

Masse heads cultural offensive

MONTREAL — Federal Communications Minister Marcel Masse is spearheading what some observers consider the potentially largest offensive for a concerted Canadian cultural policy since the pan-Canada euphoria of Expo '67.

The current offensive is aimed at convincing Masse's cabinet colleagues of the need to surround upcoming free-trade talks with the U.S. with a legislative program repatriating the Canadian cultural domestic market in publishing, film and video. The opportunity was unwittingly provided by U.S. film industry chief lobbyist Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America.

Valenti, in an article published in *The Los Angeles Times* and reproduced Feb. 3 in the *Montreal Gazette*, threw down the gauntlet "to all nations that roam the U.S. marketplace with freedom and profit but construct the most ingenious hedgerows barring their marketplace to the Americans", citing Taiwan, Colombia, Canada, Quebec, Spain, Indonesia and India where trade "barriers stand guard against us."

Responding to Valenti in the same newspaper, Masse pointed to "the structural problem" created by U.S. distributors' domination of the Canadian theatrical film mar-

ket as a result of which only two per cent of screen-time in Canadian theatres is occupied by Canadian films.

In subsequent speeches, Masse noted repeatedly that

AT PRESSTIME Wilson tables budget

OTTAWA — With \$75 million for the arts in Finance Minister Michael Wilson's Feb. 26 budget, the Conservatives are putting back the amounts they slashed just over a year ago.

The money includes a \$33 million fund for production and distribution of Canadian features, \$13 million for book publishing, \$5 million for the recording industry, and \$10 million for Canada Council grants, plus an additional \$14 million for royalties for Canadian authors and improvements in Public Archive and library services.

"It is another indication of the government commitment to help culture," commented Communications Minister Marcel Masse, who said he was very pleased "given all the circumstances."

Initial reaction from the Canadian film industry was positive. *Cinema Canada* will have more detailed reaction to the budget announcements next issue.

Canada produces more films than the Canadian public is given an opportunity to see. For example, in 1984 Canada's per capita film output was twice that of the U.S. In the decade from 1972-1982, the number of Canadian production companies jumped from 139 to 322. Now 35,000-strong, the Canadian film industry is producing over 75 feature films per year.

Yet if Canadian films are rarely seen by Canadians, it's not because Canada is an insignificant market. On the contrary, Canada represents about one-quarter of the total world market for U.S. film and TV output. In 1984, Canadian filmgoers paid for more than 100 million admissions to theatres, considerably higher, for example, than Britain with 60 million entries and 2.5 times the population. As Masse noted, the consumer market for film and video in Canada is just under \$1 billion, with over 90% of Canadian distribution profits flowing back to the U.S.

But with only two per cent of Canadian screen-time available to Canadian production, "we face a serious industrial problem" that has "disconcerting" economic and cultural implications, Masse told an industry conference in Toronto Feb. 24. However, he went on, "I am proud that we have now

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Telefilm reorganizes into Entertainment and Corporate

TORONTO — Following weeks of discussions since last November in Montreal, Toronto, and western Canada with associations of producers and distributors, Telefilm Canada has entered 1986 considerably re-organized. The spirit of the revamp, say Telefilm officials, is to make the federal agency more responsive to the film industry.

The structure of the re-organisation, announced Jan. 17 by Telefilm board chairman Ed Prévost, means primarily that Telefilm's previous French-English/Montreal-Toronto mode of operation is now no more. And where its divisions previously consisted of Administration, Distribution, English Production, and French Production, executive director Peter Pearson has redesigned Telefilm into a bicameral body composed of an Entertainment Business and a Corporate Affairs division. Further, the Entertainment division itself has been divided into Operations and Business Affairs components (each of which is headed by an executive and supported by managers in Montreal and Toronto).

As well, within Operations is the International Services section, which regroups all of Telefilm's exporting, marketing (including the Marketing Assistance Program), and over-

seas support activities and festivals (the latter included because of its role in promoting Canadian culture abroad). Other deletions within Telefilm have removed the posts of director of Marketing and Distribution and director of the Broadcast Fund.

Part and parcel of Telefilm's re-organisation are several key personnel changes, among them the following: to deputy director and corporate secretary, Judith McCann (previously secretary of the Board and special advisor); to executive in charge of Operations, André Picard (previously director, production — Montreal and for six months director of the Broadcast Fund); to executive in charge of Business Affairs, Bob Linnell (previously director, production — Toronto); to executive in charge of Strategic Planning, Ian McLaren (previously director, distribution — Montreal); to executive in charge of Communications, Josée Miville-Dechêne; and to executive in charge of Administration, Yves J. Beauchesne (from director, finances and administration — Montreal).

With the aim of increasing Telefilm's responsiveness to the industry, the leading edge will lie in both the Operations and Business Affairs compo-

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MAP marks first year with good sales

TORONTO — Success, both in sales and syndication, has been the fortunate lot for Canadian producers at recent markets abroad, in the U.S. at the Jan. 17-21 NATPE market in New Orleans and in Europe at the Monte Carlo market Feb. 9-15. Both markets, attended by a combined Canadian contingent of over 100, concluded Telefilm Canada's 1985-86 fiscal year and the first year of its Marketing Assistance Program on an upbeat note.

For the one-year period since February 1985, MAP director Margo Raport told *Cinema Canada* that Canadians pulled in over \$13 million Cdn. in sales at international markets — a 300 per cent increase over the previous year. "You're looking at a phenomenal sales record, so we have to be doing something right," said Raport.

Something right carried into the new year at NATPE where,

for the first time, Canada was a unified entry with its own booth and a team numbering 12 Canadian exporters and five producers. NATPE, a syndication market described by Raport as "extremely important" for sellers as well as information and marketing strategies, not only drew Canadian broadcasters buying foreign programming but equally, generated considerable interest in syndication (by non-Canadians, a point Raport felt was immaterial given the sales achieved) of Canadian product.

Precisely what success met Canadians at NATPE was rhymed off in rapid-fire by Raport, highlights that included: the sale in 65 markets covering 40 per cent of the U.S. population of **Rocky Mountain Inn** (represented by Eagle Media); Canadians garnering all three nominations in the international sec-

tion of NATPE's Iris Awards, with programming executive Stan Thomas and CKND-TV of Winnipeg winning for **Tramp at the Door** (Thomas' fifth nomination and his second win in two years); the ordering of more episodes, thanks to excellent ratings, of CTV's **The Campbells** by the Christian Broadcast Network plus sales to Britain, Holland, and the Caribbean; the entry into its fourth year of syndication (represented by Access Syndication) of **Lorne Greene's New Wilderness**, which consists of 84 complete episodes offered on a barter basis and which now has covered 70 per cent of the U.S. market; and the addition of 14 U.S. markets to its coverage south of the border for the CTV series, D.L. Taffner's **Check It Out**.

CBC Enterprises "again did phenomenally well" said

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Ontario announces Film Corp

TORONTO — The Ontario Film Development Corporation, first announced by Ontario Citizenship and Culture Minister Lily Munro last Nov. 1, held its inaugural launch on Feb. 11. The OFDC, chaired by former Festival of Festivals director Wayne Clarkson, has held meetings throughout February with various industry groups (among them the Canadian Independent Film Caucus, Toronto Women in Film and Video, and ACTRA) both to publicize its aims and establish its guidelines.

The OFDC, established with \$20 million in funding to invest in Ontario-based productions over the next three years, also had its organization further fleshed out at the launch with the appointment by Premier David Peterson of a 13-member board of directors. Those individuals, culled from the media and arts community,

include: author/columnist June Callwood; Ontario Stadium Corporation chairman Martin Connell; movie directors David Cronenberg and Norman Jewison; TV producer and Chromavision International and Videoglobe Inc. founder Jacques de Courville Nicol; CHCH-TV general manager Frank DeNardis; Young People's Theatre general manager June Faulkner; True North Records' Bernard Finklestein; Toronto Life publisher Peter Herrndorf; jazz pianist/composer Oscar Peterson; Toronto **Cats** co-producer Tina VanderHeyden; literary agent Lucinda Vardey; and Rogers Cablesystems president Colin Watson.

Clarkson will serve as board chairman during corporation meetings, with directors receiving per diems of \$125 plus expenses for each meeting.

Telefilm changes

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nents. The respective executives, André Picard and Bob Linnell, point out the re-organisation's intent is to provide a quicker response (particularly of the "No" variety) to applicants for Telefilm assistance. While the application process itself remains a four- to six-week process, the enhanced responsiveness is also designed to ensure what Picard calls a "more complete 'Yes'."

Within the revised scheme of things, Operations' mandate will consist of evaluating the quality of all financing requests, which says Picard will include examination of script-development, production and distribution arrangements and, in a bid to lead more producers to think of sales at the outset, export and marketing programs. Despite his view that Telefilm "already has a well-oiled machine," Picard says the essence of the re-organisation is that, on a managerial level, there will be direct contact with producers and distributors.

That contact, a "close and open dialogue" (which includes broadcasters) is viewed by Picard as a first priority. Ob-

serving that the application process previously failed to address the principal points supporting the quality of productions (script, past track-record, success in distribution, crew), he added that Telefilm's focus would be on identifying "the best and most important projects," while still taking some risks and being more responsive to the film and television industry.

Other items on which accent will be placed, says Picard, include: trying to find markets for French-language productions; assisting distributors in establishing an independent base in Canada for their product; establishing a base for Canadian products abroad (central to which is a continuation of the MAP effort, whose volume has doubled in the past two years, as noted Picard); and endeavoring to be what Picard described as "creative and open" to private initiatives. As to the future, Picard hopes the agency has gained some maturity over the past two years of the Broadcast Program Development Fund and that it will stand Telefilm in good stead over its next two years.

Still unchanged within Operations, Telefilm's regional of-

ices in Halifax and Vancouver will continue to report respectively to Montreal (whose manager was to have been named later in February) and Toronto (where Donna Wong-Juliani, former co-ordinator of Western projects in Vancouver, has been appointed manager).

Business Affairs' Bob Linnell, charged with the responsibility of negotiating and administering all corporate contracts, says Operations will always be Telefilm's "front door." Echoing Picard's comments about streamlining the application process, Linnell says once Operations has assessed the merits of a project (primarily on its content, from a less extensively prepared application than was previously required), it is then passed on to Business Affairs for an examination of its business aspects or "down-back function." The effect, after perusing each project in the same detail previously used, will ensure a more final 'Yes' or 'No' decision.

Linnell, in effect in charge of

every financial transaction and a budget of \$60 to \$70 million for the 1986-87 fiscal year (beginning April 1, 1986), says the re-organisation's thrust is to generate "decent production." Crucial to that aim, says Linnell, are whether projects submitted to Telefilm are of good quality, financially sensible, and have a market. While he noted Telefilm "theoretically should do projects that are 10 out of 10" and that the re-organisation should crystallize that, he did note the agency would "never do something just because a deal is good."

Accounting for that, in part, are three priorities for Linnell. The first, an investigation into how to financially strengthen the Canadian production industry's "underlying fiscal solidarity," aims to alter the previous 'project by project' nature of production. To avoid the traditional 'boom and bust' cycle, Linnell says production companies need to be on a true, business-like basis. Thanks to the market-driven instrument Linnell sees in the

Broadcast Fund, that evolution is underway.

Second is one of his highest priorities: finding another \$100 million for the Broadcast Fund to direct towards production. Noting that Telefilm investments have averaged around 30 per cent in projects, Linnell admits this will be a hard objective to meet (since \$74.9 million was spent by the Broadcast Fund in fiscal 1985-86, with \$60 million available for the upcoming fiscal year).

Linnell's third priority, what he calls the "house-keeping," is the streamlining of documents so as to simplify the decision-making process and facilitate Telefilm investment. This includes an improved administration of contracts, simplifying both reporting procedures and getting returns by Telefilm.

Backing up Linnell in Montreal and Toronto respectively are managers Francine Forest and Gwen Iveson. Although not yet bilingual, Linnell says he's getting there, thanks to his fairly frequent shuttle trips to Montreal.

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