

## Little progress in dubbing

MONTREAL – International film financing was the subject of recent talks between the governments of France and Canada and representatives of unions and the private sector in both countries.

The mixed commission on the Canada/France film and television co-production treaty met March 10-11 in Paris to renew the 25-year-old treaty (signed in 1963).

Financial instability within both production industries (Canada and France) has created a new sense of urgency on the mixed commission, says Jean-François Bernier, a policy analyst in the department of Communications.

"With tax reform in this country the way it is, there is a strong interest in international financing," says Bernier.

The talks centered on cinema, television and animation as well as agreement to enter into a twinning arrangement, to be reviewed in two years' time.

In order to assure a more representative cultural product, each producer in a twinning arrangement will be obliged to hire outside of his own domestic industry. He will have to guarantee that the twinned product will be properly marketed in his domestic market.

There was discussion but no agreement on union jurisdictions in co-productions especially where a third-country location is used.

An extra fund for culturally oriented French-language films was proposed by the Canadian members but no agreement has been reached to date.

Jeremy Kinsman, deputy minister of cultural affairs in the department of Communications and co-chairman of the mixed commission, told *Cinema Canada* that the talks were a success in terms of agreements renewed and on "a psychological or political level."

"We emphasized that in the French-speaking world, Canada and France need each other because the alternative to working with each other is to turn towards pre-financed deals from the U.S. market."

Kinsman says both countries agreed that they must be mutually supportive for the sake of the French language and culture.

"We agreed that our connection is that of French-speaking countries and not just respective deal-makers in a world of international financing," says Kinsman.

He says progress on the dubbing front, where the government of France has prohibited foreign-dubbed product, is at best minimal and unlikely to amount to anything until after the presidential election in May.

Between 1963 and 1982, 33 Canada/France co-productions were completed.

This volume of work hardly compares to a total of 45 co-productions made between 1983 and 1987 of which 75 per cent were made by Quebec producers. During this four-year period Canada has spent over \$230 million on Canada/France co-productions.

It was determined by the mixed commission that both sides are currently in a state of financial balance, i.e., have benefited equally, from the co-production treaty in terms of money spent, earned and opportunity for both industries.

Among the more pressing concerns of the French industry, particularly among the unions, is the unprecedented growth in demand for U.S. film and television product in France which has resulted in a 50 per cent reduction in indigenous production since 1982.

Evidence of this foreign blight is that in the late 1970s no more than 250 actors made their living in the dubbing industry. Today, despite strict protectionist laws, the French dubbing industry is the mainstay for over 2,000 actors.

## Magnetic deal proves unattractive

TORONTO – A move by Standard Broadcasting and Magnetic North/Magnetic Fax to consolidate

post-production facilities in the city has fallen through.

Magnetic Enterprises Ltd. was to have been a joint venture of Magnetic North/Magnetic Fax and Standard's VTR Productions and Eastern Sound divisions to provide full-service film and video post-production. (Magnetic had planned to purchase 100 per cent of Medallion Film Labs.)

But three weeks after the announcement of the deal, Standard issued a short statement saying that "negotiations have terminated" due to a disagreement about the compensation package Magnetic principals Dan McGuire and Riff Markowitz were to receive.

Standard president Allan Slaight felt the package was "inordinate for a company of this size."

## Sask directory

REGINA – The first Saskatchewan Motion Picture Industry Directory has been made available through the Saskatchewan Motion Picture Industry Association (SMPPIA).

The 1988 directory has been published with the support of the Department of Communications, Saskatchewan Parks, Recreation and Culture, Saskatchewan Lotteries, Telefilm Canada and the Yorkton Short Film and Video Inc.

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