

C.R.T.C. Hearings — Vancouver

CRTC opened hearings in Vancouver on April 22nd to receive applications for Channel 10, the last remaining VHF channel in southwest B.C., and for Channel 26, the UHF channel.

The well conducted hearings provided one of those rare opportunities for concerned people to make their feelings known BEFORE important and far reaching policy decisions are made. The public availed themselves so well of the chance that M. Juneau, the Chairman, was prompted to remark upon 'the fantastic ganging up' against the applicants.

The hearings were somewhat of a rerun of the 1973 meetings when the so-called license to print money was previously up for grabs. The quality of applications at that time was so uniformly bad that the commission declined to give the license to any one of them. There were many people there who expressed the hope that M. Juneau would stick to that decision this time as well.

Each of the three private companies who competed for the VHF channel unfolded plans of how they would put the airtime to use. Ten Television promised 120 weekly hours of programming, Pacific Rim Broadcasting promised 70 weekly hours with the possible addition of 3 daily hours of educational T.V. and Western Approaches promised 104 weekly hours — this figure also to be supplemented by educational T.V. Of those hours local programming would be 24 for Ten T.V., 32 for Pacific Rim and 26 for Western.

Without entering into too much detail the salient points seem to be as follows: Ten Television is the best financed with \$10,000,000 — with the major shareholder being Dr. Charles Allard. Wendell Wilks would be the driving force behind the station. Allard and Wilks have a similar operation with CITV in Edmonton. While they expressed an awareness of the large numbers of production, performing and writing talent in this area they went on to say that most of their people would come in from Edmonton. There are some reservations about the possibility that such an operation would merely serve as an extension of the Edmonton operation to balance out production costs and this would be a singularly unnecessary addition to Vancouver.

Pacific Rim Broadcasting has 6.5 million and applicants are Graham Dawson, the Vancouver Developer, lawyer Charles Wills and Seymour Epstein — one of the principals of Global. This latter fact is interesting since Mr. Dawson had denied any connection with

Global in the weeks preceding the hearings. The group says that Manitoba Tax lawyer and former leader of that province's Liberal Party, Izzy Asper, will be added as a shareholder at a later date. One bewildering aspect of this group's plans was the proposed setting up of an independent production company which would produce, among other things, Made for T.V. Movies for which they would seek government financing. It's hard to make sense of a proposal that would hand a private group firstly the public airwaves, secondly tax payers' money to make their programmes, and thirdly the enormous revenues that would come from such programmes.

The third group is Western Approaches with the respected name of Darryl Duke as president in company with writer Norman Klenman and local radio biggie Bill Bellman. Of the three, Western has the least amount of operating capital with 4.6 million. They also plan the smallest staff of the three applicants which opens up the healthy possibility of free lance personnel being used. Many in the film community hold out hopes for Duke and his group with the thought that at the very least he will balance creative standards with commercial ones.

The CBC made application on the basis of their long standing argument that they deserve the channel for use in Victoria. The B.C. Government in their brief supported this and gave as an option that CBC be given another channel for Victoria use and that Channel 10 become a Provincial Education System.

Among the many interventions we heard from the B.C. Teachers Federation with a backing of 250,000 total number of members in organizations (i.e. unions) that supported their position and from Herschel Hardin for the Association of Public Broadcasting. The B.C. Film Industries Association President Keith Cutler read a brief prepared by Peter Bryant which asked that any station receiving the license would make it part of its mandate to use local freelance people.

At the outset Mayor Art Phillips said that a new station would be a shot in the arm for local employment. As we have seen with our two existing local stations, this is not necessarily true. There is a great reluctance to hire freelance people here that has existed for some years.

For Channel 26 UHF, license applicants were Western Approaches (who covered their bases in case they should not receive Channel 10) and Toronto's wunderkind Moses Znaimer. In a sometimes amusing presentation Znaimer, who is of course the man behind Channel 79 in Toronto, presented

himself as the little guy and decried the big bad Americanised slick guys. That, perhaps, was the slickest move of all. Though some feeling was expressed that Znaimer's presentation represented the arrogant assumption that what Vancouver needed was a Toronto type station, on the whole the attention was given to the big guys and the possibilities there. No one is making any bets as they did in 1973. Same time next year M. Juneau?

— Fiona Jackson

Vancouver Film Politics

Keith Cutler of the B.C.F.I.A. attended a conference in Ottawa regarding co-production agreements with Great Britain. Cutler's attendance was a last minute affair, based on the fact that the British representative, Michael Relp, had visited Vancouver. The C.F.D.C. had not asked the B.C.F.I.A. to attend, although various British groups have used and expressed interest in Panorama studios over the last several years.

The Pacific Film Co-operative is working primarily in the area of distribution, with two projects under way. One is to work in the interior in a five community film tour and research project, the other is to assist Enda Bratt in becoming a film agent and to work in distribution for independent film makers. The Pacific Film Co-operative is also collecting film scripts and outlines for later production proposals. Any interested writer can send material to B.J. Clayden, Co-operative Coordinator, 3241 W. 14th Street, Vancouver.

The B.C.F.I.A. has elected to join the C.C.F.M. Patricia Robertson is the West Coast representative to the C.C.F.M. and participated in the last general meeting.

On the B.C. Government front the B.C.F.I.A., the Co-operative and Director's guild, among others, are still trying to communicate with the government on various film policies. Perhaps the B.C. government will wake up when they find out the old version of the Film Brochure, with W.A.C. Bennett pictured in his glowing glory, was mailed out recently to a number of Hollywood producers by the B.C. Tourist Bureau.

The B.C.F.I.A. Features Committee, which is composed of feature film directors and potential producers, would like to see scripts, outlines, novels for feature films. The Committee will circulate the scripts to interested producers. Writers are asked to send their scripts with a letter attesting to copyright ownership, and a self addressed stamped