

Minutes of a meeting of the Council of Management held at 8.00 p.m.,
Wednesday 11th November, 1970, at Kestrel Films, 10 Brunswick Gardens, W.8.

Those present: Leslie Elliot, Tony Garnet, Michael Henshaw, David Mercer,
Otto Plaschkes, Irving Teitelbaum, Peter Sainsbury, Nick
Hart-Williams, Audrey Battersby, Roger Housden, Penny
Barham.

Apologies for absence received from: Albert Finney, Joseph Losey, Tom
Maschler, Harold Pinter, Michael White.

- 1 The meeting was opened by Nick Hart-Williams who dealt with the first matter on the agenda, the reasons for calling the meeting, which were twofold: firstly the fact that since August The Other Cinema had been expecting finances from Memorial Enterprises which, it had been discovered only the previous week, were no longer forthcoming. A letter from Albert Finney explaining this was read to the meeting. It was explained that because of this expected finance, no fund raising operation had been undertaken. The second reason was the status of The Other Cinema, which was no yet established as a company, and the discussion of whether it would operate as a non-profit making company, or a charity, or exactly what, and why this matter had not yet been resolved.
- 2 Michael Henshaw then reported on the progress made in establishing The Other Cinema as a non-profit making organization and explained that the Inland Revenue had now adopted a policy of looking very closely into the affairs of non-profit making organizations for possible cases of tax evasion, and at present objected to our proposed structure, and that to form The Other Cinema into such an organization would present many problems and perhaps would not be successful. He then proposed that The Other Cinema should take over a defunct charity, namely Centre 42, which he, as secretary, had been instructed to put into liquidation; and which had aims in its constitution which were similar to those of The Other Cinema. This would virtually involve only the resignation of the current trustees of Centre 42, the take over by The Other Cinema, and the change of name and the appointment of the trustees. This could be done quickly, involve no expense, and would be particularly advantageous for The Other Cinema since Centre 42 had been formed prior to the 1959 Act and was thus exempted from presenting its accounts to the Inland Revenue and the change of name would not be queried by the Charities Commission. Both Irving Teitelbaum and Otto Plaschkes questioned the feasibility of this proposition, both from a legal point of view, and from the possible effect of any association of the two organizations in the public eye. It was agreed that this proposition was favourable subject to the articles of constitution of Centre 42

being looked into to ascertain their similarity of aim to The Other Cinema, which would be done by Irving and Otto with Michael; and with Otto raising the point as to whether it was advantageous to The Other Cinema to have the status of a charity for the purpose of fund raising.

- 3 All present were handed copies of The Other Cinema's budget, which set out total costs for one year's operation, and the basic cost for it to operate for another twelve weeks, and listed all current debts. Michael proposed that all outstanding debts to personnel should be covered by council members and this was seconded by Tony and Leslie. They pointed out that although there was a quorum present, those trustees absent who did not agree with this proposal could opt out and those present and in agreement would cover it pro rata. Otto did not agree totally with this proposition. Tony said that he was in favour of the trustees paying pro rata all the current debts as well as back wages. Nick explained that this would work out at £220 to £250 per trustee.

Tony stated that more importantly a decision as to the future of The Other Cinema had to be taken. If it is to continue then (1) a considerable amount of money had to be raised, and (2) this amount of money had to be kept turning over allowing for expansion, so that the present situation would not repeat itself. It had to be decided whether the whole operation was feasible or not and he needed to be convinced of this. Leslie agreed wholeheartedly with this and suggested that if The Other Cinema were to continue, then he was prepared to take on more responsibility and suggested that an executive committee be formed from council members and with Peter and Nick for decision making. And if The Other Cinema were to continue then the overhead for the next six months would have to be greatly reduced. Leslie then explained

- 4 his proposition for the Arches at Charing Cross - how he was intending to create a totally new leisure and educational centre which would include a cinema which he would rent to The Other Cinema. Nick made the point that up to now the difficulty has been trying to operate without a cinema, and outlined the various situations they had shown at, The Place, etc, and the future possibilities of the Open Space and the Round House. Tony said that if The Other Cinema were to continue then energies should not be diffused in this way and the very future was dependent on getting a cinema.

Leslie explained that The Other Cinema could operate at much lower costs than a commercial cinema, and that it could be the launching pad for the other aims of The Other Cinema. This could be operational by April or May, and Leslie was prepared to put in more money until that time, and to cover the costs of any film commitments; whilst at the same time setting up a large scale fund raising effort within the industry which he felt would be successful because of his particular position. But the status of the organization (charity or not) would have to be settled before funds could be asked for. Leslie mentioned the figure of £20,000 as what he could raise. Tony proposed that if The Other Cinema were going to extract money

from large film companies, then perhaps currently financeable people from within the industry should be asked to add their names to the list of trustees to further this aim.

It was decided that Nick and Peter would prepare a budget for the running of The Other Cinema from now until April, with just a scratch organization and minimum costs, which Leslie would lend to The Other Cinema. Nick pointed out that they could manage with just themselves and a secretary which would mean that people would have to seek other work. Leslie offered to find situation within his organization for these people during the interim period. Tony asked Leslie, as a businessman, whether he thought that The Other Cinema was itself a viable proposition for the future, and Leslie replied that he believed so, given the support and effort from the other trustees. Tony then suggested in line with Leslie's ideas on fund raising that people from unions such as ACTT, the Writers Guild and Equity be invited to become trustees for future protection, for example when the production part of the Other Cinema is in operation.

Conclusions

That all trustees should be written to asking them to pay part share to cover all debts. If some do not contribute then the others would cover this extra amount.

That Michael would meet the Centre 42 people and would further the suggestion of The Other Cinema taking it over, and that in the mean time Irving and Otto would look into this whole idea in greater detail.

That Nick and Peter would prepare figures for minimum operating costs from now until April.

That an executive committee would be formed.

That Leslie agreed to lend The Other Cinema an agreed minimum of funds needed until April when the cinema at the Arches would be finished and which he agreed to rent to The Other Cinema.

That a further meeting would be held the following Wednesday, 18th November, at a time and place to be notified, to report on the above and for further discussion.

The meeting was closed at 12.30a.m.