

Feds to legislate distribution

TORONTO — Flora MacDonald's promise to create a distinct Canadian (national) market for commercial/theatrical video and film rights could generate an estimated increase of close to \$20 million in revenues for Canadian distributors, say government officials.

At a Toronto press conference, Feb. 13, the communications minister announced her intention to stem the importation of films and video by foreign-owned distributors through legislation.

The impending legislation, expected in April, will introduce a system to license the importation of commercial films and video. This in turn, said MacDonald, will allow distributors to re-invest in Canadian production and thus strengthen the production, distribution and exhibition of Canadian films.

According to federal government statistics, U.S. distributors earn 90 per cent of distribution revenues generated in Canada — a mere 8 per cent of

revenues taken from North American markets. "It is not our purpose to promote the personal well-being of Canadian film distributors," MacDonald told the press conference. "Our purpose is to enable them to earn a normal share of the Canadian film market, so as to encourage the re-channelling of funds back into the Canadian film industry."

When asked if legislation will guarantee that Canadian distributors re-invest in Canadian production, MacDonald said there is no guarantee but rather indications of a strong willingness on the part of distributors to re-invest, given access to foreign films.

The licensing system will provide a general license for Canadian distributors. This license will allow them to negotiate Canadian rights and import films for commercial distribution.

A second category of license, to be called a proprietary license, will enable non-Canadian

film companies to import films for which they hold world distribution rights. These rights must include all countries for which rights are held, including country of origin, at the conclusion of principal photography or when application is made to import the film into Canada.

They may also import films which they have actually produced.

Government officials estimate that of 300 films imported into Canada annually, close to 50 per cent are studio produced and thus fall into the proprietary license category.

"The interest of all film distributors will be respected," said MacDonald.

"Canadian film distributors will begin, at last, to acquire fairer access to independent production from abroad, and foreign distributors will be assured the right to import their own films. These new economic opportunities for Canadian distributors are vital to the Canadian film industry cycle."

Venture fund may attract immigrants

VANCOUVER — Vancouver could become the first city in Canada to have a private venture capital fund for producing indigenous feature films, if Beacon Pictures Ltd. (a Vancouver-based venture capital company) meets its goal of raising \$5 million for a feature film fund. The project is the brainchild of Beacon's CEO Grant Allen, who sees Vancouver as a hotbed of opportunity for private investors who want to participate in the building of a domestic film industry.

The fund will be spread over development and production of 30-40 films of varying lengths. 80 per cent of the fund will be dedicated to BC-based Canadian Certified features, with another five per cent going to script development. The remaining 15 per cent will go towards building a bridge to Pacific Rim countries, encouraging Asian productions to shoot in BC and interesting Asian investors in participating in BC projects. While the minimum investment is \$25,000, purchasers investing \$250,000 will qualify as landed immigrant investors under the investment requirements of the federal Immigration Act.

Allen, a BC native who lived

in Southern California for several years doing marketing and fundraising (his company Beacon Group Productions, has been involved in over \$20 million worth of commercial and industrial productions in California in the past seven years), believes that feature filmmaking in BC doesn't have to be a crap shoot if the investment dollars are spread over many projects.

"We are bringing formal venture capital investing principles to the business. Rather than putting large amounts of money into two or three pictures, which would be considered by any investor as a high risk situation, we will take a minority position in approximately ten to 15 Canadian features, so that we reduce the risk. If the quality of the producers and directors is high on all of the projects, there is a very good chance of making money back."

Allen claims that the fund would be the first of its kind in Canada, although there are several in the States that are doing well.

The board of directors includes Gins Doolittle (president of The Doolittle Company and York Financial Corporation), Ken Tolmie (former

CEO of Hastings West Investments), Robert McLernan (retired TD banker with a sideline in playwriting and directing), and Sean Allen (Grant's brother — a Canadian actor who has worked successfully in New York and Hollywood and would like to come home to continue his writing and acting career).

Allen reports that in the past year and a half the Board has been active doing research on the industry and setting up a game plan. The federal and provincial governments have been very helpful. He gives particular credit to Peter Pearson, Donna Wong-Juliani and Diane Neufeld for introducing him to key industry people and giving him an education on the past, present and future of Canadian filmmaking. With the strong talent base, world-class technical expertise present in Vancouver, all that is needed to make a domestic production industry flourish is private investment.

The Beacon fund is intended to augment federal and provincial support. Allen says that since producers will only have a minority investment from Beacon, they will still have to go out and raise substantial

cont. on p. 36

MacDonald supports commercial free TV

OTTAWA — Communications Minister Flora MacDonald has reaffirmed a commitment to improving the quality and quantity of Canadian television programming.

MacDonald recently told the parliamentary standing committee on communications and culture, that a commercial-free English-language network (TV Canada) should be created in the best interests of Canadians who, she says, have expressed a need for improved prime-time Canadian programming.

April 15 has been set as a deadline for receipt by the minister of the committee report on the Caplan-Sauvageau Report (Task Force Report on Broadcast Policy).

"I am keen to receive your views by then," MacDonald told the committee, "because I am determined to keep my deadline of seeking cabinet approval for a broad policy framework shortly after Easter, as well as authority to begin drafting a new (broadcasting) act over the summer."

Citing recommendations in the Caplan-Sauvageau Report, MacDonald suggested that a "minimal fee" or an increase in cable rates could provide necessary start-up capital for the new network controlled by public and private interests.

TV Canada would carry

specialized programming aimed at children, senior citizens, women and minority groups. The minister noted that specialized programming is scarce both on the private networks and on the CBC, which has a mandate to target general audiences.

A March 12 deadline has been set by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) for applications for the national service.

On the French-language side, the new TV5 service, La chaîne française of TVOntario, and specialized programming already existing on the French-language networks, will serve a wider and more selective audience.

MacDonald also informed the committee that the tendency of Telefilm's Broadcast Fund to favour general audience productions and "down-play attractive programming aimed at a somewhat smaller audience," will be corrected by Treasury Board approval to establish the Broadcast Fund on a permanent basis rather than as a five-year fund.

The Communications Minister has recently announced that satellite-to-cable channels are eligible broadcasters under the terms of the Broadcast Fund.

Toronto productions up

TORONTO — Record numbers of movie and television shows were made in Toronto last year, but early indications show even more promise for 1987, a city film official says.

Naish McHugh, Toronto's film liaison officer, told *Cinema Canada* that permits for about 100 more locations have been issued so far this year than compared to the same period one year earlier.

"It looks like it is going to be another record year...it's very, very busy," McHugh said.

"It's crazy. It's like June." In January alone the city dealt with 15 productions, he explained.

He said even though production was fully stretched during the peak months of July through October last year, a period when crews were completely booked up, this year could be even busier overall.

"If we are going to increase all of the off-months of January,

February, March and April, then it is going to add to the overall total as being even greater," McHugh said.

Last year was a record period for film and television production in Toronto with everything from large American productions, such as the 14.5 hour ABC mini-series *Amerika*, to Canadian television series such as *Degrassi Junior High* being shot here.

In 1986 a total of 102 productions were made including 35 feature films, 50 television productions and 17 television series.

Those productions had total budgets of \$280 million and they spent about \$180 million here on everything from wages to accommodation to props. By comparison, in 1985, there were 62 productions with budgets totalling \$180 million and of that amount they spent \$100 million in the city.

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MacDonald defends distribution legislation

TORONTO – Major American film companies aren't likely to embrace Canada's efforts to control some movie distribution here, but the move won't hurt free trade talks, Flora MacDonald, Canada's minister of Communications, says.

MacDonald was answering reporters' questions after her speech outlining proposals for federal legislation intended to open up domestic movie distribution to Canadian firms.

"What we are talking about in cultural industries and exchanges really comes to only about five per cent of the total trade between our two countries. This (the proposals) comes to a very, very minor fraction of that five per cent."

The minister was asked whether the proposals would anger Americans who are like-

ly to view them as another barrier to free enterprise in Canada.

MacDonald said the proposals are not likely to be regarded as a barrier.

"But at the same time no one has ever said that we were going to stop our cultural development because there are trade negotiations going on."

"In a sector of the economy where there is such development no one is going to say put a cover on it all and wait until trade negotiations are over."

Although there was no U.S. response yet on the specific proposal, the Americans were aware that the federal government was moving in the film sector for some months, she said.

"I don't suppose that they

are going to obviously welcome this outright, but I don't see it as being a major impediment at all."

The film import licensing system is to be introduced as proposed legislation in the House of Commons in the weeks immediately following the announcement.

The proposed system would not limit the American Majors from distributing movies in Canada in which they have a large stake. Instead, the system is intended to allow Canadian companies a better chance to distribute other foreign films from countries such as England and Australia before those rights are bought by American companies.

One of the main goals of the film distribution policy is to allow Canadian distributors a

greater share of the home market so that, in turn, they can reinvest in domestic production.

MacDonald was asked if there are any proposals that will guarantee reinvestment in Canadian productions.

"No I don't have any guarantees. I only know that for years the Canadian distributors have looked for this kind of access to foreign films to indeed boost their access to the revenues here in this country."

She added that in the past Canadian distributors have shown their willingness to invest in Canadian films.

"From the response that I heard around the audience today I am positive that they will continue to do so."

Cinar opens studio in Mtl.

MONTREAL – Cinar Films Inc. will open an audio/video production centre in September following an extensive \$500,000 renovation project in downtown Montreal.

The distribution and production company has purchased a five-story building at 1207 St. André for development as a one-stop centre for audio and video sound post-production, special effects, music recording and musical composition.

The \$3.5 million centre will also provide office space to be occupied by Cinar in March as well as rental space.

Digital Music Systems, which provides sound recording facilities, has entered into a long-term agreement with Cinar for the top floor of the building.

Toronto

cont. from p. 35

McHugh said Toronto is becoming more well-known as a production centre and that in itself helps keep the ball rolling.

"The fact that we're the third largest production center in North America speaks for itself. We've got everything here that a producer needs."

He said producers have such good experiences filming in Toronto that they come back again and quickly spread the news.

The lower value of the Canadian dollar is a major asset, but even if it was at par with the American dollar Toronto would still be competitive, McHugh said.

"We've got tremendous crews, we've got tremendous facilities, the whole broad range of pre-production and post-production services...and then we've got the locations. We're a world-class city. We've got everything from historic neighbourhoods to futuristic modern complexes."

McHugh added that the unions are also more flexible here than in the United States.

"Everyone talks about the keenness of the crews and the fresh approach. They say it is what New York used to be like 40 years ago."

Of the total number of productions done in Toronto, McHugh said more than 60 per cent are Canadian although the most hefty budgets come from American shows.

The city issued more than 2,100 location permits in 1986 compared to 1,700 the previous year.

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Cable differs about new TV network

OTTAWA — Are Canadians willing to pay for a new commercial-free television network recommended by the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy?

This question is the source of debate between Communications Minister Flora MacDonald and Michael Hind-Smith, president of the Canadian Cable Television Association.

In a recent presentation to the parliamentary committee on communications and culture, MacDonald endorsed the Task Force recommendation for an English-language network (TV Canada) to be distributed on cable television.

Hind-Smith says he is sur-

prised by the minister's position, arguing that Canadians will not watch — let alone pay for — the new network.

Recent consumer research to be released by the CCTA in early March indicates, says

Hind-Smith, less than majority support for a new, publicly-funded network.

The CCTA supports the need to increase and improve Canadian programming; however, Hind-Smith contends that

Canadians will not be satisfied with the quality of programming that minimal fees prescribed by the task force would afford.

MacDonald argues that cable subscribers would bear the extra cable fees if offered "high-calibre" programming.

"I have listened to the concerns of the cable indus-

try," MacDonald told the committee, "but I am convinced that with high-calibre results the service would be popular."

The CCTA has stated its objection to the principle of 'must carry, must pay' and has called for more thorough public debate on whether specialty programming should be carried by other means.

Venture capital

cont. from p. 35

amounts of their budgets, and will be looking to Telefilm and the upcoming BC film fund. Already, Beacon is involved in a co-venture with Telefilm to develop a comedy feature scripted by Sean Allen and Stefan Arngrim.

Two advisory boards have been set up to assist Beacon's management team in administering the fund. The Film Advisors include Donna Wong-Juliani, John Juliani, Gordon Pinsent, René Malo, Ron Woodall from Canada, and Robert Stabler, James Alex and Stefan Arngrim from the U.S. They will serve to screen and channel good projects to the fund, which will back BC-based features that have "serious international marketing potential."

Canadian content requirements will be met, but Canadian cultural niceties will be less strictly adhered to in the search for marketable product. The fund will be tightly administered, and projects will have to fulfill some Telefilm-inspired requirements such as attached producers, interest from distributors, etc.

The Business Advisors include John G. Smith (partner in the Vancouver law firm Russell & DuMoulin and former president of the Vancouver Symphony Society), William Grant (president of FirstFund Capital Corp.), Wilfred Vachresse (an immigration specialist and partner in Hemlin, Vachresse and Associates), and Robert Wall (former managing director of the San Francisco stock and bond brokerage firm Hambrecht & Quist).

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Stop talks, says ACTRA

TORONTO —American comments that Canada should be willing to risk its culture in a free trade deal brought a swift reaction from ACTRA: end the talks.

Garry Neil, general secretary of the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), said comments by U.S. trade ambassador Clayton Yeutter underline the need to break off the talks.

"The Prime Minister's earlier assurances that he will not jeopardize Canada's sovereignty are meaningless today," Neil said.

Yeutter caused an uproar in Canada by stating that he is prepared to risk American culture in free trade negotiations and that Canada should be willing to do the same. He spoke out Feb. 3, 1987 at a Washington trade conference.

The next day ACTRA issued a statement calling on Prime Minister Brian Mulroney "to stop Washington's attack on our cultural sovereignty, by walking away from the free trade negotiations immediately.

The same day Mulroney told the House of Commons Yeutter's comments displayed "stunning ignorance" of Canada.

Mulroney's comments hit the nail on the head, Neil said, but he questioned why the Prime Minister doesn't carry his comments to a logical conclusion by ending the talks.

For the Canadian cultural industry, free trade is a losing game, Neil said.

"Mr. Yeutter's statements make it clear that the Americans have always intended to challenge the various programs and agencies the government has established to encourage Canadian production. It is reckless of the Prime Minister to turn a blind eye to Washington's grab for our cultural wealth."

Mulroney has repeatedly declared he won't allow Canada's cultural sovereignty to be affected in free trade talks.

MONTREAL — Garth Drabinsky, chairman of Cineplex Odeon will be honored by the Montreal World Film Festival, Aug. 21 to Sept. 1, at a gala evening ceremony.

Serge Losique, president of the festival, will present Drabinsky with an award for his contribution to film exhibition in Canada.

Cineplex Odeon controls 1,500 screens and 500 theatres in six Canadian provinces and 20 U.S. states.

But Neil said the Prime Minister has not defined whether he is willing to bargain with specific parts of Canada's cultural industry. ACTRA's general secretary said it appears to be a game of semantics.

Comments made by com-

munications minister Flora McDonald at a House of Commons committee meeting shortly after Yeutter spoke out indicate a possible step in the right direction, Neil added.

McDonald outlined several provisions designed to protect Canadian culture that are out of bounds under any potential agreement. They are Bill C-58, an act to amend the income tax act and Canadian content regulations.

"This is the first time I have heard anything specific," Neil said.

He added that despite all the cultural support measures developed by the government, Canada still isn't producing enough of its own cultural programs. Any of those support measures taken away through free trade would make the situation worse, Neil said.

As well, history has shown

that the Canadian cultural industry has gone through cycles, Neil said. He cited the example of the film production boom in the late '70s that was a result of tax shelters. Tinkering with the system can have large consequences, he said.

"Little things can trigger bigger occurrences."

ACTRA represents more than 8,000 performers, writers and broadcast journalists in Canada.



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NEWS

LE DÉCLIN WINS OSCAR NOMINATION

It's a first — for the NFB and the Canadian film industry. **Le Déclin de l'empire américain**, Denys Arcand's intellectual sex comedy, has become the first Canadian feature to receive an Oscar nomination for Best Foreign Film. It is one of five features selected from entries by 32 nations seeking a nomination for the prestigious Academy Award. Since winning the International Film Critics' award at the Cannes Film Festival last May, **Le Déclin** has accumulated numerous honors. Most recently, it was voted Best Foreign Film by New York film critics. Quebec film critics awarded it the L.E. Ouimet-Molson prize for best Quebec-made feature of the year. The film also received the Golden Reel Award for the highest box office gross for a Canadian film in 1986. Co-produced by the NFB and Corporation Image M&M Ltée, **Le Déclin** also leads in total nominations for the 1987 GENIE awards.

31 GENIE NOMINATIONS

NFB productions and co-productions account for 31 of the 86 nominations for the 1987 GENIE awards. Leading with 13 (including Best Picture) is **Le Déclin**. Next in line with nine nominations is **Pouvoir Intime**. Directed by Yves Simoneau, this suspense-thriller about an armoured truck hold-up that goes wrong, is being distributed in English Canada by Norstar. It opens in Toronto March 13. Léa Pool's second feature, **Anne Trister**, which centers on a 25-year-old Jewish artist who moves to Quebec following her father's death, received



Sound mixers Jean-Pierre Joutel and Adrian Croll.

three nominations: best supporting actress, best cinematography and best original song. The film was co-produced with Les Films Vision 4 inc. **Sitting in Limbo** director John N. Smith is one of five filmmakers in the running for the best director award. In the category 'best achievement in overall sound', location sound recordist Richard Besse and re-recording sound mixers Jean-Pierre Joutel and Adrian Croll have been nominated for their work on **Le Déclin**; NFB staffers Joutel and Hans Oomes, together with freelancers Richard Nichol and Shelly Craig, have been nominated for overall sound in **Sitting in Limbo**.

Les Traces du Rêve, a 95-minute documentary about the legendary cinéma-vérité filmmaker Pierre Perrault, earned a nomination for best documentary. The film was directed by Jean-Daniel Lafond and produced by Jacques Vallée.

Other GENIE nominations include **Where's Pete?**, a half-hour drama for children about a young boy's diffi-

culty in dealing with his older brother's death. Directed by Jim Purdy and produced by Michael Scott of the NFB's Ontario Center, the film is competing for best live-action short drama.

Two NFB productions have been nominated for best animated short: **Every Dog's Guide to Complete Home Safety**, directed by Les Drew and **Get a Job** by Brad Caslor, a Winnipeg production.

CANADA'S MOST HONOURED FILMMAKER DIES

Condolences poured in from around the world following the death of Norman McLaren on January 26, 1987. In his 48-year career, McLaren made some 60 films. He was hailed as a brilliant innovator of animation techniques and is credited with having raised animation to an art form. Retrospectives of McLaren's work have been held in some 20 Canadian cities and are being planned in several cities around the world.

NFB SIGNS DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT WITH TROIS-RIVIERES

Trois-Rivières has become the fifth Quebec city to enter into an agreement with the NFB for the purpose of increasing public access to NFB films and videos. The Film Board office is now located in the main public library in the center of town. Library members will benefit from a 50% discount in video rentals and the library will be able to access FORMAT, the national databank on the Canadian film industry administered by the NFB.

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SHOOT ALBERTA

by Stacey Bertles

It would be an understatement to say that Alberta filmmakers are disappointed with the Calgary Olympic Committee. COC sent out questionnaires to local producers on February 4th. Those who wanted to compete for rights to produce the official documentary were asked to present sources of funding, world-wide distribution networks, lists of crew members, and their 'philosophy' - before February 27th. Jerry Joynt, vice-president of communications, said he felt three weeks was "adequate time for professionals to answer the questionnaire."

Local producers disagree. Allan Stein, president of the Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association (AMPIA), said "it's clear that this process has been evolved by people who know nothing about the business." Very few producers would be able to find funding and make distribution deals that quickly.

Even if they could, Stein said, the committee's expectations are unreasonable. They are planning to sell production rights for the film, just as television rights were sold. "In all the hundreds of film proposals I've seen, I've never seen that before. Usually people pay me to make films."

The profit margin just isn't there. "If you sold to every network in the world at top documentary prices you couldn't expect more than \$250,000," said Stein. Production costs for the Olympic film have been estimated at \$1 to \$3 million.

Stein thinks it is unlikely that a corporate sponsor would offset costs. "It's my intuition that corporate sponsors have been bled dry by the Olympics."

Joynt pointed out that the Los Angeles summer Olympic film sold world-distribution rights. The committee feels obligated to license producers of the 1988 film with a fee. "We would be short changing the athletes of Canada if we did not pursue this avenue (of funding)."

In response to claims that the COC ignored AMPIA's attempts to develop some policy with the COC, Joynt said he was waiting to see how many producers filled in the questionnaire. "Obviously, if we

don't get any submissions, we're wrong."

In the meantime, AMPIA is gearing up for its 13th annual awards night on March 21. A panel comprised of federal and provincial government representatives, Winnipeg producer Derek Mazur, and director Sandy Wilson will be viewing the entries during the second week in March.

Anne Wheeler, who has already scooped up 8 Genie nominations for **Loyalties**, might be well-advised to take her wheelbarrow to the AMPIA ceremony. It will be televised live on CBC.

Local performer Tim Feehan will be back from his Japanese tour in time to appear at the AMPIA awards. The singer/songwriter is establishing strong connections with the film industry. His contributions include a single and rock video based on the U.S.-produced feature **The Wraith**. He's been talking to Calgary's Dave Winning about composing the soundtrack for his next feature, **Flash Frame** (see below).

Both of the big winners at last year's AMPIA awards are gearing up for new projects. Wheeler's putting the final touches to the adaptation of **Cowboys Don't Cry** for Atlantis. She plans to start shooting it in May or June. She'll be off to India to scout locations for **Bye Bye Blues**.

Dave Winning spent January in Calgary, shooting additional scenes for last year's festival winner **Storm**. He's added another 20 minutes to the original 81-minute running time. The final version should hopefully be deposited on Cannon Group Inc.'s doorstep the first week in March. Winning sold world rights for **Storm** to Cannon, and Canadian rights to Thomas Howe.

Both those companies are potential backers for Winning's next project, **Flash Frame**. He's hoping to start production on the action/suspense film sometime in June.

HBW/Toth will be shooting another 26 half-hour episodes of **Connecting**, a series for teenagers. Production on **Tel**, a seven-part dramatic series, has been postponed until 1988. Helene White and Gary Toth have one British partner, Diverse Productions, but are hot in pursuit of another. Meanwhile, Denise Coffey (former associate director of the Shaw Festival) is working on the scripts about British immigrants adapting to Western Canadian culture.

Any local producers who plan to start shooting this summer might want to book crews early. David Crowe of Calgary's economic development office echoes some of the optimistic predictions for summer production. There is talk of five or six pictures coming to Edmonton and Calgary. Crowe said there has never been more interest from foreign producers.

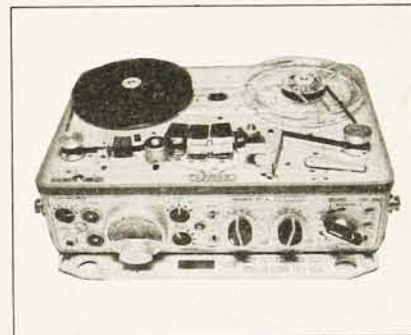
"This is the best year I've seen it since I've been here." At the very least, he believes "everyone will be working."

Edmonton's CITV plays host to some 55 privately-owned television stations. The Canadian Programming and Promotion **CanPro** festival will be held

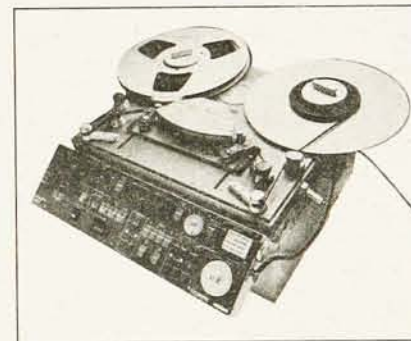
April 4th to 7th at West Edmonton Mall's Fantasyland Hotel. Scheduled activities include seminars on music, program production and management skills. The festival will culminate with an awards ceremony hosted by CRTC chairman André Bureau.

Stacey Bertles •

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MONTREAL - François Bilodeau has been awarded the critic's prize at Les Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois, Feb. 10 to 15, for a review of **Le Déclin de l'empire Américain** in *Liberté* magazine.

Independents object to Broadcast Centre

TORONTO — The proposed CBC Broadcast Centre for Toronto will be a monster that could spell doom for many independent production facilities, a vice-president of

the Canadian Film and Television Association (CFTA) says. Wilson Markle toldis Cinema Canada that the centre, which will combine CBC facilities with 1.8 million square feet of

commercial office and retail space, would really be more of a production than broadcast center. But CBC officials strongly disagree and say that the

broadcast centre, which could be under construction by 1988, won't put an end to private production facilities in Toronto. Bruce McKay, CBC manager

of television facilities planning, said the corporation needs to replace and consolidate its more than 20 separate locations in Toronto.

"The intent is to replace something that doesn't work," McKay said.

The CBC knows how much production it will contract out with independent producers and how much is to be done at the broadcast centre, he explained. McKay said the CBC doesn't want to build the centre and turn around and compete with outside business.

While the corporation needs some production facilities, McKay said, it makes no sense for the CBC to be on the leading technological edge.

Markle, who is also president of Mobile Image Canada Limited, agreed that the CBC needs a central facility in Toronto, but said a central production facility is not needed.

He said the CBC should job out its production to independent Canadian producers "otherwise were not going to have a private sector."

"It is going to be the biggest production center in North America."

The CBC wants to build facilities on a 9.3 acre site on Front Street across from the Metro Toronto Convention Centre.

Markle said the CFTA, which represents members from a full range of film and broadcast interests, opposes the centre and is planning to make a representation to the federal cabinet at "the appropriate time."

"This country needs public broadcasting, but it also needs the private sector support of public broadcasting."

Janet Dey, director of planning and development for the centre, said there is a large amount of support for the facility.

Dey said the only area of sensitivity to the project is from a few people in a specific part of the independent production sector.

Dey and McKay, in an interview at CBC offices, emphasized that it is important to distinguish between the views of independent producers who make programs and people who provide facilities for producers. She said the two groups have different views about the centre.

The CBC needs a strong base in Toronto, Dey said. She said an awful lot of producers can't wait for the centre because it will help make their product look better.

She said in terms of the protection of Canadian culture, the broadcast centre is important.

"We think it is most tremendously consistent in terms of where this country is going."

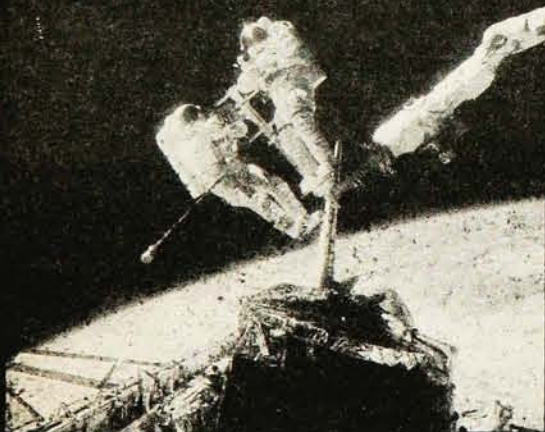
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B.C. reconciliation

VANCOUVER – The reconciliation of the British Columbia Film and Video Association (BCFIA) and two splinter producers' organizations was announced at the BCFIA's annual general meeting in late January.

An earlier meeting had been suggested in January by Ron Devion (Dir. of TV, CBUT) who saw the need for the various factions to join forces and create a more effective lobbying strategy. Out of that meeting came a spirit of co-operation and three letters.

The first outlined a proposal for gaining an ERDA agreement between Victoria and Ottawa for film financing and was sent to federal authorities. The second was to Premier Vander Zalm asking for news on the status of the ever-awaited BC film policy. The third was to federal minister of communications Flora MacDonald regarding Telefilm Canada's activities in this province.

Board member (and now president) Chris Bruyere announced that his Guide to the

Festivals and Markets will be finished by the end of April, and Keith Cutler (Image International) was asked to report on the status of the lease on Dominion Bridge, which is still administered by the British Columbia Development Corporation.

Cutler said that although renovations to the building are continuing, BCDC has yet to choose from its short list of bids to run the studio. Dominion Stages is the name of the company formed by a coalition of industry insiders (including the BCFIA) which has been pushing for the development of the old warehouse for several years. Some puzzlement was expressed at BCDC's delay in coming to a decision but cautious optimism was recommended for the duration.

Diane Neufeld (BC Film Commissioner) spoke briefly on the incoming U.S. productions, saying that most of the traffic in the province is now television series and movies. She commented that while the

tax situation is still a cause of concern to U.S. producers, it isn't keeping them away. She surmised that a testing period will continue until April, when the productions will discover either waivers or reality. On the upcoming film fund and growth of the indigenous industry, Neufeld saw no conflict with her office's work in promoting BC as a location. "I can see the Film Commission expanding its activities in promotion and marketing to include U.S./Canadian co-productions, as the central Canadian commissions are doing, on going to other regions to both promote BC as a location and as a producer of high quality productions."

Maria Falcone of the Vancouver Telefilm office was invited to speak, and announced that the Vancouver office now reports directly to Linda Beath, in a Telefilm effort to streamline communications between BC and the decision-makers. Another person will be hired for the Vancouver office to

help deal with the increasing workload.

In conclusion, Falcone hinted that from the script development proposals TF has received, BC could look for at least one feature to be produced with Telefilm assistance this year.

Five new Board members were elected: Harry Cole (Erin Films), Bert Skelton (Canadian Prolite), Michael Conway Baker, Sandy Flanagan (*Reel West*) and Fiona Jackson. Raymond Hall stepped down from his post as president of the association, and was presented with thanks and a large gift by chairman Coralee Testar. Hall intends to use his new-found time to increase his involvement in his company, Petra Films, as well as in keeping up with his teaching schedule at UBC. Debbie Jansen, BCFIA's administrative assistant was also bid a fond farewell, as she moves to work fulltime in the Academy of Canadian Cinema's Vancouver office.

Alliance again

TORONTO – The Alliance Entertainment Corporation series *Night Heat* has been renewed by both the CTV and CBS television networks.

The two networks have ordered an extra 22 episodes of the production bringing the total complement for *Night Heat* to 83 shows.

The police show is filmed in Toronto with a Canadian cast and crew and won the best dramatic series at the 1986 Gemini awards.

Night Heat is in its second season on CTV and its third season on CBS.

At a ceremony celebrating the 50th episode of *Night Heat* the government of Ontario honored the series with a plaque. It said *Night Heat* has provided entertainment, a major economic contribution to Toronto and Ontario, a vehicle for artistic talent and employment for Canadians.

Short film

TORONTO – The Canadian independent short film contest is alive and kicking again after a one-year break.

The Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television is presenting the contest from which five short films will be selected by a jury of filmmakers, distributors and exhibitors in March.

An honourarium of \$3,000 will be given each winner in the competition, intended to introduce independent and innovative short films to the public.

Each film will be blown up to 35mm, multiple prints made and sub-titling completed. It is then to be packaged with a feature film and distributed nationally by Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association members.

The competition is supported by Swatch. A Feb. 28 entry deadline is set for the Swatch Showcase of Canadian Independent Short Films.

Between 1982 and 1985 the competition was called the Ca-

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Caplan hits road for broadcasting Chinese pay station expands

TORONTO – Gerald Caplan, co-chairman of the recent federal task force on broadcasting, is hitting the road to rekindle public debate on recommendations for more Canadian content television and an invigorated CBC.

Caplan, at the invitation of a Canadian education association, agreed to attend public forums in 11 cities on the future of Canadian broadcasting.

Public debate on the issue is simply a good idea, said Caplan, when asked by **Cinema Canada** why he has embarked on the series of discussions.

But it doesn't mean the ministry of Communications won't act without the public forums, said Caplan, who co-chaired the task force on broadcasting policy with Florian Sauvageau.

Caplan said that, in fact, he is delighted by federal Communication minister Flora MacDonald's endorsement of the task force proposal for TV Canada, a national non-commercial public television network to be carried on cable television.

Caplan said MacDonald came out in support of the proposal at a House of Commons committee meeting in February despite the strong lobbying efforts of the Canadian Cable Television Association, who opposed the recommendation.

"She agrees with us that the private sector has to provide more programming," Caplan added. "Now we have to indicate to her that she has support around the country."

The Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy was completed in September

1986. Seven task force members toured the country in preparing the massive document that is intended to guide Canadian broadcasting policy until the end of the century.

Another major task force recommendation is a greatly strengthened Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Caplan said he wants to spend time ensuring that the public understands the CBC is in real danger if it continues to be whittled away.

The Canadian Association for Adult Education, which is a voluntary organization that promotes adult learning and citizenship in Canada, is holding the forums to build momentum for broadcasting policy reform.

The forum schedule is as follows: Feb. 4, Ottawa; Feb. 9, Victoria; Feb. 10, Vancouver; March 3, Montreal; March 4, Toronto; March 9, Edmonton; March 10, Calgary; March 17, St. John's; March 18, Halifax; March 23, Saskatoon; March 25, Winnipeg.

Reid to top post at Yorkton Festival

YORKTON – Ian Reid is the new executive director of the Yorkton Film Festival. Festival organizers recently announced that the Golden Sheaf Awards for short films and videos will be presented earlier this year. Festival dates have been moved from the end of the festival circuit in November to May 20-24.

VANCOUVER – A Chinese pay-TV station has received approval to extend its broadcast nationwide starting in May.

Chinavision Canada Corporation was told by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission that it can extend its Chinese language programming into British Columbia starting May 1, 1987.

Except in British Columbia, Chinavision was licensed in 1984 to provide a Chinese language pay-TV service in Canada. The CRTC previously licensed World View Television Limited, which is now Cathay International Television Inc., to provide an ethnic regional pay-TV service in British Columbia.

To reduce the impact on Cathay television, the CRTC in 1984 refused to permit Chinavision to offer programs in British Columbia for two years.

In announcing that Chinavision would soon be available in British Columbia the CRTC said the pay-TV service has met all conditions of license and exceeded Canadian content, local programming, news and current affairs commitments.

Also, despite the fact that Cathay has not met its conditions of license, the federal broadcast regulator has renewed its license for a five-month period ending August 31, 1987.

But the CRTC imposed a condition of license for Cathay to provide 15 hours per week of programming in two languages other than French, English or native Canadian in addition to its Chinese language programming. The require-

ment must be met by April 30, 1987, a CRTC statement reads.

Cathay failed to meet programming requirements within one year as it is required to do in its license, the CRTC said.

"The extension of the license until the end of August will provide Cathay with an opportunity to show its good faith and re-introduce, before April 30, an ethnic regional pay-television service in

British Columbia and, as part of the single service, serve a number of ethnocultural groups in their mother tongue as Cathay had itself committed to do."

Cathay has also been called to a June 9, 1987 public hearing where it must show that it has complied with its conditions of license.

Two CRTC commissioners expressed minority opinions on the issue.

Chinese treaty in works to cover Bethune shoot

OTTAWA – The signing of a Canada/China co-production treaty will take place in Beijing, China, upon the arrival of Communications Minister Flora MacDonald in the Chinese capital.

MacDonald is scheduled to arrive in Beijing on Feb. 22 where she will sign the government-to-government treaty with the Chinese Minister of Radio, Film and Television.

The signing coincides with the shooting of principal photography of **Bethune: The Making of a Hero**, a \$20 million co-production between the Montreal-based Filmline International, China Film Co-production Company, August 1 Film Studio of China and Belstar Productions of France.

This four-part mini series starring Donald Sutherland is directed by Phillip Borsos and produced by Pieter Kroonen-

burg and Jacques Dorfman (France). Executive producers are Nicolas Clermont and David Patterson. The script has been written by Bethune's biographer, Ted Allen.

The Canada/China co-production treaty signing will be attended by the principals of Filmline International. As required by Revenue Canada regulations, the treaty includes all forms of production and distribution and allows the producers to benefit from financial advantages offered to Canadian productions.

Since 1963, Canada has entered into official co-production treaties with France, United Kingdom, Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and Israel. There are also film and video agreements with Spain, Algeria, Belgium, France, the UK and Israel. Discussions are on-going with Hungary.

DEPARTMENT OF FILM AND VIDEO

Applications are invited for an assistant professor (probationary). Duties will include teaching film production and the history of avant-garde film. Knowledge of and experience in the Canadian avant-garde milieu is essential in addition to successful teaching experience. The appointment shall commence July 1, 1987.

Curriculum vitae including the names of three references should be sent to:

**Dr. Martin Bergbusch,
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Deadline for acceptance of applications is April 15, 1987.

Applications are invited for a one-year term appointment as assistant professor (subject to budgetary approval). Candidates shall have professional experience in film drama direction and have had considerable successful experience teaching advanced film and video production. The appointment shall commence July 1, 1987.

Curriculum vitae including the names of three references should be sent to:

**Dr. Martin Bergbusch,
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Deadline for acceptance of applications is April 15, 1987.

Applications are invited for an assistant professor (probationary). Duties will include responsibility for teaching introductory 16mm film production, cinematography and still photography. Candidates should have demonstrable competence in professional film production and still photography in addition to considerable successful teaching experience. The appointment shall commence July 1, 1987.

Curriculum vitae including the names of three references should be sent to:

**Dr. Martin Bergbusch,
Acting Associate Dean,
College of Fine Arts,
University of Regina,
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0A2**

Deadline for acceptance of applications is April 15, 1987.

LEGAL EYE

by Michael Bergman

In his *Cinema Canada* piece on the recent *Convergence II* conference, Michael Dorland writes about the panel on Copyright and Technology which this writer moderated. I must respectfully disagree with Mr. Dorland on two points concerning his comments on that particular panel. It is with some surprise that I learned that I was speaking for the Canadian Government given that I have not only no connection with the Canadian Government but have frequently disagreed with its cultural and particularly motion picture policies as many of my earlier writings would demonstrate. Of more interest though is Mr. Dorland's notion that Canadian Law is an extension of public policy whereas American Law is an extension of individual or natural rights. As a blanket statement Mr. Dorland's remarks would surely spark considerable controversy among the Canadian legal community. Surely the plethora of Provincial, Federal and Constitutional Charters of Rights which presently exist in this country are sufficient evidence of the degree to which individual liberties are held sacred, not to mention that the basic legal structure in Canada is grounded on British legal notions of the rights of a subject against the Crown and fair play. Nevertheless, there is distinct public sense, although its parameters defy definition, that Canadians are more compromising, submissive to authority, content and expectant of government intervention. Whether this sense is caused by population, economics, climate or insecurity, this writer feels that not only too much has been made of this notion of the Canadian way (an expression which might denote the perjorative) but that not every region of Canada displays this characteristic. Be that as it may, the real issue on the *Convergence II* Copyright and Technology panel was the application on an international basis of the public policy of nations in the copyright domaine.

In this respect and although none of the participants on that panel represented any government, all tended to reflect the notion that their respective countries should in the International Copyright Law arena reflect a public policy which tends to defend their country's domestic Copyright Law policies. In fact, one of the principal difficulties of International Copyright Law is the establishment of common international norms which func-

tionally link the various national copyright laws even if homogeneity cannot be obtained.

This process is influenced by power politics and the politics of power, by fundamentally different notions of culture and how nations view themselves. Western Europe consists of old countries with long-established cultures confident enough to enter into European economic communities with a common Parliament - a process which the Europeans do not view as compromising their national sovereignty. They view free movement within a larger protected and protective sphere as non-opposing to their national identity. American public policy in International Copyright seems to be grounded in the ethic of American individual rights. In this context American public policy is designed to advance and protect those rights in the international sphere and consequently tends to be colored with the notion that all other systems which do not acknowledge these individual (more often than not commercial) rights are imperfect or unsatisfactory. This conception of public policy is to a great extent complemented by two practical and legitimate elements. For whatever reason, Americans tend to view culture as entertainment and entertainment as industry. Active dynamic culture has an economic value, it should be exploited. In this context legal impediments to this exploitation must be diminished or nullified. Since most countries worth their salt believe their national cultures are at least as good as anybody else's, this attitude is understandable. On the other hand American public policy is also influenced by the fact that its cultural and entertainment industries have an extensive infrastructure and are recognized as an integral and vital part of the American economy. The defence of these interests through public policy is also legitimate from the American perspective.

In comparison to the Europeans and the Americans, Canadian public policy in the international copyright and cultural and entertainment fields appears negligible. This is not to say that Canada does not have a policy on International Copyright Law. The problem is that Canadian public policy on International Copyright Law reflects the more stable and settled areas of print and related media. In motion pictures and television Canadian public policy is a question

mark. Two reasons may be submitted for this deficiency. Firstly, the Canadian film and television industry has yet to be regarded as an export industry. Although most Canadian feature films are designed to be acceptable to the American market, this is not so much export as an unstated and perhaps unrecognized attempt at integration with the American film industry. The primary emphasis of Canadian public policy in the film and television industries is to make their products available for domestic use. Consequently, all of the so-called international problems which concern the Europeans, Americans and other film and television exporting nations are either superficially recognized or unexperienced in Canada. Perhaps the most problematic area of formulation of Canadian public policy which applies to International Copyright Law, and the film and television industries in particular, is the general absence of Canadian public concern about these industries and the film industry in particular. Although Canadian film and television are well represented by a variety of special interest groups, these groups generally appeal to a narrow audience of the various Ministers of Culture or Communications in this country. No broader public relations effort has been made to make the Canadian public aware that a quite substantial domestic film and television industry now exists that can compete with non-Canadian products.

American and European negotiators can talk to each other about their respective cultural industries, public policies and their international implications because they are each coming from well-defined positions and understand each other's point of view. American and Canadian negotiators discussing the same subject matter are talking at, and not to each other, as Canadians without a well-defined public policy in this area have no precise stance. It is for this reason (among others) that the Canadian/American Free Trade Talks seem to be going so poorly, and the Americans continue to insist, more or less, that cultural industries be on the table for discussion.

The extent to which domestic legal systems are concurrent with domestic public policy can be debated at length by jurists and other interested persons. There can be little doubt though that on an international level the rules of the game established between nations - and how, if at all, their respective domestic legal systems interface - is very much a matter of public policy. In a

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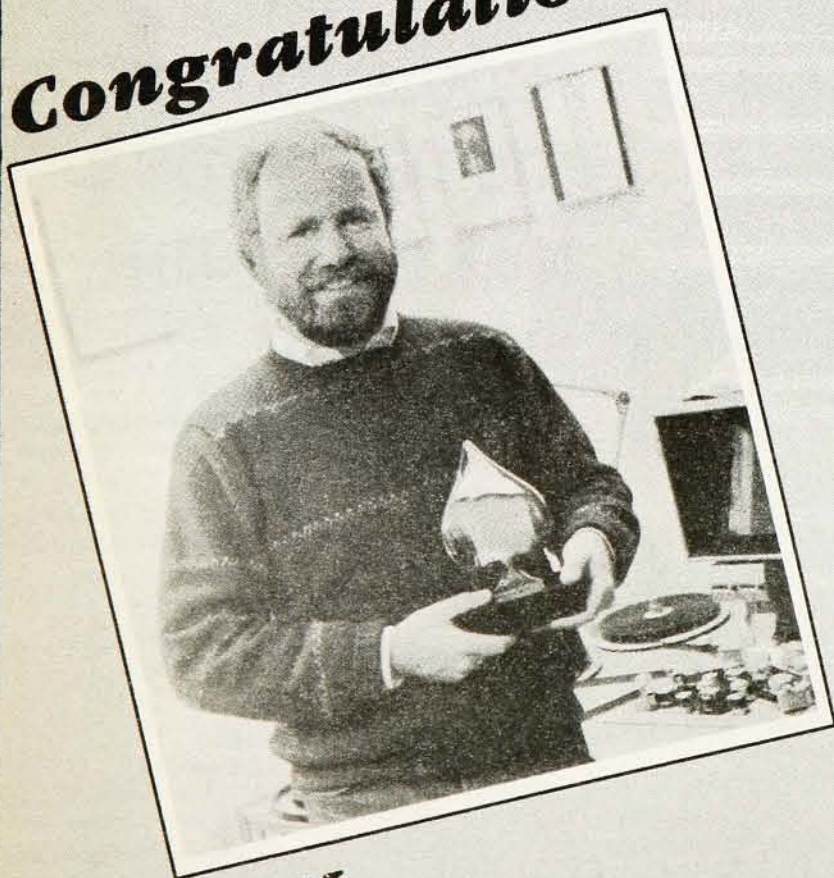
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Arcand and Berman vie for Oscars

MONTREAL – The winner of numerous awards in 1986, *Le Déclin de l'empire américain*, directed by Denys Arcand, has been nominated in the Best Foreign Film category by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Hollywood.

Le Déclin is one of five foreign films selected from features entered by 32 nations.

Co-produced by the NFB and Corporation Image M et M Ltée, *Le Déclin* has become the largest grossing film ever made in Quebec.

Awards to date include, the International Film Critics' Award at the Cannes Film Festival, Best Foreign Film (New York Film Critics) and Best Canadian Film Award at the Toronto Festival of Festivals.

TORONTO – An Academy award nomination for *Artie Shaw: Time is All You've Got* was an extraordinary surprise, says Brigitte Berman, the Toronto filmmaker who made the documentary.

"When they called me I was shocked. I just wouldn't believe it and I kept saying 'come on'."

In fact Berman said she be-

came so tired of the psychological ups and downs of the film awards circuit that she wasn't even going to enter her documentary for nomination.

"It just gets in the way of your work sometimes."

But luckily her distributor and Don Haig, the associate producer, urged Berman to enter the film.

That's one reason Berman is so thrilled about the nomination of the film, about clarinet player and big band leader Artie Shaw, in the best feature documentary category.

When Berman reached Artie Shaw, who was in hospital, he had already heard the good news about the film. Berman said Shaw was surprised and really pleased.

"I think the film has a lot to say and Artie has a lot to say and that's why he's so happy."

The 114-minute documentary was in the making 2.5 years and was produced on a budget of \$225,000 with support from the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council and a private investor.

Berman said Telefilm Canada helped ensure the documentary made it to film festivals around the world and thereby made it eligible for the Academy Awards.

Legal Eye

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bizarre way the public policy of all nations, concerning their cultural and entertainment industries, have some remarkably common points. They are all designed to permit their domestic industries to grow and expand in an environment elastic enough to permit this. The problems arise because the expansion and growth of national cultural and entertainment industries is perceived as being at the expense of the growth of other nations' cultural industries or economic interests. In the international context the individual rights of the various participants in the cultural industries take precedence only to the extent that they are concurrent with this growth process, otherwise, however cherished – and rightly or wrongly – they appear secondary.

Michael N. Bergman,

Barrister & Solicitor, Member of the Bars of Quebec, Ontario and Alberta with offices in Montreal and Toronto.

Talks on-going about merger

TORONTO – Talks about merging the Canadian Film and Television Association (CFTA) and the Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers (ACFTP) are under-

way. While representatives of both groups acknowledge the discussions, there is disagreement about the nature of the bargaining.

Sam Jephcott, executive director of the CFTA, said he thinks the move is essential. He said a secret committee of three members from both groups and a chairman have a mandate to discuss the issue.

But Peter Mortimer, executive vice-president of the ACFTP, said the discussion of a possible merger is part of ongoing talks between the groups.

"Some form of integration is one of the ongoing things on that agenda," Mortimer told *Cinema Canada*. "There is nothing spectacular going on at all."

Mortimer said no marriage is about to be announced, although he added the two groups have decided to start some dating.

After three years in his part-

time paid post at the CFTA, Jephcott said he will be stepping down in May. Jephcott intends to stand for re-election in May as a voluntary board member of the CFTA.

He said there are several benefits from joining the two groups including reduced office costs and, most importantly, a unified voice for producers.

The ACFTP broke away from the CFTA about three years ago after organizational and policy differences developed. The ACFTP has up to 40 members (production companies and financiers), while the CFTA is a much broader group that includes producers.

Despite the split both spokesman said the two groups are very close on many issues.

"We are not at war. There are very few areas in which we have a disagreement," said Jephcott.

He said while the merger talks are not a high priority compared to some of the policy issues and film industry concerns being discussed by the groups, the discussions are still crucial to creating a stronger industry voice.

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E A S T E R N W A V E

by Chris Majka

Film production companies have been coming to Atlantic Canada ever since the Shipman Studios came from the United States in 1919 to shoot the silent film *Back to God's Country* in New Brunswick (or maybe even before - I'm not a film historian). In more recent years films such as *The Bay Boy*, *My Bloody Valentine*, and *Children of a Lesser God* have all been shot in this area. Nevertheless, production has been, at least until recently, irregular and sporadic. What film activity has taken place, both by indigenous producers as well as those from outside, has often been regarded relatively indifferently by the provincial governments in the region. Film was often seen as a marginal activity with little significant economic impact.

That image seems slowly to be changing and the recent creation of Film Nova Scotia, an organization whose mandate it is to help and encourage film production in the province, is evidence enough. Film Nova Scotia replaces the Nova Scotia Film Resource Centre, an organization founded seven years ago with somewhat similar purposes. At that time the provincial government, acting on a report by Hadley Robertson who studied a variety of film commissions in the United States, was convinced of the need to establish some organization which might encourage film production in Nova Scotia. It was a time of fiscal restraint, however, and the government did not wish to be shown to be spending additional funds and so the department of Culture, Recreation & Fitness did not act directly to establish such an office. Rather, it encouraged the local office of ACTRA to make a request for this purpose and then the government financially supported this 'private sector' initiative. Ho hum - the convoluted path of governmental action. In any event the consequence was the creation of the Nova Scotia Film Resources Centre. This office was active in promoting film production although principally in terms of encouraging outside producers to come to this area.

Over the years there was a considerable degree of grumbling by local filmmakers that this office was not responsive to their needs and had an unclear and undefinable mandate. This arose partly because neither ACTRA, which ostensibly funded and administered the centre, nor the department of Culture, Recreation and Fit-

ness, which *actually* provided the monies, was willing to assume responsibility for it. It thus drifted in a kind of bureaucratic limbo.

In 1984 the provincial Task Force on Film and Video presented a report to the government with a number of recommendations, one which was that the role and mandate of the Film Resource Centre be re-evaluated. As a result of this, a Board of Directors was created in 1985 and proceeded to review and revise the policy of the Centre. This led, in 1986, to the establishment of the Film Nova Scotia Society which receives money from the provincial government through the department of Culture, Recreation & Fitness to operate Film Nova Scotia. The new director of this office, replacing Marcelle Gibson - who had been with the Film Resources Center since its inception - is Christine Cruickshank. She told me that under its new mandate she sees three principal goals for Film Nova Scotia:

1) To promote Nova Scotia as a location for films as widely as the limited resources of her office will permit.

2) to assist in promoting the resources of the province, in terms of location scouting, information of the production infrastructure, etc. to filmmakers both local and outside.

3) and to see that as many Nova Scotians as possible find employment in all sectors of the film industry and its related service industries.

She is careful to stress that all forms of assistance offered by her office are available to local as well as outside (or as they are termed in this region 'offshore') filmmakers and production companies. The office does not undertake to do any production management itself nor does it involve itself in hiring of personnel directly. It does, however, maintain an ever-growing file of cast, crew and other people involved in various aspects of the industry as well as an archive of production stills and information, all of which are available to anyone interested in filming here. This information will eventually be computerized in a database in such a way that complete profiles of regions of the province can be given to production companies. These would include local and municipal authorities, rental companies, hotels and restaurants, names and addresses of extras, etc. An off-shoot of this compilation of data is the plan to publish, in the near future, a film directory for the province

which will include some of this information.

In terms of future directions, another of the recommendations of the Task Force on Film and Video was to establish an actual Film Commission in the province with wide responsibilities including a budget providing development and production money to writers and producers. This proposal is currently the subject of a study by an interdepartmental governmental board within the Nova Scotia government which is drafting legislation for the creation of such an entity (rumours about town give it an operating budget of \$800,000, but then we all know never to trust rumours). If and when it comes into existence, Ms. Cruickshank anticipates that Film Nova Scotia and its activities and responsibilities would become incorporated into the larger framework of this organization.

The idea of film commissions to co-ordinate the growth of film industries, although not a new one, has been slow to catch on in the Atlantic area. As previously mentioned, there has been some scepticism that film could be an important factor in the economic equation. In this light it is interesting to see that in the wake of the success of *Children of a Lesser God*, which was filmed in New Brunswick, the NB government has recently established its own film commission which is called the Tourism, Recreation and Heritage Film Commission. More on this in a future issue.

In the meantime calls from Los Angeles, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, as well as from down the street come in every day and Ms. Cruickshank, with one part-time assistant, tries to prepare and send out packages of information which were urgently needed yesterday. She will give callers an earful on the beautiful and varied locations available, the number of skilled local production personnel, the advantageous money and tax situations, the lower costs of filming in the area and the ease of bringing in production equipment. She's convinced that we're on the brink of a new and exciting era of film production in the province. Any takers?

TORONTO - A former CBC producer and radio commentator is the new communications and research director of ACTRA.

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School debate continues in QC

MONTREAL – There is popular support for establishing a new film school in Quebec, say members of a panel who gathered recently, to discuss the time-worn question: Does Quebec “really” need a film school?

“After five years of debate, discussion and correspondence, the accent is on the word really,” says Michel Coulombe, moderator of the panel discussion and executive director of Les rendez-vous du cinéma québécois (Feb. 10 to 15), who adds that there is strong support within and outside of the Quebec film industry for *l'école supérieur de cinéma et de vidéo*.

A post-graduate film school, says Coulombe, would be unique in providing an intermediate step between existing, accredited university and college film programs and a place within the industry for aspiring filmmakers.

The gradual development of a Quebec film industry over the last two decades has meant an increasing number of film courses and degree programs at the CEGEP (junior college) level and at Concordia University, University of Montreal, and the University of Quebec in Montreal.

However, it is no less difficult today, says Coulombe, for a first-time filmmaker to “break into the industry.”

“Obviously for the young filmmaker the expense of a first film is a big problem,” says Coulombe, who adds that the absence of proven credibility in the film industry is the second part of the novice filmmaker's dilemma.

Monique Champagne, a panelist and executive member of the Institut québécois du cinéma, who has been working on the film school dossier for several years, says there is no question of duplicating existing film-study programs. Rather, she explains, the numbers of students graduating from these schools who are interested in filmmaking need a place to apply their knowledge and learn technical skills.

“We have to organize a school that will provide what these people need and help in a concrete way,” says Champagne.

As a veteran continuity person on Quebec film sets, Champagne has observed the frustration of ambitious young filmmakers anxious but unable to find employment in the industry.

“There is a lot of undeveloped talent out there. You see them on the set one day and they are gone the next,” she says.

The film school would assist in developing projects suitable for television broadcast which, says Coulombe, the student could use as a sort of “calling card.”

Support for the school is currently spearheaded by both the Institut and the National Film Board of Canada, represented on the panel by George Dufaux, head of French-language programming.

“We will do as much as we can to support a school,” Dufaux told *Cinema Canada*.

Dufaux does not rule out the possibility of associating a proposed six-month NFB training program, which he hopes to launch in the next fiscal year, with the school.

Another possibility for the school, he says, would be to serve as the French-language wing of the National Screen Institute (see article).

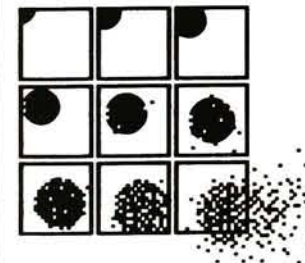
Champagne and Coulombe agree that the co-operation of the NFB is essential, and that the school must make the best use of existing resources including the NFB.

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National Screen Institute poised

EDMONTON – Dramalab 1987, will begin its search for aspiring writers, directors, and producers from across Canada to participate in a three-phase training program. An announcement is expected in late February.

Plans for the expansion of the National Screen Institute, launched in April 1986, as a result of the success of Dramalab 1984 and 1985 will also be announced, says Tom Radford, executive director of the NSI.

In a recent interview with *Cinema Canada*, Radford explained that the evolution of Dramalab through the first cycle in 1984, the second cycle (begun in 1985 and now nearing completion) and the beginning of the third cycle (1987) shows an expanding national orientation from a western base to a national base, and is resulting in the expansion of the NSI.

“The NSI,” he says, “is the Dramalab model extended into other areas of filmmaking. It exists to help find ways to create training programs in, for example, animation.”

Radford says the Quebec/Alberta connection, as characterized by the recently signed

Quebec/Alberta co-production agreement, sets up a strong impetus for the NSI to become involved in programs in both languages.

An on-going feasibility study in Quebec for a new film school (see article) could become the Quebec wing of the NSI, says Radford, who is in consultation with the Institut québécois de cinéma.

Dramalab is comprised of teams of filmmakers who have been selected from the five major regions of Canada to make a series of dramatic productions in a three-phase, inter-disciplinary training program.

Phase one consists of film drama studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, followed by a hands-on practical training at the National Film Board studios in Montreal. The third phase sees the filmmakers returning to their respective regions where, under the supervision of executive producers, they write, direct and produce segments of a series of half-hour television programs.

To date, the second phase of Dramalab 1985 has resulted in a six-part series of 15-minute

NFB-produced films entitled **Tech Change**.

The incomplete results of the third phase of Dramalab is entitled the **Border Series**, currently in development. Negotiations are on-going with CBC and Radio-Quebec. Shooting is scheduled for the summer.

The 18-member board of directors at Dramalab consists of representatives of both the public and private sector. Administrative offices are in Edmonton.

Super 8 festival

MONTREAL – The 8th Quebec International Super 8 Film and Video Festival will feature over 100 films of non-professional filmmakers, March 3-8, at the Cinémathèque québécoise in Montreal.

For the first time, video productions are included in the Intercollegiate, Quebec and International sections of the festival.

Organizers say that the inclusion of video is acknowledgment that video “has become a creative tool as effective and as accessible as super 8.”



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ON (EXPERIMENTAL) FILM

by B. Sternberg

Two film-related events took place recently in Toronto which featured, in each instance, a filmmaker as critic: *Kalling all kanadian kritics*, a performance by Al Razutis, took place at The Funnel on December 19 and had been preceded by his screening the week before of *Splice*, a film which in turn was based on a seminar in which six filmmakers spoke on the topic "Avant-Garde Film Practice: 6 Views;" the second event was a paper *The Death of a Canadian Art Movement* presented in lecture format by Bruce Elder, at Innis College Film Society on January 29. As little as these two people and presentations had in common (I'm not even sure how they will take to being mentioned in the same paragraph!) it is interesting to note and wonder upon the significance of this move by filmmakers to 'take on' both the critics and academics who propound and give credence to certain film theories and critical positions. Is it a case, as was suggested by Bart Testa, film teacher at University of Toronto, of filmmakers whose aesthetic is without a critical milieu: that faced with films which have a density of their own and theories laid upon these which are inadequate to the films, filmmakers have turned critic?

Since I had not attended *Kalling All KK*, I decided to call some of the Kalled for their opinions, observations, and more particularly to ask what issues/questions Razutis' performance had raised for them. The position/condition Al was analyzing is Postmodernism, and this by way of employing some of its methodologies; namely, parody and appropriation, or, as Al refers to it, plagiarism. For Bart Testa, the citings became less of an attack on the various theories quoted, (apparatus theory, feminist film theory, Bruce Elder's histories of philosophy found in *Illuminated Texts*), than a 'jolt to the memory, a game of recognition of sources, and, in some cases, a reminder of how interesting the source material is. This was clearly not Razutis's intention.'

Bill Wees, of McGill University, questions whether a multi-media performance can function as a viable form of critical debate. An art event, Bill muses aloud, is by its very nature open to interpretation, is multi-valent, which is unlike the desired exactitude of critical discursive thinking. *Kalling* introduced critical issues

which, for Bill, were then overshadowed by the 'show'. Dot Tuer, freelance art critic and reviewer, notes that Al ascribes a lot of authority to critics. She asks why Al would want to locate himself in the avant-garde and at the same time decry critical canon? If one is avant-garde why bother about critics and institutionalized curating at all? And she asks, then, what is the authority of the critic? What is the critic for? Is the authority of criticism more properly a question of the authority of language itself - intimidation by rhetoric? Does criticism arise from work, from a theory, or from the intersection of a theory and work? Is the image (films) stronger than what surrounds it (critical canons)? Dot also questioned what she supposed to be a desire for dialogue that the performance was to facilitate: where are the openings for dialogue - and is it the function of experimental film to create dialogue?

Al Razutis tells me that he intends to keep developing this area of *live* film performance that will employ elements of audience involvement. He wants to directly interact with audiences *while* the film is being made (an element of *Kalling* was to have been the filming, processing on stage and screening of the same foot-

age during the performance) as opposed to spending years to make a film and then have it screened and criticized in the filmmakers absence. Is this an attempt to control not only the making but the reception of film, and/or is it an attempt to stress each aspect as process?

Bruce Elder prefaced his paper, *The Death of a Canadian Art Movement*, by expressing his regrets with his past role as advocate for Canadian avant-garde cinema. He reflected that in celebrating work done here in the past, he had papered over defects, and stated that now this tactic was to change.

The theme of the paper was "Film Theory's Assault on Avant-garde Cinema", and the film theory Bruce challenged is the particular Feminist film theory, or 'Ecriture feminine' (feminine writing.) Bruce maintained that he is not against theory, *per se*, but opposes academic film theory institutionalized in film journals, university film departments and curatorial policy. The wide-spread critical attention this theory enjoys and its legitimization by academic institutions has caused, Bruce alleged, the death of Canadian avant-garde film.

Support for this accusation proceeded along two lines. Part a), was an attack against the theory itself. Bruce also made a point that I particularly noticed as contrary to a position often reserved for experimental film in explaining not only its history, but it's *raison d'être*; namely that of being an

alternative to or 'anti' the dominant cinema. Bruce argued that being 'anti conventions' is not the point, (in fact, conventions are all right as long as they are true to the medium and not so overdone as to be hackneyed); that valuing alternative cinema as anti-dominant, values only its social aspects. Films are then discussed only in terms of how they differ from dominant cinema, and not for their own aesthetic value. In fact Elder attributes the drying up of an aesthetic interest in cinema, and in avant-garde in particular, to this tendency.

Bruce accused the theory of being bourgeois, counter-revolutionary and, in as much as it advocates a filmmaking that is valued solely for its social utility, a return to a Calvinist world-view in which the value of the liberating potential of art is denied. Elder also questioned the validity of Lacan and concomitantly called for a re-reading of Freud and the tragic state of duality and negation at the core of language and the human condition.

In part b), Bruce enunciated what he considers the 'baleful' effects of institutional support as evidenced in Canada by specific appointments to university positions, selection of Ontario Arts Council film juries, access to publication and the role of academia in legitimizing this theory unreservedly.

The reading of the paper was followed by a screening of Anna Gronau's film *Regards*, which was then followed by a question and answer period.

Although this structure had been announced at the outset of the evening, and so the possibility for dialogue was guaranteed, nonetheless many of those implicated by the paper or qualified to question its tenets were either not in attendance or left part way through the presentation. I wonder about this; wonder about the mode of presentation, about the concerns of the paper itself and whether these suited the targeted audience of a university film society. Perhaps such a paper needed to be presented at a conference like the one held in London at the ICA on Postmodernism, or at the Canadian Film Studies Association Conference; that is, before people learned in the same field and with a designated responder appointed to 'answer the paper' before general discussion ensues. I say this, if, in fact, a dialogue was the aim. If the righting of past sins of omission by the tactic of full, public disclosure of perceived errors and conspiracies to gain and maintain power was intended to draw attention to the severity of the problem before rigor mortis sets in - was it effective? Is there another way? Is it more honest to say it out loud than to 'politic' behind closed doors? What does one do when the people behind the closed doors are seen as part of the problem? Are subjective characterizations warranted? Is naming names and describing specific events a necessary part of the game plan? And what's next?

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FRONTS WEST

by Kathryn Allison

Chris Bruyere, the newly elected President of the British Columbia Film and Video Association (BCFIA), attended the CBC regional producers meeting (held in Winnipeg on January 29) as a representative of the BC sector of the new Western coalition of independent producers' organizations. ACRIMPIA (Alliance of Canadian Regional Motion Picture Industries Association).

Also attending from Vancouver were Wayne Sterloff (Telefilm) and Ron Devion, Director of Television (Vancouver plant). ACRIMPIA reps had been invited to participate in one day of talks concerning the failure of Telefilm money to filter down to independent regional producers through the CBC.

While the meeting was non-confrontational, the basic centralist philosophy of both Telefilm and the CBC was seen as the major problem facing independent regional producers. Before the meeting, CBC people handed out their in-house document on Telefilm project guidelines which, Bruyere reports, were then openly discussed by ACRIMPIA reps.

"What it boiled down to was that the network comes first at the CBC, and that there's no room for feature production in the CBC's regional plants," commented Bruyere.

One note in the section on Development illuminated the state of regional decision-making: "If it appears that a project may be of such large scale that it may require more than \$500 development, this must be approved by Brian O'Leary (Network Director of Television)." ACRIMPIA reps politely suggested that regional decision-making over the \$500 mark would be a worthy goal for the Corporation. They also suggested that it would be more equitable for the regions if the network expanded its interest in regional dramas to formats longer than one hour.

The Telefilm Feature Film fund was described as having too rigid a mandate, which contributed to its underutilization by regional producers and the subsequent millions of dollars leftover at the end of the 1986 funding year. ACRIMPIA reps would like to see a portion of that leftover money earmarked for the regions and more co-operation between CBC and Telefilm to pump up regional production.

While CBC regional directors have a directive from

Juneau to listen, take notes and consider the independence suggestions, Bruyere hedged when asked if the ACRIMPIA reps were hopeful or dejected after the meeting. "I feel that it was an initial discussion, and can't really say what I think will happen until the next meeting sometime in March, and after Flora MacDonald's Feb. 13 announcement on the use of Telefilm's \$25 million. Certainly some members of our coalition are more optimistic than others."

Happily, Bruyere's feature **Shelley**, whose sale to the Vancouver region of the CBC had been stalled over a low CBC offer and the corporation's inclination to cut it into three parts, ended happily early in February when it was sold intact for the **Lies from Lotus Land** series for a better price. It will air March 28 in the region. With a sale to Global completed, Bruyere now faces selling it to Superchannel/First Choice in the midst of the CBC-Pay TV battle. (Apparently, Superchannel/First Choice won't buy anything that's had a first run on CBC citing bad experiences with a couple of recent projects out of Alberta.)

When he's not out lobbying, Bruyere is busy writing — he just finished his second draft of **Cinderella Ballerina**, his forthcoming feature which got Superchannel development money. He's waiting to hear from one of the two BC distributors he's pitched it to, and says that if one responds quickly, he could be shooting the feature in April or May. He also has finished an action feature that will be shot in Saskatchewan and BC this summer. It is being developed by Jonathon Prangley's company, Man Tracks, which has got several projects on the go, including a teen comedy feature being scripted by Phil Savath.

Another Superchannel/First Choice development fund recipient is Peg Campbell, who is in the treatment stage on a feature which she describes as "a conceptual murder mystery about a single mother private eye who investigates the death of a relationship." She and co-producer Peggy Thompson have three other writers working on the script with them: Peter Eliot Weiss, Banuta Rubess and Raymond Dang. They plan to workshop it in Vancouver and Toronto this spring.

Congratulations to the BC Genie nominees — Peg Campbell's **It's a Party** and Wendy Tilby's **Tables of Con-**

tent; as well, three out of the total of five nominated documentaries are from BC — Steve de Nure's **Ranch — the Alan Woods Ranch Project**, Kirk Tougas' **Return to Departure**, and Chris Bruyere's **Dads and Kids**. As well, Michael Conway Baker's score for **John and the Missus** was nominated, and Vancouver's Winston Rekert got nominated for best actor in a leading role for **The Blue Man**.

According to Cari Green, Director of the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution West the two hottest sellers these days are de Nure's **Ranch** and Tilby's **Tables of Content**. 1986 was a good year for the CFDW, with total sales this year coming in at \$82,595.00.

She says that the CFDW has had increasing success with the television market, and reports not only an increase in U.S. buys (through their U.S. distributor Coe Film Associates in New York), but an increase in buying by local broadcasters and the CBC network (thanks to continuing interest by Rena Krawagna at the corporation).

Green, who has been working closely with Tom Howe in co-distributing a series called **North American Indian Portraits**, is going to Saskatchewan Film Week (March 9-16) where she and Howe will give workshops on their joint work on the native series, as well as outline access to markets for new independent productions.

Green will also go to Regina and work with the Saskatchewan Film Pool to introduce them to potential buyers and illustrate how the CFDW has been expanding into the educational and television markets. She recently completed similar work with the Atlantic Filmmakers Co-op, and picked up two films from there — Linda Joy-Busby's **Linda Joy** and Heather MacLead's **World In Edgewise**.

In June she will be leaving her post at the CFDW and plans to work in the private sector.

Tom Howe is no longer the only Vancouver distributor now that Marilyn Cole is up and running with MCM, but he is certainly the fastest moving one. He's been expanding into production financing as well as hitting all the major markets in the States. Apparently response to his wares was very positive at the NATPE market in New Orleans, with some serious nibbles at the **Breakaway** series pilot produced by Terry David Mulligan and David Foster's company, Fame.

Now Howe is getting ready for the American Film Market (AFM) to which he is taking five feature projects, including David Winning's latest script **Flash Frame**, Vic Nicollet's

cont. on p. 52

→ **First Seasons.** Marv Newland's **Tunes Times Nine**, and two from Petra – **Visa** and **Matinee Massacre**.

Tom Lightburn (formerly with Norstar and Cineplex Odeon) is joining Howe at the AFM to work on those projects. The two have been talking about doing business together for some time but this will be their first real whack at pooling their skills and making some deals. Howe has also invited old pal Melanie Friesen (former head of creative development at MGM/UA's London office) to the market to assist him in developing film projects and to identify feature material to distribute in Canada.

Booths for five Canadian distributors at the market were organized by Telefilm – two of them will be from Vancouver.

Diane Neufeld and Brent Clackson (BC Film Commission) will attend the "Locations Expo" part of the AFM. They put on their carnival barker hats with other Film Commissioners peddling their wares to the producers who stroll in and out of the Market.

She and Clackson will also participate in the "Producers Breakfast" which was initiated three years ago by IATSE 891's boy wonder business manager George Chapman. The breakfast information meeting, held during the market week (March 3 this year), draws 50 to 100 producers who get specific questions answered about shooting in BC. The result of this one is expected to be consistent with the past two years – four to six productions (producers?) in the bag.

Barbara Janes, the new Director of the Vancouver branch of the NFB, reports that they are well underway with two short dramas. The Vancouver plant produced its first drama last year (**Differences**) and is continuing the new foray into drama with Peg Campbell's \$200,000 **Nuclear Fear** film which shoots this March. Peggy Thompson was supervising writer, with co-writers Raymond Dang and Banuta Rubess. Jennifer Torrence is the producer. It will be included as part of a series called **Home Movies**, for kids between 11 and 13. Aside from **Differences** and **Nuclear Fear**, all the other segments are from Ontario.

The first of a series of teenage dramas is in the first draft stage for the Board. Annie O'Donoghue will direct the 20-minute drama on teenage pregnancy which is being scripted by Tricia Finn. Script consultant is Sandy Wilson.

Shooting will take place in May and June.

Bill Maylone is directing a series of six eight-minute films for kindergarten-age children which is aimed at "reaffirming scientific curiosity in kids." George Johnson is producing those. Haida Paul finished shooting a half-hour documentary on PMS, which she directed and will edit. Before that she had co-directed another documentary on menopause.

Moira Simpson will direct a new program of sex education films for kids in Grades 5-6, which will follow-up the popular **Feeling Yes, Feeling No** series.

The Pacific Cinémathèque and Praxis are co-hosting a screenwriters' workshop in late February, with public lectures to be given by Kit Carson (**Paris, Texas**), Stewart Kaminsky, Sharon Riis (**Loyalties**) and Joan Micklin Silver

(**Chilly Scenes of Winter**). As well, there will be a practical seminar for selected screenwriters to work on specific scripts.

Patrick Ramsay of Marathon Productions Inc. is pushing the sound end of his business with the help of a time-code NAGRA tape recorder. According to Ramsay, people are more aware of the type of audio quality they can get these days, with TV series like **Danger Bay** being done in

stereo, and the advent of digital audio. The problem is that the new technology baffles a lot of people who are reticent about jumping in and spending a lot of money learning the ropes. Ramsay says his time-code NAGRA is the highest quality portable production tape recorder available, and he's used it on several videos already with superb results. He plans to get into more audio production of rock videos on the Coast.

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Time to speak out for non-theatrical films

TORONTO — People must speak out now in support of government funding for Canadian non-theatrical films or risk the industry's gradual demise, a member of a government task force that studied the issue says.

Les Modolo was a member of a federal task force that last year recommended government funding of Canada's non-theatrical film industry.

Producers and users of non-theatrical films such as those used by schools, industries and community groups must let the federal government know they support the task force's recommendations, Modolo said.

Communications minister Flora MacDonald isn't likely to move on something about which there is "deafening silence," Modolo told *Cinema Canada*.

The industry must write to tell her their views or watch the report go on the shelf, he explained.

In August 1986 the six-member non-theatrical film industry task force submitted a 38-page report to MacDonald called *The Other Film Industry*.

The task force produced 17 recommendations including the creation of a production fund similar to those set up for broadcast and feature films.

The other major recommen-

dation was that a financial rebate program be established to encourage users to increase the purchase of Canadian non-theatrical films and other audio-visual materials. Users include school boards, universities, public libraries and Canadian-owned companies, but not individuals.

Modolo, who is president of Marlin Motion Pictures, said if nothing is done a number of private sector non-theatrical film companies will disappear.

Revenues from Canadian non-theatrical films were estimated to be between \$7.5 and \$13 million in 1985. The report said this is equal to or more than the Canadian share of theatrical revenues in Canada as estimated by an earlier task force on the Canadian theatrical film industry.

The Educational Media Producers and Distributors Association of Canada (EMPDAC), of which Modolo is also a member, says it is pressing the government for a positive reaction to the non-theatrical film industry report.

The producers and distributors association is also concerned that the government revise the Copyright Act to help the non-theatrical industry remain healthy.

An EMPDAC press release says Jarvis Stoddart has been appointed the new executive-director of the association.

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