



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Personal Minute

No. 5

MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

We agreed the additional £5 million for the Arts Council this year in order that they could deal with the problems of the four big companies.

I now gather that the Arts Council have decided to spread the money widely among their clients, and that as a result the problems of the four big companies are not being properly dealt with, despite Press reports that they are. That seems to put all concerned - the Government, the Arts Council and the companies concerned - in a false and difficult position.

I should be grateful if you could let me have an urgent report on exactly what is happening, and what we can now do to sort things out. I am displeased to put it mildly - the money was given for a specific purpose only.

I am sending a copy of this minute to the Chief Secretary, Treasury.

*Margaret Thatcher*

31 January 1983