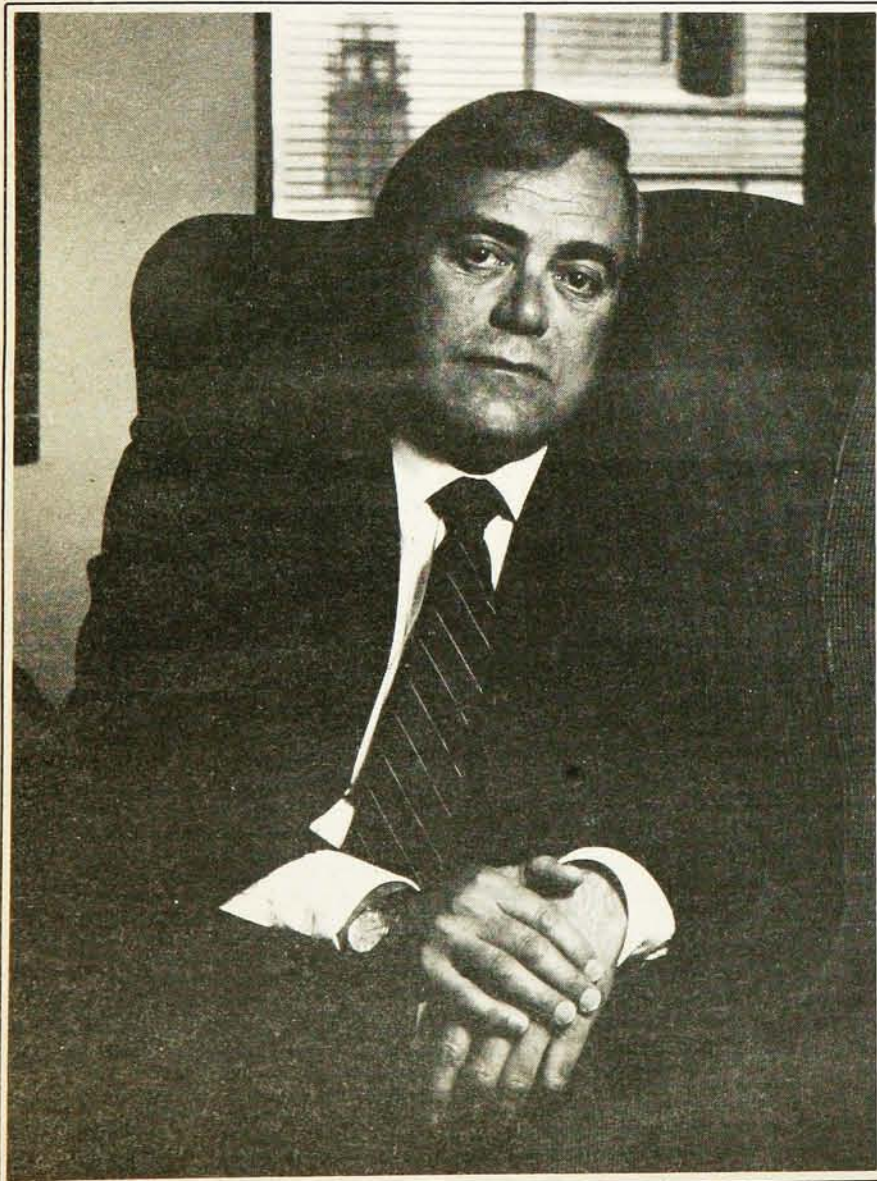


For the good of the system

The quiet counter-revolution of Marcel Masse

by Jean-Pierre Tadros & Michael Dorland



"Because we are a new government, we are in fact looking at everything from a new perspective. We can, and we will, carefully examine all facets of our responsibilities, with a view to achieving the degree of change, as well as the kind of change, which the Canadian people have said - and shown - they want to have."

- Marcel Masse

Nothing says counter-revolutionaries can't be charming, and Marcel Masse is both. Masse, 49, former historian turned technocrat, former independentiste turned (briefly) Liberal, then unioniste under Daniel Johnson, became at 30 the youngest cabinet minister in Quebec history.

Nineteen years later, Masse is a cabinet minister again: since the Tory landslide of September 1984, the federal minister responsible for the \$1.6 billion department of Communications. He has described himself as the most nationalist minister of Communications in federal history.

It's a new kind of nationalism, a Tory version of Quebec's Quiet Revolution, but in this case it's a Quiet Counter-Revolution. And not even so quiet either as last November's culture cuts and the recent removal of Telefilm director André Lamy forcefully demonstrate. As Masse has pointed out, the major challenge facing the Mulroney Tories is "nothing more or less than to redefine the role of government." In Masse's department, the process of redefinition has only just begun and in its ambition and scope it is, to employ the word used in the following interview by Masse himself, "a revolution."

Acutely conscious that culture is the Canadian blindspot, the redefinition

Masse proposes is tantamount to reversing the centralizing thrust of Liberal federal action in culture since the Massey-Lévesque Royal Commission of the early '50s. However, it by no means suggests the abandonment of the cultural field by the new Tory federal government. On the contrary, it represents the construction of a new cultural system in Canada, for it is Masse's ambition to come to grips with Canada's constitutional blindness in cultural matters. If the chosen achievement of Pierre Trudeau the lawgiver was to provide Canada with a constitution, it is no less Masse's to nominate one of the most gaping blanks in the Canadian constitutional division of powers. In this sense, he is perhaps quite right to describe himself as a nationalist.

The difficulty, however, is that there are as many variants of Canadian nationalism as other things Canadian and it is still too soon to attempt to call the full extent of the Masse variety. The following interview was requested primarily to get a sense of Masse's philosophy and the Tory government's cultural objectives, both of which have been obscured by the storm of cultural agency cutbacks. Indeed, on the day before the interview, The Globe & Mail's parliamentary columnist was also wondering "just what are (the Government's) 'cultural and economic priorities.'"

In person, in his Slater Street office where the stereo plays opera and a gilt-edged Canadian flag stands to the right of the minister's desk, Masse is energetic and forceful and, as the following interview shows, not without a driving eloquence. The interview, by Cinema Canada publisher Jean-Pierre Tadros and associate editor Michael Dorland, was in French and has been translated by Cinema Canada.

Cinema Canada: *You've just returned from Saudi Arabia where, as you said a moment ago, you were promoting Canadian industry. On the other hand, as you said in your speech in Paris in January, your department is also concerned with culture. You are dealing both with the medium and the message. And yet very often in Canada, given the market perhaps, one notices that medium and message do not necessarily go together; they do not support one another. How do you envisage bringing them into line?*

Marcel Masse: Just this morning, in fact, with the people from Statistics Canada we were examining the evolution of statistical data in the sector, and on that basis the cultural portion of the sector alone is practically as important as the entire agricultural sector in Canada in terms of gross national product. So if you add that to the telecommunications sector which wasn't among the statistics this morning, the space research sector, a sector like Spar Aerospace in the area of satellites, the broadcasting sector, as well as publishing, cinema, the theatre arts, painters and other artists, it's about the equivalent of agriculture. Including telecommunications which is a very important sector, this amounts to the fourth largest industrial sector and ranks 11th in terms of job-creation. There is an industrial component to all these domains.

Now the problem is to arrive at an osmosis between the two overall sectors of industry and culture which isn't perhaps yet complete. In part because it was a relatively recent decision to graft the two areas into the same portfolio. There is an osmosis to bring about within the department at the policy level which hasn't yet been done. But that's what we're working on.

For example, what is the responsibility in the cultural domain, what is the cultural field of Canadian government activity in relation to the provinces? This is a debate which hasn't taken place until now and about which it will be necessary at a given moment to clarify somewhat the responsibilities of each (level of government). Because it is difficult to establish programs or policies if the field of activity is not clearly defined. For what happens is that there are contradictions between provincial policies and the Canadian government with respect to the same clientele. As a result, there is a profusion of money in certain areas that leads to the creation of cartels and that is not necessarily either in the interest of the taxpayer on the one hand, nor is it possibly in the interest of the clientele.

Cinema Canada: *Are you not concerned that in trying to develop an industry, be it a cultural one or another such as telecommunications, that you will damage or perhaps pass over the culture? In other words, that the cultural movement will be changed, relegated to a secondary place as the industry takes up more and more room?*

Marcel Masse: I think that in the cultural milieu there are two basic themes: the creative side of culture and the consumption of culture. And I think that policies and programmes are required in both aspects. It serves no purpose to have culturally creative programs if there is no cultural consumption. That is to say there is no point having programs that assist creativity in the domain of sculpture if there is no equivalent support program for equip-

ment, museums, or sculpture in urban environments; in other words, a program where there is consumption by Canadians of the artwork of a sculptor. And, for example, in the recording industry or in cinema, it's the same thing. There is little to be gained in defining a policy of creativity in the cinema if there is no policy for the consumption of the cinematic product.

Because otherwise what purpose is served? We end up with films sitting on the shelf and there is no follow-through. Furthermore, without a consumption policy, there comes at a given moment a reaction from the consumer who is the taxpayer who says: Why invest public funds in an area where there is no public utilization? It's a little like the medical field: you can invest in re-

search, you can invest in universities to train doctors, but at some point you need hospitals because it's there that you have the consumers. The comparison is worth what's worth, but it's there that you consume the fruits of medical research and medical training. In the cultural area, there must be, on the one hand, policies to assist creativity. In music, for example, people are trained in conservatories; here, then, the provinces have an important role to play as the music faculty of a university is not the responsibility of the Canadian government, though there are policies to encourage creativity that can be undertaken by the Canada Council and other programs that exist in governments in general. But, at some point, there must also be concert halls; there

must be a policy that results in people coming to those concert halls. And it is this overall that produces a cultural policy.

It's a bit in this sense that we have addressed (cultural policy) up to this point. We have tried to demonstrate the numbers and statistics in support of the industrial part of culture. This is not to harm the creative element at a time of budgetary restraint: it is obvious that if you want to obtain the required credits, you have to be able to prove the usefulness of cultural policy to the minister of Finance as well as to the taxpayer. Not only in terms of principle or philosophy or sociology but also in consumer terms. Because if the taxpayer doesn't recognize himself in that - if he never finds a profit in it - it's obvious that he's going to rebel against the use of public funds in this sector as opposed to another sector. So we have to be able to defend our demands by our pressure on the department of Finance for the credits we need for the development of the cultural sector.

Cinema Canada: *Does this not amount, though, to the reduction of culture? What you've said on the need for developmental structures rests nevertheless on a global cultural definition which is, it seems, a matter of national policy. So I would ask you to define in that respect the global, cultural objectives of this government?*

Marcel Masse: I think that in a confederation, in a federation, this is very difficult to do. I think that the Canadian people would refuse cultural homogeneity. Because that goes against their history, it goes against their geography and it goes against their sociology - and for all those reasons amounts to the difficulty of defining cultural policies. Because Canada is not a unitary state; Canada does not have the will towards a "melting pot" as in the U.S.A. which, anyway, is beginning to change enormously. Even unitary states such as France are obliged to develop cultural policies that take into account the will for self-expression of, for example, the Bretons or the Corsicans.

So obviously once you talk about Canada, francophones whose identity, whose difference, is largely their cultural identity or originates from there, would never accept a uniform or homogeneous cultural policy. No more than in Newfoundland, in Toronto, in Saskatchewan or in the Yukon would they accept a homogeneous policy that would descend on them like a heavy coat. Now it is true that, on the level of the spirit, it would be a relief to be able to say: Well, the thing is simple, the world is identity-producing. But it isn't so in an identical way. And I believe that this distortion of cultures is one of the riches we have in Canada: this will to regionalism, this ethnological aspiration that Ukrainians who have established themselves in Manitoba have up to a point to retain a certain Ukrainian identity with respect to the Italians of Montreal or Toronto, (or) that people from St. John's Newfoundland wish to be able to recognize themselves as somewhat different from people in Vancouver.

Cinema Canada: *So why not leave cultural budgets entirely up to the management of the provinces then?*

Marcel Masse: There, I think, you have to raise a problem that has not been raised until now. What is the cultural *espace*, the cultural responsibility of the Canadian government?

The policy so far

A briefing book prepared by DOC staff outlined a range of departmental positions on questions ranging from the National Film and Video Policy to the players in the Canadian broadcasting system. The briefing book was approved by Masse. Some highlights:

• national film and video policy

Approval of the policy in principle as well as continued application of the measures proposed by the policy. Recognition of the inefficiency of the capital cost allowance but no specifics, however, other than favoring the continued development of the film and video industries in Canada's three largest production centres: Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, as well as in all Canadian regions.

• Quebec's Bill 109

Quebec's Bill 109 has objectives similar to those of the government: development of domestic industries, attempt to control the domestic market and increase the Canadian share of theatrical revenues, reduction of foreign control of the internal market, and supporting production and distribution of film and video as cultural expression.

The government supports the objectives of the Quebec government, but no comparable legislation in the area of distribution should be expected for the moment. Recognition of Quebec's unique linguistic and cultural situation in North America.

• negotiations with the Majors in Canada

Three meetings to-date have taken place with the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors' Association, with a fourth to take place shortly. Negotiation is favored as an approach over quotas, levies or taxation that would restrict the range of films offered to Canadians. (In 1982 foreign distributor income from film, and broadcasting in Canada was \$194,448,000 while Canadian distributors earned \$71,799,000 for a total of \$285,864,000.) Yet choice does not truly exist if Canadians can't opt for Canadian films. A negotiated solution is hoped for, otherwise the only means available to remedy the situation would be those used by other nations, or in this country applying the recommendations of the 1983 Cohen report.

• non-payment of U.S. rights holders for program retransmission on Canadian cable systems

Under existing copyright law, retransmission of broadcast programming by cable systems does not constitute an infringement of copyright. If Canadian cable operators did have to pay, estimates are that \$10 million in copyright revenues would flow to U.S. rights holders. The government has referred the matter to the Parliamentary Committee on Communications and Culture which will be holding public hearings on the whole question of copyright.

• the broadcast review task force

Will recommend on an industrial and cultural strategy which takes full account of the government's overall social and economic goals: the public policy objectives for the Canadian broadcasting system; the role and mandate of the CBC, private broadcasting, provincial broadcasting services and interrelationships; the demands of the public; regulation; impediments to the broadcasting system's contribution to the Canadian economy and society.

• the broadcast fund

Since the fund was fine-tuned April 1, 22 new projects (13 French and 9 English) were submitted for assistance - as compared to 27 for the month of March - an increase of 95% in 10 days. Since July 1, 1983, more than 500 programs or 140 projects have been supported by the fund, representing budgets of over \$200 million.

What is its relation with respect to the cultural responsibility of the Québécois government or the government of Saskatchewan or the government of Ontario? That is an area we began to approach at the Vancouver conference (with provincial counterparts in March) and that we will continue to discuss at the Halifax meeting (this fall) and beyond.

Cinema Canada: *But you yourself must have some idea of what that space is?*

Marcel Masse: I have an idea of the difficulty of it! But I don't think it would be wise of me to define what should be the responsibility of the Canadian Parliament, or of the federal government in the sense of its relationships to the provinces. I don't think that would be wise of me, though I can arrive at a definition of it in the context of a larger assembly.

Cinema Canada: *Can you envisage the possibility of the provinces unani-*

responsibility of the provinces. Which does not prevent the federal government from assuring through the income-tax a certain equalization by means of the subsidies it gives the provinces. But it's the provinces who define the programs, who grant the diplomas, etc. You know the system.

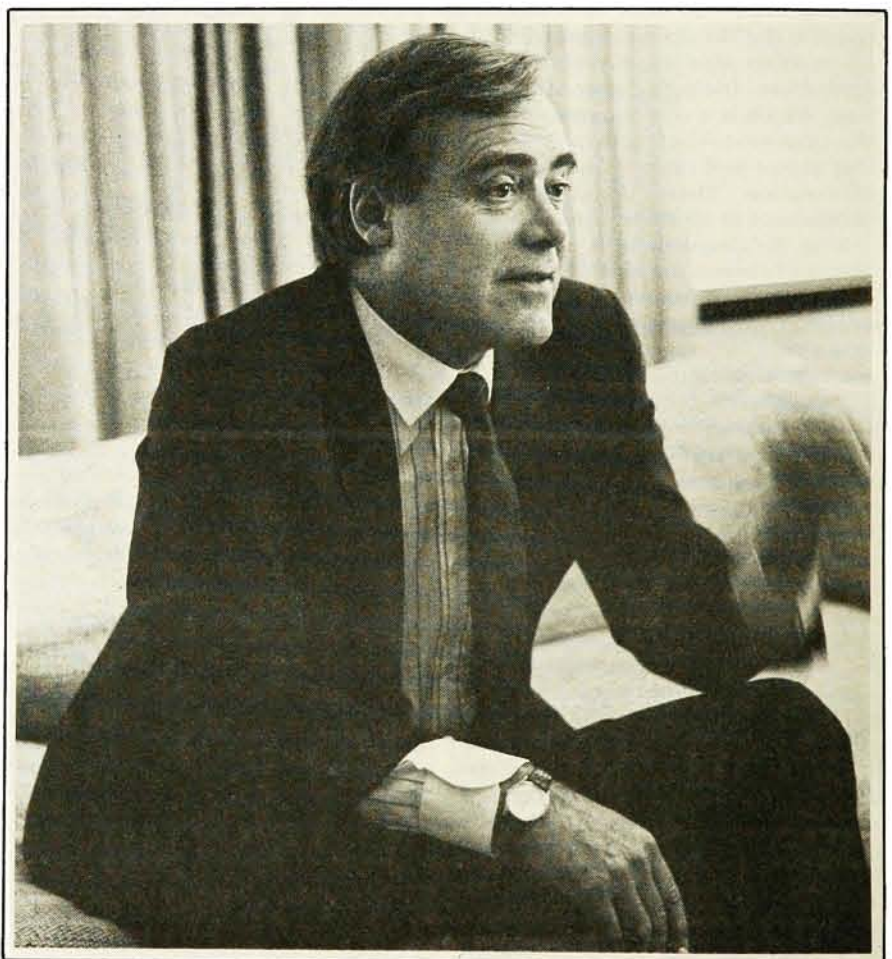
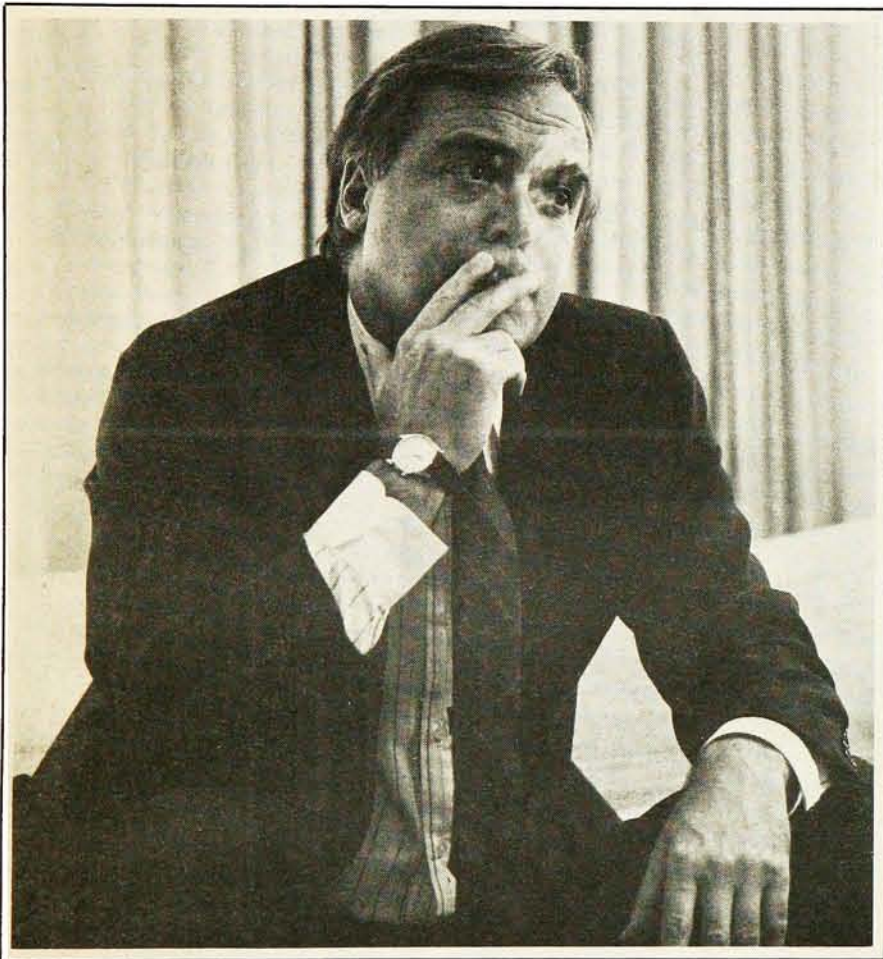
In the cultural domain, and it's rather symptomatic, we have never discussed this question: Why did neither the Fathers of Confederation nor anyone since discuss constitutional responsibility with respect to culture? Even if in '79 there was a unanimous resolution, I know perfectly well, as you know, that in 1982 there were fundamental constitutional debates in Canada and that this same question was not taken up by the premiers of the Canadian provinces. As a result, two conclusions are possible: either the prime-ministers did not agree with the ('79) resolution since they didn't table it for constitutional discussion, or the clientele that they serve are perhaps in disagreement with this (the provincial) position. In any event, one thing is

their responsibilities are, there are some provinces who are more active than others in cultural matters; some devote a higher percentage of their revenues to cultural programs than others. The situation is unequal. Secondly, it's from there that the federal government runs into difficulty in defining programs: should programs be defined in terms of culturally passive provinces or in coordination with the active provinces? And the result is a certain confusion in the debate and people are not sure whom to address for what.

Take the domain of cinema, for example. With respect to the question of Telefilm, the Canadian government, reacting to the pressure of American (cultural) products in our market for one and, secondly, out of the need to use film as a means of cultural identity, as a means of transmitting a certain cultural identity, and thirdly, the need to develop an industry – that is to say, a certain number of investors, of people working – decided to develop a film policy. They established a system of taxing cable-

the film industry, be it at the level of producers or story location. As well we have tried to enlarge the number of potential clients who would use Telefilm product by opening the fund to provincial broadcasters, by bringing the private sector to better use those means, and so on.

We have tried to enlarge the film domain. Which doesn't mean that certain provinces who, for their own reasons, either because there the cinema clientele is more dynamic and put pressure on the provincial government or because within the provincial government itself there are those who on their own initiative have decided to make a contribution – provinces such as Alberta or Nova Scotia, a number of provinces who have developed parallel programs or ones complementary to the federal government, (shouldn't). But there are provinces with no programs at all. That is why I believe that, for the both of the system, for the health of the system, for the value of the regional aspects of the system, for all the



mously asking to control their cultural resources?

Marcel Masse: You know that's already happened. The political problems that we have in Canada result from the fact that we have no collective memory. And that's a fact. In 1979 at a meeting of Canadian ministers of culture, including a representative of the Canadian government, a resolution was unanimously passed stating that the primary responsibility in the cultural domain belongs to the provinces. The resolution was accepted and they re-presented it to me in Vancouver, saying: This resolution has already been approved, Mr. Minister, what do you think of it? So I said, firstly, that I note that it was passed in '79 but that I also observe that, on this topic which is clearly of the constitutional domain, the Canadian constitution is silent with respect to culture, though it rules on what the responsibilities are in educational matters. For example, the constitution says: education is the

clear: and that is that the problem has never been taken up until now. I have no objection that the question be discussed, that a working group be formed to determine who is to do what so that there be better-coordinated programs, a better use of public funds, that there be the minimum of duplication, that the clienteles in question be better served in the sense of knowing who to address when they want such-and-such a program, whether to go to the provincial level for this or the Canadian level for that. But it is certain that, as we speak, there has been no working document made available that would allow us to discuss this (definition of responsibilities.) That's where we were in Vancouver and that's where we are now. And I think that this lack of clearly defined responsibilities creates part of the confusion.

And it's the same at the administrative level. Which is to say that as long as the provinces do not know exactly what

distributors, a six percent tax, and with it made a fund and on the basis of that, defined a policy. This policy was in the beginning, at that time, oriented toward the existence of CBC. After several years, with the agreement of the *milieu* and an analysis of the results of the policy, we have tried to expand the policy, taking into account the needs of the regions that want to participate in this policy because they put money into the fund. An example: Saskatchewan injects \$1-1.5 million into the Telefilm fund, so Saskatchewan minister Gary Lane wants to see a certain return on his investment. Everybody is agreed that, each year or at least over a number of years, it would be normal for Saskatchewan to get back a certain percentage of what it has placed in the fund. So we have tried to give clear indications in favor of the idea that the Atlantic provinces, like the western provinces, like Quebec and Ontario, must find themselves within the investment they have put in as participants in

reasons we were discussing earlier about the sociology of Canada, it appears essential to me – and that is why we spent so much time on it last fall – to renew the dialogue in matters of culture with the provinces. Those people or agencies must not see themselves as adversaries; this is not a competition to serve clienteles, this is not a competition for a presence in the (film) milieu, it is in my view a complementarity of policies.

But in order to have complementary, there must first be trust and that is why from the beginning, as of last fall, we undertook such an effort to renew a dialogue that had gone sour, as you know, and even more so in the area of my portfolio than in other *milieux* because of the cultural confusion. In other departments where the cultural sector is well-balanced or at least better balanced, there were daily struggles but things were less complicated than in my portfolio. We've renewed that dialogue and will continue to do so for the dura-

tion of our mandate, that's for certain, and I hope that in the years to come we will arrive at a situation where there will be a team working together for the flourishing and enhancement of what exists, instead of having agencies using public funds to war among themselves. For in my view they have been undertaking negative policies, oppositional policies. I am developing a (counter) policy because what has been developed are oppositional policies, and in my view, policies should be complementary. And if I could realize this aspect – which is a difficult task; there should be no illusions on this account, but which is essential in my view – we will have greatly improved the climate and the programs, and I always speak in terms of programs and not in terms of money. The Liberal approach – that is to say, throwing money at problems – had as a result the budgetary system, which you know about, that has almost bankrupted the country.

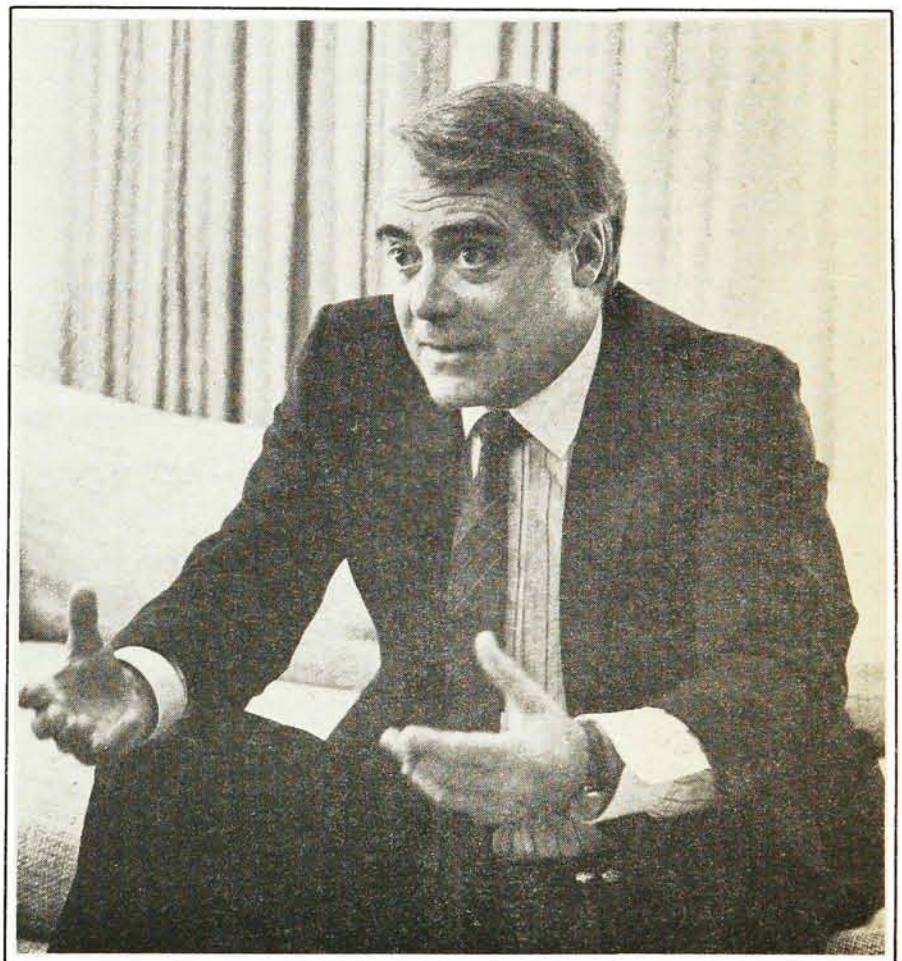
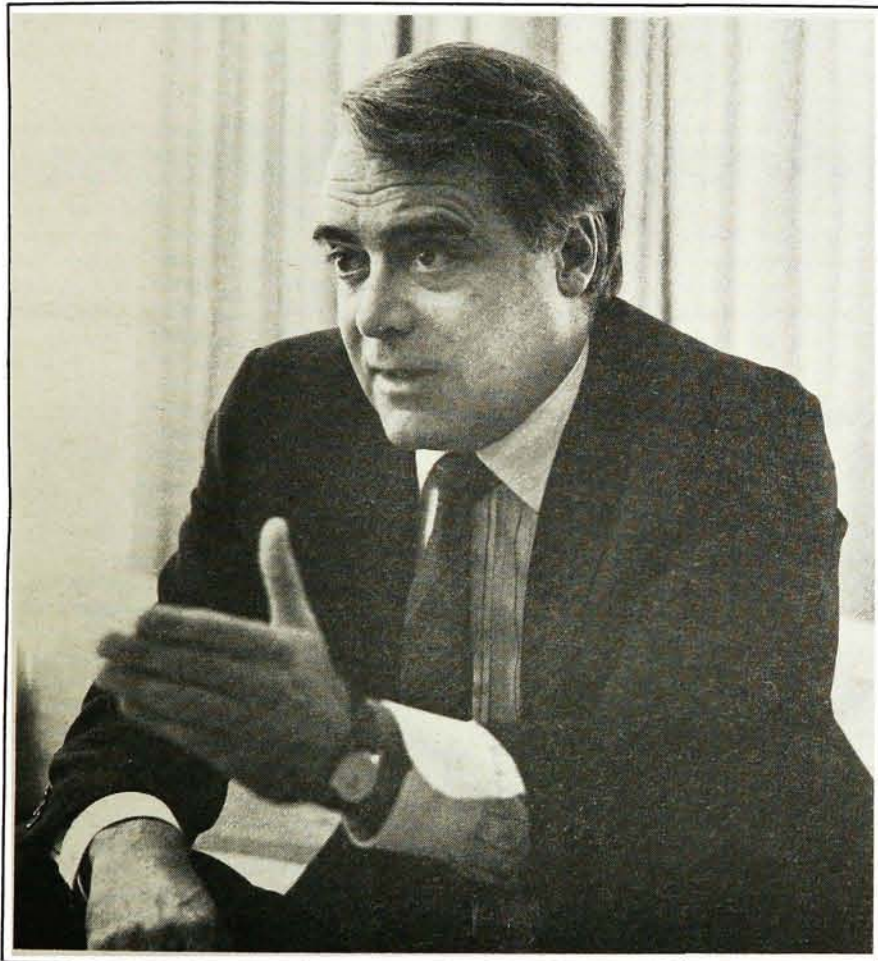
So it's programs that have to be developed; though programs are not

we've done the same with the broadcasting policy review. I will have a task force that will help me define the White Paper instead of, as was traditionally the case, setting up a team of bureaucrats and having them draft the White Paper. I want to be certain that there are people who will go and meet with the *milieux* to bring in freshness, new ideas, and bring those new ideas into the department. And from there we'll arbitrate, make adjustments and (provide) the necessary coordination.

That seems very important to me and that's what we've attempted to do, be it with the (NFB's) photography museum, or be it with Telefilm, and we'll do the same with broadcasting, and the other sectors to come. That's what I've done since the beginning and to that effect wrote to my colleagues Mr. (Sinclair) Stevens who heads the (cabinet) economic committee and Mr. (Jake) Epp who heads the social development committee and I'll be making those letters public. I want to assure myself that policy is the responsibility of the en-

when each has his responsibility – and I have to be assured that my clientele has a right to that. For instance, in the area of industrial expansion, I have to be assured that Mr. Sinclair Stevens' business investment programs are made applicable to the film industry. I have to make sure in the area of taxation that the minister of Revenue takes our sector into account. It's not a question of repatriating taxation our way or business investment our way or job-creation, it won't work like that. It's not organized like that. But I'm dealing with a milieu that isn't used to that approach, that would like, to take a hypothetical example, that the Canada Council administer all the programmes. Yet if you want that the state as a whole be responsible in cultural matters, that culture cease being merely a side-car of the state, all the departments must understand that their programmes have a cultural dimension. Take the export of cultural product: the minister responsible, Mr. (James) Kel-leher, when he goes to export Canadian products, his programs, his thinking

the secondary sector and in the tertiary sector. The million unemployed are roughly concentrated in this or that sector. For each sector, you know, the investment fork required for job-creation and so you add it all up. And you know that you'll need so many millions of dollars to absorb or create the jobs that are needed overall. But you know that our national debt is some \$150 billion. So there's a limit, because the state has to borrow directly to create jobs. Given that is not the philosophy of our party, that in our opinion the private sector has to assure its own dynamism, which is normal in a market economy, and we are in a market economy and not in a socialist system. So we have to open the country to investment. That is to say that we cannot – there are only 25 million of us – the state itself cannot take charge of all the job-creation. With only 25 million in population to create an investment reserve, we have to add, we have to bring in money from outside for investment in the economic sector. We have to attract investment to Canada



necessarily better because they have more money. You have a better program because it better answers (a need). First in terms of the provinces. Secondly in terms of the *milieux*. I believe and I said so in Toronto last week, that there is no such thing as bureaucratic infallibility, and that is clear. The governments must define their policies with the *milieux*. With *milieux* that know their needs. Which doesn't mean that we have to accept everything they put forward or directly elaborate policy on the basis of coordinating (all) the other *milieux*; after all, there are conflicts among *milieux*, that's certain. For example, between the film industry and the cable distributors who are perhaps not always on the same side of the table. It happens then that the government must arbitrate between the needs of the different groups. But it is essential that policies be more and more defined with the *milieux*. And that's why (in broadcasting) we took outside consultants and why

semble of the government, and not merely of one sector. Cultural policy, the actions of the state in culture, should not be the monopoly of my department. (If) the definition of policies must be the responsibility, must be largely, not to say principally, the responsibility of my department, the utilisation of the instruments that apply that policy must, in my opinion, include the other departments as a whole when they have (applicable) programs. Let's take the example of cinema. We must define Canadian film policy with the *milieu*, and with the provinces, but at some point the department of employment has job-creation programs. There I have to be certain that when Mrs. (Flora) MacDonald defines her program, the film industry get its share of the job-creation market in its sector as opposed to my saying to Mrs. MacDonald: Give me the money and I'll put it to use. Because that way nothing would work. It's not like that that the state works. The state works (best)

and his actions have to include the export of cultural products as well as manufactured products or primary resources. And that's a revolution in that circuit.

Cinema Canada: *Is there not a danger of being in contradiction with the government's political belief in free-trade, for instance, especially when, as you've said yourself, the cultural milieu has to be protected? Does that not contradict a wholly different philosophy?*

Marcel Masse: That's the chapter of (foreign) investment in Canada, and here there are two things we can do, and that we've begun to do. The calculation is easy to make: there are one-and-a-half million unemployed; job-creation represents \$X per job created whether it's in services or resources. Now you say: the profile of job creation in Canada is that there proportionally so many people in the primary sector, in

and we're going ahead positively to make it work.

But having said that, it must not happen that certain sectors fall under foreign control, because these are the sectors that control our personal identity. When you sell lumber, well, wood is wood, but I cannot conceive and in fact Canadians do not accept – and they're right – that important parts of their industry, of the value-creation of their identity come into foreign hands. We've made sure that, in the Investment Canada Act, for the first time – before it wasn't clear; now the law is clear – that in the area of cultural investment there is a protectionism provided for by law. This protectionism gives us two possibilities: first, to assure that we control our Canadian investments in that area, and secondly, that this protectionism entails a greater action by the state, either in the definition of the program or by an investment by the state such as a subsidy or an investment by the state

that is more substantial than in other programs. This does not preclude – that's the last aspect to open – that the participation of the citizenry should not equally be greater. The state carries a lot with its responsibility for broadcasting and the development of culture. It's certain that – and I'm not putting it into doubt – the Canadian demographic, geographical and sociological reality obligates us to bear such a policy. That is why for, example, according to certain statistics, though one statistic can always be contradicted by another, that in the United States the per capita cultural investment is \$7 while we invest \$34 per capita in cultural questions.

But one must nevertheless attempt to ensure greater freedom. The taxation system has to be, in my opinion, reorganized, or at any rate reviewed. I don't say this because I want the state to turn the problem over to the private sector; I don't want to review the taxation system to diminish the presence of the state, but to increase the number of players and see whether, in the area of taxation, it is not possible to reorganize part of it to allow a greater number of Canadians to choose for themselves. Because ultimately freedom in the area of culture is closely related to the number of players and it's certain that a state-system wants to collect the tax and channel it through its own programs, which gives the bureaucracy the power of management in the definition of the programs and in who decides what the programs will be. Now since this is Canada, that has to be there, but it remains to be seen if one can't increase the freedom of choice: to make it possible for a number of Cana-

dians to decide for themselves whether they'll invest in films or in a regional museum or whether to buy a painting and donate it to a museum. Increasing the number of decision-makers, the numbers of decisions that can be made by Canadians because the tax-system encourages this is, in my view, an increase in the freedom of creation. And freedom of choice for the consumer increases the freedom of creativity. For as long as there is only the state, and it is only the state that decides, freedom is diminished accordingly. And so it's in that sense that, by improving the tax-system, you improve choice and increase liberty. And when I say I want to do that, it's not to free the budget in order to do something else, it's to increase freedom of choice.

Cinema Canada: *So what position do you adopt given the fact that the culture – in the case of the cinema which is overwhelmingly in foreign hands or in broadcasting where the Canadian end of it is rather limited – is already undermined from within. How does the state deal with that in the overall policy?*

Marcel Masse: That depends on the cultural sectors themselves. There are cultural sectors where the vitality exists, where the market exists, or where the pressure from outside is not so strong. Let's randomly take the example of sculpture since we spoke of it earlier. All things being equal, Canadian sculpture can express itself directly, market pressures from, say, Italian or French sculpture being less. At the other extreme, in domains like television or film, there it's the complete opposite. That is to say that the economic costs of expression

are high – it costs a lot more to make a film – the costs of expression are high and the need for the product is great because of the number of television channels or theatres. There are great numbers of product and it is not possible to satisfy 100% the needs of the consumer with 100% Canadian product. Nor, perhaps, would that even be very interesting.

Cinema Canada: *But the consumers in their need aren't even asking for Canadian products...*

Marcel Masse: Yes... and so you have two options. We have the means – though in my view that is not the road we should take, since I believe that freedom of expression of ideas, even for creators, even in the area of the cinema, (means) that a certain competition can engender quality product. But we do have, nonetheless, a situation that's abnormal and because of it everybody considers it right that the state invest a greater amount of public funds in that area than in another. To what point can we turn the thing around? I don't have any figures in front of me, so I don't know. In any event I don't think anybody knows what the ideal level is. Should it be 23%? Is it 43%, is it 68%? I don't have the answer. Since we are in any case far from the ideal, we've got a lot of room to manoeuvre before discussing that aspect. In the development of product, the state is attempting by all sorts of means – from coproduction to investment to the tax-system – to pump greater financial means into the system.

Cinema Canada: *In seeking new partners, you seem particularly to favor investors, financiers, producers. If*

artists as well were equally favored, would you not find yourself with a different definition of cultural reality?

Marcel Masse: We're working right across the board, but I think that what is difficult in the cultural area is that, when you're speaking of one sector, there's always someone else who says: Yes, but what about the other sectors? And that's for the good reason that you can't speak of everything at once, and we were speaking of investment. At the same time the White Paper on copyright is before the Parliament and in part it touches on the aspect you raised.

We're trying to work on all aspects at once. I think that the least one can say is that we've managed to energize the department up to now. Practically every month we're opening another sector but always with the same elaboration of policy with the participation of the provinces, be it in telecommunications or in broadcasting; secondly with the maximum participation of the *milieux* concerned through consultation, and thirdly to ensure that the range of instruments available to the state responds to the need of the policies. Whatever area we look at, it's always with this tripartite approach.

Cinema Canada: *Speaking concretely, what are your immediate plans?*

Marcel Masse: Concretely speaking, we reviewed Telefilm last month; this month it's broadcasting. I announced the review; we'll be getting the Task Force underway next. Next month we'll begin looking at telecommunications. Everybody's working seven days a week.



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