A Brief Report to the Annual Congress of Film Archives:

This is a Congress of Film Archives, concerned primarily, I suppose, with the questions and problems of preservation of outstanding films, exchange of films between different archives and ancillary matters. A brief report, from India will surely appear to be a little irrelevant in the context of being presented but it is hoped it will give some idea of what exactly we have been able to do so far and what we have resolved to do in the near future, in the sphere of film appreciation, preservation and exchange.

Unfortunately we do not yet have a proper national archive. The movement for an archive has been going on since 1952. The Indian Federation of Film Societies, though recently established, has been able to secure a nucleus for an archive. The Federation itself is an infant having been in existence since December 1953 only. There are a number of individuals, the Federation, private collection of some films from certain countries. The Federation, for its small library, is now buying to include some of these private collections and is also buying to acquire titles from private collectors and abroad (with little success so far), it is hoped that by 1955 the collection will increase considerably and it will then be possible to have an 'archive' of some value and importance.
The Federation of Film Societies - The General Set-up

The Federation, indeed, is the Indian Cinematheque. In a country where the term is not widely known, the Federation has become a major player in the world of film discourse. The Federation produces on an average 200 full-length feature films annually, serving a vast population of 100 million

Laid down by foreign imports, mostly Hollywood and British productions. A few, perhaps, have stood the test of time. The present era of film history, however, has seen the rise of Indian cinema. Films like "Carrie" and "Shoe Shine" were released in India through commercial channels, dubbed in Hindi language and enjoyed widespread appeal.

We hardly any film from America, but all the films "Yakii" and "Pearl" (from Mexico) put together touch a negligible fringe of the vast needs of the vast needs put together touch a negligible fringe of the vast needs of the vast needs of the vast needs.

The Federation has a vast library. There are only two films of note in the permanent possession of the Federation - Potemkin and Renoir's "The Rules of the Game." They are shown to a select audience of film enthusiasts.

The Federation has 21 member units, with nearly 2,000 members. Some of the Societies have a collection of 250 films in their collection. The Federation has been instrumental in the establishment of the Film Society of India during the last two years.

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In fifty years of cinema, India has produced a few outstanding films—featurs films—and more than 50 good documentary subjects. Only a few have come out of India for viewing abroad. India's participation in various film festivals has opened the prospect in a small but significant way. The Indian film industry, for specialized audiences abroad, is expected to be not greatly successful by the end of 1965. It is an unfortunate thing, though, that the film trade in India is not as enthusiastic in this direction as in the West. Perhaps Indian films have not been very well received abroad, and they have not been properly promoted here and abroad. But their redeeming features are the small number of films of real merit and those that have not often received due recognition at home and abroad. Roy's film "Two Acres of Land" by far the most important Indian film since "Hamrahi" is not quoted quickly. The Indian Film Institute, which is the only body that has its own film festival, has recommended a number of films for international recognition, and those that have been selected have been screened in many countries, but only a few films have been shown in the West. The main problem is to promote Indian films on an international scale.

Conclusion: The Indian film industry—like most other industries—has started receiving the attention it deserves from the Government. Its Committee appointed by the Government in 1951 has examined the situation and made recommendations for the improvement of the industry. The Film Enquiry Committee has recommended the formation of a national film institute and the establishment of a film finance corporation. The relevant Government and the Film Finance Corporation are currently engaged in the study of the industry. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is also doing a lot of work, and it is expected that the Government, under the able stewardship of Dr. B. V. K. Keskar, the Minister for Information and Broadcasting, will contribute significantly to the advancement of the industry.
"Sangeet Natak Akademi" has introduced various awards for films produced in India, and the Films Division of the Govt. has produced some outstanding documentary films.

The Federation of Film Societies is preparing a scheme for submission to the Government in which it questions the exchange of films. We do hope to join the FIAF as a regular member by 1955, receive films from various countries, and make the Cinema Theatre of the FIAF widely known.

Cinema authorities have expressed interest in receiving films. I shall perhaps express my concern if I do not mention, in passing, the inspiring meetings I have had with Messrs. Lindgren, Longlees and Gallopy whose words of encouragement and assurance of help will take us a long way.

Anna Roy (Leathley)

Honey, Secretary

12/9/54.