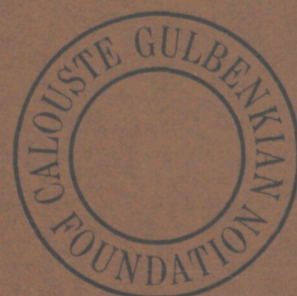

PATRON OR PAYMASTER?

The arts council dilemma

A conference report prepared
by Elizabeth Sweeting



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98 Portland Place
London W1N 4ET
Telephone 01-636 5313/7

ISBN 0 903319 25 X

Cover design by Michael Carney Associates
Produced by PPR Printing London W1

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Foreword

by Peter Brinson

The third conference, projected for 1983, in the series initiated in April 1979, will face a very changed international situation: priorities have shifted and the context of the arts in societies has changed, sometimes radically, because the societies have changed. This foreword therefore contemplates the significance of these changes for the third conference and suggests consequential themes, some raised by the second conference, some new.

The First Conference of Commonwealth Arts Councils, convened on the initiative of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, was held at Canterbury, England, in April 1979. It brought together senior officials of national arts councils and similar arts funding bodies in eight Commonwealth countries, representatives of several British based arts agencies with Commonwealth interests, representatives of the US National Endowment for the Arts and a few individual experts. Its purpose was to review principles and policies for arts support, discuss short- and long-term problems and current issues, and explore the possibility of further consultations.

There was general agreement at the conference that meetings of senior arts officials held from time to time would be helpful, given that government arts administration is so recent in origin and is still developing a professional base and a body of knowledge and experience; given too that it represents a social initiative whose continuing vitality and effectiveness depend on a strong support and imaginative interpretation; and that arts administrators, being generally few in numbers, tend to be working in relative isolation and to lack the widespread support and stimulus of professional colleagues.

The first conference recommended, among other things, that a second conference should be held within two years. The Canada Council agreed to host the second conference, and a three-member steering committee was formed to direct its planning. The steering committee was composed of Dr Jean Battersby, Chief Executive Officer of the Australia Council; Peter Brinson, Director of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK and Commonwealth Branch; and Charles Lussier, Director of the Canada Council.

This steering committee met in Canada in November 1980. They chose a theme and format, and agreed that the second conference should be larger and more widely representative of the Commonwealth than the first conference, which was designed to be exploratory. It was understood that most participants would be senior officials of national arts funding bodies in Commonwealth countries, but that there would also be a few participants from outside the Commonwealth. The Second Conference of Commonwealth Arts Councils took place in Montreal, Canada, from 12-15 April, 1981, with the detailed planning and organisation carried out by Mario Lavoie and Parise Cote of the Canada Council staff, under the direction of Charles Lussier, and in close consultation with the other members of the steering committee.

This publication is a report of the conference. It is in two parts; Part I written by Elizabeth Sweeting describes the systems and debate about arts support in Europe, USA, Australia, New Zealand and Third World Countries; Part II reproduces the papers presented to the conference, in some cases edited because of space. The whole has been arranged and edited by Elizabeth Sweeting.

Like the first conference, its successor recommended continuity and development, including development in the nature of the conference itself. In future the conference will be called the 'Conference of Commonwealth Arts Administrators' to recognise and embrace more easily the many different forms of arts support throughout the nations of the Commonwealth.

Whatever the form of support, however, and whatever the organisation and policy behind this support, the fundamental issue remains the role the arts play in each Commonwealth society. What do they do and why should they be supported for doing it? The papers which follow in Part II emphasise that this role has much to do with national identity expressed through a shared culture which, ultimately, is a product of individual expression in relation to other individuals.

Clearly, this cannot be the whole of the matter. The arts influence many areas of national and personal life—education for example—and are the creation of artists whose position in society may need special consideration in particular circumstances. These areas among others remain to be illuminated, by succeeding conferences. At present most people agree that the arts do a job, but few can agree on the job description. Is there, for example, a contradiction between the role of the arts in a predominantly industrial society and their role in predominantly rural societies, between developed and developing nations? The question subsumed all the debate at Montreal with the developing nations able to offer models of great value to their industrial neighbours. This value has to do with the nature of the arts themselves, their organic nature and existence as an inseparable part of humanity. Concentration on problems of support, organisation and so on inevitably tended at Montreal to obscure this social fact.

Section B of Part I shows the developing societies constantly aware, and sometimes needing to remind developed societies, that in their tradition the arts remain more clearly integrated with social practice and daily life than they do in urbanised industrial countries where necessary links between the arts and the mass of the people frequently take second place to support for centres of excellence in theatre companies, galleries, orchestras and so on. Not that excellence is unimportant but there needs to be a balance with excellence shared as widely as possible.

The message of the developing nations is that the arts have to do with celebratory and ritual functions in society as well as artistic/creative, that the arts thereby have much to do with community activity and are not only the solitary work of individuals. Thus they have an inescapable social function and influence, whether the product of one person or a hundred. This fundamental fact has been translated and developed in different ways by the community arts movements of industrial nations, seeking to re-integrate the arts into society and re-establish the role of culture in working life. Thereby the status and function of the artist in industrial societies are elevated. The artist is no longer solitary but a public animator, communicator and educator through the practice of art.

There are significant connections, then, between the practice of the arts in many developing nations and their practice by an increasingly influential range of community artists in industrial nations. So too, in the allocation of time to work and leisure. Many developing countries are experts in societies which have a three day working week and which consider the arts equal in importance with work—indeed, inseparable from work. Such attitudes and practices are crucial now to industrial society where advancing technology has changed forever the balance between work and non-work. In other words, the place of the arts in changing societies, whether developed or developing, is a theme of central importance for a future conference. So, too, is the threat posed to national cultures by tourism and the international media, a threat reiterated by contributors at Montreal. A third urgent theme is the situation of the artist under pressure of these threats and changes, consideration of which may need to embrace also the defence of the artist.

Finally, a theme already mentioned which received much attention at Montreal. It is, perhaps, the most important of all, the inseparability of the arts from education. Can one not conclude that it is time to stop talking about systems, councils and ministries, to concentrate instead on the totality of education for the new societies ahead? Not just schools, colleges and training courses, but museums, galleries and curricula integrating the arts with learning, the professional artist alongside the professional teacher, communities where the arts are one with education, together translating the national cultural inheritance with integrity into the present and the future? Towards this vision the developing nations, sometimes less trammelled by bureaucratic structures and reservations about the arts than nations in the European tradition, can offer models which show the arts doing their job within a living culture which remains part of everyday existence.

The first two conferences and succeeding events have demonstrated the need to continue discussion of these matters through periodic meetings of Commonwealth colleagues. Unquestionably, too, they indicate the need for *continual* advocacy of the arts with governments, and for Ministries of the Arts, Arts Councils and other support organisations to be staffed by people with arts experience and affinities, not just civil servants. This need for experience and affinity applies equally to all of us who attend these conferences. We remain part of communities to be enriched through education in the arts; we need to keep contact with the arts and be concerned with their practice

and impact on people, not just with their organisation. This, surely, is our personal task between now and the next conference which is to be held in Hong Kong in September/October 1983.

I end with a salute of warmest thanks to colleagues who gave so much to Montreal, to Charles Lussier and his assistants who arranged the Canada Council's splendid organisation and hospitality and to Mavor Moore, Chairman of the Council, for his personal interest in our discussions and proceedings. Our thanks also to all who have contributed papers to this volume. Finally, our thanks to Elizabeth Sweeting, who wrote Part I and edited the papers in Part II, and to Millicent Bowerman, literary editor at the UK Branch of the Gulbenkian Foundation.

Delegates to the Second Conference of Commonwealth Arts Councils in Montreal, Canada, 12-15 April, 1981

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PART I

Introductory note

- A. The systems of arts support in Europe, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand**
- B. Emergent systems and debate in the Third World countries**

Introductory note

1. *Deliberations of the First Conference*

The First Conference of Commonwealth Arts Councils, April 1979, initiated the valuable exchange of information and opinion which led to the decision to develop the connections formed there at a second one. Discussion had ranged over ever-widening and complex issues, and it was felt that a second gathering might highlight in more detail what had been seen to be of common concern.

This corporate intention is summarised in the report of the 1979 Conference, *The Arts Council Phenomenon** as
‘some further investigation of the many issues underlying the main issue’ including ‘the relationship between the arts and education in each national tradition, the formulation of policy, the nature and practice of accountability, the concept and development of culture in multi-cultural societies, the obligations of the artist to society and society to the artist, democratisation of culture or cultural democracy, above all the determination of cultural priorities.’
2. *Suggested subject of the Second Conference*

In order to focus discussion without imposing undue restraints, it was agreed that the next forum should deal with public patronage of the arts. Representatives of a variety of organisations and arts agencies were invited to prepare papers which would describe in some detail the philosophy and practice of arts support in their respective countries.
3. *Scope of subject matter*

The First Conference and the report focused on the arts council as the predominant system in the Commonwealth countries, in general based on the British model evolved from the 1940s. It was agreed that the Second Conference should look also at other systems evolved in and deemed appropriate for other countries. Delegates were therefore invited from France, the USA and ex-colonial and Third World countries to contribute papers and to widen the horizons of discussion.
4. *Summary of the First Conference subject matter—the arts council*

The First Conference examined the ‘arts council’, a blanket term for an agency or organisation designated by government to receive and distribute funds for the support of the arts, with policy and methods acceptable to government but not within their direct control. In today’s parlance, it is a ‘quango’, a quasi-autonomous governmental institution.

Given variations in national practice, the virtues of such a model are seen to be a distancing of the arts agency from sudden swerves in government policy, even changes in government in a party political system; a body of skilled professional officers with a specialised relationship with arts organisations, to scrutinise and assess their activities; the evolution of a long-term yet flexible system of operation; the involvement of specialists representative of the arts world and others representative of the widest possible community and consumer interests; a means, also, of protecting artists from government pressure, perhaps used for political ends. Such an agency would be acceptable to the government for considerable sums of public money and would have to find its own ways of dealing as equitably as possible with financial and other constraints.
5. *Alternatives to the arts council*

The debate covering the virtues and shortcomings of the arts council naturally raises the question—is the arts council a definite and appropriate model, generally acceptable in some form? If not, what other existing or ideal alternatives exist? Are there other means of achieving ‘the best for the most’ in countries other than those represented in the First Conference, particularly those of the Third World.

* *The Arts Council Phenomenon* (1981) Dr Jean Battersby Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, edited by Elizabeth Sweeting.

6. *The Minister for the Arts—co-existence with the arts council* Arguments in countries which have an arts council frequently suggest its replacement by a Ministry, with a Minister in direct control of policy and funding. The element of direct control is an important qualification in this context since the existence of an arts council does not preclude the appointment of a Minister for the Arts. Britain is a case in point, as is Australia too. In both cases the Minister is not necessarily of cabinet rank, nor does he have a separate Ministry. The arts may be only one part of a mixed portfolio. In these instances, the Minister 'represents' and speaks for arts interests in Parliament, but may not infringe the limits of arts council autonomy by unilateral action or decision, referring major questions to the arts council and seeking information and advice as required from the council.
7. *The Minister—direct power* In France, on the other hand, the Minister may be the direct instrument of government policy and responsible for its instrumentation through a department of his own. This gives scope for the drive and imagination of a Malraux, for instance, a short circuit between the switch and the light. The Minister could, however, be the creature of his civil servants who have the permanency a Minister does not equally enjoy. Whatever the balance of power may be, there is no elastic cushion between government and artist such as an arts council may provide.
8. *The Third World experience* Debate on the distribution of power—Minister with or without department, with or without an arts council, direct government responsible—has to be conducted mainly with reference to the European countries, the USA and Commonwealth countries blue-printed by Great Britain's practice in this as in other matters, or with a population of mainly British and European extraction. These models emerged as not being immediately comparable in Third World countries, indeed perhaps not even relevant, in size, population, social, political or economic structure. The group of such countries, represented by Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Jamaica and Hong Kong by papers, and other representatives in discussion, contributed some entirely new aspects of the role of the arts in their respective countries and of the manner in which they are supported and used, for want of a better word, as an essential part of a political process, in emergent nationhood.
9. *System or subject matter* Countries other than those in this group were naturally pre-occupied by the problems of existing systems, by the difficulty of adjusting them to changes in an inherited social structure mainly of a democratic nature. It seemed at some points that obsession with the mechanism of arts support had begun to blur, in the systems, the initial rationale for the principles of support itself and so for the role and contribution of the arts in society on which such support must be based.
10. *The nature of this report* This report attempts to draw together the main facts and appraisals both from the papers and from ensuing discussion. The papers of course supply the essential context in which the aims of the Conference are centred, so the report should be read with close reference to them.
11. *A: the systems of arts support in Europe, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand* It may provide the maps for fuller exploration of complex and well-debated territory in which shared experience provides the detailed terrain. There are in fact two maps. Section A concentrates on the common ground mainly drawn from European countries, the USA and countries such as Australia. They sought to pool information and views which might enable existing models to be refined and brought up to date. Their arts too stem from shared or overlapping inherited tradition, influenced but not overlaid or displaced by those of other countries. In their democratic mode of government they allow for minorities but they do not have some of the urgent pressures of reconciling opposing interests which complicate the issue in some Third World experience. They take their national identity for granted, perhaps too complacently so, and the acceptance of government support for the arts has become a principle rooted in history, now debated more for its degree than for its true *raison d'être*.

12. *B: emergent systems and debate in the Third World countries* Eloquent and stimulating accounts were given by the Third World contingent of their special problems. As is to be expected, their dominant pre-occupation was with the establishment of a national identity and indeed there is the question of whether this can be established as a unified concept in the many elements which must remain co-existent rather than synthesised into an unnatural, even unwilling, whole—the tribal unit; the conglomeration of minority groups some of which are ever increasing in power; the heritage of the past as against the present partially imprinted by the colonial dominance only recently shaken off; the concomitant debate of where the true roots lie; the social implications of the arts and their balance between benefit and pleasure alone; the basic question, therefore, of the role of the arts and of the means by which they can be supported to fulfil their functions, whatever these are perceived to be; leading on to the primary importance of awareness of the arts as more than symbols of nationhood, rather the mainsprings of pride and the perception of human achievement. It was immediately apparent that this last observation flows on to the real meanings of education, not only in the arts per se but in the social contract of which they are a part.
13. *Future possibilities* It would be fair to say that debate on these issues is of urgency for the countries practically involved at this moment in seeking answers, and that it is a debate which must continue. Doubtless the Third World representatives learned a lot from hearing at first hand of the options open to them from their colleagues in very different political, social and economic conditions.
- It would be equally true to say that hearing of the Third World experience was very salutary to the other delegates. No doubt the Third World countries already have bureaucratic problems such as constituted the greater part of the papers and the debate, but they have to face the basic questions in the world of today rather than the refinements or inadequacies of practice based on a traditional past.
14. *Venue for the Third Conference* It is to be hoped that the Conference may continue its explorations in the Third World country and context. Its participants from elsewhere may be encouraged to jettison unwanted baggage of pre-conceived practice and philosophy, to learn at first-hand by meeting a wide spectrum of those involved in the arts, including the artists themselves. They should thus be enabled to take a new look at their old problems, refreshed by contact with basic dilemmas rather than some of those created by arts bureaucracies paradoxically set up to find the answers. This broader context of future discussion was recognised by a decision of the Second Conference to retitling itself 'Conference of Commonwealth Arts Administrators'. Under this title we move forward to the Third Conference.

A. The systems of arts support in Europe, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand

1 Governments and Ministers

Government arts policy is usually defined in the broadest terms. It acknowledges implicitly the perceived benefit of the arts and sets out broad guidelines for the bringing about of this benefit, to be available and accessible to all. Eg:

‘the pursuit of excellence, preservation of the national heritage, the encouragement of all forms, both directly to organisations and individuals and through related activities intended to introduce as many people as possible to enjoyment and participation, as part of desirable accessibility.’

Such a statement is typical of a government’s difficulty in formulating a policy for the arts as against other matters within its practical jurisdiction. It states an attitude rather than a policy, leaving open the manner of its necessary implementation. The structures for support of the arts are therefore built up on a very broad, though benevolent, basis. The looseness of the definition can imply a degree of freedom, but it can also contain unresolved ambiguities about the real obligations of government. It is this element of ambiguity which is the cause of many misunderstandings which continuously confuse arts councils, other arts agencies, local governments, artists and practitioners in all related forms, not to speak of the general public who suddenly are made aware that, as tax-payers, they are helping to subsidise the arts willy-nilly. Dissatisfactions are argued volubly in public by newspapers and the media and such publicity for the arts and arts support is usually bad.

Behind it, of course, there is the long, slow process of acceptance of responsibility for the arts, ‘rationalising patronage’, as Frank Milligan (Canada) expresses it in his papers. An example of the process is described by David MacDonald (Canada) from ‘the clear coming together of a sense of cultural policy’ in the mid-1960s, to the detailed political discussion of arts policy emerging 1979/80. The Canada Council had already been set up in 1957 on the handy model of the Arts Council of Great Britain, but there was for the period described no firm expression of the government’s continuing intent, tied though such councils are to government subvention for translating intent into reality.

Frank Milligan (Canada) puts his finger on the resulting problem of the arts council, in which governments have assumed the role of paymaster and ‘the function of taste-maker, the other half of the dual role the patron of the arts has assumed throughout time.’

It logically follows, though mercifully in practice not always, that governments may invoke their policy statements to justify involvement in the processes of implementation which they have devolved to their appointed agency. The much-quoted ‘arm’s length’ principle—the distancing of government from direct intervention in arts activities, organisation or management—has to be respected by government, by the arts council towards its clients, and by a Minister for the Arts if he co-exists with an arts council. Such a code of practice is hardly likely to be part of a policy statement and makes no allowance for the very diversity and flexibility needed to bring to fruition the aims stated, say, in the typical pronouncement quoted earlier. Perhaps a useful semantic distinction was made by Donald Moore (USA) stating the opinion that there should be policy ‘in support of the arts’ rather than ‘a national policy for the arts’.

In this debate on statements of government policy, Augustin Girard (France) contributes the observation that governments are rarely interested in large-scale cultural policy, or able to set it up. They are inevitably dependent on information and advice, whether directly via a Minister, with or without a Ministry, or via an agency which they have set up in a more distanced relationship.

In both systems—Minister with direct responsibility or arts council—there grows up a policy within the broadly stated government policy. Both have to interpret expressed intent in the light of existing arts activity and community preferences, in relation to the signs of future needs and developments. These have to be costed for inclusion in government budget discussions, and the inevitable elements of choice and rejection themselves bend the policy, to a greater or lesser degree, leaning to what is possible and likely to be accepted rather than what is at best ideal and, at a minimum level, desirable. When the main function is that of the paymaster, and there is not enough pay for all contenders, then the grant-giving body becomes itself the task-master too, albeit the government has by intent assumed this function.

Both council and Minister, according to their varying degrees of belligerence, may press more or less forcefully for the maintenance of status for the arts and the need to support them, even in times of financial stringency, in the manner to which they have become accustomed. When the Minister is the middle man, facing the two ways to government and arts council, and perhaps not a Cabinet member, his taste as well as his status has built-in ambiguities. He is the appointed go-between but is likely, if too vocal or too pressing for the claims of the arts as against the more obviously appealing claims of social welfare or defence, to incur unpopularity in Parliament which does the arts no good. Then comes the storm of protest from the arts community, an articulate body when feelings run high. It is questionable whether the 'arm's length' principle, invoked in this context as well as in its operational meaning, has real validity and whether the obligations of council and Minister in combination need more precise definition and general understanding.

1. *The Minister—the French model*

The looseness of the definition can, of course, be turned to the personal advantage of the Minister and that of the arts if he is a man of notable achievement and a fighter for the arts. Augustin Girard (France) reminded the Conference of just such a man, André Malraux. He had strong political clout, being close to the President, General de Gaulle, and was able to build up supportive connections with other Ministries, such as Education. It is regrettable that men who represent the arts in government are rarely so active and influential, set on acquiring more obviously prestigious portfolios. The arts' status is insecure by reasons both of different attitudes in changing governments and those of the individual there representing them. They have low priority in budget allocations, with the result that subventions to the arts in times of inflation fall behind.

There is of course a flow-on from these attitudes and their effects to the Minister's department, if he has one, or to the arts council. Either support network becomes discouraged, quiescent in accepting an unsatisfactory status quo, and, in the case of the arts council, where the staff changeover is greater, unable to attract key staff of the requisite calibre. What is needed is the occasional swift stroke of policy leading to immediate action—André Malraux seems thus to have been able, when he saw absolute need, to bypass his department—which at once raises morale and effects change.

2. *Civil service operation*

It was pointed out to the Conference, particularly by Augustin Girard and Frank Milligan, that the very nature and structure of a civil service department are not necessarily amenable to the particular needs of the arts. In most government activities the civil service is concerned with the preservation of the status quo to maintain stability in the general running of the country while governments change and Ministers come and go. They cannot readily respond to the rapidity of change which reflects a healthy arts scene. Their tendency is to centralise and so they find it difficult to deal with local and widely dispersed activities. They prefer clearly formulated, even rigid, systems, into which individuals who are within the arts orbit do not easily fit. Democratic principles also call for even-handed treatment for all, the application of accepted criteria. These principles can in fact be poles apart from the subjective judgements which the arts call into play but which public

servants can hardly be expected to apply. While it is true that a Minister can speed matters up, he can effect no radical change. The criticisms of public service practice made in the context of the Conference were not seen as denigration of that service per se, but as balancing factors in the comparison of the arts council with possible alternatives.

2 The arts council and its relationships

3. *Arts council operation*

To judge from the cautious beginnings of the arts council, recognition that the arts need somewhat different treatment from that of other activities seems to have been tacitly accepted by governments. Even in Britain, where the first model was successfully set up to deal with public support of the arts and to distribute grants, the council did not emerge fully armed. It has reached its present level of power keeping pace with the development of the arts.

There is no doubt that this has been a two-way process. The 'Encouragement of Music and the Arts', which gave the earliest council its name (and initials CEMA) was just that, and the encouragement paid dividends. But it must also be acknowledged that in the 35 years or so of its existence other social factors have exerted pressure. Minority groups pleading for notice, aggressively or not, for, say, disarmament, anti-nuclear action, consumer affairs, have found that their protests or advocacy can be listened to, and so with the arts. Within the balance of attention to both old and new, experiment and innovation are encouraged, and often even rewarded by financial help. The arts council is not so readily daunted by the subversive in arts activity. It recognises that this is inherent, that the artist may be ahead of his time and needs to break the mould of accepted practice. At best this subversion is a factor of necessary change; at worst it reflects a temporary dissatisfaction which needs to be stated. The act of expression may be sufficient to dispel anxiety about it.

4. *The council and policy*

Here the duality of stated government policy—paymaster and taste-master—must be cited again. It is by the arts agency rather than the public service that the double function can be implemented to any degree. Public service can respond to what exists and is exemplified; the arts agency has the potentiality of seeing future achievement and of taking the risks which are in general anathema to more rigid systems. At the same time there are constraints against rashness by their invocation of the arm's length principle. The council cannot, on the one hand, intervene directly in the conduct of arts activities; it cannot, on the other, indulge in unilateral gambles going against the government or its Minister since it is publicly accountable for its conduct and cash disbursement. Ideally it would appear to enjoy the best of both worlds, its independence of operation and its usefulness as an instrument of government. It should be able to maintain its closeness to the artists and to the community in general fanning out its influence rather than centralising. It possesses a continuity greater, perhaps, than that of a public service department because it is not so deeply dependent on the Minister, close though that relationship should be.

5. *Inherent difficulties*

These relationships are easier to state than to maintain in practice. They imply responsibilities which cannot be dodged and which may be conflicting. For example, pressures from artists for support which they see as conditions of their survival conflict with the government's decision about the global sum available for distribution. Decisions taken by the council in selecting the favoured recipients spark off animosity in the rejected. The community may suddenly protest about the proposed withdrawal of some of the very amenities which have been brought to disaster by public indifference and lack of support. Artists have to be reminded that they too are part of the community and are therefore accountable to their public if they are in receipt of public funds. Partial protection from the rigours of a free market does not entitle them to the isolation of self-indulgence.

6. *Internal conduct*

How, then, is this intricate balancing act, so full of pitfalls, to be efficiently maintained for the benefit of all concerned, from government through to the young aspiring artist? Like charity, such efficiency probably begins at home, in the internal day-to-day conduct of the council's affairs, with its aims and obligations kept clearly in sight, ie. its attitudes and modus operandi have to march together. This achievement should be that much easier because the council is at liberty to set up its own methods of organisation, not necessarily on the model of a public service department. It can promulgate its own management style and hire and fire its officers to make sure it has a team chosen for professional understanding of the arts and their support.

7. *Communication*

The network of relationships outlined above, and stressed by many Conference participants, makes one requirement at least quite obvious—the need for communication. This has possibly been overworked in modern management parlance but cannot be too strongly stressed in the context of the arts council.

In the basic sense of passing on information the council must equip the Minister to answer questions and put forward arguments in parliamentary discussion, if he is to be an effective advocate of the arts. There is a thin enough line already between the quasi-autonomy of the arts council and the government. If the council should appear to be in any way withholding or even concealing information about its operations, and in particular its use of public funds, it is presenting an open invitation to government to come closer than arm's length. In particular, if controversy about arts matters is likely to hit the headlines, no Minister likes to be taken unawares, with awkward questions from the press and the media, not to speak of his peers. The all too familiar figure of the 'indifferent tax-payer' is also a voter, a potential supporter or opponent, and must be given a coherent, if not always convincing, answer. Pressure of public opinion can affect the government's attitude, and as paymaster it has finally the upper hand.

The council is therefore vulnerable. Ability to maintain some credibility in the public eye is much affected by the extent and nature of its policy of public communication. Its attitude should be confidently articulate, not defensive after the event. As was pointed out by many speakers in the Conference, the autonomy of the council should theoretically enable it to create its own image, of which flexibility should be one of the elements, giving it the ability to respond effectively to the many different demands made upon it.

8. *Status and structure*

It would also be fair to argue, however, that this lack of a structure imposed by government or by any other requirement, is a mixed blessing. It could be equated with a lack of easily recognisable identity and consequently to a lack of effortless status. It has no precedents to refer to and often no legal obligations to which it might have recourse in times of conflict.

Timothy Porteous (Canada) points out in his papers that the Act setting up the Canada Council (1957) does not clearly classify its status within the defined categories of Canadian Crown Corporations. This leaves the Canada Council open to advocacy of tighter government control. It so happens that the Council does not wish to press for a greater degree of autonomy which might provoke such an argument. The example points up, however, the need for an arts council unprotected by legal status, to be securely accepted by the approval of government and by public opinion. It must not only serve its appointed purpose with efficiency and justice, within the limits of human frailty, but it must be seen to do so because it operates openly. Its tenets could never be acceptable with total unanimity, when it is the nature of the operation that there must always be losers. But at least they should be made known, subject to constant scrutiny and up-dating, and accountable when brought into question.

9. *Self-regulation –internal relationships*

Government and quasi-government institutions are by nature resistant to outside investigation. Such investigation usually occurs after the event, and can be avoided before the apparent need arises by open statement of policy and operation.

Confidence in the arts council ideally has to be built up in government, the Minister, the artists and the community. Objection must be taken into account that there is a conflict between open communication with the outside relationships and the obligatory confidentiality between council and clients. Of course this has to be maintained, as in the operation of any business enterprise. It is part of the training of the experienced officer, working in the fullest collaboration with his colleagues, to recognise the limits which must not be overstepped. If there is shared confidence and full communication within the organisation itself, it should not be beyond the wit of its corporate staff structure to reconcile the internal and external behaviour and attitudes which endow it with respected status.

10. *Factors
for change*

The atmosphere in which particular problems are encountered in today's social, economic and political conditions, was agreed by most participants to be especially unpropitious for the arts. In the current turbulence, councils have to maintain, are even asked to increase, commitments made in happier and more affluent days. New problems are caused by inflation, rising unemployment, cuts in education, etc—and they have to be faced in nearly all countries, certainly in Europe, America and Canada. They impose new strains on all government departments and organisations.

This pressure highlights the danger of clinging to inherited systems, in spite of the temptation to do so. It is easier, but may be fatal, to make ad hoc decisions in the short-term, than to step back from the hurlyburly to study the long-term.

Conference members therefore studied with particular interest descriptions of varieties of experience in arts council operation, experiments and suggestions, in the hope of some enlightenment in common problems.

3 Arts councils: structure and personnel

11. *Personnel—
external
advisers*

The arts council's function as described above is to maintain relationships at many levels and this must be done by devising a suitable structure appropriately deployed to represent the variety of interests which have to be served. The manner of the appointments and reason for the choice of appointees are difficult to define. Each country using the typical British-inspired model seems to have evolved similar precedents and compromises between government appointments, peripheral but influential private individuals used for advisory help, and staff officers chosen for their expertise and experience in the arts or arts administration. The aggregate of involved individuals is therefore considerable. There are those who are possessed of some personal consequence which makes them acceptable to government; the advisers may be distinguished arts practitioners, rubbing shoulders on their selected boards or panels with representatives of community interests or pursuits not related to the arts; the professional officers both contribute to and put into practical terms the deliberations of their own heads of organisation and the outside specialists. In Britain payment to such advisers is minimal, the rationale being confidence in their willingness to contribute freely in established traditions of voluntary work and the manifest impossibility of paying a 'rate for the job' to such diverse and often eminent individuals.

12. *Organisational
structure*

The conventional model of an arts council is pyramidal. At the top are senior government appointees eg. chairman and director. They interpret their duties as representing the interests of the council in the public eye, monitoring the overall policy and its implementation, and keeping open channels of communication to and through the Minister to reach government level. They preside over meetings of the two-tier advisory structure ie. the 'council' of distinguished public figures, appointed by government also. The policy and funding decisions which the senior officials together with council receive at stipulated intervals for debate and ratification filter upwards from the larger body of advisers on the 'panels'. The panels may be set up to have responsibility for particular art forms or aspects of general policy-making across the board, as will be seen when the practice of the Queen

Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand is examined. Council members may be involved or not with the panels—that is the decision for each organisation to make. In the structure of the Australia Council, for instance, it used to be customary for Council members to attend occasional meetings of the Boards for art forms as and when they chose to do so. Similarly chairpersons attended Council meetings. Any such practice is obviously open to change if thought to be better, and this is an internal decision, unless, as in the case of the Australia Council, certain conditions have been stipulated in legislation.

The number of outside advisers needed to service the panels is considerable and represents the wide base of the pyramid moving up in diminishing numbers through the council to the chairman. It is also customary for such advisers to serve for a stated period, maintaining a rotation of turnover but thus continuously involving more and more people who are knowledgeable in the council's operations and policy. They are selected by an amalgam of government preference, personal recommendation and internal preference, latterly also by public advertisement. This process is thought by some observers and participants to make for wide representation and to be as nearly democratic as is possible. By others it is thought to be unclear, unsatisfactory, tending to an 'old boy network' and at worst elitist.

13. Professional officers

The supporting base (metaphorically—not necessarily in order of importance but in function) is the body of professional staff. They are responsible for the detailed administration. So far as is physically possible they maintain personal contact with client organisations and individuals, local authorities and other arts-related interests. In British practice, a staff member customarily attends board meetings, but in the limited capacity of 'assessor', with no voting rights and no power to impose the Council's will on the board of directors of the organisation. This has been resisted in Australia as a threatening presence, though, paradoxically, representatives of government who may also be officers of a Ministry or arts agency may be appointed as actual board members—hardly at arm's length.

Staff appointments are usually made internally but preceded by public advertisement, there being no automatic promotion certainly in British practice. Departments may be set up according to the art form (as in Britain and Canada) and headed by specialists in particular arts eg. drama, visual arts, music, community arts, literature, etc. French practice in the Ministry of Culture reflects the policy factors common to all the arts and it may well be argued, as in New Zealand, as an acceptable alternative.

14. General aims and purpose

Conference members spent a long time debating the advantages and disadvantages of this structure, which were agreed to be common to the practice of many countries. Certainly Third World representatives to whom the arts council is a comparatively unfamiliar phenomenon can have been left with little doubt about its problems.

It was generally agreed that the whole edifice should be unified by the understanding and pursuit of shared goals:

- implementation of policy pro bono publico
- collection of the fullest information possible to form the basis of decision-making
- sharing of information and communication constantly and at all levels
- fair assessment of artistic achievement, correlated with financial need
- awareness of internal and external constraints on policy implementation.

15. Changing relationships

The relevance of the hierarchical structure and inherited departmental divisions was questioned in the light of radical change within society and therefore in the arts, since such structures were devised anything up to 40 years ago. Certainly it was agreed that priorities have changed. The support of solid centres of activity, national and regional companies housed in appropriate buildings were not being challenged as prime claimants for funding.

Nowadays upheavals and reactions against the art establishment, which such organisations are said to represent, have brought powerful contenders into the field. The alternatives to the establishment, the contemporary, and the urgency for change, have taken up questions of social concern, for instance, they have broken down the boundaries between the arts which they saw as barriers in the search for the most eloquent and all-embracing expression and general concern. Dancers speak, actors dance, music uses all resources of the electronic age as well as its traditional performance, technology augments and transcends conventional stage settings, and audience and performers often truly share the same areas.

With these powerful forces for change and expendability the means of arts support must truly accept and understand them. The choices they have to make are not only more numerous but much more difficult. The risk element is greater, as is the reluctance to promise permanent funding. The boldness has to be greater, both to encounter the risk, to take it and to make clear cut-off decisions for the ephemeral which reaches the limit of its purpose. Built-in obsolescence is now common in household goods, but must be faced in arts support.

16. *Suggestions
for structural
change*

Internal structure on the departmental model may well increasingly prove to be less relevant. If art forms themselves now acknowledge no frontiers, arts council officers can no longer be specialists in limited fields. It is a management cliché that the departmental system tends to empire building, to defensive attitudes towards personal territory, to entrenched ideas. The need for crossing the frontiers of the department's information, and communication barriers is a strong argument for internal management review. In a more real and basic sense than ever before, departments must see themselves as integral parts of a corporate whole.

17. *Management
attitudes*

It is curious too that arts councils in general have taken virtually no cognisance of modern management methods. They do not shrink from enjoining their clients to improve their organisation and administration, but one wonders whether they should not in fact be taking their own advice. Councils support arts administration courses which are strongly business-oriented, courses which, if sauce for the goose, may also be sauce for the gander.

It should not, it was suggested in the Conference, be out of the question for arts council staff either to take some form of management course, or to be placed in an arts organisation for a brief refresher period in the field. If the first could precede the second, double benefit might accrue. No doubt loud objections would be raised to the release of staff, but it is equally a principle of open management that staff engaged in similar or shared pursuits should be interchangeable to cross limited periods of absence which might occur for any of a number of reasons.

18. *The 'task
force' model*

A possible factor of change was suggested to draw staff members more closely together and to get rid of departmental barriers. Industrial and commercial management makes use, in general successfully, of 'task force' tactics. Its operation simply makes use of combinations of staff with special skills coming together to set up a special strategy or complete what the name implies, a designated task. Working to a clearly defined target and usually to a deadline, the group does not suffer the delays of meetings held at specified intervals but works intensively for whatever period is necessary. Diverse talents and skills from any areas are combined to concentrate on particular issues, using whatever methods are expedient. There is no possibility of settling into a routine and the whole operation is imbued with a sense of urgency. This choice rejects the easy trap of appointing a sub-committee which defuses a situation with spurious relief. The task force is not meant to replace existing structures necessarily, but to prevent a hardening of attitudes. Rivalry can be an incentive at best, but not when departments are competing against each other instead of pitting united forces against real threats and problems. Whatever the solutions, diverse as are the problems in individual organisations, the arts council is in need of self-examination and some degree of reformation in both senses of the word.

19. *Change in advisory systems*

If this is true of the staff structure, what might be the areas needing reform in the other components of the arts council, it was asked in the Conference. The answer was swift and trenchant, from the experience of many members involved with arts councils and other agencies for arts support. Criticism is loud, clear and insistent of the composition and operation of the advisory bodies, not on a personal level as individuals, but because neither they nor their critics seem entirely clear about their function. They may compel respect for their own achievements in whatever field they shine, but they are rarely valued entirely in their own right. They are seen, rightly or wrongly, as representatives. Behind them work numbers of people who feel that their 'rights' must be put forward by the panel member. This unseen body of opinion behind every panel member may be made up of members of an organisation, local authorities, colleagues, peers in artistic or other achievements, even political pressure groups. It is often vain to insist that all individuals who become members of a group or committee with a common purpose must, unless specifically required to put forward special opinions, jettison other pre-occupations and work for the corporate end. In so doing, they must face the facts that at some time they may find themselves expected to serve interests not consonant with government, say, with sections of the arts community, even of the interests nearest and dearest to them, as Timothy Porteous has pointed out in his paper.

The fact that they are distinguished individuals may not always work to their advantage either. Distinction can be all too easily confused with 'elitist', the much misused epithet with a built-in element of snobbery and remoteness from the community. The term has a dangerous element of social criticism rather than critical arts assessment and imposes its own discrimination against certain forms. Because of their distinction, mis-named elitism, they are accused of weighting the balance of power and of money in favour of the traditional arts. These—notably opera, classics of performance in drama and music also—are seen to be costly. It is supposed that the panels give the 'traditional', sometimes called 'heritage' arts, unfair advantage over the forms evolved today, especially the spontaneous ephemeral and participatory activities loosely included in the comparatively recent category of community arts.

It is not easy to put these misapprehensions right. Democratic and open societies acknowledge the full right of expression of diverse, conflicting and minority opinions, as do arts councils of the existence of the arts activities such views represent. To devise real channels of communication for so many, through the comparatively few who can for practical reasons be selected, is a very real problem.

20. *The panel system*

The panel itself is thus a microcosm of the tensions of the arts council phenomenon. It would appear that it must try to reconcile the irreconcilable. Artists will always press their claims for artistic freedom to the limits, as Frank Milligan points out, and they have to be allowed to do so. They seem to disregard the tastes of the community which they are outstripping but which they may be thought to represent. Character and achievement are individualist in the panel members, yet these must be subordinated in the corporate whole, too limited by numbers anyway to represent all the interests or partisan views which lie behind them. Unless, however, some way is found to encourage co-existence, if not reconciliation of claims, to an extent that the arts council remains both workable and acceptable in the public view, it may invite government intervention and the latter state might be worse than the first, probably less democratic in any case.

21. *Centrality or dispersal/ devolution*

Another important aspect of the representation network of an arts council is its relationship with state, regional and community 'satellites' or similar autonomous bodies. These may be set up in various ways. Some, like the regional arts associations in Britain, represent a degree of devolution from the central arts council, taking over some of its grant-giving functions. Others are set up, as in Australia, by state governments, and most of them in the larger countries have control or input from local government. Whether their links with a central arts council are

formal or not, they are essential components of the totality of arts trends and activities.

A central arts council, advised by a comparatively small and select number of representatives of various fields, is open to the criticism of being of limited ability to deal with the more far-flung outposts of its empire. The emphasis of its interests may seem to be on large organisations in capitals and the larger cities or set up on a national basis. It may appear to ignore, or to be unaware of, the needs of non-urban and smaller communities. The problems of activity are compounded, of course, by specific geographical and demographic configurations. Nor is there any norm for the support of the arts by local government, either by financial contribution or helpful attitudes towards the arts.

The broad policy of central governments may implicitly or explicitly admit the right of the whole nation to benefit from access to the arts, but this is easier to say than to do. Governments are notably reluctant, and not only in the arts, to embark on real devolution of money and power away from the centre. The lack of either or both diminishes incentives for local government, hard pressed in any case to provide adequate essential services, to allocate their own or matching funds to the arts. Nevertheless local arts bodies, whether connected with state, regional or central government or not, have to carry out their functions as best they can. They are aware that their formal links are tenuous, and they tend to build up their own bureaucracy, which is at best efficient and perceptive, at worst an inward-looking, parochial affair, not truly representative of the community. Many Conference members referred to these satellites and discussed their value and their shortcomings.

22. *New Zealand's reformed arts council*

It was of particular interest to have the excellent case study of New Zealand practice, provided by the director of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, Michael Volkerling, and elaborated in his absence by its deputy director, Jim Booth. New Zealand has effectively perceived and tackled many of the problems of general concern which beset the conventional arts council pattern—among them the need for the widest possible representation from the community, airing of views on arts activities shared by practitioners and specialist advisers, the dangers of centrality, the balance of 'elitist' and egalitarian, the role of the professional administration. In the briefest summary, since the paper itself is wholly to the point, it points out that the 50 or so community arts councils are corporately the real manifestation of the council entity. The staff of the central office handle government subsidy and have the role of a national advisory body. There are also three Regional Arts Councils and a Council for Maori and South Pacific Arts. Particularly germane to the general discussion is the extent of the spread of its operation through a system 'unique in its insistence on overlapping membership' which prevents the difficulty of holding together units which become isolated from the general purpose and too self-important. There is no panel or board system to build up separate empires of yet another kind. The staff, in their capacity as advisers, seek help from outside people as need arises and this can be done in confidence. Policy objectives are expressed in functions rather than in art forms, to which the functions are applicable—the development of professionalism; the development of the practice and appreciation of the arts; the accessibility of the arts and regional development; public education, promotion and research. These objectives are identified with expressed government policy for the arts. Since the council is a manifestation of the community rather than a bureaucratic structure, 'the will of Parliament is accepted as a statement of objectives desired by the public', in the words of Michael Volkerling. The disjunction between the needs of the arts and the public good cannot readily occur since both concepts are necessarily defined within a common set of terms.

It is a patent that the philosophy and principles of the New Zealand model are of particular interest in positing an alternative to the conventional arts council model and to the Minister or Ministry for the Arts. It has taken cognisance of so many of

the problems which have admittedly caused criticism and dissatisfaction with those alternative models, from the arts world, from the community generally, and from those who work within arts councils and ministries.

Perhaps even more importantly it has a great deal to offer countries still making choices, who have to include particularly strong social implications in any system which is still in process of growth, as in the countries of the Third World, and where government must work out a close relationship with the arts as with other aspects of national identity.

4 Support for the arts from the private sector (non-governmental sources)

23. *Growth of private sector support*

There is a very important third component in the debate concerning the degree and matter of support of the arts by government through an arts council, a Minister with or without a Ministry, or a combination of two or more of these elements, and that is the private sector, in many countries an increasingly powerful partner in patronage. In the United States, of course, it has been dominant. As Donald Moore writes, 'the history of arts funding indicates a clear and predominant role for non-governmental sources of revenue for arts organisations'. These sources include multi-national corporations, trusts and foundations, and wealthy, philanthropic individuals. They have been responsible for arts buildings and facilities, art collections, support of performing arts companies, educational and community activity too. Impressive numbers of individual supporters are continuously involved in fund-raising which is not only of financial benefit but gives the participants a special stake and interest in what they have helped to bring into being. They are of invaluable assistance in carrying out the aggressively successful marketing and publicity strategies which are only just beginning to be used in other countries.

24. *Special functions of the private sponsor*

Since necessity is the mother of invention, it has, over the recent years of economic stringency in European countries and others feeling the effects of inflation, become essential for arts organisations to augment their shrinking financial resources. At best, government funding keeps up with inflation but falls behind the spiralling costs of a heavily labour intensive industry. The battle of the box office is hard to win, since steep rises in ticket prices reach the threshold of consumer resistance all too soon. The private sponsor is now regarded as a very important help in trouble, and a new relationship is being worked out. Arts councils, such as the Arts Council of Great Britain, endorse the need for arts organisations to eke out its diminishing resources by assistance from the private sector, being always in favour of self-help being demonstrated rather than passive acceptance of subsidy as a prop rather than a stimulus.

It was generally agreed that dependence on subsidy, mainly from government, is a built-in danger of official support. But it is equally an inescapable fact that private sources can never entirely replace fiscal funding. This emphasises the need for establishing some relationships and principles so that money from both sources may be applied in the most beneficial manner. Commercial and industrial organisations have demonstrated in practical terms their willingness to 'come to the party', in the Australian phrase. There is increasing understanding between donor and recipient as they come to recognise more clearly the benefits to both parties in the transaction and also the constraints.

25. *Benefits for the sponsor*

An obvious benefit for the sponsor is publicity, associated with a certain kudos by association with a crowd-drawing activity. Numerically, those people who attend performances, buy pictures and craft objects and participate in arts activities may appear to be a minority. The names of sponsors of sports are blazoned large and clear before huge crowds, but some statistics appear to prove that devotees of arts activities in fact outnumber those who regularly attend sporting events. Such comparisons are of little intrinsic value but they do demonstrate some factors common to both leisure choices. Attenders or audiences are drawn from all sections of the community. They are of all ages and social backgrounds. They

are consumers and potential customers for the goods and services whose suppliers' names are consciously or unconsciously associated with pleasure activities, whether these are football, opera or picture galleries—chacun à son gout. Some potential benefactors are attracted by the prestige of public association with illustrious organisations and special events, such as festivals. They are beginning to evolve a clearer policy for financial support of the arts, sometimes designating a special officer to deal with the flood of applications for help which they were formerly ill-equipped to assess. There is also the implicit acceptance of responsibility to the community from which commercial organisations derive their profits, and the recognition that help to the arts is acknowledgement of involvement in community benefit.

26. *Balance of public and private subsidy*

A more important factor in funding strategy was the reminder that few benefactors in the non-governmental sector can be relied upon for long-term support. Like the arts industry, they are vulnerable to the hazards of diminishing profits, accountability to shareholders, and cutbacks in their own operations. While money from the private sector may come as manna from heaven, the day-to-day bread, it would appear, must continue to come from government. Individual arts organisations must be clearer than they always appear to be about the use of private sector support as supplementary, not to be built in as part of the regular budget. It can be an investment, for instance, to meet the costs of a special subscription scheme or drive for audience-building. It may prime the pump for a gala occasion. It may subsidise a special contribution to production or presentation eg. costumes, catalogues or special programmes, to name a very few of the endless available possibilities. It may even be the hidden cost of advice from experienced specialists giving advice on specified problems or the setting up of more efficient internal management systems. What it should not be used for is the undertaking of extra and on-going commitments in the long-term, for which the bill would have to be met from other sources should the sponsor withdraw.

27. *Pluralism of support*

Some of these issues were focused in the papers presented by Charles Mark (USA) essentially a plea for 'the concept of a pluralism and laissez-faire policy for the arts and humanities', and by Donald Moore (USA) describing the National Endowment for the Arts. Donald Moore describes in detail the measure of private support for the arts. He makes the very important point that it has been encouraged by what amounts to hidden subsidy for the arts in the form of tax benefits to the donors. Several Conference members endorsed the benefit which similar concessions would produce in their own arts support systems.

With regard to the relationship between government and non-government support, Donald Moore stressed the leadership factor. This can be expressed more coherently in government policy and practice as a corporate aim than in diverse sources and methods elsewhere. This point is borne out by the reassurance to potential sponsors by the receipt of government subsidy as against applicant organisations without such a seal of approval. The National Endowment for the Arts is defined by Donald Moore, in the context of the categories under discussion, as 'a ministry or department, rather than an agency with final authority resting on a council'. In some respects it may seem, in his admirably detailed account, to enjoy some of the best factors of all the funding systems, it differs fundamentally in the low profile of government support in the USA.

28. *A laissez-faire suggestion*

Charles Mark (USA) fills in the context of other organisations in the field of arts support co-existing with the National Endowment for the Arts, and explains the manner of their funding and their related aims. This adds up to what he sees as a very interesting plurality, representative of many interests and involvement in the community. In the specific relationship between government and non-government funding, he refers to a recent decision of President Reagan. This recommended a 50% reduction in the federal commitment to the arts. Charles Mark demonstrates the tension which exists between the expressed will of government and the consent

of the private sector to participate. He writes that the theory of the decision 'depends on private monies replacing the government funds and this will be made possible by the total economic scheme' put into operation by the present government's administration. He points out the fallacy of the idea that extra capital generated by tax reductions and increased profits will be distributed to the arts, when in fact it is supposed to be invested for greater productivity. If greater benefits were to accrue to the arts, he adds, there would in any case be a dangerous time-lag. Furthermore, if the depressed economy is deprived of investment in favour of the arts, long-term support to the arts could well be withdrawn in due course. In either case it would appear that the arts cannot wholly win.

29. *Conclusions*

This might be the last word in the discussion of the network and variety of models for arts support. If the First Conference went a long way towards demonstrating the need for such support and for determining the motivating philosophy, the Second Conference proved its complexity and variety. Arts council, Minister, Ministry, non-governmental sources, free floating in plurality and laissez-faire, or seeking workable relationships all came under expert and controversial scrutiny.

Like the arts they serve, they must not be static, with flexibility in response and clarity in organisation. They may change in form but not in the acceptable purpose of the best for the most, in availability and accessibility, involving as many of the community as possible and truly serving the general good. Perhaps what was really being said is that each country accepting some responsibility for the arts must draw on all possibilities and meld the most appropriate into an entity of its choosing. To allow Charles Mark the summarising comment: 'no single element of the system provides sufficient support to be effective'.

It is inevitable that this Section A concentrates on established practices and the experience drawn from them. Third World countries are in the interesting stages of determining how best the arts may be encouraged and assisted in their own countries; in some cases they are even faced with the dilemma of deciding the real nature of their arts. Section B which follows raises some of these special debates.

B. Emergent systems and debate in the Third World countries

1. *Method or matter*

Perhaps because of the follow-on of the Second Conference after the initiating scope of the First, in 1981, it will be apparent that discussion mainly centred on the relationship of the various means of arts support. These means, having been evolved over a number of years in democratic and comparatively stable societies, have reached a degree of sophistication which has its own dangers. Since the systems appear to work, the temptation is in the main to accept the established model. More seriously, it is easy to think that the systems have perhaps reached a point of no return, so that they are beyond complete overhaul which would examine the basic premises on which they were originally built.

Naturally the mechanism is capable of adjustment to meet economic, political and social changes. These have, however, always existed and we run the risk of not perceiving how radical they are. They draw attention to the nature of the society in which the arts exist, to the relationship of the arts and their contexts, and so to the nature of the arts themselves. Intrinsically, the closer relationship which has had to develop between the arts and business practice, for a variety of reasons, has weighted the balance towards a study of systems rather than of what is being produced and why. It may not be entirely what is now needed, it may even not be the same.
2. *The 'product'*

European and Europe-oriented countries take their shared cultural heritage for granted, a part of their common origins and history. Their established priorities in the arts have their roots in the past. As nations, they have minority ethnic groups which they feel they must eventually absorb. Even in countries such as Britain and Australia where these minorities are considerable, vocal and uneasy, this attitude persists. A concept of pluralism, of co-existence in the full sense of the word—encouragement rather than tolerance only of contrasted cultures—is hard for them to assimilate, let alone implement.
3. *A contract of cultures*

It was extremely salutary, therefore, to have at the Second Conference, eloquent representation from Third World and ex-colonial countries. All of them, either in background papers or discussions, were at pains to emphasise their shared problems. Common factors emerged, showing that they find very different needs and conditions confronting them from those which seemed to pre-occupy the European and Europe-oriented countries, and very importantly, that they therefore have very much more in common with each other than with their colleagues from the developed countries. These differences are fundamental, the problems complex, and the answers much concerned with the very identity of the countries who share them—such as the Caribbean world, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Nigeria and Papua New Guinea.
4. *The role of the arts in emergent countries*

Their obvious common factor is that they may be termed, to a greater or lesser degree, emergent countries, at crucial stages of development and independence. Elaborate discussion of the historical factors properly lies outside a report of Conference proceedings, but of prime significance was that all the delegates from these countries stressed the importance of the arts in the development process.
5. *Nationhood*

Frank Milligan (Canada) referred in his paper to the use of 'the rhetoric of traditional identity and national unity'. This search is for the developing countries not the shibboleth it may be for other nations, but the very essence of their corporate being. It has a dual implication. They must, to take their part in the global family of nations, have a recognisable identity and one which is respected. Their national unity, the second part of the concept, does not mean the absorption of minorities, be they racial, religious, or linguistic, but a plurality which has evolved a considerable and workable degree of co-existence of disparate components.

6. *Pre-colonial tradition*

The arts have an important connecting role to play, but, before this can become truly effective, the arts themselves have to be more clearly defined, groomed for their roles. Part of this grooming process relates to history, which again cannot be separated from plurality. Historically, most of the countries referred to are emerging from colonialism, from the imposition or absorption of cultures not indigenous. There is therefore a difference to be asserted, a danger of over-emphasis in so doing. Continuity has been broken, but the past cannot be wholly discarded, because some of the influences of occupation are ineradicable. The arts, like social and political practices and systems, have been changed. Perhaps the roots are there and can be re-discovered. The question then arises, whether the traditional is still relevant to today's society and indeed to artists of today. Is there to be revival or evolution of new forms? How is this to be encouraged? And why?

7. *Preservation of the past—motives*

Such questions are basic, and so are a direct concern of government. The arts are more than a case for patronage—they can be a visible, even symbolic, manifestation of the country's identity, accessible across all frontiers. To take one example, that of Papua New Guinea. It is a country, as described by Moi Awei, with 700 languages within its comparatively small confines. Unity of identity is not an immediately achievable goal for so many linguistically distinct groups. It has a corporate heritage of arts and crafts organic to the country, recognised as of importance to the national interest. A National Cultural Council directly responsible to the government has been set up to study and promulgate it. Creative artists are given grants in order that they may pursue their work. The 'pursuit of excellence', in non-Commonwealth countries used as only one of many criteria for arts support, is typically practised in Papua New Guinea as vital to the re-discovery of national qualities. It asserts the pre-colonial achievement as against what is seen as 'impurity' of external colonial pressures.

The natural corollary of this search for the traditional past as against the corrupted recent present is the display of arts objects. The building of galleries and museums is, it seems, common to those emergent nations so that the collections are visible history, a proof of achievement produced without outside influences. They are a reminder which can be understood by the whole community, tangible educational aids to the understanding of nationhood. It remains to be seen, let alone proved, whether they really have this effect to the degree they are intended to achieve, but at least they are there for reference, as a historical statement, with political overtones.

8. *The dilemmas of the artist in emergent countries*

If such policies are aimed at the general community, what is the situation of the contemporary artist?

This brings us to the tension of past and present with a break between, which is common to many of the emergent countries. Practising artists are faced with a dilemma of choice. They are the product of present-day conditions and speak to their contemporaries, or more ahead of them to a future only partially perceived in the present. But artists are open to whatever influences they find potent for their individual talent. They try new techniques and acquire attitudes wherever and whenever they like. It is not possible for an artist to return to the past, in the literal sense. Nor is it possible for an artist's talent to be subservient to a political purpose. This dilemma is not particular to Third World countries, but it is likely to affect the artist very deeply and for quite a long time to come.

9. *The artist and government*

The artist's independent creativity was mentioned frequently in Conference discussion, where arts councils and governments came under fire for what the public see as subversive arts activity. It was agreed that, by and large, the original, the innovative, the shocking can be accommodated within total policy and are inevitable symptoms of growth and talent. In the emergent countries, the political importance of the arts may force the relationship to be dangerously close, and one of dependence of the artist on government support. If the artist is wayward,

appearing to assert individuality above what he has been in a sense hired for, there will be rocks ahead.

10. *Appropriate systems of support*

The government may see its role as almost totally that of taste-maker, overtly rather than in the inescapable effect of funding choices in the bureaucracy of the developed countries. The 'arm's length' principle loomed large in discussion of the operation of arts support in those countries. It would seem to be virtually inoperable when the arts are part of a national and political process, and where the government makes the decisions. This should not be the end of the debate, nor should we jump to the conclusion that arts councils, Ministries etc really represent artistic freedom, or that this does not exist in emergent countries.

What should follow is a real appraisal of existing elaborate systems, which we have taken for granted as essential, to ascertain the real degree of artistic freedom which they permit. It was touched on—an Australian participant stated, for instance, that the arts agencies were being strangled by the red tape of an over-elaborate bureaucracy; others asserted that too many people, not all of them qualified to do so, are interposed between the artist and his claims for support; New Zealand put forward its reasons for reforming its own system.

The dilemma of artists in the emergent countries is heightened by the lack of other support if they are rejected by government when they apply for support. There are as yet no sources of private funding like those which are proliferating in the developed countries. They may not be told whether the rejection is for reasons of inadequate quality or unacceptable political attitudes.

These new areas of emphasis in the discussion open up the needs of further debate on the real nature of the arts today, intrinsically and in their value and role in society, the real attitudes of government, all of which the Conference was able only to glance at in the discussion of varieties of accepted practice.

As yet it seems that the arts have to be dependent to some degree on government in the emergent countries, like everything else which has to be worked out over a considerable period within a political framework.

11. *Co-existent groups*

The problem is further compounded by the factor mentioned earlier, of the need to study co-existing groups which make up the total 'nation'. The central government of a truly multi-cultural society has different responsibilities from those of a government where certain groups are minorities in the true sense. Such co-existing groups have different traditions, different manifestations of their identities through their art forms. All of them may demand a voice. The term 'consumer public' acquires a different connotation.

12. *The role of local government*

In an environment structured in differing segments, local government has a different role. By contrast in countries such as Britain, local government has shown less interest in arts matters and lags behind in financial support because of the umbrella of centralised arts subsidy, certainly for the easily identified major arts activities. In Africa, for instance, village culture has been very much the model. Central government, whether or not it is in any country the model derived from colonial practice or the will of the people, has to take cognisance of this inherited, fragmented picture, where strong ethnic differences exist, as well as geographic ones. There has to be a good information-gathering system, best done in person, of course, by government representatives. If this happens, as on one interesting occasion described by Dr Garba Ashiwaju, from Nigeria, action can be direct and swift. He related to the Conference how a Minister on a journey through a country area was excited by a group of local dancers. As a result he set in motion a programme of research into dance in that particular area.

13. *The Malaysian situation—multi-culture and religion* Professor Ungku Aziz has described very graphically in his paper the problems for the arts in Malaysia. This he characterises as a strongly multi-cultural area with special emphasis on the co-existence of religious communities—Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. The arts are strongly identified with religious expression in ceremonial, ritual and visual imagery, and so are an active and accepted part of the life of each community. They also exist alongside aggressive colonisation by foreign powers and commercial interests in the present day. In this conglomerate model, liberty to pursue special cultures is a priority, and also a deterrent to any artificial attempt to meld the elements artificially into a nationalistic whole.
- Religious cultures preserve ancient traditions, so that there is a quite different emphasis in this country to the endeavour to reconcile old and new which emergent nations share. Professor Aziz stresses, however, the search for the ‘tenuous strands of native or Malay culture’ in which he feels that ‘the real cultural identity of the Malaysian nation may only be found’.
14. *Modern pop culture* In the context he draws attention to the threat of the superficiality detectable in today’s scene, in the infiltration of ‘popular’ arts and entertainment from the West and imitated in Malaysia. He blames the influence of the mass media, overwhelming in the impact of their novelty. Inherited art forms are being reproduced in debased form to supply the increasing tourist trade—a complaint reinforced by the experience of other countries.
15. *Housing the arts* To combat the flood of the imitation by exhibiting the best of the authentic, Malaysia, like Papua New Guinea, has built museums as a means of public education and, by the display of excellence, to set standards for public taste and to make the best of the past available to the artists of the present. Thus the University of Malaysia, of which Professor Aziz is Vice-Chancellor, and which is very active in the arts and their support, has provided a Museum of Asian Art with the assistance of government and of some private individuals. In addition the University has provided a large theatre and a multi-purpose theatre-in-the-round.
16. *Arts support systems* A network of organisational arts support has been built up in Malaysia which includes full-time officials, committee members representing a spread of interests and input from the community. There is a certain similarity with the Western countries’ practice. There is a familiar ring also in the frank description by Professor Aziz of the duty of the Chairperson to make sure that the professional officers, whether from government or not, do not exert undue influence on policy. Interestingly, he also stresses the need for special attitudes to the arts and the hope that graduates of the University, for instance, may pass into positions in public service and other institutions where they may have an enlightening influence.
17. *The Jamaican situation* The contribution of Professor Rex Nettleford (Jamaica) to the Conference was a similarly considerable one. It includes a comprehensive extract from his book, *Caribbean Cultural Identity*, the content of which he elaborated in discussion of this and of general issues. Like the other ex-colonial countries, Jamaica has a mixed community, with some prominent minorities co-existent with the indigenous population. It differs, however, in that the prevailing emphasis is Euro-centric.
18. *Consensus or unity* The aim of cultural support is not so much an emergence to nationhood as a consensus of interests. It is directed towards a desirable unanimity with recognition of minority rights and interests.
19. *The arts in nation-building* The Jamaican experience has not been without fierce nationalist ferment, from which the arts emerge with a status and stability in which ‘leaders have seen the need for a conscious role of creative artists and cultural agents in nation-building’. An Exploratory Committee of the Arts (1973) also stated that ‘the responsibility is placed on *the community* rather than on government exclusively since the Committee saw the arts not as an instrument of propaganda but as an instrument

of cultural growth and personality development'. Since then there has been increasing commitment to cultural policy and a large number of organisations cited by Professor Nettleford to instrument the policy.

20. *The arts and education* The arts are represented in government by a Minister of Culture, who is also the Minister of Finance, and extensive training for the arts in special institutions at various levels is a remarkable feature described in full in the excerpt from the book. The Schools for National Cultural Training open up new vistas in the whole question of the role and encouragement of the arts, which will be referred to in a later section and which merit special study of Professor Nettleford's contribution, too complex to be summarised here. The need for education received greater attention from the Third World countries which points to further and more specific discussion in a future Conference as a major issue which concerns all countries.
21. *The Hong Kong situation* To illustrate yet other aspects of this group's concerns, Darwin Chen's description of the arts in Hong Kong stresses some of the social aspects of the arts.
22. *Social problems* The special problems include the sheer density of population, 5 million people in an area of roughly 404 square miles. Mainly Chinese and Western, it is still growing rapidly with an influx of immigrants from mainland China. It differs also from other countries represented, both the European, European-oriented and the Third World, in the rapidity of its growth and its economic success as a world centre of commerce. At the same time, this 'lure of gold' and its attraction for speculation and developers from outside has polarised the rich and the poor, and produced the complex social problems inevitable in such a situation. Rioting, urban unrest and dissatisfaction have regrettably become familiar in many countries and have awakened a social conscience in governments about inadequate provision for the poor in the midst of plenty.
23. *The arts and the quality of life* Darwin Chen ascribes a strong element in government concern for the arts to the intention to improve the quality of life in the community by this means. The Urban Council of Hong Kong has therefore provided a wide range of arts services in the form of theatres, concert halls, museums and libraries etc. The provision is lavish, well-equipped for the widest spectrum of the arts and arts centres for all tastes and backgrounds. They are cosmopolitan in content, catering for Western and Chinese taste in particular.
24. *Support systems and dilemmas* Generous subsidy is allocated and distributed by well-developed systems of bureaucracy. These encounter interestingly similar policy problems similar to those of countries operating with quasi-European arts support agencies, summarised by Darwin Chen as the placing of emphasis on Chinese or Western forms; raise or spread; education and/or entertain; direct funding or subsidy to independent organisations; housing the arts or creation of performing companies; centralisation in major companies or dispersal. By its very nature Hong Kong is not so concerned with the possibility of an overall identity or with the retrieval of its past, much of which is quite literally buried under the buildings of the new world.
25. *Common problems* It is perhaps the consideration of Hong Kong, with its affinities with the quasi-European countries, and that of Jamaica, with its highly developed integration of the arts and education which emphasise the impossibility of neatly grouping emergent or established countries. It is equally impossible to set up a ranking of achievement or of problems in set priority, since all countries, wherever geographically situated or politically governed, have to move at their art pace and to an amalgam of tradition of a developing future.

26. *The central theme—education* There is however one essential common factor, emerging in different forms and at different levels and that is the inescapable identity of the arts and education in its widest sense, social as well as formal.
- Some countries, including Britain and the USA and others which have built similar models of arts support, have come late to recognising the relationship between two vital areas of knowledge and creativity. Indeed the unilateral provision of arts facilities through specially designed agencies has obscured their basic near-identity. They are further alienated by competing for government subsidy.
27. *Awareness and the sense of nationhood* In emergent countries education from the wakening of awareness to formal instruction is essential and continuous. The people have to understand new attitudes, new forms of provision to be part of the building of nationhood, to consent to it and to assist the process. In theory, therefore, the arts should benefit insofar as they are seen to have political value. The proviso is, of course, that those in charge of the educative process are truly sensitive to the arts, seek excellence in all its forms and integrate arts activity and participation in ordinary life.
28. *The arts as national symbol* The arts can then serve the political masters' purpose as national symbols, prestigious creativity in the eyes of the world and linking disparate elements in their countries above the potentially divisive factors of race, language, religion, social status, etc. They can overcome the missing link between the traditional past of the 'impure' present of the post-colonial age.
- All these points were raised in the rich and varied material of the Conference discussion and papers. Stress was laid on the constant presence of the selected best in museums, the provision of buildings for performing arts and related activities. The process of osmosis, familiarity with these accessible displays are important, but a great deal of active guidance and instruction must guide people towards the arts, or the galleries and theatres will remain empty, expensive consumers of money better spent on living arts, perhaps.
29. *The arts and formal education* It would seem that some Third World countries have in their individually appropriate ways recognised the need for raising the status of the arts in the formal education system. Because the arts have in many countries been relegated to the category of leisure pursuits, activities which are to provide relaxation from the work which is the main pre-occupation of us all. There are many other reasons too complex and too many for enumeration here. The upshot is that the importance of the arts has not been recognised as sufficient for their inclusion in the regular curriculum. Only when this can be achieved, in whatever country, will the permeation of the community with awareness of the arts be achieved, and it is difficult. Papua New Guinea, for instance, advocated the inclusion of the arts in the schools curriculum. It was admitted that the programme had run into the sand, but the determination to carry it through has not been abandoned. A considerable share of the national budget has been allotted for this purpose by the government, and the project has, it was said, in spite of setbacks more effective potential than the National Cultural Council.
30. *Training arts teachers* Inclusion of the arts in schools raises the question of qualified teachers, and this too has had some attention. In Jamaica, as described by Professor Rex Nettleford, an explicit policy decision was made to reject the building of arts centres in favour of institutions for arts training. With state support and funding by interested groups, an umbrella network, described at length, of schools of art, drama, dance and music has been set up. It is important to note that graduates become not only artists and performers in their own right but practitioners for work in schools. Their numbers are computed by the Ministry of Education to regulate supply and demand.
31. *The training of the artist* Time did not allow in the Conference for a full discussion of the education and training of the artist in specialist terms. What emerged clearly was the need to

awaken the artist's awareness of his role in the community. He is at once the preserver of inherited skills, creator, interpreter, innovator and the product of his nation, often the critic of the status quo and the visionary who brings change. This composite importance needs constantly restating as an essential component of evolving arts policy, gauging a degree of financial support and deciding how best such support can be offered and administered. Enlightened examination on these lines might well lead to surprising revelations, new definitions, even, of the arts, and might well accomplish much more than starting at the wrong end with bureaucratic changes as the wrong priority.

32. *The community and the artist* It would be heartening to think that a really comprehensive programme of cultivating general awareness of the arts, creating respect for artists, might permeate a whole nation. Not only does the artist need to be 'educated' to understand his role in the community, but the community must equally learn to understand and respect the artist. Individuals must emerge who enter government service, for instance, with the intention and ability to further the cause of the artist and advocacy of the arts.

33. *Government attitudes to the arts* This pious hope applies particularly to government agencies, Ministries and the like, in whom both power and money are vested. Papua New Guinea, for instance, has the intention of finding officials who are sensitive to the arts and the need for treating them in the appropriate manner slightly different from that applied to more regularised government pre-occupations. This leavening of the political lump is more healthy than the attempt to impose conventional government practice on the sometimes intractable arts world. For Malaysia, Professor Aziz explained that some graduates of training connected with the Museum of Asian Arts go into government employ, taking special understanding of arts needs with them from first-hand experience. He also stressed the educative aspects of the media which could be used positively for good instead of disseminating mainly the shallow popular imports of Western entertainment.

The philosophy and practice of education discussed in the context of the arts seem to lead up endless avenues, to open up many vistas. It would indeed seem impossible to leave them out, or treat them as peripheral in any aspect of the arts. They have social implications, they colour political thought and practical policy. Like the quality of mercy, they bless those who give and those who take. The recognition of the identity of interests in the arts and education, and a fully informed examination of their nature and variety seem overdue. Might this not be a logical and worthy extension of the valuable work achieved so far by two so successful Conferences?

PART II

Papers presented:

Canada (3 papers)

France

Great Britain

Hong Kong

Jamaica

Malaysia

New Zealand

Papua New Guinea

United States (2 papers)

A Centre for Studies on the Arts: A Feasibility Study

The biographical notes of those presenting papers include activities up to April, 1981 only.

Public Policy and How it is Developed

David MacDonald

The Hon David MacDonald, former Secretary of State and Minister of Communications and Minister responsible for Status of Women programs, is presently a Fellow in Residence at The Institute for Research on Public Policy, in Ottawa. He was first elected to the House of Commons on November 8, 1965 for the PEI constituency of Prince. He was re-elected June 25, 1968, October 30, 1972, July 8, 1974 and May 22, 1979 for the PEI constituency of Egmont. David MacDonald was appointed Secretary of State and Minister of Communications on June 4, 1979. He was Conservative Party spokesman for Regional Economic Expansion, Consumer Affairs, Canada-US Relations, Youth Policy, Chairman of the Question Period Organization for the Progressive Conservative Caucus, Co-ordinator of Cultural Policy and Status of Women and Party Spokesman for the Department of the Secretary of State. He is at present Chairman of Parliamentarians for World Order; Vice-Chairman and a member of the International Council, Inter-Parliamentary Union; Vice-Chairman of Canada-US Parliamentary Association; Past Chairman of the Canadian World Federalism Parliamentary Association and a member of the Association Internationale des Parlementaires de Langue Francaise.

'If you did nothing else, you've politicized the arts'—Arts advocate and activist, Ottawa, Spring 1980.

That off-hand remark over lunch reflecting on my stewardship, first as opposition critic on cultural policy, and then latterly as Minister, points up a quite new phenomenon in Canadian public policy. Politics and the arts has not been a matter of major or even minor public discussion in this country. Indeed, as is clearly evident, we were well into the end of our first century as a country before there was a serious attempt at a national level to appraise and formulate an overall cultural policy.

The almost accidental creation of the Massey-Levesque Commission in 1949 was the first serious attempt to deal with the long-term intellectual and artistic needs of the nation. It represents an important take-off point for federal public support for artistic and cultural creativity. The recent political debates surrounding the arts obviously owe their generation to that initial period of activity in the late 1940s and early 1950s. But not until the mid-1960s with the adoption of a flag, the celebration of centennial year, the formulation of a new broadcasting act, the implementation of Canadian cultural quotas and the passage of legislation to establish a feature film industry do we see the clear coming together of a sense of Canadian cultural policy.

The growth of Canadian consciousness toward public policy for the arts can be seen most clearly in the reaction to the double-barrelled announcement of national unity grants and the cutback on funding for the cultural agencies in the summer of 1978. The impact of the Trudeau restraint on the arts community, through the formulation of the 1812 Committee as well as the thousands of cards of protests precipitated by The Professional Association of Canadian Theatres in an attempt to get the government's attention, clearly indicated new levels of political and public awareness. It is instructive to recall that it was 11 years into his term in office that Mr Trudeau, in the spring of 1979 on the threshold of a general election, made one of his few supportive statements on the arts at the presentation of the Juno Awards (the annual awards for outstanding achievement in the Canadian record industry).

The general elections of 1979 and 1980 surfaced in a new and more detailed way a political discussion of arts policy. A growing public interest in the arts encouraged the three major parties both to formulate specific policy positions and to engage one another through their principal spokesmen on national radio and public debates, an indication of the degree to which parties saw the arts constituency as increasingly significant to their political fortunes. To my knowledge the 1980 election was the first time a Minister campaigned across the country almost exclusively on culture and communications issues.

For the purposes of this paper I would like to examine more specifically four different phases of public policy activity as it affects the arts. In general I want to deal with the pre-1977 period, particularly as it relates to my experience within the opposition party of that period; and secondly I would like to look at the much more direct and organized period of opposition activity from 1977-79; thirdly, our experience of government as it affects artistic policy and finally, in post-script, some brief observations on my present role from the vantage point of an institution concerned with long-term formulation of public policy.

It is quite easy to deal with the period prior to 1977 in terms of how policy and political discussion affecting the arts occurred. One has the very real impression that almost all activity pursued at the level of opposition debate and discussion centred on two basic experiences. One was in reaction to government initiatives or on those occasional instances when there was some public concern or outcry as it affected the arts, and secondly, there was an occasional attempt to evolve a policy position, primarily in isolation, having to do with some specific element of artistic or cultural policy. Indicative of the situation for cultural policy was the designation of the critic for the Department of the Secretary of State. While the Secretary of State encompassed many responsibilities in the area of citizenship, protocol, post-secondary education, and language rights, cultural policy was not considered a major obligation. This was both cause and symptom of the absence of sustained public interest in culture.

In the summer of 1977, however, a year after a new leader had been elected for the Progressive Conservative party in the person of Joe Clark, he decided to establish six positions of senior

co-ordinators (those who have been interested in the evolution of the Inner Cabinet while in government will see in this initiative in 1977 the beginning of that process). The six senior co-ordinators were to bring together policy in a more comprehensive way across a broad policy front. There were co-ordinators for economic policy, food and resources, transportation, social policy, and interestingly enough, a co-ordinator for cultural policy. I was asked to assume that responsibility. It raised for the first time the notion that the official opposition would attempt to have a comprehensive, co-ordinated, and clear policy in this area.

Needless to say our examination of the record, in terms of what our experience had been and what our options were, proved to be very scanty. We made an initial decision in the fall of 1977 that we would attempt to become much more focused and active. It led us almost immediately into a process of some tentative formulation of arts policy not unusual in itself. It also suggested to us two basic ways of proceeding. One was internal in terms of a wide-ranging consultation with our own caucus and party officials; the other external, in an attempt to sound out and reach a broad constituency of those who were interested in arts policy.

Following our initial period of formulation, and the exposing of some specific positions in the area of film policy, something which particularly interested me from my earlier experience with the establishment of the Canadian Feature Film Development Corporation, we began to plan for a series of consultations, particularly with national and regional representatives of artistic and cultural organizations. This involved the nucleus of our caucus cultural affairs committee as well as other MPs in their respective regions. Meetings were held in Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and Halifax with over 60 organizations and hundreds of individuals.

We based these initial consultations around some of our early proposals and as we continued to develop tentative policy positions we sounded out groups as we went. This in turn led us to revise and return to many of our original consultants for their further reaction and opinion. They have ultimately led to some major policy pronouncements. One of the most significant was the statement made during a budget debate in the fall of 1978. In brief then, we developed a kind of six-phase approach involving 1. formulation 2. consultation 3. consideration 4. proposing 5. reformulation and 6. positioning.

This whole process obviously took place during a period of increasing political awareness. As I have mentioned earlier, the 1978 cutbacks, the tied use of cultural money for national unity purposes, the heightened activity of national artistic organizations around their own financial plight, all created a lively backdrop for the increasing public attention that was focusing through our caucus committee, various meetings, consultations, and pronouncements.

In addition, the leadership of the party had obviously engaged in a philosophic way through the elaboration of a specifically philosophically appropriate approach in what came to be known as 'community of communities'. While it was interesting that no detailed definition was ever given to this specific overall theme, it was obvious from the way in which we proceeded that a good deal of fleshing out was taking place. While I have no illusions about the single-handed impact attributed to me in the quote at the start of this paper, there is no doubt of the symbiotic process where public and politicians' awareness of arts issues encouraged one another.

A variety of means were chosen to publish policy positions as they developed. These included, along with the budget and other speeches, letters to Ministers and to those in the arts community, notices of motion within the House of Commons, and private members' bills. Extensive mailing lists were maintained to inform interested members of the public and solicit their reactions.

The move from opposition to government in June 1979 began with a unique approach in itself. In this instance I was able to turn the tables and present to senior officials in the Department of the Secretary of State a briefing book on party policy similar to the ones that are normally loaded onto Ministers about departmental policy. This enabled us to deal immediately with a number of matters on which ordinarily a good deal of preparatory time prior to the establishment of positions would have had to be spent. Indeed our experience in opposition put us in position to first of all deal with immediate issues in the area of publishing, ongoing activities of a questionable priority—Discovery Train—as well as emergency funding needs, ie, Canada Council and National Film Board.

Secondly, it allowed us to enunciate early our basic goals and priorities, in the drafting of the throne speech and in early meetings with provincial representatives as well as those responsible for a variety of cultural and artistic associations and industries. And thirdly, it gave us the opportunity to initiate long-term projects, such as the cultural review, the formation of a cultural industries council, and work on specific fiscal measures for the arts and artists.

Overall in government there was an attempt to develop a collegial and global approach which meant continuing close lines of consultation and association with various representatives of arts organizations and cultural industries, in establishing better lines of communications with other federal departments and agencies, and opening up a more co-operative and collaborative approach with provincial ministries and agencies. In brief there was an attempt to take a holistic approach to the longer-term development of arts policy and implementation. It was a direct result of our previous extensive interaction with the public that we came to office with an understanding of cultural policy which went beyond the compartmentalized structures of government.

Central to this overall approach of course was the cultural inquiry. We had been concerned for some time with the need for an update on the Massey-Levesque Commission. Indeed, the principal umbrella organization for the arts, the Canadian Conference of the Arts, had come very much to the view that there needed to be a full-scale public inquiry if not a Royal Commission. Since 1978 when I had tabled the motion as opposition critic, see page 32, I had very much agreed with the sense of a public inquiry. But I was equally convinced that the most effective one would be an instrument more closely tied to the eventual decision-making process.

That is why we had opted first in opposition, and latterly in government, for an eventual parliamentary inquiry involving representatives of both the House of Commons and Senate. In this way we have felt that there could be a very real process of education related to Members of Parliament who would ultimately have to approve of government expenditures and policies in this regard. Equally important, although public awareness had gone from the sporadic and reactive to a point where there was sustained but minority interest, we wanted to build on this base and broaden the constituency of those concerned and supportive toward cultural policy. More than any group of experts, politicians in hearings across the country would stimulate that public involvement. We saw no long-range solution to the financial and policy needs of the arts, in fierce competition for budget priority and legislative attention from government, without solid citizen backing.

As a first step in that process we felt it necessary to establish an advisory committee to the Minister which would draw together the threads of the government's own experience, as well as basic issues that it was having to confront, and issue a blue paper for full-scale public discussion. It was, if you like, to provide the 'establishment' viewpoint, that of prominent Canadians who had 'made it' in cultural life plus senior officials and the federal agencies. We would then see how well the assumptions underlying almost 30 years of policy stood up to public debate and input.

It might be appropriate at this point to note that the succeeding government decided to retain the original advisory group but to make it the principal vehicle for the cultural inquiry. This does not particularly satisfy my concerns, particularly in the area of having an inquiry that was comprehensive, independent, and would allow for the largest amount of public participation and education.

I am now embarked on the fourth phase, since April 1980, of my engagement with public policy in the arts, at the period of having moved out of a partisan and parliamentary form and into a new and quite intriguing role.

The last decade has seen a rapid growth in the development of independent institutes examining various aspects of public policy. None has paid particular attention to the arts. I was delighted, therefore, to be invited by the Institute for Research on Public Policy to continue our work on matters affecting culture and communications. Our time in government was all too brief, and there were a number of initiatives which we felt could be constructively pursued in a thoughtful and independent basis. The Institute has offered an appropriate setting to examine in particular—the implications of the debate on the new information order on Canadian communications policy; the impact of new technologies on potential developments in Canadian television policy,

formulation of meaningful Canadian content proposals, particularly with new forms of marketing television; the social and cultural applications of new forms of inter-active television and communication; and some concrete approaches and strategies to the development of a cultural industry. Finally, we shall be watching with considerable interest the activities of the Applebaum-Hebert Commission as it attempts to update the landmark achievements of Massey-Levesque 30 years earlier.

In this phase of independent analysis with respect to public policy, it has struck us even more clearly that there is a very real lack of opportunity for continued public assessment and debate of our overall responsibility in the arts field. While the phenomenon of increased political activity around arts policy and funding is clear, there is as yet no continuing centre or centres where serious, sober and reflective thought with respect to long-term arts interests can occur. Obviously for a country with a unique developmental pattern there is a very real need. Perhaps some observations from this Conference may be helpful in that regard.

Notice of Motion
David MacDonald MP
18 October 1978

In the opinion of this House the government should consider the advisability of establishing a special joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons to enquire into the state of this nation's cultural health and the proper role therein of the federal government;

that this committee be empowered and given the appropriate funding to:

- a) conduct public hearings and receive briefs across Canada, in particular from provincial and local governments and from individuals and organizations involved in this nation's cultural life;
- b) engage research and other support staff as it deems necessary;

that this committee be asked to consider and where appropriate recommend measures concerning:

- a) the mandates of all federal agencies and programs of real or potential significance to cultural activity;
- b) the important role of provincial governments regarding cultural matters, especially the development of appropriate mechanisms for federal-provincial co-operation;
- c) the significant improvement of inter-regional and inter-linguistic communication among Canadians through our diverse media of cultural expression;
- d) the encouragement of national and international standards of excellence within this nation's cultural community;
- e) the development of this nation's cultural industries, in particular the broadcasting, film, publishing and recording industries, and the significant improvement of their ability to produce and to commercially distribute their creative product both within Canada and abroad;
- f) such other matters affecting this nation's cultural life as it wishes to bring to the attention of parliament and the public;

that this committee be asked to make its final report to this House within a period of one year.

Signed: David MacDonald

The Arts Council as Public Patron

Frank Milligan

Frank Milligan is a staff member with the Canadian Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee. He served from 1966 to 1978 with the Canada Council, directing its programs in support of the humanities and social sciences as Associate Director for University Affairs. Born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1921, he holds an MA in history and politics from the University of Manitoba where he lectured from 1947 to 1949. After two years of graduate study at the London School of Economics and Political Science, he was associate professor at the University of New Brunswick until 1954 when he moved to Ottawa as assistant to the deputy minister of Defence Production. From 1960 to 1963 he was Director of Research for the Royal Commission on Government Organization and the principal draftsman of its reports, following which he was Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet until his appointment to the Canada Council. Since 1978 he has been an honorary fellow in the Political Studies Department at Queen's University at Kingston.

Let me start with a flat assertion: for any function of a parliamentary government, the most suitable form of organization is almost invariably a ministry. As it has evolved over the centuries, the ministry (or department, as it is more generally called in Canada) is a remarkably versatile form of organization. What I wrote almost 20 years ago in the report of a Canadian Royal Commission on Government Organization seems no less true to me today:

‘One general conclusion emerges clearly: the departmental form of organization is admirably suited to the needs of government in a parliamentary democracy. It is adaptable to almost any conceivable purpose and unequalled in its sensitivity to public wants.’

The key to this versatility and sensitivity is to be found in the role assigned to the minister, which exacts from him an unqualified accountability to parliament for all the acts of his departmental staff, and confers on him a correspondingly wide authority to impose his will in almost any matter. To quote again from the report of the Royal Commission:

‘In effect, the use of a non-departmental form involves a decision that the ministerial function be restricted—and parliamentary acceptance of a corresponding diminution of ministerial responsibility. Because the departmental form offers the maximum in flexibility and responsiveness to public wants, there must clearly be special reasons for such a decision.’

It follows from this that anyone who proposes that public patronage of the arts be exempt from the normal patterns of ministerial direction and accountability must accept a heavy burden of proof. The workings of the political process are, after all, vexatious to any group of bureaucrats, and equally so to any public clientèle they serve. But in the absence of some special justification, any claim for exemption must fail in the face of broader interests. Is there, then, a sufficiently strong case to be made for autonomy of status in the public patronage of the arts? I think there is.

Government and the Arts

Philosophically, the case rests on a pluralist view of society and a restrictive view of the role of government. What this view entails has been succinctly expressed by the American sociologist, Robert Nisbet:

‘What characterizes the pluralist view of autonomy can best be thought of in terms of the ability of each major function in the social order to work with the maximum possible freedom to achieve its own distinctive ends. What applies to school or university should also apply to economy, to family, to religion, and to each of the other *great spheres of society*. [Among which, the arts and cultural life generally must be given a prominent place.] Everything must be done to avoid intrusion by some one great institution, such as the political state, into the spheres of other institutions. Perfect autonomy is scarcely possible, or even desirable perhaps, given the needs of unity in some degree in a society. But, as Aristotle observed in his criticism of Plato’s communism, there is a kind of unity that comes from harmony, that is articulation of diverse sounds or elements, and there is the kind of unity that comes from mere unison. It is harmony that our society needs above everything else—and I use the word precisely as Aristotle did, and as Althusius, Burke and Tocqueville later did in their different ways—as the bringing into consonance of elements in the social order the diversity of which is recognized as vital to both freedom and creativity.’

This having been said, the case for the autonomy of public patrons is still arguable. After all—to refer back to Nisbet—one of the ‘great spheres’ of society he mentions is the economy, but few would draw the inference that ministries should not be used to regulate any aspect of economic

life. Long and sometimes painful experience, however, tells us that some of these great spheres have greater need of autonomy than others. One thinks of religion, and the protracted struggle to separate church and state. In their own way, the arts, like religion, foster ideas and attitudes that serve to check the unbridled or unjust use of state power and to prick the pretensions of political authority. To all critics of the open society, from Plato on, the role of the arts has seemed subversive.

Even so, democratic governments have shown themselves to be generally tolerant of the artist's barbs—accepting him as a sort of latter-day court jester. Politicians in the parliamentary tradition are, in fact, accustomed to criticism from a host of sources. But there is another aspect of the arts which makes them attractive as potential instruments of policy for purposes uncongenial to the arts themselves—even for parliamentary governments. Given that a central pre-occupation of representative democracy is the contrivance of majorities in a society of minorities, there are signs that this task is becoming increasingly difficult as minorities become increasingly self-conscious and self-assertive. It is not only in Canada that governments have resorted more and more to the rhetoric of national identity and national unity (or provincial identity and provincial unity). Nor, I suspect, is it only in Canada that governments have talked more and more of cultural policy as a means to unity—and a unity too often of 'mere unison' rather than one of harmony. Nothing could be farther removed from the natural tendency of the arts to promote diversity.

Government and Patronage

There are further complications when one considers the role, not of the artist himself, but of the patron of the arts. The first of these arises from the double function which the patron has performed throughout time: as paymaster and as taste-maker. The great patrons of history, in the course of providing a living for creative or performing artists, have consistently imposed their own tastes. For the artist, however dictatorial the princes and prelates of the past may have been, they were at least a numerous breed, and there was always the possibility of shopping around to find the most congenial taste and the least indignity.

As the nationalization of patronage has proceeded—for that in effect is what has happened as governments have assumed the role of paymaster—there has been uncertainty about the taste-making function that traditionally accompanied that role. Whatever form of organization might be chosen for the public patron, the question was bound to arise. In the Act of Parliament creating the Canada Council, for example, the new body was directed 'to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in the arts, humanities and social sciences'. (The reference of the humanities and social sciences was deleted in 1977 when a separate organization was created for this part of the work.) This directive summed up the duality of concerns: enjoyment and production, use and creation, consumers and producers.

If all artists and all taxpayers shared common standards of quality and taste, there would, of course, be no contradiction between the two functions. Or governments might—as some have done—eliminate the contradictions by nationalizing philanthropy and taste-making together and subordinating all to the dictates of the State as the embodiment of the General Will, or the Will of God or the proletariat. But in an open, plural society it is not that simple. And the more dominant the position of the public patron within the artistic life of a society, the more acutely it will feel the tension between its two roles. On the one hand the artists and the organizations through which their work is presented will press their claim for artistic freedom to the limit, and view with alarm anything that smacks of taste-making. On the other hand, members of the public as taxpayers may object strenuously to what they perceive as an insensitivity to community tastes and standards or indulgence of artistic follies; and elected governments cannot be wholly indifferent to their sense of outrage. Any organization dispensing public patronage must feel as the Canada Council did when it said, 'like Janus we face two ways'. Contending with two would-be masters, the government and the clientèle, it can succeed in its role of patron only by maintaining something of an arm's-length relationship in both directions. It must resist coercion or manipulation by government; but, equally, it cannot allow itself to become the pliant instrument of artists.

Public patronage, in short, involves a state of tension with both the artistic community and the governments which furnish the funds. This tension manifests itself in everything the patron does, but the Canadian experience and a nodding acquaintance with experience in other countries suggests that it is central to three chronic issues of major importance:

- the allocation of resources among competing kinds of claim for support;
- the criteria and procedures adopted for the judging of requests; and,
- the kind and degree of accountability required by the patron from its clientèle, and by the government from the patron.

Inevitably these are recurring themes whenever the managers of public patronage meet on occasions like these Commonwealth conferences.

It is axiomatic that form must follow function. One must conclude, therefore, that public patronage of the arts requires a form that preserves its status of intermediary between government and artists. This leads, inescapably, to a certain ambiguity of form: public but not quite governmental; sensitive to the wants and needs of the arts but not controlled by artists.

This is easier said than done. The very fact that the public patron must discharge divergent—and at times conflicting—functions precludes the possibility of any tidy organizational solution. Different countries have experimented with different models; but all involve the same implicit concept of public trusteeship—a concept difficult to explain to an uneasy clientèle or to the watchdogs, elected or self-appointed, of the public. In the end, all variants tend to be driven back to the same line of defence; that for all its imperfections, public trusteeship works better than any alternative that might be proposed, and the ambiguity of form and status that is its inevitable concomitant is no more than a reflection of the ambiguity inherent in its function.

Conflict of Principles

There is a further reason why the government ministry is ill-adapted to the administration of patronage: a conflict of animating principles. For governments, in our tradition, the dominant principle is the democratic one of equality of treatment. The notion of equality before the law is, of course, as old as the Common Law, but the emergence of equality as a dominant principle in government really dates from the acceptance, through universal adult suffrage, of equality of political rights. Given universal suffrage, the egalitarian principle gradually made itself felt in all that governments did, if only in an attempt to achieve an equality of dissatisfaction among the citizenry. And when public money is to be given out, politicians are inclined to say, as the Dodo said of the caucus race in *Alice in Wonderland*, ‘Everybody has won and all must have prizes’. As Tocqueville observed in *Democracy in America*:

‘The foremost or indeed the sole condition required in order to succeed in centralizing the supreme power in a democratic community is to love equality or to get men to believe you love it. Thus, the science of despotism, which was once so complex, has been simplified and reduced, as it were, to a single principle.’

In our own lifetime we have seen a growing pre-occupation with equality of rights and claims, in laws that seek to root out irrelevant or unfair distinctions. And the urge to equality seems both inexhaustible and irresistible, as the range of irrelevancies is extended through race and religion and sex to age or physical infirmity or sexual orientation. In the vocabulary of democracy, ‘discrimination’ is the dirtiest word of all.

But if distinctions based on, for example, race or sex are unacceptable and irrelevant, what are we to make of distinctions based on imagination or skill or industry? Our notions of juridical or political equality admit of no such distinctions. And all our recent experience suggests that, as long as we remain committed to the democratic idea—that each voice shall count for one and no voice count for more than one—governments will continue to respond, however haltingly, to complaints of unfair or simply unpalatable discrimination.

For public patronage, the important consequence of this is that as governments become increasingly involved in the support of institutions and activities that have historically been self-directing, its support tends to be accompanied by a stiffening insistence on the egalitarian principle. There then emerges a conflict of principles, for patronage has its own imperative, in which equality of treatment has played no part. The fact is that in the support of the arts there cannot be prizes for everyone. There cannot even be equality of dissatisfaction. Discrimination, the *bête noir* of democracy, is the ruling principle of the enterprise.

We see this conflict in the growing and pervasive tendency of government to urge 'balance' as a goal to be sought in public patronage, to the end that artists and institutions throughout the country receive 'fair shares' in the distribution of public funds according to some measure defined by the political process. But if the arts are to flourish, the material resources must go where the talent is to be found and where there is the greatest promise of creativity. And the distribution of talent and promise is, at any given moment, a very random affair; over time it is very changeable.

No public patron, however exempt from political control and direction, can be entirely indifferent to—or at least uninterested in—the relative shares of its support going to one region or locality as against another, or to women as compared with men, or among the various art forms. As Michael Straight said to the first of these Conferences two years ago, 'Public agencies in pluralist societies, which fail to take the artistic claims of minorities into account run the risk of having quotas laid upon them by politicians'. But any attempt to substitute some notion of 'balance' based on the counting of heads (or votes) for the natural and healthy condition of shifting imbalance, is bound to subject the arts to an enforced state of mediocrity. On the other hand, to expect ministers to accept direct responsibility for an activity based firmly on the principle of discrimination, is to ask too much of them. They may be pardoned if they echo Lord Melbourne's *cri de coeur*: 'God help the minister who meddles with art!'

Conflict of Objectives

There is finally a problem of objectives whenever governments become involved in the patronage of the arts. As was pointed out, the public patron must recognize two potentially divergent aims: fostering artistic creativity and enlarging public enjoyment. But the difficulties arising from this seem almost trivial compared with the implications of trying to accommodate the array of objectives pursued simultaneously by governments. By various devices—of which the cabinet and presidential systems are the two principal forms—governments try to ensure that all their objectives are accommodated, as far as possible, in everything they do. Through the operations of the cabinet system, the rules and guidelines of the Treasury Board (or its equivalent) and the complex machinery of inter-ministerial consultation, the entire range of government aims is brought to bear on every decision of consequence involving the programs and policies of each ministry. And because what is reflected in the array of objectives is the complexity of demands made on government, it is characterized by inner contradictions and conflicts. The more completely any publicly-financed activity is brought within the regular framework of ministerial direction, the more it will be subjected to the interplay of these widely divergent aims.

Recognizing that this process simply reflects the diversity of public interests and expectations, it is unrealistic to ask or expect that any appropriation of public funds should be wholly exempt from it; more particularly, that public patronage of the arts should be unaffected by government concern with, for example, economic growth, or social justice, or national unity. That is not to say that arts councils cannot demur—as the Chairman of the Canada Council did when, in 1978, funds were earmarked by the government for purposes unrelated to the primary concerns of the Council itself. 'The willingness to fund "national unity" through the arts,' Mrs Laing reported after the fact, 'but not adequately to fund the arts themselves, is evidence of an attitude to cultural policy which gives me great concern.' To be realistic, however, one must expect that major pre-occupations of the government, unrelated to the promotion of the arts or of their enjoyment, will sometimes intrude as qualifications attaching to the provision of funds.

At least, however, the use of a form of organization operating at arm's length from the government ensures that any such 'contamination' of the organization's objectives will be open and visible, and will not so pervade its operations as to eclipse its primary aims. Without this arm's length

relationship, the political price-tag attached to the public funds may become unacceptable, in terms of the impairment of benefits to either artists or their audiences.

In a sense, the argument has come full circle, for we are back to the original question about the autonomy of the artistic and cultural life of our societies: how can we preserve that autonomy—the capacity of the arts to interpret their society and define their own role within it—when they become dependent on the public purse?

Humpty Dumpty at Arm's Length

Timothy Porteous

Timothy Porteous was appointed Associate Director of the Canada Council on April 1, 1973. He was born in Montreal and attended McGill University, Université de Montreal and Institut de droit compare, Université de Paris. He was Co-author and Associate Producer of *My Fur Lady*, a musical satire that toured Canada from coast to coast in 1957 and 1958. He was admitted to the Bar of Quebec in 1958 and practised law in Montreal until 1966. In 1966 he was appointed Executive Assistant to The Honourable C M Drury, then Minister of Industry. In 1968 he was appointed Special Assistant to the Prime Minister and in 1970 he became Executive Assistant to the Prime Minister. He has been associated in various capacities with the National Theatre School of Canada, Theatre Canada and the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. He is a member of the Composers, Authors and Publishers Association of Canada.

'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.'

'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you *can* make words mean so many different things.'

'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master—that's all.'

The achievement of the Commonwealth is to have adapted itself to the disappearance of the forces which created it. It no longer depends on military, political or even trade relations. Our commonwealth lies in human contacts, a sharing of skills and values, and the development of similar institutions. Of these institutions, one of the more recent and least analysed is the independent arts council.

The absence of any precise description of such a body offers all the attractions of flexibility, and may be thought to be in the best British tradition. But it also presents certain dangers, particularly to those who wish to support or defend the concept. It is open to anyone who deals with the subject to provide his own definition. In some cases, two of which are quoted later in this paper, those who believe themselves to be enthusiastically supporting the principle have put forward recommendations which would completely undermine it.

To describe the appropriate degree of independence for an arts council, the term 'arm's length' has been borrowed from tax legislation. For tax purposes the term has been defined with great precision. As a description of an arts council it remains extremely vague. Perhaps the time has come to set out what constitutes the essential elements of an arts council's independence, based on our common experience.

In Canada such a definition would be particularly useful at this time. The Canadian government has established a Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee under the chairmanship of Louis Applebaum, one of whose responsibilities is to advise on the future status of cultural agencies, including the Canada Council. The Council has recommended that its present status be re-affirmed. In the Applebaum Committee's consideration of this vital question, it would be helpful for it to draw on the policies and experience of other Commonwealth councils.

The Canada Council's status

The first example of an independent, national arts council, the Arts Council of Great Britain, received its Charter in 1946. Lord Keynes, the moving force behind its founding, gave a characteristically understated description of its birth.

'I do not believe it is yet realized what an important thing has happened. State patronage of the arts has crept in. It has happened in a very English, informal, unostentatious way—half baked if you like. A semi-independent body is provided with modest funds to stimulate, comfort and support ... the arts of drama, music and painting. At last the public exchequer has recognized the support and encouragement of the civilizing arts of life as a part of their duty.'

The Canada Council, at its birth in 1957, enjoyed a double advantage. First there was the example of the Arts Council of Great Britain. This example was consciously followed in the recommendations of the Massey-Levesque Commission on which the Canada Council Act was based. 'We should consider it a misfortune,' the Commission Report stated, 'if this Canada Council became in any sense a department of government.'

Secondly, the government provided the Council with an endowment, the revenues from which were expected to support it entirely and forever. The Council's political independence was to be reinforced by financial independence. Unfortunately these revenues have been unable to keep

pace with the growth of arts activities or the current rate of inflation. They now constitute only 14% of the Council's budget and, if present trends continue, may shrink to half of that in the next five years. For the remainder of its budget the Council is almost entirely dependent on an annual appropriation from Parliament.

Despite this radical change in its financial situation, there has been no change in the Council's legal status. Its Act still states that the Council 'is not an agent of Her Majesty'. Although this James Bond-like phrase means less than you might think (it simply absolves the government from a principal's legal responsibility for the actions of its agent), the Council's present status has so far defied classification within the four defined categories of Canadian Crown corporations.

The present threat to the Canada Council's status

A few years ago a Canadian Crown corporation which sells nuclear reactors was involved in an international bribery scandal. This provoked the government to set up a royal commission to advise it on how to exercise tighter control over Crown corporations. The commission informed the Canada Council that the Council's undefined status excluded it from consideration by the commission and from its recommendations. Not surprisingly, in view of the problem with which it was asked to deal, the commission recommended that Crown corporations should be subjected to ministerial directives and to more extensive financial control by the Treasury Board.

In 1979 the Conservative government introduced a bill based on the commission's recommendations. If these recommendations were applied to cultural agencies, they would seriously impair the 'arm's-length' relationship. For this reason the government temporarily excluded the Canada Council and five other cultural agencies from the provisions of the bill. The exclusion was to last until completion of a review of cultural policy, which was expected to take two years.

The Liberal government (elected in 1980) will shortly introduce a similar bill, but it is likely to follow precedent by excluding the cultural agencies until it receives the report of the Applebaum Committee. Until the government makes its final decision, at the earliest in 1982, a sword of Damocles hangs over the cultural agencies.

In this on-going debate the Canada Council is placed in the most vulnerable of postures, a defender of the status quo. Unlike those of its fellow cultural agencies less favoured by their legislation, it is not arguing for greater autonomy. The Council believes that Parliament, on the recommendation of the government, should continue to decide how much tax money will be allocated to the Council's annual grant. The government should continue to appoint the members of the Council and (though this is debatable) the Director and Associate Director. The Council should continue to provide detailed reports on how it spends its money, and why it spends it the way it does. In this sense it is fully accountable to Parliament and the public.

The essential elements for an 'arm's-length' council

1. The independence of Council members

If the concept of an autonomous, yet government-funded, agency is to work, the attitude of the government in appointing the members of its board is crucial. By convention there is a provincial residence criterion for appointment to the Canada Council, as to many other national bodies in Canada (one member of the Council comes from each of seven provinces, with a larger number from the three most populous provinces). Having observed that convention, the government must make sure that the Council includes a sufficient range of competence to deserve the confidence of the government and, ideally, the arts community and the public. Once appointed, Council members should be expected to serve the interests of the Council, which may not always coincide with those of the government or the arts community. There have been instances of Council members being appointed 'to keep an eye on the Council' on behalf of an apprehensive minister. Fortunately, human nature provides some protection for the Council's interests. Experience shows that even the most loyal appointees, after a period of serving on the Council, usually find themselves more committed to it than to the Minister who appointed them.

2. *The independence of the chief executive officers*

The Director and the Associate Director of the Canada Council, like the deputy ministers of Canadian government departments, are appointed by the government. (The dual appointment reflects Canada's two official languages. By convention one is a French-speaker and the other an English-speaker.) It would reinforce the Council's autonomy if these officers were appointed by the members of the Council. Under the present system, despite their appointment, they should serve the Council's interests.

3. *The attitude of ministers and members of Parliament*

The distinction between a government department and an independent council also depends on the attitudes of ministers and members of Parliament. Whereas ministers, and through them, members, may be able to give instructions to a department, they can only make representations to a council. Some members of our Parliament are surprised, and frustrated, to find that they cannot compel the Canada Council to provide a grant to an artist or raise the subsidy to an organization. Unless the 'arm's-length' principle is understood at both ends of the arm, it creates hostility which will threaten a council's independence.

4. *The 'intermediate order of judgements'*

No one would dispute the government's right, with Parliament's approval, to decide what financial resources should be provided to the Canada Council. All those who support the concept of an arts council agree that it should have the authority to select among competing applicants for grants, at least when they are individual artists. This choice is sometimes described as 'a question of artistic judgement'. The uncertainty arises in relation to what my former colleague Frank Milligan has described as 'the intermediate order of judgements: the assignment of priorities to the varied claims upon the council and the definition of the policies on which those choices are to rest'.

A dramatic example of this conflict occurred in September 1978. The government included in an extensive list of cutbacks of its programs a reduction of \$800,000 in the Canada Council's Art Bank purchases. The Art Bank buys works from living Canadian artists and rents them to government departments and non-profit institutions. The Council did not challenge the government's right to reduce its grant by \$800,000, but nor did it accept the government's right to decide which of its programs would be affected by the cut. Since it believed that the Art Bank was an essential component of its system of support for visual artists, it re-allocated \$600,000 from its remaining funds to this program. The Secretary of State, the Honourable John Roberts, who was at that time the minister responsible for the cultural agencies, made no secret of his bitter resentment of this decision.

Some months later Roberts issued a statement on his view of the Council's 'arm's-length' relationship. In this statement he claims that a reason for the Council's independence is to protect the creative artist 'against the exigencies of the market-place'. In Canada, as in other free market countries, the artist remains largely dependent on the market. If freeing him from this constraint is the objective, it is difficult to see why an independent council would be more effective than direct government grants. The real reason for an arts council's autonomy, surely, is to protect the artist from the government, or to put it tactlessly, from the Secretary of State.

Under our system the artist enjoys a double protection from the state. There is the 'arm's-length' between the government and the council, and the 'arm's-length' between the council and the artist or arts organization. This paper deals only with the former relationship. Equally important and equally difficult to maintain is the latter. It deserves a paper to itself.

In his statement the former Secretary of State sets out a list of policy questions which he believes should be decided by the government rather than the Council. In my view many of them are well within the 'intermediate order of judgements' best left to a council's discretion. For example he includes such questions as: 'to what extent should Canadian content be a factor?' and 'what proportion of total revenue should come from the box office?' No simple formula can be devised to answer these questions. Reasonable answers would take into account a vast range of diverse

conditions relating to disciplines, population concentration, regional development, the accidents of outstanding talent and the availability of facilities. The answers would vary from place to place and from season to season. Obtaining them would require the professional experience and full-time attention which are characteristic of arts council officers but not of government staff. If the government were to assume responsibility for working out policies of this type it would first need to duplicate the expertise presently available to the Canada Council. If the Council were required to conform to government policies on these subjects it would destroy the 'arm's-length' relationship which the Minister claimed to defend.

The Council's authority over the 'intermediate order of judgements' would be equally undermined if the government were given the power to control the internal allocation of the Council's budget. As an example of such a proposal I will quote from a letter of 16 January, 1979 written by the Honourable David MacDonald, who at that time was the Opposition spokesman on culture. (To be fair I must point out that when David MacDonald became Secretary of State he took no steps to implement this proposal and, in fact, became a stalwart and effective defendant of the Council's independence from the federal government.)

'For example, there could be four budget items in place of the present one "lump sum" to be approved by Treasury Board and Parliament: administration; encouragement of artistic achievement; encouragement of artistic development (ie experimental and social animation art); and cultural exchange (at home and abroad). The Council would remain free in its judgement to disperse funds within each broad category how and to whom it wishes, while the government would be made responsible for those decisions which are by their nature more properly political than artistic, such as the balance between administrative costs and grants.'

There are three serious problems with this approach. First of all, in practice it is not possible to draw hard and fast lines between the suggested categories of expenditure. It is not possible to divide arts organizations into those which encourage artistic achievement and those which encourage artistic development. Both aspects co-exist in even the most traditional or the most avant garde organizations. It is even less possible to divide individual artists along these lines. The creative act itself, which lies at the heart of the arts, is an unpredictable combination of acquired skill and experiment, of repetition and innovation, of achievement and development. Similarly, cultural exchange is an aspect of many arts activities which often cannot be separated out in a way that would satisfy a chartered accountant. Even if it were possible to devise a practical scheme for breaking down the Council's budget, the type of judgement required to distribute it among arts activities is much less likely to be found among the officials of the Treasury Board than at the Council itself.

Finally, such a system of budgetary control by the Treasury Board or any other government department would be a clear violation of the 'arm's-length' principle and would give rise to legitimate apprehensions about government control of the arts.

5. Statements on cultural policy by Council spokesmen

Another sensitive area in which the role of an independent council must be distinguished from a government department is that of public statements by its members and staff. In my view it is essential to the proper functioning of an 'arm's-length' arts agency that its spokesmen should have the right, and sometimes the duty, to comment freely on questions of cultural policy, even when they express disagreement with the policies of the government or opposition parties.

Under our system it would be considered inappropriate for a public servant to speak out on an issue of public policy. It would be unacceptable for him to criticize current government policy. These constraints should not be applied to the members or staff of an independent agency. In the nature of things most of the critical statements made by Canada Council spokesmen are aimed at the government. For instance, it would be a rare arts council that did not believe that it was perennially underfunded. (Perhaps the Urban Council of Hong Kong is the exception that confirms this rule.) In addition to this familiar lament, the Council's recently published brief to the

Applebaum Committee is critical of government policy on such matters as the exposure of Canadian artists abroad, the capital cost allowance for film production, and the government's book publishing development program.

It sometimes happens that the opposition parties can be as misguided or as misinformed as the government in their statements on cultural policy. In these circumstances I believe that Council spokesmen, including the Associate Director, have an obligation to speak out. On one occasion I commented publicly on a statement by the Leader of the Opposition which, in my view, placed too much responsibility for arts funding in the hands of provincial governments and showed insufficient confidence in the role of the federal government. I was taken to task by a prominent Opposition member, not for the content of my statement, but for the inappropriateness of my having uttered it.

Politicians have considerably less job security than bureaucrats, so that it is understandable that they should be wary of attacks from that quarter. Nevertheless, a distinction should be made between partisan incitement to vote for one party or another and fair comment on a matter of public policy.

I concede that such distinctions cannot be expected to be drawn during the heat of an election campaign. During the 1980 federal election one candidate proposed a program of travel grants for artists. A lump sum would have been paid to every constituency and distributed by a committee named by the local member of Parliament. The Canada Council's artistic advisors urged it to denounce this proposal as a derogation from traditional Canadian practice in arts funding and from the 'arm's-length' principle. The Council agreed with the substance of its advisors' argument but decided that any public pronouncement during the campaign could be interpreted as partisan activity.

If such a proposal had been re-affirmed after the election by the government or the opposition, the Council would have been obliged to contest it.

Summary

Among the elements essential to an 'arm's-length' arts council are the following:

1. Members should be appointed for their ability to serve the council and should be expected to put the council's interests ahead of loyalty to the government which appointed them.
2. The chief executive officers, however appointed, should also serve the interests of the council.
3. Ministers and members of Parliament, in making representations to a council, should understand that the council's decisions and policies are not subject to their authority.
4. The council, not the government, should be responsible for the 'intermediate order of judgements'.
5. Council spokesmen should be free to comment on matters of cultural policy even when they express disagreement with government or opposition policies.

The Choice: Arts Council or Ministry of Culture?

Augustin Girard

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If one has the choice, should one choose an independent arts council or a ministry of culture? Judging by experience, asking this question is much easier than answering it. There is not a political and administrative structure that is best for all functions.

I am going to try to show, from the French experience of the last 20 years, that the ministry structure presents both advantages and inconveniences, and that these vary according to which cultural function one considers (conservation, creation, communication or education) and according to stages in the development of each cultural sector (theatre, film, music, etc). For example, what is appropriate during the initiation of a policy regarding the theatre may become inappropriate during its administration.

Theoretical Advantages of the Ministry Structure

1. The Minister is a member of the Government. Thus, in theory:

a) He is ideally situated to inform the Prime Minister and the whole Government on any specific cultural project. His situation is particularly intriguing inasmuch as it involves the formulation not only of proposals to Parliament that can become law, but also of the procedures by which these proposals can be made. For instance, the annual budget requirement may be changed to a budget presented every three to five years. By such means, André Malraux got through Parliament two successive laws governing historic monuments, and Mr Lecat, assistant to the Prime Minister, got through a law regarding museum development.

b) A Minister is equally well situated to secure arbitration with the Minister of the Budget and thereby participate in some of the most momentous government decisions.

c) A Minister can work toward the achievement of ultimate cultural goals, such as the extension to all citizens of the rights to cultural opportunities, or the improvement of the quality of life, by influencing ministries that are not specifically under his care, such as education, telecommunications, urban affairs, youth, etc. This can lead to the creation of interministerial committees charged with the administration of specific programs. More and more government functions are becoming integrated, with decision-making that involves several Ministers at once. Presence on an interministerial committee convened by the Prime Minister is a further possible source of power for a cultural Minister. The Minister's influence is also enhanced by his informal contacts with other members of the Government.

2. In practice, however, the Minister's position never quite lives up to these ideals. A Minister can sit in the Government without exerting any influence on it.

a) The best of a possibly bad situation is when the Minister finds himself politically indispensable. Such was the case in France between 1971 and 1973 when the Minister of Culture was the head of those Christian Democrats who were traditionally anti-de Gaulle: he was a fulcrum of power for Pompidou's Gaullist government.

b) Nearly as favourable a situation occurs when the Minister carries a good deal of weight personally with the Prime Minister. Such was André Malraux's privilege, sitting on General de Gaulle's right hand as one of his constant political advisers. He attained this stature not from being a supreme artist but by virtue of his support of the ruling party.

c) The most usual situation, however, is that the Minister in charge of culture has little influence at the heart of government. When a government is set up, culture is often relegated to a Minister at the last moment and then the appointment is likely to be a political balancing act or a settling of electoral debts—the Minister is, after all, a 'little Minister', in charge of less than 1 per cent of the budget. When inevitable conflict occurs between the Minister of Culture and the Minister of the Budget, the Minister of Culture has to seek the arbitration of the Prime Minister or the President or both.

In France, since the departure of André Malraux, all the great decisions involving cultural matters, such as budgetary innovations and appointment of the higher officers, are made by

three authorities: the President, the Prime Minister, and the Minister of Culture, working in a tightly integrated triangular relationship among their three cabinets or technical councils. Hence the cultural power of the State is very concentrated, which is not to say that it is not also limited in its representation of the full power of the nation's culture—its local and professional groups, its cultural industries, its individuals (who themselves are responsible for 85 per cent of the nation's cultural expenses). But the large national programs, the laws, and the nomination of the men who put them into action, are decided upon by a close cadre. Their efficacy and rapidity of execution are dependent on their constituting a network homogeneous in political affiliation and in having been trained at the national administrative school, and on the group's relatively small size and frequent intermingling.

The Prime Minister's cultural adviser once said to me: 'My impact in negotiations with the Minister of Finance does not derive from the worth of the cultural causes that I advocate, nor from the fact that I represent the Prime Minister; it derives from the fact that I also have responsibility for Social Security which involves millions upon millions of francs. So, at the end of a five-hour discussion about a 50 million deficit in Social Security, as we're all getting ready to leave, I can say, "By the way, you don't have any objection to adding on 10 million to support the national theatre, do you? Such a sum will seem ridiculous by contrast and will be easily granted".' The advantage, then, of situating those responsible for culture within the intermeshing gears of the Government is the opportunity to bargain with those who really hold the power, instead of being relegated to a cultural lobby outside the inner circle or to an intellectual ghetto. We shall soon see the reverse of this coin, however.

Parliament, for example, which lacks this homogeneity, this integration and frequency of interchange, is ill-equipped to carry out the broad objectives of a cultural policy or even a significant investigation. One need only read the account of cultural budgetary debates in Parliament during the last 20 years to establish these truths. The cleavage between the executive and legislative powers may have its short-term use but prevents a long-term definition of cultural policy.

3. The potential efficacy and speed of the ministerial alternative is partly dependent on the existence within the ministry of an elite corps of bureaucrats (about 50 in France) who are bound together not by political affiliation but by training.

To speak of the French situation I must describe briefly this national administrative school, access to which is as selective as its curriculum is rigorous and which provides about 70 per cent of all governmental administrators and is gradually infiltrating the private sector. This school produces highly competitive and competent bureaucrats who, most importantly, speak the same language of incumbent administrators, high or low, and of their ministers. This quasi-technocratic network is one reason for the efficacy of administration. We shall soon see its drawbacks, which are shared by all technocracy and which have something to do with their not being recruited for their artistic sensibility.

4. A final advantage of the governmental situation of the Ministry of Culture is its regional representation. France is still working with the Napoleonic, or rather Roman, system of prefects, who in each region are fully invested with the Government's power and represent it in all matters. More and more one is likely to see prefects, themselves products of the national administrative school, deputizing cultural affairs and creating regionally responsible cultural councils quite integrated within regional government. In considering this alternative between a cultural ministry and an independent arts council, one must be conscious of the degrees of decentralization possible, ranging from the strongly decentralized countries like Canada to the relatively centralized situation in France.

Drawbacks to the Ministerial System

1. At the level of conception and decision

- a) *The Excluded Intelligentsia*

The reverse of the coin of a power system whose efficacy is technocratically based is that it leaves the artist and intellectual out of the decision-making process. True, there exist

several consultative commissions, nominated by the Minister, on which cultural professionals sit, and their power is not negligible. This power, however, is relevant to only a minimal part of the cultural budget. And these commissions are in general presided over by a bureaucrat named by the Government in the Council of Ministers, and that bureaucrat possesses considerable power.

So, professional people do not feel represented by these commissions, and the alienated intelligentsia do not feel responsible for the expenditure of public monies. This irresponsibility gives free rein to unhealthy and contradictory behaviour: on the one hand, there will be public protest, often systematically orchestrated by the media, against the State, and on the other there will be individual attempts to seize power on the part of artists and others. The artists seem at times to come to the Minister with a Molotov cocktail in one hand and a beggar's cup in the other. Neither collective irresponsibility nor conduct befitting a courtesan should characterize the relationship between the arts and government. The Minister and his advisers are pressured into the roles of mercurial Maecenas.

There is no longer the possibility of sealing off conflict with a watertight door—conflicts mount very quickly up through the hierarchy and converge on the Minister, for every cultural decision is strategic. Not lending themselves to formulaic treatment, cultural decisions should not be left to the bureaucrats. Once they reach the top, decisions risk being personal and political and also create insupportable burdens, for, classically, he who has the greatest decision-making power is also he who has the least information and time to arrive at a sound judgment.

b) The Impact of Notoriety

Since the competence of the administrator is not that of the artist, he has a tendency to be sensitive to public renown, even to notoriety and its cumulative effects which are compounded by the media and public relations people. Either narrow academicism or superficial wordliness lie in wait for those cultural administrators who have not been recruited for aesthetic sensibility. On top of those dangers, in France we have Parisianism, which exalts all who live there, all that happens there, over life in the provinces.

The discovery of new talent, emanating from authentic creators who refuse to follow the laws of publicity, academicism or worldliness, is rendered difficult by a system which is centralized and hierarchical. Prudence, a certain docility in the purlieus of the powerful, and self-censorship are likely to conspire against innovation.

c) The Headquarters Impact

The existence of a bureaucratic elite, essentially Parisian, passing their official and unofficial time far from the terrain where the real initiatives are taken, where encounters take place between art and public, where cultural professionals and elected public officials do battle, leads to a predominance of the systematic over the experimental, of theory over practice. Information recirculates poorly, and the headquarters officer is in danger of skirting round the real problems or of failing to find those empirical solutions that come of necessity when one is backed up to the wall.

d) Obfuscation

We have already dealt with the limited role of parliamentary assemblies, whose ability to challenge the administration is, however, far reaching and is evinced each year by documented reports. The restricted power of Parliament has more of a social base than a constitutional one. The technicality of the decisions to be made, and the speed at which they must be made, conduces the cultural technocrats to work as much as possible within a closed circuit. They have not the time nor the obligation to seek out a consensus from other cultural powers. If they take the further precaution of formulating a monolithic public relations policy with subtlety and perseverance, they will be able to conceal the real problems from public view and deflect attention from maladministration. A democratic debate on the future conduct of the nation's cultural life, leading to a great parliamentary debate, will thus not take place.

2. At the level of execution

a) *The Bureaucratic Impact*

A Ministry, even a Ministry of Culture, is before all things a ministry like the others. That is to say, it epitomizes the required bureaucratic qualities in relation to execution: slowness, rigidity, compartmentalization, resistance to innovation, and incapacity for risk-taking and assumption of the appropriate level of responsibility. With his 11,000 functionaries or quasi-functionaries (on direct salaries or on permanent subsidies), the French Ministry of Culture can hardly be immune to criticism of the bureaucracy. The problem, strikingly, is that we are dealing here with *cultural* affairs, precisely those values that are most opposed to the bureaucratic are those upon which a culture depends: innovation, renewal, risk-taking, truth-seeking and individualistic behaviour.

This is why André Malraux, each time he wanted to introduce an important innovation, was obliged to provide an ad hoc organization parallel to the existing administration. For example, the administration of the Museums of France, with all its erudite curators and its thousands of employees, was judged incapable of carrying out museological innovations or grappling with contemporary art. Malraux thus created ad hoc organizations, 'commando' outfits, unorthodox administratively and extra-legal, hence inherently fragile.

The most interesting example of this tactic was the Georges Pompidou Centre. When Pompidou was Prime Minister, it occurred to him that during the Fifth Republic created by General de Gaulle, unlike any other great epoch in French history, no suitable monument had been willed to succeeding generations of Frenchmen. A teacher's son, he came to believe greatly in the power of the word, and becoming part of the establishment he became an amateur of contemporary art. Thus the idea came to him of creating a vast centre for public reading and contemporary art in a part of Paris for which the city administration had not yet found a use. As Prime Minister he could entrust to the Minister of Culture the construction of this vast House of Culture. But he had no confidence in the existing administrative structure; he feared that administrative conflicts and budgetary circumspection would keep the project from seeing the light of day. The Ministry of Culture's cultural projects commission, moreover, had already refused this project as going against two of its principles: to give the provinces preference over Paris, and to prefer the small projects over the grand.

When Pompidou became President of the Republic, he had the necessary funds entered into the 'common expenses' budget (a part of the national budget not attached to any particular ministry), and he nominated and convened an international architectural jury (which chose a non-French group), and changed various regulations so that the construction would be speeded up. For its administration, he created a public establishment specially adapted to permit recruitment outside the usual administrative hierarchies.

The Pompidou Centre is today incontestably a cultural success; it receives 20,000 visitors a day—twice the number foreseen. Further, it has brought back to life in the heart of the city a neighbourhood which was well on its way downhill.

This example shows both the predominance of the political will over the administrative structure on decision-making and the lack of trust in the administration of cultural affairs, even when given direction by a Minister.

b) *Public Administration and Cultural Affairs*

When institutions, such as museums, the opera, national theatres, are directly managed by the State, or by public establishments whose regulation is modelled on that of the State, these developments seem inevitable: the entrenchment of staff; the increasing compartmentalization of work to be performed; attention directed toward conservation of ground already gained and not the gaining of new ground (or publics); the rigidifying of a budget based on government subsidy rather than on the search for independent revenues; annual negotiations easily renewed with the political powers rather than research into ways of better communicating with the public; the policy of increasing the personal prestige of high-level bureaucrats paid by the State rather than encouraging risk and innovation.

There is in the cultural field not only a failure of agreement between the 'public service' and *public* service, but perhaps even a contradiction. Theoretically, cultural services, like educational services, are a function of public service. As collectivities, museums, libraries, even theatres (conceived not as profit-making enterprises but as conservatories of a common heritage, promoting its distribution and encouraging its renewal) certainly fill a public service function. But in the cultural domain, which requires constant reinvigoration and a constantly sharpened sense of communication with the public, public administration cannot impart the flexibility, the guerilla-type improvisation, the sense of reality and taste for risks that the creative institution demands.

Converting cultural personnel into public administrators may at first seem to guarantee continuity, freedom, disinterestedness and objectivity, but it leads in the long run to institutions that are like beached whales—barely breathing. When crises occur, the publicly administered system can scarcely cope with them, and the usual solution is to increase subsidies, creating institutional swelling rather than growth.

The Swedish system, which calls for a strong Minister of Culture who defines objectives for the Government and prepares the way for informed legislative activity by Parliament, stipulates a minimal amount of administrative management of cultural services—the number of cultural bureaucrats is only two to three dozen. Execution of policy is left to councils and independent committees which are funded by Parliament, to which they report.

The Swedish system thus seems to be a mixture of the two alternatives, of the cultural administration in the hands of a Ministry (which Sweden retains for the advantages it gives at the level of essential decision-making), and of the arts council (for its relative ease in the execution of policy).

3. Analysis by Function and Field

If one wants to arrive at a useful comparison between the ministerial system and the independent arts council, one must go further than this generalized consideration of decision-making and policy execution. One must identify the maximal efficacy as to decision-making and policy execution with regard to specific functions and fields in cultural policy. The table illustrates the function classification that the New Zealand Arts Council has deemed most important.

In my view the functions in which the ministerial structure is the most effective are these, in descending order:

- Preservation and Archives
- Administration, Research and Information
- International Co-operation
- Education

What follows is a list of functions in which a mixed structure seems desirable:

- Creation (to nourish innovation)
- Radio/television (to combine responsibilities for quality programming, preservation of national cultural identity and a concern for variety)
- Cultural Industries (edited works, such as books, records, cassettes)
- Live Performance
- Amateur Expression

4. Analysis according to Degree of Development in a Field

The ministerial structure is most useful in launching a large, ambitious program, for example, a program for decentralizing theatre, a developmental program in publishing or film, a new program for visual artists, etc.

When programs become well established, and it is only a question of managing them well, then the advantages of the independent arts council become conspicuous.

This distinction is particularly necessary for the so-called developing nations, but it is also useful for industrialized countries in which many cultural fields remain seriously underdeveloped.

CULTURAL POLICY : FUNCTIONS AND FIELDS

M = ministry
A = arts council

Fields \ Functions	Creation	Live Performance	Radio T.V.	Cultural Industries	Amateur Expression Free Groups	Education	Preservation and Archives	International Co-operation	Administration Research Information
Music	M + A	A	M + A	A	A	M	M	M + A	M
Dance	M + A	A	A	-	A	M	M	M + A	M
Theatre	M + A	A	M + A	M + A	A	M	M	M + A	M
Literature	A	A	M + A	A	A	M	M	M + A	M + A
Cinema	A	A	A	-	A	A	M	M + A	M + A
Photography	A	M + A	A	A	A	A	M	M + A	M + A
Plastic Arts	M + A	M + A	M + A	M + A	A	M	M	M + A	M + A
Crafts	M + A	M + A	A	A	A	M	M	M + A	M
Museums	M	M	M	-	-	M	M	M	M
Monuments	M	M + A	M	-	M + A	M	M	M	M
Urban Sites	M	M + A	M	M	M + A	M + A	M + A	M	M
Natural Sites	M	M + A	M	M	M + A	M + A	M + A	M	M
Architecture	M + A	M + A	M	M + A	-	M	M	M	M
Interdiscipline Innovation	M + A	A	M + A	M + A	A	A	-	M	M

Conclusion

Prospects for Evolution in France

1. In France the ministerial structure stands to be decidedly transformed in 1983-84 as the consequence of a law governing the responsibility of local collectivities which will be voted on in June, 1981.

Cultural responsibilities will be redistributed into two sectors:

- the sector of local collectivities, which will cover all fields by function, with far-reaching powers and an endowment from the State;
- the federal sector, which will be reduced to several missions of state, such as the preservation of historical monuments and various national institutions.

One can only hope that the interaction between the two sectors, as to information, technical expertise and structure, will profit from the last 25 years' experience of the State in the area of cultural policy.

2. From the international point of view, I will simplify the comparison between the ministerial structure and the arts council structure in the following table which distributes its pluses and minuses according to seven criteria.

	<i>M</i>	<i>A.C.</i>
– Budgetary advantage	+	–
– Influence on other ministers	+	–
– Cost-effectiveness of management	–	+
– Promotion of the economic status of the artist	=	=
– Creativity	–	+
– Service to the public	–	+
– Evaluation/planning: development of a cultural policy	–	–

Certainly the most crucial of these criteria is the budgetary. If the funds are not forthcoming, innovation, which is the most important factor in all functions affected by cultural policy, will wither. Budgetary advantages, and also the overall development of culture, is more the result of the Government's political desires than the result of any particular administrative structure.

In the two structures, one enormously important function is seriously neglected—that of evaluation and planning, the explicit elaboration of a cultural policy.

This is why one must give great thanks to the Gulbenkian Foundation for having initiated a process of evaluation and reflection which promises, if one can go by the report of the First Conference, to be very fruitful for each country involved. And one must thank equally the Canada Council for having taken up the challenge.

Keeping Our Balance

Elizabeth Sweeting

Elizabeth Sweeting from 1978-80 was Arts Consultant to the Government of South Australia. She took a BA from the University of London, an MA from the Universities of Oxford, London and Adelaide, and received an MBE in 1966 for her services to the arts. An experienced Arts Administrator, she has worked in a great variety of positions in that field in England and also served as member of panels and working parties for the Arts Council of Great Britain. In Australia, Elizabeth Sweeting was chairman of the Conference on Arts Administration in Adelaide (1972) and in 1976 was invited by the Government of South Australia to be Director of the Arts Council of South Australia. From 1977 to 1980 she served as Council member of the Australia Council. She has participated in enquiries and reports for the Gulbenkian Foundation, Unesco, and the Australia Council. She is the author of three books on theatre.

Charles Dickens wrote somewhere about the best of times and the worst of times, one and the same. Perhaps it is a paradox appropriate to many periods, even to the state of the arts looked at from today's standpoint.

To take the good news first—the run-up over the last few years since the inception of increasing public governmental support for the arts has had many aspects of being the best of times. Government agencies strengthened their relationships not only with government but with other activities which cannot properly be divorced from the arts, such as education, community activities, local government, specialist training for artists, technicians, administrators, and the wider world of industry and commerce, in terms of interest as well as financial support. In this atmosphere, give or take inevitable set-backs, variable rates of growth and subsidy, the arts began to assume the possibility of a hopeful future. Established companies counted on stability and steady policy planning, the new and experimental brought forward dramatists, composers, artists who had outlets for their creativity, and there was a groundswell of self-generated and local activity in the community. Together with the provision of appropriate buildings and spaces, the arts world was sustained by the hope that all this would continue.

This achievement was naturally helped along by the development of administrative frameworks, a network of ancillary skills operated by a host of experts and interested individuals working with professional arts officers. As the arts expanded and proliferated, so too did the organisations and systems.

And here we come to the foreshadowing of the bad news. With hindsight, would it be fair to say that the systems were running hard to stay in the same place? Were they being outpaced by the arts rate of growth and by the rate of change in the context of social, political and economic conditions which instantly affect the arts?

There is, alas, no need to rehearse the sorry chronicle—recession, inflation, etc leading to fierce cutbacks in money available not only for the arts but in the interlinked areas from which progress in the arts is inseparable. Education, where the arts are the first activities to be lopped off when the axe falls because they are still, by and large, regarded as 'extras', is itself being demoted, from primary school to university and through continuing adult education. The results of this attitude will be even more apparent in the next few generations to come. In the short-term it is obvious that the ripple effects will be directly felt in potential audiences in performers, in leisure pursuits and in the sadly increasing numbers of old and young for whom some arts activity might at least provide human contacts or individual satisfaction in empty months or years of unemployment. Local governments can no longer provide arts facilities or personnel for the community to supplement or replace diminished opportunities.

In the immediate orbit of arts agencies and their work, arts activities have been stopped in their tracks, and at short notice. Some which are well-rooted, such as national and important regional companies, must perform either the celebrated U-turn, abhorred by some politicians, as we are constantly reminded. Others must drastically retrench and wipe out advances painfully and painstakingly made over many years. An unfortunate few, as they feel, must even disappear. I have no need to go on rehearsing the unfortunate ripple effects of hurling a very large stone into a pool. You have all in your various capacities been agonising about aiming the stone.

What I ask myself, granted that the cataclysm was inevitable, is whether the administrative attitudes and systems we have set up have proved themselves adequate in times of crisis. Could they perhaps have had, in their development and hardening, weaknesses which have not proved entirely equal to taking the strain, perhaps even to avoiding it or clearly enough seeing the possible consequences? Blessings can come heavily disguised and perhaps the worst of times is one in which we are forced to assess our work and our ideology which we have come to take for granted because so far they have appeared to work. Such an assessment cannot be bad. It may even be a reassurance. If not, we may be directed to the lateral thinking which we are always urging on our clients.

Belatedly, perhaps, I come to the use of the term 'balance' in the title. I chose it advisedly, because to me it conjures up the image of movement, of adjustment, of the weighting of either scale, putting on or taking away, aiming at accuracy, with apparatus which moves constantly. I have

preferred it to change, which has an element of replacement or removal. Unfortunately, very few of the factors which we have to put on our scales ever go away. They merely weigh more or less, as do the art forms and activities with which we are concerned.

I do not want to flog to death a metaphor which would not stand it, but I want also to emphasise my view that administration is a process, not the entity in itself to which it is sometimes elevated. That way madness lies. In fact, I want immediately to change the metaphor to say that administration is as organic to the arts as skin is to the body, living, breathing, and growing with the creature. It is also a guide, a safety net, a channel of communication between creativity and the recipients of the created products.

I stress all this because of what administration is not, but runs the risk of becoming—a blueprint, an instrument of power for its own aggrandisement. Do not be alarmed that I may be asking you to sink in the sea of metaphor. I believe only that the attitude must be established. There then follows the development of structures and skills to translate attitudes into day-to-day procedure directed to the correct end. The technical and technological expertise can and must be learnt, and integrated with experience. One must never fall in love with systems but remember what they are directed to. I quote W H Auden, as I have done elsewhere: his *Litany for Modern Man* asks: 'Deliver us from our peculiar temptation, that we may not come to regard the written word or the statistical figure as more real than flesh and blood.' In fact, the conjunction of the word, the figure, flesh and blood is probably what policy is. I have tried to practise what I preach, as my former colleagues may remember, as administrator of a national opera company, an international festival and a major repertory company. I have been on the begging bowl end as well as a participant in the distribution of largesse.

In administration of the arts, nothing ever stays put. Paraphrasing Polly Garter, one might say 'Life in the arts is a terrible thing, thank God'. One must keep one's own balance to deal with the shifting balance of everything else.

What, then, are these balances? How are they to be reconciled? A crucial relationship is that between the expressed, usually generalised, statement of government policy and its implementation by the arts agency. Within this relationship is the balance of the quasi-autonomy of the quango, the arm's length treatment of the clients, and the setting up of a judgemental system for the distribution of public funds for the greatest benefit possible within variable financial constraints.

This imposes the really crucial relationship between policy-making and funding—a *post-hoc, propter hoc* equation ideally. It includes the well-known dilemmas—raise or spend, instigate or encourage, align traditional and established with experimental and ephemeral, discourage the notion of permanence or require long-term planning. The intricacy of balancing these factors is increased by the inclusion of outside forces and sources of funds whose involvement we seek and need—private sponsorship, local government, education authorities et al. We have to weigh the prices to be paid for favours granted, such as the choice by private sponsorship of what is most likely to be 'useful' and prestigious for them. There is an effect on policy if it has to please too many masters. The masters may feel they have bought a right indeed to punish if policy is not agreeable to them. It is ominous that we have just had a case of censorship by subsidy, or by the withholding of subsidy, in the Greater London Council's decision not to increase the current grant to the National Theatre because affronted by one play. It has punished not the play, but the future planning of the company's work. It has, in these worst of times, jeopardised the dangerously fine line between policy and funding, when they may become identical.

If then, there are these dangers, who are the people who should discern and deal with them? How are they doing it? Here again we come to a difficult balance. It has become accepted practice to have departments in arts agencies, usually responsible for separate art forms—drama, music, visual arts, etc. They are manned by professional officers, with Boards, Panels or Committees as a supporting network or background of reference. This structure is said to be democratic, but, even if justice is done, it seems not to be seen to be done by the press and the media. They constantly question who the Panel members are, how they are chosen, how long they reign, what are their powers. The howls are redoubled in the worst of times, in the human reaction of assigning blame for a disaster. There is never a similar chorus of acclaim for long years of routine and successful

operation, but perhaps both reactions spring from the same ignorance of what really happens. Do we shrug our shoulders and say "That's Life"? But should we not also ask whether we ought not so readily accept the human frailty of others and question our own position? The howls come from the clients too, and it is becoming more than the family squabble which can be forgotten when attacks come from outside. It seems that here too the balance between agency and client is a tricky one.

It is essential to over-emphasise the comforting thought that the problems are special to arts. We cannot justly lay that flattering unction to our souls. We tend frequently to weaken our arguments in many contexts by saying complacently that the arts are a special case. If we mean to stress the sensitivity with which we should capitalise the personal qualities of talented and creative people, yes, they are special. If we mean that we intend to use them to prime and to maintain a multi-million dollar industry, then we must assume certain similarities with industrial and business practice. It is ironic too that agencies are constantly impressing on their clients the need for efficient and business-like conduct.

Within the agencies as well as within arts organisations, many of the problems are common to industry and business too. If they exist elsewhere, they may be soluble, in whole or at least in part, by similar measures. The main problems come about through the success of the operation, paradoxically—rapid growth which outstrips the capacity to change or modify the system, problems of communication when the empire becomes far flung, the increasing assumption of independence by departments, rivalry and competition between departments, taking the place of concerted and generally understood purposefulness. Are we not in danger of seeing growth as accretion rather than re-organisation? It is a great temptation for instance to meet increasing needs by acquiring more staff to do the same jobs instead of re-examining work allocation, or changing the management structure. It has taken the arts a long time to catch up with the modern management attitudes. This is being rectified by specific training and indeed by force majeure—the need to fight for existence, for audiences and for money through the box-office to justify subsidy from elsewhere. A case in point is the success recently of subscription seasons, sold aggressively in a manner which would have been unthinkable not so many years ago, *infra dig* and all that. The computer revolution is also making itself felt in areas which used to be the prerogative of inherited practices. It is no longer an excuse to say that communication is difficult. Information, if the equipment is there, is fully and instantly available to all. There is no need for each department of activity to keep separate and often incomplete records when an efficient central system, properly set up, can do better. Are we sure that arts agencies have begun to make full use of what technology has to offer? Money thus spent can be more than fully repaid in the results and benefits which flow on and develop, if the organisational structure can make the best use of them.

Which raises the basic question of the management structure. Here I must digress for a moment. My Parthian shot on leaving Australia was a report for the Australia Council on the organisation and the operation of the big arts complexes which the capital cities there can now boast, either completed or nearing completion. All seemed to be set up with the hierarchical system of management, the Man at the Top and Departments. In such large organisations it is certainly taxing to the wit of man to devise an elaborate system of relating the apex to the ever-widening base, in terms of information, operation and the setting up of budgets and financial control. Some already in operation were already fragmented in separate self-contained units, hardly aware that they are parts of a whole. The complexes are of course committed to development and change, but it could look as if they were advancing to battle as separate battalions without knowing what they were fighting for.

Any departmental organisation, as is the arts agency in general, may be subject to similar risks. Perhaps an alternative structure should at least be examined. Any setting up of internal frontiers in an arts agency is particularly old-fashioned, if not dangerous, when the arts themselves are crossing frontiers, joining forces, evolving multi-media forms, mixing professional and amateur skills and generally stimulating each other in new ways.

Far be it from me to advocate a free-for-all, to substitute a general *melée* for a clear structure. I venture to suggest that there is a need for greater flexibility, for a real exchange of knowledge within the organisation, based on people, not on paper. I have been reading with great interest

about the move to the Task Force conception of management. It is adaptable to many contexts and can be set up in many forms. Its purpose is to have a system in which designated experts in particular fields can be called together as and when need arises, not necessarily always the same group. They can take swift action across the board by reason of being well-informed about what is happening overall instead of knowing more about less and less. The relationship between departments can be maintained without an elaborate and time-taking machinery of regular meetings for exchanging information, which are sometimes set up with the best of intentions and then become such a drag that they are tacitly abandoned. As the situation changes, and in times when there are special difficulties, machinery exists to tackle special situations. The Task Force members might or might not be heads of departments, but would be chosen for expertise. It seems possible also that the existence of such a flying squad would ensure the continuing up-dating of expertise among professional officers. The danger of an established and static management structure is that its officers become office-bound and less and less aware of new developments taking place outside their world. It would surely be beneficial to build into the management procedures the importance of release periods for acquiring special training in the latest business methods. We should be sure that we give the staff who deal with the clients the know-how to be able to assess the progress and quality of all the activities we now expect them to undertake—marketing, financial control, industrial relations and all those practices which have now reached too high a degree of sophistication to be merely ‘picked’ up.

I referred earlier to the difficulties which cause resentment and unhappiness when unpopular decisions have to be made and made public. It is now an inescapable fact of life that much of any arts agency’s business has to be conducted in the glare of publicity. The arts are an emotive issue, and sympathy tends to be with those who are seen as under-dogs, victims of the wielders of power, whether derived from governments or from election to situations where power means control of public money. It could be that a Task Force within an arts agency could well tackle the problem of arts advocacy.

By this I mean a continuous programme which would be concerned with putting the case for the arts to governments, to potential sponsors, to the public, in appropriate terms, generalised and policy-based, but with concomitant explanation of the problems of funding, finance and general conduct. It is possible to stand by the belief that there is no obligation to explain the whole process, that one can go along with Falstaff’s saying ‘If reasons were as plentiful as blackberries, I would give no man reasons upon compulsion’. At the same time, this is surely an area for balance. Nothing arouses the anger of the media more than a suspicion that information is being withheld. They then get their noses well down on the scent to uncover the skullduggery which they believe must exist, and howl for the arts agency’s blood. Any later pronouncement has less credibility—*qui s’excuse s’accuse*, they say. Perhaps there is a way to find the balance between secrecy and undiplomatic disclosure, and a new way of finding the happy medium to defuse future fracas.

I have cited the Task Force as only one possible manifestation of what I see as the need for administration to be as flexible and speedily responsive as today’s dilemmas require. It is also important, I believe, as an outward and visible sign to our critics and clients, a statement of intent which can only be possible to an organisation in which thought has been given to all the checks and balances which make up policy, from which funding and other activities should logically flow. There are many other and perhaps better ways of doing this which you may already be using. I can do little more in this instance than draw attention to what I believe is the need to be alert and responsive in arts administration.

**Provision of Cultural Services with Public Funding:
The Hong Kong Experience**

Darwin Chen

Darwin Chen is the Director of Cultural Services of the Urban Services Department of the Hong Kong Government responsible for the overall policy and administration of cultural services including facilities for the performing arts and their manifestations, three museums and public libraries. Born in Shanghai, China, Darwin Chen holds a BA (Hons) degree of the University of London and a Diploma in Management Studies of the University of Hong Kong, and is a Member of the British Institute of Management. Darwin Chen has been involved in cultural work since 1961 when he joined Hong Kong's first cultural centre, the City Hall. For the past 10 years, he has been responsible for the development of cultural services which have grown from a single centre to a Cultural Services Department managing more than 30 venues/institutions, a staff of over 1,000 and three professional performing companies.

Hong Kong has experienced phenomenal growth in the last 20 years. From three million people in 1961, it has grown into a metropolis of more than five million people, crammed into an area of only 404 square miles. A large portion of this population growth consisted of recent immigrants from mainland China, mostly young adults of working age. The pressure exerted by this huge population explosion has been gigantic, both on the economy and on the social fabric of this small territory. Yet Hong Kong has not only survived, but actually prospered. The miracle of Hong Kong's economic success has become legend, but little has been said of Hong Kong's ability to maintain social stability—an achievement which is probably equal in magnitude and significance to its economic accomplishment. Despite the very crowded living conditions, the long hours of work needed to make a living, a double-digit inflation rate and the political uncertainties of the future, by and large Hong Kong is a stable and peaceful community. How did we do it? Of course, there is no simple answer, but I believe that the sincere concern over the well-being of the community and the tremendous efforts being made to improve the quality of life by the policy-makers of Hong Kong have been instrumental in bringing about a feeling of camaraderie among different walks of life in Hong Kong.

The very rapid expansion in the provision of cultural services by the Urban Council of Hong Kong represents a significant part of these efforts. The range of the services is deliberately cast as widely as possible: from puppet shows in a park to concerts by the world's renowned symphony orchestras in a superb concert hall; from Chinese instrumental recitals to Italian grand opera; from Shakespeare and Ibsen to Cao Yu and Brecht; from Tang pottery to Henry Moore; from ancient rock carvings of Hong Kong to exploration and study of the cosmos. These services, whether at libraries and museums or at concert halls and theatres, have all been enthusiastically used by the community. For example, annual attendance at the 950 outdoor entertainment events is 1.2 million; 600,000 persons attend concerts, plays, dance performances and exhibitions at the main cultural centre, the City Hall, each year; over 2 million visits are expected at the Museum of Art, the Museum of History and the Space Museum annually; and the public libraries lend out over 4 million books a year. These services are provided by the Urban Council at an annual cost of about HK\$80 million (US\$16 million) a year, or about HK\$20 (US\$4) per capita of the urban population of Hong Kong. This cost is met almost entirely from the Council's revenue consisting mainly of rates and fees.

Further expansion of these services is under active planning which includes the construction of more and better physical facilities, viz purpose-built museums and libraries, bigger and better-equipped concert halls and theatres, smaller multi-purpose auditoria for district and amateur companies, large indoor stadia and well-equipped open-air theatres. The total building programme for cultural facilities being planned by the Urban Council will cost HK\$1,000 million (US\$200 million) and is due to be completed before the end of this decade.

To provide a clearer picture of what these services consist of, what their objectives are, how they are organized, how much they cost, how well they have been received, what particular problems have been encountered—both social and economical, I shall deal with them under the general headings of the Performing Arts, the Visual Arts, the History Museum and the Space Museum and the Public Libraries.

The Performing Arts

Great strides have been made by the Urban Council in recent years in increasing the accessibility of the performing arts to the public. Some 1,500 events are funded and presented each year, ranging from Chinese and western operas, ballet, Chinese folk dances, instrumental and vocal music and orchestral concerts to film shows, exhibitions on the performing arts, lecture demonstrations and master classes. Total attendance is in the region of 2 million each year and an annual budget of HK\$30 million (US\$6 million) is provided for the promotion of the performing arts. This amount provides for two large orchestras—one western and one Chinese, a repertory theatre company, a dance company, two arts festivals—one international and the other Asian, a major film festival, and a host of guest artists both local and overseas, ranging from solo recitalists to large symphony orchestras and ballet companies. The great majority of the 1,500 events are held at open-air venues such as parks and playgrounds with free admission. For those indoor events with admission charges, ticket prices are deliberately pitched at levels to attract both students and wage

earners. As a result one could hear the Cleveland Orchestra or see the Sadlers Wells Royal Ballet at a fraction of the cost in the USA or London. In other words, the cultural programmes are very heavily subsidized, the ticket income being about HK\$5 million (US\$1 million) per annum, or 17% of the cost.

Although the subsidy of some HK\$25 million appears to be generous, it represents less than 3% of the Urban Council's annual budget and in Hong Kong's present state of prosperity (a surplus of HK\$8 billion representing almost one-third of the Government's annual expenditure is forecast for the next financial year), funding for the performing arts does not appear to be a major problem in the immediate future.

What, then, are the problems? The problems are, indeed, many, as may be expected in a situation of extremely rapid growth, the budget for cultural programmes having increased almost four-fold over the last four years.

Most are policy problems: Should emphasis be placed on Chinese or western art forms? Should the aim be the raising of standards or the spread of appreciation, the nurturing of the mind or the giving of pleasure? Should the Council set up and manage orchestras, dance and theatre companies and festivals, or merely grant subsidies to independent artistic organizations? Should physical facilities be provided before the formation of professional performing companies or the other way round? And should the facilities be centralized in major complexes or decentralized to cover each of the 11 urban districts of Hong Kong?

There are, of course, no simple and clear-cut answers to these questions. Indeed, our experience shows there is probably a different answer to the same question for each art form, each performing company, each facility. Nevertheless, we have found that sympathy and flexibility are the key words in the successful administration of the arts. For example, while devoting a great deal of effort and resources to the establishment and the management of the ethnic Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, the Council also subsidizes the western-style Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra which is managed by an independent organization. The Council's own Hong Kong Repertory Theatre aims at high artistic standards in both its choice of plays and its productions, but amateur and school drama companies are also supported, subsidized and promoted by the Council, eg its sponsorship of an annual amateur drama competition. While Boney M was presented at an open-air stadium one night, another evening would find Ravi Shankar in the concert hall. We are now planning a major cultural centre consisting of a 2,300-seat concert hall, a 2,000-seat lyric theatre and a 400-seat theatre-in-the-round; at the same time we are building several small multi-purpose and relatively unsophisticated auditoria in high-rise buildings which will also house markets, indoor games halls and libraries, spread over the entire urban areas of Hong Kong. Our Philharmonic Orchestra mixes the ever-popular works of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky with contemporary music by both local and overseas composers. On the one hand, we try constantly to understand and meet the special needs of our community for enjoyment and relaxation; on the other hand, we provide opportunities for the appreciation of the very best in music, dance and drama performed by internationally renowned artists.

This flexible and sympathetic approach towards the promotion of the performing arts has brought about the desirable result of excellent attendance figures, enthusiastic and appreciative audience response, an increased number of amateur performing groups, higher artistic standards, a more discriminating and critical public, and general awareness and acceptance of the performing arts as an enjoyable and meaningful pursuit.

The Visual Arts

Appreciation of the visual arts is promoted by the Urban Council mainly through the Hong Kong Museum of Art which has a collection of 4,000 items ranging from Chinese bronzes, ceramics, paintings and calligraphy to contemporary art in all forms by Hong Kong artists. This collection is expanded each year through an annual acquisition fund of HK\$3.6 million (US\$0.7 million). The Museum presented twelve exhibitions in 1980 displaying art from France, Britain, Singapore and the Philippines besides local and Chinese art and these are visited by some 320,000 people with free admission. Comprehensive exhibition catalogues are published for all major exhibitions.

In addition, reproductions, postcards and prints are available to the public at reasonable cost. As the present accommodation of the Museum of Art is far short of the area required to display the growing collection, a new Museum of Art which will have a usable floor area of 10,000 sq metres is being planned as part of a new cultural complex which will also house the concert hall and lyric theatre referred to earlier. Apart from the exhibitions in the Museum premises, small travelling exhibitions are organized for lending, free of charge, to schools, libraries and cultural institutions, thus providing opportunities for the appreciation of the visual art to students and residents all over the territory.

In organizing these activities, the main problems have again been policy ones, both social and economical. How much resources should be devoted to the building up of the Museum's collection? Should the collection be expanded rapidly to anticipate the construction of the new Museum? Or should a slow but steady pace be adopted in view of the current lack of space to display the collection the Museum already has? Should emphasis on the Chinese collection continue? If so, should acquisitions cover the whole of the vast range of Chinese art, or concentrate on particular media, periods, regions and artists? Should the Museum seek the very best pieces available without regard to cost, or attempt to fill the current gaps in the collection with significant but perhaps repaired or otherwise imperfect pieces at reasonable cost? Should the Museum's display aim at comprehensiveness, showing as many pieces as possible, or try to be representative in selection and attractive in presentation? Should exhibitions cater for the connoisseur and the scholar or the young and the uninitiated? Should the Museum be a mausoleum of Chinese masterpieces of the past or a home for Hong Kong artists of today and the future?

The Council's approach to these important questions has been basically a pragmatic one. Realising that it is simply not possible to compete with the well-established and well-endowed museums of the world and those in China in particular, the Council believes that the Hong Kong Museum of Art should be educational and regional, and its collection should reflect these objectives. Thus, the acquisition budget is a realistic one and purchases are geared to build up representative collections of the major art forms of China through the ages, with particular emphasis on the South China region. The pace of acquisition takes into account the eventual needs of the new Museum and is so phased that there will be adequate materials for display when the new building is completed in six to seven years' time.

On the other hand, the importance of showing the very best in order to raise the standards of appreciation is fully recognized. The Museum fulfils this need by organizing loan exhibitions of highly regarded private collections of Chinese porcelain as well as materials from other overseas museums as was the case in a recent exhibition of Chinese bamboo carvings and another one of Chinese snuff bottles.

While making the treasures of the past accessible to the public, the Museum is very much aware of its responsibility in encouraging and promoting the contemporary art of Hong Kong artists. Since the establishment of the Museum two decades ago, the visual arts in Hong Kong have grown into an active and forward-looking movement, and the work of many innovative and experimentative artists has become accepted and recognized. A great many of these successful and established artists today were introduced to the public through the Museum's biennial award schemes and further encouraged and promoted through regular exhibitions of their work sponsored by the Museum.

The many problems faced by the Museum of Art in its development have thus been tackled through a pragmatic but enlightened approach. Our experience indicates that such an approach encourages the appreciation and practice of the visual arts in all forms. The visual arts are happily blooming in Hong Kong as never before.

The History Museum and the Space Museum

The importance placed by the Urban Council on our links with the past is reflected not only in the collection of the Hong Kong Museum of Art, but also in its establishment of the Hong Kong Museum of History six years ago. The scope of the Museum of History covers both the recent past and the distant past. On the recent past, the Museum has built up an extensive collection of

old photographs of Hong Kong, a complete collection of coins and banknotes used locally, as well as collections of ethnographical materials and remnants of village architecture which are fast disappearing. On the distant past, the Museum is the repository of all archaeological finds which are surprisingly rich in Hong Kong. It is also involved in the identification, preservation and restoration of Hong Kong's dwindling number of buildings of historical significance.

The annual operating budget of the Museum of History is, as may be expected, smaller than that of the Museum of Art, because historical and ethnographical items usually cannot be bought 'off the shelf', but will have to be excavated, found or sometimes made in the form of models and replicas. Nevertheless a fund of HK\$3.2 million (US\$0.6 million) is made available annually for the activities and collections of the Museum of History. The Museum is now housed in rented premises and plans are in hand for the construction of a permanent Museum of History occupying a usable floor area of 12,000 sq metres.

The problems facing the Museum of History are perhaps peculiar to Hong Kong. While the political aspects of the history of Hong Kong are no longer regarded as sensitive issues, the Museum has the unenviable task of trying to rescue Hong Kong's past in the face of rapid urbanization and re-development. Hong Kong's history is being steadily and relentlessly wiped off the surface of the earth. Each day old structures are torn down and new skyscrapers put up. Invaluable archaeological sites, even those in remote parts of Hong Kong, are threatened by the building of new roads, new reservoirs, new tunnels, new houses. It appears that nothing can halt Hong Kong's building development. Even the premises of the Hong Kong Club, one of the last vestiges of Hong Kong's colonial past, will be demolished shortly despite public outcries and protests. The lure of gold is simply irresistible in Hong Kong, the entrepreneur's paradise.

Yet the people of Hong Kong, especially the generation born and brought up locally, are interested in the city's past, as evidenced by the annual attendance of 380,000 recorded by the Museum of History despite its small premises almost hidden away in a large commercial complex. It therefore falls on the Museum of History to salvage as much as it possibly can by recording and photographing old buildings and structures facing the wrecker's hammer and salvaging as much of the remnants as practicable. This work calls for a dedicated and knowledgeable staff. Motivating these staff members and providing suitable and essential training for them are problems which have to be tackled with understanding and forward-planning.

A complete change of scene is just across the road from the Museum of History. The visitor is taken from the distant past to the present and the future when he enters the newly completed Hong Kong Space Museum, another cultural project of the Urban Council. The Hong Kong Space Museum, which forms the first phase of the cultural complex referred to earlier, was opened in October 1980. It provides the public with a unique entertainment venue in which knowledge about the universe, space exploration and related sciences are presented through sky shows, exhibitions, public lectures and telescopic observations. Seven sky shows are screened every day in the space theatre which presents the audience with 9,000 stars in various configurations and surrounds them with a panorama of space scenes. This system is only the fifth of its kind in the world and the first to be installed outside America. In the astronomy hall, man's achievements in astronomy and space exploration are featured. The solar hall provides information on the structure and activities of the Sun and its relationship with the Earth, and visitors will be able to see images of the Sun through a solar telescope installed on the roof.

In the short period of five months since it opened, the Space Museum has recorded attendances of over 500,000. 1.4 million visitors are expected annually. The annual operating budget is HK\$9 million (US\$1.8 million). So far, problems facing the Space Museum have been largely technical and operational, as may be expected in a project of such complexity and under such heavy use. The main policy problem is whether the Space Museum should pay its way, and if so, whether this could be achieved without denying the student and the wage-earner the opportunity to experience this unique form of entertainment and education. By careful planning which maximizes the use of automation techniques, thus reducing staff costs to the minimum, and by aggressive marketing and publicity, the Museum hopes to be able to break even with admission charges pitched at levels similar to the average price of a ticket to one of the Council's many cultural programmes.

The success of the Space Museum has strengthened the Council's confidence in the viability of a Museum of Science and Technology. The need for such a museum in view of the industrial and technological orientation in Hong Kong's economy has long been felt and active planning began two years ago with the visit of a consultative team from the Association of Science and Technological Centres of the USA. The team's report has led to the adoption of a philosophy of 'hands on' participation for visitors and a futuristic rather than historical bias. A total floor area of some 17,000 sq metres is envisaged for the Science Museum. Since such a large undertaking will take several years to complete, the Urban Council will first put up a small building to serve as a temporary science museum in order to stimulate the public's interest in science and technology. As has been successfully proved in the Space Museum, the aim of the Science Museum will be both to educate and to entertain.

The Public Libraries

The Urban Council operates a total of 14 libraries spread over various districts of Hong Kong. Together they lend out over 4 million books a year to a registered readership of almost 1 million persons. There is an established policy of up-dating the book-stock, adding new knowledge and expanding the audio-visual collections. Apart from the usual lending, reference, periodicals and junior services, the libraries also provide extension activities covering a wide range of cultural topics, from creative writing to chamber music recitals, from children's drama competitions to lectures on Chinese classics, from ribbon-flower making to photographic techniques. Last year these extension activities held in the various libraries recorded attendances of 600,000. The annual budget for book acquisitions and other operating costs, excluding staff, is around HK\$10 million (US\$2 million). Since the service is free except for nominal charges for music listening, income is less than HK\$600,000 consisting mostly of fines on overdue books. Expansion of the library service will continue for some years, until the target of providing a large library in purpose-built premises for each population concentration of 200,000, with a book-stock of 0.7 per capita, is reached in seven years.

This policy takes into account the growing literacy level of Hong Kong's young population, the traditional desire to better oneself through self-education, the high density of population and its distribution pattern, the demand for books in both English and Chinese languages from an increasingly bilingual readership, and the need for meaningful leisure activities. The aim is to make each district library a mini cultural centre where readers are encouraged to make full use of the wide range of services provided. It is also intended that the libraries should serve as vital links between people at grass-roots level and the 'national' cultural facilities such as museums, concert halls and theatres. Thus travelling exhibitions from the museums visit the libraries regularly, information on the cultural programmes at the major cultural centres is readily available at the libraries, and book exhibitions in connection with major events such as arts festivals are held regularly. The public libraries have therefore become an important and integral part of the overall effort to make the arts accessible and comprehensible.

Conclusion

Cultural services in Hong Kong have grown and flourished because of the city's continuing prosperity, awareness of the urgent need to improve the quality of life of a hard-working population living under over-crowded conditions, the traditional high esteem in which the arts are held, the increasing sophistication of a young and better educated generation looking for new life styles and new fulfilment, and the stimulation and interaction of a bi-cultural society.

Together these factors have produced a fertile field for creativity and expression on the part of the artists, and appreciation and enlightenment on the part of their audiences. Our policy-makers have provided the opportunities, and our people have taken full advantage of them. 'There is clearly a growing social commitment to the common man in a way that was never the case before,' the Chairman of the Urban Council, Mr A de O Sales, said recently in a policy statement on culture and entertainment.

In Hong Kong, we have a Council which fully acknowledges the significance of cultural pursuits, is prepared to devote adequate resources to promote such activities, and approaches this task with

sympathy as well as determination in a pragmatic and flexible manner. We have a community which is hard-working, maintains high levels of productivity, treasures its cultural heritage, and participates enthusiastically in the cultural programmes that are offered. We stand at a cultural crossroad where east meets west. Under these favourable circumstances, consolidation and further growth of our cultural services may be expected although the numerous and complex policy problems mentioned above will require continuous and searching attention.

There is an old Chinese adage advocating liberal thinking: 'Let a hundred birds sing in unison; let a hundred flowers blossom together.' This is happening in the cultural scene of Hong Kong. Indications are that this happy trend will continue in the years to come.

The Cultural Dimension of Development

Rex Nettleford

The Hon Rex Nettleford, OM, is Professor of Extra Mural Studies at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona, Jamaica, where he directs the University's Adult Education Programme for the Commonwealth Caribbean territories which support the UWI, and heads the Trade Union Education Institute. He has taught Politics in his University's Department of Government as well as Politics and Culture in the UWI's Institute of Mass Communication. His parallel career as a creative artist is reflected in his long and extensive work in the field of art and culture. He was for many years Chairman of the Institute of Jamaica charged with the overall implementation of cultural policy in Jamaica and Cultural Adviser to the Prime Minister from 1972-1980. He is Founder, the current Artistic Director and Principal Choreographer of, as well as dancer in, the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica. He has led several overseas cultural missions from his native Jamaica since 1963 to North America, Europe, Australia, Latin America and Africa. He has had experience in the field of development as founding Governor of the Board of the Canada-based International Development Research Centre. He is also a member of the Inter-American Committee on Culture (CIDECA) OAS, and has acted as Expert/Consultant (on Culture) to the Government of Ghana 1962, FESTAC 76, (African Festival), CARIFESTA 76, and UNESCO. He is Chairman of the London-based Commonwealth Arts Organisation. He has lectured extensively on Caribbean political development in many countries including India, the Philippines and Israel. He is the author of several books and articles, editor of CARIBBEAN QUARTERLY as well as a radio and television political analyst in his native Jamaica. He was educated in Jamaica and at the University of the West Indies, where he read History (Honours) and Oxford where he pursued post-graduate studies in Politics as a Rhodes scholar.

The contribution of Professor Rex Nettleford to the background papers of the Conference was an extract: Part 3, of his book, *An Essay in Caribbean Identity*. It was a notable contribution to the material for debate and information but, in view of its considerable length, a summary has been made to conform with the limitations of the published report. Additionally, Professor Nettleford played a significant role throughout the conference discussions and in initial plans for a Third Conference.

The title of the selected extract, *The Cultural Dimension of Development*, goes to the heart of the matter. It gives an account of the political background against which cultural development acquires its importance, and the informing belief in the vital role of culture, in the emergence of independence and nationhood. Implicit in both the historical process and the philosophy is much of importance not only to developing countries but all those which respect and support the arts. The premise is argued that cultural development is an integral part of the overall developmental imperative, along with economic growth and political modernisation; it is not merely an instrument of coherent growth at a particular stage in the evolution of nationhood, but is the factor of continuity in a continuing situation of rapid change. The arts may throw up 'symbols' of nationhood, but as a product of their own identity, not of the political will.

In the history of the early nationalist movement, the arts were accorded centrality in the eloquent utterances and political acts of Norman Manley in the 1960s. They aroused criticism and debate in which serious questioning of his views in fact did much to crystallise them. He sensed the danger that, particularly in developing countries, 'cultural goods and cultural products served the better-offs while the masses of poor people benefited little, even when they were the primary producers of a wealth of customs, religious rituals, songs, dances, spirit and the very life they lead'.

Cultural policy in Jamaica after 1973 was therefore placed within the frame of human resources development. Organic linkages were set up with education and training, including preparation for employment as well as the artist's own celebration of life in a variety of self-expression. The 1970s were notable for the work of the Exploratory Committee of the Arts, chaired by Rex Nettleford, then Cultural Adviser to the Prime Minister. The work of this Committee ranged over a wide field, including the necessary freedom and importance of private input; the resources of Government and the private sector; decentralisation; participation; the perspectives of the cultural heritage; the natural concept of the creative arts in education; the employment potential and protection of the artist's livelihood; the inclusion of sports in the social implications of the amenities which enhance the 'quality of life'. This last phrase, often used superficially, has real meaning in the building of a unified and contented society. For such a deeply-rooted process, the arts are finally useless if they are merely an instrument of nationalist propaganda. They must help to bring about real personality development and so enhance the greater stability of the whole society.

It is further pointed out in this exposition of the Jamaican experience that Government participation is seen as essential. The key-word is 'catalyst', to assist activity which is intrinsically independent towards fulfilment as an element of the general good. The Committee stated its belief that this is 'best done by linking cultural development organically with social and economic development through the country's educational policy, adult education and youth community programmes as well as through direct assistance to national cultural bodies and groups'. Separation of the collective cultural tradition from formal education is seen as 'part of the alienation and schizophrenia that grip the nation in its search for identity'.

This very much touches on the conference debate about the wrong direction which could be taken in search of an artificial revival of the traditional arts without regard to their real roots. Manley is further quoted in relation to the need for the arts to be a truly national product: 'If the whole society is to develop in an egalitarian way, art must reflect the total social experience and be appreciated by society as a whole'.

In order to move in practical terms to this desirable idea, he further detects a two-part process in self-discovery by post-colonial societies. This is not best achieved by disregarding or denying the effects of colonialism but by taking a long view of the evolution of a people's culture. He suggests that the first part is to ascertain the validity of their own culture at the moment of colonial

intervention and retrace the steps that led up to this point. The second is to establish within the frame of reality the culture imposed by colonialism to give it true perspective.

Such statements of belief and intent remain academic unless they are implemented so that the whole society is alerted to the importance of the arts and actively assisted to understand and participate, primarily, of course, through education in every sense of the word. In the context of the conference, this union, seen as of prime importance by others of the developing countries' speakers in the debate, became one of the most fruitful issues.

To quote Manley again, as does Rex Nettleford, on the need for education to embrace the arts: '... the educational process must first recognise art, in the widest sense of painting, sculpture, poetry, drama, literature, the theatre, music, dancing and the rest, as an indispensable element in the process of transformation'.

Jamaica had already instruments of such policy to hand which acquired experience in the years between 1944 and 1962 (Independence). They included voluntary groups, broadcasting and library services, the work of the Ministry of Education in primary and secondary schools in areas of arts, crafts and music, as well as major bodies such as the University of the West Indies and its Department of Extra-Mural Studies. Others followed in the first ten years of Independence, until in 1972 the decolonisation process was accelerated. This 'ensured the continuity of what went before and focused attention on the rationalisation of all these institutions of cultural action against the background of deliberate social change'. By 1977, Rex Nettleford states: 'Jamaica could genuinely refer to a cultural policy that has an identifiable mechanism of implementation (in practice an aggregation of interlocking institutions and procedures) which if properly worked can help lead the nation towards a socially just and humane society'.

He gives a full and fascinating account of these interlocking institutions, with particular emphasis on the Schools of Drama, Dance, Music and Art which were finally brought together in a Cultural Training Centre in 1976 which was built at a cost of 2.6 million dollars, 'to provide adequate facilities for the training of teaching, creative and performing talents in art, music, dance and theatre'.

There is interesting emphasis on the involvement of practising artists who recognise the need for some re-orientation towards the work of training and the skills required for teaching which differ from those for artistic practice and performance. The whole account of these Schools and their activities provides useful information for such work in other countries. It does not ignore the tension which can exist between the artist's individualism and the need for public expenditure which supports these institutions to benefit the many, not the few, and stresses the need for Government to recognise the special character of creative talent. At the same time it has particular relevance in these times of mass unemployment, particularly of the young, in the need for training to be geared towards the ensuing sense of usefulness which cancels out the sense of alienation of the artist from society which he feels has rejected him and his work.

The other major instrument of cultural development fully described by Rex Nettleford is the Institute of Jamaica, founded in 1879, and set in the mould of colonial rather than indigenous culture, it too now reflects change and development into present day structure. He describes its great diversity of provision for an art gallery, publications, natural history, a reference library central to the Caribbean countries, and links with community cultural centres. It is another example of structural diversity, a unity made up of inter-related cultural institutions, defined by Rex Nettleford as 'an umbrella rather than an iron-grid'. It is the responsibility of a permanent Council of the Arts, set up for 'the encouragement and development of Literature, Science, the Arts and Culture, the pursuit of history, the preservation of monuments for the public benefit'. Its Board of Management is made up of the Chairman from each constituent unit of the Institute, together with many key voluntary workers, paid employees and artists. As well as this varied empire, there is also the Jamaican Festival Commission for the annual celebration of traditional and contemporary culture best able to mobilise Jamaicans regardless of age, class or location.

Government finance to support and stimulate these large-scale, wide-spread implementations of cultural policy is described in impressively full detail by Rex Nettleford. In addition he stresses

the need for seeking international aid and the already existing means of such promotion of outside help via the Gulbenkian Foundation's Branch in London and through bodies connected with UNESCO. Strategic funds remain a problem for Jamaica as for other developing countries, where the cultural process has to be reinforced as part of the developmental imperative. Cultural activity in these countries has the extra dimension of need to stand firm in asserting national indigenous arts against the external pressure of imports from other countries. Rex Nettleford writes strongly about the danger of 'cultural subjugation' by the mass media from neighbouring countries, for instance. Mentioned also by other speakers, strong media policy seems to him a priority, reinforced by a national information system, and he sees the need for setting up an advisory body for Government on media development as part of cultural growth in the national context. Democracy is one thing, mass culture, especially imposed from outside the national entity, is another, and the danger of equating the two must be avoided. Ensuring dedication to cultural achievement by Government and individuals can make a stand for unpressured nationhood. On this hopeful note, which inspires Rex Nettleford's account, he also points out the inherent advantage enjoyed by the developing state: 'the capacity for innovation and continuing discovery, once people obtain the opportunity, is seemingly unlimited'. This thought may well be an inspiration for their continuing regard for their arts.

**Public Policy-Making and Administration:
The Pragmatics and Aesthetics from a
Malaysian Point of View**

Ungku A Aziz

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This conference is concerned with principles and policies involving national or local efforts to support the arts. This paper is mainly confined to a discussion of some aspects of policy formation and administrative implementation in two relevant institutions in Malaysia where the author has had some direct experience. The term 'arts' is therefore somewhat restricted to works of art that can be exhibited in a museum and the performing arts. The pragmatics include all aspects of the realization of policy. These activities may range from the purchase of stationery or the approval of a motorcycle loan for an office boy, to the transmission of valuable museum pieces for loan exhibitions. The mounting of displays with explanatory cards in several languages or the preparation of posters, catalogues or brochures for travelling exhibitions or cultural performances are typical examples of such activities.

Under aesthetics are included the selection of items to be acquired, displayed or performed. Every order has its rationale. If harmony is apparent, then it reflects the underlying concept of the arrangements. This reflects consistency in policy formulation. The scarcity of funds may be a constraint on growth but it is not a serious impediment to harmony.

The Malaysian Context

Although Malaysia declared its Independence on 31 August 1957, its present socio-cultural matrix may not be equally familiar to all the participants of this conference. A brief description of the main forces at play may help readers of this paper to understand certain policies.

For over a thousand years, Southeast Asia has been the focus of highly differentiated cultures. For example, it is one of the few loci in the world where Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity have peacefully co-existed for long periods. Substantial numbers of people have lived side by side over long periods without becoming involved in religious wars. The underlying native systems of beliefs have, and to a perceptible extent continue to be, a heterogeneity of systems of pagan beliefs.

During the previous four centuries the region has been aggressively colonized by foreign powers ranging from Portugal to America. Furthermore, it has been permeated by a uniquely integrated community whose orientation is more towards commerce and the accumulation of wealth than proselytization or acculturation: namely, the Chinese of Southeast Asia.

Briefly, this implies that any cultural policy always has to be formulated in a multi-dimensional poly-directional continuum. The European or North American situation where there is one main religious influence, Christianity, is distinctly different. Even if there are differences, the basic beliefs are fairly compatible with each other. Gothic architecture or a medieval triptych can be understood and appreciated by most Euro-Americans because they share a common heritage in the Bible. In a broad sense European languages stem from a few common roots and by the twentieth century they have been considerably cosmopolitanized. The alphabet is one single Latin script. To return to the Southeast Asian case—diversity requires a special attention to harmony for peace to prevail. In this context art can play a decisive role.

In Malaysia, for example, the citizens of Indian origin, who form less than ten percent of the total population, regard the Hindu religion as a vital part of their daily life. Temple iconography, liturgical chants and music or dance have strong religious significance for the man in the street who is a Hindu. It is unlikely and I would even say undesirable for any attempt to be made to modify these classical forms so as to 'Malaysianize' them. Similarly, while the genuine, i.e. rather unwesternized, Chinese of the Southern Seas do not mind other people visiting their temples or even participating in their rituals, these are so different that no absorption or adulteration would be tolerated. Then, unfortunately (to use a value-loaded word), much of what is thought to be western and so-called 'modern' culture is of a superficial popular type purveyed mainly by the mass media including television.

Indeed, to sum up, if anything indigenous can survive from these highly charged close encounters with forces of the fourth kind, it would be a miracle. As we shall see in the latter part of this paper, this potent brew of powerful cultural forces that rarely interact is not the only force that confronts attempts to clarify or to discover the genuine native culture. There are the mongols of the red-tape

wastes and the barbarians of the committee rooms, not to mention the philistines who regard culture as one of the stepping stones to power and wealth.

The Aesthetics

Among the fundamental liberties guaranteed by the Malaysian Constitution are the freedom of religion and rights in respect of education. The Constitution also states that the National Language shall be the Malay language provided that no person shall be prohibited or prevented from using, other than for official purposes, teaching or learning any other languages.

To this writer, the aesthetic aspects of cultural policy formulation fall into two disparate parts:

1. The avoidance of restrictions on individuals who wish to preserve or to enjoy their own cultural traditions, artifacts, performances etc. and,
2. The identification and promotion of genuine native cultural traditions, artifacts and performances etc.

Thus, the Indians should be free to enjoy Tamil music or Kathakali dance or to worship Ganesha in their temples. The Chinese should not be discouraged from supporting their temples especially their God of Wealth, Toh Peh Kong, and their classical or popular music. The Western educated Malaysians who have lost some of their Hindu or Chinese cultural roots in their scramble for modern Western cultural forms (high or low, notwithstanding) should be left to changing fads and fashions so long as their behaviour does not seriously threaten the economic and social fabric of the nation.

However, the real cultural identity of the Malaysian nation may only be found in the tenuous strands of native or Malay culture. Over the centuries this native culture has absorbed certain Hindu, Islamic and Western influences which are clearly noticeable in the etymology of the Malay language and in certain traditional customs. Since the Fifteenth Century there has been an increasing absorption of Islamic cultural influences from parts of the Arabian peninsula, Persia and the Indian sub-continent.

To sum up, the task of cultural institutions such as art museums or academic publishers or university theatres is to respond to these two streams. The ceramics that were exported to Southeast Asia from China, Japan and later from Vietnam and Thailand are part of the real heritage of the region. The religious statues and Chinese manuscripts or Arabic calligraphies created in stone, wood, metal or textiles should be collected and displayed with adequate explanations.

Simultaneously, the works created by native artists must be found, studied and displayed with adequate explanations too. This is the part that is so difficult. Much has been lost. A large quantity has been taken out of the region by European and American collectors. What remains is now being carefully threshed out, repaired and displayed. This can bring a new pride to the Malaysian people, many of whose leaders have been beholden to Europeans who have 'discovered' and 'explained' their culture and the messages therein. This line of thinking should not be dubbed as parochialism or xenophobic nationalism. It is a key part of the process of strengthening the fragile nationhood which must grow in the multi-cultural background of the total population.

Naturally, education and the mass media play greater roles in this process. Nevertheless, museums, exhibitions and theatrical performances are vital roots in the formation of this tree of culture. Therefore, policy needs to be formulated accordingly. Neither stream should be allowed to overwhelm the other. We should try to find a harmonized balance, as Ezra Pound says, the 'unwobbling pivot' between the two streams.

To be fair to certain parties, I would openly lay my cards on the table and state that I do not believe in the mixing up of cultural elements—Indian, Chinese, European, Malay or Islamic—to synthesize a kind of 'Malaysianized' culture. Without getting into a lengthy discussion, I would simply state that I believe one cannot produce culture like a salad or a cocktail.

The Malaysian ideal aesthetics should encourage tolerance for other cultures while the native Malay culture is more clearly identified and further strengthened.

Pragmatics—The Implementation

This section is divided into personalities, procedures and resources. The aim is to distinguish different categories of protagonists while perhaps some provocative statements are made about relevant desirable characteristics. What each does or should do comes under the sub-heading of 'The Who'. Ranges of activities are indicated rather than the finer niceties of official, General Orders. Resources are mainly but not solely concerned with funds. Since cultural presentations are often seen by financial officials as luxuries which can be easily accorded lower priorities, a regular confrontation occurs during budget meetings, especially when funds for special projects are requested.

Before trying to discuss these rather acultural attitudes, it may be desirable to examine the types of persons who are involved in the support of the arts, as well as the ways and mores that have evolved. Ultimately, like it or not, funds will be the decisive factor.

1. The Who

The taxonomy of individuals concerned with the arts may be divided into three categories:

- (a) Officials, who may be further subdivided into administrators and academics;
- (b) Committee members, who may consist of ex-officio government representatives and of ordinary persons; and
- (c) The Chairperson.

The officials are full-time employees of the State, the University or of whatever institution it is that is concerned with arts support. They may be seconded from the general civil service or they may be direct employees of the institution concerned. These administrators should mainly be involved in the pursuit of the stuff of bureaucracy: letters, files, minutes, accounts, circulars and graceful pas de deux in the corridors of power. They are a necessary evil. Problems arise when they exceed their function and try to determine aesthetic policy. Therefore the success of any institution depends upon the skill of the chairperson in extracting the maximum efficiency from the administrative officials without allowing them to influence, significantly, cultural policy which should be determined by the Board of the Institution.

The academic officials would include curators, keepers, and other non-administrative career employees who, where possible, should be kept well away from administrative tasks. The talents of these academics are based on training, knowledge and a certain subjective ability that may be summed under the simple word 'taste'. Some degree of control has to be placed on their taste otherwise they may be excessively motivated to develop the museum etc. along lines that may become skewed.

Besides these full-time employees who are responsible for dealing with the day-to-day affairs and the actual implementation of policies, there are the committee members and the chairperson.

The Board of Trustees or the Council are often given the legal authority to be responsible for the institution concerned. In other instances, their duties may be of an advisory nature and the director of the institution would be the main legal authority.

For convenience and to draw attention to some interesting differences in functions and powers, I have distinguished between the committee and the chairperson.

The committee may consist of ex-officio members who represent Ministries, other Councils or certain public authorities. Individual members who may be appointed by a Minister or by designated interested societies or associations, are there entirely in their personal capacity. The Ministers etc. who appoint these individuals have the delicate task of searching for dedicated individuals who are prepared to sacrifice their time and energy for such work. In developing countries, there is a

pronounced scarcity of such individuals and the few that are available tend to be overworked. Many able and otherwise suitable persons are generally too busy accumulating wealth or power to agree to serve on arts councils, etc. This problem may be solved after half a century of Independence when the ranks of the elder statesmen and retired officials become larger. Only time can solve this problem.

Chairpersons are harder to find. Their quality can be a critical factor in the effectiveness of an arts council. They stand between the administrators and the academics. They moderate the various opinions and fancies of the Council. Above all, they need to have a good idea of the main thrust of the Council's program of activities. They stand between the Council as a whole and the government.

It is desirable that the Chairperson should have a modicum of influence in the world of finance so that private donations or grants for foundations may be more readily obtained. I would add the suggestion, perhaps to attract discussion, that the Chairperson can be rather more engaged with a particular aspect of the arts than the other members of the Committee, taken as a whole. An indifferent Chairperson will take the Committee through the agenda of its meeting like a novice playing a musical exercise on the piano.

2. *The How—Procedures*

Since support for the arts may range from buying materials for budding artists who are poor to the preparation of art exhibitions with \$50 catalogues, the subject can be extensive. Nevertheless, basically, it means the implementation of decisions that have been made by the Council. In another sense, it means the realization of the general policies of the Council even though some areas may not have been discussed in full detail. In yet another sense, it means the creation of an efficient, honest and useful administrative system that gets things done to the satisfaction of most of those concerned.

Since arts organizations involve relationships with creative individuals, a special attitude is needed. Creative artists are sensitive people whose feelings can easily be hurt by bureaucratic procedures that may appear to them to involve excessive red-tape or in some way to be 'inhumane'. If they are to be helped, such assistance should come reasonably swiftly and with a minimum of fuss. They should be encouraged to be creative with a minimum of interference. During periods of stress, particularly if a program involves travel, a high degree of tact and skill in the management of human relations is required. Wherever possible, it will be best to minimise administrative responsibilities including correspondence, filing etc. among the academics and the creative personalities.

Regarding acquisitions for a museum, those responsible should be able to allow a small group of persons to make the decisions, especially where, for instance, normal purchases are being made. If the sums involved are exceptionally large, then the ultimate sources may need to be rather strongly convinced of the aesthetic value of the acquisition.

To sum up this section: there should be a clear separation between routine activities which are the responsibilities of different levels of employees in the institution and the formulation and approval of policy which should be the prerogative of the Committee or Board. Between meetings the Chairperson should be able to provide an interpretation of the mainline of thinking or the consensus of the committee.

The Chairperson and the Director or the more senior employees need to have a clear understanding of who is to be the most senior personality. This will probably vary with circumstances and so no rule can be suggested. However, at any one time the exact balance of power should be apparent to all concerned and any struggles should be kept to a minimum in the interest of the institution which all concerned serve.

3. Resources

For its normal operations, an institution requires a budget that provides for staff, relevant requisites and a vote for special projects such as the purchase of acquisitions or financial support for creative persons sponsored by the institution. Usually, the institution receives an annual one-line grant from the Ministry under which it is placed. The projected budget is considered by the Board and then negotiated with the Ministry. What can be frustrating is the experience where an ex-officio member of the Board (e.g. a Treasury representative) can argue fiercely against certain projects, and then even if the Board outvotes such a person, he can have a second or third opportunity of terminating the project as the Budget goes through its various stages in the Ministry and through the government. This allows excessive power to relatively junior officials who may have no commitment to cultural affairs or who may be virtually ignorant of cultural matters. This problem is compounded when the ex-officio representatives from such Ministries are frequently changed. The man 'who can most be spared' is given the file and attends a particular meeting. Inevitably, he plays it by ear, and metaphorically, he may be somewhat hard of hearing. At the next meeting another officer from the Ministry attends and so on ad infinitum.

At this level, one comes across instances where ex-officio representatives attempt to downgrade the academic type of posts in museums or cultural centres. One gains the impression that there is some kind of belief that, (a) culture is a luxury deserving a low priority, and (b) cultural or academic officials do not deserve to receive incomes comparable to those of their administrative colleagues even though they may be roughly of the same career vintage. This is a pity.

To digress, briefly, this is one reason why in the University of Malaya, concerted attempts have been made to establish and to fill with worthy exhibits a museum of Asian art as well as to equip a large theatre and a multi-purpose theatre in the round. The hope is that a significant proportion of our graduates, who may become government officials, will have a rather better appreciation of cultural matters.

Turning to the problem of acquisitions or large single expenditures, we are confronted with some of the most essential issues in cultural support. How does one persuade any government official to agree to spend say 10,000 Canadian dollars on the purchase of some battered-looking Khmer jar? This is almost an impossibility.

However, fortunately, donations to the University qualify for exemption from income tax. Therefore, all that needs to be done is to find potential wealthy donors and to persuade them to contribute towards the enrichment of the museum's collection. In third world developing countries, like Malaysia, such people are used to making donations to hospitals, welfare homes and of course to political organizations. From my own experience I have found that each instance has needed a considerable effort in art education as well as friendly persuasion from 'authoritative personalities' before such donations can be forthcoming. Such sources can be generous but may not be approached too often. Of the few charitable foundations in the country, only two will provide substantial assistance whenever called upon. Smaller grants may be obtained to help research in the field of cultural studies or to support the publication of books that would otherwise not be commercially viable.

Although on first impression cultural support may seem to be expensive, if the national significance of such activities is realized then it may not seem to be so costly. Comparisons may also be made with comparable expenditures on such functions as state dinners, annual processions or displays etc. It seems difficult to get culture firmly locked into the national scene as an item deserving adequate financial support simply because it is culture and because national unity depends in some degree upon a popular realization of the national cultural base.

Another problem in avoiding the diversion or diminution of resources is a tendency to relegate native culture to a class of folk art. It may be considered entirely proper for a Persian carpet to be obtained for exhibition in the section on Islamic art, in the art museum, but a piece of Malay textile woven with gold threads and having a similar grammar of patterns would be seen as being more appropriate for an ethnographic museum and would be classified as a form of folk art.

While it may be possible to fill an art museum with donated items or to present dramatic, dance or musical performances for nominal expenditures, it is not possible to sustain such activities at any desirable qualitative level. The museum may be filled with items that people prefer to donate and not with items that may make up a harmonious collection. The performances may be infrequent or of varying quality. Therefore a cultural institution needs to be given sufficient financial resources if it is to fulfil any national role adequately.

Dilution and Degeneration

In some of the more fortunate third world countries, waves of cultural creativity, frequently coupled with a powerful curiosity to discover original roots buried under the detritus of a colonial culture, can sustain a wide based popular thrust in many forms of cultural activity. In other instances, the realization of the need to achieve rapid economic development, while reducing poverty especially in the rural sector, absorbs the whole energy of the ruling elite. What then happens to cultural support?

The adage about bread and circuses by Junius operates. Thus spectacles and extravaganzas are required more than presentations of genuine national art. An endless circuit of visiting dignitaries enhances this demand. Furthermore, tourism exudes a strong influence which is justified on the grounds that it is supposed to enhance economic development. In such situations, the following trends are noticeable:

- Shortening of the time for the presentation of each item
- Increase in physical tempo
- Simplification of costumes and props
- Intensification of colours
- Flowing movements become jerky

A dance that may normally progress through four stages over 30 minutes is reduced to two stages taking 10 minutes. Slow graceful movements are speeded up. Steps become hops or jumps. The net effect to the eyes of the cultural purists is that of seeing a group of monkeys prancing on hot bricks. The danger is that since such performances are frequently shown on television and described in the press, in a short while these degenerated and diluted forms become accepted as the real thing. Visiting expert dance instructors from the West may try to 'improve' the performances by introducing gestures and body movements that are totally alien to the native way.

A few years of such 'progress', often sponsored by national cultural institutions, distorts the national cultural forms into something that can best be described as being fit for tourists. The original forms are lost and their performers retreat into neglect and poverty until perhaps years later they are rediscovered, old and decrepit, at some national cultural congress where pious resolutions may be adopted.

This author has seen the passing of the Malay opera within one generation. We are witnessing the systematic dilution of native forms of dance. We are subjected to distortions of the original ways of singing and performing national music. The introduction of electronics into musical instruments has exacerbated the whole process. All these activities are made in the name of progress.

It should be noted that no reference has been made to the activities of politicians or propagandists who also contribute in their own ways to the general deterioration.

What Needs to be Done

The preamble to the Unesco Constitution states that, since wars begin in the minds of men, the defences of peace must be created in the minds of men. Similarly, cultural appreciation begins in the minds of men. Men and women form the body of a nation. The minds of the leaders need to be tuned towards the appreciation of national aesthetics. Only then will resources become more readily available to support cultural programmes.

Here are some of the points that occur to the writer of this paper:

1. We must continuously search for the real sources of the national culture. These sources need to be properly recorded in their pre-degenerated forms. We should study the genuinely creative artists even though they may not have fancy names or wear modish garments.
2. We should support activities and programmes which help to rediscover native art and culture.
3. We should avoid using terms like 'folk' or 'ethnic' to downgrade native art.
4. We should learn to appreciate modern western art forms side by side with national art, in all fields. However, we should not try to graft one form on to another. It should be accepted that the process of cultural absorption or adaptation requires centuries. That which is synthesized, instantly, becomes the cultural equivalent of junk food.
5. Practically, while there is a need for efficient administrators in cultural institutes, cultural activity like sports or education must be carried out by dedicated professionals or as I have called them, academics. Both parties together with their multi-headed committees should be led by chairpersons of impeccable ability who have a deep appreciation of national culture as well as for other cultures.
6. The right mixture in the correct milieu can catalyze into a rich interaction between a people and their culture. In such a situation, cultural institutions would receive their proper support and they could truly fulfil their role of assisting the nation to discover its ethos.

**Reforming the Arts Council:
The New Zealand Experience**

Michael Volkerling

Michael Volkerling was born in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1948. He was educated at the University of Auckland and was awarded a PhD in New Zealand literature in 1976. After working for some years as an education editor, Dr Volkerling joined the advisory staff of the Queen Elizabeth the Second's Arts Council in 1974. He was appointed acting director in December 1976 and director in June 1977, a position he still holds. In addition to numerous lectures, articles, radio talks and reviews, Dr Volkerling has edited a number of publications including the *Politics of Education* (1969) and *Soundscape* (1973).

1. Arts Councils internationally are a recent phenomenon. The Arts Council of Great Britain, the first in the field, was set up only 35 years ago; and the most recent I know of—the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand—was established just six years ago. I say ‘established’—perhaps *re-established* is the more accurate word. For although the New Zealand Arts Council was originally set up in 1963, its structure and functions were changed so fundamentally by amending legislation 12 years later that it must be considered as effectively a new organisation.

The Arts Council of New Zealand is not the only government arts agency which has attracted controversy during its short history. In Canada, Australia and Great Britain the structure, function and operations of similar bodies have been the subject of continuing public discussion, and their fortunes have waxed and waned accordingly.

There are a number of important reasons why Arts Councils should have enjoyed such a stormy and such a tenuous existence. Some of these problems are the legacy of the cultural tradition and administrative context within which Arts Councils operate; others, however, have been intensified by the way in which Arts Councils have chosen to conduct their business. The primary conflict concerns the continuing dialogue about the nature of culture and, in particular, the nature of the common culture the people of any country should share. It is an argument which extends in English writing from the work of Coleridge and Mill to T S Eliot and Raymond Williams, but remains substantially unresolved. Eliot, for example, saw the ‘conditions for the survival of culture’ as depending on that

‘... class of people who recognise public and private responsibility of patronage of the best that is made and written’¹.

The responsibility of the arts patron thus consisted for Eliot in the ‘maintenance of a particular level of culture’, embodying its highest artistic achievements, for ‘the benefit ... of the society as a whole’.²

For Williams, culture does not consist simply in a fixed set of received traditions conforming to known criteria. Instead culture arises from continuing social process, characterised by aesthetic and formal variety.

He stresses that

‘A culture, while it is being lived is always in part unknown, in part unrealised. The making of a community is always an exploration, for consciousness cannot precede creation, and there is no formula for unknown experience.’³

And Williams argues the need to

‘actively encourage all and any who can contribute to the advance in consciousness which is the common need. We need to consider every attachment, every value with our whole attention; for we do not know the future, we can never be certain of what may enrich it.’⁴

The conflict between these static and dynamic conceptions of culture underlies many of the contradictions with which Arts Councils are obliged to grapple. It has surfaced recently in the debate about community arts in Great Britain; but it has existed implicitly since the Arts Council was founded. Lord Keynes, for example, in welcoming the establishment of the Arts Council of Great Britain, could argue that its assistance could permit

1 T S Eliot *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (London 1948), p.22

2 Eliot, *ibid*, p.22

3 Raymond Williams *Culture and Society 1780-1950* (Penguin 1961), p.320

4 Williams, *ibid*, p.320-21

‘... different parts of this country (to) again walk their several ways as they once did and learn to develop something different from their neighbours and characteristic of themselves. Nothing can be more damaging than the excessive prestige of metropolitan standards and fashions.’⁵

At the same time he could commit almost 11 per cent of CEMA’s budget to the Covent Garden Committee, of which he was also fortuitously Chairman, to establish the Sadlers Wells Ballet Company at the Royal Opera House.

The work of Arts Councils is also affected by the conflict between the responsibilities they are expected to fulfil as public bodies, and their responsibilities to the arts. This conflict, which bears a structural resemblance to the cultural debate, helps reinforce certain values which inform that discussion; it is nevertheless a separate problem arising essentially from the nature of contemporary economic theory.

For fundamentally, Arts Councils are established to fulfil a specialised function within the broader field of welfare economics. Crudely stated, the philosophy informing welfare economics insists, rightly, that state intervention in any sector of public life can be justified only if its effect is to increase the public good.⁶ In particular the policy-maker needs to be satisfied that benefits which flow from government support to the arts are sufficient to outweigh the loss of welfare that can be assumed to result from associated reductions in private income and spending.

There is however, nothing in economic theory which tells us the value of the public benefits which will flow from specific works of art or specific performances. There is also little in current aesthetic or critical theory to indicate that the public benefit of any particular work of art should be a crucial factor in determining its quality. Any organisation committed to assisting the arts on the basis of quality, but obliged to be accountable for its decisions in terms of the enhancement of the public good, frequently finds difficulty in reconciling these two sets of values.

There is one further conflict which Arts Councils have necessarily inherited. For while they are recent inventions, Arts Councils were born into rapidly changing times. Lord Keynes may well have seen some permanence in the fact that, in establishing the Arts Council, ‘the public exchequer’ had finally acknowledged ‘the support and encouragement of the civilizing arts of life as part of their duty’.⁷ But the enthusiasm of Treasury officials has endured only as long as the assumptions of Keynesian economics. And there is immediate evidence to suggest—in Great Britain and the United States in particular—that those assumptions no longer exert even the vestigial influence necessary to ensure that the principle of state intervention in the cultural sector will be ensured effective continuity.

This obliges Arts Councils now to reach a deeper understanding of their role and function and attempt to resolve these perennial debates. There can be no single solution: the cultural needs of each country vary and different solutions—or different emphases—will be required at different times. But some accommodation can be reached between the protagonists on both sides of the cultural debate; and the apparent conflict between the needs of the arts and public priorities can also be resolved. The basic contention of this paper is, however, that the ability of Arts Councils to achieve this reconciliation has been frustrated by the nature of the administrative structures they have evolved: to this extent they have connived at their own oppression. In developing this

5 John Maynard Keynes, *cit* in Eric W White, *The Arts Council of Great Britain* (London 1975), p.60

6 These points are closely based on arguments developed by Dennis Rose in two documents, *The Application of Scientific Analysis to Problems of Arts Administration: An Economist’s Perspective* (1979) and *Institutional Funding Policy* (1981)
Both are available from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council, which commissioned each study.

7 Keynes, in White *ibid*, p.60

argument I will illustrate my points primarily by examining the Arts Councils in Great Britain and New Zealand, largely from the point of view of administration theory. For while I believe the cultural debate which I have outlined earlier represents the crucial question for Arts Councils to resolve, administration theory fortuitously illuminates these larger issues and also suggests some means of resolving the conflict between public accountability and responsibility to the development of the arts.

2. Arts Councils are distinguished from arts patrons of the past by the fact that they are *public* bodies spending *public* funds for *public* purposes. As such, the scope of their operation is constrained by the nature of their enabling legislation which defines the public purposes each agency is expected to serve. Their approach to implementing their policies is also conditioned by the administrative strategies which have been evolved in the public sector.

Administration theorists have identified two predominant approaches to policy formulation and implementation in the public sector. The first is what has been called incrementalism. This approach

‘essentially views public policy as a continuation of past ... activities ... Existing programs and expenditures are considered as a base, and attention is concentrated ... on increases, decreases or modifications of current programs. Policy-makers generally accept the legitimacy of established programs and tacitly agree to continue previous policies.’⁸

The alternative to this ‘science of muddling through’⁹ is the goal-model approach exemplified by the Programming Planning and Budgeting System (PPBS). Originally developed for the Pentagon, PPBS demands greater clarity in the definition of goals and much greater scrutiny of the means of achieving them. Its aims are:

‘... the specification of objectives, the evaluation of program output as it relates to objectives, the measurement of total systems costs, multi-year program planning, the evaluation of alternative program designs, and the integration of policy and program decisions with the budgetary process. ... It brings both the budgetary process and the analytic problem-solving approach into the specification of objectives and the selection of alternatives among programs ...’¹⁰

In choosing between these alternative administrative strategies, Arts Councils, following the British example, have adamantly favoured incrementalism. Sir Roy Shaw, speaking at the first Conference of Commonwealth Arts Councils, explained the reasons for this preference in the following way:

‘Throughout its life, the Arts Council has set itself against having a specific arts policy. Thus, Lord Goodman (then Chairman of the Council), opposing in 1966 the idea of a Ministry of Culture, said he feared it would inevitably lead to the Minister imposing his own notions of cultural policy. He affirmed that the Arts Council did not in any way seek to lay down an arts policy, but rather to lay down a sensible and organised use of money. Subsequent annual reports of the Council stress that the Council’s role was to respond to needs rather than to initiate developments, and the Welsh Arts

8 Thomas R Dye, *Understanding Public Policy* (New Jersey 1972), p.30

9 This redolent phrase was coined by Charles Lindblom in an article entitled “The Science of ‘Muddling Through’” in *Public Administration Review* Vol. XIX, No.2 (Spring 1959), pp.79-88

10 Charles E Schultze, *The Politics and Economic of Public Spending* (Brookings Institute 1968), p.24, 34

Council put the matter succinctly by saying that its policy was not to have a policy. I think there is muddled thinking here. A famous political scientist once perceptively pointed out that policy is secreted in the interstices of policy decisions. The only choice is between having a consciously formulated policy and an unconsciously formulated one. I would also say, reversing the Welsh dictum, that not to have a policy is to have a policy.’¹¹

Rather than establish specific goals, the Arts Council of Great Britain has adopted certain values which provide guidance for its decision-makers. These values centre on the notion of ‘excellence’ and panels of experts have been established to identify, on the Council’s behalf, manifestations of ‘excellence’ in specific arts disciplines.

The Council’s principal role therefore consists in ensuring that the conditions conducive to the maintenance of these standards of artistic achievement are consolidated. As Lord Goodman has stated

‘Once we decide an institution is worthy to be alive, our concern is to keep it alive, and to assess its needs on that basis’.¹²

This same administrative approach—and an identical set of assumptions—informed the work of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council from its establishment in 1963. Its enabling legislation envisaged a structure and a range of responsibilities similar to those of the Arts Council of Great Britain and it similarly saw its principal purpose as fostering excellence in the arts. As the Council’s 1969 policy states:

‘The principal objective of the Council will be to raise the standard of both the practice and appreciation of the arts in New Zealand and thereby to promote the highest possible level of artistic activity’.¹³

For the first ten years of its existence the Council attempted to do this largely through subsidising professional theatre, opera and ballet companies and orchestras; through maintaining drama and dance training schools; through the support of selected individual artists; and through subsidising touring art exhibitions. The Council employed a small advisory and administrative staff but depended for policy formulation to a large extent on committees of its own members who were in turn advised by specialist panels of up to 30 people. These panels were organised on traditional discipline lines—theatre arts, music, visual arts and so on—and panel members were generally drawn from the various artistic professions. As a result, the Council’s advisers were frequently its own clients.

In a New Zealand context, it became apparent that this system, despite the coherent approach it developed to its work, was failing to serve the cultural needs of New Zealanders. In particular, this failure was a consequence of the distortions produced by a system which depended for its operation on an alliance between a closed system of policy formulation and an incrementalist approach to policy development.

Incrementalism deals with problems as they arise with little or no attempt to anticipate them; the long term effects of a policy outside the immediate problems area are ignored. Its objective is to move away from perceived ills rather than towards desired futures.¹⁴ What analysis there is, is not

11 Sir Roy Shaw, ‘The Arts in a Democratic Society’, paper presented to the Gulbenkian Conference of Commonwealth Arts Councils, 6 April 1979

12 *cit* in *Cultural Policy in Great Britain* (Unesco 1970), p.15

13 *Annual Report of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand for the year ending 31 March 1969*, p.27

14 These and a number of following arguments are developed in more detail in a paper jointly prepared by Jim Booth, Hamish Keith and Michael Volkerling for presentation at the ANZAAS Conference at the University of Auckland, New Zealand in January 1979. Numinously entitled “The Application of Scientific Methods of Analysis to Problems of Arts Administration: The Administrative Context”, the full text is available on request from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council.

concerned with failures of achievement, but with ways of meeting the most recent demand. These shortcomings are necessarily intensified in an organisation which depends for its policy guidance on a closed system of advisers working within a restricted set of values. This is precisely what a panel system—constrained by the injunction to maintain excellence—represents for Arts Councils.

In the panel system, each discipline is considered as a separate ‘problem’. Experts give their opinion of applications in the discrete terms of the discipline. There is thus no overview and little real control over the directions a Council is taking. Decisions are made on information drawn from a restricted source. Essentially, the panels operate as standing lobbies for the discipline they represent. In time, the notion of excellence becomes associated with specific art forms which, it is argued, are inherently capable of achieving excellence or which have a central importance in the nation’s cultural priorities. Thus in New Zealand—largely a nation of Polynesian and British origin—the Arts Council argued that ‘opera and ballet form part of the traditional foundations on which our culture is built’; and ‘provide rich experiences for people of all generations’.¹⁵ It then devoted over 50 per cent of its funds to support these art forms.

When combined with a closed system of policy formulation, incrementalism not only consolidates vested interests; it also undermines the position of the professional staff of the Council. In any organisation conflict necessarily arises between the power hierarchy and individual professional authority. In an organisation such as an Arts Council, where authority is vested primarily in a 12 member Council, advised in turn by panels whose members are selected from outside the Council’s professional staff, this type of conflict must occur. Since both Council and panel members serve relatively short terms, the likelihood of pragmatic and even contradictory solutions to policy problems being developed will be heightened.

The net effect will be that the Arts Council, concentrating with tunnel vision on individual disciplines, and captivated by the very real problems they entail, loses public sympathy. It should not be surprising if the government then, intervenes, restructures the Council or produces the perennial threat of a Ministry of Culture intended to bring the Council’s activities more closely into line with public (rather than simply artistic) priorities.

For every Arts Council

‘... whether it recognises it or not, is an organ of social policy; deciding, for example, to spend so much on theatre of a particular kind in a particular region, is deciding on what is valuable for the community or for particular groups in the community. To settle the problem of which art forms to support and at what levels cannot be achieved on aesthetic criteria alone, for no criteria exist to demonstrate that a performance of *King Lear* is more worthy of support than one of Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony*. Nor can these problems be solved by counting heads, not least because the fact of providing subsidy can alter the number of heads to be counted. Nonetheless, decisions will have to be made about which particular art forms to support, the level of that support, the possibilities of encouraging the arts in new areas or among different sections of the population, and so on. The outcome of these decisions will be that some practitioners of some arts will benefit, some followers of these practitioners will receive enjoyment and entertainment that they otherwise would have had to pay higher prices for or forego. In other words, certain social consequences follow from the making and implementing of such decisions.’¹⁶

15 *Annual Report of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand for the year ending 31 March 1969*, p.28

16 David Bradley and Roy Wilkie, ‘The Arts Council: The Case for an Organizational Enquiry’, *Public Administration* (Spring 1975 Vol.53), p.79

Both governments and the public have a legitimate interest in the social consequences of such decisions: and when they appear not to be serving the best interests of the public, the government has a clear duty to intervene. This certainly was the New Zealand experience.

3. New Zealand's new Arts Council system is unique. In addition to the national body, it comprises over 50 community arts councils; three Regional Arts Councils and a Council for Maori and South Pacific Arts. These Councils contain an interesting mix of democratically elected representation and government appointees. Community Arts Councils, for example, may be established in any area of the country by calling a public meeting, adopting an approved constitution and obtaining the agreement of the local authority to assume administrative responsibility for the Council. At this stage they become legally constituted as that community's manifestation of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council, and are entitled to receive funds for specified purposes and advise the national body.

In addition, delegates from each Community Arts Council attend mandatory annual conferences to elect four of their number as full members of the Regional Arts Councils. The remaining five members of the Regional Arts Council are appointed by the Minister for the Arts, including their chairman who is an *ex officio* member of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council. Members of the Council for Maori and South Pacific Arts are all appointed by the Minister including their chairman who is also a member of the national Council. Maori and South Pacific communities, however, may gain similar access to the Regional Councils through forming or joining community arts councils or by Ministerial appointment.

The system is also unique in terms of its insistence on overlapping membership. Each element within the structure is linked through the identity of particular members. Moreover, the Council's links with other public bodies active in the cultural field is consolidated by the representation of the permanent heads of the Department of Education, the Department of Internal Affairs and the Broadcasting Corporation on the Council.

The structure is remarkable for the extent to which it is decentralised. There can be very few other national government agencies which employ only 20 staff, who are responsible to over 600 elected or appointed members at a national, regional, and community level. This necessarily obliges the Council to operate not as a hierarchical structure but rather as an outwardly oriented responsive network.¹⁷

In terms of the internal organisation of its business, New Zealand practice also departs from Australian and British models. Significantly, there is no panel or board system. Instead, policy guidance is provided through the staff who draw on the advice of a varying selection of specialist consultants they refer to privately and in confidence.

A variety of sources of advice is therefore used; the role of the staff essentially consists in articulating art world opinion in terms which are useful for the Council members charged with the responsibility of making policy choices. This provides the staff with an effective and necessary role within the organisation.

17 It is only fair to admit that the motivations of New Zealand's policymakers were not necessarily as pure as this description may make them appear. As in Australia at the same time, this reformed structure was not the product of idealism alone or deep understanding. As Terry Smith wrote of attempts to 'democratize' the Australia Council in 1975, the politicians' "new emphasis on 'the community' contains no new conceptions of what constitutes a community. The push for change seems to be coming from politicians who want to be able to show to their constituents some clear evidence of some piece of the millions for the arts being spent locally. This means a new lease of life for the local arts club, sculpture society, watercolour group, dramatic ensemble ..." 'Official Culture and the Visual Arts Board', *Meanjin* Vol.34, No.2, June 1975, p.127

The Council divides into four committees, only two of which meet at any one time: every member therefore has experience of two major areas of the Council's work. The committees are not organised along traditional discipline lines—*theatre, music and visual arts*. They are based on structural elements within the arts arena—*Projects, Individuals, Institutions and Regional Development*. Each committee must therefore consider proposals in a multi-disciplinary context: in relation to finite budgets and established funding strategies; and with the benefit of the specialist advice channelled through the staff. Wider perspectives are therefore forced upon the consideration of any single issue.

In addition, the Council has abandoned incrementalism in favour of a more goal-oriented approach. At the time the restructuring of the Council occurred, PPBS was fashionable in the New Zealand public sector. While its rigid goal orientation seemed inappropriate for a volatile field such as the arts, consideration of PPBS procedures suggested a variety of means by which a more systematic approach to the Council's business could be developed.

To express the Council's solution in simple terms, it took the purposes defined in its enabling legislation literally as its objectives. It refined them into four major policy groupings or *functions*, and recast its budget and programme in terms of the objectives each function implied. The four functions are:

- The Development of Professionalism
- The Development of the Practice and Appreciation of the Arts
- The Accessibility of the Arts and Regional Development
- Public Education, Promotion and Research

These provide a conceptual framework for the Council's activities in which goals are explicit and values implicit. They therefore serve a unifying and directive purpose, and provide the terms of reference for each of the constituent Councils.

Since a variety of means of achieving these objectives may be tested through time—and at different levels of the Council's structure—the system retains some of the flexibility of incrementalism. At the same time it allows for momentum towards defined futures which are desired in common.

Such an approach to public administration has constitutional implications. Through basing the Council's definition of functions on its legislation, the necessary division between policy formulation by government and policy implementation by public servants becomes an essential administrative principle. The will of Parliament is accepted as a statement of objectives desired by the public.

The purposes set down in the Act are then translated by the Arts Council into functional categories supported by programmes intended to achieve specific futures. The Council cannot therefore depart on courses which diverge from public priorities: its decisions are necessarily defined and tested against its functions which are in turn sanctioned by legislation.

Since the Council also has an advisory function to government, a feedback loop—a kind of safety valve—is available if it becomes clear that the functions of the Arts Council, and therefore the government's objectives, are diverging too markedly from artistic reality or public priorities. Any change resulting from this would be explicit and cause a new functional relationship between the government, the Arts Council and artists.

The system effectively represents a form of contract between the public, whose will is expressed through the legislation, and the Council which is obliged to develop effective means of realising specified cultural goals.

The expertise of the art world is drawn on to define and assess alternative strategies for achieving these objectives. And the public—through its elected and appointed representatives at a national, regional and community level—is left with the responsibility of determining which strategies are likely to be most effective, and establishing their relative priority.

The new Arts Council system in New Zealand is thus at once simple and sophisticated. Its routine operation and procedures are uncomplicated; but the dialogue it facilitates occurs within a ramified framework. The decisions which are made cannot be achieved simply on the basis of artworld consensus—as was the case with the panel system; these discrete value judgments must be tested against those public priorities reflected in the objectives each Council programme is designed to realise. The disjunction between the needs of the arts and the public good cannot readily occur since both concepts are necessarily defined within a common set of terms. More significantly, the New Zealand system not only acknowledges the importance of the continuing debate about the nature of culture: it effectively institutionalises it. For the functions of the Council demand the consideration of certain key relationships which are central to the cultural debate.

Developing professionalism in the arts, for example, requires clarification of the desirable relationship between art and work.¹⁸ Developing the appreciation of the arts raises fundamental questions regarding the relationship between producers and consumers of art—the artists and their publics.¹⁹ Making the arts accessible nationally entails an appreciation of the relationship between national cultural resources and community cultural needs.²⁰

Questions such as these must be confronted in a national, regional, community and multi-cultural context. Since these controlling concepts are not necessarily considered in relation to the conventional pattern of arts support systems—institutions, training schools, and so on—they can be developed as the basis of a more thorough-going critique of the nation's cultural life. The New Zealand system thus allows the possibility of an approach to cultural development which is both

‘ ... goal and process. It is a goal because it means giving a society the ability to create its own life and environment. This ability means participation. But the process of cultural development entails more than participation alone. To be meaningful, such participation must be critical and continue to feed the sources of change.’²¹

- 18 As Clement Greenberg (and many others) argue, the professional arts, supported by subsidy are not 'culture', but simply a specialised form of work: 'a set of special disciplines practised during working hours by professionals'. Art is therefore downgraded by professionalism to become merely 'a department of industrial work'; not 'art, not ... humanistic culture; ... a thing worked at, but not flowing from work'. See 'Work and Leisure under Industrialism' in *Mass Leisure*, Eric Larabee and Rolf Meyerson (Free Press 1958), p.42. There are other valuable perspectives on this question: they all essentially demonstrate that cultural policy would be more coherent if it were more widely recognised that we do not have a problem of *leisure*, but rather a problem of work.
- 19 The following comments suggest the complexity of the issues involved in developing cultural 'appreciation': 'The choice of good culture is not monopolized by the high culture public; most of the time, people from all publics want the art, information, and entertainment they judge to be good (p.137) ... if people seek aesthetic gratification and ... if their cultural choices express their own values and taste standards, they are equally valid whether the culture is high or low ... The evaluation of people's choices cannot depend only on the content they choose but must compare what might be called the *incremental aesthetic reward* that results from their choices: the extent to which each person's choice adds something to his or her previous experience and his or her effort towards self-realization' (p.127). This argument, developed by Herbert J Gans, concludes that there are two 'alternatives for public policy ... implied by (these) statement(s). Either society must find ways of implementing cultural mobility that would allow people to have the educational and socio-economic background prerequisite to choice in the higher task cultures' (p.129). Given the practical difficulties in achieving this, it would be preferable in the short term, Gans argues, to provide public support for the development of a variety of taste cultures in order to allow members of a lower taste culture the same 'incremental aesthetic reward' as a member of a higher taste culture: 'For the reward has nothing to do with the quality of the content; instead it judges the person's progress beyond his or her own past experience' (p.127). The claim that the fostering of high culture is the only important priority 'is insufficient for public policy' since 'it ... assumes ... that only culture is important, but that the users of culture are not important ...' (p.126). See *Popular and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste* (New York 1974).
- 20 Susan Crean has argued effectively in a Canadian context that accessibility of the arts—touring from a metropolitan centre—is an ineffective way of promoting cultural activity.
- 'The similarity of (touring) arts programs throughout the country is sometimes advanced as evidence of growing cultural unity, but if unity in a democracy requires the coming together of people through a mutual understanding of similarities and differences, then cultural autocracy is a better way of describing the situation. What valid claim could be made for playing Beethoven's Fifth in Edmonton and Halifax to heighten the awareness of Nova Scotians and Albertans for one another? Stated in the terms of cultural politics, the problem is one of unequal access to input; or, to put it another way, the majority of our citizens, collectively and individually, have no influence on the cultural messages these organisations transmit. Consequently, although the arts are being made available to more Canadians, they seldom reflect the tastes of the people and communities they purport to serve. In the light of all this, the concept of "democratization" of the arts, as it has been interpreted by our cultural policy-makers and arts organisations, is a sham. It had dealt only with the technicalities of distribution—taking a ballet company to the Yukon, keeping museums open in the evenings, subsidising ticket prices so that more of us can afford them—while ignoring the real causes of alienation. How can most Canadians be expected to have an appreciation of the fine arts when the art they see has about as much to do with their own experience as the Ceremony of the Black Rod?'
- It is a view which would elicit a sympathetic response in New Zealand. See *Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture?* (General Publishing Co. 1976), p.1ff.
- 21 *International Fund for the Promotion of Culture* (UNESCO)

The Papua New Guinea Experience

Moi Avei

Moi Avei is Chairman of the National Cultural Council, Papua New Guinea.

Moi Awei explained that he was speaking in place of the Director of the National Cultural Council who was no longer in office. This account is reported from the recorded verbal presentation on the experience of Papua New Guinea.

Moi Awei defined the role of the National Cultural Council as 'the patrons, the tasters of what goes into the consumer society', demanding excellence from the artists with the promise of backing their work 'whether or not it is given the criticism of the current State'. He was not sure whether Papua New Guinea's status is unique in the field of arts administration, or whether differences between his country and, say, Canada and the United States are simply differences of scale. He wished to concentrate particularly on the philosophy of arts administration in Papua New Guinea as the contribution to general discussion.

The National Cultural Council wishes to be more than just a patron, and is embarked on a far more ambitious scheme, which has many difficulties. For instance, politicians try to create national symbols which in fact stand for totally diverse cultural groups within the country, which has 700 different languages. The Council has been trying to devise a national cultural programme within which are two concepts: one of continuity and one of revivalism.

The concept of continuity aims to create the impression that culture in the independence era is somehow connected organically with the pre-contact era, and that the Western experience is a cultural impurity in the present-day context. The second concept, that of revivalism, is that of the creation of arts, with grants for this purpose to creative artists. The biggest problem is that of finance, but it is clear from experience that there are many non-financial problems which could have a devastating effect on the programme if they are not solved. These relate to some of the fallacies and contradictions in the approach to the concept of reviving national culture.

The first of these is the notion commonly advanced by the politicians on the question of national identity. This may be because of the nature of their duties, which causes them to think of the colonised and the coloniser in terms of 'us' and 'them'. The logical conclusion to be drawn from this is that, in terms of national programming, it is imperative at this stage to create national symbols which will distinguish the national from the colonial era.

When this thinking was accepted it resulted in a monumental building programme. Over the past years museums have been built, beautiful temples, so to speak, to house the national heritage. While these look good on paper, the people do not value these temples as they did in the past. The net result is a lot of cultural centres which cost a lot of money and labour, which are now totally non-functional.

In the field of revivalism, future generations have to be kept very much in mind, and this is where educators have a role in the cultural programme. A curriculum has been designed thought to be suitable to the needs of Papua New Guinea, with the belief that culture should have a central place in the national schools' curriculum. But a close look at what has actually been done in schools shows that children have been forced to learn chants, dances and songs which are meaningless to the youth of today. This sort of cultural tokenism is an insult to the intelligence of Papua New Guinea, but the educational contribution to the cultural field cannot be ignored, because it consumes one-half to two-thirds of the national budget and may be a more effective springboard for cultural activity than the National Cultural Council.

Other fallacies have been advanced in relation to the notion of continuity. There is an Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, of which one of the basic functions is to conduct research into the pre-contact era and folklore. Much of this work is good and useful because no society can live without its Ned Kellys or Robin Hoods, and this applies equally to Papua New Guinea. Because of the lateness of the contact era, there are pockets in Papua New Guinea which remain comparatively untouched. These are the areas which are being given particular attention in terms of the documentation of traditional music and with the making of ethnographic films. Most of the money goes into this exploratory process. But the programme has completely ignored the 100 years of Western contact, the 100 years which have completely changed the society of Papua New Guinea.

What is being done at present is to provide support for artists who can create things which will be comforting and reassuring in terms of the past, but does not explain the 100 years of change. This badly affects the formulation of a cultural policy. Moi Awei expressed serious doubts about constant support for contemporary artists. He felt that perhaps more work should be done on trying to understand what has taken place in the colonial era. In particular there is need to understand the effect of the cultural changes which are the consequence of the social revolutions in Papua New Guinea.

Finally, the aim should be, in his view, to look at culture from a historical perspective. The arts of Papua New Guinea should be valued not only for their aesthetic qualities, but also as a historical statement, to reflect the agonies of that time. He hoped that 'the children of Papua New Guinea of tomorrow may use these objects to open the windows of their past in order that they may feel refreshed, confident, and hopefully a little bit wiser'.

**Observations on Public Policy and
How it is Developed**

Charles C Mark

Charles Mark is editor and publisher of *Arts Reporting Service*. He was born in 1927 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and took a BS and MS from the University of Wisconsin (1952 and 1954). After serving in various capacities with the Wisconsin Welfare Council, he embarked on a wide range of duties in the arts, including serving as executive director of the Winston-Salem Arts Council and the Greater St Louis Arts and Education Council. From 1964-65 he was special consultant to the White House cultural advisor, then director of State and Community Operations for the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities (1965-67) and Director of Planning Analysis for the NEA (1965-67). He began *Arts Reporting Service* in 1970, and since then has continued that work while serving as lecturer, advisor and speaker for many groups and organizations. Charles Mark is also a novelist and a contributor to numerous professional journals.

In 1969, UNESCO asked me to write a study of cultural policy in the United States. This invitation came four years after I had joined Roger Stevens, President Johnson's Assistant for Cultural Affairs, as special consultant on the arts. In the four years in which I assisted Mr Stevens and various Congressional leaders in hewing the foundation for a federal arts program, and in assisting in the design of the program after it passed in the Congress, I had seen no evidence of a cultural policy of any kind. I remember telling the UNESCO official I couldn't write such a study because the United States didn't have a cultural policy.

'Ah, but you do,' said the official.

'If we do,' I said, 'would you share that bit of knowledge with me?'

He said: 'But of course. You have a policy of pluralistic *laissez-faire*'.

I said I would give the assignment further consideration and went away and thought about our alleged cultural policy for several weeks while I continued our pragmatic, political approach on a day-to-day basis. When I was convinced of the merit of the UNESCO official's statement, I undertook the assignment.

As I wrote I became more and more converted to the concept of a pluralism and *laissez-faire* policy for the arts and humanities. Pluralism allows for a maximum freedom for the arts, freedom from interference by any single element of the society. No governmental 'official' art can become dominant when funds are gathered from several sources. When city, county, state federal, individual and corporate patronage combine to support an institution or particular production or exhibition it would be extremely difficult for any source to dictate a point of view. In a Western democracy ideologies are scarce and it would be difficult to determine whether a painting or orchestral work reflects one philosophy or another. It would be ludicrous for a city council to dictate that its support of culture had to reflect a Republican or Democratic Party point of view.

A *laissez-faire* attitude follows pluralism as does day the night, or as cause the effect. One cannot adopt a policy of emphasis or doctrine when artists and institutions draw upon a support system that is varied and diverse. No single element of that system provides sufficient support to be effective. And yet, leadership in support can have an enormous effect on the direction and health of cultural institutions, providing that leadership is armed with adequate funds. Two examples come to mind, one from private sources and the other from federal.

In 1964, the Ford Foundation announced that it would give the larger symphony orchestras in excess of \$80 million to ensure their future through the establishment of endowment funds. In 1965, coincidentally with the establishment of the federal program in the arts, the Ford plan was complete and the funds were forthcoming. The orchestras were committed to raise additional amounts of money from other private sources to match the amounts granted by the Foundation. This left the fledgling federal program free to serve other art forms and set off a mad scramble among the orchestras to collar the matching money. Most of the orchestras were successful and the Ford Foundation's \$82 million was duly paid to them.

However, by 1970 the orchestras were again in financial difficulty due to inflation and accelerating demands from the musicians. The Ford Foundation had no more money to grant to them and the federal program was exceeding modest in its concern for the orchestras. After an ill-conceived effort to circumvent the National Endowment for the Arts and solicit the Congress directly for aid, a compromise was worked out that would supply each orchestra with \$50,000 to \$300,000 per year in federal funds. Again, these funds were to be matched by private dollars. This program has been in effect until this year.

In effect, the Ford Foundation was following a *laissez-faire* philosophy by giving an enormous amount of money without imposing any conditions. They supported the status quo of the orchestras both from a management point of view and an artistic one. The orchestras, feeling secure with their new found largesse, continued their outdated management procedures and concert programming. Five years later they had spent most of the Ford money and turned to a new *laissez-faire* source. The federal government continued basically the same program, but with annual gifts instead of one-time offers. Had the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment

for the Arts co-operatively insisted on more entrepreneurial management techniques, or more broadly conceived orchestral programming, the leadership role might have borne some permanent results.

The other example of leadership within a free enterprise arts system is the policy of President Carter. Before he was elected, Mr Carter committed himself to a policy of 'accessibility' of the arts. He believed culture should not be available only to the urban citizen, but should be dispensed far and wide across the land. He not only had touring for the major institutions in mind, but also the nurturing of local talent with programs designed to instruct, develop and display. Under the leadership of the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, Livingston Biddle, existing programs serving these ends were expanded and new programs begun. Since programs of accessibility seemingly were contrary to the programs begun by the Nixon-Ford leadership—programs that subsidized the major institutions—forces gathered against this leadership effort and branded it 'populism'. In truth, the subsidy programs maintained their level of support during the Carter years, though the emphasis was slanted toward increased touring. Nevertheless, in the last presidential election the so called 'elitist' forces of the major institutions encouraged the Republican leadership to eliminate the accessibility policy.

These are two examples of leadership in attempting to establish a national cultural policy. Both went away for different reasons. The first, as stated, because long term vision of cultural changes was not considered as part of the scheme, the second because it was partisan idea that was subject to political criticism. Neither example proves that cultural policy is impossible under a system of pluralism. What is indicated is that pluralism demands a policy that rises above politics and must include all of the major support systems in the planning and execution of the policy. Such an approach has never been attempted in the United States and it is doubtful that sufficient cohesiveness exists among the various elements to even begin such planning at the present time.

However, several hopeful developments can be seen on the horizon in my country which has had only 15 years of experience with any sort of multiple level support for the arts. The individual states became an element in the support system in 1965 when the Federal-State Partnership was forged under mandated grants from the National Endowment for the Arts (an example of successful policy leadership). For the first five years the states were primarily concerned with building their own houses and securing them against intra-state attack. After 1970, when the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies was organized, the states began to see a threat from the federal program in the form of burdensome administrative responsibilities imposed on them by Washington without consultation. Their resistance stiffened and an adversary relationship developed with the federal program. In 1976, under new leadership, every effort was made to resolve differences and now the states and federal agencies often act in concert. It is now possible for these two important resources to plan together on cultural policy.

Another developing compatible relationship is possible with the communities across the country through the National Assembly of Community Arts Agencies (NACAA), though it has not developed as yet. The National Endowment has embraced a policy of support for these local federations—some are privately supported, some municipally or country supported—no specific Endowment program has been implemented. If a participatory planning relationship could be forged between the Endowment and NACAA, then another of the support elements would be in place for policy development.

The missing elements then would be the corporate and individual patronage elements that contribute the majority of support for the arts in our country. Attempts have been made to organize these widely dispersed and disparate patrons on the state level, and once unsuccessfully on the national level, but the emphasis has always been on increasing government support by either the state or federal governments. Instead, if a kind of 'United Audiences and Patrons Society' were organized nationally, a group that could participate in policy deliberations as an equal partner with state, community and federal systems, we could have a respectable policy-forming coalition. Of course the patron group, composed of corporate and individual representatives, would have to emphasize their needs in terms of a cultural life rather than the present emphasis on trying to get other resources to shoulder a larger share of the support burden.

Without such a complete federation of all the various resources supporting the arts, it is impossible to develop a cohesive cultural policy that can stay in place long enough to be effective. In the present situation with an actor in the White House who has shown an antagonistic attitude and ignorance toward a cultural life, our national cultural policy is subject to a capricious charting; one might even say a regressive position. Such circumstances bring forth a policy by consensus, the only kind of policy consistent within a pluralistic laissez-faire system. The arts community, the state arts agencies, the community arts agencies, the arts institutions and many members of Congress are opposed to the diminishment of the federal posture for the arts. Without regard for the expressed needs of the people and the institutions, and without knowledge of the economics that govern the arts, the President arbitrarily has recommended a 50 percent reduction in the federal commitment to the arts. Under our system the will of the Congress can prevail over the will of the President and the funds can be restored through the appropriation process. However, the President will control the expenditure of those funds through the appointment of a federal administrator who reflects his position. The Reagan-appointed Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts cannot undermine the President and therefore will not undertake programs that represent the needs of the people and cultural institutions.

But perhaps the President is right and the cultural institutions have been wrong in expecting their government to provide a measure of support. The Reagan-Stockman theory depends on private monies replacing the government funds and this will be made possible by the total economic scheme put into operation by this administration. The theory is that private individuals and corporations will possess more capital through tax reductions and increased profits, and therefore will contribute more generously to the needs of the arts. This is in conflict with another facet of the economic theory followed by this administration. Increased disposable wealth and profits are supposed to be invested in business ventures and securities which in turn creates more productivity. If this is true and it actually happens, then philanthropy will benefit only after the reaping of the profits from the first round of increased investments; an economic reality that will take a minimum of three years and more probably five years. In the meantime, the arts are without both federal government support and increased private giving during crucial times.

But then, if the private sector should leap into the breach created by the \$88 million cut in federal arts spending it would result in \$88 million not being available for the business investment essential to priming the economy of the country. In which case the arts are without solid long-term support from that source. In short, culture will be a depressed enterprise for at least five years in America under any circumstances.

From this discussion one might easily conclude the pluralistic cultural policy is not to be envied. It is true that it has many flaws; long-range planning is difficult because funds are not assured from year to year; evaluations of effectiveness are even more difficult because of a lack of centralized control. However, no other system provides the degree of freedom to the artists and cultural institution as does one of multiple resources. Experience indicates that every artist, from the most avant-garde to the most traditional, is free to practise his or her art without interference from any source. Attempts in the past to dictate taste or to ensure a safe choice of programming for a cultural institution have been swiftly met with resistance and resulted in a reversal of efforts. Pluralism represents the best and the worst of all possible worlds; the maximum amount of freedom for the artist and institutions of art and the minimum of organized progress.

I recall an evening of social discussion with a group of men representing the cultural agencies of several foreign countries in which the conversation wandered from art to international affairs. The group was vociferously attacking the American war in Viet Nam and I was doing a poor job of defending the American policy. But then, when I described a play currently running in New York in which President Johnson is depicted as murdering President Kennedy and Senator Robert Kennedy, the attackers grew thoughtful. I asked if their countries would allow such a play about their head of state in a time of war. They unanimously admitted that their governments would not allow such complete freedom. Even the Swedish representative present, whose country was at that moment conducting the famous war crimes trials involving the United States, had to admit his country would not allow such a play. From that moment on I became an advocate of our cultural policy of laissez-faire pluralism and have bent my efforts ever since to improving the efficiency of it without jeopardizing the basic concepts of freedom. Art is the essence of freedom, and like people, functions best when most free. Progress and efficiency have never been the touchstones of a democratic government.

**The Experience of the National
Endowment for the Arts**

Donald A Moore

Donald Moore was appointed Deputy Chairman for Policy and Planning of the National Endowment for the Arts by Chairman Livingston L Biddle, Jr, on May 12, 1980. Among his principal responsibilities are overseeing the Endowment's policy and planning efforts, its inter-agency activities and Challenge Grant Program; as well as co-ordinating the agency's management functions with the Chairman. Donald Moore came to the Endowment from the White House, where he served as Deputy Chairman of the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities, the office which promotes co-ordination among 20 government agencies involved with programs and activities affecting the cultural life of the nation. He was Director of the Congressional Affairs Office at the National Endowment for the Arts from March 1978 to July 1979. He previously served for five years as legislative aide to Majority Whip, John Brademas (D Ind), in the US House of Representatives and assisted the Congressman with arts-related legislation. Before joining the Congressman's staff, Donald Moore was an editor and writer for *Education Daily*, a Washington-based national newsletter on educational affairs.

It might be helpful to begin in my attempt to usefully address the topic of this colloquium, *Arts Council or Ministry of Culture*, by sketching the history and theory of the National Endowment for the Arts before moving on to acquaint you with some of the salient features of our recent practice. It is my firm belief that theory and practice must be one and inseparable. As Winston Churchill said, 'Those who are possessed of a definite body of doctrine and of deeply rooted convictions upon it will be in a much better position to deal with the shifts and surprises of daily affairs.'

It is a misconception to assume that federal support of the arts began with the establishment of the National Endowment for the Arts 15 years ago. Prior to that date the US tax code provided an opportunity, through the mechanism of tax exempt, non-profit status, for professional arts organizations to gain a modicum of financial freedom. But this government support was *passive*. A spark of *active* leadership was missing and it was this element that was supplied when President Lyndon Johnson signed the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act on September 29, 1965.

I am one who believes that when a field such as ours is blessed with so admirable a document as this law, we should cherish it, discuss it and utilize the power it so generously bestows, to be open in our thinking about the arts and to design policies and programs which are responsive to and support the needs of the arts.

The Arts and Humanities Act is, I assert, a model of thoughtful and principled legislation. The authors of this measure had a healthy concern about the troubling potential of creating a cultural ministry or czardom in Washington that would dictate or direct culture. So our law does not call for a national policy for the arts—but rather a national policy in support of the arts—not a distinction without a difference. What was sought was not the establishment of an official culture, but an agency with policies that would welcome diverse and even antithetical, aesthetic perspectives.

Here is what the law says in its declaration of purposes:

1. that the encouragement and support of national progress and scholarship in the humanities and the arts, while primarily a matter for private and local initiative, is also an appropriate matter of concern to the Federal Government;
2. that a high civilization must not limit its efforts to science and technology alone but must give full value and support to the other great branches of man's scholarly and cultural activity in order to achieve a better understanding of the past, a better analysis of the present, and a better view of the future;
3. that democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens and that it must therefore foster and support a form of education designed to make men masters of their technology and not its unthinking servant;
4. that it is necessary and appropriate for the Federal Government to complement, assist, and add to programs for the advancement of the humanities and the arts by local, state, and regional, and private agencies and their organizations;
5. that the practice of art and the study of the humanities requires constant dedication and devotion and that, while no government can call a great artist or scholar into existence, it is necessary and appropriate for the Federal Government to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry, but also the material conditions facilitating the release of this creative talent;
6. that the world leadership which has come to the United States cannot rest solely upon superior power, wealth, and technology, but must be solidly founded upon worldwide respect and admiration for the nation's high qualities as a leader in the realm of ideas and of the spirit.

It is also worthy of note that the law takes considerable pains to be inclusive, rather than exclusive, in the arts which are eligible for support. The law states that:

The term 'the arts' includes, but is not limited to, music (instrumental and vocal), dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, industrial design, costume and fashion design, motion pictures, television, radio, tape and sound recording, the arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of such major art forms, and the study and application of the arts to the human environment.

Under the leadership of Livingston Biddle, the National Council on the Arts in 1978 approved a statement of basic policies which distills the mission of the Endowment and which crosses and is common to all of these programs. The statement says in part that:

The goal of the Endowment is the fostering of professional excellence of the arts in America, to nurture and sustain them, and equally to help create a climate in which they may flourish so they may be experienced and enjoyed by the widest possible public.

Put another way, the recurring question throughout is to devise ways to nurture creativity, excellence and innovation, while broadening access to arts experiences of high quality.

From its beginning the Arts Endowment has relied on citizen advisors to guide its work, rather than leaving policy and grants-making decisions solely in the hands of permanent government employees. In the early days of 1966 when the Endowment's appropriation was a resounding \$2.5 million, the 26-member National Council on the Arts, mandated by the legislation, convened around a table with the agency's first Chairman, Roger Stevens, and they made the funding decisions without any semblance of a formal program structure. Then, as the agency grew and gradually established its programs in specific arts areas, the model of the National Council was replicated so that the grants from each program were recommended by panels of outside experts in the relevant arts disciplines. To put the past in perspective with the present, the Endowment, with a budget this year of nearly \$160 million, will use the services of over 600 individual panelists.

An innovation of the current administration was to augment our purely grants-making panels with a policy panel for each of our 15 programs to help set general policy directions.

It might be appropriate to take a moment to briefly reflect on the astronomical growth of the arts in the US. In 1966, the Endowment estimated that there were only a handful of professional, non-profit performing arts organizations nationwide: including 58 professional symphonies, 27 opera companies, 12 resident theaters, 10 resident dance companies and 27 touring dance companies. State arts agencies numbered only 7 then and only an estimated 125 community arts agencies existed.

Today there are 144 professional symphonies, with hundreds more community orchestras; 65 fully professional opera companies; 70 large and 200 small theatres and 300 dance companies. While the number of museums has grown more modestly, they now stage much more ambitious and varied exhibitions. Every state of the union now has a full-time state arts agency and the states now appropriate nearly \$110 million a year compared to \$4 million in 1965. This amount is exclusive of the \$26 million granted directly to the states by the Endowment in 1981. And the community arts agencies are estimated to have grown to a number which is nothing short of legion.

This year the Endowment will receive over 30,000 applications, only one-fifth of which will be funded. The average Endowment grant will be less than \$25,000.

Here it might be helpful to enumerate the programs of the Arts Endowment of which there are 15 and to note that within these programs there are more than 100 separate funding categories of non-matching fellowships for individual artists and matching grants for arts groups. By law, the Endowment must provide 20 percent of its program funds in roughly equal amounts to the State Arts Agencies which are independent of the National Endowment.

The organization of the Endowment is structured on its separate discipline programs and they illustrate the breadth of the agency's concern for the arts. These are:

- Artists in Education
- Design Arts
- Dance
- Expansion Arts
- The Federal-State Partnership
- Folk Arts
- Inter-Arts
- Literature
- Media Arts
- Museums
- Music
- Opera/Musical Theater
- Theater
- Visual Arts
- Challenge Grants

And further, according to our law, the Chairman of the National Endowment is the final authority for all policy and grants. Our National Council members, serving staggered six year terms with a third rotating off every two years, are charged with making recommendations on policy and grants before the Chairman makes his or her determination.

Under the definition being applied by the Conference, the Endowment is a ministry or department, rather than an agency with final authority resting with a council. This being the case, I would like to further explore how the Endowment presently operates and to examine its strengths and limitations. Finally, I would like to enumerate a few of the major issues which fascinate or which plague the Endowment.

For a number of reasons I shall begin by asserting that whatever the Endowment sets out to do well—it accomplishes. From my three years' experience with the Endowment in various capacities, I believe I can say this with considerable confidence.

For the strengths of the Endowment are many. First, an eloquent authorizing statute, like our constitution, crafted with a far-sighted set of principles that have remained firm yet permitted flexibility and growth over the years. However, beleaguered, the notion of excellence remains a fierce rallying point for the best minds of our nation who are concerned with the arts. This brings me to a second point which is that laws are meaningless unless animated by men and women committed to those principles.

Today, as throughout the years, the people of the Endowment, Chairman, Council Members, and Staff—are motivated by a sense of purpose uncommon among most government agencies. Put simply, a common characteristic is that they love the arts. They know the arts. Many are practising artists or directors of companies, museums, etc. Some, like myself, are lapsed artists. Few expect to remain in government as a permanent career. This became an article of faith when Livingston Biddle instituted a policy that no senior program official could remain in his or her position for more than five or six years. In a similar fashion, we have another rule that panelists are appointed for one year with the opportunity to serve for no more than three years consecutively.

So we have established, by law with the National Council and by administrative directive with senior staff and expert panelists, a clear, regular policy of rotation and replenishment. These procedural policies are necessary, we believe, to reassure our arts constituency, the public, the Congress and the press that our funding decisions are fair, informed and unencumbered. We have no fear of being seduced by notions of quality or excellence. But we do wish to safeguard the Endowment against any hint of being the captive of a closed circle of advisors. Controversy is in the very nature of that which we undertake to fund. It should be minimized as much as is humanly possible in the manner in which we undertake to make these admittedly subjective judgements.

Second, we have worked to make wider use of the unquestioned expertise of our National Council. Chairman Biddle established committees of the Council to meet regularly with staff over matters such as: Policy and Planning, Budget, Relations with the State Arts Agencies, and Challenge Grants.

What we now have is a system where the development of policy flows two ways: up to management and the Council from the individual programs, and down from the Council. I am somewhat amused whenever the question of decentralization arises, for I would argue that we have, within our own house and family, a very decentralized system where intense contact occurs between a program and its field which is equal to if not greater than the amount of contact between the program and management.

Our organizational structure is not pyramidal. It is horizontal with a series of compartments for each of the program's areas. Our staff resources, we currently operate with an administrative budget equal to seven percent of our total funding and staff numbering about 330, are allocated in the main to line functions within the program areas.

For example, a program such as Museums oversees 12 funding categories addressed by six grants panels which each meet once a year. In addition the Museum Policy Panel will meet once or twice a year to assess program activity and make recommendations for changes in categories, guidelines, or annual budget allocations among its categories.

It is then the function of management and the Council first to adjudicate the various interests of the programs in constructing overall Endowment plans and budgets, and second, to then sell these within the hierarchy of the Executive Branch and to the Congress. This is not to say that Endowment management and the Council are simply reactive. In recent years, for example, in addressing increments of growth in our annual budgets, the Council and Chairman disproportionately improved funding for individual artists, or for touring of performing arts groups, or for the presentation of the arts on radio or television.

To aid in the more effective clarification of policy-making and planning, the office which I now hold was created three years ago when Chairman Biddle took office. He is also served by a Deputy Chairman for Programs. The creation of these two offices is first a reflection of the growth, size and complexity of the agency, and second represents an institutionalization of the quite appropriate creative tension between the program imperatives and central planning.

A third strength is that the agency, for all the swirling recent hyperbola of politicization, elitism versus populism, etc, has maintained a remarkable degree of independence from political pressure. Although the Endowment is technically referred to in the jargon of our government as an 'independent agency', we are more so by custom than by law. The Endowment is not a sub-unit of a larger agency. We are independent in that respect. But our statute, on the other hand, does not prohibit interference in decision-making by those to whom we are accountable, namely, the Office of Management and Budget, an instrumentality of the White House; broad policy-making sections of the White House such as the Domestic Policy Council; or the Congress.

But for whatever reasons—the force of moral persuasion, able agency leadership, hard work, enlightened elected representatives, luck or a bit of all of the above—the Endowment has managed to retain its decision-making authority. This is not to say that every policy or every decision may, therefore, be seen as right and virtuous. Can we just say with some ironic pride that if a finger is to be pointed, we must point it at ourselves?

For evidence to support this general contention, I recall only a handful of instances where the Congress instructed the Endowment to do this or that: to provide 20 percent of program funds to state arts agencies, to create the Challenge Grant Program for arts institutions, to establish a separate Folk Arts Program, or to suggest some greater recognition of local arts councils, little of which in my own view was unwelcome.

Similarly the Office of Management and Budget has infrequently and only half-heartedly intruded. We do get nickled and dimed to a point which I sometimes believe pushes us to the brink of extinction with requests for reports on expenditures of all types. And for all of our entreaties,

I am still uncertain whether they fully understand or trust the panel system. Permanent civil servants I am convinced tend to see the impermanent panel system as subversive. We have learned to accept it as our permanent lot and duty to roll that stone uphill without respite. Within a week I shall, with my colleagues, be grilled by a Congressional Appropriations Committee which will want an answer to the same time honoured question: Why panels? I should add that a companion committee on the other side of Congress will not ask why, but rather, how can we help you do it better? And so it goes.

The successes of the Endowment, then, are attributable to the dedication and energy of the people directly associated with it and, too, to a few good friends and help-mates within the Executive Branch and within the Congress. It has always been thus under each of the Endowment's three Chairmen. Roger Stevens moved from being White House advisor on the arts to the first Chairmanship. He had strong support within the Executive Branch. Nancy Hanks could depend on the offices of White House Counsel Leonard Garment and others, and Livingston Biddle on the considerable energies of Vice President and Mrs Mondale, among others. And each of the four Presidents under which they served was supportive. Each Chairman had the wisdom to form alliances with enlightened officials who would go out of their way to defend and advance the cause of the arts and of the Endowment.

Has the Endowment demonstrable limitations? Yes, certainly. I think so, but I do not believe that its limitations are a consequence of the question here addressed of arts council or ministry of culture.

My sense is that our greatest strength also contains the key to understanding our shortcomings. Simply stated it is our zeal. Have we loved well, but sometimes intemperately? Ours is a subjective field. So we are not as familiar with objective data, not because we fear it, but because we often hold it to be off the point. I think this attitude is changing. The tool of planning recently introduced to the Endowment, which has begun to stretch the minds, to raise the sights of our senior staff beyond the annual rush of grants and events to reflect on the questions: What effect? What greater effect?

Research; another limitation. Why, because it has been fragmented, unfocused, unguided. This, too, is changing, though with less speed. We are, you must recall, a very small agency, serving a field of artists and audiences which is relatively unrecognized, I believe, in its size and scope by many in the government and Congress.

The Endowment has followed an evolutionary path of development to a point today where its grant-making activities, in kind and breadth, are reasonably well in place. Expansion has occurred, but we are confident that we are serving artists and audiences well. We have arrived at a point where we could take a step back and say, we are getting the grants out to the arts. How may we now insure that this work continues, what more could we do in providing leadership which would not entail subvention, but which would aid arts institutions to better understand themselves and the public to be better informed about the considerable diversity, character and value of our culture and those of other nations?

We do face a myriad of complex questions of whom to fund when, and the Endowment has in recent years pushed out to fund more innovative arts activities: small theater doing high quality experimental work; composers of new music; jazz ensembles, and the like. We hope that these initiatives are welcomed by the public and those to whom we are accountable in government. We know that artists and arts organizations are pleased—at least those for whom we have sufficient funding to award them a grant. Living with the disenchanting is a fact of life. But, so far, so good.

So, in sum, I do believe that the arts are well served by our Endowment, our department of the arts. The difficulties we encounter relate far less to questions of relative independence of the agency, than they do to obstacles any agency would face in advancing the cause of the arts as a legitimate undertaking for public subsidy.

**A Centre for Studies on the Arts:
A Feasibility Study**

Jean Battersby (Australia)

Jean Battersby has been Chief Executive Officer of the Australia Council since 1968, when the Australian Government established the interim Australia Council for the Arts. Formerly a freelance writer, broadcaster and television commentator, mainly on the arts, and from 1966-68 was Project Officer to the Third Commonwealth Study Conference of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, with responsibility for the conference programme and publications.

Dr Jean Battersby presented a paper introducing a feasibility study for the establishment of an effective international information base on the arts. Explaining the inception of the study, she referred to the initial and exploratory conference of arts councils held in Canterbury, England, in 1979 from which 'a tentative proposal emerged for the establishment of such a centre' and where its possible functions and organisation were discussed.

As a result of ensuing discussions between Dr Battersby and the Director of the United Kingdom Branch of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, it was agreed that a proposal should be prepared for the 1981 Conference. Dr Battersby's paper is therefore supported by papers (copies of which are available from Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation* in London) prepared by Professor S Encel, who holds the Chair of Sociology at the University of New South Wales and by Mr Alan Hodgart, a partner in Deloitte Haskins and Sells, who had drawn up a statistical framework for the Australia Council on a similar organisation. Mr Hodgart presented to the conference a detailed explanation of the research papers.

A full session was devoted to discussion of the principles and the practical organisation of such a project. The members expressed appreciation of the thoroughness with which the material had been prepared and the arguments presented for the alternatives suggested. At the same time they expressed misgivings, among these being the high costs involved necessitating high rates for subscribers to such a scheme; the need to define sharper objectives to justify the large-scale implementation; the need for assurance that the system could speedily provide accessible information in appropriate form for the short-term decisions which administrators so often have to make, as well as long-term and research policy; the long preparation period needed to prepare compatible presentation of a virtually infinite variety of operations and subject-matter; uncertainty about the best choice of establishment or organisation where the system should be sited, eg. university or blanket organisation such as UNESCO, among others; the reconciliation of the sense of urgency inherent in the arts with the more leisurely approach of academic systems; the need to keep research close to ever-changing documentation; the strain on arts organisations, many of which are under-staffed, to maintain a continuous supply of up-to-date material.

Without reaching a firm decision, it appeared to be the consensus feeling of the conference that modest beginnings might be made to test the practical possibilities, as an initial move to the goal of a full-scale centre for the future on the basis of experience and further exploration of the problems. Suggestions were made for the formation of an interim secretariat to set the first processes in motion. Ways of collecting and collating material could thus be tested gradually and without heavy setting-up costs. A questionnaire might be circulated to conference members to determine the most relevant categories of information. The exchange of details about the participants' own organisation might also be helpful.

These suggestions were made with the unanimous agreement that the conference itself had proved the value of information exchange. A means of continuing to accumulate such knowledge for general use could obviously be invaluable to the general and world-wide operation of arts policy, organisation and funding. It was agreed that moves towards a workable means of collecting and disseminating knowledge should be encouraged, but as a more gradual process than that which had been put forward to the conference in its entirety, bearing in mind both the intrinsic complexity and the difficulty of obtaining the substantial funding which would be needed.

* 98 Portland Place, London W1N 4ET

A Centre for Studies on the Arts Summary of a feasibility project

The proposal

To establish an international centre for studies in the arts.

The purpose

To create a reputable body of international information and scholarship to help people working in the arts or in government arts administration for purposes of policy formulation, programme evaluation, preparation of budget cases and public information.

Functions

1. accommodation and services for experts from different disciplines wishing to carry out studies relating to the arts;
2. an information service incorporating:
 - a. statistics and indicators relating to the state of the arts in different countries
 - b. digests of policy, support programmes, research and evaluations
 - c. bibliographies
 - d. forecasts for long-range planning;
3. conferences and seminars for arts administrators and experts on different aspects of arts policy or development;
4. publications.

Background

Many experienced public arts administrators are pessimistic about the future. The arts play an increasing role in contemporary life but the basis on which they operate and survive is relatively insecure. Governments generally acknowledge responsibility for helping the arts; but in difficult economic times they tend to apply drastic and arbitrary budgetary cuts. Foundations and corporations support the arts generously; yet they commonly express anxiety about the basis on which sponsorship decisions are taken and uncertainty about the effectiveness of assistance in this field. The basis of decision-making, policy, planning and evaluation in the arts is still to a large degree unprofessional, a fact which contributes to the vulnerability of the arts.

The situation of the arts is not dissimilar to that of education and welfare some decades ago. These social initiatives were sustained by idealism, commitment and much voluntary assistance. However, education and social welfare administrators quickly developed a support structure of reputable international studies, statistical information and documentation. The arts are not yet in this position.

There is no recognised body of reliable international information, expertise and opinion about the state and development of the arts to serve as a source of reference and ideas for government, arts councils, foundations, corporations and arts organizations. Isolated studies, some of high quality, have been carried out by universities and foundations. A mass of undigested documentation crosses the desks of arts administrators. So far there has been no opportunity to stimulate or focus the work of economists, statisticians, sociologists, public administrators, legal experts, historians and others wishing to bring specialised knowledge to bear on studies relating to the arts.

There is as yet little useful statistical material, either national or international. Some attempts are now being made to set up national statistical services, but there is no mechanism for ensuring compatibility internationally. There are no regular publications of consolidated information.

Arts administrators in different countries experience problems similar or relevant to those experienced by colleagues in other countries. But there is no effective means of sharing experience about activities, plans, evaluations of policy or support programmes. Opportunities are also rare for professional colleagues, widely scattered geographically, to come together for exchanges of ideas with a view to improving the standard of arts administration.

Public policy making in the arts

Government arts agencies have surprisingly a common thread of experience. Most were set up at a time of crisis and decline in the arts. Their early aim was to arrest a deteriorating situation and provide for secure future growth in the arts. They were, in general, highly motivated instruments of social development, responding to the needs of artists and finding a sympathetic public response. Their early operations stimulated rapid and often explosive growth in the arts.

With the passage of time, certain problems have emerged. Some are internal—relating to structure, budget, operations, membership arrangements, programme evaluation, accountability, forward planning and organizational flexibility and drive. Others are external—political intervention, bureaucratic pressures, interaction with commercial interests, increasing complexity in the problems of the arts, media scrutiny, financial amputation in hard times.

Arts agencies find it increasingly difficult not only to sustain their cause to governments and the public, but to make wise decisions about increasingly difficult policy issues. Enthusiasm, idealism and artistic expertise, while still essential, no longer suffice. A sound base of information and argument is needed to consolidate the early breakthrough. Facts are required about such matters as:

- the size of the arts ‘industry’;
- its function within the economy;
- trends in public consumption in arts products and services;
- employment and industrial issues in the arts;
- the public benefit of arts resources, applied to education, social welfare, urban and rural development, the entertainment industry, film, television, publishing and related areas;
- the economic bases of different art forms;
- the contribution of the private sector;
- other factual and quantifiable aspects of arts development.

On the policy side, more analytical capacity is required to deal effectively with issues of increasing complexity. These include such matters as:

- the best systems and safeguards to disburse public patronage to the arts;
- the interaction of arts policies with other government initiatives in education, welfare, migration, ethnic minorities, industrial relations, etc;
- how to increase community access to the arts;
- how to reconcile the pursuit of excellence with the spread of resources and access;
- industrial and trade union matters affecting the arts;
- the impact on the arts of technological change;
- economic factors affecting arts development;
- the relationship between the amateur and the professional artist;
- training;
- how best to support individual artists;
- the impact of contemporary international cultural expression on national cultural traditions;

- the relationship between public and private sector patronage; .
- legal protection for artists—copyright, taxation, droit de suite, droit moral;
- centralization versus decentralization/devolution/regional development in government arts plans;
- international connections—the growth in international arts activity and attendant financial, contractual, industrial and other problems.

The present feasibility project

For some months a team of people in Australia has been looking at ways in which the functions listed on page 102 could best be carried out. Professor Encel, Professor of Sociology in the University of New South Wales, has looked at the structure and operations of a number of different institutes of studies with a view to proposing the best type of model for an institute of studies on the arts. Alan Hodgart, partner in Deloitte Haskins and Sells, has drawn up a proposal to demonstrate how an international information service on the arts might operate.

The options

There appear to be two options as to how the functions mentioned on page 102 can be carried out.

a. Option 1

To approach certain institutions already operating in the fields of research, public policy, information services, conferences or documentation and encourage them to expand their operations to give special emphasis to the arts. This would in effect be an upgraded version of what happens at present. It would be possible, however, to reduce the present random nature of research and documentation and to seek greater depth and impact by establishing a consortium of participating institutions which would establish priorities for study and coordinate the contributions of participating institutions. With an arrangement like this it would be necessary for a foundation or one of the participating institutions to provide a secretariat to service the consortium, convene meetings, arrange publications, etc.

b. Option 2

To establish a separate institute to perform all the above functions. There are many institutes which study and document different aspects of social, political, cultural and economic activity, the best of which make a significant contribution to policy making and public information. Such institutes have the advantage of impact, of public identification with a particular subject and of convenient integration of a variety of functions.

i Type of organization

Institutes fall into various categories—university affiliated, government funded, independently funded, consortium/membership based, or various combinations of these.

An institute of arts studies, which would presumably be fairly small in scale, would have advantage in associating with a university

- to take advantage of umbrella services and facilities (library, computer, clubs, etc.);
- to provide scholarly interchange in different disciplines;
- to secure career prospects and privileges which would attract good research fellows.

ii Structure

The structure should desirably be one of subscribing members. This would provide a source of income, a network for essential international information to be fed into the institute, and a pool of people for such appointments as governing council, etc.

iii Staff

The information service and the study programme would constitute the core activities and determine the basic staffing arrangements. A core staff of approximately 15 people would be required to direct the organization, run the data base and manage the research, conference and publications programme. Visiting research workers and other experts would supplement this number.

iv Location

If located in the English-speaking world, the realistic options must be Britain or North America. In the event, location will probably be determined by availability of finance. Association with one of the more prestigious universities in the United States or Canada, preferably one with established interest in the arts, would seem at present to be a more hopeful course than seeking a host university in Britain. This should not be ruled out however.

v Finance

This will depend very much on the relationship established with the host institution. The nucleus salary bill on present prices is likely to be of the order of \$500,000. The overheads would be likely to equal that sum at the very least, but would more likely be double.

vi Reputation

Prestige would be essential to the success of such an institute. The choice of host institution, council members and, above all, foundation director, would be critical factors in establishing a reputation sufficient to attract research fellows whose work and publications will sustain the reputation.

Next steps

The immediate next steps are to discuss this paper during April and May 1981 with a group of arts administrators and policy research workers in London, with a conference of arts experts and administrators convened in Montreal by the Gulbenkian Foundation and the Canada Council, and with foundation and arts colleagues in the United States.

The proposal which takes shape as a result of these consultations will form the topic for a special meeting which it is hoped to convene of people from academic institutions, foundations and other organizations who may be in a position to help put the proposal into effect.