

E A S T E R N W A V E

by Chris Majka

We've been blessed with an early spring this year in the Atlantic Provinces. The pale faces of filmmakers who spent the winter in isolation bent over their Steenbecks can be seen wandering Argyle Street and bent over cups of coffee in the Athens. Quite a number of such pale but hopeful souls were recently at a meeting sponsored by the NFB with NFB president and government film commissioner François Macerola. Billed as an opportunity to present briefs, views, ideas, etc. on the role and future of the NFB, it drew a wide spectrum of the film/video community from throughout the Atlantic Provinces.

Ken Pittman, from Newfoundland, spoke about the relationship of the NFB, CBC, and Telefilm and emphasized the great importance of regional autonomy in allowing creative ideas to be realized. Cordell Wynne, from Halifax, addressed the issue of training and development in the region and in particular projects such as PAPPFS grants, Dramalab, and the support the NFB gives to the regional film co-ops. Brian Pollard from P.E.I. discussed the NFB's role in employing local filmmakers. Gordon Parsons, impresario of Wormwoods Dog and Monkey Cinema (really, I'm not kidding, that's what it's called) spoke from the perspective of the exhibitor dealing with the constant stream of American film and added a Marxist flavour to the proceedings when he called for a "repatriation of our means of projection." Finally Margaret Conrod from Acadia University spoke on Canadian cultural sovereignty. Discussions were animated and showed the considerable interest that the local film community has in the role and involvement of the NFB in both the production and exhibition sectors of this region.

Lots of interesting projects are in various states of development. In Newfoundland pre-production for **Finding Mary March** continues with shares of the production being sold through investment brokers. Director Ken Pittman told me that he should be prepared to give the final go ahead by the middle of May. Gordon Pinesent's **John and the Missus** is in the final stages of preproduction and is set for a seven-week shoot beginning in late May in Newfoundland. Also in preproduction is **The New**

Poverty a kind of "dramadoca" (the opposite of a "docudrama": a film which seems a conventional interview-type documentary but which is really a scripted drama) film

about poverty in Newfoundland. The latter is being directed by Vancouverite Debbie McGee who has become a transplant to Newfoundland (moving from "lotus-land" to "the rock" is an event extraordinary enough in itself to deserve a documentary).

Hubert Schurmann of Hol-

low Reed Productions in Nova Scotia's verdant Annapolis Valley is in the thick of production with Lulu Keating of Red Snapper (watch out for its bite!) Films on an NFB production called **Women Entrepreneurs** which looks at the new ways in which women are becoming involved in the busi-

ness world. He is also continuing to work on an NFB-assisted production called **South Mountain** which examines the rural poor of the Annapolis valley who earn their livelihood as agricultural workers. They live in appalling cir-



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T O R O N T O

TORONTO FILM LIAISON
 Naish McHugh, City of Toronto
 Planning and Development
 Department
 18th Floor, East Tower, City Hall
 Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2
 Canada

(416) 392-7570

