

Outlook at the CFDC: a cautious year

MONTREAL - In the first week of May, the Canadian Film Development Corp. was looking at between \$20-\$30 million worth of production, submitted to it for consideration for the year 1981. "I have no way of knowing how many more films will be submitted to us during the remaining months of the year," Lamy told Cinema Canada, though the CFDC still expects a smaller volume of production this year than last.

The CFDC has a total budget of \$4.1 million with which to operate during the fiscal year '81-'82. For the moment, the funds are allocated as follows: \$1.3 million for anglophone productions, \$900,000 for francophone productions, \$500,000 for distribution, p.r. and marketing, and \$1.2 for administration.

Most of the funds spent on English language films are expected to be used as interim financing while expenditures on French track films are liable to be on an equity basis.

"The situation is much tighter this year, and the CFDC - like everyone else - is being much more careful," reports Lamy. The CFDC will look for serious guarantees before backing projects. "If we can turn around the interim money once this year, we'll be happy," he commented.

Lamy expects the CFDC to back about 6 or 7 features, and to be involved in 1 or 2 television series.

Lamy declined to comment on the suggestion, made by staffers in the Ministry of Communications, that the CFDC is looking for an additional \$4 million for this fiscal year. "It is not good form to go looking for additional funds from the government now that the system of distributing additional funds

has been modified," responded Lamy.

Prior to the modification, agencies which required additional funding would prepare documents and solicit the Treasury Board for the additional funds. "Now, the initiative is up to the Minister," reports Lamy. If funds become available, the Minister picks the agency he wishes to fund, advises it that sums are available, and then requests documents proving that the agency can meet whatever requirements are necessary.

"The new system cuts down on the in-fighting among agencies for funds, and eliminates the costs of preparing those documents before there is any

assurance that funds are, indeed, available," explains Lamy.

Lamy did confirm that the Minister Francis Fox is expected to attend the annual meeting of the APFQ on June 6, and that a major film policy speech may be in the offing. "But we never know until 24 hours before the meeting whether he will really come."

Fox had been expected to make a major policy speech at the annual CFTA meeting, but, in the end, did not attend.

Asked by Cinema Canada, the evening of the opening of *Les Plouffe*, about the timing of a major film policy speech, Fox replied "We've been a bit slow about that, haven't we?"

Ménard takes Brault, Guy and O'Brien to court for bad faith

MONTREAL - For the first time in Canada, a producer is suing a broker for bad faith in the distribution and sale of a public issue.

The company 98204 Canada Inc., whose president Robert Ménard is also president of Les Productions Vidéofilms and producer of *Une journée en taxi* is suing Brault, Guy, O'Brien Inc., and the Seven Arts Studio for \$1,143,549. The cause: the non-sale of units for the Canadian-French co-production, starring Jean Yanne and Gilbert Renaud and shot last year in Montreal.

According to the papers filed at Quebec's Superior Court on April 29, Ménard accuses B.G.O. of "not fulfilling its obligations, of making false representations, and of bad faith." Combined, B.G.O. promises caused Ménard to borrow money and

make a film which he wouldn't have undertaken, had he not counted on the brokers carrying out their part of the bargain. The film's budget was set at about \$1 million.

Briefly, Ménard's declaration is as follows:

B.G.O. handled the public offering of \$200,000 of Ménard's previous film, *Coffin*, and sold all units. Both parties were happy with the outcome, and Ménard signed a contract, whereby B.G.O. was to handle the financing of any other films undertaken by Ménard.

Prepared to undertake *Une journée*, the producers organized a screening of *Coffin* for past and prospective investors on May 7, 1980. The response was overwhelming, and Jean-Claude Dorval of B.G.O. in-

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Cover: Howie Mandel is up to his usual high jinks. For details on how his career has suddenly started to branch out, see pages 38-39. (photo: Jac Jacobson)

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