

# Porn legislation may be dropped before Parliament acts

OTTAWA—Bill C-54, the highly controversial anti-pornography legislation, could "die on the order table" this fall, according to informed sources in Ottawa, if a new session of parliament is opened in October.

Nancy Waugh, executive assistant to Communications critic Sheila Finestone (Lib.-Mount Royal) told *Cinema Canada* that the House of Commons may prorogue, in September, upon returning from the summer recess.

A new session of parliament could mean, says Waugh, that that many pieces of legislation, including Bill C-54, are dropped or assigned a new number and given the same status in the legislature with an all-party agreement.

When the House prorogued in July 1986, not all pieces of legislation died. An all-party agreement kept alive legislation such as Bill C-95 (Archives) by assigning a new number. Less fortunate was the last anti-pornography legislation, Bill C-114, which did not make it through three readings. To prorogue the House is a convenient way of dropping unwanted legislation, says Waugh.

She says, strong opposition to C-54 by a large faction of the artistic community, women's groups and a groundswell of concerned citizens has weakened government resolve to give the bill a second reading.

"We have been hearing from people in the art's community that the bill is not a priority because of the negative reaction. They have been told the bill is going to be left to die," says Waugh.

Opponents of Bill C-54 claim that this legislation is too prohibitive and has gone too far in outlawing any depiction of heterosexual intercourse between consenting adults without regard for artistic merit. Within the legislation's definition of erotica, depictions of

nudity would also be outlawed. Depicting basic nudity would become as much of a crime, says Waugh, as depicting the sexual exploitation of children.

"We have written a letter to the art's community informing them that this legislation has

failed to come up with an acceptable balance which protects the community from obscenity while at the same time recognizing that adult Canadians expect their government and police to treat them like adults," says Waugh.

In May, François Macerola, government film commissioner and chairman of the National Film Board, clearly stated his opposition to Bill C-54 while appearing before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.

Under this legislation, the award winning *Not a Love Story* and *The Decline of the American Empire* would not have been made. The NFB has also made its views known to the justice department which is responsible for the legislation.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE IN TORONTO

Complete the following by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.

*I'm shooting my next production in Toronto because ...*

**a.** Toronto is the third-largest film and video production centre in North America.

**b.** Production budgets buy more in Toronto.

**c.** Toronto's locations adapt to time and place.

**d.** Toronto Film Liaison provides a comprehensive service that is fast, efficient, and free.

**e.** ALL of the above.

For the correct answer, and a lot more, contact:

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### Dominion Bridge rents two of three stages

VANCOUVER — Two out of three sound stages in the recently opened B.C. Film Centre at the former Dominion Bridge site in Burnaby have been booked for one year. Paramount is using the converted factory for the production of the television series *MacGyver*, starting July 1. The production will occupy two sound stages or a total of 31,000 sq. ft. including office space. Negotiations are underway for the remaining stage and a 40,000 sq. ft. special effects stage.

