

CBC cuts trigger dismay as programming affected

TORONTO - Independent producers responded with dismay to details of budget cuts at CBC. Michael MacMillan of Atlantis said "it's possibly horrifying. It appears that Juneau is saying that there's a freeze - no more

commitments in the foreseeable future. It could have a devastating impact. It's an insane thing to do. It is completely inconsistent with Telefilm and the government's policy to encourage privatization."

Atlantis produced the award-winning *Sons and Daughters* anthology for CBC.

Stephen Roth, chairman of RSL and co-president of the Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers, expressed similar feelings. "A freeze is the worst possible thing to happen to us. Nobody knows what's happening. It paralyzes production." Roth is particularly disappointed that CBC "did not pursue a course

suggested to them, i.e. co-producing with the private sector." He suggested that the freeze may be CBC's way of mobilizing the private sector against the cuts. RSL is currently producing *Joshua: Then and Now* as a mini-series for CBC. The freeze will delay or scrap a number of RSL projects, said Roth.

Stephen Ellis, Canadian Film and Television Association (CFTA) president, said "our worst fears are being realized.

We can only hope that private broadcasters become major players. Telefilm may have to bend its rules on cultural significance which almost precludes foreign pre-sales."

John Watt at the DOC's Film Policy unit said "it is not yet clear what is happening. We are looking at it with Telefilm. The implications are serious."

CBC producers were shocked by the nature of the cuts. Ray Hazzan, president of the Association of Television Producers and Directors, said "it's like dropping a neutron bomb. We wiped out the people and kept the buildings. Our group is being hit hardest. We're losing 36 network and two local producers. It's a big blow."

Hazzan is particularly enraged with a "myth that programming will not be affected. There is no way that programming will not be affected. We won't be doing the kinds of series CBC is famous for." When asked why the Association hadn't responded earlier, Hazzan noted, "we were busy doing programmes."

Hazzan was afraid that it was his senior colleagues who would be replaced. "They're moving towards daily programming, away from large productions. By inference it's the senior people, the most distinguished, who may go. The newer producers will stay because they are in a popular area." The Association does not have stringent union contracts with seniority protection and bumping privileges.

At ACTRA, Margaret Collier, national executive director of the ACTRA Writer's Guild, said, "that what is really not evident is the number of freelancers who won't be hired. Lots of actors, writers will be out of work. The CBC has been the creative and cultural base for this country. What's going to happen now?"

On December 11 Pierre Juneau, CBC chairman, announced that 1,150 jobs would be cut at the CBC. Denis Harvey, vice-president of CBC's English-language TV service commented at a press conference, "there's blood on the floor." The English television network will lose 198 positions out of 2000. Out of that 37 are management/supervisory, 36 producers, 68 CUPE producers, 31 CUPE office staff, 22 NABET technicians and four secretaries. The exact number of layoffs depends on how many employees take early retirement. By the end of the day of the announcement, lists of eliminated positions were being posted throughout the corporation. Independent production to which CBC committed \$25 million this year has been frozen. The effect on the Broadcast Fund of which CBC is a major component is uncertain.



National Film Board of Canada

Office national du film du Canada

NEWS

NFB FILES APPLICATION FOR YOUTH TELEVISION SPECIALTY SERVICES

On November 30 the NFB submitted an application to the CRTC for children's and youth television specialty services. To be broadcast in English and French, Young Canada Television/Télé-jeunesse Canada would carry a minimum of 70 per cent Canadian programming. The majority of the material will come from Canadian private sector producers. Other sources will be existing collections along with new public and private television network programming.

The application by the NFB was made on behalf of a non-profit foundation to be established from among a diverse representation of private sector interests, citizens groups and government organizations. Assuming a favorable response from the CRTC following its hearings scheduled for early 1985, the two channels, Young Canada Television and Télé-jeunesse Canada, will be available to all Canadians subscribing to the basic cable television service.

ANNIVERSARY PUBLICATION

A special issue of "Les Dossiers de la Cinémathèque" has been released in honor of 25 years of French Production at the National Film Board. Published by the Cinémathèque québécoise under the direction of Carol Faucher, the booklet covers the emergence of



Members of the Bailey family in "The Things I Cannot Change" (1966)

French production in the early sixties through to the present. Contributors include Jacques Bodet, Werner Nold, Pierre Véronneau, Richard Gay, and Louise Carrière, René Jodoin, Michel Euvard and Gilles Carle. This valuable reference on the background and development of French production, is available for \$4.00 from the Cinémathèque québécoise and from the National Film Board's Quebec Regional office, Place Guy-Favreau, 200 ouest, boul. Dorchester, Tour Est, Suite 102, Montréal, Québec H2Z 1X4.

EIGHTEEN YEARS LATER

In 1965 the National Film Board released *The Things I Cannot Change*, a feature-length docu-

mentary examining poverty as it occurs in Canada. Set in Montreal, the film tells the story of the Baileys - the tenth child is expected, the father is unemployed and ultimately is in trouble with the police. Directed by Tanya Ballantyne Tree, this award-winning documentary is considered the forerunner of the NFB's acclaimed Challenge for Change Program. Now, eighteen years later, Tree is returning to the Bailey household to film the next generation and to discover if it is possible for a family to break out of the poverty cycle. The new film, which includes excerpts from the original, will be released in two versions; an hour documentary for general distribution, produced by Michael Rubbo; and a shortened version produced by Kirwan Cox for special telecast on CBC's *The Journal* this March.

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