection points. While the staff of the Films Division agreed that the Films Division should undertake the production of television films they explained that the Films Division is already working to full capacity and cannot take on any further work. Nevertheless we consider that the Films Division should be equipped to assume responsibility for television films. The establishment of a unit in Delhi and other centres recommended earlier on other considerations becomes all the more urgent for this reason also.

227. Fourthly, the production of films for export should be taken up seriously. Arrangements should be made to project the image of India abroad through colourful films imaginatively designed. These should portray our cultural heritage and be shown inside the country also. They should have a commercial value as well.

228. At present six films a year are specially made for the External Affairs Ministry for showing in our Missions abroad. The reports on them are not encouraging, mainly because of the unsuitable approach and style. These films have to be made with an eye to the audience and in the language of the country where they are shown. The complaint is that this is hardly so. In the film library in our Paris Embassy there is an accumulation of 347 documentaries and 20 news reels but only 19 of these have an indifferent French commentary. Sub-titling and dubbing, it is said, have been inexpertly done. There is hardly ever an audience at the shows arranged and the cost of these prints has thus become infructuous. Another complaint is that the films depict mostly India's economic growth and the accompanying commentaries are didactic in tone, unsuitable for the audience. There seems to be little point in labouring the importance of steel in a film on a steel plant shown to French audiences.

229. The External Affairs Ministry has suggested the possibility of using the source material of selected films as the groundwork for films to be specially made for foreign audiences with suitable commentaries. The Films Division considers this impractical. We do not see why.

230. Some time ago a proposal was mooted to set up a separate unit to make films for the External Affairs Ministry. This was abandoned but the need for it is still stressed by the Ministry of External Affairs for the production of films, for showing abroad in cinemas and on Television.

231. We agree that such films cannot be made as part of the programme of film production for internal use. We consider that there should be an experienced film producer

with a knowledge of foreign audiences, to work full time on films specially required by the Ministry of External Affairs and those required for exhibition abroad. These may be made either in the Films Division or made by using outside producers. We agree with the view that unless the tastes and needs of foreign audiences are studied and met it will be difficult to exploit the foreign market.

232. The commentaries in foreign languages are at present provided by the staff of the External Services of All India Radio. These are not satisfactory. The alternative of doing the dubbing abroad is expensive and has not been considered feasible. Yet unless the films are re-designed and the commentaries properly arranged, there will be little purpose in spending time and effort in making them.

233. A major point is that outside India black and white films are not popular and are in fact going out of use. For financial reasons, the Films Division is unable to make colour films for release abroad. This does not make the most of the material. We have seen some excellent documentaries in colour (The folk dances of Assam, the Pindari Glacier) which should attract audiences anywhere even without dubbing. We commend the making of colour films selectively for release to our overseas Missions. Suitable films in colour available in stock should, we feel, also command a sale abroad with proper publicity and organisation. This possibility should be explored immediately, more so as the receipts would be in foreign exchange.

234. Fifthly, the importance of Instructional Films should be accepted. Greater attention should be given to the making of these films, if necessary by contracting out the making of other types of films. Elsewhere in the world, films play a major part in direct class-room education besides their use in adult education. The Ministry of Education is not unaware of the advantages of using films and a committee appointed to examine the production of class-room science films has recommended that the teaching of various subjects, particularly scientific subjects, should be supported and supplemented by audio-visual aids, including films.

235. Several educational institutions in the country already have projectors and facilities for showing films in class rooms, but it has not been possible to get the exact figures of the number of schools so provided in the different parts of the country. Even where a projector unit is available it is not always certain that it is in working order or is in regular use. One witness informed us that out of 40 projectors in schools in Poona only about 10 were in working order and even these are not regularly used. It would seem therefore that if instructional films are to play a part in the educational system at all, a good deal of organisation would be necessary on the lines of our recommendation for school broadcasts of All India Radio.

236. The production of class-room films is a specialised undertaking and requires teacher-producer co-ordination for use in the class-rooms of primary, secondary or higher educational institutions. It would require sustained, organised and systematic planning in collaboration with the National Institute of Audio-Visual Education. It would also involve a large number of projectors - silent and sound - to be installed in schools throughout the country. Even though a programme of this magnitude would take some time to complete it is necessary that a start should be made even in a small way for the production of class-room films. The Films Division should immediately consider the use of material now available with it and adapt it for schools. The ~~documentary~~ ^{documentary} ~~Commentary~~ may have to be altered but this would not be difficult. It is of importance however that the availability of projectors should be considerably expanded.

237. Educational institutions and other projection centres should be encouraged to build up film libraries. We understand that the central film library of the Ministry of Education has at present a stock of 15,000 films which are hardly over used. These should be made available to the institutions through a better organised distribution system.

238. Our recommendations for the revitalising of the Films Division have necessarily been inhibited by the country's financial situation. If greater resources were available, we have no doubt that Indian documentary films and news reels could be brought up to the standard prevalent in advanced countries. Even with the present limitations, we believe that much can be done on the lines we have suggested. Many of our recommendations do not involve additional expenditure. They do, however, need a re-orientation of attitude on the part of all concerned. Without a radical change in thinking about Film and its potential, there can be no hope of progress, no matter how much additional resources are provided.

SUMMARY

PART III - THE PROBLEMS

In a developing country, the *raison d'être* of the Films Division is to propagate the aims, and portray the activities and achievements of the State. But it is necessary that the objectives of our planning effort should be presented with subtlety, able to hold the attention of and make an impact on the viewing public. Films should be provocative and pose a challenge to the community, motivating it to participate in the endeavour to alleviate poverty, hunger and disease. They should portray the realities of life, pose the problems boldly, pin-point the deficiencies and bring into focus the role the community can play in transforming the face of India. (Para. 49).

2. Because of organisational defects the documentaries are produced mechanically and disinterestedly making them dull and uninteresting. The documentaries must concentrate on the visual impact as in the days of the silent movie, when words were unnecessary and action was all important. The spoken-word should come from participants and not, as far as possible, from a commentator. (Para.50).

3. In the anxiety to produce a large number of films, quality is being sacrificed to quantity. There is little purpose in making a large number of indifferent films, and available resources should be husbanded and used for making a smaller number of quality films on a selective basis. (Para.52).

4. It is necessary to distinguish between different kinds of audiences. While films relating to questions of general importance should be prepared for general showing, other documentaries should be designed separately for urban and rural audiences. (Para.53).

5. Waste of raw film, time and effort can be minimised by planning a film thoroughly and by better co-ordination among the staff at all stages of its making. (Para.58).

6. Wherever possible, the script-writer should be allowed to visit the location where the film is to be shot, before preparing the script. (Para.59).

7. Rates of payment to all categories engaged on ad hoc basis by the Films Division are extremely low. Rs.1,500 per reel should be the minimum payment to the script-writers and Rs.400 to commentators. (Para.63).

8. A larger use of independent producers would ease the load on the Films Division and make it possible to produce documentaries with topical interest. In employing independent producers the unsuitable system of tenders should be given up and selection made on the proved aptitude of a particular producer for a particular film. Payment should be determined by what it would cost the Films Division itself to produce the film (Paras.65-66).

9. A new producer should be given the opportunity to produce a film on trial. This would give encouragement and also enlarge the field of choice. (Para.66).

10. Since banks do not give advances for making films a system of progress payment should be introduced. Twenty-five per cent of the contracted amount should be paid on signing the contract, another 25 per cent on approval of the rough cut, 25 per cent after approval by the Central Board of Film Censors, and the remaining 25 per cent on delivery. (Para.68).

11. Payment to script-writers, commentators and others should be made within a fortnight of completion of their work. (Para.68).
12. The net subvention from Central Revenues should be fixed as a percentage of receipts and should be of the order of about 50 per cent. The Films Division should also get credit for supplies which are made without charge now. (Para.69).
13. The shortage of foreign exchange has compelled the Films Division to use inferior type of raw film. Considering that documentary films have to be shown extensively and over a long period of time it is uneconomic to make them on raw film which deteriorates rapidly. (Para.73).
14. An initial expenditure of Rs.6 lakhs, with a foreign exchange component of Rs.2.3 lakhs (pre-devaluation), should be provided for a complete switch-over from the use of optical film to magnetic tapes for the preparation of sound tracks. The expenditure would be recouped in three years in savings secured and enhance the quality of the films produced. (Para.74).
15. The building in which the Division is at present housed is in a dilapidated condition and is beyond repair. It is imperative that certain steps should be taken, particularly air-conditioning, to protect valuable material and equipment from further deterioration and decay until the new building projected is ready. (Paras.77-78).
16. A retiring room should be immediately provided for the members of the staff who work till very late. (Para.79).
17. To eliminate difficulties in the speedy processing of films, the Films Division should have processing laboratory of its own located at Delhi. Whenever it is possible to do so, outside work may be accepted on a commercial basis. The possibility of setting up a joint organisation with the Ministry of Defence may be explored. (Paras.82-85).
18. In the interest of economy itself, it is necessary that the library of films should be well maintained to provide quickly the material needed. For this it has to be well-equipped and well-organised, with proper indexing. Immediate steps should be taken to safeguard the future by providing the small capital outlay needed in the purchase of equipment to air-condition the vaults where films are stored and to reorganise the library on systematic lines. (Paras.86-89).

19. Maintenance is faulty. A room should be immediately air-conditioned and de-humidified for storing expensive equipment when not in use. This is necessary to prevent further deterioration of available equipment and the protection of new acquisitions. (Paras.90-91).

20. The Research Section should be suitably strengthened. (Para.92).

21. The Music Section is under-staffed and under-paid. The pay scales of musicians should be adjusted so that the present dispensation given to them for accepting outside work may be withdrawn. (Para.93).

22. There is hardly any collaboration between the director of a film and the Music Director in the selection and composition of suitable music for each film. (Para.95).

23. The present method of drawing up the production programme for the year is unsatisfactory. At the meeting held to draw up the programme, the Ministries are represented by junior officers not authorised to take decisions. As the Ministries do not have to bear the Cost, they usually make excessive demands for films on subjects suitable and unsuitable. As a result the approved programme is beyond the capacity of the Division to produce. (Paras.96-97).

24. While there is nothing inherently wrong in the system of Consultants, their responsibilities must end with providing material and information and approving the factual content of the script. They should be prevented from undue interest and interference thereafter and in no event allowed to revise the script or alter the treatment after the picture had been made. (Para.103).

25. In addition to sponsored films, the Producers of the Films Division should be allowed to make about a dozen films on subjects of their choice. Creative artists should be given the scope to express themselves without being placed in a strait-jacket both in regard to subjects and their treatment. They should also be encouraged to suggest subjects which are of general interest and are ideal for visual presentation. (Para.104).

26. The directive on the nature of items to be included in news reels and the treatment to be given to them makes for excessive caution and to the exclusion of items which should not come within the ambit of the restriction imposed. (Para.105).

27. While compulsory showing of films on rental basis need not be given up, the present complaint of the exhibitors and distributors should be met by ensuring the supply of fresh, up-to-date and better news reels and documentaries to them. (Para.108).

28. The Films Division at present purchases on a selective basis, only six films from the independent producers for release. This quota should be doubled and the choice of the films to be purchased should lie with the cinema houses and not with the Films Division. For this the terms of contract between the Films Division and cinema houses should be suitably revised. (Para.109).

29. If the length of feature films is reduced and a general duration of about two hours is prescribed, it would conserve stocks of raw film in short supply and also give impetus to the making and showing of short films. (Para.110).

30. Documentary films, produced for cinema houses, must vary according to the nature of the audiences. The cinema houses should have the possibility of choosing a film from some of the older documentaries of the Films Division. For this the Distribution Section should present to the cinema houses not only the annual programme for the coming year but also a list of old documentaries. Rentals of these documentaries may be fixed according to their popularity. (Paras.111-112).

31. The present set-up of the publicity unit is inadequate to undertake proper publicity for the activities of the Films Division. (Paras.113-114).

32. The technical staff of the Films Division and others interested should be encouraged to write and speak about documentary films and their place in social education. (Para.115).

33. A journal to promote film craft, particularly short films, should be brought out. This should not be just a house magazine but one of general interest with contributions from outstanding film personalities, both Indian and foreign. (Para.116).

34. The interposition of the Film Advisory Board in the process of approval of films is neither necessary nor appropriate. In any case, the Board should have on it a leavening of people with artistic perception and technical competence and should limit its role to classifying films and not be the arbiter of their quality. (Para.124).

35. Though the evaluation of documentary films is difficult, it should be possible in the case of rural shows to judge the popularity of a film from the size of the audience in relation to population, its participation in the discussion that should follow the showing of a film, and a random questioning of viewers. (Para.125).

36. The possibility of exempting the cinema shows in villages from the obligation to pay a rental should be examined. (Para.130).

37. Arrangements for the free showing of films in rural and urban areas are unsatisfactory. The number of prints is too small, the number of mobile vans and fixed projection points is insufficient, films are not made in tribal dialects and languages, etc. (Para.134).

38. There should be greater co-ordination between the Directorate of Field Publicity and the State Governments' film units. (Para.137).

39. In the field of visual publicity, it would be more purposeful if the States' Field Publicity Organisations were given primary responsibility. If need be, local agencies should be strengthened with subventions from the Centre. (Para.137).

40. Villages or groups of villages with a population of 5,000 or more should have 'projection theatres'. Constructions of asbestos or galvanised iron sheets, equipped with a projector, would cost about Rs.15,000. A local person should be trained to operate the projector and a small library of short and entertainment films should be established. A small admission fee should make the scheme self-supporting. (Para.141).

41. At the shows, an element of entertainment should be added by showing suitable feature films along with the documentaries. (Para.143).

42. The Films Division should be able to produce feature films of educational value and social impact. (Para.143).

43. A specialised training course in the use of the film for educational purposes and in the maintenance of the projectors should be organised. As in the case of the Farm Forums of All India Radio, there should be organised discussions after the showing of films. (Para.144).

PART IV - REORGANISATION

44. A reorganisation on the lines of the National Film Board of Canada should be contemplated after some time. This evolution should take place when the activities of the Division have expanded considerably and enough resources allocated to it. The position should be reviewed at the end of ten years. (Para.157).

45. For the best utilisation of present resources the Controller should be given the necessary latitude by revising the rules suitably. (Para.158).

46. The status of the Controller should be upgraded and he should be given a financial adviser empowered to take decisions. (Para.159).

47. The Controller and the various echelons should be provided with the authority they need by framing a suitable set of rules and regulations. (Para.159).

48. Sponsoring Ministries should not interfere with the concept and construction of films and should be responsible mainly for providing background material and approving the script. (Para.160).

49. As the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is not technically equipped, references to it, particularly on technical questions, should be kept down to the minimum. (Para.160).

50. It is not possible to be dogmatic about the source from which the Controller should be drawn but it seems that there is a better chance of finding the right type of individual from the film or related professions than from the administrative services. An administrator should make his career in the Division itself with status and salary suitably adjusted from time to time in relation to his prospective position in the service to which he belongs (Para.164).

51. The Films Division should not be loaded with functions and activities unconnected with its responsibility for producing and distributing documentaries and news reels. (Para.165).

52. The recommendation of the Patil Committee that a National Film Council should be formed and that the Film Consultative Committee be developed into this national body should be accepted and implemented. (Para.166).

53. Instead of creating separate departmental film units to overcome the present delays in making of films by the Films Division, it would be much better if resources needed for speeding up the production and improving the quality were made available by

the sponsoring Ministries to the Films Division. (Para.167).

54. In future young graduates, with a keen visual sense, should be recruited and put through an intensive course of training in the Film Institute, Poona, and given, subsequently, in-service training. An ad hoc appointment may be made occasionally when needed. (Para.169).

55. The knowledge and skill required for the specialised art of film-making cannot be provided by officers of the Central Information Service whose postings and retention in the media units are determined by exigencies of the service and do not allow continuity. Therefore, pending the reorganisation of the Central Information Service, those in the Service who have visual sense should be selected and compartmentalised in the Films Division. (Paras.170-171).

56. Procedural and technical difficulties in appointing the diploma-holders of the Film Institute to the Films Division should be looked into. (Para.172).

57. The diploma-holders of the Film Institute who are undergoing apprenticeship at the Division should be absorbed against existing vacancies and given further in-service training. There should also be a training and leave reserve to accommodate a few supernumeraries. (Para.173).

58. The unrealistic requirement that a Director should produce at least four films a year should be scrapped and it should be left to the Chief Producer to prescribe the time schedule for a film. (Para.174).

59. Pay scales are inadequate and the grading of posts irrational. Initiative and improvisation should be stimulated and rewarded, and there should be infusion of new people and a turnover of staff to give life and colour to the organisation. (Para.175).

60. A special set of rules should be drawn up appropriate to the needs of the Films Division. The higher technical staff of the Division should be asked to suggest modifications in the rules and their considered views should be taken into account. (Para.176).

61. The post of Assistant to Director should be redesignated and converted into that of 'Unit Manager'. Those Assistants who have the qualities of a film-maker should be given the opportunity to develop by re-assignment to other duties. (Para.177).

62. Multiplicity of short scales of pay causes staff to stagnate without opportunities of advancement. This creates dissatisfaction among the employees and affects the efficiency of the organisation. The scales also do not reflect the relative responsibilities of different posts. It would be a sound principle to group together posts with the same weight of responsibility irrespective of the nature of their duties and designations. The Controller's proposal for reducing the scales from 37 to 16, providing also appropriate channels of promotion, should receive proper consideration. (Paras.178-179).

63. Savings resulting from rationalisation and readjustment of functions should be used for the revision of pay scales. (Para. 180)

64. While the category of producer must be retained, it should cease to be treated as a normal channel of promotion. People with experience and vision, able to inculcate a team spirit, inspire confidence and bring out the best in the technical team, should be appointed as producers both from within and outside the organisation. (Para.181).

65. The producer in charge of news reels should receive the same pay scale and treatment as other Producers get. (Para.182).

66. Adjustment of pay scales on the lines suggested by the Films Division should make it unnecessary for the staff in one category to move to another just to get higher pay. It should then be possible to provide for specialisation in camera work, editing and directing. (Para.183).

67. To provide for 'area' specialisation the recruitment policy of the Films Division should be so adjusted that graduates specialising in particular fields and possessing a keen visual sense are trained at the Film Institute for making specialised films. (Para.184).

68. There should be flexibility in deploying staff for allied duties at different times. A scheme should be devised by which the technical people are made more versatile. (Para.185).

69. The shooting team which gives economy in the use of scarce raw film and produces a film on or ahead of schedule should be given a cash prize as a stimulus, provided of course that the quality of the films is up to the standard. (Para.186).

70. Fifty per cent of the technical staff should be on permanent list or on indefinite contract, while the remaining fifty per cent should be employed on short-term renewable contracts each of three years' duration from the theatre, radio, television, journalism and allied fields. None of these should be retained beyond six years though a few outstanding ones may be absorbed in the permanent list. (Para.188).

71. The work of writing scripts and commentaries should be largely farmed out among persons outside the organisation. (Para.190).

72. Regional units should be set up at Delhi, Calcutta and Madras - the unit at Delhi getting priority. They should be controlled and co-ordinated by a revamped Films Division. (Para.196).

73. Films needing local colour should be made regionally. It would imply making four, or even more, separate films but they would conform in outline and concept to a pre-determined prototype adjusted in detail to suit local needs and conditions. (Para.199).

74. The four zonal units should produce news reels for exhibition in cinema houses in their zone for three weeks in the month. In the fourth week all cinema houses should be required to show an all-India news gazette comprising

items of all-India interest only. The weekly zonal news reels should also include items of all-India interest depending on their topical interest and importance. (Para.200).

75. There should be effective co-ordination with the State units so as to make the best use of available resources. (Para.201).

76. The news reel units of the Films Division and of the Television Service should work together, pooling their manpower and production facilities. (Para.202).

77. Until regional units can be set up, shooting teams should be allocated regionally to make special films separately on subjects accepted for a country-wide national campaign. (Para.204).

78. If the role of the Film Advisory Board is only to classify films, the State Film Advisory Board should be used for passing films for local showing. For co-ordination, a member of the Central Board can be appointed to the regional Boards. (Para.205).

79. When States film units produce a larger number of films, the Films Division should confine itself to producing films needed by the Central Ministries and others, and to guiding the making of regional films relating to national campaigns in accordance with a centrally worked out theme and concept. At that stage an understanding should be reached between the States and the Films Division that there would be an equitable allocation of time for showing their respective films in the cinema houses. (Paras.207-208).

80. There should be greater co-ordination between the Films Division and the States' film units to prevent duplication and overlap. (Para.208).

81. To make the Films Division a more efficient and effective instrument of mass communication, it has to be provided with much larger resources than are available now. The Ministries should pay the Films Division for the full cost of producing films which they commission. (Para.213).

82. The budget of the Films Division should only bear the cost of producing news reels and documentaries which it releases to the cinema houses for which a rental is charged. The cost of prints supplied to the State Governments and to the Field Publicity Directorate should be recovered from them. (Para.214).

83. The concept of a service department should be adopted. (Para.214).

84. The Films Division should augment its resources by undertaking to produce television films both for All India Radio and for sale to overseas television networks. (Para.215)

85. A sustained effort should be made to exploit the sale of films in foreign markets. (Para.216)

86. Only a limited number of special films should be earmarked for free shows abroad, the rest should be for sale. This will reconcile the two purposes of publicity and earning revenue. (Para.218)

87. If small theatres are established at suitable locations for showing documentary films and news reels, there would be a steady and appreciable income from admission fees. This experiment should be tried out in the supper-market at New Delhi where there is a large congregation of people (Para.219)

88. The vast amount of unused material in the archives of the Division should be utilised profitably for making television and other films and releasing stock shots (Para.220)

89. The Films Division should be provided with a well-equipped and well-staffed research and planning cell. (Para. 223)

90. The Films Division should produce a monthly news magazine in which a subject of national importance should be treated in depth to provide information and arouse interest. (Para.224).

91. The Films Division should make films for Television. The Division in fact should be looked upon as a breeding ground for the future television network and the training of personnel should be initiated from now on. (Para.225).

92. Production of films for export should be taken up seriously. Arrangements should be made to project the image of India through colourful films imaginatively designed. (Para.227).

93. Films specially made for the External Affairs Ministry for showing in our Missions abroad should be made with an eye to the audience and in the language of the country where they are shown. An experienced film producer with a knowledge of foreign audiences should produce films for the Ministry of External Affairs and for showing abroad. (Paras.228-231).

94. Some selected colour films should be made for release to overseas Missions. (Para.233).

95. The possibility should be explored for selling abroad with proper publicity and organisation, suitable coloured films already available in stock. (Para.233).

96. The importance of instructional films should be accepted and greater attention paid to the making of these films, if necessary by contracting out the making of other type of films. (Para.234).

97. If instructional films are to play a part in the educational system at all, a good deal of organisation would be necessary on the lines of this Committee's recommendations for school broadcasts of All India Radio. (Para.235).

98. A start should be made in a small way for the production of class-room films. The Films Division should consider the use of material now available with it and adapt it for the schools. (Para.236).

99. Availability of projectors in schools should be considerably expanded. (Para.236).

100. Educational institutions and other projection centres should be encouraged to build up film libraries. (Para.237).

101. The films available with the Central Film Library of the Ministry of Education should be made available to the institutions through an organised distribution system.

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Sd/- NATH PAI, M.P. Member

Sd/- M.S. GURUPADASWAMY, " M.P.

Sd/- L.M. SINGHVI, M.P. "

Sd/- SMT. KAMLA CHAUDHRI, " M.P.

Sd/- S. HAFIZ ZAHEER "

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Sd/- MISS M. MASANI Secretary
1.9.1966

ORGANISATIONAL CHART OF THE FILMS DIVISION, BOMBAY

