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FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES ARCHIVES DU FILM (FIAF)

UNESCO-MEETING OF EXPERTS ON PRESERVATION
OF MOVING IMAGES OF CULTURAL VALUE

(22. - 26. Sept. 1975, Berlin)

PROPOSALS OF THE FIAF

Document prepared by
Fédération Internationale des Archives
du Film (FIAF)

Posing and discussing the following problems

- the FIAF will not give a detailed description of the present situation in the preservation and transmission of moving images since experts, to whom this document is addressed, have sufficient knowledge and experience on this score;
- no attention will be paid to the analysis of the social, political and ideal causes of the present situation. These problems should be reserved for scientific investigations;
- the FIAF will confine itself to those problems which are directly connected with the transmission and preservation of moving images and will disregard other aspects, such as the utilization of existing stocks, the organization and structure of the archives, description and cataloguing;
- the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film will make efforts to offer feasible solutions and take an active part in their implementation in the framework of its possibilities.

General problems of the preservation and transmission of moving images

In many countries moving images are not regarded as an integrated part of the national and international cultural heritage of mankind. The cultural policy of many countries is far from giving to the preservation and transmission of moving images the attention which the growing importance of this medium deserves in social communication. The result of this attitude is the largescale uncontrolled destruction of moving images as works of art and historical documents of our epoch.

For these reasons the FIAF recommends:

- The report of the Director General of the UNESCO to the 19th General Assembly should emphasize the importance of moving images as part of the cultural heritage of mankind and the

responsibility resting upon the governments for their preservation and transmission.

- to develop and promote the specific problems and all aspects of the preservation, transmission, utilization and diffusion of moving images in accordance with the steadily increasing importance of this medium, the responsibility for this task inside UNESCO should be clarified.

Proceeding from Resolution 3.422 of the 18th General Assembly the setting up of an international instrument could draw the attention of all members to the necessity of preserving and transmitting moving images.

The FIAF thus recommends:

- Measures should be taken to prepare a recommendation on the preservation, protection and transmission of the heritage of moving images for the 20th General Assembly of UNESCO.
- A proposal should be made to the 19th General Assembly authorizing the Director General to prepare this document.

The experience gathered and results achieved by film and other audio-visual archives, their tasks and goals for the preservation and transmission of moving images are little known to the public in comparison with the knowledge of the role played by museums and libraries. In order to make good omissions of the past it is imperative to familiarize the public in the broadest sense with problems and tasks with regard to the preservation and transmission of moving images.

For these reasons the FIAF recommends:

- The various publications of the UNESCO should be used to inform

on experiences gathered, the results achieved and problems unsolved in the preservation and transmission of moving images.

- It should be examined whether the production of a film of the UNESCO on the necessity of preservation and transmission of moving images can be made possible.
- The members of the IFTC should be informed on the activities of the UNESCO with regard to the preservation and transmission of moving images and asked for their active support.
- The UNESCO should support financially the "Manual of film archives", which is being prepared for publication by the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film.
(Likely date of publication: 1977)

The experience gathered by the members of the FIAF for many decades show that no film archive, museum, nor library is able to live on their own financial means. The preservation and transmission of moving images requires financial subsidies. This problem can only be solved in a national framework.

For these reasons the FIAF recommends:

- The UNESCO should suggest setting up at a national level bodies of experts, commissions, councils or committees, composed of film, TV, archive, library and museum representatives and representatives from the competent authorities who face the task of formulating the national requirements and solution variants for the preservation and transmission of moving images.

Special attention and encouragement must be given to the preservation and transmission of moving images in developing countries where film and TV are build up, where the audio-visual media are of extraordinary importance in the propagation of knowledge, in education and where moving images are the most important form of passing on old traditions and cultures and the social changes taking place in these countries.

For these reasons the FIAF recommends:

- In its long-term plan the UNESCO should envisage the establishment of a film archive in a developing country with an own film- or TV-production which could serve as a model and centre of training for a certain region.

The FIAF is ready to cooperate in a study on this project .

- If adequate conditions are given the UNESCO should send special lists for film archives to developing countries and carry out regional courses for further training.
- The UNESCO should enable representatives from developing countries to take part in further training courses organized by the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film.
- Those member countries of the UNESCO which have long-standing experience in the preservation and transmission of moving images should be encouraged and called upon to help the developing countries to train personnel and impart them scientific, technical and organizational knowledge.

There are only a few countries in which there is special training for the collaborators of audio-visual archives. In 1973 the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film successfully carried out its first international seminar on further training for collaborators of film archives. This seminar was for members of FIAF only and will be repeated at an interval of four years.

The FIAF recommends:

- Participation in this further training seminar should also be made possible to interested persons outside the FIAF; it should be examined whether it is possible to repeat this meeting at shorter intervals.
- The UNESCO should examine in how far financial aid can be granted above all for the participation of representatives from developing countries in this qualification course.

Technical problems in the preservation and transmission of moving images

Thanks to the systematic work done by the Preservation Commission of the FIAF the technical problems of a permanent preservation of moving images can be considered solved. The Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film will submit in the form of theses to the conference of experts the most important principles of the conservation of black-and-white films, colour films and electronic recordings.

In the course of scientific-technical progress new methods of the recording, transmission and storage of moving images will be developed posing new problems with regard to their preservation and transmission.

For these reasons the FIAF recommends:

- For the publication of the results of the work done by the Preservation Commission of the FIAF on the conservation of nitrate films, black-and-white films, colour films and magnetic tapes the UN ESCO should give financial support (likely date of publication: 1978/1979).
- The UNESCO should call on its members to undertake research work on problems of the permanent preservation of moving images.
- Aided by the UNESCO the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film should organize international congresses of experts at a four-year interval at which the latest technical developments and scientific findings in the conservation of moving images will be made known.

Legal problems of the preservation and transmission of moving images

In the existing legislation at a national and international level moving images are not properly taken into account as part

of the cultural heritage of mankind. The competence, rights, the legalization of tasks faced by those institutions devoted to the preservation and transmission of moving images are hardly defined.

The setting up of an international instrument in the form of a UNESCO recommendation could doubtlessly also spark off legislative initiatives in many countries.

For these reasons the FIAF recommends:

- A conference of experts under the guidance of the UNESCO and active collaboration of the Legal and Copyright Commission of the FIAF should be organized whose aim is to elaborate proposals of amendment to the international copyright convention which make it possible to preserve and transmit moving images as part of the cultural heritage of mankind.
- The Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film will elaborate a statement on the legal position of film archives or similar institutions devoted to the preservation and transmission of moving images and submit it to the UNESCO for inclusion in an international recommendation.
- The members of the UNESCO should be urged to look in the framework of their legislation for possibilities to ensure an transmission of moving images as part of the cultural heritage of mankind.

Preservation and transmission of moving images and the problem of selection

Due to the technical and financial consequences the principle of completeness of the transmission of all moving images produced must be questioned. Apart from technical and legal questions selection constitutes one of the central problems of the transmission of moving images. In accordance with its requirements,

tasks and preconditions the problem of selection is coped with differently and the technical, organizational, legal and financial consequences can only be solved at a national level. In the international framework: experience can be passed on, orientations and recommendations be given.

For these reasons the FIAF recommends:

- The UNESCO should subject the problem of selection of moving images for permanent preservation to a study on the basis of an international inquiry among members.
The Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film is ready to take a large share in elaborating this study.
- Aided by the UNESCO the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film should organize a congress of experts on the problem of selecting moving images for permanent preservation.
- The results of the study and the congress should be made known in a UNESCO publication (1981/1972).

The Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film expresses its hope that this document and the suggestions contained in it will help to enrich the work of the UNESCO-meeting of experts on the preservation of moving images of cultural value.