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## **THE CREATION AND DESTRUCTION OF THE UK FILM COUNCIL**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Established by a Labour government in April 2000 and wound up at the end of March 2011 by a Conservative-led coalition, the UK Film Council (UKFC) was the key strategic body responsible for supporting the film industry and film culture in Britain for over a decade. Cultural agencies such as the UKFC may be conjured into life by governments of one colour and unceremoniously interred by those of another. Such decisions are of considerable interest to all those who wish to understand the nature and exercise of political power in the cultural field.

The UKFC's creation owed much to the personal commitment of Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in the 'new' Labour government that took office in May 1997.<sup>1</sup> Another Culture Secretary - the Conservative Jeremy Hunt - was responsible for its peremptory demise, as a member of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat cabinet installed in May 2010.<sup>2</sup> These individuals' actions need to be set in the wider context of the history of British film policy and also the particular conjunctures in which they took their decisions.

The present chapter is a fragment of a wider study that addresses the UKFC's performance in the round, ranging from the quest to develop a 'sustainable' film industry to facing the challenge of digital distribution (Doyle et al. 2015).<sup>3</sup> By focusing here on two key moments – the creation and destruction of a public agency - I intend to explore a largely unexamined aspect of cultural policy-making. In doing so, I wish to underline the role of elites and the uses of favoured forms of expertise in film policy-making, which exemplifies an approach to creative industries policy-making I have developed elsewhere (Schlesinger 2009). The UKFC's creation was decided on and implemented by a coterie around Chris Smith. Its closure ignored standard governmental processes.

My account exposes discontinuous, irrational and asymmetrical features of the policy process. Anthony King and Ivor Crewe (2013: 6) in an overview of 'blunders' in British government, describe these as 'occasions on which ministers and officials failed to achieve their declared objectives'. As we shall see, Labour did not achieve its goal of rationalizing the film agencies and the Coalition's cut had little to do with the official account given. We might count the closure of the UKFC as a minor governmental blunder, contributed to – in no small measure – by a lack of clarity in its original construction.

### **A NEAT HISTORY?**

The UKFC's decade-long lifespan makes it an ideal case for policy analysis, although there is both a pre-history and an aftermath to be taken into account. British governments have devised one or other form of state aid for film production since the early twentieth century in line with two persistent governing assumptions: first, an emphasis on promoting national identity through cultural expression and second a need to keep inventing new forms of economic intervention to keep the film industry alive (Magor and Schlesinger 2009).

In the formative decade prior to the UKFC's creation, tax incentives for film production returned to the policy agenda. In 1992, under Conservative Prime Minister John Major, key moves took place. Fiscal support for the film industry was reintroduced and the Department of National Heritage (DNH) was established. The DNH began to administer the UK's new National Lottery in 1992. Arts Council England allocated £96m of Lottery funding to support three 'film franchises', in effect mini-studios set up in May 1997, as well as supporting individual projects. The incoming Labour government therefore inherited a Conservative policy initiative in the shape of Lottery support for film (Caterer 2011). Dissatisfied with how this was working, Labour decided to pursue institutional change.

### **CREATING THE UKFC**

It rebadged the DNH as the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). In May 1997, Culture Secretary Chris Smith set up the Film Policy Review Group (FPRG). This was co-chaired by Film Minister Tom Clarke, and – significantly – by Stewart Till, President of International, PolyGram Filmed Entertainment, whose appointment reflected the special status that global trade and distributor interests were given in the review (Magor and Schlesinger 2009: 306).

The creation of the FPRG was a crucial step in establishing the Film Council. Published in March 1998, its report *A Bigger Picture* set the scene for future change:

In the longer term, the Government will review the machinery for providing Government support to film in light of the recommendations of the British Screen Advisory Council<sup>4</sup> and other bodies. Its aim will be to establish structures which:

- provide strategic leadership for the film industry and a clearer focus on its development;
- achieve greater coherence by ensuring that the allocation of resources reflects priorities and that gaps and areas of overlap in provision are eliminated;
- ensure that discretionary funding decisions are not all taken by one person or group of people.

It will look at how the roles of all the national and regional publicly funded bodies fit together and will consider whether any changes are needed in order to maximize the benefits for the UK as a whole. (DCMS 1998: 50)

The Film Council was launched on 2 May 2000 as a non-departmental public body, working at 'arm's length' from government, with the status of a company limited by

guarantee. It absorbed other public and semipublic bodies concerned with film, including the Lottery Film Department of the Arts Council, British Screen Finance, the British Film Commission, and the production and regional funding roles of the British Film Institute (BFI). All remaining activities in the BFI came under the Film Council's control. Although the BFI retained its formal autonomy, it now received funding through the Film Council, which also appointed the chair of its board. According to one well-placed source, interviewed in 2013, who wished to remain off the record, Chris Smith had wanted from the start to fold the BFI into the new body but was persuaded not to by some of its highly influential defenders. The rationalization, therefore, was incomplete as devolution of political powers to the UK's 'nations' meant that, along with the BFI, separate screen support agencies existed in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

### **AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAD COME**

The idea of a unitary film body had been discussed in Labour Party circles in the 1970s. A committee chaired by John Terry, managing director of the National Film Finance Corporation – appointed by Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson – recommended the creation of a British Film Authority in 1976. But despite further work pursued under his successor James Callaghan, the opportunity to reshape the support landscape disappeared when Labour lost the 1979 general election. The Labour-supporting Director of the BFI, Wilf Stevenson,<sup>5</sup> revived the idea again in 1996, shortly before the FPRG's report. Richard Attenborough, then Chairman of the BFI, prepared the ground for the meeting on the future of the film convened on 15 June 1990 by Conservative Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher (Puttnam 2010). Stevenson now thought that government needed to devolve decision-making by creating a body like France's Centre national du cinéma (CNC). In his view, there were too many film bodies and more coherence was needed to represent the industry. Stevenson thought the unitary body's time had finally come, that civil servants in the DNH shared his frustrations, and that the ground was being prepared for a policy shift (Interview 2013).

Our research has uncovered other behind-the-scenes initiatives. One involved John Woodward who, after being appointed Director of the BFI in February 1998, became the Film Council's first CEO in October 1999. He had moved there from the BFI to join the new Chairman, the leading film director, Alan Parker, who had been Chairman of the BFI's Board. These new appointments came at the initiative of Culture Secretary Chris Smith. Prior to running the BFI, Woodward was already a key player as CEO of the Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television, PACT, when he had a 'conversation with Chris Smith...about all these different bodies...and [Smith] said, "Well, wouldn't it make more sense to pool all the stuff together? ... Could you write me a paper about how you might rationalize it all?" Which I did.' (Interview 2013).

Woodward commissioned a consultancy report (Hydra Associates 1997) that he said 'was a model for one overarching film organization for the industry' but which would exclude the BFI as 'the cultural institution' (Interview 2013). Woodward had been 'amused' to find the idea resurfacing in the FPRG's report. His account provides an insight into how decisions seemingly taken as a result of recommendations after a due process of inquiry may be pre-decided:

When this [*A Bigger Picture*] was published, there was a page at the back which basically, literally in the small print, that said, by the way, we are going to rationalize [the] machinery – which was never discussed at any point in the Film Policy Review by anyone. And that was a decision that had clearly been made privately. (Interview 2013)

Woodward believed that the rationalization of existing structures was Smith's pitch to the Treasury to show that there would be 'efficiency savings' in government (Interview 2013). His account suggests that Smith had – or was advised to – rationalize. He then asked Woodward to figure out how to do it, used the idea informally as a justification for change, and with the proposal now firmly lodged in his private circle, had something to drop into the FPRG's recommendations via his appointees. Setting up the FPRG, therefore, did not so much instigate a process of discovery but rather endorsed a policy position already privately established. However, this certainly is *not* Smith's own retrospective account:

We didn't come into government with the idea of creating a Film Council – it emerged out of the work of the *Bigger Picture* group, my response to the rather chaotic landscape of support for film, and the need to bring some coherence to it. (Interview 2013)

Smith's emphasis is on his pursuit of a rational process to arrive at a conclusion. This was the official view taken by the DCMS, where civil servants were tasked with following up the Film Policy Review Group's recommendation to create a new leading body – which became the Film Council.<sup>6</sup> Inside government, it was maintained that the drive towards creating such a new institution offering strategic leadership had been the outcome of discussion and debate, and had emerged as a result of this process.

It was evident, nonetheless, that a strong lead had come from Smith's special advisor in the DCMS, John Newbigin, as well as from Neil Watson, a very close associate of the prominent film producer, David Puttnam, who (as a life peer) later occupied a multifaceted policy-related role in the 'new' Labour project.<sup>7</sup>

John Newbigin said that what came out of *A Bigger Picture* was the idea of 'one big organization', that Chris Smith knew what he was looking for and the Film Policy Review Group was set up with that in mind (Interview 2013). Prior to this, there had been 'high-level involvement' in the rethinking of structures by key film industry figures such as David Puttnam and also Richard Attenborough, then Chairman of the BFI Board of Governors, which underlines the importance of private conversations outside the formal review process. We may conclude, therefore, that the direction of travel was set well before the FPRG's deliberations occurred.

## **THE LOGIC OF RATIONALIZATION**

Reflecting on the UKFC's origins, just as Jeremy Hunt, his eventual Conservative successor was dismantling that body, Chris Smith remarked:

I felt there was a need for two things. One was much greater coherence – hence the idea of bringing everything together under one roof. Second, I wanted to make sure that we brought what one might call the artistic side of British film-making together with the more commercial side so that each could usefully feed off the other. (Macnab 2010: 3)

This encapsulates the logic of rationalization. It is based on the belief that one agency is better than many because it may concentrate resources and pursue more effective strategic action. This logic also involves a process of disavowal and taking distance from superseded bodies judged to be ineffective.

The pursuit of ‘coherence’ meant that the existing patchwork funding arrangement was found wanting. But the goal of creating a single agency was not achieved because, as noted, the creation of the Film Council – while sweeping up some smaller bodies – left the BFI reduced and weakened, with much of the cultural remit of film policy sub-contracted by the Film Council to the older body. This affected the achievement of Smith’s second goal: that of making the industrial and the cultural wings of the film sector interact. This proved difficult, Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (2012a: 300, 298) has suggested, because New Labour strategy ‘really was about the creative industries’, putting ‘film culture firmly in second place’, removing ‘production from the BFI’s brief’ and leading to ‘the subordination of the BFI to a new organisation of a totally different type’.

Woodward, who became director of the BFI in February 1998, recalled that he and Alan Parker had met Chris Smith at the DCMS some six or seven months later. It was made clear at this meeting that a new organization would ‘have oversight of all the film funding. ... At which point, the BFI would not be getting its money direct from government. ... It was a fundamental shift in the power relationship’ (Interview 2013) and this was hard for the BFI to accept. In fact, the creation of the Film Council was a tremendous blow to the BFI, which both lost its chairman, Alan Parker, and its director, John Woodward, to the new body. During the ‘shadow’ period from October 1999 to April 2000, when the Film Council was finally established, the BFI’s top leadership was very ill prepared for the coming change in status, according to one key insider (Interview 2013),

### **THE LOGIC OF EXPERTISE**

A second logic also informed the new arrangements. The role of expertise in government was central to the Labour project, not least as so many of its leading lights either came from or relied heavily on think-tanks or policy advising. The creation of the Film Council was of a piece with the Labour’s drive to develop the creative industries, with think tanks and input by leading industry figures mobilized to that end (Schlesinger 2007; 2009).

Applying the logic of expertise entailed first, finding fault with (and disavowing) the know-how and practice of existing agencies. Second, it set a value on specific kinds of expertise as especially credible and effective, thus legitimizing them. The next task was to find the right exemplars of embodied knowledge by choosing particular individuals to undertake the necessary task of transformation.

Mid-way through the UK Film Council's life, Margaret Dickinson and Sylvia Harvey (2005: 425) criticized the closed process whereby the UKFC was established and noted the 'relatively limited range of interests represented on its governing body'. This stricture is borne out by our research.

Smith has described how he set about creating the framework for change:

[When] I became Secretary of State – one of the very first engagements I had was to go to the Cannes Film Festival [in May 1997] and I hosted a reception for the British film industry and I met with a lot of the key players at that time. And, sort of, on the spur of the moment - it wasn't quite on the spur of the moment, but it was only, sort of, 2 or 3 days in the gestation - I decided to establish the Film Policy Review Group and to ask Stewart Till to chair it. And I announced that at the Film Festival. (Interview 2013)

Stewart Till, who after his stint co-chairing the FPRG became deputy-chairman, and subsequently the second chairman of the Film Council, described his recruitment thus:

It was...1997 and Chris Smith was the Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and he went to David Puttnam and said, 'Look, I want to review the British film industry and I want to have the Film Minister, Tom Clarke, to co-chair with someone from the industry.' And Puttnam put me forward. I had a thirty-second interview with Chris Smith on the beach in Cannes. And Chris said, would I chair it with Tom. (Interview 2008)

Producer, amongst numerous other films, of *Chariots of Fire* (1981) and *The Killing Fields* (1984), and former CEO of Columbia Pictures (1986-88), David Puttnam's advice was evidently crucial in identifying the required experts. Puttnam had a complex and contradictory relationship to Hollywood. He was marked by the immense influence of what – following Pierre Bourdieu (1984: 101) - I have labelled the 'Hollywood entertainment habitus'. This was shared in distinct ways by several of the UKFC's board members, and certainly by all three of its chairmen (Schlesinger 2015). Till – with his PolyGram Filmed Entertainment role (until the company folded in 1999) – represented a European attempt to create a quasi studio system. His deputy chairmanship of the Film Council, along with the appointment of Alan Parker as chairman, gave a strong inflection to major production house and distributor values.

Within the DCMS, civil servants worked with Chris Smith and his special adviser John Newbiggin, who led much of the input from senior officials. A key move was to produce 'really strong role specifications' for the Film Council's Chairman and CEO posts, so they could 'go off and create the strategic vision, which was their first business plan' (Interview, 2013).

However, those seen as the men for the job - Alan Parker, the new Chairman, and John Woodward, the new CEO, were initially in the wrong place: doing precisely those jobs at the BFI. Inside government, those selected to join the board were seen as embodiments of the best available expertise and as complementing the skills possessed by the new Chairman and CEO.

Whereas in side the DCMS it was the careful pursuit of the appointments process that was invoked, thus legitimizing expertise in terms of explicit criteria, Stewart Till emphasized the role of personal connections: ‘I mean from the get-go, Chris Smith recruited, put together the first board almost, well, totally himself, taking some members of the Film Policy Review Group and just people he’d come across’ (Interview, 2008).

### **INTIMATIONS OF MORTALITY**

We now shift from a tale of creation to one of destruction, preceded by an indeterminate interim phase. From early 2009, over a period of eighteen months, merger talks between the UKFC and the BFI were in train. The key question during that period, in the run-up to the general election of May 2010, was which body would survive. Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (2012b) has given the best available bare bones account to date.<sup>8</sup> John Woodward made the first key move, it appears, in May 2009, when – mindful of economic stringency ahead, whichever government might be elected in May 2010 – he commissioned a legal analysis from which two main options emerged:

Either the BFI might be absorbed into the UKFC through the creation of a BFI Trust of which the UKFC would be sole trustee, or the UKFC could be folded into the BFI. The former model, which was the preferred one, would leave the UKFC in control; the BFI would retain its charitable status but probably have to lose its Royal Charter.<sup>9</sup> (Nowell-Smith, 2012b: 307)

This initiated a complex series of negotiations, with the DCMS apparently determined to effect a merger before the next general election, but – in part, through ministerial indecision - failing to bring this about. Both organizations’ boards and CEOs were involved in the merger talks, as well as ministers and civil servants at the DCMS. The dialogue was conducted in a wary and mutually mistrustful atmosphere. The UKFC’s chairman, Tim Bevan, later remarked that the talks were ‘not what would be called a smooth road’ (Bevan, 2011). Senior figures inside the BFI believed that its values were not respected by the UKFC. In the acerbic view of one insider, the BFI, which sought its own contrary legal advice to that of the UKFC, and which played both its charitable status and the Royal Charter as obstacles to take-over, had successfully deflected attack.

The BFI kept putting up the Royal Charter and kept putting up Charity Commissioner’s blocks. ... They say, ‘Oh, we are an independent charity’. Well, of course you are not, you’re totally dependent on government funding for your sustainability. ...Your Royal Charter is governed by the Privy Council, which is, in effect, the Cabinet. ...The BFI did, from time to time, put up these alleged roadblocks to structural reform. (Interview, 2013)

The process reached an inconclusive stage, as Nowell-Smith (2012b: 308) recounts:

an outline agreement was reached before the end of March [2010], leaving the BFI and its Charter formally intact but with crucial questions about the form the new organisation would take and it would pursue still very much up in the air.

However, this still half-baked solution was soon overtaken by events.



## DEATH OF THE UKFC

The UKFC's abolition followed the May 2010 general elections, which had resulted in the formation of a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government. The Conservative wing of the coalition came into power determined to axe at least some quangos strongly associated with Labour. In opposition, the new Conservative prime minister, David Cameron, had identified the communications regulator, Ofcom, as a target. After the general election that body experienced a deep cut and a rolling back of its policy role rather than annihilation.<sup>10</sup> The BBC had also been fingered, with evidence of collusive attacks by the Murdoch media camp and the Tories. It too faced cuts and a redefined use of the licence fee.<sup>11</sup> But well before those actions were taken, it was on the UKFC - never publicly in the frame for closure - that the ultimate blow fell.

On 21 June, the new government announced that the merger talks were on hold. Because he had considered the two bodies to be incompatible, Ed Vaizey, the Conservative Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, told John Woodward (Interview 2013) that he wanted the UKFC to concentrate on the film industry (perhaps becoming the core of a new creative industries council), with the BFI continuing to support film culture. Both Woodward and the UKFC's chairman, film producer Tim Bevan, disagreed with this position.

A month later, therefore, the decision to abolish the UKFC, announced in the House of Commons on 26 July 2010 by Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State for Media, Culture and Sport, came as a huge shock to the UKFC. As Woodward (Interview 2013) put it:

One Saturday morning, Tim [Bevan] got a ... call from Ed Vaizey when he was in LA, I think, just saying, 'I am terribly sorry, but we decided yesterday we have to abolish the Film Council and we are announcing it on Monday.'

Why was the UKFC abolished? The official reason given to the House of Commons on 26 July 2010 by Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt was that: 'abolishing the UK Film Council and establishing a direct and less bureaucratic relationship with the British Film Institute [...] would support front-line services while ensuring greater value for money. Government and Lottery support for film will continue' (Hunt 2010).

But at that time, no decision had yet been taken as to which body would administer Lottery support and replace the UKFC as lead body for film. Still on the attack, in September 2010, Hunt subsequently told the House of Commons Media, Culture and Sport (CMS) Committee:

The Film Council spent 24% of the grant that it received on its own administration and we asked ourselves if there was a better way to support the UK film industry than having a large number of executives paid more than £100,000 and an office in LA. (cited in CMS Committee 2011: par. 116)<sup>12</sup>

Tim Bevan responded that the government had taken

a bad decision, imposed without any consultation or evaluation. People will rightly look back on today's announcement and say it was a big mistake, driven by short-term thinking and political expediency. British film, which is one of the UK's more successful growth industries, deserves better.<sup>13</sup>

He also later disputed Hunt's calculations in his own evidence to the CMS Committee in November 2010. Although Vaizey delivered the blow, Bevan (2011) told the Committee: 'He was the bearer of the tidings. I don't know whether he fired the bullet or not.' Less equivocally, he told us: 'I entirely blame Jeremy Hunt, actually, because he made the policy decision and then got somebody else to go and execute it' (Interview 2013). Both he and Woodward were furious at the lack of planning behind the decision, which the latter publicly described as a 'blitzkrieg'.<sup>14</sup>

Beyond the official account of making efficiency savings, political ambition is the recurrent explanation given for the cut. According to John Newbiggin, 'Jeremy Hunt wanted to be best boy' by demonstrating he could undertake cuts as part of the coalition's austerity drive. This was also Woodward's view and that of most informants. In off the record comments, moreover, some key players have said that there were divisions between Hunt and Vaizey over the decision and that the latter believed that the government had axed the wrong body. If so, Vaizey certainly held to the official line in later evidence to the CMS Committee. He observed: 'I think the merger of the Film Council with the BFI is an achievement and a renewed policy for British film' (Vaizey 2011). He acknowledged that the decision had come as a 'bolt from the blue' and said the Friday phone call to Tim Bevan had been intended to minimize leaks before the parliamentary announcement the following Monday. The CMS Committee found the decision 'surprising' and was 'critical of the Government's lack of dialogue' with those affected. It did, however, endorse the eventual decision taken on 29 November 2010, namely that the BFI would become the 'flagship body for film policy in the UK' from 1 April 2011 (Vaizey 2010).

On 7 March 2011, the Labour peer Wilf Stevenson raised questions about the closure process in the House of Lords, where he accused the government of 'abolishing the UK Film Council by press release'.<sup>15</sup> He explained his intervention as follows:

The reason I went on about this is because we were talking about the proper processes that should exist for closing down a public body... We [Labour] could hardly argue against because we had asked the BFI and the Film Council to consider merging themselves. So we weren't very far apart on it. (Interview 2013)

For its part, the National Audit Office drew attention to other procedural failings. It reported that the DCMS's decision to close the UKFC 'was not informed by a financial analysis of the costs and benefits of the decision... such as lease cancellation, redundancy and pension crystallization costs.' Nor had the Department planned for the transfer of functions to the BFI on 1 April 2011 (NAO 2011: 7, 31).

All of these criticisms underline King and Crewe's (2013: 386-387) point that there is a 'deficit of deliberation' in British politics. They characterize a deliberative approach as involving careful consideration, not being over-hasty, and conferring and taking counsel. None of these criteria was met when the UKFC was axed.

In fact, the key shifts following the UKFC's closure involved yet another redrawing of the institutional map. Most of the UKFC's functions (and 44 of its 73 posts) were transferred to the BFI on 1 April 2011. The Regional Screen Agencies were closed and replaced by a new body intended to work alongside the BFI, Creative England. Film London took over the role of attracting inward investment. In the end, the BFI was the principal beneficiary of the closure, although in ways that would come deeply to challenge its existing cultural norms. In a paper written after the abolition had been decided, the BFI welcomed the restoration of its direct reporting to the DCMS which would allow it 'to have a conversation at a departmental level alongside other national cultural bodies and collections, giving a much needed direct voice for film as an art form' (BFI, 2010: par.7.2). However, given its newly expanded remit, major adjustments – not least absorbing former UKFC staff and their ethos - would lie ahead.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

By focusing on a striking case, this brief account reveals much about how cultural policy is made in the UK. The UKFC's creation was preceded by a considerable backroom preparatory phase involving a small 'new' Labour policy-forming nexus. The creation of the FPRG – handpicked on advice given to Chris Smith – provided the framework for endorsing a key policy already decided on, as opposed to actually discovering the need for a new agency through a deliberative process. The selection of the duo to head the new venture – Alan Parker and John Woodward - emerged from the same network of connections, based on a shared diagnosis of the ills of the UK film industry and what was needed to cure them. So did the appointment of the rest of the Film Council's first board.

Two logics legitimized the creation of the UKFC: rationalization and expertise. Rationalization involves a critique of the existing landscape coupled with a proposal to simplify its workings, whereas the expertise that matters is seen as possessed by those who agree with the new project. This picture is consistent with my earlier analysis of creative industries policy, which involved the preferred sourcing of ideas by a small number of key players with a broadly shared worldview (Schlesinger 2009).

'New' Labour's innovation hardly came about in a transparent manner, appearances to the contrary. But by comparison, complete opacity prevailed when the Film Council was axed. Jeremy Hunt's zealous desire to kill a quango was acted on so rapidly and ruthlessly that the UKFC's decision-makers were taken totally by surprise and there was no wider consultation to assess the consequences. After a period of indecision following the closure announcement, Conservative ministers hit upon precisely the rationalization that they had earlier rejected: a merger that meant shifting surviving UKFC expertise into the BFI. The lack of due process – commented on both in Parliament and by the National Audit Office, not to speak of across the film industry –left an institutional succession problem for which urgent solutions had to be found.

The creation of the UKFC was the outcome of strategic calculation by a coterie committed to a broader conception of creative industries policy. However, when under the successor government the axe unexpectedly fell, the implications of the

Film Council's expedient demise had not been thought through at all. Will any lessons be learned?

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Created Baron Smith of Finsbury in June 2005, he was Secretary of State from May 1997-June 2001.

<sup>2</sup> He was Secretary of State from May 2010-September 2012.

<sup>3</sup> 'The UK Film Council: A Study of Film Policy in Transition' was funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council, grant ref. no. AH/J000457X/1. The project team's members were Gillian Doyle (PI), Philip Schlesinger and Raymond Boyle (CIs) and Lisa Kelly (Research Associate). Thanks to my colleagues for their comments and to Richard Paterson and his eye for the nuance.

<sup>4</sup> The British Screen Advisory Council is 'an independent industry-funded body' that represents 'the audiovisual sector in the UK' – in effect, a lobby ([www.bsac.uk.com/about-us.html](http://www.bsac.uk.com/about-us.html), accessed: 29 November 2013). It was set up under a Labour government in 1975.

<sup>5</sup> Created Baron Stevenson of Balmacara in 2010.

<sup>6</sup> One civil servant tasked with implementing the FPRG's recommendations later joined the staff of the Film Council as Senior Executive Government Relations.

<sup>7</sup> Created Baron Puttnam of Queensgate in 1997. Neil Watson became a key strategy adviser to the UKFC and subsequently the BFI.

<sup>8</sup> For further detail about these negotiations see Doyle et al. (2015), Chapter 9.

<sup>9</sup> A royal charter is a formal document issued by the monarch, granting a right or power to an individual or a body corporate. The BFI's royal charter was originally granted in 1983 and amended in 2000.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2010/oct/21/ofcom-job-losses-spending-review> accessed 3 January 2014.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-11572171>.

<sup>12</sup> The costs of the UKFC were heavily disputed in evidence to the CMS Committee. There is no space to deal with this here.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2010/jul/26/uk-film-council>, accessed 3 January 2014.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2010/jul/26/john-woodward-film-council>, accessed 3 January 2014.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/110307-0002.htm#11030728000052>, Col. 1413T, accessed 3 January 2014.

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