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## C A B I N E T M I N U T E

Canberra, 26 March 1984

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Decision No. 2982

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Submission No. 660 - National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA)  
and Decision  
No. 2971(LA)

The Cabinet agreed that:-

- (a) an autonomous National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) be established in Canberra within the Department of Home Affairs and Environment and report to the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment;
- (b) the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment seek agreement of the National Library Council to the immediate transfer of the relevant archival material held by the Library to the control of the NFSA, noting that the Government is prepared to enact legislation if necessary, and the immediate transfer of appropriate staff and finances;
- (c) a National Film and Sound Archives Advisory Committee (NFSAAC) with terms of reference as indicated at Attachment D to the Submission be appointed to report within twelve months on plans for the future development of the NFSA;

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2.

Decision No. 2982 (Contd)

- (d) the position of Director of the NFSA be established and advertised nationally - the Director to be an ex-officio member of the NFSAAC;
- (e) an Interdepartmental Committee be established to investigate the Commonwealth's film and sound collections with representatives from the NFSA, Australian Archives, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Australian War Memorial, the Australian Film and Television School, and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and others as necessary to report on methods of rationalising and efficiently managing the Commonwealth's resources in this area;
- (f) outlets for the film archive be established in Sydney and Melbourne and negotiations commence immediately with the New South Wales and Victorian Governments over the possible provision of space and facilities;
- (g) a program of cost recovery be developed to ensure that a reasonable income is earned from the provision of services to commercial users and, where appropriate, that fees be charged for other services; and

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3.

Decision No. 2982 (Contd)

(h) the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment make a statement in Parliament along the lines of that at Attachment A to the Submission.

2. The Cabinet noted that:-

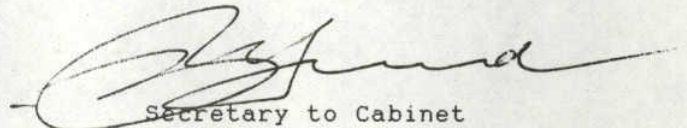
(a) the recommendations will involve an increase in staff and that this will be negotiated with the Public Service Board and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Public Service Matters as necessary;

(b) the question of funds for these purposes will be taken up with the Minister for Finance in the normal manner; and

(c) the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment would bring to Cabinet his recommendations for appointments to the NFSAAC.

(This endorses Decision No. 2971(LA) of 20 March 1984.)

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Secretary to Cabinet

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C A B I N E T M I N U T E

Legal and Administrative Committee

Canberra, 20 March 1984

Decision No. 2971(LA)

Submission No. 660 - National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA)

The Committee agreed that:-

- (a) an autonomous National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) be established in Canberra within the Department of Home Affairs and Environment and report to the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment;
- (b) the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment seek agreement of the National Library Council to the immediate transfer of the relevant archival material held by the Library to the control of the NFSA, noting that the Government is prepared to enact legislation if necessary, and the immediate transfer of appropriate staff and finances;
- (c) a National Film and Sound Archives Advisory Committee (NFSAAC) with terms of reference as indicated at Attachment D to the Submission be appointed to report within twelve months on plans for the future development of the NFSA;

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2.

## Decision No. 2971(LA) (contd)

- (d) the position of Director of the NFSA be established and advertised nationally - the Director to be an ex-officio member of the NFSAC;
- (e) an Interdepartmental Committee be established to investigate the Commonwealth's film and sound collections with representatives from the NFSA, Australian Archives, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Australian War Memorial, the Australian Film and Television School, and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and others as necessary to report on methods of rationalising and efficiently managing the Commonwealth's resources in this area;
- (f) outlets for the film archive be established in Sydney and Melbourne and negotiations commence immediately with the New South Wales and Victorian Governments over the possible provision of space and facilities;
- (g) a program of cost recovery be developed to ensure that a reasonable income is earned from the provision of services to commercial users and, where appropriate, that fees be charged for other services; and

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3.

Decision No. 2971(LA) (contd)

(h) the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment make a statement in Parliament along the lines of that at Attachment A to the Submission.

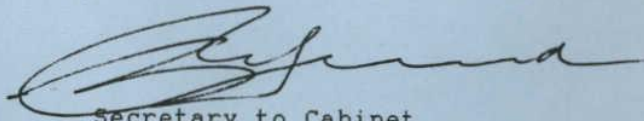
2. The Committee noted that:-

(a) the recommendations will involve an increase in staff and that this will be negotiated with the Public Service Board and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Public Service Matters as necessary;

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(b) the question of funds for these purposes will be taken up with the Minister for Finance in the normal manner; and

(c) the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment would bring to Cabinet his recommendations for appointments to the NFSAAC.



Secretary to Cabinet

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## CABINET-IN-CONFIDENCE

FOR CABINET

Title	NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE (NFSA)
Minister	The Hon Barry Cohen, MP, Minister for Home Affairs and Environment
Purpose/Issues	<p>To propose the immediate establishment of the NFSA by separating the film and sound archive collections from the administrative control of the National Library of Australia, and the appointment of an Interim Advisory Committee. Increasing demand for access to these collections has been constrained by lack of resources in the Library, leading to criticism of the Library and agitation for separation, particularly of the film archive.</p>
Relation to existing policy	<p>The maintenance and development of national collections of films and recorded sound is provided for by the National Library Act 1960. The Prime Minister announced on 24 September 1983 that action had been initiated to ensure that problems of the National Film Archive are overcome and that the necessary resources are made available to ensure that the National Film Archive is developed to guarantee the preservation of Australia's film heritage.</p>
Legislation involved	<p>Attorney-General's advises that unless the Library Council voluntarily disposes of its material to the Commonwealth pursuant to section 7(2)(b) of its Act, legislation would be necessary to effect the transfer.</p>
Urgency: Critical/significant dates	<p>The need to greatly expand the preservation program to ensure that no further losses of significant film occur. The film and television industries are continuing to press for this proposal.</p>
Consultation: Ministers/Depts consulted	<p>Prime Minister and Cabinet, Finance, Public Service Board, Aboriginal Affairs, Communications, Administrative Services, Science and Technology, Defence, Education and Youth Affairs, Special Minister of State, National Library of Australia and Australian Archives.</p>
Is there agreement?	<p>No - refer paragraph 12 and <u>ATTACHMENT E</u>.</p>
Cost this fiscal year year 2 year 3	<p>Additional \$635,000 (existing budget is \$808,000) - No offset savings (refer paragraph 10) ) ) To be considered in the Budget )</p>





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Implications of proposals	Will improve preservation of part of Australia's heritage and will improve public access to that heritage.
. social	
. economic	Will have benefits for the film industry
. environmental	) Positive to the extent that these areas of public
. women	) policy could be enhanced through improved access
	) to film and sound material on these subjects.
. employment	Small increase in staffing, see paragraph 11.
. administrative	Will improve administration of film and sound archives.
. other	N/A
Wider consultation	
. state or foreign governments	Nil
. unions and industry bodies	)
. other special interest groups	) Views of industry bodies have been made known
	) to the Government.
	)
	)
What general or sectional support can be expected?	Significant support for more resources to preserve Australia's heritage, and industry support for improved access.
What criticism is anticipated and how will it be answered?	Those who favour the retention of the present system, particularly the National Library itself, may well make their views known. This is unlikely to be given much credence or space.
Timing and handling of announcement of decision	Immediate announcement by Ministerial Statement in Parliament as per <u>ATTACHMENT A</u> .

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## BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the National Library Act, the National Library of Australia has over many years collected, conserved and made available for use, films and video recordings collectively known as the National Film Archive (NFA) and various records held in the Sound Recording Section (SRS). However, in most countries of the world, a National Film Archive has a quite separate existence from the nation's book and paper collections.

2. The NFA holds most of the commercial or private film material in Commonwealth hands. Government records generally are held either by the Australian Archives or by other custodial or originating agencies such as the Australian War Memorial, the ABC, the Australian Film Commission and the CSIRO. There is a need to consider whether better co-ordination of such material from these two sources is required. A preliminary assessment of the film holdings is at ATTACHMENT B, and the sound recordings at ATTACHMENT C.

### CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES

3. Although the work the Library has done for film preservation over the years is worthy of recognition, it is clear that its own priorities have not been in accord with the burgeoning development of Australian film and television production, study and scholarship, and the urgent need to ensure that deteriorating nitrate film is transferred to acetate stock. The NFA has had to respond to these increased demands through the administrative structure of the National Library and has therefore had to have its priorities, finance and staffing decided by the Library in the light of the Library's other wide demands. This has led to many problems and criticisms and the imposition for a time of restrictions on service and access.

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4. I believe that we should take the decision now to establish a separate institution called a National Film and Sound Archive, to preserve the moving image and sound as part of Australia's 20th century cultural heritage. The Archive would be based on the existing film and sound archives in the Library but would also develop presentational material such as literature and artefacts relating to the history of Australian film and sound. It would contain facilities to encourage public access and research - including the collection of books, posters, stills and periodicals currently held within the NFA - and would present films to the public. This would make it a self-contained centre for research, production, preservation, distribution and film presentation.

5. The Archive would, at least initially, be attached to the Department of Home Affairs and Environment. An Executive Director should be appointed who would report direct to the Minister and Head of the Department where appropriate. The staff and finances of the NFA and SRS should be immediately separated for administration purposes from the Library without disruption to ongoing operational services, but any physical separation of accommodation could take some time. The first essential need is increased resources to permit preservation of more nitrate film and the handling of newer technical conservation problems. The accessibility of the NFA to the film industry would be improved (including the opening of offices in N.S.W. and Victoria and possibly later in other States).

6. The question of establishing such an organisation on a statutory basis is more difficult as it seems to be unnecessary for such a small organisation with such aims to be given this status which necessarily involves greater administrative cost.

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7. At this stage therefore it would seem more desirable to establish an Interim Advisory Committee (IAC) to prepare a plan for the future of the Archive. The members of the IAC would be people with expertise and knowledge of the purpose and use of the Archive, the film and television industries, film trade and film educators and researchers. They would be expected to report within a specified time on a range of matters as set out in Attachment D, including the need for a statutory authority.

8. I believe that discussions should also be initiated on the desirability or otherwise of rationalising or amalgamating the Commonwealth's holdings, which in many cases face similar problems to the NFA and SRS. Any such consideration raises complex issues, such as ownership and copyright (e.g. commercial-type productions by the Australian Film Commission or the ABC), integration between film and sound collections and other collections and activities of the particular agency, collections held on trust, and relationships with private industry. I propose that an Inter-Departmental Committee should be established to report on these matters, and the IAC should participate.

### OPTIONS

9. These are the options:

- (a) NFA and SRS remain with the Library, but be given significantly increased resources to enable an expanded preservation program and to ensure no restriction on access;
- (b) NFA and SRS be separated from the Library and attached to the Department of Home Affairs and Environment, given increased resources, and planning advice by an Interim Advisory Committee; or
- (c) establish a statutory authority for the same purposes as (b), as soon as possible.

I prefer Option (b). Options (a) and (b) will need the agreement of the Library Council, otherwise Option (b) will require legislation.

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## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

10. For all options an increase of \$615,000 is sought immediately to bring to \$1,423,000 the allocation to the NFA and SRS in 1983-84, but this will need to be separated from the Library's appropriation. Neither the Library nor the Department is able to offer any savings to offset this additional amount. Larger increases will be required in 1984-85 and 1985-86 but it is estimated that receipts of more than \$300,000 pa would be earned from services provided, which would offset the cost of the additional servicing staff and State offices. Option (b) would involve an additional amount of \$20,000 in 1983-84 and of the order of \$30,000 in 1984-85 for meetings of the IAC. Option (c) has not been costed.

## EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

11. Employment of 15 additional full-time staff is proposed immediately. Any further increases over the next two years would need to be assessed in the light of Government policy and the report of the IAC. The new full-time staff would include the establishment of small regional offices in Sydney and Melbourne, for which investigations should be initiated on the basis of space or facilities being provided by and with the co-operation of the two State Government's Film Centres.

## CONSULTATIONS

12. Detailed comments are contained in Attachment E. Dissenting comments were obtained from the Departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet and Finance, the Public Service Board, the National Library of Australia and the Australian Archives. The Library's view is that the benefits assumed to flow from separation really depend only on the provision of additional resources and can be achieved more rapidly and more cost effectively simply by providing these to the Library, in accordance with its plans for

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the NFA and SRS and in line with its repeated requests. The Library urges that a decision on the separation of the NFA and SRS from the Library be deferred until after the IDC review, and possibly after a full public enquiry. Finance considers that the case has not been made in the Submission for an autonomous NFSA. Prime Minister and Cabinet is of the view that consideration of the proposal should be deferred to the 1984-85 Budget context as required by recent Cabinet Decisions on expenditure control.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

13. I recommend that Cabinet:
- (a) agree that
    - i) an autonomous National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) be established in Canberra within the Department of Home Affairs and Environment and reporting to that Minister;
    - ii) the Minister seek agreement of the National Library Council to the immediate transfer of the relevant archival material held by the Library to the control of the NFSA noting that the Government is prepared to enact legislation if necessary, and the immediate transfer of the staff and finances;
    - iii) an Interim Advisory Committee with terms of reference as indicated in Attachment D to the Submission be appointed to report to the Government within twelve months on plans for the future development of the NFSA;
    - iv) the position of Director of the NFSA be established and advertised nationally - the Director to be an ex-officio member of the IAC;
    - v) an Interdepartmental Committee be established to investigate the Commonwealth's film and sound collections with representatives including the NFSA, Australian Archives, ABC, War Memorial, AFTS and Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and others as necessary to report on methods of

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rationalising and efficiently managing the Commonwealth's resources in this area;

- vi) outlets for the film archive be established in Sydney and Melbourne and negotiations commence immediately with the two State Governments over the possible provision of space and facilities;
- vii) a program of cost recovery be developed to ensure that a reasonable income is earned from the provision of services to commercial users and, where appropriate, that fees be charged for other services;
- viii) I make a statement along the lines of the draft at Attachment A;
  - (b) note that
    - i) the recommendations will involve an increase in staff and that this will be negotiated with the Minister for Finance and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Public Service Matters as necessary;
    - ii) the question of funds for these purposes will be taken up with the Minister for Finance in the normal manner.

BARRY COHEN

23 February 1984

**CABINET - IN - CONFIDENCE**

Draft Ministerial Statement to be made in Parliament by the Hon. Barry Cohen, M.P., Minister for Home Affairs and Environment

NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

The Government will establish a new National Film and Sound Archive.

The Archive will preserve moving images and recorded sound as part of Australia's 20th century cultural heritage. The Archive, based on the existing film and sound archives presently located in the National Library of Australia, will develop presentational material such as literature and artefacts relating to the history of Australian film and recorded sound. It will contain facilities to encourage public and industry access to the collections, and for screening old films for public viewing.

The National Film and Sound Archive will be made administratively independent of the National Library immediately, and will initially be an Office within the Department of Home Affairs and Environment reporting to that Minister. Its staff and finance will be separated from the National Library immediately and its accommodation as soon as possible.

The position of Director will be established and advertised nationally.

An Interim Advisory Committee will be appointed to develop planning for the future development of the Archive. It will advise the Government on a range of matters including accommodation, staffing, regional representation, appropriate charges for services, preservation program and timetable, relations with the industry and trade, and deposit requirements. The Interim Advisory Committee will be asked to report within twelve months of its appointment.

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The Government has also decided to provide increased resources in the form of staff, funds and equipment to develop the film and sound archives. The increased resources should permit preservation of more nitrate film and the handling of newer technical conservation problems.

The new National Film and Sound Archive will be more accessible to the public and the film industry. Offices will be opened in N.S.W. and Victoria and the Advisory Committee will examine the desirability of opening offices in other States.

The National Library's management of its holdings of film and sound recordings has been criticised but I think this criticism is unfair. It must be remembered that the Library took the initiative to preserve this vital inheritance. The Library, as a whole, was restrained by its allocation of resources from the previous Government, but its film and sound sections have received at least a fair share of those limited resources and some, apparently unrecognised, success has been achieved in building up the collections and establishing a working relationship with the industry.

Nevertheless, the Government has decided that there is a need for a separate institution with a charter of its own and guidelines established by the Government after consultation with all the interests concerned.

In addition, an Interdepartmental Committee will inquire into and advise on policy generally concerning all the Commonwealth's

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holdings of film, sound recordings and related issues. Policy advice will include matters such as the co-ordination and rationalisation of all Commonwealth activities in this area - acquisition of material, cataloguing, conservation, reproduction, access arrangements, and co-ordination with relevant State and private sector interest.

There are many complex issues involved in consideration of how other Commonwealth holdings of film and sound recordings will relate to the National Film and Sound Archive. In view of these issues, and the need for consultation, the Government will consider the requirements further after receiving the reports.

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## FILM COLLECTIONS IN AUSTRALIA

Most of the following material was obtained from research by Nicholas Clark & Associates, consultants to the National Library.

- . About 25 organisations in Australia have holdings of film and video tape which are of archival significance and which they intend preserving indefinitely. None of these organisations is solely concerned with film and video preservation.
- . The total financial resources devoted to film and video preservation in Australia have not been estimated. It is noted however that only the National Library, the ABC, and the Australian Archives have physical facilities even moderately appropriate to long term storage of film and video.
- . There is no obligation on film and video producers to deposit for preservation a copy of each work (such as there is for books and other printed materials).
- . Only about 20% of material held in major archives and intended for preservation is actually under the direct control of the archive concerned; the remaining 80% is under the control of the ultimate (usually copyright) owner, who may withdraw the material from the archive if desired.
- . Similarly, material produced by the Australian Government and its agencies is by statute the preservation domain of the Australian Archives but the material remains in the control of the producing agency, with Australian Archives acting only as official custodian.

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At least nine Government agencies hold significant quantities of films that should be preserved. Estimates of the total holdings are given below. The quantity is measured in two ways, titles plus cans or cassettes, because both measures are used by the organisations concerned although some organisations use only one of the measures.

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Titles</u>	<u>Cans</u>
National Library	42675*	80415*
Australian Archives	29404	46521
ABC (Television)	-	45500
Australian War Memorial	2616	3845
Australian Film and TV School	2110	3860
Australian Government Advertising Service	300	200
Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies	-	1000
Australian Film Commission	3600	4400
CSIRO	200	-
Total held by Commonwealth agencies - a minimum of	80905	185741
Held by State Government agencies and private industry - about	30000	86000
Total - approximately	111000	272000

\* Including 6000 titles and 11000 cans of nitrate film.

- . There are clear understandings, especially between the three major institutions (NLA, AA & ABC) as to their respective responsibilities in collection, development and provision of service.
- . Some State Government agencies are also developing local archives. These work closely with the NLA, frequently depositing original material for preservation and retaining only viewing copies.
- . It has been estimated that the growth in the amount of material to be preserved will be in the order of 5% pa.

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Concern has often been expressed at the slow rate of copying of nitrate film (pre-1950) to modern safety base stock, which is necessary to ensure its preservation. However, whilst the copying of nitrate film is a pressing problem, it is finite and will be overcome in time, with adequate resources. The preservation of video and sound tapes and of colour films represents an ongoing problem for which technical solutions are not yet available.

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## SOUND RECORDINGS COLLECTIONS IN AUSTRALIA

- . There are 3 major archiving institutions in Australia:
  - National Library of Australia 450,000 recordings
  - ABC 30,000  
(In addition, the ABC has some 200,000 recordings in its working collection.)
  - Australian Archives 5,000 recordings  
(Made up of sound recordings produced by Government departments and agencies. In addition Australian Archives houses part of the ABC archive.)
  
- . The other significant collections in Australia are:
  - Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies 7,000 recordings  
(a copy of each is placed at the NLA)
  - Australian War Memorial 3,000 recordings
  - State Library of South Australia 12,000 recordings
  
- . While there is no legal deposit requirement for producers of sound recordings, the Australian Record Industry Association (ARIA) has arranged for the deposit with the NLA of 1 copy of each disc manufactured by its members — (this amounts to about 80% of the Australian production).
  
- . As in the case of films, the archiving institution does not own the copyright in the recordings. The recordings themselves held in the National Library are, however, owned by the Library.

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INTERIM ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL  
FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE

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## Terms of Reference

1. To report to the Minister within twelve months on the development of the National Film and Sound Archive, including
  - functions and responsibilities
  - legislation required
  - resources and facilities required, with a program of construction and costs
  - staffing
  - policies for acquisition of material, cataloguing, conservation, reproduction and access arrangements
  - relationship and co-ordination with other Commonwealth bodies, with the industry and trade
  - regional representation
  - appropriate charges for services
  - preservation program and timetable
  - deposit requirements
  
2. To advise the Minister and the Department of Home Affairs and Environment during this interim period on the management of the Archive.

## Membership

The Interim Advisory Committee shall consist of a Chairman and not less than 7 nor more than 10 other part-time members. They shall be appointed by the Minister having regard to their knowledge and experience with respect to matters relating to films and sound recording or with respect to any other area of knowledge relevant to the affairs of the Archive.

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**CABINET - IN - CONFIDENCE**CO-ORDINATION COMMENTSDepartment of Finance

The Department of Finance considers that the case has not been made in the Submission for an autonomous National Film and Sound Archive. It notes such a move would involve a substantial duplication of the Commonwealth's investment (accommodation, capital equipment and overheads) in the National Library, the costs of which have not been identified in the Submission but which would be significant.

While there may be a case for giving the film and sound archives greater autonomy and resources within the National Library, Finance believes that any additional costs should be borne by the users - primarily the film, television and radio industries.

Department of Defence

Defence films would be declassified prior to transfer to the NFSA. A Defence requirement for security storage would therefore be minimal.

Public Service Board

The Public Service Board suggested that the Government's objectives could be met by some increase in staffing and financial resources, earmarked for film and sound archival purposes, together with a strengthened performance monitoring mechanism, e.g. a body along the lines of the proposed Interim Advisory Committee to advise the National Library Council. This would permit a higher grade of service to be offered which might ease pressure to establish a new Archive, the costs of which might not result in corresponding benefits.



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### Department of Aboriginal Affairs

The views of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (AIAS) are that there is agreement to the establishment of the Archive but consideration should be given to the AIAS being represented on the Interim Advisory Committee.

### Department of Communications

The Department of Communications supports efforts to upgrade National Film and Sound Archive functions. It is noted that the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) has a substantial interest in the activities of the Archive. Accordingly, it is suggested that consideration be given to ABC representation on the proposed Interim Advisory Committee as well as the Inter-Departmental Committee proposed to report on Commonwealth holdings.

### Departments of Administrative Services, Special Minister of State

Supported.

### Departments of Science and Technology, Education and Youth Affairs

No comment.

### Australian Archives

The Australian Archives supports the provision of increased resources for the management of film and sound archives from commercial and private sources. The creation of a National Film and Sound Archive within the Department of Home Affairs and Environment assumes a need for the creation of a new administrative body and appears to pre-judge the outcome of any investigation. The Archives is not yet convinced that the case has been made for such a body. It therefore questions

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whether it would not be more appropriate for the proposed Interim Advisory Committee to operate under the auspices of the National Library of Australia and to postpone any administrative or legislative action concerning film and sound archives until both the need for, and the nature of any changes have been established.

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is of the view that consideration of the proposal should be deferred to the 1984-85 Budget context as required by recent Cabinet Decisions on expenditure control.

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National Library of Australia

Consultation - The National Library Council's advice on the separation of the National Film Archive from the National Library was sought by the Minister who undertook to bring that advice before Cabinet. It is set out in full in Appendix 1 to these comments. The Council has not been consulted at any time about the separation of the Sound Recordings Collection from the National Library. In the Council's view the arguments for separation have much less validity than in the case of the National Film Archive.

Benefits - The Submission states that separating the film and sound collections from the Library's control will achieve various benefits (listed on page two as improved preservation, improved public access, benefits to the film industry, improved administration). It is clear that these benefits will be achieved by the allocation of additional resources and do not depend necessarily on the separation of the collections from the Library. They could be achieved more quickly and more cost effectively simply by providing increased resources to the Library. The Submission overlooks the fact that the proposals contained in the Submission for increased funding and staffing are based on proposals made by the Library. These proposals are set out in Appendix 2 to these comments. As noted, extensions to the Library now under construction include not only other vaults and additional storage for the National Film Archive and the Sound Recordings Collection, but also properly designed provision for their administrative requirements. All this will become available in late 1985.

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Costs - The Submission does not identify the cost of creating the proposed archive. The extra resources noted in the body of the Submission are based only on those suggested by the Library as being required to bring the film and sound operations up to an appropriate level within the Library. In particular they do not take account of the substantial support in terms of ADP facilities and preservation expertise at present contributed by the Library or of the administrative costs of transferring these activities to a new location. There would be unavoidable duplication between the proposed film and sound archive and the Library. The Library will have to continue to collect audio-visual materials since they are important media for the communication of information, and all such media are becoming increasingly interdependent. This will require not only the acquisition of material but the retention of equipment and expertise. The proposal assumes that the Library will continue to service the National Film Lending Collection including the Film Study Collection, and to conduct its extensive Oral History Program. At the same time, the new archive would need to build its own resources of books and periodicals in the areas of film and sound, since the Library's holdings in these areas must be retained as part of the national collection of library materials. There would also be duplication and possible competition in such areas as the collection of private papers and the conduct of oral history interviews, since the film and sound industries and the personalities involved in them do not exist in isolation and many achieve distinction in more than one area.

Ministerial control - The Submission proposes that two major parts of the national collections, which constitute important

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elements of the national heritage, should be administered, not by a statutory authority as is the case for the other parts of those collections, excluding the Australian Archives (Australian National Gallery, Australian War Memorial, Museum of Australia, and the National Library of Australia), but by Ministerial control under the Department of Home Affairs and Environment. No reasons for such a radical change are given; nor are the reasons for the present arrangements acknowledged - i.e. the public accountability, continuity and independence.

Other matters - The Submission implies an administrative failure on the part of the Library in the allocations it has made from the available resources to the film and sound recordings collections. The Council believes that it has been quite fair in this regard and this is acknowledged in the draft Ministerial statement. The Council also emphasises that in its Annual Reports to the Parliament and in specific submissions to Ministers it has repeatedly drawn attention to the particular needs of these two activities. In doing so it has noted the unparalleled demand for the services of the film archive is, to a large extent, a direct consequence of the Government's initiatives to promote the Australian film industry.

The Council can discern no case in the Submission for bringing together of film and sound in the proposed new centre. It is by no means convinced that the quite distinct needs of the respective user groups would be best served by amalgamating these two activities in a single purpose institution. It is not aware of any serious public pressure for such an amalgamation.

Defer decision - The Council urges Cabinet to defer a decision on the separation of the film archive and sound collections from

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the National Library and, if it so wishes, to submit the whole matter to a full enquiry. The functions of the Library were established on the basis of a public enquiry (The National Library Enquiry Committee, 1957) and unanimous agreement of the Parliament. It seems reasonable and proper to suggest that those functions should be varied only after a similar enquiry. The Council suggests that the need for such a public enquiry should be determined in the light of the findings of the Inter-Departmental Committee proposed in the Submission (paragraph 15) to consider such issues as co-ordination with other Commonwealth agencies.

This result could be achieved by adopting a fourth option (paragraph 16 of the Submission).

"(d) - adopt option (a) for an interim period of 2-3 years while the IDC investigates the complex problems of the appropriate location and development of the National Film Archive and the Sound Recordings Collection and their relationships with other Commonwealth holdings of film and sound recordings. In the light of this review, the Government would decide whether to proceed with a full public enquiry."

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NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

## COUNCIL

### REPORT ON THE FUTURE OF THE NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE

1. The National Film Archive has been developed within the National Library since 1937 to collect, preserve and provide access to Australian films. The Archive has expanded rapidly since 1970 and has been extremely successful both in establishing meaningful relations with the Australian film and television industries and in actively pursuing the discovery and preservation of early Australian films. The Archive has secured international recognition and is stated to be the largest in "the Asia-Pacific area". Like all genuine film archives and indeed, in common with the Library's responsibilities in relation to all forms of the national record, it has the continuing problem, in assigning limited resources, of reconciling the need to preserve materials for posterity with providing access for use by the present generation. This use is largely, but by no means completely, by the film and television industries. The Archive, like other sections of the Library, is used by a range of scholars and research workers interested both in the particular medium and in aspects of Australian history and culture.
2. The rapid development of the film industry and the heavy and increasing demands made by it and by the television industry on the Archive, at least in part as a result of the Archive's very success in acquiring valuable material for preservation and use, have outrun the capacity of the Archive to provide a satisfactory service to users. This has demonstrated the need for a more substantial film archive operation than the Library has been able to fund within the limitation of the resources available to it to carry out its wide ranging statutory functions.
3. The Council is at one with the industries concerned in recognising the need for additional resources for the National Film Archive. It has noted with pleasure, accordingly, the undertaking by the Prime Minister to provide additional resources specifically for the development of a national film archive. At the same time, Council must draw attention to other areas of the National Library's operations which are experiencing the same difficulties and which are as socially significant as the National Film Archive.
4. The Council emphasises that, under the National Library Act, the Library has the specific statutory responsibility of preserving and providing access to films relating to Australia and the Australian people, along with other forms of the national record and that, unless properly relieved of that responsibility, the Library will continue to undertake it.
5. The Council is unclear about the extent of support for recent public pressure to divorce the National Film Archive from the National Library. However, it accepts completely that the Government has the right to decide now, or at a later date, that the national interest would be better served by the Archive not being part of the Library; assuming the Government can provide the funds to finance such a separation.
6. The Council draws attention to the Library's initiative in establishing the Archive in the first instance, to its very substantial investment, over nearly fifty years, in accommodation, equipment and administrative support for the Archive, in the face of public and industry apathy for most of that time, and to its long and responsible history of collecting, preserving and providing access to the national record in all its forms. It notes the

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considerable cost that would be involved in replicating some or all of the Library's investment, should a new institution be created or another existing institution be given responsibility for the National Film Archive.

7. The Council believes it would be irresponsible of it to advocate the separation of the Archive from the Library unless it was convinced that, only by so doing, would the Archive secure sufficient resources of staff, equipment, accommodation and recurrent general funding to enable it to carry out its functions effectively. These functions go beyond providing a service to the film and television industries and include the responsibility of preserving for posterity an important portion of the nation's cultural heritage. The Council is strongly of the view that it would be quite unsatisfactory to entrust this responsibility to the governing control of any vested interest.

8. The Council draws attention to the advantages of preserving and making available, in one institution, the totality of the national record in all its forms, apart from the records of government. This enables both the institution itself and those using it to have an overview of that record. It concentrates resources and expertise to meet the growing technological problems involved. It provides increased security for the national heritage.

9. In considering whether the National Film Archive should be set up as a separate institution it should be noted that, important though its functions are, it could not realistically be expected to grow to more than a modest size. The 1980 report of the Working Party set up under the auspices of the Australian Film Commission to consider the Archive, recommended an increase of the then staff of 7 to "about 20". The Library has itself recommended an increase from the present 9 to 28. Even allowing for possible future increases, perhaps an ultimate doubling of this number, there would need to be compelling reasons to incur the substantial capital costs and continuing overheads to support such an operation as a separate institution.

10. Bearing these considerations in mind, but with the intention of keeping open the widest range of options for the future of the Archive, the Council proposes:

a) that the additional resources envisaged by the Prime Minister be applied to the Archive in its present situation;

but that;

b) the Library afford the National Film Archive a more distinct identity by internal amendments to the staff and reporting structures, by severing the existing administrative link between the Archive and the National Film Lending Service, which might be held to compromise the function of the Archive, and particularly by separately identifying the Archive's finances;

c) the Council review the membership of its Advisory Committee on the National Film Archive to provide for a wider representation of all the users of the Archive.

11. In view of the publicly expressed concern for the future of the Archive, the Council would monitor these changes carefully.

12. The Council believes that the additional levels and numbers of staff needed to bring the Archive up to a satisfactory pitch of operation are of



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the order of those set out in the Five Year Plan for the Development of the Library (1983-88) submitted to the Minister in February 1983 and sought in the Forward Staff Estimates submitted through the Minister for 1983/84. These increases, which would bring the full-time staff of the Archive up to 28 by the end of 1985/86, and estimates of the parallel extra provision required by way of equipment, accommodation and funds for the acquisition and copying of films are attached as Appendix A to this report.

13. The Library will continue its current initiatives in relation to the Archive. These include the design and implementation of a computerised information system to facilitate the use of the Archive's holdings, the development of custom built accommodation for both the services and the holdings of the Archive in the extension to the National Library building at present under construction, the provision of specially designed vaults in Canberra and the acceleration of the program to copy old and endangered films. The Library should be in a position to remove, by 1 January 1984, the restrictions on access imposed in July 1982.

14. An early call on the provision of extra staff for the Archive would be the establishment of an extra-Canberra presence for the Archive, in Sydney and Melbourne in the first instance.

15. In arriving at its recommendations the Council has taken into account the advice offered by its Advisory Committee on the National Film Archive and the report of the independent firm of consultants who were recommended to the Library by the Advisory Committee.

*Harrison Bryan*

HARRISON BRYAN  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE COUNCIL

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## PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY'S FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVES

### 1. Resources

The Table below sets out the resources allocated by the National Library at present for 1983-84 for the film and sound archives, together with the resources proposed for 1983-84, 1984-85 and 1985-86.

	1983-84 (Existing)		1983-84 (Proposed)		1984-85	1985-86
	\$'000		Total \$'000		Total \$'000	Total \$'000
Staff -						
film	(9)	200	(18)	245	(24)	480
sound	(6)	130	(9)	145	(12)	240
					(28)	560
					(17)	340
Development of Collec- tions -						
film		315		570	650	650
sound		78		138	200	200
Equipment -						
film		55		250	650	450
Sound		30		75	100	75
		808		1423	2320	2275

### 2. Storage and Accommodation

- Acetate vaults - Provision has already been made for high quality vaults for acetate film in the extensions to the Library building now under construction.
- New offices and technical facilities - The provision of new offices and technical facilities for the film archive and sound recording activities is being planned by the NCDC for inclusion in the present building contract. This would provide accommodation which would create as far as possible identities for these activities separate from the other activities from the Library, including shopfront, easily accessible and purpose built offices.
- Nitrate vaults - The NCDC has made provision in its 1984/85 Works Program for the extensions of the Library's vaults in North Canberra for the storage of nitrate film.

### 3. Administrative arrangements - The staff of the film and sound archives would be accorded a more distinct identity by:

- . changes to structures and lines of reporting
- . up grading of level
- . separating the film archive and the film lending service

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It is also proposed:

- to establish outlets for the film archive in Sydney and Melbourne
- to introduce fees for services provided to industry clients with a view to covering the salary and other costs involved.

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