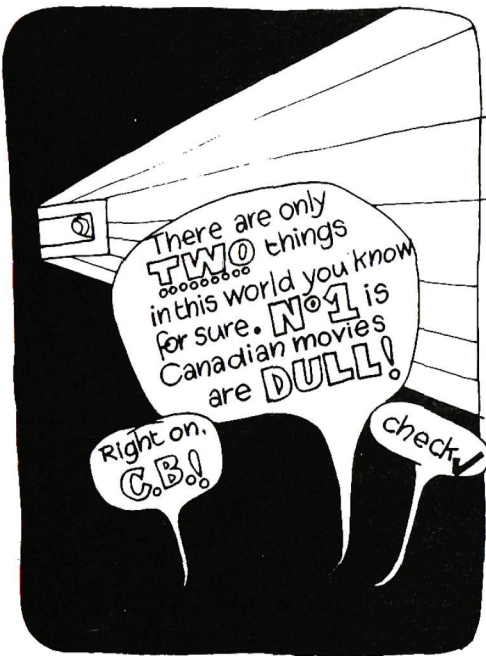


SPECIAL EVENTS

THE C.B.C. LOOKS AT OUR HOME MOVIES



On March 17, on the CBC TV network, you'll see the first really publicly exposed, in-depth look at filmmaking in Canada, and especially feature filmmaking, ever presented in the media. The CBC is presenting the program in its Current Affairs series *The Great Canadian Culture Hunt*. This one's called "Home Movies", a term of derision used by editorial savants far and wide, but here, as producer Bob Ennis points out, it's anything but a derogatory label. For he and his crew have found that the emphasis is equal: Canadians love movies, and they need movies, and will accept them, made here at home.

"We started out with the feeling that Canadian culture is marginal and needs something to support it. Film is so important today, but our film culture is so small, and there's no reflection of the past. My motivation at the time was to find out why we don't have it and to discover how to get it."

Ennis, under Current Affairs head Peter Herndorf, gathered researchers

John Hudecki and Kirwan Cox, writer Brian McKeown, and editor Bernard Beaton, together to join the quest. Gordon Pinsent will be narrator. They went to government people such as Hugh Faulkner, filmmakers such as Ted Kotcheff, and the man in the street, not to mention industry figures such as George Destounis. As they researched and interviewed, Ennis says, the understanding came.

"Our approach was emotional, not political. And we realized that a basic premise is that Canadians are great moviegoers. Hollywood has worldwide influence but Canada is the only country without measures to protect against that influence, probably because we're so culturally close we're part of Hollywood. A producer or director here is not really a Canadian, he's just another independent American filmmaker, only the odds are greater against him. Ted Kotcheff makes that perfectly clear.

"We do have the filmmakers. And we feel that they have a right to be seen, to be seen and to be bad and

to improve. We have to make it important to the people out there, by appealing to Canadianism, to say that it's important to have a cultural identity. That's what this program is trying to do."

"We're also avoiding the downer line," adds Hudecki, "because we don't see it that way. Our filmmakers are still pioneers, and they're resilient. There's energy and there's a community."

Ennis continues, "What we have now is a marginal culture. To have culture we have to take steps. We have to say, 'Look where we're failing, look at history and at our response.' We don't have a dramatic tradition or a feature tradition. We accepted the imports because we had no alternatives at home and because it was so easy. But we're still lying down and letting it happen.

"Canadians have no concept of themselves as genres, for example as private eyes. And we're part of the American dream — stars, going out to movies. But we have achieved something: the documentary tradition made a name despite all hardships. And the dramatic features that we've made don't have to be apologized for. We need a consciousness and a maturity, and we have to get it here. And we still haven't had a watershed film, a film that breeds more and gives momentum as well as getting it."

They found that conclusions came forward, beginning with the fact that Canada needs a film industry. Now however, film consumers are part of the system, because it's a foreign system. And filmmakers are outside the system. "If we are to have an industry, it's clearly in the lap of government, and it means going beyond subsidizing production. It means getting into distribution and exhibition. The only way to crack it is through quota and levy. For the sake of the country, not only the filmmakers.

"We think the program, as it is intended for the general public and not the industry itself, will be a surprise to filmmakers — and a shock to the public.

"We know that it's an important document."

Stephen Chesley