

Fair representation next content challenge

Disabled new target

MONTREAL - The importance of enfranchisement of interest groups such as the disabled - that is, providing access to the broadcast media, portrayal, employment in the media - will soon surpass the issue of Canadian content in the Canadian television broadcast industry, says Bill Roberts, senior vice-president, television, of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB).

Roberts, who recently presented a CAB brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Disabled Persons, says a revised broadcast policy (expected this summer from the federal government) will close the 20-year-old debate on Canadian content and open a new avenue of discussion: interest group enfranchisement.

"For the last 20 years we have been preoccupied with Canadian content and how to handle it. Now we are fine-tuning it with specialty channels, questions of basic or non-basic tiers, capital costs. There are no foreseeable big leaps. So the real discussion in broadcast policy will be technology and enfranchisement," Roberts told *Cinema Canada*.

At this point in time, Roberts says, it is obvious that the Standing Committee on the Status of Disabled Persons, which concluded its hearings May 3, is considering the best interests of the disabled. A report of the committee's findings is expected in late June.

CAB was among several media (film and television-related) organizations to appear before the committee. Among these organizations were the National Film Board of Canada, the CBC and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

François Macerola, NFB Film Commissioner, told the committee that the NFB will aid the hearing-impaired with closed-captioned versioning of all NFB videos released for distribution in 1981-1989. This accounts for close to 200 titles.

Pierre Juneau, president of CBC, outlined policy for hiring disabled persons to positions in front of and behind the cameras. He explained that the CBC has an Employment Equity Co-ordinator to oversee the implementation of the Employment Equity Act which is concerned with women, aboriginal peoples, visible minorities and the disabled.

Juneau reminded the committee that disabled persons have acted in episodes of *Street Legal*, *Lance et Compte* and *Des dames de coeur*. "There was a time when such things would not have



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NEWS

FILM PROJECT ANNOUNCED FOR SASKATCHEWAN

The province of Saskatchewan and the National Film Board have announced plans for a three-year production training and film development project. The plan calls for a total commitment of \$600,000 from each of the two parties.

The NFB will be working directly with several independent Saskatchewan-based co-producers, screenwriters, directors, performers, musicians and production crews to create seven half-hour dramas. Saskwest Television Incc., (STV-Regina, Saskatoon), a member of the CanWest Broadcasting Group, has secured the Canadian broadcast rights to the first drama produced under this project.

Substantial training opportunities in all skill areas will be a priority. The proposed three-year project is designed to help stimulate increased independent film industry activity throughout the province.

NFB VIDEO DISPENSER PREMIERES

Markham, Ontario is the first site for a new experiment by the NFB. The Film Board has installed its first videocassette distributing machine in the Thornhill Community Centre in Markham. The Vi-

deomatic Teller will provide access to 196 NFB productions at a rental rate of \$2 each.

The Videomatic Teller was developed by the Technical Research and Development Division of the NFB in co-operation with Tercet Enterprises, Inc. of Markham and Continental Research of Toronto.

The video dispenser features state-of-the-art robotics and a unique "marquee" display system which allows all 196 cassette jackets to be viewed by the client (28 at a time). The Videomatic Teller is the only such machine currently being manufactured in Canada.

Aside from the normal processes of dispensing the cassette, the bilingual Teller invites users to recommend other NFB titles for the collection and provides updated reports on the most requested titles. As well, an LED (Light Emitting Diode) system allows the display of upcoming NFB events and new titles.

NFB ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF FRANCOPHONE FILM CONTEST

The winners have been announced in the National Film Board's Francophone First Feature Film Contest. The contest, which was announced by the NFB's French Program Branch in March, 1987

was organized in association with the Board's 50th Anniversary celebrations (1989).

In September '87, six projects were selected by a first jury awarding each finalist with a prize of \$109,000 and assistance in finalizing their scripts within six months.

The jury's first choice was **Sous les draps, les étoiles** by Jean-Pierre Gariépy. The second script chosen was Richard Roy's **La couleur du désir**. Gariépy's production will be shot during the NFB's fiscal year 1988-89 and Roy's 1989-90.

Among the other finalists, the jury also praised the quality of **Bonne fête, Jacques** co-scripted by Robert Cornelier and André Blanchard.

COMPETING IN BANFF

Four NFB films have been selected for competition at this year's Banff Television Festival to be held June 5-11 in Banff, Alberta. They are: Paul Cowan's **Under the Influence** one in the four-part series on highway safety entitled **At the Wheel**; **Foster Child** directed by Gil Cardinal; **IKWE**, directed and produced by Norma Bailey, which is one of the four films in the highly acclaimed series **Daughters of the Country** and **Sucre Noir** directed by Michel Régnier.

NFB Offices in Canada:

Headquarters - **Montreal** (514) 283-9253
 Pacific region - **Vancouver** (604) 666-3411
 Prairie region - **Winnipeg** (204) 949-2812
 Ontario region - **Toronto** (416) 973-0895

National Capital - **Ottawa** (613) 996-4259
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plus offices in most major cities

been thought possible, either on television or in real life. But as I said, society is changing. We now recognize disabled people as individuals with talents they are eager to use and abilities we can all benefit from," said Juneau.

The CBC runs a weekly average of 12 to 15 hours of closed-captioned entertainment and news programming. Trails for "real time" captioning on live sports events are scheduled and the coverage of the Seoul Olympics "will have at least some captioning," he said. The proposed second English-language news and information channel includes plans for captioning or signing similar to the signing used

in French and English on the national satellite channel for the daily *Question Period* from the House of Commons.

For his part, Roberts stated the CAB position that 15 per cent of the Canadian population or four million disabled persons is "an audience to whom our attention should be turned." CAB publications have promoted closed-captioning among CAB members whom, he says, already exceed the CBC by 25 per cent in approximate hours per year of new captioned programs not including captioned repeat episodes or captioned U.S. shows.

Public service announcements, often run at no

charge, are another way that many of the CAB members support the disabled.

The Global Television Network in Toronto (a CAB member) has been involved in annual muscular dystrophy campaigns and has shown over 125 news stories related to the disabled over the past two years.

Télévision Quatre Saisons in Montreal captions its *Le Grand Journal* and co-produces, with CFCF-TV, a marathon for the disabled.

Roberts commended Télé-Métropole and Radio-Québec for their support of the disabled.

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YOU CAN LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT, IF YOU'RE SHOOTING IN TORONTO

Continued from previous page

In its presentation to the committee, CAB recommended that a new voluntary industry standard be created to raise the issues of disabled person portrayals and employment. This standard, says CAB, should be based on the recommendations of a United Nations Seminar of June 1982 entitled Improving Communications about People with Disabilities.

CAB is a nonprofit association representing 86 per cent of Canada's private television licensees.

CAB calls for multicultural emphasis

TORONTO - Canadian television must reflect the country's changing social make-up, says a new report issued by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters.

CAB senior vice president Bill Roberts introduced the 30-page "Broadcaster's Guide to Canada's Cultural Mosaic" at the Forum on Multiculturalism in Broadcasting held here in May. The report comes in the wake of calls by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission for broadcasters to increase multicultural programming. Since 1985, stations seeking license renewals must show how their programs will reflect the interests of the communities they serve.

Citing statistics showing over nine million "ethnocultural" Canadians (those with origins other than British, French or Native Canadian), the report uses both economic and social factors to push for closer links between broadcasters and immigrant communities.

"Research indicates these new Canadians are young, well-educated and highly motivated to succeed; in short, the demographics sought after by advertisers who are targeting upscale consumers," the report says.

"The broadcaster who has attracted ethnic minority audiences with attractive programming and who has become identified with these groups by means of local ethnic community involvement and participation, will be in a strong position to access some of the millions of advertising and promotional dollars which are being moved into multicultural marketing."

The report calls for increased access to broadcasting for ethnocultural groups, both through employment and programming, by:

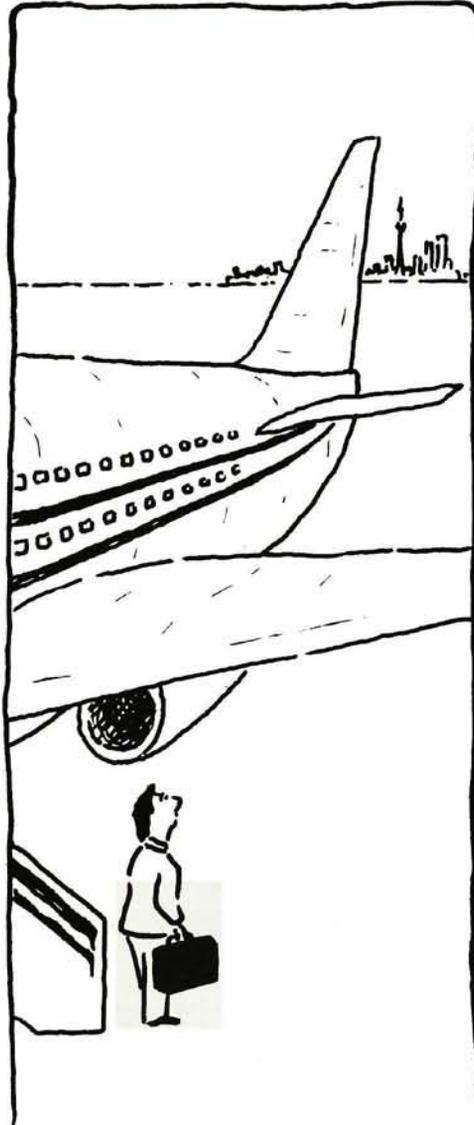
- "implementing employment equity programs to redress the underrepresentation of ethnic minorities in the broadcasting industry;

- "providing for the dissemination of creative works by ethnic minority persons;

- "providing for greater opportunity for access for ethnic minorities to the broadcasting system as program and service providers."

The report also outlines the categories set up by the CRTC to describe ethnocultural programming, based on language and cultural content. Broadcasters are eligible for Canadian content reductions for this sort of programming.

Don't worry about bringing it with you. Toronto is the third-largest film and video production centre in North America. That means Toronto has everything a producer needs or requires — crews, technicians, actors, studios, labs, equipment, supplies, and accommodations — all available at costs that will make your trip worthwhile.



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Joint-ventured features in QC formula

MONTREAL - The second series of five feature films in a 10-feature package for Radio-Québec has received \$525,000 from the Société générale des industries culturelles Québec (SOGIC), the Quebec film funding agency.

This film package of 10 movies-of-the-week is

being produced by four independent Quebec-based companies, known as Les Producteurs TV-Films Associés, in cooperation with the National Film Board.

Eight of the films are being coproduced with the NFB, each member company of Les Producteurs TV-Films Associés being responsible for two. The remaining two films will be completely financed and produced by the Board.

The second series of five films includes *Bye Bye Love* directed by Claude Fournier for Productions du Verseau. *Le Chemin de Damas* directed by George Mihalka for Cinéma Plus Productions.

Gauguin directed by Jean-Claude Labrecque for Les Films Vision 4. *Julie* directed by Yves Dion for the NFB. *Richard Coeur de nylon* directed by Michel Poulette for Les Productions Vidéofilms.

Budgeted at \$846,000, each of the feature films is being shot in Montreal on an 18-day schedule. Production began in November 1987. The first five films are already in post-production. The first series is expected to be ready for broadcast by September while the second series will be in post-production by January.

Radio-Québec has invested \$105,000 in each film. Other participants include the SOGIQ and Telefilm Canada.