

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
Société Radio-Canada

June 8, 1972

Mr. Philip McPhedran,
Editor,
Cinema Canada,
72 Isabella Street, Suite 8,
Toronto 5, Ont.

Dear Mr. McPhedran:

Thank you for sending me a copy of your May/June issue which I would not otherwise have seen. You puzzle me by the last sentence of your letter which suggests that the thought might have entered your mind that I would not want to read your article. Perish the thought! The Corporation has been criticized in many places with much more vehemence, unfairness and inaccuracy!

Speaking seriously, it seems to me from first reading that you have made a conscientious effort to assess the CBC-NABET situation without showing marked favoritism to either side. You have said, in effect, "A curse on both your houses!" and this is a perfectly natural reaction on the part of any interested and reasonably neutral by-stander, whenever a labour dispute involving the public as an innocent third party occurs.

I think you are completely wrong of course, in asserting that the Corporation has shown "flagrant disregard" for the effect the dispute is having on public interest and other areas of the entertainment field. I also deny that we have failed to show sincere interest in the welfare of the viewing and tax-paying public.

So far as the viewing public is concerned we have considered it to be the first duty of the Corporation, throughout the strike, to keep a broadcasting service on the air – and this we have succeeded in doing, in the face of very considerable difficulties through the entire period. No one denies that the Corporation, and the viewing public, have had to pay a price for this – not so much in financial terms as in the loss of quality, variety and numerous excellent programs which the Corporation has been prevented from producing because of the work stoppages which have occurred since last January.

In terms of the tax paying public – which is of course even larger than the viewing public – the position is even more clear. Can anyone seriously argue that it could have served the interests of the tax paying public to have made an incredibly costly settlement as the Corporation would have had to do, had it acceded to NABET's demands? To advance such an argument would be to show a serious lack of understanding not only of the immediate cost of settlement on NABET's terms, but equally of the far-reaching implications of such a settlement for other unions and for the broadcasting industry as a whole.

There are many other statements in your article with which I could take issue, but to do so would result in a letter even longer than your

article itself. You quote union officers as estimating the Corporation's losses to date as \$10 million; you also repeat the charge that the Corporation is out to break the union. Both of these statements are the sheerest fantasy. The Corporation has lost valuable programs – which cost money to produce – but it has not lost dollars as a result of the strike. And the Corporation, despite all assertions to the contrary, respects and believes in strong, responsible unions and in the process of rational free collective bargaining. To say that the Corporation is out to break the union is just as ridiculous as to counter with the equally unfounded statement that the union is out to destroy the Corporation.

I will conclude with a reference to a final statement in your article which borders on the irresponsible and which, taken by itself does not add to the credibility of the article as a whole. You state, "the CBC has more bodies in its offices doing nothing than the entire membership of NABET". The total work force of the Corporation as of this date is approximately 9,000 – approximately 7,000 of them unionized. The total membership of NABET, as of recent date, is in the neighbourhood of 2,140.

Do you believe that anyone – including myself – would seriously credit your assertion?

Thank you for bringing to my attention an interesting, provocative – and not overly accurate – article.

Yours sincerely,
George F. Davidson

Mr. George Davidson,
President,
CBC,
1500 Bronson Avenue,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Davidson:

Thank you very much for the letter of June 8. My comment that you may/may not want to read this article was a feeble attempt at humour.

I read with interest your comments and criticisms on the article, and while I am pleased that you took the time to write to me, I must admit that I don't agree completely with your statements.

I especially take issue with your sentence "The Corporation has lost valuable programs – which cost money to produce – but it has not lost dollars as a result of the strike". Although I am not a financial wizard, it does not take too much common sense to realize many an advertiser not only looked at the other network but probably went there due to the uncertain nature of the Corporation's program schedule.

I also do not think you can fault me for quoting union officers as saying they thought the strike cost at least \$10 million so far or that the Corporation was out to break the union. Yes, these do seem exaggerations, but nonetheless, if this is what they believe, then it is in the interest of fair play that they be printed. You must have noticed that I prefaced the union official's quote by a quote from Cec Smith, who says "Yes, the strike has cost the CBC money ... but nowhere near the ludicrous figures quoted by the union."

I'm afraid you're the first person to say that

"... it has not lost dollars as a result of the strike." Even Smith agrees that the Corporation has lost money. You don't seem to believe the article was "overly accurate" but it seems to me that your only justifiable (and one I agree with most heartily) criticism was the rather tongue-in-cheek poke at the number of bodies in CBC offices. It would be nice if you could stroll around Toronto CBC offices, not as George Davidson, President, but as a complete stranger – the amount of sitting around is the rule rather than the exception.

I must admit I was carried away by the idea behind the thought which seemed to fit into the article. However, since the article had come out, quite a few people have approached me and told me that they got the general idea of what I was trying to say. (Yes, but it was an inaccuracy! !)

Since this probably is the only time I'll have a chance to tell you this – I'd like to say that I really think you've done a tremendous job with the Corporation under what must have been the most trying conditions. Unfortunately the Corporation has always been the whipping boy for the press, and it seems very unlikely that situation will change.

Again, thank you very much for your interest and time: I appreciate it very much.

Yours sincerely,
Philip McPhedran,
Editor.

P.S. You seem to have jumped from the frying pan into the fire with your next job!!

Dear Mr. McPhedran:

I like your reply of June 13 so much that I hasten to answer.

I really don't think there is too much real disagreement between us. It would be ungenerous of me not to acknowledge that when you referred to the Corporation's losses (at \$10 m.) and to its "break the union" attitude, you made it clear that this was the union talking. You were not putting forward these statements on your own – and yet – you know that even in putting them forward as the union's side without comment or question you help to give them a certain credibility. Repeat a statement often enough and it becomes accepted as a fact: and if you thought these statements worthy of repetition and inclusion in your article, without challenge on your part – well that in itself means something.

Let me make one thing clear incidentally: when I said "the Corporation has not lost dollars", I did not mean to suggest by that that the Corporation had not in individual instances lost a single advertiser dollar, or incurred additional costs as a result of the strike. Obviously not. What I meant, and what is true – is that any losses of that nature are almost fully, if not entirely offset by the savings resulting from the fact that wages were not paid to striking employees and that overtime payments for NABET technicians were almost completely absent from January to March. We have calculated our "losses" – both revenue losses and extra costs – at less than \$2 million for the period January to the end of March 1972, - a large sum but less than 1% of our gross budget. And to offset that we calculated in excess of 1 3/4 million in offsetting savings on the wages and overtime bill.

Incidentally, for the year 1971-2 as a whole – and this includes the 3-month period of the strike from January to March inclusive, our commercial report will make it clear that on the

balance of expenditures and revenues, the former were lower than originally targeted, and the latter higher — so-o-o — in that sense you will understand what I meant when I said "CBC has not lost dollars as a result of the strike".

May I touch on just one other point — the number of bodies in the CBC's offices. I agree with you that you were "carried away by the idea behind the thought...". As to the "idea behind the thought" — I don't quarrel for a minute with the global idea of what you were trying to say — it was the exuberant expression of that idea which led you to such hyperbole. And the only defense I would add is that I do contend that in reducing overall CBC strength from 9400-9500 or thereabouts in 1968 to 9000-9100 — while at the same time adding Charlottetown TV, Moncton production entre, St. Anthony's (TV), Marystown (radio), Windsor (French radio), Regina-Moose Jaw-Saskatoon (TV), Edmonton (French TV) and almost 100 other assorted rebroadcasters and relays, we've at least made a move in the right direction.

You see, from this, and from my earlier letter — I'm Irish — and I like to argue — *not to criticize*. It was in that spirit, I assure you, that both my letters were written.

Many thanks for your good wishes. This job, I repeat, has been fun — and I hope the next one is too.

Yours sincerely,
George F. Davidson

ciation could not justify this type of expenditure. I am sure you will appreciate that there is tremendous pressure on our very limited funds and we cannot even begin to think of providing the amount of money necessary for a bulk mailing, either on an economic or philosophical ground. Although we congratulate you on the new look of Cinema Canada and completely understand the difficulties of publishing in Canada, we have to say that yours is only one of several trade magazines which may be of interest to our members, as I am sure you are aware, and if we made some special arrangements for your magazine, why would we not do the same for others? The best I can suggest in this connection is that you use the enclosed up-to-date membership list in contacting each member individually to see what interest you can obtain in subscriptions and/or advertising.

As a point of interest, other than the new thrust in feature film production, in which some of our members are involved, the majority of our membership in the private sector earns its daily bread from the production of television commercials and sponsored business films. Our customers are *NOT* within the ranks of film producers, directors, cameramen, editors and other persons currently interested in the film medium. Our customers are major business concerns, advertisers, agencies, governments and so on.

One of the weaknesses of our industry in the past, and I think still is, is that we spend too much time talking to ourselves. Although I found your new issue well laid-out and smoothly produced, I fear that most of the material included is of interest to those who are involved in the various fields of film production. There is nothing wrong with this, providing the magazine can make it pay, but in turn there is little real value to say, me as a producer of sponsored motion pictures in trying to reach my clients or a potential market. Businessmen are so busy these days with the floods of reading material that cross their desk they have little time to read anything and other than those in the feature film business, which is a tiny minority group of enthusiastic people, family news of the C.S.C., C.F.E., AMPPLC and other organizations of this type, it is of no real interest to the businessman who is involved in a pretty hard daily life trying to make sure their

respective businesses run successfully.

You will notice that the ad which our company has agreed to place in Cinema Canada for 3 issues is designed specifically for one area — producers' services. In my twenty plus years of experience one does not "sell" film production contacts through newsprint advertising. We do, however, try to support various Canadian business magazines from time to time within the scope of our budget.

If I was to be truly hard-nosed about this subject, I think that it is unlikely anyone within the C.S.C., much as I respect them personally and for their craft, is going to commission major film contracts from us. In this connection, I am somewhat amazed at the second paragraph of your letter in which you say the C.S.C. lost over \$2,000.00 on the first issue. In my experience with most of the associations falling within the purview of those involved in the several facets of film production, very few, if any, have this kind of money to spend in a highly speculative area. I know how difficult it has been over the years to get any financial help at all in promoting such annual activities as the Canadian Film Awards, which is of much more direct benefit to those involved in the making of films.

I do trust that the foregoing is not construed by you as being unfair criticism. To my mind, it is most important that we all face the real facts of life and not try to fool ourselves.

Again, congratulations on your first issue. We wish you the best of luck for the future and you can be assured that we will do everything we can to encourage AMPPLC members to give you some support.

Yours sincerely,
Arthur Chetwynd
President

Dear Mr. McPhedran:

Your letter of May 30, 1972 with enclosures, addressed to Mr. Frank Young, Executive Secretary of AMPPLC, has been passed on to me for an answer, in my capacity as chairman of the Publicity Committee.

On the matter of bulk mailings, as discussed with George Csaba Koller yesterday, our Asso-

Dear Mr. Chetwynd:

Your letter of June 7th, prompts us to answer it, through the pages of our magazine, in an open-letter format.

You sound as if you have your mind made up on the issue and that there's no use trying to argue with you. Far be it for us to try and convince you of the error in your way of thinking, but we must respectfully respond and air our opinions. Let the readership of our magazine judge for themselves, as to which of us is right.

On the question of bulk mailing: if the Canadian Society of Cinematographers, the Canadian Film Editor Guild and the Directors Guild of Canada can justify the expenditure for this purpose, would it be unreasonable to think that the AMPPLC might also? (As far as having limited funds, all we've been hearing since we started the magazine, is go talk to the Producers, they have all the money!)

On the question CINEMA CANADA being only one of many trade magazines available to AMPPLC members: sure, if you count the U.S., but if you look at the other Canadian film publications (TAKE ONE, THAT'S SHOW BUSINESS, MARKETING, CANADIAN FILM DIGEST, and IMPACT) you must realize that CINEMA CANADA is better suited to the needs of the Canadian producer, than any of the others. TAKE ONE is basically a film buff magazine, designed for the American market,

A lot can happen before you get it in the can

Your casting is perfect, your cameraman the best around, all is ready to shoot... then your lead breaks his leg or your film stock is faulty or the weather turns bad or the lab messes up and you're in trouble... But that's the film game, isn't it? It is, unless you play it smart and protect yourself

in a professional manner with insurance. It's not expensive but it is important and it gives you peace of mind because you can insure against the bad things that can happen before (or after) you get it in the can.

Let's discuss it.

Arthur Winkler, CLU

Insurance for the Film Industry

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very limited in its Canadian coverage. THAT'S SHOW BUSINESS is trying to cover too much at once. It is worth while, but is basically a 'show biz rag' where starving actors can read about auditions. The only thing I can say about CANADIAN FILM DIGEST, without being unduly scathing, is that it's Nat Taylor's house organ, and if you want to read about where the business was in the forties, go ahead. (There are rumors that under new editorship they'll turn it into 'the magazine of the Canadian Motion Picture Industry.' Who do they have to thank for that, if it ever happens, other than CINEMA CANADA? We don't mind competition, but if one already exists, why bother.) And IMPACT was perhaps a nice idea, but the theatre-going public has indicated a thumbs down, by leaving it under their seats, along with the pop corn, and the chewing gum. And it was obviously indentured to serve the interests of the distribution moguls. The only one that's left is MARKETING with all the nice pictures of account executives trying to look hip for the camera. Sure, if you're making T.V. commercials, by all means subscribe to MARKETING, but don't close your eyes to the other realities happening in the Canadian film community, which MARKETING doesn't even bother to mention. And it's a TV-broadcasting, ad agency mag, not a film industry publication.

On the question of the enclosed up-to-date membership list of the AMPPLC: we never received it, nothing was enclosed in either letter.

You say that the customers of the AMPPLC are NOT within the ranks of film producers, directors, cameramen, editors and other persons currently interested in the film medium; but rather major business concerns, advertisers, agencies, governments and so on. Aside from the obvious fact that you totally ignore situations where a cameraman or a director or a producer or an editor quickly requires the assistance of a post-production house, or a

laboratory (and laboratories are members of the AMPPLC, are they not?) or that of another producer (extra equipment, manpower, services) and doing so he just might become a customer of an AMPPLC member company; what makes you think that major business concerns, advertisers, agencies, governments and so on do not get or read CINEMA CANADA? Our most active readership works for government agencies, not just in Canada, but all over the world. And if a foreign government ever sends a delegation of some sort here and wants a film made of the tour, don't you think that the government official making the decision whom to hire might be influenced by an ad in a magazine called CINEMA CANADA? If not, then why do Toronto motion picture production houses spend thousands of dollars a year taking ads out in publications such as VARIETY and AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER, which are foreign publications, whether we tend to forget that fact, or not. So the members of the AMPPLC who advertise in American Cinematographer are being a bit hypocritical when they claim that it doesn't pay to advertise. Especially since AMPPLC charges astronomically higher prices for ad space than CINEMA CANADA.

We really appreciate your own company's ad, and recognize that it is aimed at one area. We wouldn't dare question your twenty plus years of experience, but permit us to add, that even if production contacts, per se, are not sold through newsprint advertising, perhaps a well placed and well-composed ad does register the fact in the reader's mind, that, let's say in Vancouver, someone says: "Art Chetwynd is still active and the next time I'm in Toronto, I'll look him up, and maybe he can help with this contract I have to farm out," etc. If ads sold everything to the North American public - from hoola-hoops to guided missiles - during the past few decades, there is no reason to believe that businessmen desiring to use the

medium of film are any less gullible, psychologically. Maybe the tera-in-the-pants-seat folksiness of your ad will grab the attention of the Mayor if a small Newfoundland town strongly enough, so that the next time he wants to make a film about his community, he'll give a call to Art Chetwynd in Toronto. And that contract would return your ad investment a hundred-fold, at least.

About the CSC losing two-thousand on the first issue; that was about all the money they had, and the reason they chose to spend it in such 'a highly speculative area' is that without 'advertising' their existence through CINEMA CANADA, two years from now they might not have had enough membership dues to keep the Society alive. Cameramen outside Toronto felt more and more cut off, and communication was sorely needed. What better way to set up new lines of communication, than to revive the magazine, which, we can assure you, is doing a fine job. Sure, it's expensive, but it has managed to create enough good feelings between Montreal and Toronto alone, to warrant the expense. The Canadian Film Awards have been boycotted by Quebec filmmakers because they felt that the organizers didn't care about them. Those same filmmakers are coming to us offering to contribute to the magazine.

Please don't think of this long reply as being in any way antagonistic. We appreciate you congratulations, and we think that we've made tremendous improvement since that first issue. We can only hope that the member companies of the AMPPLC will soon realize the obvious benefits of using CINEMA CANADA as an advertising outlet, as well as a forum to increase communication within the film community itself, which we think is sorely needed. (Many already realize this, and we are deeply grateful for their support, and vote of confidence.)

the Publisher/Editors

has just happened in the last few years, and I happened to get in on a very good film when it started. And I got the opportunity obviously to write *Rip-Off* and *Out* both only because of *Goin' Down the Road*. It all happened so quickly that I can't evaluate it."

"I have no idea what David is going to do with *OUT*. It could really be a sharp picture, really classy, I'm talking about something that we don't do in Canada. With big cinematic value to it. We tend to keep small mostly, I guess, because of budgets, to begin with. There's this confinement, we have trouble here breaking out. I for one have done a picture that was severely limited by a small budget. For me personally it was an ideal picture to do, because of its simplicity. The areas that are going to hold up like the acting I feel very confident about. I couldn't go out and do a picture like *OUT* for a starter, with all this grand big thing about it. In everything I've written I've always had to consider budgets: do it small, keep it little. So I think I'm cutting my teeth now on an ideal picture.

Where are you headed for now? Do you have many scripts in mind?

"I have a few things in the back of my head that I'd probably like to work on. Nothing specific. . . ."

Do you envision directing another one?

"I don't know, I don't know . . . I guess I have to see how well I've done with this one. I'm kind of from an old school of film in a lot of ways, I would like to do the kind of film - do it in the style - that Hitchcock talks about. I feel that the kind of film I want to do is planned. Thoroughly planned, every shot, and every shot has a purpose. I'm not of the new school of cinema verité that Richard evolves from, strange enough, because I've worked too much in documentary film and public affairs, cutting film, and it's too hit-and-miss for me. It doesn't satisfy me. I want to know it's there before I start it, I want a storyboard, I want to do all the old-fashioned ways, so that I know I've got it before I start. I don't like the risks involved, like *Goin' Down the Road* was a hit-and-miss thing. And if we want to be honest, there are about a hundred things wrong with that film.

"I guess there has to be more money. I want to do commercial films, I'd just love to do a thriller - or toughest of all - a good comedy film. Which everyone wants to do, but ninety-nine out of a hundred are disasters. I'd like to do a film that's fun, too. This was a pretty heavy film. I think it had its effect on everybody. There was a lot of sad feeling, the whole atmosphere was so down. "I'm gonna write my next picture: takes place in Acapulco, with a lot of beautiful girls in it, and all the ideal situations, (laughs) I now understand why Hollywood makes the kind of films they do. It's a hell of a lot more fun to make those kinds of films than it is a serious one, like *WEDDING IN WHITE*."