

New CBC vision: totally Canadian network

Stock crash little effect

TORONTO – The CBC English television network will redirect \$20 million it has spent annually on American programs toward Canadian shows.

The spending shift is part of the corporation's plan to further Canadianize its prime-time and regular television schedule on both the English and French networks.

Citing increased competition from American programming and the CBC's role as Canada's national broadcaster, the corporation's board of directors outlined a three-year plan for both networks.

For CBC English television the plan includes increasing Canadian content to 95 per cent during prime time by 1990-91, having regionally-produced programming occupy a larger portion of national schedules and adding more commercials.

Denis Harvey, CBC English television vice-president, said about 100 CBC officials decided at a special meeting to unani-

mously support the plan. Harvey said it's a vision for a totally Canadian network.

After outlining the plan to the Parliamentary Committee on Communications and Culture in a recent Toronto session, Harvey told *Cinema Canada* that CBC will need extra money to realize its goal.

Along with redirecting the \$20 million for U.S. programs, the CBC intends to redirect about \$23 million of regional programming for new network programs. Harvey explained the regions will continue to make the programs, but instead of only being shown in the regions they will now be shown on the full network.

Other ways of funding a Canadianized CBC English television network include increased commercials and more co-productions.

"Whether we can do it without any help from outside (or) more government grants is difficult to say, but, yes, we are de-

termined to do it in some way," Harvey said.

The major obstacle, aside from the money problem, he added, will be to produce high-quality, continuing Canadian television series.

"The U.S. programs are liked by Canadian audiences – a **Dallas** gets three (to) three and a half million a week, a **Bob Newhart** and a **Kate and Allie** get two million a week," he said.

"Viewer loyalty in television is to continuing series with the same characters week in and week out."

Harvey said we haven't had a lot of success in this country in making television series and added that we must make series with continuing characters that have enough human elements, humour and drama to make audiences come back every week in numbers similar to what the American products get.

He said some Canadian shows are at that level now, but more need to be made and the quality

must continue to grow.

CBC Television is also aiming for more than 90 per cent Canadian content across the whole schedule by 1991 in addition to increasing Canadian content to 95 per cent during prime time.

By comparison, CBC English television last year aired 76 per cent Canadian content during the prime-time hours of 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Four hours per week more Canadian drama will be produced, with more arts, performance and pre-school programming.

On the English network more than 40 per cent of the total schedule will come from the regions compared with the current 26 per cent.

CBC predicts that it will have financial shortfalls of \$56.6 million in 1988, \$71.5 million in 1989 and \$97.3 million in 1990. The CBC says it will need more financial help from the government to reach its goals.

When answering questions from committee members Harvey said some programs that don't have commercials now will get them in future. One possibility is that **The National**, CBC's nightly network newscast, will be interrupted by commercials for the first time, he added.

TORONTO – The recent stock market crash had a "very minimal" impact on the \$1.43 billion CBC pension fund, corporation spokesman Richard Chambers says.

The CBC fund, which is one of the largest pension funds in Canada, is invested in a variety of areas with slightly less than half in stocks, Chambers explained.

The rest of the fund is diversified in mortgages, real estate, bonds, short-term notes and cash.

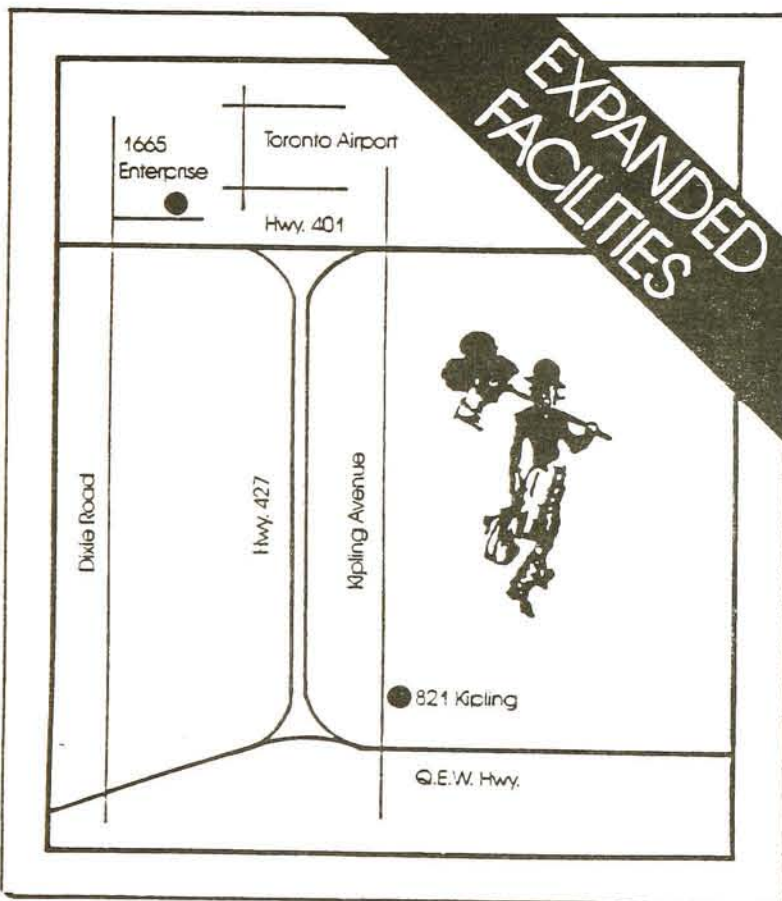
Despite the market fluctuations "the pension fund is quite healthy," Chambers said. He explained the statistics given were as of Dec. 31, 1986, but gave no other details on the current state of the pension fund.

WINNIPEG – The work of Richard Condie, animated filmmaker whose films include **The Big Snit**, **Getting Started**, **Pigbird**, **John Law** and **the Mississippi Bubble**, **Oh Sure** was the subject of a "Richard Condie Retrospective" at the Animation Festival Bristol.

The Winnipeg-based NFB animator attended the festival in Bristol, England, Oct. 27-Nov. 1 where a tribute to the late Norman McLaren was also held.

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