

INTERNATIONAL INDEX TO FILM PERIODICALS

27 Mildmay Grove
London N1 4RH
1 Nov 1973

Dear Jacques,

I would like briefly to go over the questions that we discussed on the phone yesterday, since I feel that my situation and that of the indexing project may not be fully appreciated. I want to emphasize that the backlog of work is formidable and that unless one dispatch per day is sent out there is no chance of the work being completed by next March when the cards should be delivered to Bowkers. The backlog is the result of Josseline never being able to keep up to schedule; even since she was relieved of the typing she has not achieved the target of five dispatches in a week even once. Whether this is because the work was underestimated or whether the offset machine has introduced delays and difficulties I am not in a position to say, but I suspect an element of both. Replacing Josseline will not solve the problems which the project has this year especially as these are to be greatly increased on the first of January when the typing help in Copenhagen is to cease.

I expect by now you will have checked the 1974 budget which was prepared for the Congress and seen that in fact the item for wages ($1\frac{1}{2}$ persons) is unchanged. The extra help is not for the editor but for the typing/duplicating aspect of the work. I think this is an important matter which should have been clear to the executive committee and illustrates what a disaster it was that the Documentation Commission was not represented at the meeting.

With regard to my own position and the meeting I had with Messrs Stenklev and Gough Yates my point of view does not seem to have been fully conveyed to you. When I agreed to edit the index for one year I fully intended to supplement my income with other work. I found that time did not allow this and reported my problem to the Documentation Commission in March who accepted that the editorial fee should be increased. Although FIAF executive/Congress agreed to the increase they apparently did not agree to the fee recommended by the Documentation Commission and appointed a committee to look into it. When I discussed the matter with two members of this committee on July 16th disagreement centred upon two points: firstly the weighting to be given to free-lance status, secondly the timing of the increase.

1. I do not object to rating the job at about the level of the librarian at the National Film Archive (though whether she is underpaid in comparison to people in similar work elsewhere is another matter and difficult to prove). But I strongly disagree that free-lance status can be compensated for by starting one or two increments up the scale for that job. Working for the NFA one enjoys security of employment, superannuation benefits, trade union representation, paid holidays, sick leave, free admission to the NFT and many other advantages. One does not have to supply ones own office, office furniture, typewriter, heating, lighting etc.

2. The committee maintained that it could not consider retrospective payments, the increase would have to date from July 1st. My position was that since I had raised the matter officially in March and that the anomaly the increase was intended to correct did not suddenly arise on July 1st but had obtained since the beginning of the year. As a compromise it was suggested that the executive should consider a payment back to April 1st and on this basis I agreed to consider acceptance of the committee's proposals and the new contract. As you know the new contract has not yet been sent to me so I have not been able to form an opinion of it. Nor have I yet been informed of the executive's decision regarding the back payment and the item for rent in 1973.

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- 2 -

Finally, I understand that my offer to house the project in 1974 was not acceptable but instead office space is to be found near the NFA so that supervision can be applied. I would appreciate a definition of this "supervision" and an explanation as to on whom or what it is to be imposed. In my experience in this field, which includes six years as editor of the British National Film Catalogue, an editor is appointed in a supervisory capacity. He formulates, discusses with his board, and carries out policy, appoints and administrates staff, works out budgets, arranges publicity etc. I would be interested to hear of any other aspect of supervision which could usefully be applied to the indexing project.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Michael Moulds.

Michael Moulds
Editor

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Mr Michael Moulds
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Dear Michael,

Thank you for your letter of November 1st which is I think the first letter you address to me. I say that to underline that till now you considered your normal channel to FIAF through the heads of the Documentation Commission. Perhaps was it wrong. I think the Commission should decide on its policies and that you should communicate with me directly about the day to day difficulties you encounter.

Let me examine now point by point the questions you raise :

1. About the backlog of work, you should not have any worries. This will be resorbed very quickly with the new arrangements we have made here. I do not think that Josseline is at fault. It is unfortunately quite normal that somebody should be ill from time to time and that she should take some holiday. What is true is that you underestimate the work with the offset machine. Josseline is a hard worker and it was strictly impossible for her to do more than printing and dispatching one set a day, even when not ill. I believe that the backlog of work is mainly due to the fact that in January we received only from you enough indexing forms for one dispatch, and in February for four dispatches. Only in March did the forms begin to arrive more regularly. So there are two months lost and that of course should not happen next year.

2. About the half-time person you want to have with you : the opinion of the Executive Committee was that we should hire for you a half-time assistant-editor who should do the typing of the masters. The reason behind it is that we should like to have somebody who could replace you in case of illness or if you decided at a certain time to leave the project. Mr Kevin Gough-Yates said that this was perfectly feasible and that we should try to find somebody to do this job. Of course, if the whole project has to go to London, there will also be a necessity to find somebody for the duplication and assembling of the cards.

3. About your contract, I can say nothing except that I understood from your discussions with Gough-Yates and Stenklev that you agreed on the contract which we just sent you. We knew that you asked for some retroactive increase but this was not agreed by the Executive Committee. You should remember that you, as a skilled librarian and involved in the project since the beginning, signed a contract with FIAF till the end of 1973 in which you accepted to do a job you knew on a half-time basis. We consider we did a lot in accepting to sign a new contract with you on a full-time basis before the expiration of the old contract.

I think you do not realize that FIAF has quite a heavy machinery and any change in the budget must be approved by the Executive Committee and the General Meeting. We consider that it is not serious to come to each Executive Committee meeting asking for a change in budgets made up by the Documentation Commission and approved by the General Meeting.

4. About the office space, we thought that it would be wiser to have our own office in or near the National Film Archive, as we do not know how long you will desire to work with us. In our mind, supervision means that the project being a FIAF project, a FIAF officer should supervise it on the spot and see that everything goes smoothly. The definition of what is expected from you was clearly stated, I think, in your contract. I personally understood that the editor-work was one of a specialist in cataloguing who would supervise the specialized cataloguing work of the project. But that is a personal opinion and if you have other views, I will have to submit it again to the Executive Committee in February.

I hope that this at least clarifies our mutual point of view and will give you to understand the reaction of the Executive Committee.

With my best regards,

Jacques Ledoux,
Secretary-General

Brussels, November 12th, 1973

c.c. Eileen Bowser
Karen Jones
Jon Stenklev
Kevin Gough-Yates

3. About your contract, I can say nothing except that I discussed your discussions with the Executive Committee and thinking that you agreed to the contract which we first sent you, we later that you asked for some retroactive increase but this was not agreed by the Executive Committee. You should understand that you, as a skilled librarian and involved in the project since the beginning, signed a contract with FIAF till the end of 1973 in which you accepted to do a job you knew on a half-time basis. We consider we did a lot in attempting to sign a new contract with you on a full-time basis before the expiration of the old contract.

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27 Mildmay Grove

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11 Dec 1973

Dear Jacques,

I am afraid your letter of the 12th November does very little to clear up the points I raised with you either about the project or as regards my personal position. Karen Jones's letter has answered most of the questions raised on the project, I would just like to emphasize the point she makes that the half-time assistant is unlikely to be both a willing typist and a competent editor. Does the FIAF executive committee seriously think that a typist could take on the work of the editor?

I do not want to waste any more time discussing the question of the editorial fee. I would just like to place on record that this matter has been handled most unfairly from my point of view. As I understand it a sub-committee of four people was appointed to settle this question. The meeting I had with two members of this sub-committee on July 16th ended in total disagreement. My position was, and still is, as outlined in my last letter to you. If your understanding was that I had agreed to the terms of the new contract all I can say is that I must have been grossly misrepresented.

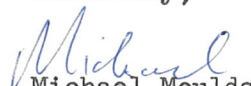
There are a few other comments I would like to make about this contract which I received on 12th November. I am at a loss to understand the meaning of Clause 4. It appears to say that I am to work 35 hours per week - "the equivalent of" normal office hours, that is to say not necessarily normal office hours. But then I must "arrange to be available by telephone during normal office hours", that is to say whether I am working or not. Since in fact I work either at home or at the BFI I cannot see how I could avoid being available by telephone. The clause seems at best unnecessary and pointless, at worst absurd and petty.

With regard to sundry expenses (Clause 5) as you must know I have been using a float which Karen Jones transferred to me at the beginning of the year from Copenhagen. Since this arrangement is now in operation satisfactorily and involves a minimum of unproductive paper work, I would recommend that it is retained.

Finally, on the question of office space, I am very pleased that the decision has been taken to provide an office for the project in or near the NFA. Having the office in my home entails considerable expense and inconvenience which will be increased shortly when building work starts on my house. Has any action been taken on this as yet?

With best wishes

Sincerely,


Michael Moulds
Editor

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