



From the Minister of State for Industry

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
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Norman Lamont MP

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cc/po  
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12/17

12 December 1984

**FILMS BILL**

I am writing to you about problems encountered during Committee on the Films Bill and about the line we propose to take.

As you will know, the Government were defeated in Committee on 6 December by 11 votes to 7 on amendment 39 to the Films Bill. The amendment, which was proposed by John Gorst and supported by the Opposition and four Conservative Members including Mr Gorst, is intended to prevent the Secretary of State repealing the current legislative framework for the Eady levy until he has imposed upon the independent television companies and the BBC a means for them to pay makers of films in proportion to the television audience viewing them: in other words, a levy on the BBC and ITV for the benefit of the film industry.

I should also forewarn you that, in the light of the instability of our support revealed on 6 December, it is possible that we shall be defeated again this week on clause 3 of the Bill, which provides for the dissolution of the National Film Finance Corporation (NFFC) and the new arrangements for the financing of film production. These arrangements include a transfer of assets from the NFFC to a new private sector body.

I do not know what the reaction of the House of Lords is likely to be to the changes made in Committee. There are a number of people in the Lords with a special interest in films and the film industry will no doubt lobby hard.

However, I do not believe that there should be a change to Government policy as contained in the Bill and I shall be seeking to overturn at Report stage amendment 39 and any others that may be unacceptable to us. I do not expect that the opposition of some

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Conservative Members in Committee would be reflected much more widely during Report, but I should be grateful if you would let me know how things stand when you have had an opportunity to assess the position.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, other members of the Cabinet and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*You r*  
*N*

NORMAN LAMONT

12 DEC 1984



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FROM THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE  
HOUSE OF LORDS

13 December 1984

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14/12

Norman Lamont

FILMS BILL

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 12 December to John Cope about the handling of the defeat which the Government suffered on the Films Bill in Committee in the Commons, and of any further defeats which we might suffer on Clause 3 this week.

In the fourth paragraph of your letter you say that you do not know what the reaction of the House of Lords would be to any changes made in Committee in the Commons. A Short Debate is taking place here in the Lords next Wednesday 19 December on the Films White Paper which underpins the Films Bill and, unless it is essential that a decision on handling the defeats is taken immediately, it might be prudent to wait and see what if anything is said next week on the matters on which we are in trouble in the Commons.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, the members of the Cabinet, PUSS, DTI (Lord Lucas) and Sir Robert Armstrong.

John  
Lamont

Norman Lamont Esq MP



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