

OPINIONS

Punchlight

by Wally Gentleman

The *Gazette*, Montreal, Tuesday August 5th, 1975; mark the year – 1975!... began its editorial:

"Secretary of State, Hugh Faulkner, will announce today a quota system for Canadian movies and a new tax regulation for film producers."

In September of 1968 – mark the date – 1968!... in 1968, among a number of specific recommendations to the CFDC for prompt implementation, The Society of Film Makers, an organisation of principal professional filmmakers, listed under proposition No. 4 required a policy for:

- A) A Canadian Film quota
- B) Anti-dumping regulation
- C) Production tax on distribution profits in Canada
- D) Labour relations in the film industries.

It has taken seven years – 7 years – to get little recognition for an obvious need as regards quota, a need that remains almost entirely unfulfilled by the Secretary of State's pronouncement of August 5th.

It has taken seven years to recognise that six out of nine principal filmmaking functions must be filled by Canadians!

This abysmal neglect has continued while the CFDC has frittered away over \$17,000,000.00 from the public

purse by ill-considered "do-it-yourself" instant pudding adventures.

Their recipe of deluded success yearly presented to credulous government committees permitting contrived CFDC self-educative exercise. Thus all four recommendations under proposition 4 have not yet found fulfillment, after a seven year lapse – and this particular manifesto had nine distinctly different proposition clauses!

Hugh Faulkner has probably fought a tremendous battle to win this most minor objective and he is to be given most sincere congratulations for effort. But effort must be sustained and increased and he must take a long look at the sorry parade of his lack-lustre advisers within and without government who persistently cripple Canadian film development.

Hugh Faulkner must know that justice, if not business, demands immediate imposition of a tax that will restore to Canadian production monies at present leaving the country to foreign profiteers. Not this sop of \$500,000.00 from Odeon and the niggardly \$1,700,000.00 Band-Aid from Famous Players.

Hugh Faulkner must know that to be masters of our destiny *every* principal filmmaking function must be performed by a Canadian. This does not preclude paid foreign advisers within ordained limits.

Hugh Faulkner must listen to the voices of industry. The cry of his own conscience must demonstrate that seven years is too long to wait for so little. □

Thoughts from Someone Who Loves You

by Natalie Edwards

It is not a question of Canadianism, it is a question of the quality of life.

Obviously the future organization of peoples will not be restricted by national boundaries. But there will be differences between peoples as strong as the old nationalistic jingoistic tendencies proclaimed. The new boundaries are ideologies. And the quality of life condoned and encouraged by the ideology will shape the culture of the peoples.

For Canadians it is essential to define that quality of life we value to identify its characteristics.

We are not anti-American, but we may be anti-an-American way of life. We are not anti-British, yet an aristocratic cultural class and power system is not our way.

It is because of this that regardless of the market potential, we who live in the territory called Canada at this point in the twentieth century must refuse to describe ourselves in terms of England or the United States, but seek to find, or perhaps better yet, create, our own icons, our own image.

Film is the ideal form for this.

The quality of life that is valued in Canada is not all that unknown. We have relatively conservative natures; many of our peoples have escaped aggression and are peace-loving and non-militant; our vast agricultural wealth has attracted people who respect the laws of nature, who respect hard work, who enjoy minor daily achievement, are patient and pragmatic, and who have only recently been seduced into overflow commerciality.

But in terms of culture, we hardly know ourselves. Are we the painter Kurelek's Happy Canadians? More

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than any other artist in Canada his works define working people, simple people, immigrant people. But where is the film that parallels his strong message, his powerful love of *being* in Canada?

Are we Glenn Gould's intellectually scintillating musical discussion and compositions and interpretations? Or John Mills Cockell's explorative resonances? Or are we the Yonge Street strip or Anne Murray's scrubbed smile?

What is the quality of life we should propagandize to ourselves?

Would our filmmakers find their direction more visible if they considered their works in a political sense as Instructive and Inspiring? Should we take Red China for a model, rather than U.S. capitalism or British aristocratic values?

Can we, in fact, shift and change an attitude to life with our films? If not, why does anyone worry about pornography or violence-in-advertising. And if we could, what would be the effect? Is it wrong to preach, to care, to attempt to lead? Do our filmmakers have any responsibility to our people, or should they just relax and reflect our slide to obscurity?

When artists care about something larger than themselves, powerful art can be produced: Consider the magnificent religious art of other times.

Common to many of our filmmakers is a humane quality that acknowledges love and tenderness for the human being, tolerance for the human condition, compassion and understanding.

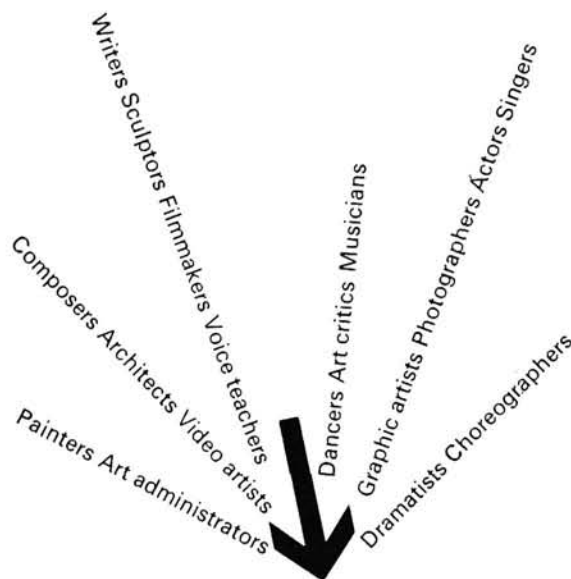
Our cities may be safer, our land a little less polluted, our politics a little less corrupt than those of some other nations as a result of a time gap from which, for once, we benefit rather than suffer. We have not inhabited our land long enough, or developed a radical urban crush, or sold out to corporate power so completely yet. Most people sigh, however, and say, *it will come*.

But will it? Need it? Do we really want it to come? Is it inevitable? Can we arouse ourselves sufficiently to stem our instinct to join the lemming rush to disaster?

Film. More money for film. More power to film. More distribution of film. And more film vibrating with a sense of the quality of life we now call Canadian, though one day it may have a different geographical appellation.

More film that illustrates our values, extolls more than the diversity and beauty of our landscapes but pulses with the diversity and beauty of our people. Film of our Ukrainians, our Poles and Latvians, our Icelanders and Jamaicans. Films of our women, our northern communities, our native peoples, our communes, our religions groups. Films that focus on cooperation, on our humanitarian adventures, our working people, our friendship, on affection and deal less with independent enterprise, ego-tripping, power plays, territorial greed and subjugation of one group by another. We need films in fact that reflect the best of our quality of life, the quality of Canadianism. □

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