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lec No

Prime Minister



Department of Education and Science

Office of Arts and Libraries
From the Minister for the Arts

Elizabeth House York Road
London SE1 7PH

Surely we

Telegrams Aristides London SE1
Tel: 01-928 9222

should say

12th May 1983

The Rt Hon Tom King MP
Secretary of State
Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street
LONDON SW1

X before being

It would be helpful to decide precisely what we shall say before attached in the point? Mrs 13/5 Wednesday - I will call - giving Minister in on Monday

Dear Tom

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND/OR REORGANISATION
OF GREATER LONDON COUNCIL

Since Cabinet has in general approved your proposals about the Greater London Council, I think I ought to warn you of one issue which is liable to be raised when Cabinet's decision is announced.

The GLC spends several millions a year on supporting the Arts in London. Among other possibly less praiseworthy uses of their money they subsidise the four London orchestras, the National Theatre, the English National Opera Company, and the Festival Ballet to the extent of £3.5 million. They also subsidise the Festival Hall to the extent of just under £4 million.

We will clearly be asked during the next few weeks what will happen to the sums of money that these organisations now receive from the GLC. It is perfectly clear that the Festival Hall, for example, simply could not exist without this large sum.

* We really must be in a position to say that if the GLC is to be abolished we will ensure that there will be no damage to these institutions, and I would propose to do so if asked. I do not think we need to go any further than this at this stage but unless we go that far, we shall certainly get a great deal of criticism from informed circles.

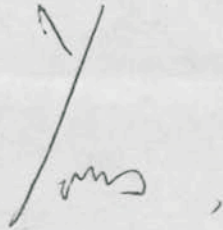
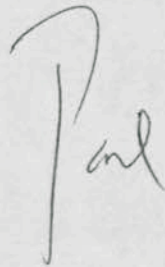
which institutions, exactly?

We may also be asked as to the future ownership of such buildings as the National Theatre, the Festival Hall, the National Film Theatre and the Hayward Gallery. My initial view is that all these buildings with the exception of the Festival Hall should be transferred to their present tenants who are largely independent bodies. It would probably be necessary to set up a new Board to run the Festival Hall and own the freehold. All these issues will have to be covered during consultations and no firm decisions need to be arrived at now.

... / ...

It is also possible we will be asked about the future of three important GLC museums, Kenwood, the Rangers House and Marble Hill. These are also financed by the GLC. Again we must ensure that money is provided from some other sources in future. My initial view is that these three museums might become outstations of the V & A. But again no firm decisions need be taken until after the consultations are concluded.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister, Geoffrey Howe and Sir Robert Armstrong only.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Paul', written in a cursive style.A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Paul', written in a cursive style.

PAUL CHANNON



1-1-1953





Prime Minister

✓ NO

(1)

Content with the line

at x ?

Yes

MUS 17/5

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon Paul Channon MP
Minister for the Arts
Office of Arts and Libraries
Elizabeth House
York Road
London SE1 7PH

Told Mr Gieve

MUS 18/5

16 May 1983

R Paul,

REORGANISATION OF GLC

attached

Thank you for sending Geoffrey Howe a copy of your letter to Tom King about support for the more worthwhile of the arts institutions supported by the GLC.

Naturally I agree that we must leave no doubt that we will continue to support these bodies. We should certainly not want them to go to the wall. But I do not think we can be committed to continuing support on the same scale as the GLC without question.

x/ May I therefore ask that you say, if asked, that we will arrange for these bodies to continue to receive proper financial support.

It will also, of course, be important to make it crystal clear that the commitment is confined to these bodies and does not extend to some of the less praiseworthy outlets for the GLC's munificence.

I am sending copies of this letter to the recipients of yours.

LEON BRITTAN

17 MAY 1955

