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THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA: ITS
TASK OF COMMUNICATION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of The Ohio State University

by

Clifford Rodney James, B.S., M.A.

*****

The Ohio State University
1968

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INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study was to make an analysis of the National Film Board of Canada in terms of both its educational and artistic achievements - to answer the questions of:

(1) How good is the film board idea? Does it fulfill the objectives set up by John Grierson, the first Commissioner, and reconfirmed by the Board members twenty-five years later? These objectives are the production and distribution of films in the national interest and the fostering of an understanding of Canada at home and abroad.

(2) Assuming that NFB has been successful in serving the cause of democratic education, as well as advancing the art of the film and doing both at a minimal cost, how did it accomplish this task? Does the secret of its success lie in its formal structure, administration, personnel, production methods; or is it perhaps in a national predisposition to this form of governmental education? The answer, as was expected, lies in a combination of these variables.

Scope of the Study

This study was originally limited to an analysis of the National Film Board of Canada and the work done by that organization. However, in order
to make a meaningful assessment of the Board's achievements, a limited amount of research was done on several related organizations in Australia, New Zealand, Ghana, Nigeria, Great Britain, and the United States. This was necessary to make judgments regarding National Film Board of Canada's success from a comparative point of view and to determine what problems, if any, were common to all such operations. This knowledge thus made it possible to formulate several statements to explain the reasons for the success or failure of the film-board type of government production unit, which can be applied on a broader basis than as an assessment of the National Film Board of Canada as a unique organization.

Objectives to be Tested

1. There is a relationship between the success of a film board in a particular country and the formal structure of that film board, i.e., its position in the overall governmental structure, its administration, its production and distribution methods and its personnel.

2. There is a relationship between the success of a film board in a particular country and that country's national predisposition to foster this form of government film production, i.e., the type of government, attitude and strength of the existing commercial film industry and the attitude of the public toward this form of governmental information dissemination.

3. The National Film Board of Canada has unique features that can be singled out in its formal structure and in the national predisposition of Canada that are integral to its success as a producer of films of artistic and educational merit.
Method

This study involved a variety of techniques in the gathering of information.

1. First, there was a review of literature. This included both writings produced by the NFB itself, as well as articles from other sources that dealt with the Board and its films. The latter served as a partial guide to standards of criticism of NFB films and often as an indication of public, governmental and film industry attitudes toward the Board.

2. Second, with this information in hand, there was a critical analysis of NFB films themselves. This included (a) what did they try to do? (b) did they succeed artistically and, in the case of sponsored films, in pleasing the sponsor? and (c) did they meet with public acceptance?

3. Third, to gain deeper insight into the situation, a carefully formulated interview schedule was used with members of the Film Board, including both administrators as well as the production and distribution staff.

Results Obtained

With regard to the first objective it was found that there is a relationship between the success of a film board and the formal structure of that board. The following are the most important features.

1. First, with regard to the place of a film board in the government structure, strong legislation is a key factor -
a government act that gives the board a definite job to do and a definite source of income; an act that gives the board control of its own administrative affairs and frees it from competition with and/or interference from other government and commercial organizations.

2. Second, an administration that actively works to encourage quality work by seeking talented personnel.

3. Third, a production program that gives the film-maker creative freedom.

4. Fourth, a system of film distribution that insures the delivery of the films produced to their intended audience.

National predisposition would also seem to be of importance. Nevertheless, this is almost impossible to measure since it is a rather vague term and contains a great number of variables - many more than are mentioned as objectives to be tested. However, those that are mentioned do seem to be of importance.

1. First, the type of government is most important. Film boards as autonomous, nonpartisan agencies exist only in social democracies. In nations with nondemocratic forms of government the film board is a direct propaganda agent of the state.

2. Second, the strength of the commercial film industry is the most important factor since its attitudes are seldom very favorable towards government film production. A strong commercial industry is usually successful in curtailing an attempt by the government to create a film board.
3. Third, public attitude is important, but the role it plays is dependent on a great many variables. The important factor is that public opinion is aroused. This occurs when there is an issue, e.g., the question of creating a film board or the question of dissolving a film board already in existence.

The National Film Board of Canada was found to have unique features that could be singled out from the above listed findings. These features were found to be responsible for its success.

Highlights and Significance of Findings

Perhaps the most important aspect of this study was the shift in emphasis of what was considered to be the most important quality of The National Film Board of Canada. At the outset of the study, the most important quality of NFB of Canada was felt to be "survival ability."

During the pre World War II era, government film units were set up by the United States, Great Britain, and Canada to produce film in the national interest. The units in the United States and England succumbed to a combination of political and commercial pressures. The Canadian National Film Board, while it underwent a severe political crisis in 1950, emerged from the experience in a stronger political position than it had held before.

This in itself is a significant achievement, but is second in importance to the influence exerted by The National Film Board on government film production in the free world today. Following the war, a large number of government film units were created and most of these exist today. Many of them, e.g., Australia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa and
Israel, were created on the model of NFB of Canada. Personnel from these countries were sent to Canada to study methods of The National Film Board; also NFB personnel worked in the various countries aiding them in establishing film units.

Recommendations for Further Action

The value of the film board type of government information service is, at last, being recognized and an increasing number of governments are considering the creation of this kind of agency. While this study of The National Film Board of Canada is a worthwhile enterprise, the most important project would be to make a comparative study of a number of similar operations to determine what strengths, weaknesses and problems they have in common. This has been done in this study, but only to a limited extent and as a "second thought" deviation from the original plan. Such a project as the one proposed would undoubtedly provide a more reliable and clearly defined set of criteria to explain the reasons for the success or failure of a planned film board than would the criteria based on the study of a single institution.
CHAPTER I

THE INFORMATION FILM IN CANADA 1896-1939

Motion pictures first appeared on Canadian screens in 1896, only a year after similar public exhibitions in the United States and France. While a discrepancy of one year may seem of little importance in a historical sense, the conditions and events that preceded these showings were vastly different and shaped the course of production and distribution in these countries to this day. While Canadian inventors may have been working on a motion-picture machine, they never succeeded in producing such a device. Experimentation and development of the motion picture was almost exclusively the privilege of larger, richer nations - Great Britain, France and the United States.

Thomas Edison and his chief engineer, W. K. L. Dickson, had been working since 1886 to perfect a practical motion picture system. The earliest attempts to combine the motion picture with a cylinder phonograph were later abandoned in favor of a machine utilizing a long flexible strip of celluloid. In 1889 Dickson succeeded in developing a combination camera and projector which could be synchronized with a phonograph. Although successfully demonstrated in the laboratory, the first American showing of a film for the public was not until September of 1895 and that by rival inventors - C. Francis Jenkins and Thomas Armet. Edison had concentrated his efforts on the Kinetoscope - a peep-show movie where a single viewer squinted through an eyepiece at a tiny image on the film.
In England Robert W. Paul built a machine similar to the one designed by Jenkins and Armet and gave a public demonstration in 1896. The most successful European exploitation of the motion picture, however, was by the Lumiere Brothers in Lyon. Edison had failed to take out foreign patents on his designs and the field was wide open to anyone who wished to duplicate or modify his equipment. The Lumieres built a machine that was small, light and well-made. It was also portable and inexpensive. While keeping some of the basic features of the Edison equipment, it was much more practical from a commercial standpoint. A public demonstration was first given in March of 1895. It was this machine - the Cinematographe - that brought motion pictures to Canada. Auguste Guay and André Vermette purchased one of the projectors and gave the first public showings in Montreal in 1896.

In the following decade Edison and his competitors waged a bitter and costly patent war over cameras and projection equipment. There was also cut-throat competition among distributors and producers of films. In the United States, films could be covered by copyright laws only as still photographs. American producers rushed to place contact prints of their films, made on paper rolls, in the Library of Congress. In Europe laws varied from country to country and film piracy was rampant. In spite of the various restraints, illegally duplicated motion pictures circulated freely on both sides of the Atlantic. Film production was a lucrative but hazardous business. An enterprising film-maker could soon find his original materials being pirated by competitors or himself being sued for patent infringement if he built his own equipment. Either way, the result would be involvement in an expensive legal battle.
Few Canadians dared to enter this wolf pit, and those who did went on tiptoe. Guay and Vermette limited themselves to the exhibition of films. Throughout the 1890's they, along with similar entrepreneurs, set up shows in storerooms, tents and church halls. Films were shown at the 1896 Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto, but there was little Canadian content. In February, 1900, the Canadian Patriotic Fund held showings of Boer War films to raise money. This program, in Toronto's Massey Hall, was the first large-scale showing in Canada.

There was a demand for Canadian material, but this was met almost exclusively by American producers. Edison sent in camera crews to photograph the scenery, Niagara Falls and the Canadian Rocky Mountains being favorite subjects. Films still exist of the Duke and Duchess of York on a 1901 visit to the falls and parts of Quebec. There were also films of less momentous events, such as children at play, hockey games, and of Tommy Burns, the only Canadian world heavyweight boxing champion, winning his title in 1906. Fictional subjects were not neglected either. Two dramatic films with Canadian themes are known to exist. Acadian Elopement (1904) produced by George Kleine, was a two-reel drama of young lovers fleeing irate parents; Crossing the Border (1904), another two-reeler, produced by Edison, was probably the first of the Mountie epics. It is possible, though, that these films could have been made south of the border with some scenes taken from footage shot in Canada. Most of the films of this era were "scenics" produced by Edison, Albert Smith of Vitagraph and George Kleine. Kleine's General Film Company made a travelog series under the title "Wonders of Canada." In the period of 1895-1913 approximately
6000 films were placed in the Library of Congress. Of these, 100 were Canadian subjects. How many were actually made by Canadians is anybody's guess, but the number would certainly not exceed more than a few dozen.

The first films to be made with Canadian capital were produced by American and British personnel. In 1898 the Massey Harris Company, a manufacturer of farm implements, secured the services of Edison to make a promotional film showing the company's new binder in operation on Ontario farms. It was not until 1900, however, that any large-scale productions were attempted. The first of these was by the Canadian Pacific Railway. It was to be a group of one-reel films depicting the good life in Canada, and would be aimed at encouraging emigration from Great Britain. Arrangements were made with an American promoter, Charles Urban, a man with close ties to the British Bioscope Company. Urban went to Guy Bradford - Bioscope's owner - and Bradford, along with Joe Rosenthal and Clifford Denham, completed the production in 1903. Denham described the project as follows:

In the first place Guy Bradford was my brother-in-law and we came to Canada at the instigation of the C.P.R. (Canadian Pacific Railway) around 1900 to take a series of pictures which were used to stimulate emigration from Great Britain to Canada. There were three of us in the party, Guy Bradford, myself and a man named J. Rosenthal, who was an expert photographer. On our arrival in Canada we reported to a Mr. Kerr in Montreal, who was then General Passenger Agent for the C.P.R. and with the help of Mr. George Ham and a Mr. Armstrong, who I believe was Colonization Agent for the Company, we mapped out a program of what we thought would stimulate emigration from other countries to Canada. These included many scenic shots of the country which the railway road passed through. The principal ones being a trip through the Rocky Mountains, and scenes around Banff, a trip through the Kicking Horse Canyon and others too numerous to mention. In addition to these subjects we photographed Harvesting a 160-Acre Field, Lumber and Milling Logs, Salmon Industry, Cattle Industry and
Manufacturing Plants in all cities from coast to coast. The railroad scenes were taken from a flat car pushed by an engine and the others were usually picked by Tourist Bureaus, etc., as we visited different cities in turn.

It took about two years to finish up this work as we could only operate in the summer and we had definite instructions from the C.P.R. not to take any winter scenes under any conditions, as they wanted to dispel from the Englishman's mind that Canada was a land of Ice and Snow.

These films were then shown in England in Corn Exchanges, Town Halls and Theatres, if available, and all through Ireland, Scotland and Wales, always with a fully qualified lecturer in attendance at all performances. Results from the emigration standpoint were more than successful, according to reports we received from the C.P.R. These films were exhibited under the title "Living Canada."

In talking the matter over with Guy afterwards, we decided that there should be quite a successful exhibition field for us in this country, as of course during our trip across from coast to coast we had taken pictures of every city of any size.

Our first engagement was the Windsor Hall, connected with the Windsor Hotel in Montreal. It was a full-two-and-a-half hour show and our prices were $1.00 and $1.50 and we stayed there for six weeks and did capacity business. We then moved to Massey Hall, Toronto, . . .

Following our engagement of two weeks at Massey Hall we then played principal cities and towns in Ontario, and gradually made our way to the Coast, making four complete trips in all, as we were able to give a complete change of program both coming and going.

The reason Bradford was commissioned to take the series of pictures was because at that time he was the biggest exhibitor of motion pictures in England and was the owner of the London Bioscope Company which used to supply practically all of the Music Halls with twelve or fifteen-minute reels as part of their program. As this part of his exhibition field was well organized, he decided to spend considerable of his time in Canada with the idea of opening up a new field along the lines he had already started in.

It was not until after 1900 that films which could be definitely established as being made by a Canadian appeared. Most of these were the work of one of Canada's first visionaries of motion pictures - Ernest Ouimet. Born in 1877, Ouimet began his career in the entertainment world by working as an electrician and later as a lighting man at Montreal's National Theatre. His first experiences with film were in 1902 when he attended Sunday showings at Montreal's Schoen Park. He made the acquaintance of the projectionist, an American who brought in films each week. In 1903 the customs authorities refused to pass the films brought in by the projectionist, stating that they had to be sent in advance. For the sake of expediency, Ouimet was given the job of projectionist.

Two years later he bought two Edison projectors and went into business on his own. His first job was showing publicity films in local stores. He also held outdoor showings at a small park in Viauville. In 1905 Ouimet received a call to the National Monument where a showing had been interrupted by a broken projector. Ouimet responded and with his assistance the showing was completed. The sight of the large crowd made a great impression on him, and he decided that the big money was to be made in theatrical showings and not as an itinerant projectionist.

For fifty dollars he rented an ancient music hall - La Salle Poire, located at the corner of Sainte Catherine and Montcalm. Between boxing matches and cockfights he showed films. In a week he had grossed $120. In a matter of months he was using the hall exclusively for films and showing to crowds in excess of 600. This could be considered quite a success, since the seating capacity was 450. The theater was dubbed
"Ouimetoscope" and featured singers during the changing of reels. Ouimet offered special rates to students and free entry to teachers. The latter came almost exclusively from various religious orders and added an air of respect which, at the time, was invaluable.

The program consisted of about twenty films per week which Ouimet bought or rented and later rented out again to theaters in Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. The films themselves were imported mainly from France and the United States. They consisted of the usual fare of the day - comedies, melodramas, news clips and travelogs. In 1906 the Ouimetoscope gave the first North American showing of Pathé films. During Easter week Ouimet presented The Passion. Billed as a "super production," the fifteen-minute German film was seen by an audience of 5000 in a single week.

By that time there were seven theaters in Montreal, and Ouimet was beginning to feel the pressure of the competition. A one-time employee of Ouimet attempted to buy the Salle Poiré. Ouimet, however, was given an option to buy first at a price of $100,000. The location was an excellent one - so good that Ouimet's newest competitor opened a theater a few blocks away called the "Nationoscope." Ouimet countered by pulling down the Salle Poiré and the neighboring Hotel Klondike and building the first movie palace in North America. It was completed in 1907. Ouimet brought an aura of respect to the motion picture that had heretofore been reserved for the theater. The new Ouimetoscope, built at a cost of $50,000, featured 1200 arm-chair seats, and house lights that could be slowly dimmed. The foyer was elaborately decorated with Tiffany-esque murals representing the performing arts.
Shortly after the opening Ouimet presented the first sound films seen in Canada. Imported from New York, the first film - *A Musical Conversation* - showed a man, who after a brief spoken introduction, played a violin and then a cornet. The audience's amazement was short-lived for they soon noticed a small phonograph sitting near the screen. This move was a shock to the owner of the Nationoscope who had been advertising for a month that his theater was going to have talking films.

The rivalry continued as both men improved their equipment at considerable expense and brought in films from the United States and France. The talkies of this era were far from successful and were soon abandoned. Both the Edison and Gaumont systems required the synchronization of a disc or cylinder record with a projector which was located some distance away. The records were easily broken, often mixed up or improperly cued. At best, the results were far from satisfactory. The 78 r.p.m. records limited the film to no more than five minutes. The lack of electrical amplification gave the sound a muffled quality. It was not until the 1930's that sound was again considered in Canada. By that time it had grown in status from an experimental luxury to an absolute necessity.

By the end of 1907 Ouimet's theater had cost him more than $150,000. His troubles, however, were not over. Most cinemas were remaining open on Sunday, since this was one of the most lucrative days. The legal status of movie theaters was at the time vague. The church, however, was convinced that they came under the laws governing legitimate theaters and should be closed. Amusement parks could remain open - even those that showed films. Ouimet urged that all cinemas should be under a single law. The church, led by Monseigneur Bruschési, threatened those exhibitors who remained open with excommunication. The cinema owners decided
to put the law to a test, and urged that Ouimet take the matter to the courts. Expenses of the case were to be shared. Ouimet agreed and the legal battle continued for six years. During that time a number of theaters changed hands and as a result Ouimet was able to recover only about a fifth of the $10,000 in court costs. He did, however, succeed in gaining Sunday showings for Quebec. It is interesting to note that they are still prohibited in parts of Canada.

In spite of these heavy costs, Ouimet continued to keep his theater operating on a paying basis. In 1908 he purchased a motion picture camera and began making his own films. These were almost exclusively topical subjects. They included reports on such items as the celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of Quebec, the fire that destroyed part of the city of Trois-Rivières, and the Eucharistic Congress of 1910. In 1915 Ouimet left the production field completely. He turned over the job of managing the Ouimetoscope to a partner, opened the Specialty Film Import Company and became the North American distributor of Pathé Films.  

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2 This abridgment was translated from Michel Patenaude, Hommage à M. L. Ernest Ouimet.

While Ouimet did present what can be considered the first Canadian newsreels, he was primarily an innovator in the distribution field. He undoubtedly sold or rented the films he produced to other exhibitors, but there was evidently not enough profit in this for him (or any other theater owner for that matter) to venture into major production. Although the number of theaters in Montreal had grown to twenty by 1914, the demand for film was met by foreign producers.
A handful of independent producers did make films in the early part of this century. Most remain unknown and their films have long since disappeared. Two names that stand out, H. B. Scott and a Toronto man - James (first name unknown) do so simply because some of their material still exists. Both men were free-lance cinematographers working out of Toronto and selling their films to newsreel companies in the United States, Great Britain and France and possibly to local exhibitors. Scott can be credited with taking the earliest known films made by a Canadian. These consisted of some remarkable pictures of the Toronto fire of 1904. Other examples of his work have yet to be uncovered and identified.

Many of the early films of Toronto and its environs were made by James. According to Peter Morris of the Canadian Film Institute, James was originally a still photographer who purchased a set of ciné equipment and filmed news events between 1914 and 1916, although some estimates place his active period between 1909 to 1919. Existing material includes scenes of aquatic sports on Toronto Island, the making of Patterson chocolates, Camp Petawawa, military scenes, Navy recruiting during the First World War and an Orangeman's parade. The unconfirmed, though probably true, story is that he attempted to form his own newsreel company and was boycotted out of existence by American distributors. He returned to still camera work, making occasional contributions to Pathé International.

A third cinematographer - the first to film to any great extent in Quebec - was Maurice Tanguy. His films show World War One recruiting and footage of the Quebec Bridge collapse. Unlike James and Scott he produced scenic material (evidently for travelogs) although no completed films exist.
After the First World War there was a short news film boom. In every large community at least one person with a camera could be found filming parades, openings, horse, cat and dog shows, hoping to sell the footage abroad. News "events" were also created. Vignettes, such as boxing on ice skates and wrestling in the snow, were promoted as "scenes of life in the wilds of Canada." The boom ended when the market was cornered by Associated Screen News in 1920.

Canadian motion picture exhibitors and, one assumes, their audiences wanted the new and the exotic. This kind of material came from the United States, France and Great Britain, where production was well established. Canadian exhibitors were not so willing to pay for Canadian films as long as foreign studios were turning out great numbers of dramatic films with large casts and comparatively lavish sets. These films had already proved their worth at box offices in New York, Paris and London.

Numerically speaking, Canada was and still is a small country. Few wanted to take the financial risk of plunging into a new industry which was well developed in the United States and Europe. In the first two decades of the century, the only spot left for the Canadian producer was the provincial news film. Even the travelog had been usurped to a degree by the British and Americans. Canadian business, which could have added support to film-makers, chose to play it safe and have their screen image fashioned by British and American hands. Working within the news film genre, supplying material to Canadian as well as foreign distributors, the Canadian film-makers developed their art an inch at a time. In 1919 the Prince of Wales made a tour of Canada and the United States. An eight-reel compilation of the visit was put together by Charles Urban and released
in Britain and Canada. On the strength of the returns, interests identified with the Canadian Pacific Railway invested a quarter of a million dollars into a company known as Associated Screen News. In 1920 the


company established a branch in Montreal and began producing news film. The Associated Screen News of the United States soon became insolvent. The Canadian organization, however, continued as Associated Screen News of Canada Ltd.

Located in Montreal, A.S.N. was the first successful film production company in Canada. It began with three men under the leadership of B. E. Norrish. Norrish, who had previously been in charge of the film unit set up by the Department of Trade and Commerce, expanded the organization throughout the 1930's and 40's. A.S.N. began as a news-gathering agency, sending out cameramen to cover news events and sending the news stories to the parent company in New York. When the latter failed, the material was sold to a number of American and British newsreel companies. In this sense, A.S.N. differed little in its operation from such independents as Scott and James. The important fact was that A.S.N. was a company, owned in part (fifty percent) by the Canadian Pacific Railway. Legal battles could be fought, if necessary, and copyright violators sued. Unlike the early independents, A.S.N. had the advantage of the tighter copyright laws that came into effect after 1910.

A.S.N. did not produce a newsreel series, but remained a "news-gathering" agency sending material abroad. Its first original productions
appeared in the mid-1920's when the company ventured into commercial film production. Most of the films were "scenics" - travel and promotional films for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Later, films were made for industrial sponsors. The first large production was a seven-reel promotional film for the T. Eton Company made in 1927 - a time when films were relatively untried in public relations work in either Canada or the United States.

In 1931 a production department was set up to create a series of theatrical sound films. All material made before this time had been silent. In 1932 the first of the "Canadian Cameo" shorts was released. The series was produced by Gordon Sparling who also wrote and directed many of the films. They were one reel in length and were released at the rate of one every six weeks. Briefly they could be described as a hodgepodge of Canadiana in a variety of styles.

Sparling's *Rhapsody in Two Languages* (1934) was an impressionistic rendering of a day in Montreal. Its style was derived directly from the work of Alberto Cavalcanti and Walter Ruttmann, particularly the latter's *Berlin, the Symphony of a Great City* (1927). *Rhapsody* was an inferior copy of the Rutmann film, substituting slapstick humor for the former's incisive social comment. Rutmann worked closely with the composer, Edmund Meisel, who had written the score for *Potemkin*. Meisel worked to create a score synchronized to Rutmann's "Visual Symphony." The role of this music, he felt, would strengthen the formal tendency in the editing. 4 This was

4Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler*, p. 183.
never realized in a completely successful manner since the music was played by an orchestra accompanying the film - this being in the pre-sound-on-film era. Sparling did have synchronous sound and a specially composed musical score, believed to be the first for a Canadian film. This was created by Howard Fogg, composer and musical director of A.S.N. The music was thematic, thickly orchestrated and vigorously played by a medium-sized orchestra in what must have been a rather small room. In spite of the artistic limitations of both picture and music, they did work together and the score added considerably to the impact of what would have otherwise been a rather bland film. Thus Sparling and Fogg achieved in a small way what Ruttmann and Meisel had attempted seven years previously. The same kind of symphonic treatment was used in Sparling's The Thousand Days (1942), another film in the series which dramatized the first three years of the Second World War. Other items in the "Cameo" Series were concerned with topical subjects, such as touring Royalty and an occasional straight newsreel. There were also short comic bits à la Pete Smith, screen musical numbers, and short news feature stories on sports and bathing beauties.

Two feature films were produced for the Shell Oil Company, That Shell Service (1934) and House In Order (1936). The latter used a dramatic format to give the product a soft sell. The hero of the film runs a Shell station and is struggling to put his son through college. As could be expected, hard work and cheerfulness pay off in a happy ending.

In 1936, A.S.N. moved into a new building on Western Avenue in Montreal. This was the first modern, fully-equipped motion picture plant in the country and maintained this position until the National Film Board
improved its present plant after the Second World War. The half-million dollar structure included a large sound stage, recording theater, editing rooms, carpentry shop and a modern laboratory. In these facilities A.S.N. printed release prints for nearly all of the American and British films shown in Canada, in addition to its own material and that of a number of the Canadian feature film producers. Both the sound and lab facilities were frequently used by the Motion Picture Bureau and later by the National Film Board.

By the end of the 1930's A.S.N. had newsreel crews stationed across Canada, preparing news footage for all British and American companies. The "Canadian Cameo" series had by that time secured world-wide distribution. Production peaked during the war. By that time the staff numbered between 150 and 200 and the company was doing a large amount of technical work for the National Film Board and also producing complete films, through NFB, for the government.

The period following the war was a difficult one for the country's film workers in the commercial field. In discussing the fate of A.S.N., Gordon Sparling described the years following the war as:

...a slow decline caused by many things; such as the loss of experienced and talented staff; the postwar growth of competition; but chiefly 'hardening of the arteries.' In 1955 Associated Screen News Ltd. was sold and the new owners who were more interested in the real estate pulled out of production. Then in 1957 the company was again sold, this time to American interests (Duart Labs) who renamed it Associated Screen Industries. A.S.I. operates successfully today as a lab, with some recording services.5

Although the entry of the A.S.N. into the news film market closed the door on this type of free-lance production, the independent cinematographer found that a living could be made by producing complete films. Private companies, as well as various Federal and Provincial Government agencies, were recognizing the educational and propagandistic value of the film.

One of the earliest producers of such commercial films was Blaine Irish who, along with Clifford Sifton and Irwin Proctor, set up the Canadian Aero Film Company in 1918. This three-man operation was located in Toronto on King Street near Spadina Avenue. In 1919 the name was changed to Filmcraft Industries and in the following year the unit moved into a larger building on Queen Street. The staff was enlarged to ten and a laboratory was built. One of those who joined the staff was Roy Tash who took over the job of chief cameraman, as well as that of running the new lab.

In 1922 Filmcraft produced its own series of travelogs - "Camera Classics" - which received good distribution throughout the Province. Promotional travel films were also produced for the Ontario Government Picture Bureau. Theatrical trailers and industrial films were also made. A seven-reel feature film - Satan's Paradise (1920) - was the largest production. The story centered around the adventures of two professional mystics. Filmcraft came to an end in 1924 with a disastrous fire that destroyed the entire plant.  

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It was in the late 1920's and into the 1930's that a new breed of independent producer came into being. They were the film-makers for various government agencies, creating films that probed beneath the scenic to examine the Canadian landscape with the eye of the scientist and later the social reformer.

William Oliver from Calgary, in addition to producing scenics for the National Parks Branch, made two films - Beaver Family and Beaver People - studies of wildlife which pointed to the values of conservation. Both of these were reedited and given sound tracks to appear in A.S.N.'s "Canadian Cameo" series as Gray Owl's Little Brother and Gray Owl's Strange Guests.

In Quebec, the opening of the Abitibi region was chronicled in the work of L'Abbé Maurice Proulx. The clearing of the forests by the pioneers of the 1930's was reported in three films - Défrichement, Brulage des Abatis and Motenise - produced for Service de Ciné Photography. As a tool of the church, the film was used in the study of Indian tribal dances and ceremonies in the mission films of Proulx and in the ethnographic films of Pere Lafleur. Straight reportage and re-enactment provided records of cultural activities that were soon to disappear.

A more sophisticated style of interpretive film was being made by other men - Leslie Thatcher in Toronto and F. R. Crawley in Ottawa. Working with a sixteen millimeter camera, Thatcher began making films in the late 1920's. His first recognition came with Mighty Niagara (1933) which won a silver medal in the amateur class in the annual competition sponsored by the American Society of Cinematographers.

A much more ambitious effort was Another Day (1934) - an impressionistic look at Toronto. The day is Saturday - the dividing line between
work and leisure. Beginning in the morning filled with the work of the
city, the film moves through a montage of activities until noon. Fac-
tories and offices close and the day of rest begins. Another Day won
several awards in the United States and was entered in the Barcelona film
festival. Returning to a more standard style, Thatcher's Fishers of
Grande Anse (1935) was a careful study in composition - a slow, beauti-
fully constructed series of images of the boats of the Saint Lawrence
fishing banks.

Beginning his career in much the same manner as Leslie Thatcher,
F. R. Crawley took a camera on his honeymoon and made L'Ile d' Orle"as
(1938). In this short film he captured the pattern of life, permeated
with old-world tradition, on this historic island in the Saint Lawrence.
In his later films - Portage (1942) and History of Power in Canada - a
sense of the dramatic pattern of the social and industrial life of the
nation began to emerge.

Films with a strong sense of social purpose that reflected the aims
of the soon-to-be-established National Film Board were being produced in
the late 1930's by Evelyn Spice and Lawrence Cherry. Spice was later to
join John Grierson's Government Post Office unit in England and both Spice
and Cherry were recruited into the ranks of the NFB. Two films for the
Saskatchewan Wheat Pool - New Horizons and By Their Own Strength - by
Spice and Cherry built a firm case against the financial irregularities
in the wheat farming economy of the Province and played an important role
in the successful movement to establish co-operative marketing systems in
the prairies.
It is important to note that the production of films with this sense of social consciousness was being made before the advent of the National Film Board and outside of the existing Federal and Provincial film units. Agricultural, ethnographic and medical films, such as Thatcher's *Spinal Anaesthesia*, Spice and Cherry's *That They May Live* (cancer research), and Crawley's *The Mental Health of Children* set a standard of quality and concern for the Canadian documentary that was to become identified with the National Film Board.

Provincial interest in the motion picture reached a climax in Saskatchewan and Ontario in the 1920's. While other Provinces sponsored the occasional film, both of these established regular production and distribution. The focus of the Saskatchewan operation was on agricultural subjects, all of which were produced under the auspices of the Provincial Department of Agriculture by a unit known as Regina Films. The earliest existing films date from 1923, the latest from about 1929. All of the films dealt with rural-agricultural themes and bore such titles as *Grading of Farm Cattle*, *Better Stallions on the Farm* and *Tree Planting and Growing*.

Some of the films were of a scientific nature showing such phenomena as the development of the embryo of a chicken; others described and promoted various programs, such as a plan for hot lunches for rural schools. One of the most interesting projects aimed at Italians, Ukrainians, Germans and other nationalities moving into the region, was a group of six films on the integration of these immigrants into the rural society. The films encouraged the recent immigrant to seek out communities of his own people and thus avoid the loneliness and frustrations of "culture shock."
Distribution of the Saskatchewan films was through regional representatives working out of the Department of Agriculture who took them through the Province showing them in churches and grange halls in much the same manner as did the National Film Board more than a dozen years later. Production was discontinued about 1929. The depression and the coming of sound film made the program economically unfeasible.

On a much larger scale was the Ontario Government Picture Bureau. Ontario began sponsoring films as early as 1919 for the purpose of luring tourists to the Province. In 1923 the Government purchased the Adanac Studios - a defunct feature-film company - in Trenton, Ontario. A film unit headed by George E. Patton was established and operated under direct Government control. Production and distribution activities were pushed forward at a rapid rate. By the mid-1920's the Ontario operation had a staff of twenty and an output that rivaled the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau in Ottawa.

The films covered a variety of subjects and styles. There were the ubiquitous scenics, but also a number of educational and community films. A series was produced for rural schools showing, among other things, proper methods of dressing children who must walk to school in the winter. A dramatic film was made for Queens University - an elaborate costume piece which recreated the founding of the University - and ended with an appeal for financial support. In the late 1920's themes of social concern began to appear. A film on the Deaf Institute at Brockville described the work of that institution. A similar film was made on the care and treatment of the insane, emphasizing that they must be treated humanely and that with proper care and treatment many of these people could lead useful lives.
In addition to motion pictures, the Bureau produced slide sets to supplement their educational films. These were rented in Ontario and sold to buyers abroad. Still photographs were also produced for the various Provincial Departments. Promotional photographs were placed in publications in Canada, England and the United States.

In 1924 the Bureau bought out Canadian Pathéscope - an educational film distributing company - and added this material to its own. At that time the distribution office was shipping out 1600 reels of film per month; by 1926 this figure had increased to 2000 reels per day. The film library of over 2000 film subjects was circulated on a non-theatrical basis throughout the Province. The films were supplied to agricultural representatives, schools, churches, YMCA clubs, and other community organizations. According to Patton, the majority of the films went to sparsely settled districts. The distribution system was described by him as follows:

By purchasing projection machines outright and selling them on long-term loans to societies and clubs in the outlying districts, communities which would otherwise have little or no entertainment are regularly provided with wholesome pictures. Thus the nucleus of social gatherings - very necessary in the development of the outlying agricultural districts - is fostered and encouraged.8

8"Ontario Government Operates Movie Plant", Cleveland News, July 26, 1926.

A shipping cost of twenty-five cents a reel was charged, thus guaranteeing the same service to film users in the far north as to those in Toronto.
In the United States the Bureau's films in praise of beautiful Ontario were booked theatrically in the large cities near its border. These included Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Philadelphia and New York. Mining, scenic and agricultural films were distributed through the Agent General for Ontario in London, England. These films received non-theatrical showings in that country, as well as in the United States, and even in countries as distant as Japan. No distribution figures, however, are available.

The end of the Ontario unit paralleled that of Saskatchewan. In both cases the non-theatrical films were released on twenty-eight millimeter film. Unlike the highly inflammable thirty-five millimeter films used in theaters, twenty-eight was a safety film - slow-burning and scratch resistant. With the coming of sixteen millimeter film, twenty-eight soon passed from the scene, speeded by the development of sound on film. The twenty-eight gauge was never adapted for sound. The Bureau made a few attempts to release some of its last films with sound on discs. The depression made the conversion to sound financially impossible and in 1934 the Bureau was closed as an economy move by Ontario Premier Mitchell Hepburn. All existing prints and original films were sold to Associated Screen News. The originals were cut up for stock shots and the prints were destroyed to regain the silver from the emulsion. With the end of the Provincial units the only Government film producer left was the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau.

While private industries used films to publicize their products and to persuade people to travel on their lines at the turn of the century, it was not until 1914 that the Canadian Government took an interest in
the medium. Far from being a late comer in this instance, Canada was
the first country to create a government film agency to project a nation-
al and international image. It was not until 1929 and 1936 respectively
that Great Britain and the United States developed comparable agencies.

Undoubtedly impressed by the successes of the Massey-Harris film
and C.P.R.'s "Living Canada" series, the Department of Trade and Commerce
created the "Exhibits and Publicity Bureau." The Bureau was to function
in the capacity of representing the natural and industrial resources of
Canada via the medium of still and motion pictures. The end result was
to stimulate external trade and investment. In 1916 a film unit was set
up under the direction of B. E. Norrish. Cameras and editing equipment
were purchased and temporary quarters were set up. The first permanent
facilities were located on Wellington Street in Ottawa. The early films
served to visualize Canada's natural resources and industrial activities.
Major emphasis was placed on wheat farming and water resources. A series
called "Water Power," showing the potential industrial rise of the
Canadian lakes and rivers, was begun that year and completed in 1917.

In 1918 the Bureau, installed in the Wellington Street building,
began expanding its activities. The Department of Trade and Commerce
hoped to regain some of its expenditures. That year a new function was
added, namely, that other government departments and commissions requiring
the preparation of films, slides and still photographs for their own
purposes were to arrange for their production in consultation and cooperation with the Exhibits and Publicity Bureau and were to avail themselves of the production facilities offered by the Bureau.\footnote{P.C. 2307, September 19, 1918.}

How well this plan worked is difficult to determine. While the annual reports of the Bureau for the years 1918-1921 stated that work had been carried on in cooperation with other government departments, the lists of films produced in those years give little indication of any direct departmental sponsorship. Emphasis in production was beginning to shift away from the industrial aspects of Canada and to focus mainly on the scenic. With improved transportation, Canada was beginning to exploit what later came to be known as the "fourth industry" - tourism. Although the films were not in color, they were designed to serve as picture postcards beckoning to British and American populations with what could best be described as "where films," e.g., \textit{Where Trout Abound}, \textit{Where Nature Smiles}, \textit{Where It's Always Vacation Time}, \textit{Where Lake and River Meet}, \textit{Where Salmon Leap} and \textit{Where the Moose Run Loose}. Cinematically the films were little more than moving-slide shows. \textit{Falling Waters} (1923) consisted of shots of water falls over Canada interpreted by appropriate quotes from such poets as Bliss Carman.

Distribution of the Bureau's films in Canada was limited by the lack of theaters. For the first few years, screenings were held for groups of bankers, boards of trade, stock exchanges and educators. Prints were sent to the United States, Great Britain, and other Commonwealth countries.
How many were shipped and how often these prints were screened is not
known since they were placed in embassies and trade missions where they
could be shown frequently or left lying idle. There were occasional
special requests, such as one from the Inventions Board of the British
Admiralty for a complete set of the "Water Power" series.

By 1919 the Bureau was at last getting regular theatrical distribu-
tion of its films in Canada by the newly formed Canadian Universal Film
Company. New films were released at the rate of one every other week.
During the summer and fall, an official lecturer of the Bureau exhibited
the films at fairs in Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon, Brandon,
Toronto, Ottawa, Chatham, London and Halifax. The total estimated
audience for these shows was in excess of 150,000. Theatrical distribu-
tion was begun in 1919 under William F. Jury who accepted twenty-one
prints. American distribution in 1919-1920 was booming, if the estimates
are to be believed. No indication of how these figures were compiled can
be found in the Bureau's annual reports. Nevertheless, United States
distribution figures showed Bureau films were playing 6000 theaters to an
estimated weekly audience of over three million. Plans were being made
to circulate films in Central and South America. This involved translating
the titles into Spanish and Portuguese.

In June of 1920 Norrish left the Bureau to take over leadership of
the A.S.N. unit. He was replaced by the head editor, Raymond S. Peck.
The following year, the unit was reorganized and renamed the "Canadian
Government Motion Picture Bureau." More important, it was given the
authority to produce and distribute film and still photographs for all
government departments. The wording of P.C. 2307 was vague enough that
other departments began setting up their own film units. On March 29, 1919 the Department of Agriculture obtained permission from Council to produce its own films on the grounds that its requirements were only for sixteen millimeter films and that the Bureau's facilities were not equipped to handle this gauge. With this precedent established, the National Parks branch of the Department of the Interior had little difficulty in gaining permission to set up a small unit. Later the National Museum of Canada produced a few independent films. This inability to hold complete control over all government film production had a debilitating effect on the MPB that was to hamper its development and limit its effectiveness throughout its entire existence.

There is no information as to how vigorous a campaign Peck waged to gain control of all government film work. The Bureau staff was working at capacity, producing about twenty films a year. Until 1922 these were devoted to tourist and industrial subjects. During that year, seventeen films were produced — two of them multi-reel productions for the Department of Agriculture. That year, the Bureau was having difficulty meeting demands for prints since circulation had outgrown laboratory facilities.

New lab equipment was installed the following year and Peck sought more departmental work. Although there was some interest, no major films were requested. Most of the productions were in the series of one-reel travel films which, since 1921, had borne the title "Seeing Canada." In 1924 the amount of work for other departments increased significantly. Three multi-reel films were produced for the Department of Agriculture, and two original two-reel films were produced for the Provincial Department of Agriculture of Quebec. The Department of Defence, Mines, and
Interior also commissioned film services and laboratory work. The Bureau had gained an international reputation by that time and arranged to produce a group of five one-reel films for the Tourist Trade Development Board of Jamaica. There is no evidence, however, of this project being completed.

By the mid-1920's tourism was fully established as "Canada's fourth industry," and the major production effort was the "Seeing Canada" series. Sponsored work increased and a greater number of departments and their various branches and divisions requested motion pictures. The two largest efforts in 1926 were a complete film record of an Arctic expedition made for Northwest Territories Branch of the Department of the Interior and a group of special travel films for the Canadian National Railway for the use of their official lecturer in Canada and the United States.

The years 1927-1929 were the Bureau's best. Every year the amount of material prepared for government departments increased. Nearly all had become convinced of the value of the motion picture and were impressed by the high quality of the Bureau's work. They were also convinced that the Bureau's prices were lower than the commercial rate. In 1927 seventy-seven government organizations, representing thirteen departments, requested and received materials produced by the Bureau. The biggest problem at that time was meeting the requests. While output had grown each year, the staff remained at forty and facilities were not expanded. When films could not be made, departments had the choice of buying equipment and producing on their own, or having their film made by Associated Screen News. A few joint productions of the Bureau and
Associated Screen News were completed. The largest of these endeavors was in 1927 when the MPB and A.S.N. combined forces to cover events of the Diamond Jubilee of Canada's Confederation, the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, the tour of the British Premier, and the opening of the new Peace Bridge.

Throughout the 1920's almost every annual report began with the statement "The Director of the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau reports that the last fiscal year has been the most successful in its history." Revenues increased each year along with the volume of production and distribution. The Bureau's annual appropriation, however, was not increased and the funds received from rentals and sales were returned to the Canadian Government.

The growth and flourishing of the MPB was primarily a story of distribution. The main objective of the Bureau was to gain as wide an audience as possible. The Bureau was also to be run as a business operation. As Peck stated in 1923:

Films are a commercial product and as such, must be distributed on a marketable basis. The two methods which we have found to be the most successful are as follows:

(a) A certain percentage of the revenue derived from the rental being received by the Canadian Government;

(b) The selling of prints out-right to the distributor at a margin over cost price.

Experience shows that this is a highly satisfactory arrangement because under a system of free circulation, little or no interest is taken in the distribution and exploitation of these Canadian films by distributors.10

In distribution, as in production, there was a double standard. As early as 1921, the Bureau had made an arrangement with the Canadian National Railway to supply a number of prints of the "Seeing Canada" series, as well as other films at a laboratory-cost basis only. C.N.R. used the films to promote travel, circulating them through Canada and the United States. A lecturer was provided by the railway, who took the shows to Rotary Clubs, high school and university groups, Chambers of Commerce and church organizations. The plan was successful since the Bureau's product was exposed to a large audience estimated in 1921 at 7000 per month. The system, although commendable, yielded no revenue and, in a sense, it cost the Bureau in terms of the time and effort needed to produce the extra prints - time that could have been spent producing films for sale and rental. Matters such as this and the duplication of production facilities and occasionally of productions by other departments were considered by the Bureau to be respectively, a necessity and a nuisance. If efforts were made to make changes in either of these practices they did not succeed. It is doubtful that efforts were made during the 1920's, since production and distribution expanded so rapidly that the Bureau had to work at full capacity to meet the continually rising demands of both sponsors and distributors. When the twin blows of the development of sound films and the depression fell, precedents had been set, revenues had been lost and the Government was reluctant to put money into an operation which was not efficiently organized.

The 1920's, however, marked the apex of the Bureau's career. During that era, it was the undisputed world leader in governmental publicity and directly or indirectly was the inspiration for similar activity in a
number of Commonwealth countries. In 1921-1922 the Bureau began to expand its operations both theatrically and non-theatrically on a broad international scale. At that time most of the films were still being exhibited through the offices of Trade Commissions. However, contracts were being negotiated with distribution companies in Europe, Latin America and the Far East. A Chinese company had received twenty-three films and was distributing them as early as 1921. Japan soon began distribution after a number of the Bureau's films were shown at the Tokyo Peace Exhibition in 1922.

During the same year contracts were signed with Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Germany, Holland, France, Belgium and Switzerland. Through Trade Commission officers, films were also sent to Cuba, the Hawaiian Islands, and four South American countries. In all of these the number of prints sent increased each year. All of the film sent to non-English speaking countries had titles in the native language. By 1928 European distribution had been expanded to include Italy, Austria, Yugoslavia and the Scandinavian countries. By 1929 the only country which had not shown a substantial increase in distribution was France where "quota" laws had limited the importation of foreign films. The next year Switzerland placed a quota on foreign films and distribution declined. Sound equipment was generally available in most of these countries by 1932 and distribution dropped sharply. It was only the existence of the non-theatrical programs and the fact that the Scandinavian countries were not sound-equipped that kept the foreign distribution program from collapsing completely.
Theatrical distribution in Canada expanded rapidly via the Canadian Universal Film Company. In 1922 Canadian Universal began selling the "Seeing Canada" films in packages of fifteen and by this maneuver gained wide distribution. A second contract signed with the Famous Players Corporation to distribute the series throughout their circuits further increased distribution in Canada. With this contract, signed in 1928, saturation of the theatrical market was virtually complete.

The big theatrical market, however, was in the United States. The national value of film as a propaganda force was demonstrated by the fact that ninety-eight percent of all the films produced and exhibited in the world during the 1920's was of American origin and provided a showcase for American goods. Basing its philosophy on the idea that "trade follows films," the MPB directed its main efforts at the United States since it was from there that Canada drew the greatest volume of its tourist trade. By 1924 the American theatrical audience was estimated at between five and ten million, seeing MPB films in more than 4000 theaters. The figures reached a peak in 1929 and then began a decline as sound came to the theaters.

The theatrical story in England was much the same with theatrical distribution beginning in 1919 under Jury's Imperial Pictures. The quota laws of 1927 limiting the percentage of non-Commonwealth films opened a broader field for the Canadian product and by the next year the "Seeing Canada" series was in 400 theaters and remained at that level through 1929.

In Canada, in the United States and in the United Kingdom non-theatrical distribution increased the audience by as much as one-third and
accounted for nearly a half of the total world audience. The Canadian National Railway expanded its foreign activities showing the Bureau's travel films on its lecture circuits in both the United States and the United Kingdom. American universities in ten states were supplied with prints which they distributed. By 1929 forty-eight different agencies were distributing the Bureau's films non-theatrically in the United States.

A "cooperative" program similar to that of the Canadian National Railway, was arranged with the National Parks Branch of the Department of the Interior. Showings in parks across the country reached an annual audience of more than 23,000. The Forestry Association also used Bureau films in a large campaign to promote forest safety. By 1929 the privately owned Canadian Pacific Railway had secured a film loan contract similar to the one held by Canadian National Railway. Provisions were made on the same basis for several steamship lines. The Bureau could proudly point to the fact that distribution figures had doubled. At the end of the report for that year was a disquieting statement:

...The introduction and extraordinarily rapid growth in popularity of 'sound' and natural colour films throughout the world, and particularly in the English-speaking countries, presents a serious problem to the Bureau. It is the general opinion in the motion picture industry that in the English-speaking countries, at least, 'sound' films will almost entirely supersede 'silent' productions in the course of the next year. Advices from distribution agencies indicate that, by the end of the current fiscal year, more than 75 per cent of the theatres in Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and the United States will be equipped for the exhibition of 'sound' pictures, and that there will be no market for the silent product in these territories.11

The report concluded with a discreet recommendation that the Bureau should be equipped to produce sound films since it was from the theatrical bookings that most of the Bureau's revenue was obtained. In 1930 distribution decreased in the theaters and expanded in the non-theatrical circuits. Revenues, however, fell off, a result of the lack of sound films.

Although the annual appropriation was increased from $50,000 to $75,000 in 1930, the Bureau had become trapped in a "Looking-Glass" world where it took all the running that could be done to keep in the same place. The $25,000 increase was used to purchase new equipment and better facilities. These were in turn used to meet the increased demand for prints - prints which were requested by the railways, parks, and shipping lines, and brought no monetary return. Of the 3,495 prints in active circulation in 1930, only 639 were bringing in revenue. Distribution figures climbed but returns diminished as theatrical bookings dropped and new non-theatrical outlets were found.

To keep the Bureau's financial structure from collapsing and turning into a free publicity agency, Peck attempted to secure greater cooperation with other government departments. Those possessing their own film units were reluctant to turn over all of their work, even though they could no longer use the well-worn excuse that the Bureau did not produce narrow-gauge films. By 1929 the MBP was releasing prints on both twenty-eight and sixteen millimeter stock. The Bureau continued to point out that it could produce films at a much more economical rate than the commercial producers. This statement had more truth than ever before. Sound had
nearly doubled the cost of production and the MPB's rates were bargains compared to those of Associated Screen News or any of the American companies. But nobody wanted silent movies.

Replacement footage and narrow-gauge prints were produced, but the "Seeing Canada" series was virtually discontinued. At one time the Bureau's chief money maker, it had now become a kind of cinematic anathema. Used mainly by the railways and shipping lines where sound was provided by a lecturer, the series required many prints and returned nothing. The campaign for more government work, however, was successful. Short technical films, slides, and still photographs suddenly became important work. By 1931 these tasks had become the mainstay of the Bureau.

The sound era had begun. The international reputation of Canadian information films ended. Not only sound, but the depression reduced the dollars in trade and the number of tourists that came to Canada. The Bureau began the last phase of its career - that of a departmental production unit and a national information agency. Production work for other departments raised revenues to an all-time high of $29,444 in 1930-1931, but the MPB was still costing the government over $45,000 per year at a time when it could ill afford the expense.

By 1931 seventy-five percent of Canadian theaters were sound equipped and had no use for the Bureau's films. For the first time, non-theatrical distribution was of major importance and small contracts were a good source of income. The Bureau enlarged its loan library and began circulating its films through Provincial Government Organizations, school systems and university extension programs. Revenues, however, were not derived from the loans, which covered only the printing costs, but from the sales of prints.
With the death of Peck in 1932, Frank Badgley - the chief editor - was placed in charge. Theatrical revenues were dropping in nearly all of Europe, the Commonwealth countries, the United States, Canada and much of Latin America. Distribution figures rose in the non-theatrical category where the films brought in little or no revenue. Of the 400,000 feet of film in circulation, more than half was on free loan to railway and steamship companies.

Revenues were also dropping in the production operation. The depression forced drastic cutbacks in all government departments. Film output during the year was limited mainly to the production of replacement footage, and the processing of film shot by the units maintained by other departments. Six sound films were produced for theatrical distribution. While sponsored by the Government, they were produced in "commercial plants" - probably by Associated Screen News. Theatrical distribution of the films was evidently good, since the scheme was repeated the following year. These were not the "scenics" of the 1920's, but films showing the work of the fishing, wheat growing, lumber and automobile industries. A seven-reel promotional film Canada Coast to Coast (1933) and a few general films were released. Revenues from these did not go to the Bureau.

On the strength of the theatrical distribution records of the privately produced films, funds were allotted the following year to purchase sound equipment and new facilities for the Bureau. The 1933-1934 year could be considered the worst in the entire history of the MPB. Theatrical distribution no longer existed and non-theatrical distribution gained an audience but brought in no money. Government departments
requested little or no material from the Bureau, choosing to produce films on their own or to spend the extra money to commission sound films which would receive theatrical showings.

There was no point in the Bureau's trying to cut back its non-theatrical activities. Although they brought in little revenue, they were its sole reason for existing. Badgley worked to build these outlets and could only hope that the acquisition of the sound equipment would spur future sponsored, film-making activity. With this in mind, the Bureau began photographing material for proposed films on a number of Canadian industries, as well as on scenic material for new travel films. The promise of sound did convince two sponsors, Topographical Surveys and the Department of Defence, to commission the Bureau to begin work on films which would be released with sound track.

During the year the Bureau completed its move into a large building on John Street that had once been a sawmill. Although it lacked space for a sound stage, recording facilities were provided and an enlarged and improved laboratory set up. While this was being done, plans were being made for expanded non-theatrical activities. Depositories for film were established in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. Similar arrangements were made with the Manitoba Co-operative Marketing Association, the Province of Ontario Picture Bureau, The Quebec Department of Agriculture and several commercial film libraries. The promise of sound films was a definite aid in securing an agreement with the film division of the British General Post Office to act as a depository and distribution agency of the Bureau's films. A similar arrangement had existed with the Empire Marketing Board, but there had been some doubt of its contribution.
To achieve the widest possible distribution Badgley decided to begin the Bureau's venture into sound with a feature-length spectacular. Begun in 1934 and released a year later, the film was called *Lest We Forget* (1935). The project had begun when the Bureau had received 75,000 feet of war footage from the Department of Defence. Originally the plan had been to cut this material into a single film describing Canada's part in the First World War. The final film went beyond this and the result was an epic, telling of the entire war using a combination of actual war footage and material taken from vintage theatrical films.

That Badgley had had no experience with sound films was obvious. *Lest We Forget* was conceived as a silent film, with music and narration in much the same manner as radio documentaries of the day. The commentary was of the rapid-fire, newscaster variety with the ratio of words to pictures practically one to one. The opening sequence describes in a montage of shots the peaceful life in Canada circa 1914. This is followed by a clip from a feature (origin unknown) showing the assassination at Sarajevo. "This spark set the world ablaze," proclaims the narrator. There is a close-up of a back-lit hand poised over a dynamite plunger. The plunger is pushed, there is a cut to another close-up of a sand table landscape also back-lit. This flares as an invisible gunpowder coating is ignited.

The following scenes show the mobilization of German, Russian and Austrian troops. An animated map shows the German thrust. There are quick cuts of Belgian refugees and of recruiting in London. There is a montage of hands clicking telegraph keys, newspaper headlines and troops
marching as Canada enters the war. Camp scenes and drilling exercises of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry are accompanied by war songs played on an organ, which grinds along throughout most of the film.

There are cuts of British troops in action, naval battles and the first Canadian troops training and landing in France. The war on the sea uses armed, though harmless-looking fishing trawlers, to trick U-boats into coming to the surface. Canadian troops dig in at Vimy Ridge. Shots of Woodrow Wilson announce the United States' entry into the war. The same shot of a row of 75's firing initiates at least three of these - one of them by the Germans. The war ends with shots of celebrations in various Canadian cities. Canadian troops march across the Rhine to occupy Germany. The closing sequence cuts very effectively from a Canadian war memorial to a panning shot of a battlefield cemetery, to a tracking shot, taken from a train, passing a seemingly endless landscape filled with neat rows of white crosses. "The War to end War! Was it? Search your own heart?" says the narrator.

If the body of the film was as good as the final part, it would have been a classic. Unfortunately it bore all the marks of fast and sloppy work. Perhaps the most annoying feature was the clumsy re-use of stock footage and the organ medley of war songs which ran through most of the scenes, whether they were appropriate or not. Last We Forget was a silent movie with sound added.

Public reactions were favorable, and Badgley decided that "the big film" was the way back into the theatrical market. The double feature program which had come into practice in most theaters during the 1930's made it difficult to distribute individual short films even if they did
have sound. Successful theatrical shorts, such as the "Canadian Cameo" series, were sold in packages guaranteeing the exhibitor a fixed number of films per month. The Bureau, however, did produce several one and two-reel sound films on Canadian industry and travel. The longest of these was a three-reel production on the white-pine industry. The major effort was on a feature about the unveiling of the Canadian War Memorial at Vimy Ridge and the pilgrimage of Canadian war veterans to Belgium, France and England. Begun in 1936 it was cut from 50,000 feet of news-reel and original footage to six reels (24,000 feet) and released the next year under the title *Salute to Valour* (1937).

This second large effort combined the talents of Badgley and J. Booth Scott. *Valour* begins where *Lest We Forget* concluded - with a montage of war scenes. This fast series of wipes and dissolves ends with a shot of a "second" convoy carrying the veterans to England and France. Speeches by the Minister of Labour (substituting for Mackenzie King) and the Governor General of Quebec praise the men and wish them "bon voyage."

The liner and its escort move past Quebec and out into the Atlantic.

The Vimy Ridge Memorial in France is first seen from an air shot and then from the ground as the crowds gather for speeches by King Edward VIII and French President LeBrun. In Ottawa Mackenzie King reads a speech honoring the veterans. The journey continues for the men - to Paris, London and into Scotland.

There is no music and the coverage of events is in the standard news-reel manner. Between the speeches is the narration of W. W. Murry - filling every inch of the sound track. The pacing is slow and the result is a dull film. Despite its dullness, it does have a sense of order and control which was lacking in *Lest We Forget*. 
Even while this film was being made, shooting was in progress for a feature-length film on the gold mining industry for the Department of Mines and Resources. *Unlocking Canada's Treasure Trove* (1937) was released theatrically early in the following year. In its final form *Treasure Trove* ran only three reels - a fact which undoubtedly improved it. The film is a clear and rather dry explanation of hard-rock gold mining. Animated diagrams show the mine in cross-section as each step of the mining process is shown.

The Bureau's last feature, before it was brought under the control of the National Film Board, was a record of a visit of their Majesties to Canada and the United States. Film and photographic pools were organized which included British, Canadian, and American newsreel agencies. Under the supervision of the Bureau, 80,000 feet of 35 millimeter sound film were produced and cut into a ten-reel feature - *Royal Visit* (1939) - 15,000 feet of color film was also made for archival purposes.

Of the Bureau's long films, *Royal Visit* is without a doubt the best. The work of Badgley, Scott and composer Howard Fogg, it used the same newsreel style as *Valour*, yet it is a superior job carefully edited and with enough camera coverage to give the events an interest that was absent in the former film.

*Royal Visit* opens with the welcome of King George VI and his Queen to Quebec where they are greeted by the Royal Twenty-Second and Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis. The tour then proceeds by train to Montreal and then Ottawa where the King unveils the Peace Monument. The royal couple visit wounded veterans in Toronto. At the Derby Day race the King presents the cup.
The royal train heads west through Regina, Calgary and Banff, where the King and Queen meet with Prime Minister Mackenzie King for a brief rest. From Vancouver the train heads east. The tour and the film move with a faster pace as the visit nears its end -- short stops through the Prairies and Ontario with a brief excursion to Washington, D. C. and to New York for the World's Fair. The final sweep through the Maritime Provinces ends in Halifax where the royal couple board the ship that will take them to England.

Although by today's standards Royal Visit is not an exceptional film, it wears well. The score by Howard Fogg keeps the pace brisk where it is visually a bit stodgy. Narrator Rupert Lucas explains and comments, but does not intrude. The film stands - a nostalgic document of those last bright days of the summer of 1939.

Gradually, the Bureau began to increase the output of short sound films, mainly on Canadian industry. However, a number of travel films were also made. Some of these were co-productions with the units of other departments. One of these occurred when an MPB crew stumbled on to a crew from the National Parks Branch, making a film on the same subject. This would indicate that the lines of communication between the MPB and the departments were not functioning as well as they should.

One of the best of the short productions was Heritage (1939), produced for the Department of Agriculture. Opening with shots of buffalo being hunted and an Indian on his horse posed on a hill, Heritage begins a thirty-minute epic of the prairie from the time of the buffalo to the dust bowl and the subsequent recovery program initiated by the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. Conceived along the same general lines as
Pare Lorentz's *The Plow That Broke the Plain* (1936) produced for the Resettlement Administration in the United States, *Heritage* was in the style of Gordon Sparling's *Rhapsody in Two Languages*. *Heritage* was written and directed by J. Booth Scott of the Bureau, with music by Howard Fogg who had created the score for *Rhapsody*. *Heritage* marked the fullest development of the symphonic genre of film-making. The narration described every picture, the music - fast and furious - served as a driving force to the entire film. All transitions were done optically, and therefore the film required a score which was a complete composition capable of standing on its own. *Heritage* marked the end of another era. It was two years in the making - a carefully put-together, highly-polished production. In that same year, the National Film Board was established, the Second World War began and production was aimed to meet the demands of providing wartime information.

By the end of the 1930's the production situation had improved and by 1939-1940, of the twenty-five films released, fifteen were with sound. The Bureau had over 6500 prints in circulation and was at last regaining a theatrical audience. Most of this, however, was in Canada, since the sound films were mainly of Canadian subjects and in the English language. Unlike the retitling of silent films, sound versions for foreign consumption were expensive to produce. It was not until 1939 that French language versions of Bureau films were released for distribution in Quebec, and this was limited to *Royal Visit* and *Heritage*. While MPB films reached a total world audience estimated at thirty-five million, few of them were paying customers, few saw the films on a regular basis, or enjoyed any great variety in terms of subject matter.
The Canadian public was, however, receptive to the motion picture medium. Most of the interest came from educational groups, such as universities, Provincial departments of Education, libraries, and school systems. These were responsible for the development of much of the Bureau's non-theatrical distribution. In 1935 the National Film Society of Canada (now the Canadian Film Institute) was formed. This group composed mainly of educators interested in film, promoted the study, appreciation and use of films as a cultural instrument. The society proposed to act as a clearing house for films and film information to educational and scientific organizations, as well as for those interested in the cultural aspects of film.

In 1936 the Society issued a lengthy report on the status of the motion picture in Canada and included a number of recommendations for improved use of films. The importance of the report was that film was being taken seriously by a number of influential people. They recognized the values of film in both formal as well as informal public education. Although no critical references were made regarding the MPB, the report made it obvious that the Bureau's films were more than a tool for government publicity.

Two members of the society whose views were more critical than most were the Secretary, Donald Buchanan, and Ross McLean who was later to become Commissioner of the National Film Board. Both had been exposed to the films of Lorentz and John Grierson's Empire Marketing Board, and General Post Office units. The formation of the National Film Society
from the scattered local societies which had developed in the late 1920's and early 1930's was the first step in gaining a unified film production and distribution policy for Canada.

The second step came when Vincent Massey was appointed High Commissioner to London and McLean accepted a position as his private secretary. In England McLean soon made the acquaintance of Grierson and became a convert to the latter's philosophy of the public responsibility of the motion picture and of film's ability to dramatize the commonplace. With Massey's consent, McLean prepared a report discussing film developments in Britain and Canada, and urging that changes be made in the activities of the Bureau:

...There is no sounder basis for the expansion of trade than a deeper wider knowledge of differences in tasks and modes of life. These can be conveyed most effectively by interpreting in a wider sense the functions of the Motion Picture Bureau, by improving the quality and enlarging the quantity of Canadian films and by adapting them more consciously to the British Public. 12


McLean concluded his report with a recommendation that Grierson be invited to Canada to make a survey of the situation and prepare a report including specific recommendations for improving the system of government film production and distribution.

Massey sent the report, with his recommendation, to the Department of Trade and Commerce early in 1936. No action was taken. Massey applied pressure as did the National Film Society and Badgley - who had long recognized the short comings of the existing operation but was powerless
to alter the situation. Throughout that year and the next the campaign was continued. By 1938 Massey and Badgley had succeeded in convincing both the Deputy Minister and finally the Minister of the Department of Trade and Commerce of the necessity of the report. Grierson was given the nod to begin the survey first in England, reporting on the distribution of the Bureau's films there; and then to come to Canada to prepare a thorough report on all aspects of production and distribution and to make specific recommendations regarding the film publicity activities of the Canadian Government.

The problem facing Grierson was that of setting up a government film unit that would function to provide national, as well as international, information. He would have to surmount the obstacles of a production and distribution situation which had grown in a haphazard manner, rather than being systematically developed. This would mean proposing a plan that would be acceptable to those departments which were convinced that a central production organization could not provide materials fitted to their needs.

Outside of the governmental structure were other problems. Canada was a large country with a small population strung out in a 3000 mile ribbon along the northern border of the United States. While there were several large cities, the distribution of urban and rural population was almost equal. To reach this latter group via films would require an extensive program of non-theatrical distribution.

Canada was also a compartmentalized nation. The most obvious difference was between the English-speaking and French-speaking regions. Physical and climatic differences, as well as economic interests, also
divided the country. The three Prairie and three Maritime Provinces had many common interests, but British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec could almost be regarded as different countries. Provincial governments were strong, having a great deal of autonomy not only over laws, but over community services as well. Outstanding among these was the matter of education, which is still controlled by Provincial departments rather than a national office.

While regional differences existed in the British Isles, they were by no means comparable to those in Canada. In England Grierson had not had to contend with the problems of circulating films to large numbers of small disparate communities. He did have in Canada several examples of successful non-theatrical operations which served to provide a basis for the film circuits of the National Film Board. Among them were the Ontario Picture Bureau, The Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Extension Service of the University of Alberta, which used a system of traveling projectionists to bring films to communities in outlying areas of the Province.

The automobile was just beginning to have an effect on the mobility of Canadians when the depression came. By the end of the 1930's roads had been improved and more people could afford to change locations. This marked the beginning of a period of mobility which is still taking place. Film, radio, television and air-craft were to serve in the task of bringing Canadians from all parts of the country together. In 1939 the time was ripe for the motion picture to begin its part, not merely to show pretty pictures of Canadian scenery or to deal with isolated events of national interest, but to build a sense of national cohesiveness among the peoples of Canada.
John Grierson was a person who was able to grasp these facts. Perhaps his coming from outside of the country sharpened his perceptions, since he was able to take a fresh view of problems which many felt had to be lived with and endured. He had achieved a wide reputation from his work as head of the E.M.B. and G.P.O film units. This training, which was both political and technical was to have a major influence in Grierson's role in the formation of what was to become the National Film Board of Canada.
The National Film Board emerged as an outgrowth of the Motion Picture Bureau. Its structure, however, was shaped by the hand of John Grierson and based on his experience as head of the film units of the Empire Marketing Board and the General Post Office. Created in 1926, the Empire Marketing Board was in a way similar to the publicity arm of the Canadian Department of Trade and Commerce, in that the EMB served to inform the peoples of the Commonwealth of the marketing opportunities in Great Britain. Under the direction of Secretary Stephen Tallents, the EMB built a film-production unit headed by Grierson. The job of the unit was in Grierson's words "to bring the Empire alive through the film medium." Grierson chose a documentary format rather than a fictional one since the former was inexpensive and could be distributed both theatrically and non-theatrically, permitting, as he put it "the building of an entire production and distribution machine for the price of a single theatrical [feature film]."\(^1\)

\(^1\)John Grierson, *Grierson on Documentary*, p. 100.

The Grierson plan set a precedent in 1929 when he produced *Drifters*, a low-budget film on the day-to-day activities of a herring fleet.
Drifters was conceived in much the same way that Robert Flaherty had done his films in depicting the lives of Eskimos and South Sea Islanders. Grierson's film, however, placed its emphasis on the struggle of industrial man while Flaherty sought to preserve the image of primitive man in his fight for survival. At the same time Walter Creighton, another producer of EMB, made One Family - a feature-length film showing, with lavish fanfare, the ingredients of the King's Christmas pudding being assembled from over the world. One Family was as big a disaster as Drifters was a success.

Later EMB films dealt to a greater degree with social and economic themes and were the first to show the British worker as a serious figure. Nevertheless, they remained descriptions of industrial processes, filmed silently with a narration and music track added later. Industrial Britain (1933) and Aero Engine (1933-34) are fairly typical examples. The first was a general survey type of film, but succeeded in showing individuals rather than working masses. Aero Engine, however, was a rather strict analytical film about the building and testing of airplane engines.

The EMB unit began with only three producer-directors each one working almost exclusively on a single film at a time. This "auteur" film-making later gave people, such as Grierson, Flaherty, Arthur Elton, Harry Watt, Basil Wright and Stuart Legg the opportunity to make carefully constructed films. While money could not be lavished on them, time could. The results were a number of well-paced, well-edited films with a stylistic verve that more than compensated for the lack of expensive production techniques. These films were based on a theory of
education and a concept of public duty. They were aimed at dramatizing the ordinary, creating an interest in the pattern of industrial life in the modern state and emphasizing the social necessity of this pattern. This trend was given the title "documentary" by Grierson and developed into a large-scale movement.

With the worsening of the depression in 1932-33 the Empire Marketing Board was dissolved and the film unit was transferred to the General Post Office. The group was at last given its own studios and later sound equipment from an increased budget. Gone, though, was the chance to produce an almost unlimited range of films. The GPO was concerned with the problems of communications in Britain. While Grierson's objectives were limited in scope of subject matter, he was still at liberty to experiment with technique. Night Mail, produced in 1936, combined the talents of film-makers Basil Wright and Harry Watt with those of composer Benjamin Britten, and poet W. H. Auden. The film dramatized the shipping of mail from London to Edinburgh by express train. Dialog was used along with poetic narration to explain what was going on. Once the train got underway it moved to a grand finish. The final seven minutes of the train rushing through the countryside, provided inspirations for Jean Mitry's Pacific 231 (1949) and the NFB Trans Canada Express (1945). Though Night Mail is only partially successful by today's standards, its innovations were far-reaching.

Other styles were developed by such people as Len Lye and Norman McLaren who experimented with abstract films. In the midst of their vibrating blobs of color and swinging music, patrons were advised to "mail early," "airmail is faster," and "post before noon." The improved
facilities and equipment allowed the unit to venture into a semi-dramatic form using non-actors. The first of these films, *The Saving of Bill Blewitt* (1936), explained postal savings with a story set in a Cornish fishing village. Using a dialog script, this type of film was further developed in *North Sea* (1939), a film on ship-to-shore radio. In this case the people were given roles and did not merely play themselves.

This trend ultimately led to such outstanding documentary dramas as *Target for Tonight* (1941), *Costal Command* (1942) and *Western Approaches* (1944) produced by the Crown Film Unit that superseded the GPO in 1940.

Distribution of EMB and GPO films was originally to be on a theatrical basis. It soon became obvious that this was not practical. Distributors considered these films as shorts along with cartoons, travelogs and newsreels. The placing of documentary films before the public was on a haphazard basis. The situation was made worse by the fact that, until 1938, there was no quota on the importation of foreign-made shorts; and that all short films were threatened by the advent of the double-feature program which became popular in the 1930's.

In an attempt to gain a wider circulation of films, Grierson pushed for non-theatrical distribution. Films were reduced to sixteen millimeter and placed in a free-loan library that circulated them among schools, film societies and other interested organizations. This form of distribution was taken over in 1934 by the Imperial Institute which organized a series of regular showings throughout the country. The films distributed included not only those of the EMB and GPO, but documentaries produced by independent companies as well.
Another innovation was the use of traveling theaters - trucks or vans equipped with generators and projectors. This system had been used with success in Germany during the 1920's to bring films to audiences in rural and outlying areas where there was no projection equipment. In England they proved to be effective, but the vans were few in number and the circuits were without any central control. In addition to those of the GPO, Pathé, Gaumont-British Equipment, Sound Services, and The British Commercial Gas Association sent out projection units.

By 1939 the GPO had a staff of sixty, and four production units. The Grierson organization had produced, since its beginning with the EMB, a total of 300 films, many of which are today regarded as classics of their kind. Most important of all, it provided a training ground for documentary film-makers.

Some may reflect upon that era and that unit and consider it ideal. It was not. The EMB was eliminated almost before it had begun its job. Grierson stretched the framework of the GPO to include a remarkable variety of subjects, but the raison d'être of its communication program was national rather than international. In addition to the problems of finance and distribution, the GPO had to share its reputation with a number of other documentary film units, some private, some operated by industry. The breadth of the British documentary movement in the 1930's came not from the GPO itself, but from the other production units. Film-makers Arthur Elton, Edgar Anstey, Paul Rotha and Stuart Legg, who received their training in the GPO unit, went on to make such social documentaries as Housing Problems (1935), Today we Live (1937), and
The Future's in the Air (1937). Companies, such as B. P., Shell-Mex, The British Commercial Gas Company and Imperial Airways sponsored and even distributed these films for their prestige value, and did not expect to receive a profit, or even recoup production costs.

Thus, in one sense Grierson's plans of the EMB unit were fulfilled by the combined efforts of the GPO productions, those of the industries and of the independent Strand Film Company (Rothe and Legg), Realist Film Unit (Basil Wright), and The Shell Film Unit (Anstey). The problem was one of implementing and promoting the movement as a whole. While Grierson from the start had acted as a consultant on documentaries produced outside of his unit, it was not until 1935 that any attempt was made to consolidate the movement. The Association of Realist Film Producers was made up of about a dozen senior producers and directors in the field. Its aims were to act as a public relations body and to promote the production of documentary films by industry.2

The Arts Enquiry, The Factual Film, p. 55

The A.R.F.P., however, acted as a trade association and not as a production or distribution agency. To organize production and distribution in the documentary movement, Grierson left the GPO in 1937 and with J. P. R. Golightly and Arthur Elton set up Film Centre. The Centre contained many of the same people as did A.R.F.P., but acted as a consulting and policy-forming group. Its objectives were to open markets to do research, to advise sponsors on their needs, to supervise production and to arrange for film distribution. One extensive report was made
to the International Labor Organization, a project promoted by Grierson long after he left the Centre. The plan was for a group of films to be produced and distributed on an international basis through the ILO. There were to be films to improve working conditions over the world, and to promote better health, housing, child welfare and nutrition. The grand project never materialized. The Scottish Development Council created the Films of Scotland Committee to produce a series of films about the country and its people. The Centre arranged for the successful production and distribution of the first large-scale film interpretation of a country. While this represented a major success, the ILO case was a major frustration.

The Centre was a move in the direction toward the EMB and ILO idea of a world-wide production and distribution network of films to interpret all nations of the world to one another. Unfortunately, the Centre had no powers. It did not work with the Government film unit. It could only recommend and facilitate private efforts. The British documentary movement of the 1930's had achieved a place second to none. The films produced and styles developed are still one of the major influences on documentary film-making today. But the fact remained, that a unified program of production and distribution on an international or even a national scale was never realized.

In 1938 Grierson left the Centre and accepted the invitation of the Canadian Government to study Canada's film needs and to submit a proposal based on his experience in England and on his assessment of the Canadian situation. The report was to cover all phases of production and distribution with recommendations for the purpose of reorganizing
the Government's film publicity activities. Grierson went to work and in several months had finished his survey and submitted his report. (The complete text of this report is included in Appendix A.)

Grierson's assessment of the situation viewed government film propaganda as serving four objectives - general information, trade publicity, departmental information and national prestige. Films in the first three categories were generally distributed non-theatrically while those in the prestige class went into theaters. The prestige film was of great importance not only in itself, but in its educational capacity and as a support to trade films. All of these types of films worked together and had to be considered in building an information program. Ignorance of this fact, Grierson concluded, was one of the major faults in both the British and Canadian information programs of the past.

Although a government has the best access to film production and distribution, weakness in the organization of these activities - the lack of a strong coordinating policy and a strong film unit - could destroy its effectiveness. Such was the case of the MPB which Grierson also charged with serving the ends of one department. In the same manner he criticized other departments for weakening the overall program by having their own units.

To achieve a unified policy, Grierson proposed a plan to revitalize Canadian Government film activity. This included a committee of six or seven officers to review Government film policy and aid the MPB in planning films, as well as working with other departments regarding their film needs. The committee would be chaired by an executive officer who would be responsible for coordinating the work of the committee in
setting standards of quality for both the films produced by the MPB and those produced for the Government by commercial producers. The function of this office would be separate from that of the head of the MPB.

To make qualitative improvements, Grierson called for a boost in manpower, increasing the Bureau staff with outside personnel hired on a contract basis. This would also bring in fresh ideas which Grierson felt were greatly needed. The points hit hardest by Grierson were those of unified control from the top level and cooperation by the various government departments. The MPB was to be freed from its role of film-maker for the Department of Trade and Commerce and to function primarily as the central film agency for all government departments. These departments were to supervise all films made for their own specialized use, but not films which were intended for broad distribution. Films of a general public service nature would be funded by the department concerned - possibly in cooperation with Trade and Commerce.

Distribution was to be brought under central control to avoid the duplication of services which then existed. Theaters would be supplied on a regular basis. The work of the Government would be publicized among outside agencies to secure their cooperation in non-theatrical distribution. The National Film Society would play an important role in this. International distribution would also be put under unified control to avoid duplication and insure the best use of Canadian films abroad.

After submitting the report, Grierson left Canada. Members of the National Film Society had seen the report and were in favor of it. A committee of Ross McLean, Charles Cowan and Sydney Smith led by
Donald Buchanan urged the Minister of Trade and Commerce to have the Grierson plan put into operation. The Minister sent the following cable on October 14, 1938, "Anxious to secure services of Grierson to assist in coordinating all government services in Ottawa relative to Motion Pictures. . .".

Grierson accepted and began the task of revamping the MPB. The first step was to work out plans for the film needs of the various government departments and to allay their fears since some would lose their film units. While the purpose of the MPB had been to produce films for all departments, the practice had been different. The problem was much the same as the one faced by the Film Centre in England. Grierson realized that unless the advisory organization had powers backed by legislation it could never succeed. Getting a bill passed, however, was a major problem. The process took time and could provide the opposition party with an opportunity for attack. The commercial film producers could be angered since they had produced a number of government films. There would also be problems with the legal status of the organization. Grierson succeeded in assuring the commercial units that they would have opportunities to produce Government films. The problem of status, however was more complex. The corporate structure, such as that of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, would give the greatest freedom – particularly in financial matters, but would be the most difficult to
secure. Attaching the unit to a single department would limit its scope. Grierson settled for proposing the Board as a separate government agency. This would give it department status in terms of its responsibility of presenting its statements to Parliament under the Consolidated Audit and Review Act. It would also give the board considerably more independence than a mere departmental unit. Since the board was to consist of only a Film Commissioner and a secretarial staff, the cost would not be excessive and the production and distribution mechanism of the MPB would be facilitated. The bill met only minor opposition. It was introduced in the House of Commons in March 1939; and on May 2, 1939 it was given Royal Assent and the National Film Act created the Board.4

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4See Appendix B, "An Act to Create a National Film Board."

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Even before the act was passed Grierson was working to expand the MPB. In response to a request by the Minister of Labor for a producer, Grierson recommended Stuart Legg. Legg secured a contract with the Bureau and in the summer of 1939 produced what could roughly be called the first films of the National Film Board. Youth Is Tomorrow (1939) and The Case of Charlie Gordon (1939).

Although Youth was made by a British director, its style was closer to the earlier Bureau films (e.g., Heritage) than to anything produced by the EMB or GPO. The film opens with a montage of children in schools; young men in factories, cutting trees, surveying and building. "Youth is a driving force," announces the narrator. This is followed by a title panel "Yough suffers with the depression." Then follows a montage of
young men in soup kitchens, relief offices and hopping freight trains. The narrator comments on automation taking jobs and on the rising crime rate. The rest of the film is a series of cuts of young men and women in job training - nursing classes, cooking classes, planting trees, digging coal and plucking chickens - to the accompaniment of a Strauss waltz. Following the training the graduates go to jobs. Youth like Heritage took a macroscopic view of its subject.

The Case of Charlie Gordon, however, took the opposite approach - focusing on one boy and his desire to get a job. The film used non-actors in the real-life setting of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. Charlie replies to the job-training officer with answers born of frustration and scepticism. "What would you like to be?" the officer asks him.

"A detective."

"Well, there's not much detecting to do around here. What else are you interested in?"

"Aviation."

"Ah, the movies..." The officer suddenly grasps the source of Charlie's dreams and turns the conversation to more realistic goals. Charlie's interests include cars. With training, he tells him, there is a chance of becoming a mechanic. Although the acting was at times stilted, the story was one that many young men might, at the time, accept and find believable. The importance of Charlie Gordon is that it was a definite attempt to work in the genre of the non-actor drama developed by the GPO.

Grierson was in Hollywood when World War II broke, preparing to go to Australia and New Zealand on an advisory mission similar to the one
he had completed in Canada. While members of the Film Board had been selected, the job of Film Commissioner was still vacant. Although the

The following were the members of the first National Film Board:

Chairman: Hon. W. D. Euler, Minister of Trade and Commerce
Hon. T. A. Crerar, Minister of Mines and Resources
Col. V. I. Smart, Deputy Minister of Transport
Maj. J. G. Parmelee, Deputy Minister of Trade and Commerce
R. S. Hamer, Department of Agriculture
Prof. W. C. Murray, Ph.D., University of Saskatchewan
Edmond Turcotte, Editor of Le Canada
C. G. Cowan, Managing Dir., British American Bank Note Co.

Secretary: Finally Sim, Department of Trade and Commerce

The National Film Board of Canada, Sept. 1953, p. 3.

Board felt that the Commissioner should be a Canadian, there was no one with sufficient film-making experience available. At length it was concluded that Grierson was the only one capable of handling the job. In October he was recalled and asked if he would accept the position for a six-month term - until a Canadian could be found. Grierson agreed. The NFB staff then consisted of Grierson, Ross McLean (his assistant and later Commissioner) Stuart Legg (Production Supervisor) and two secretaries.

Grierson began his job with typical driving enthusiasm, seeking to build a national consciousness interpreting the Film Act in its broadest sense. "The Act most duly says that its function is to co-ordinate Government film activities. But, when that sentence was drafted I remembered one thing, why can't we say and be done with it, the National
Film Board will be the eyes of Canada. It will, through a national use of cinema see Canada and see it whole - its people and its purposes.  

6 John Grierson, "The Eyes of Canada," CBC Broadcast, Jan. 21, 1940.

The NFB-MPB production unit was faced with the task of producing and distributing films on a scale far surpassing anything tried by the EMB or GPO, for Grierson's plans called not only for a program of communication on a national level, but for an international one as well. Thus, he defined the statement in the Film Act, that the Board shall, "Advise upon the making and distribution of national films designed to help Canadians in all parts of Canada to understand the ways of living and the problems of Canadians in other parts," to include not only Canadians in other parts but all the peoples of the world.  

7 This statement in the Film Act of 1939 was changed to include interpreting Canada to the world in the Film Act of 1950.

The immediate task was to build the MPB into a large and highly productive unit. Grierson's invitations were sent to film-makers in the United States and England, offering long hours, low pay and the chance to make films and train young film-makers. Those who came to remain throughout the War and produce more than a single film were mainly people from the GPO unit. These included Stanley Hawes, Raymond Spottiswoode, Evelyn Spice, Norman McLaren and J. D. Davidson. From the United States came Julian Roffman (a Canadian expatriate),
John Ferno and Irving Jacoby. In addition, were those who came to make one or two films on a contract basis - Joris Ivens and Alexandre Alexeieff. Grierson also began recruiting young Canadians and training them as film-makers. James Beveridge and Don Fraser were the first to come, followed by Tom Daly, Guy Glover, Michael Spenser, and Sydney Newman. Films were also contracted to Associated Screen News, Vancouver Motion Pictures, and the newly-established Crawley Films. Grierson's next move was to get production underway. The question was: What kinds of films were going to be made? The information needs of the War were far more pressing than anything in peacetime.

One of the first opportunities to get a film that would have international coverage came from Louis de Rochemont of "The March of Time." De Rochemont agreed to devote one of the series to Canada. Grierson suggested the title Canada at War and assigned McLean to act as liaison with the film's producer and help in all ways possible. It was understood, however, that the film was to be a de Rochemont production and the costs would be borne by "Time-Life" and not the Canadian Government. The film was completed and slated for release in the Spring of 1940.

In January of that year Prime Minister Mackenzie King came under the attack of Ontario's Premier Hepburn for Canada's alleged state of apathy and unpreparedness. King sought to vindicate himself and called for an immediate election. King also sought to get the film released early. Hepburn got wind of the plan and had the film banned in Ontario as a political document. As a result, McLean and the Film Board came under fire and McLean was temporarily suspended. This marked the first crisis involving NFB in partisan politics.
During this crisis, Grierson was fulfilling his commitment to the governments of Australia and New Zealand. He returned at the end of May 1940 and continued the programs he had started. Along with Legg, he had planned two newsreel series - Canada Carries On, a monthly one-reeler for theatrical and non-theatrical release; and The World In Action, a theatrical two-reeler to be released every other month.

In addition to the NFB-originated material, there was a great demand for film to explain the new duties of existing departments and to interpret the jobs of newly created institutions to the public. The Wartime Information Board, channeled requests to NFB for training and recruiting films for the Defence Department. Propaganda was needed by the War Finance Committee to encourage the buying of war bonds. Films were needed to explain the necessities of rationing and controls by the Wartime Prices and Trade Board. Dramatizing the need for increased industrial production was the goal of Munitions and Supply. Grierson accepted the requests and passed them on to Badgley, along with the directive that all of the films should be released in both French and English language.

The fact that NFB made policy while MPB carried out production had become a serious problem. In short, Grierson had bitten off more than Badgley could chew. Badgley's unit was small and reasonably well equipped for its size and pre-war capacity for production. The increased size of the staff helped to a degree, but the amount of space and equipment remained the same. Day and night shifts were instituted, but the supply of finished films remained behind the ever-increasing demands. The anomaly of having some of the staff under civil service and some who
were not; led to a considerable amount of friction between members. Badgley and his original crew were unaccustomed to the high speed and seemingly high-handed methods of the British and the young Canadians. The latter were annoyed by the unwillingness of Badgley’s men to change their ways.

Grierson’s appointment ended in November of 1940. He sent a letter of resignation to the Chairman of the Board stating that he felt that the Commissionership should be handed over to a Canadian. Grierson also made clear his misgivings about the civil service situation which, in his estimation, tied the Film Board to the Department of Trade and Commerce. He also pointed out that the civil service regulations "weakens the vitality and paralyzes the initiative which are necessary to good work."

He ended by saying:

My conclusion is that I should regard it as a retrogressive step to attach the National Film Board to the administration of any department which is occupied with another kind of problem. The answer will be that there is nothing in such a step to alarm the creative prospect. Experience proves otherwise.

It will be urged that making films is no different from any other government activity and may, therefore, be fitted into the normal machine. Films, however, are different from other articles of government activity in one fundamental. It is at this point that the traditional rites of nine to five break down. A routine average will not do. They must either achieve showmanship and distinction, or they are not worth doing at all.

In my view part of the solution is to bring the Motion Picture Bureau within the administration of the National Film Board and make it the work of your Commissioner, with his own executive, to relate government procedure to creative practice. . . .

\[\text{McKay, History of the National Film Board of Canada, pp. 23-24.}\]
The Prime Minister did not want Grierson to resign and the Board was divided on the matter. Grierson met with the chairman and in the course of several discussions persuaded the Board to accept his recommendations. The Board, in turn, convinced Grierson to stay for another six-month term until August of 1941.

June 11, 1941 marked the end of the first phase of the NFB. The Cabinet passed an order-in-Council absorbing the Motion Picture Bureau into the National Film Board. The film Commissioner moved to the John Street building.

The civil service conflict continued for a time. The Commissioner, who was not governed by the Civil Service Act, took over the Bureau staff who were. The mixed staff situation continued until those who came in under the auspices of the NFB retired or quit. While attendance records were carefully kept, Grierson made a significant break with civil service practice - annual salary increases. He insisted that salaries should be related to the quality and amount of work a person produced and not to years of service. Those who came to work at the Board were started with low pay, but might have their salaries increased three or four times in one year. If their work was of only passable quality, their pay remained at the same low figure. This system - which has remained basically unchanged - encouraged those with talent and ambition and discouraged those in search of security through the steady production of mediocrity.

The NFB was now responsible not only for planning and advising on all Government films, but also for making them or having them made by commercial producers. The duties formerly held by the Minister of Trade and Commerce were transferred to the Minister of National War Services. Badgley was offered the post of head of the Still Photography Division, but declined, stating that Grierson might as well oversee the whole thing. On August 8, Stills Division was also transferred from the Department of Trade and Commerce to the NFB.
The Stills Division later became the Photo Services section of the Graphics Division which included a Posters and Publications section. This was later transferred to the Wartime Information Board. The liaison between the NFB and the WIB became increasingly close as the War progressed. Both the "World In Action" and "Canada Carries On" series were under the auspices of the WIB - serving to dramatize the Canadian War effort. In January 1943, Grierson was appointed General Manager of the Wartime Information Board. He held both that position and the Film Commissioner's job until the end of the War. In August of 1944 a display section to carry out exhibition of the WIB projects was added. In September of that same year a filmstrip section was created to produce materials for the armed forces and the War Finance Committee. This expansion marked the Film Board's initial step into multi-media communication. The major emphasis, however, remained film.

"Canada Carries On" begun in 1940 under the sponsorship of G. H. Lash, Director of Public Information in Canada, was the first of the series of wartime theatrical films. "CCO" was aimed primarily at the Canadian audiences, to dramatize all aspects of the country's war effort. The series began as one reelers, became two reelers and by the War's end had reverted back to one reel. "CCO" was the brain-child of Grierson and Legg. From its inception, Legg was in charge of production and wrote and directed most of the films.
Stuart Legg's Atlantic Patrol, the first of the series, was released in April of 1940. The opening shot showed the outline of a ship in the fog, followed by cuts of ships being built and cuts of a convoy of Canadian freighters on their way to England. Officers of The Royal Canadian Navy are seen in a brief dialog sequence - plotting the course. The convoy moves out. A crewman scans the horizon looking for submarines, flying boats soar overhead. Something is sighted, gun crews rush to their stations, torpedoes and depth charges are readied and fired. No submarines appear. Somewhere in the mid-Atlantic the convoy is met by the British Navy. The final scenes show the seaman relaxing, sleeping and at mess as they head for home. Each of these images is accompanied by the intense narration of a pre-"Bonanza" Lorne Greene in the best tradition of Westbrook Van Voorhis, ("March of Times" original voice of doom).

As the country mobilized, the films kept pace with the process. Camp life and training were shown in Letter from Aldershot and Letter from Camp Borden both produced in that same year. The "Camp Borden"

11 In 1942 Crawley produced School for Victory for NFB. It was almost identical to Camp Borden, the only exceptions being that the camp was French and the film was in color.

letter is delivered to a middle-class home. The next scene shows three recruits on a truck entering the camp. They comment on the sights they pass - drilling squads, tanks and so forth. They are soon lined up and drilled, trained, and sent to the rifle range. There are the inevitable scenes in the Canteen and a talent show complete with Hitler
imitations and chorus line. When the troops go back on maneuvers they have gained confidence and proficiency as shown by their performance in a mock battle.

The Home Front, also 1940, begins with soldiers leaving on a train, followed by battle scenes. "With the soldiers off to the war, the women of Canada are serving on the home front," says Lorne Greene. The body of the film is a series of cuts of women bandaging a dummy, driving trucks, making uniforms and ammunition, and training pilots. A title panel tells of other phases of work - that of wife and mother. The narrator urges mothers to guard the health of their children and buy Canadian. In an interview, the head of the National Federation of Women's Clubs tells how Canadian women can help refugees. The finale is a montage of all of the previous war-work scenes.

It is only with a certain amount of caution that these films can be described as being typical of the series. They do represent the degree in breadth of style of most of the series. Atlantic Patrol directed by Stuart Legg used some original material, but was composed mainly of stock footage from the Royal Canadian Navy. It is in the "March of Time" style in terms of cutting, music and narration. The Home Front directed by Stanley Hawes was made of original material shot by NFB, but part of it was composed of stock shots. The Home Front, like Atlantic Patrol, was in the genre of the "March of Time," but achieved a kind of hyper-style with dramatic music, exhortative narration and exceedingly rapid cutting. Many of the shots last less than one second and none longer than three. Shots in "March of Time" films ranged between three and four
seconds. Raymond Spottiswoode's *Letter from Camp Borden* was less macroscopic in its treatment, but the style of cutting and of narration were the same.

*Churchill's Island* (1941) combined the fast-cut newsreel style with British irony similar to the British Ministry of Information film - *These Are the Men* (1942). The Straits of Dover are seen from the French side - the German look across. There is a cut to Hitler speaking; his voice is faded under; and a subdued Lorne Greene translates, "England forced this war upon us..." cut to a railway gun being towed out. Cut back to Hitler. "Germany is a peace-loving nation..." the gun is loaded. "Germany did not want war..." Series of fast cuts as the gun fires. Cut to the English side. A warden tells how he could hear the shells and predict when and where they would land. Systematically the film covers the defense of England - the air war of 1940, the citizen army of fire fighters and anti-aircraft gunners, the convoys and U-boats, and the Germans practicing for the invasion that never came off.

Churchill inspects troops and Lorne Greene challenges the Nazis to "come if you dare." *Churchill's Island* is one of the best of Legg's early compilation films. Made up entirely of British and captured German footage, the film succeeded in giving coherent and succinct coverage of the total defense plan of England. The film was the first to attract critical attention outside of Canada. It was given a special Academy Award in 1942.

"CCO" releases continued at the rate of one a month, describing the War both at home and abroad. Films, such as *Inside Fighting Canada* (1942), *Battle of the Harvests* (1942), *Women are Warriors* (1942), and
Look to the North (1943) served to build a mosaic of the Canadian war effort. With the continuation of the War the emphasis of the series shifted to battlefront activity. Fighting Norway (1943), Trainbusters (1943), Target Berlin (1944), Wounded in Action (1944), Fighting Sea-Fleas (1944), and Mosquito Squadron (1944) covered the War on land, sea and in the air.

In 1943 Sydney Newman and Guy Glover were put in charge of production and Legg devoted his efforts to the "World In Action" series. By this time the Board had acquired large supplies of footage from British and American armed forces, as well as from those of Canada. In addition, the number and quality of NFB cameraman had increased, resulting in a marked improvement in the technical qualities of the films. The early war films were made almost exclusively from stock shots - they were editor's films and the quality of the end product was dependent upon the availability of the necessary footage. Stylistically the director's films were still much the same, but they were handled with greater finesse. It is interesting to note that while the Canadian content in the films increased, (it was to boost Canadian content that Newman and Glover became the producers) the style of some of the films took on a somewhat British flavor.

Newman's Trans-Canada Express (1945) owes much to Night Mail in both structure and style, yet the scope of Express is broader than the GPO's mail film. Express opens with cuts of trains - "carrying wheat, carrying passengers" says the narrator Lorne Greene. There is a title panel - "1939 - the Railroads Accept the Challenge." Over this are supered gun flashes. "The conversion to war begins" - there is a series of cuts of
men working on engines. Work begins in the morning as an engine comes into the yard and is swung into place on a turntable. There is a cut to a military meeting (sync sound) - a train must get company "P" to the coast. A band plays as the troops march on board. There is a series of cuts as the train moves off, the soldiers try to get comfortable, some try to sleep. A passenger asks where the club car is and is informed that there isn't any. More cuts of wheels, soldiers, and scenery whipping by. "Day and night, sun or cloud the railroad's job is never done," chants Greene. The final cuts show glimpses of the sea through the windows -- the train arrives and the troops disembark.

Although Express attempts more than Night Mail, it achieves somewhat less. The cutting and camera work are a pale copy of the British film. One of Newman's later films, Ordeal by Ice (1945), is a modest attempt and more successful. He covers winter army maneuvers from start to finish without cutting away to previous or allied efforts. The film builds to a minor but successful climax as the squadron completes its mission and returns. The final shots at the men skiing in formation, slowly forming a perfect zig-zag on the slope give the film a very satisfying finish.

Because of the necessity of delivering a film a month, a few films that were not intended as part of the series were included in it. Two films - Squadron 992 and Kill or be Killed - were purchased from the Crown Film Unit. Films with non-war themes, such as Peoples of Canada, also appeared in the series. One of the most improbable of these was High Over the Borders (1942) by Irving Jacoby and John Ferno. This film on bird migration in North and South America becomes a parable of unity
among the nations of the west. Opening with a scene of a Canadian farm boy wondering where the swallows go in the winter, the scene shifts to Central America where another boy eventually watches them depart for the north. "Who can claim ownership?" asks the narrator as the scene dissolves to air shots of Canada geese and other birds in flight. The remainder of the film probes the reasons and unexplained questions of migration. Animated maps show the major flyways. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service studies the habits of birds assisted by sportsmen, conversationists and amateur ornithologists. The film concludes with a return to the original theme of the flight of the birds as an example of the ability to overcome the restraints of distance and national boundaries. High Over the Borders is an excellent film. Its careful construction and pacing combined with low-key narration make it one of the few films of the era that has not been made obsolete by the passage of time.

The "World In Action" series was begun in June of 1942 and represented Grierson's major effort in international communication. "WIA" was to function as an international "CCO." It was aimed at interpreting problems on a global scale -- to analyze world events in a concise manner and to discuss the effects of the War in terms of all of the major world powers.

"WIA" films, like their "CCO" counterpart, were editor's films, being made up of footage from over the world and put together not only to show history in the making, but to ask the question of - how should history be made? "CCO" concerned itself with winning the War and developing the country. "WIA" proposed goals and solutions to the political and economic problems of the wartime world and anticipated those of the peacetime era to come.
Unlike "CCO," "WIA" developed a cohesive form which remained consistent throughout the series. This was mainly because Stuart Legg made - or directly supervised - nearly all of the films. The form evolved out of the necessity to describe problems, ideas and situations that spanned as much as half a century of time and several continents of space, bringing them together in a film that could not extend beyond twenty minutes running time.

Legg's films were built of interlocking blocks of history, sociology and economics. In Gates of Italy (1934) a "CCO" release, the style was clearly evident. Section one gives a social-historical background. The Italy of the picture post card is dispensed with in a few shots. Attention is then shifted to a look at the average Italian working, playing, eating, drinking, enjoying an opera or receiving en masse the blessings of the Pope. Economics is the next subject. Italy is a barren land with megre harvests and limited resources. History follows. Mussolini appears in a sequence of shots - swinging a pick, laying a brick, scattering seeds, kissing babies and accepting cheers. The Ethiopian War is won and the Germans become Italy's allies. Defeat in Africa returns the scene to Italy - war has come to the homeland.

A similar treatment was used in the "WIA" Fortress Japan (1944) which showed the step-by-step process of the Allies taking the Japanese-held territory until only the home islands are left. In the final sequence of the film, workers carrying sacks and boxes move at an increasing tempo, until in the final shots they are seen trotting. Comments the narrator. . . "Today the Japanese are driving their slave labor to
the limit of endurance. Every mine and mill and man, they say, must give
the utmost in the shortest time. And time, they know, is swiftly running
out across the Empire of the Rising Sun."

In later "WIA" films where concepts went beyond the political-
historical boundaries of a single nation, Legg drew upon the work of
Pudovkin whose experiments in creating an "intellectual" montage linked
images by poetic visualization. He was also influenced by the French
Dada and Surrealist films which created continuity by connecting images
on the basis of shape and movement alone, to ends with aesthetics rooted
in the darker regions of psychoanalysis. From these disparate sources,
Legg created juxtapositions of social, political and economic images
playing off country against country, comparing social progress, military
developments and economic changes by aural-visual metaphors and similes.

In Balkan Powder Keg (1945) a past, present and future look is taken
at that part of Europe which has been the starting point of wars for
nearly a century. A peasant lying in a field wraps himself in a cloak.
The narration comments on Hungarian aristocrats "...still wrapping
themselves and their people in a cloak of injured pride." In John Bull's
Own Island (1945) the camera cuts from a shot of British industrialists
in a meeting, to the crumbling ruins of the Crystal Palace. "...Many
British businessmen believe that the Second World War has brought a
chapter in their country's commercial history to an end. . ."

German films of French troops across the Rhine dancing to music from
German loudspeakers during the "phony war" of 1939 carry the warning
"...and all along the grim positions of the Maginot - beneath the
proud tricolor of France they danced to the tunes Goebbels called." In
this film - War For Men's Minds (1943) - the juxtapositions and fast cutting worked on a shot-to-shot basis, but the scope of the film went beyond the limits of its size. In its attempt to survey the entire spectrum of war propaganda War For Men's Minds fragments into almost total chaos.

The later films were much more successful, even when they covered topics of great magnitude. Global Air Routes (1944) presents a lucid proposal for a world-wide network of air lines, blending actuality footage with animation to illustrate the development of this network. The position of the United States with its vast production capacity and many new airfields is compared with that of Britain - world leader in the pre-war era with its BOAC line. The roles of Canada and the USSR conclude the film. They are the air-age nations holding key positions for future development and world cooperation. On a larger and equally successful scale is And Now The Peace (1945) which looks to the post-war world with a critical analysis of the United Nations. In assessing its strength and weaknesses, comparisons are made to the past World War I era and the League of Nations. The work of both organizations is graphically shown and the superiority of the U.N. is made evident.

"WIA" originated a new concept of film journalism, in its idea of presenting the nations of the world to one another. This type of film was left untouched by the major producers in the United States and England. The exception was the two medium-length films produced in England by Paul Rotha for the Ministry of Information. Rotha's World of Plenty (1942) and The World is Rich (1946-47) dealt with the problems
to be faced in reconstructing a war-shattered Europe and famine-ridden Asia. The "WIA," however, dealt with a great number of problems in

the thirty films that were produced during the war. The series was not completely devoted to international themes, just as "CCO" was not devoted exclusively to Canadian subjects. The similarity in the two series resulted in the discontinuation of "WIA" in 1945. These two series represented the major effort of the Board during the war years. In terms of their style and scope they were unlike anything produced by the MPB or the EMB-GPO units.

Since Grierson made Drifters, he realized that the social aim of informing the citizen about his world must take precedence over aesthetic goals. The Tolstoyan view that art must be activist had influenced Grierson through the Russian films of the 1920's, but it was not until the war that he was forced to make the choice. This he did, stating

We are apt to think of art as something on the sidelines of life - pretty pictures on the walls, songs and music for relaxation, poetry for occasional reading - very occasional - movies to while away the time on a dull night. But art is something deeper than that. If you must know the truth of art think not of art itself but of will-power! Will power is the hope and the vision and the faith that make them think that something is worth fighting for. And art - art is every voice, every song, every picture, every word that warms the faith, confirms the purpose and fires the heart. They tell us that art is a mirror - a mirror held up to nature. I think that is a false image, conceived by men in quiet, unchanging times. In a society like ours, which is even now in the throes of a war of ideas and in a state of social revolution of the profoundist nature, art is not
a mirror but a hammer. It is a weapon in our hands to see and to say what is right and good and beautiful, and hammer it out as the mold and pattern of men's actions. 13

13 John Grierson, "Art in Action" text of article written in 1939 or 1940.

With the EMB and GPO, Grierson was able to have it both ways - producing films of social significance that were also cinematic works of art. In England during the 1930's the pace was leisurely enough and individual film budgets large enough to give each major production the polish of professionalism. With the war, such a pace was unthinkable. Grierson stated flatly that the style comes from the job, that this was a newsreel war not a documentary war...

...It is a question of giving people a pattern of thought and feeling about highly complex and urgent events, we give it as well as we know, with a minimum of dawdling over how some poor darling happens to react to something or other... If our stuff pretends to be certain, it's because people need certainty. If our maps look upside down, it's because it's time people saw things in relativity. If we bang them out one a fortnight and no misses, instead of sitting on our fannies cuddling them to sweet smotheroo, its because a lot of braves in Russia and Japan and German are banging out things too, and we'd better learn how in time. ...So the long windy openings are out and the cathartic finishes in which a good, brave, tearful, self-congratulatory and useless time has been had by all.14


The standard of "COO" and "WIA" films was even and comparable to the American "March of Time" series. While the films were directed by
different people, they were all mass produced. Few of them had any credit titles, since they were the product of a number of writers and editors who might be working on three or four films at a time. What the films lacked in finesse they made up in expediency. *War Clouds in the Pacific* (*CCO* 1941) was a geopolitical analysis of the Japanese in Asia. Included in the discussion were the United States installations at Pearl Harbor and the possibility of attack. The film was released two weeks before the attack did come. *Zero Hour* (*CCO* 1944) was the first film on the D-day landings. The first part, containing material on the build up, was shot in advance of the landings. Five alternate end sequences were prepared. As soon as radio reports came in, the proper sequence was spliced on and the film was released two days before British and American reports. *Salute to Victory* (*CCO* 1945) was readied in 125 consecutive hours before VE day and on that night was in theaters across Canada. This kind of production brought the documentary film out of the framework of the literary magazine and placed it in the form of the newspaper.

One of the main keys to the style and success of "CCO" and "WIA" was the mechanism of distribution. The bitter experience with theatrical distribution in England had convinced Grierson that in the eyes of distributors documentaries were nothing more than shorts. This led him to push for non-theatrical exhibition of EMB and GPO films. While this policy did succeed in getting the films shown, the program was, in a way, self-defeating since the non-theatrical circuits could never be considered substitutes for theatrical bookings. Individual films, unless they were features, were not a very saleable product. The decision to
launch a series was as much Legg's idea as it was Grierson's. It was Legg who ran the theatrical distribution of all of the Board's films and his responsibility to solve the theatrical problem by making the system work for the Board instead of against it.

For the purposes of Government information theatrical distribution has very special advantages of its own. Five in particular strike me as important. In the first place there is a ready-made machine, of vast proportions and international spread. It needs no capital expenditure, no running costs by the Government as in the case of non-theatrical. And it means a saving on prints and publicity. Secondly, the fact that it is a machine that favours a mass production process, especially where short films are involved. The trade regards shorts as a "supporting programme." It doesn't want to be bothered with each film individually; it prefers to sell a number of them as a series. This preference gives the consequent advantage of regularity of outlet to the producer. The third advantage is size - size of audience. Theatrical distribution reaches enormous audiences, and gives, in fact, a blanket coverage often internationally. As an example of this I quote the experience we had in Canada with the WORLD IN ACTION series. Each picture was seen by about 40 million people in the U.S. alone. On top of this were audiences in the U.K., in Canada, in French-speaking Europe, a lesser number in Latin America, and we sent lavenders to Australia, New Zealand, and India. All that added up to a pretty impressive total for each monthly issue of the series. This blanket coverage is ideal where selectivity is not required, although it must be added that generally speaking over a broad field the cinema-going public is one largely composed of those in their late teens and twenties and to this extent there is some degree of selectivity. A fourth advantage that theatrical distribution has may be termed "attendant publicities." The other media of publicity and information are more likely to take notice of a film that is being shown in the theatres - and in consequence the theme of the film will thus be held longer and pushed further on the widening ripples from the theatrical stone. As a fifth advantage I list that of 'returns.' Admittedly returns are not of primary importance for Government information, but the fact that a theatrical film may pay for itself will probably give it a slight halo in Treasury eyes. To quote our experience with WORLD IN ACTION again, each issue grossed from $25,000-30,000 in the United States market alone. Of this about $15,000 was the Canadian Government's share in its capacity of producer. In fact these films were just about paying for themselves
in U.S. dollars, a situation which did not escape the notice of the Canadian Treasury, and which made the life of Departments and producers that much easier in consequence.

There is a further point to be made about returns. They may not be of primary importance per se, but the fact of demanding them may be of great importance in the showman's world. It is a world of very different values from the governmental world - within it there are two philosophies in this context. One school is prepared to equate Government films with a free handout. The needs of war lent a practical acceptance to this view both here and in the U.S., and the aftermath of war usage has let the idea continue. But there is another, and possibly stronger school of thought which holds that if no value, in terms of price, is put on an article in the world of showmanship then, in fact, it has no value. It must stink. It is rather as if I were a highly-trained trapeze artist, who went to Bertram Mills and said, 'I am a first-class trapeze artist, and I want to perform in your circus so that I am willing to do it for nothing.' It wouldn't by my generosity that was suspect; it would by my skill as a trapeze artist. For this reason there is an obvious value in looking for returns from Government-sponsored films. Returns can help to breed confidence in your product within the trade.15

15Stuart Legg, Film as a Journal

The idea of producing film series rather than individual films can be considered the influential factor on the Board's war-time activity. In addition to "Canada Carries On" and "World In Action" there were the French language series "En-Avant Canada" (the equivalent of "CCO") and "World In Action" (French). There was, in addition, an original French language series - "Les Reportages." There were also six short newsreels. "Eyes Front," "Canada Communiqué" and "Pictorial Hometown News" were prepared for Canadian troops overseas. "Eyes Front" went to training camps at home. They contained bits of news of home-front activity, of women at work and of sporting events. "Rural Newsreel,"
"Industrial Newsreel" and "Front Line Reports" - later "Screen Magazine" - brought stories of battlefront activities, such as food preparation and tank repair, to rural and industrial audiences on the NFB non-theatrical circuits. The Board also produced hundreds of news clips and newsreel stories which appeared in most of the major American and British newsreels. Two series which had nothing to do with the war effort were the "sing-songs" produced by the animation department in 1943-1944. Released both theatrically and non-theatrically "Chants Populaires" and "Let's All Sing Together" were purely for entertainment.

Although the emphasis of production was concentrated on film series, a fair number of non-series films were produced. Some of these were cut down for, or built up from "CCO" and "WIA" productions. Many were designed for theatrical release, but with an eye toward non-theatrical distribution later. A few, made exclusively for non-theatrical audiences, were shot in sixteen millimeter and were some of the Board's first color films.

Military themes were dominant in the early part of the war. Stanley Hawes' On Guard for Three (1940) was a twenty-seven minute compilation film on Canada's role in the war. The first half was composed of material from Lest We Forget, the latter part from Canadian Armed Forces footage. The style was the same as the "CCO" series complete to narrator Graham McInnes who did his best to emulate Lorne Greene. James Beveridge, who had been Hawes' assistant, produced a similar film lasting thirty-seven minutes. The Fight for Liberty (1941) covered Canada's efforts in the War from August 1940 to the end of 1941. Because of lack of combat cameramen the Board missed what could have been the biggest
coup of the war - the Dieppe Raid in 1942. This first large-scale Canadian action, covered almost exclusively by American and British newsreels, played up the British and token American involvement - a fact which Grierson found particularly galling. While the situation improved during the war, Canadian coverage never equalled that of the British and Americans.

Julian Roffman's twenty-six minute 13 Platoon (1942) was the last of three films which traced the history of one man from his induction - Battle Is Our Business (1942) - through his training as an officer - Up From the Ranks (1942). Discarding the compilation techniques, he produced a dialog drama using people playing themselves. The film opened on a cover shot of the platoon marching down a road. They part to let a jeep, containing the new commanding officer, pass. At the camp the new lieutenant is briefed and inspects his troops. The camera trucks the faces and picks up sotto voce comments on the new "ninety day wonder." The platoon is followed through gas drill, marches and guard duty. The lieutenant is tested as the men try to "march the feet off him." A grudging respect is slowly turned into friendship. The final bivouac and maneuvers completed, the news arrives that the platoon is to be shipped out. The lieutenant, however, will not go with them. At the end he finally receives his orders and will join the platoon in Europe. In spite of the narrator's asides, such as "a new officer always. . ." - and "confidence must be gained before. . ." the film was played with comparative restraint. Harry Alpert's photography gave a vitality unattained by any previous efforts.
Joris Ivens' one film for the Board was the forty-two minute *Action Stations* (1943). Although the film was composed of original material, it looked much like a long "CCO" and bore little resemblance to Iven's earlier work. *Action Stations* told the story of the Canadian convoys crossing the Atlantic. The film begins with a finger pushing a button, the call to action stations and a series of fast cuts of crews scrambling to their guns. The crews wait, there is a cut of a ship seen through a periscope; a tanker is sunk; the sub slips away. "Do the people at home care?" asks the narrator. The scene dissolves to a new corvette being readied. The crew were former merchant seamen, the captain newly commissioned. The crew go through life boat drills, crew drills and calisthenics as a voice and chorus sings "Roll Along Canadian Navy." Over shots of activity in a shipyard are supered figures of rising enlistments and numbers of ships sunk. At a meeting the captain receives instructions. On the deck of the new corvette, captain and crew are wished "good luck and good hunting."

The convey moves over the Grand Banks and reconnaissance planes are launched. The "eyes of the ship" - the lookout - scans the sea for submarines. Signal lights flash orders. As a fog cover gradually lifts, the men relax. In the control center word arrives that a sub has been spotted. The blips on the radar show the sub. There is a call-to-action stations. Depth charges are fired - the sub surfaces and after a brief fire fight its crew abandons ship. The men of the corvette search the foundering sub and get out just before a time bomb sinks it. The convoy continues its journey without incident, says the narrator.
While Action Stations has some beautiful photography in it by Osmond H. Borradaille and a good score by Louis Applebaum, it lies somewhere between newsreel and drama and gives the impression of three short films cut together to make one long one. In terms of plot it was very similar to the Crown Film Units' Western Approaches which was released the next year. It is possible that Action Stations could have provided inspiration.

While most of the Board's wartime activity was concentrated on the war effort, the fact remained that NFB was conceived as a peacetime operation. The Government was willing to support the program, not out of any great interest in educational film or art per se, but rather for national unity. Since all departments were in favor of strengthening the nation, NFB was able to produce a number of low-budget films dealing with a wide variety of subjects thus fulfilling the Board's original commitment to create educational, informative and prestige films, as well as those of the government departments.

The National Gallery sponsored several films on Canadian artists which were produced in sixteen millimeter color for the Board by Crawley Films. Canadian Landscape (1941) followed Canadian artist A. Y. Jackson on sketching trips through remote parts of Ontario and Quebec. Painters of Quebec (1944) showed, via the usual pans, tilts and dissolves, the works of seven French-Canadian artists. One of the more noteworthy of these films was Crawley's West Wind (1942), about the landscape artist Tom Thompson. The film begins with Thompson's boyhood - shot in the neighborhood where Thompson grew up; a young boy, seen mostly in long shots, goes fishing and hiking as the narrator tells of Thompson's early
love for the out-of-doors. The place where he worked as a commercial artist and his first paintings are seen next, followed by his last works. These are seen between cut-aways to one of his friends, a fellow artist, who tells of Thompson's death after only four years of serious painting. When the film was shown to Canadian troops in France "there was not a dry eye in the house."

With the opening up of the rural distribution circuits, films aimed specifically at rural audiences were produced. *New Home in the West* (1944) dealt with the Government program for prairie resettlement while *Land for Pioneers* (1945) explored the opportunities to be found in the Northwest Territories. There were short instructional films on care of dairy cattle in winter and the building of hog feeders.

*Just Weeds* (1944) by Evelyn and Lawrence Cherry showed that weeds were more than just a minor nuisance and cost farmers 100 million dollars a year. The opening shots of fields choked with weeds were probably nothing new to most farmers. Step by step the origin and spread of weeds are shown. Of how a single plant if left untended can form a colony. Methods of control include cultivation; using plants, such as alfalfa, to drive out weeds; and spraying. Farmers are encouraged to buy registered seed and to make sure all seed is clean. *Weeds* was unsophisticated and overwritten, but it made its point since it was prepared for audiences which were eager to see it.

Industrial films were geared mainly to the needs of the war, and as such, made under the War Information Program. A number, however, were produced describing the growth of Canadian industries and the development of the nation's natural resources. For the most part, distribution
was on a non-theatrical basis. The titles are descriptive of the content, for example - Coal for Canada, Tomorrow's Timber and Salmon Run. Some, however, were produced explicitly for industrial audiences, e.g., George Dunning's animated film Three Blind Mice (1945) promoted industrial safety, while Dallas Jones' A Man and His Job (1943) dealt with problems of a typical worker from the depression to 1943.

Some of these industrial films could be used to promote tourism. The Board abandoned all plans for tourist films when the War began and did not re-enter this area until 1944. The new films were much the same as those of the MFB, but were produced by commercial companies. Typical titles were Four Seasons on the Gatineau, Ottawa on the River, Ski in the Valley of the Saints, and Maple Sugar Time.

Of the films produced during the War the most important, in terms of the Griersonian ideal of interpreting Canada to Canadians, were the community films. One of the first efforts in this direction was Gordon Sparling's Peoples of Canada (1941). Produced by Gordon Sparling of Associated Screen News for NFB, it was a symphonic film that had antecedents in Walter Ruttmann's Berlin (1927) and Alberto Cavalcanti's Rien que les heures (1927), as well as in the "March of Time." Peoples is a thirty-minute montage of Canadian man seen from coast to coast. After a brief background on the early exploration and settlement of the country, the major ethnic groups are seen at work and play, building the major Canadian industries. The image created is of Canada as "a great storehouse" of human as well as industrial resources.

A less macroscopic view of Canada was taken by the group of ethnographic films produced in sixteen millimeter color by Laura Boulton.
Totems (1944) opened with a shot of a map of British Columbia showing where the Indians lived. The camera tilt pans totem poles. The narrator explains that their meaning is somewhat vague, but that they are no longer made. There are cuts of rotting totem and funeral poles, butterflies light on them, ants and borers riddle them. An old woman would gladly sell the ones over her husband's grave if she could get a stone marker. An Indian carves model poles and houses to sell to tourists - pole and house decoration is now a lost art.

While the commentary is read with a travelog style of delivery, the score is authentic Indian music and the pictorial content is more than mere coverage. It attempts to probe, if only slightly, beneath the surface to tell something of these Indians today, to make an ironic comment on the decay of their art - both historically and literally. Totems is an important film - a prototype for such later efforts as The Longhouse People (1950), Land of the Long Day (1952) and Circle of the Sun (1960). Other films in the wartime group dealt with Eskimo, Polish, Scottish and Ukrainian communities.

The relevance of these films is not that they were great, or even good in and of themselves, but that while they were produced as "political necessities" they succeeded in influencing and informing Canadians about their country and their cultural history, as well as informing them on ways to improve their farming, health and safety. Many of these films remained in use long after the war information productions became obsolete and of interest only to students of film. The ethnographic films provided the basis for many social and ethnographic films produced in the 1950's and 60's which are among the world's finest. While
Grierson's statement that "all our wartime films are peace films" is hardly true, he did create a broad base of production and refused to allow wartime needs to eclipse those of the peacetime era to come.

Stuart Legg was well aware of the advantages of the theatrical distribution system, but getting government films into theaters was another matter. While film production was nationalized, distribution was not. The Canadian Government had little to say about home distribution and absolutely no control over foreign showings. NFB had to depend upon the good will of the distributor or convince him that the films had merits of their own. Theatrical distributors have always been in the entertainment business. Therefore, government films had to contain qualities of showmanship, e.g., story value, spectacle, originality, topicality, sex and glamor, human interest, humor and some kind of style.

"CCO" and "WIA" films did succeed in meeting these criteria. Churchill's Island told the story of the fight of the British against Hitler. Spectacles were few, but NFB succeeded in producing some, at least second hand, through the use of captured Nazi newsreel and propaganda footage. Novelty was found in such films as the "WIA" Ferry Pilot (1942) shot completely under water and including a sequence of a submarine firing torpedoes - a cliché now, but unique in 1942. Topicality was one of the strong points of both series, with such coups as the afore-mentioned War Clouds in the Pacific, Zero Hour and Salute to Victory. Sex and glamor were scarce, but the working girls in The Home Front were neat and clean. The limit was reached and perhaps stretched in The Proudest Girl in the World (1942), a two-minute recruiting trailer by Julian Roffman, where uniformed members of the Canadian Women's Army
Corps did a "Busby Berkeley" production number. Such a film would have also qualified as humor. Human interest was generally lacking in the series films, but was always present in the theatrical story films, such as *13 Platoon*. Both "CCO" and "WIA" did have a style which was popular and acceptable at the time.

"Canada Carries On," "World In Action," En Avant Canada" and "Les Reportages" were the Board's mainstay in the theatrical market since they were sold in the same manner as commercial newsreels. The four series were shown in 480 theaters to an estimated Canadian audience of approximately three million people per month. The "WIA" series was being distributed in twenty-one nations by 1945 to an estimated total audience of thirty million. "WIA" had the biggest sale in the United States where it was distributed by United Artists to six thousand theaters. England was second, exhibiting the series in one thousand theaters. "CCO" was also distributed to a lesser extent in England, Australia and India by Columbia. As the French-speaking countries were liberated, new markets were opened for the two French series. By the last year of the War negotiations were opened with Scandinavian, Middle Eastern, Latin American and Far Eastern countries.

Short films, as well as the series were also distributed abroad, but most of these were released in sixteen millimeter, unlike the MPB film which had been placed in free "film dumps" in various government offices. The Film Board opened its own offices beginning in 1943, to act as liaison with the governments and the sixteen millimeter distributors. Non-theatrical distribution in the United States was headed by Margaret Carter - the former editor of "Sight and Sound." She successfully
publicized NFB films through the various trade journals. Like Stuart Legg, she made effective use of the existing distribution machinery. Rather than having the Board promoting its films, contracts were made with commercial distributors who paid NFB royalties for the sales and rentals of prints.

Theatrical distribution, however, solved only a part of the problem. Unlike England, Canada was geographically large and sparsely settled, with over half of the population living in rural areas. To reach this audience, Grierson turned to the method used by the GPO - the traveling theatre - this time on a scale hitherto untried. The project was directed by Donald Buchanan and inaugurated in January 1942, under the auspices of the Wartime Information Board. "WIB," was at that time under the direction of Herbert Lash and the program was dubbed Lash's Circuits.

In the first year thirty projection units were equipped. Each man was given a territory, a route with twenty points on it and an hour-long program of films. At the end of each month when the circuit was completed, he was given a new package of films. The projectionists worked under field representatives and sent in monthly reports of audience reaction, opinions and suggestions. They also attended special conferences on film utilization and discussion techniques.

There are enough anecdotes, humorous and sometimes harrowing, about the rural projectionists to provide inspiration for at least three musical comedies. They held talent contests and called square dances, as well as showing films. Some people canoed thirty miles to schools and grange halls to attend the showings. During the winter, the projectionists were often met with sleds to take them through drifted roads to
their destination. On one winter night a filmed wolf jumped howling on
the screen, and so did all of the dogs who lay sleeping in the hall.
During a showing of a nature film, an owl flew in and defecated on the
screen astounding the audience by this new height in film realism.

The program was increased to ninety-four operators by January 1945.
At the same time it was expanded to train local projectionists to work
on a voluntary basis. Most of the circuits were run in cooperation with
Provincial and university departments of education. When possible, the
programs were run in conjunction with farm forum groups and with radio
discussions of the same or allied topics. The average monthly audience
was estimated at over a quarter of a million.

In May of 1942 a second non-theatrical circuit was put into operation
to publicize the war effort among industrial workers. The National
Trade Union film circuit was sponsored by the Canadian Congress of Labor,
the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, the Worker's Educational Association and the NFB. Monthly screenings were held in union halls across the
country from September to May.

The programs not only contained films, but were integrated into
educational units dealing with such subjects as unemployment, recreation-
al programs, rehabilitation, labor management committees and internation-
al relations. Discussion trailers and supplementary printed materials
were provided. The average monthly audience was estimated at approxi-
mately forty thousand.

Far larger and more significant were the industrial circuits with an
estimated audience of nearly four hundred thousand. Begun in January,
1943, a series was set up to provide eleven programs a year at the rate
of one a month. The showings were held in the plants and run partly on company time and partly on free time, such as lunch breaks and between work shifts. Itinerant projectionists were used to show the films as on the rural circuits. The main difference, however, was that where the rural man averaged two shows per day, the industrial man might have three or four each night.

In addition to the captive audiences of the circuits, another non-theatrical audience emerged through the volunteer projection service. Interested groups, such as Junior Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce, Public Libraries, Youth, Women's and Church groups began film series. No accurate audience figures are available for this group, but it numbered at least as many as the trade unions and probably considerably more. The total non-theatrical audience for NFB films had reached nearly a million per year by the end of the War.

By 1945 the Board had become an impressive organization with a staff of 739 and 500 films to its credit, a remarkable record compared to the 350 to 400 that the MPB in its twenty-five years of existence was able to produce. NFB was serving a world-wide audience of well over thirty million. A new challenge, however, was at hand - one which was to be the acid test for the Board - the reorganization for peacetime. Grierson left in October of 1945, Legg followed a few months later as did Hawes and Spottiswoode. The Commissionership was handed to Ross McLean and James Beveridge became head of Production. The only members of the original GPO group to remain were Norman McLaren and Evelyn Cherry. The staff, which had been trained to make wartime films, now had to make peacetime films and do it without the guiding hand of Grierson and company.
In the United States, the Office of War Information was dissolved, ending for good all American domestic government film production.

Grierson sensed similar sentiments in Canada. In a final message to the staff he stated:

I know the special difficulties which emerge after a war: of the emergence of people who believe in the economy of scarcity, people who want public services but not at the expense of taxes, people who think there is a special sanctity in shortening sail, lowering sights, cutting to the bone and in general returning to a parsimonious, constipated back-house parochialism.\(^16\)


Stuart Legg also anticipated the difficulties that lay ahead and proposed a set of guiding principles to meet them. In his final statement to the staff he said:

...The times are not ripe for sitting back and talking memories. Perhaps at this moment they contain more seeds of urgency than they did throughout the seven years of the Film Board's existence. All that matters now is the future...

Up to now, the Film Board has maintained its leadership in imagination. That is why it has been strong in itself, and why it carries the reputation of having done the state home service. It is vital that this leadership should continue.

I believe that it will continue provided that four conditions are fulfilled.

The first condition is that it shall keep close and perpetual contact with the nation.

The Film Board cannot be a cloistered monastery, sufficient unto itself. It cannot spin out of its own belly like a silkworm.
Documentary has been called the shaping of reality. But reality lies outside the film-maker, not inside him. It lies all across the country, in the need for getting things done; in the plans for doing... in the growing points of constructive actions taken by communities and cities.

These are the realities to which documentary seeks to give dramatic shape in order to fire the public imagination and the public will. They are the fuel which has to be brought to the power-house. Those inside the power-house should always be developing new ways of bringing in this fuel. They should set up and maintain their own lines of communication; establish and maintain their own regular correspondents in different parts of Canada; seek and maintain their own access to the leaders of Canadian thought and action; create and maintain their own frequent opportunities of discussion with them.

The second condition is that the pressure of daily chores shall never be allowed to obscure the ultimate purpose of documentary. That purpose is everywhere the same, and it can be simply expressed.

At all times, in all places, change takes place. Sometimes it takes place slowly and imperceptibly; sometimes with violent rapidity. In whatever form it comes, it cannot be prevented or stopped. It is inevitable.

But change is accompanied by difficulty. It often generates confusion and dislocation. And if they have no compass to steer by, people find it hard to adjust themselves and their activities to its inevitable demands. This is especially true of our own times, when the developments of technology are causing change to take place at a constantly increasing speed.

It is the business of documentary to act as a compass in the midst of change; to explain the forces that create it; to assist the processes of re-orientation that it makes necessary; to demonstrate how the new which it brings can be turned to good human account... 

The third condition is that the Film Board shall always be developing new techniques of expression.

It has been said that in our society change is now occurring so fast and creating such complex problems of comprehension, that the traditional forms of expression are themselves being replaced by new media of address.
Thus, in the realm of public information there is no longer an art of painting or of photography, but only one of exhibition; there is no longer an art of film-making, but only one of presentation. . .

It is therefore necessary that established styles should invariably be called in question before being reapplied to new themes. It is always easier to save time and effort by falling back on routine treatments; and the slick mastery of effect which this practice soon produces can assume a deceptive appearance of perfection.

But the known, at best, is tedious; at worst, it leads to an obsession with unimportant detail. And the slick, when applied to matters in reality profound, will end by revealing only its own superficiality. . .

The fourth condition is that the Film Board shall not forget that it is part of a world-wide movement.

Documentary is in one sense national. It has native roots and native tasks in Britain and the United States, in France, the Lowlands, Sweden, the Soviet Union, Mexico, India, and elsewhere. It is taking root in China, Denmark, Australia and New Zealand.

But in a larger sense it is supra-national. The problems which it seeks to clarify are problems common to every land. The understandings which it seeks to create are understandings demanded by all men. The imagination which it seeks to fire is an imagination necessary to the whole world if human progress is to be orderly and concerted.

Seven years ago documentary everywhere welcomed the formation of its Canadian group. Since then, the work of this group has won the respect of other sections of the movement.

Let that powerful support never be lost.17

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17Stuart Legg - Memorandum, March 25, 1946

The War greatly accelerated the growth of the Board. In six years during the depression, Grierson had slowly and painfully formed a unit
that in production, distribution and world influence had far out-stripped
the EMB-GPO effort. It is impossible to determine the exact amount of
influence that NFB had on the Canadian public during this time since
the test of its merit was not to come for another four years. It did
serve, along with CBC and the press, as a major unifying force in for-
warding the war effort and in bringing information to the people. Per-
haps the most dramatic example of the effect and effectiveness of the
Board could be seen in the response to the rural circuit program.

In the early years there were whole audiences who had never seen any
film. A great many had never been exposed to sound films. The films
in themselves were also a surprise, in that they were not merely a
night's entertainment, but were about people like themselves, and dealt
with subjects and problems relevant to their own communities. The films
provided them with needed information to improve their health, grow
better crops, and catch more fish. The projectionists provided a direct
link to the outside world and to the Government, adding a personal
touch that press and radio never achieved. That the people were willing
and eager to come to the showings attested to the program's initial
success. More important, however, was that at the end of the War these
people were willing to take an active part in the programs by forming
film councils and libraries and by showing and circulating the films on
their own.

The job of meeting the immediate needs of the War had ended. The
task at hand was to return to the basic tenents of the Film Act - the
need to "coordinate national and departmental film activity, to create a
quality educational service, to meet the information needs of the
Government departments." The burden was great.
There was first the need to create films that would serve the immediate ends of the various departments. This called for new types of films. It meant that people who had been trained to make newsreels out of stock footage, suddenly had to become writers and directors. It also meant that each film produced for a department should be an integral part of the total educational program of that department. The responsibility of carrying out this plan fell to the production units. These had developed as rather loosely-knit affairs often responsible for a number of jobs, related only by the necessity of their having to be done. The units had to become individualized; their producers had to know what field of education they were going to develop, in short, to become experts in educational planning, as well as imaginative filmmakers.

During the War long-range planning of this type had not been nearly so important. The main concern had been to recruit and train a team of technical workers. The units were, at the beginning at least, small enough that the Commissioner and the Director of Production could maintain personal contact with both the sponsorship and the production aspects of the films. With the dissolution of the 'WIB' this was no longer the case.
CHAPTER III

POST WAR RECOVERY 1945-1950

The dual roles of Film Commissioner and head of the Wartime Information Board were more than Grierson could handle. In the last years of the War, Ross McLean gradually took over most of the responsibilities of the Film Commissioner's post. While the job was not new to him when he took over as Acting Commissioner in 1945, the situation was already beginning to change.

McLean was a very different kind of administrator than his predecessor. Grierson's background had been in the field of sociology, and psychology of mass media. He had been involved directly in film work for ten years before coming to Canada. McLean, on the other hand, had a background in literature and journalism, working as a correspondent for various Canadian publications in the 1930's. In 1935 he became editor of publications for the National Liberal Federation and soon was appointed private secretary to Vincent Massey, High Commissioner for Canada in the United Kingdom. It was during his stay in England that he first met Grierson.

Grierson's role as head of NFB was that of an enthusiastic debate coach, whipping his team into shape for the big meet. With McLean, the relationship was comparable to that of a college professor conducting a seminar of graduate students. In general, this situation was best in
terms of the post-war demands for carefully developed groups of films, integrated into educational programs. McLean, however, lacked Grierson's skills as a public relations man and political "in-fighter," qualities which would have stood him in good stead when the Board came under a series of attacks in 1946-1949. In 1945, however, his first job was to organize and streamline the production units and prepare the staff for their new work.

Training during the War had been haphazard. There were no film schools or university cinema departments to draw upon for talent. The Motion Picture Bureau was a closed shop and most of the independent companies were little more than family businesses. Grierson brought in about a dozen "name" film-makers, but these accounted for only a small percentage of the staff which at one time numbered almost 800.

Those who came to work, came because they had heard of Grierson, or they wanted to make films, or knew somebody, or needed work. They were mostly university graduates -- teachers, journalists, a few engineers and lawyers, and some fresh out of college or art school. They had three things in common -- youth, lack of experience and élan. Promotions were rapid and people hired for one job often found themselves doing another in a matter of weeks. Mobility and morale were at a peak which could never be equalled. Production during the War was a crusade, afterwards -- a job.

For the most part, training was given on the job. However, people such as Joe Gibson - a combat cameraman, held formal classes; and Stuart Legg gave occasional lectures and written handouts. The usual practice
was to team up newcomers with those who had some experience. One such trainee was Grant McLean who began by shooting optical effects and rose to head of Production. In addition to making films, Norman McLaren's job was to build an animation unit. Most of his recruits came from the Ontario College of Art and L'Ecole des Beaux Arts. His students were soon producing the "Chants Populaires" and "Let's All Sing Together" series.

Following the War, the situation changed. Production was cut back and with it the staff. Many who had been hired during the War stayed on, but there was a fairly steady turnover. With the pressure of a mass training program no longer existing, a more formal approach was possible. New employees were given tours and lectures explaining the functions of the various departments. There was some tendency to regard lecture attendance as indicative of junior status. Interest was not as high as was hoped. Most of those who came were concerned primarily with the job they would have to do. Formal programs have waxed and waned through the years. But on-the-job training has always remained the most important way to learn. In short, the policy has been, as Raymond Spottiswoode commented, "to pick only the keenest and most intelligent men and women and give them their head as quickly as possible."

After the War, production facilities did not improve as many had hoped. Much of the equipment being used was left over from the MPB days and literally held together with pieces of wire clipped from the fence that ran behind the John Street Building. The new equipment purchased during the War was also becoming worn. It wasn't until late in 1945 that adequate stocks of lenses and spare parts were obtained.
Space was also at a premium. While the main production center remained at John Street, other departments were housed in a half-dozen buildings around Ottawa, making communication difficult and time-consuming. During the War there had been hope of getting a modern plant. The main building was an over-crowded, wooden, ramshackle affair. There had been one serious film fire in 1943 and always the possibility of another.

A system for housing production units had been established in 1944. By the end of 1945 there were twelve units in operation, headed in the following way.

World In Action
Canada Carries On
Industrial Relations
Health and Rehabilitation
Newsreel and Armed Forces
Animation
Dominion - Provincial
Travel and Outdoors
Armed Services
Foreign Language Program
Agriculture
French Language Program
Education

Tom Daly
Sydney Newman
F. Lasse
Vincent Paquette
G. A. Wells
James MacKay
W. A. Macdonald
Leslie McFarlane
E. W. Scythes
H. Campbell
Lawrence & Evelyn (Spice) Cherry
Guy Glover
Gudrun (Bjerring) Parker

"WIA" was finished and "CCO" continued as a Board-initiated program rather than a sponsored series. "Pictorial Hometown News," "Rural Newsreel" were stopped before or with the end of the War. "Canada
Communique" and "Eyes Front" were discontinued leaving only "Screen Magazine" and "Eye Witness." In the post-war era the staff began the task of producing a broad spectrum of films. "Front Line Reports" became "Eye Witness" and its French counterpart "Les Reportages," "Coup D'Oeil." Both were compiled from the same material. They followed the standard newsreel format of the day and contained three or four items about the Canadian scene, e.g., shipping milk from Montreal to children in Europe, tuna fishing in Nova Scotia, logging on the British Columbia Coast, etc.

"CCO" kept pace with the changing times, shifting its emphasis from war to peace. Back to Jobs (1945) told the story of returning veterans. As the troop ships land and bands play, soldiers are welcomed home. Once out of uniform they are seen in a series of shots -- fishing, mining, logging and farming. Many take advantage of government educational aid and go to trade schools, high schools and universities. In hospitals the blind are trained and the disabled receive physical and occupational therapy. The film ends with a montage of work and play scenes. Jobs was perhaps the last of the superficial montage films, with fast cutting and narration describing each picture. In the films which followed, producer Sydney Newman sought to create greater depth as well as breadth.

Tom Daly's Suffer Little Children (1945) was one of the best of the wartime series and equal to, if not better than Legg's Churchill's Island. In the opening shot bombers rumble across a clear sky leaving long tails of vapor. An anti-aircraft gun tilts up and follows the planes. The camera tilts down - the gun is manned by ragged children. Tiring of the game they leave and scatter to play through scenes of ruins that
appear to stretch to infinity. "The school is shattered, there are no homes -- many look to the past," says the narrator as two teen-age boys stare through the window of a ruined school and the scene dissolves to a rally scene from Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*. Children are pushed about in food riots and a small boy drinks from a leaking hose as a fat rat scurries down an alley. The final irony is a shot of two boys sorting through a pile of bricks and paper money - looking for salvageable bricks. The remainder of the film deals with the relief work of the U.N. bringing in food, clothing, live stock and setting up aid stations. The final scenes at camps for children show faces of children playing, swimming and eating. A final cut-back to the faces of children in the ruins serves as a reminder of the job yet to be done.

*Suffer Little Children* owed much to such films as Willard Van Dyke's *The City* (1939) for its "set them up-knock them down style" and structure. Its strength, however, lay mainly in the visuals. *Little Children* was used, almost intact as a segment of Rotha's *The World Is Rich*.

The first of the post-war "CCO's" to break new ground was *Music In the Wind* (1945) by Jean Palendar. This shortened version of *Singing Pipes* was a straight and dull report on the building of the Casavant pipe organs at Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec. In the long version, a boy toots a willow whistle as he walks through a wood. The narrator explains how man has always liked music. As the boy walks, he is accompanied by torrents of Bach. After a tour through the organ works, there is a complete performance of Bach's "Toccata and Fugue in D Minor" by one of the organ makers. Gone were the fast-cutting and machine-gun narration, replaced by a tepid illustrated lecture.
A later and somewhat better musical effort was Gudrun Bjerring's *Listen to the Prairies* (1945), released on the series as *A City Sings*. *Prairies* covered the annual Winnipeg Spring music festival. Beginning with the selecting of music for competition, followed by scenes of adults and children practicing, the film ends with cuts of various performances. The pacing is slow, but the material provides enough interest to keep it moving. Most of the film's reputation appears to come from the final shots—a series of slow dissolves of a mixed chorus which continues singing Bach over panning shots of immense wheat fields and tiny grain elevators on a long horizon.

The new role of "CCO" was to interpret the whole of Canada in all its aspects. In doing this, the series became less of a newsreel and concentrated mainly on individual feature stories. As such, the subjects were given greater variety in style and treatment and thus lost much of the uniformity of the wartime films. Typical titles of the 1945-50 era were *Home Town Paper*, *Toronto Symphony*, *Montreal by Night*, *The New North*, *Canada-World Trader*, and *Science Goes Fishing*. Some of the films took on more of a spot-news quality, e.g., *Inside the Atom* (1948) a report on atomic energy developments, and *City in Siege* (1950) which covered the Winnipeg flood of 1950. Some of the series were made with an eye to international distribution particularly across the border. Two such examples were *Singing Stars of Tomorrow* (1946) and *Fashions by Canada* (1946). Like the wartime films, the post-war "CCO's" were still ground out at the rate of one a month. While they did achieve a greater degree of variety they still had a lack-luster about them - evidence of the necessities of expediency.
During the post-war era the Board continued to produce films of an ethnographic nature, they were basically the same product as had been produced during the war - sixteen millimeter, color and approximately one reel in length. Titles included such subjects as Indian Hunters, Eskimo Summer, Iceland on the Prairies, Skeena River Trapline and Inside Newfoundland. The same was true of films on the arts. In addition to films about artists, such as Klee Wyck (1946) - a film about the life and works of Emily Carr - in the same manner as the Tom Thompson film - there was a film about ballet - Ballet Festival. A number of other cultural subjects included Singing Pipes, The Living Gallery and Toronto Symphony.

A new group of films was also produced specifically for classroom use. Films were made about the postman, the policeman, dental hygiene and nutrition. Designed to appeal to children, these were sponsored by the Department of Health and Welfare. The Board also initiated its own classroom films beginning with a series of color productions entitled "Birds of Canada."

While producing a wide variety of films in the five years following the war, NFB also turned out films of a decidedly different character and style from those that had preceded them. The newsreel, which most of the film-makers had been trained to make, was dead - replaced by a variety of dramatic and didactic formats. The post-war era was also the era of the first "big" films--the prestige documentaries. While such films as 13 Platoon and Action Stations could be placed in this category, they were topical subjects and limited, for the most part, to the Canadian audience. In contrast, the "Mental Mechanisms" - films for the
Department of National Health and Welfare - reached a wide audience which has increased continuously through the years. These films gained a reputation for the Film Board by winning a number of awards in several international film festivals.

It was through the sponsored program that most of the Canadian film-makers began to produce their first completely original films. The Connors Case - a thirty-five minute drama made for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police - had an excellent theatrical distribution record, proof that the Board could produce dramas that compared favorably with similar British and American efforts. Drug Addict was a film with an originality of a different kind. Co-sponsored by the Police and the Department of Health and Welfare, it was the first film made in either Canada or the United States to deal with the subject of narcotics addiction.

For the Department of Defence, the Board produced its first feature-length film Exercise Musk Ox - an hour long documentary on the testing of the army's new snowmobile. Musk Ox did well theatrically and was followed by several more films that explained the techniques of modern defense and demonstrated new military hardware.

Much of the sponsored work consisted of short films for non-theatrical distribution. The agricultural films of Evelyn Cherry and Raymond Garceau touched on a variety of subjects close to the farmer. Her cinematic bulletins showed rural Canadians how to control plant and animal pests, breed better livestock, sanitize, electrify and beautify their farm buildings.

The Department of Veterans Affairs needed films to integrate the returning veteran into post-war society. Films discussed the problems
of disability - encouraging the business-man to hire the handicapped veteran and fit him to the proper job. In turn, other films encouraged veterans to take full advantage of the Government assistance available to them by describing programs for rehabilitation, job training, and higher education.

The Department of Labour sponsored films on job training and an excellent series of short films on industrial safety. Fisheries produced films on new methods of packing and preservation. Mines and Resources chose film to demonstrate the new techniques of finding and processing ores, as well as to show the progress being made on the opening of the north to new mining ventures.

Aside from the sponsored program, very few large budget films were being made. The prestige film was an expensive item and with the post-war budget cuts most of the production effort was in the sponsored program. Two of these prestige films are of note because they attempted to develop styles and concepts that had only been tried within the bounds of sponsorship.

The Boy Who Stopped Niagara (1947) directed by Leslie McFarlane was originally produced as a feature-length children's film. It was released, however, in a thirty-minute version. Using professional actors, Niagara was an account of a six-year-old boy named Tommy Twidgett, who wanders away from a school tour of the falls and into the main control room in the power station. He is met by an aged engineer who tells him not to pull the main switch and stop the falls. He does, the falls stop, and the switch handle breaks off. The scenes that follow show the results - mad housewives descend on the hydro office demanding water to wash
clothes. A radio announcer broadcasts into a dead microphone. Twidge tt, accompanied by his sister, attempts to return the handle and is pursued by the radio announcer, the tour guide and an irate hot-dog vendor who has no electricity to grill his product. The chase ends with all of them crashing through the roof of the hall where the local mayor is delivering a speech. It is, of course, all a dream of young Twidge tt who was struck on the head by a yo-yo.

The sets were elaborate, the set-ups numerous and the acting appalling. Money to produce the film came from the Rank Organization and it was eventually distributed in the United Kingdom as well as in Canada. Niagara was NFB's first straight drama film having no particular message to push. While technically the film was quite satisfactory, it was an artistic disaster. Up to that time, drama, and particularly humorous drama, had never been one of the Board's strong points. That the situation remained unchanged in 1947 was made painfully obvious by this film. It was not until the 1950's and 60's that comedy-drama was again attempted and then on the adult level. These later efforts, were almost exclusively by French writers and directors who excelled in subtlety and the light-touch.

A film that created a great deal of interest and concern among educators and parents was Gudrun Parker's Who Will Teach Your Child (1948). Beginning with a rambling series of scenes of a small boy growing up, the film shows him in a classroom under the control of an obviously bad teacher - she assigns "busy work" and answers a child's query with "Don't ask silly questions." The next sequence involves a thirteen-year-old boy who was called a "Polack" by one of his classmates.
His teacher is understanding -- she consoles him and in the following scene he is in the classroom singing while the teacher plays the piano. There is a cut to reactions of awe and pleasure from the other students.

The third sequence deals with Miss G., a new teacher. Children disrupt her class. After a girl has rifled her desk, finding a love letter, gossip spreads and the classroom situation becomes intolerable. In desperation Miss G. slaps a student who has been baiting her. "What a waste! Miss G. is one of many who leave for various reasons," comments the narrator. There is a brief bit with the good teacher and her class sitting on the grass studying the stars. The final sequence involves those who would stop aid to education. Two older men talk on the street about unnecessary expense. "Why just yesterday" says one. . . .There is a cut to a classroom circa 1900, a small boy rises and in answer to a question about the nature of the Japanese people, states that they are small, civilized and live in paper houses. There is a cut to a scene of post-A-bomb Japan. Lights come on in a classroom, circa 1948, a lively discussion begins. There is a montage of teaching activities as the narrator asks "Old knowledge is no good. How are we going to get and keep good teachers?"

Child was more note-book than film - a case assembled from a variety of rather over-blown and loosely integrated vignettes. That there was a need for more and better teachers and up-to-date education was obvious. There was not, however, any consideration given to the problem of stimulating an interest in teaching and thereby attracting prospective teachers.

The 1945-1950 period was one of learning; the training of the War years was mostly technical. The production styles were obsolete, and as
such had to be unlearned. The post-war efforts could accurately be described as a "boot strap" operation. In this respect, considering the kind and quality of films that had been produced during the War, the post-war budget problems, and political pressures, the films were remarkably good. Those who made them were developing workable styles and created a wide spectrum of films, all of which were aimed at developing a democratic community. While they still had wall-to-wall narration, the narrators stopped shouting as they had during the War. The films were original -- not merely spliced-together-bits of someone else's stock footage. The pictures were sharpened and the sound tracks were completely intelligible. The films were winning awards in festivals and gaining critical notice over the world. Once this initial learning period had ended, the Film Board was ready to take its place as one of the outstanding film producers in the world.

Following the War, theatrical distribution began to decline. By 1947 audience figures dropped from the war-time high of three million per month, to slightly over two million; and the number of theaters showing NFB films declined from a war-time high of 480 to 325. Most of this loss could be accounted for by the elimination of the "WIA" series. By 1948 the French Language "Vigie" series had been launched and the figures had climbed past the war-time high. By 1949, NFB films were being shown in 749 theatres; by 1950 the number had risen to 803.

Most theatrical distribution was accounted for by series films. In addition to animated shorts, however, several individual films did succeed in gaining fairly wide distribution. Two of the films, The Connors Case and Exercise Musk Ox were long enough to play many theaters as second
features. Two of the short films made for the U.N. received a wide playing. **Out of the Ruins**, released in 1946, was still being shown through 1947. Topicality was undoubtedly a factor since the film dealt with post-war Greece. **Hungry Minds**, however, did well on its own merits and was shown in 533 theaters in one year. Perhaps the most interesting event on the theatrical scene was the release of two films not originally intended for that audience, **The Connors: Case** and **Who Will Teach Your Child**. Both had long runs in Canadian theaters. In many cases they were held over by popular request, thus proving that short films of sufficient quality could meet with popular approval. This did not, however, set any precedent, and single short films in theaters remained the exception and not the rule.

The "WIA" series was the Board's mainstay in theaters over the world. When the series was dropped, so did overseas audience figures. **NFB** did, however, continue to supply newsreel footage to the United States, Latin America, Europe and the Commonwealth countries. Films produced for the U.N. were distributed via the various U.N. agencies and were played mainly on children's circuits. A new market - television - had also developed. During the war, **NFB** films had been televised in the United States. In the year immediately following the war both American and British and later Canadian television made considerable use of **NFB** films. It was not until 1953, however, that the Board entered into production designed for that medium.

Most of the **NFB** films distributed abroad were through non-theatrical channels. Offices set up during the war were maintained in New York, Chicago, Washington, Mexico City, London and Sydney - in addition to
film deposits in Canadian Embassies, Legations and Trade Commissions in twenty-five nations. The greatest saturation was in the United States, where the Board maintained four regional libraries in Canadian Government posts. In keeping with the wartime precedent, prints were sold and rented whenever possible. By 1946 thirty-three different subjects were being carried by commercial distributors. This number had doubled by 1948. Because of cuts in the budget, the Board was forced to close its offices in Washington and Sydney. Distribution figures, however, continued to climb. Commercial distributors in the United States did a brisk business in NFB prints. In the United Kingdom the Central Office of Information circulated prints through rental libraries, colleges and universities. The British Film Institute, the Scottish Central Film Library and the Worker's Educational Association were only a few of the other organizations using NFB films. In Latin America and most of the other nations, the Board's films were distributed through official government channels, through Departments of Education, Film Libraries and traveling circuits. By 1950 NFB films were reaching a world audience of over seventy million - more than twice the number reached during the war.

In Canada major changes were taking place in the non-theatrical field. In the Spring of 1946 both the industrial and the trade union circuits were discontinued. The combination of budget cuts and the fact that the films had principally served war production ends, resulted in the decision. Similar cuts reduced the number of Board-operated rural circuits from eighty-five in 1946 to sixty-seven in 1947. By 1950 NFB projectionists were serving only sparsely settled areas.
The situation, however, was not as grim as it might seem. In 1946-47 the Board was able to promote a number of supplementary circuits. Almost from the beginning, pressure had been exerted to make the film circuits a part of local community activities and not a Government-sponsored free hand-out. The equipment was turned over, and when possible, was sold to local groups. The projectionist became a field representative, working to organize showings, to train projectionists and to open up new territories. School systems, Provincial departments of education and agriculture, wheat pools and county federations of agriculture began operating circuits in 1946. By 1947 there were ninety, bringing the total up to 157 for that year. The rural circuits were operated almost completely by local groups as of 1950. The rural audience reached per month had increased from 268,400 in 1946 to well over seven million by 1950. The rise in audience figures was accompanied and aided by the rural electrification program which was instituted following the War. Production of an increased number of interpretative films, such as This Is Our Canada, Wings Over Canada, The Great Canadian Shield and Partners In Production, as well as information films, created interest in and were welcomed by the public.

Concomitant with the development of the rural circuits was the growth of the community film councils, film depots and film libraries. The council was composed of interested citizens or groups and worked with the field representative in organizing showings. Councils were organized in every Province. By 1950 there were over three hundred representing several thousand school, social and community organizations.
The councils worked to establish film libraries and film depots to facilitate distribution. Some of the prints placed in the libraries were donated by the Board. Whenever possible, however, they were bought from the Board, from government departments or from other sponsoring organizations. The councils raised their own funds and purchased what films they wished. These formed a permanent collection circulated in addition to the blocks of films already in circulation on a regular basis by NFB. Film libraries numbered only forty-four at the end of the war; by 1950 there were 235. Since there were several film councils in each Province, federations of film councils were formed to create purchase pools. This avoided duplication and improved the means of circulation.

The National Film Society in cooperation with the Department of Health and Welfare, created and circulated a collection of health films. A circulating medical film library was also created in cooperation with the main medical teaching centers in the country. The distribution arm of the Board, working in cooperation with the Canadian Education Association, prepared guide books on NFB films and worked to increase the use of films in schools. Titles, such as Life on Western Marshes, Ballot Boxes, Trappers of the Sea (Lobster fishing) and Newfoundland, Sentinel of the Atlantic were popular and found a ready audience among Canadian teachers and students who would otherwise have had to be content with American products or old tourist films from the MPB.

The one area of governmental expansion in distribution activity was in the tourist program. Field representatives of NFB worked in cooperation with the Government Travel Bureau, and the Parks Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources. They carried out an extensive summer
program of film showings in national and Provincial parks, on cruise ships and at resorts over the country. In non-theatrical as well as theatrical outlets, travel films, urging Canadians to spend their tourist dollars in Canada, reached an estimated audience of three million.

The important fact regarding distribution in the years 1945-1950 was that in spite of budget reductions and a decrease in the amount of direct participation by NFB, audience figures increased by about six to eight times. While exact audience figures were not available, theatrical bookings in 1945 totaled 480. In 1950, 4,377 NFB films were booked in Canadian theaters. The rural audience of 250,000 in 1945 had grown to 7,000,000 by 1950. The total non-theatrical audience had increased from 465,000 to 9,298,068. In the 1945 to 1950 period, the world audience for NFB films had climbed from an estimated thirty million to over seventy million.¹

¹Although the trends these figures represent are valid, the figures themselves must be considered as rough estimates. It was not until the mid-1950's that a standardized form of reporting such figures was instituted and not until 1962-63 that an exhaustive study and revision of the reporting system was completed. See C. W. Gray, A Friendly But Critical Look at Film Distribution, Canada, 1963.

The image of NFB during the War could not have been better. National Film Board and the Wartime Information Board represented the propaganda arm of the war effort and John Grierson stood for NFB and WIB. Grierson was immensely popular. He wrote articles, made speeches and radio
broadcasts. In short, he embodied the spirit of the war effort. The

2 It was while Grierson was in Canada that he wrote most of the material included in Grierson on Documentary.

Ottawa Journal ran a series of long articles on the WIB praising its work. "Grierson—He's Colossal" stated the title of a three-page spread on Grierson in The Montreal Standard Magazine which went on to describe him as, "A man with ideas and contempt for red tape, John Grierson has made Canada a leader in the field of documentary films." McLean's Magazine dubbed him "Propaganda Maestro" in a five-page article discussing his work in the United Kingdom and Canada. Similar praise was added by an article in The National Home Monthly. In fact, during the war it was hard to find a harsh word in the press, about Grierson and his activities. Those who were foolish enough to attack him were put down with amazing speed and thoroughness. With his formidable reputation, few dared to criticize him openly.

Under popular leadership, the Film Board grew in popularity. "Canada holds leading position in making documentary films" stated the Montreal Gazette in 1944. Edgar Anstey, writing in The Spectator (London), praised the "WIA" series as did Bosley Crowther writing in The New York Times. The Montreal Gazette, The Ottawa Citizen, The Journal and The Winnipeg Tribune reviewed the Board's films with a critical but favorable eye. The Board's other activities did not go unnoticed. The Gazette ran a long article on the excellent educational work done by NFB in developing the rural circuits and bringing worthwhile films to people who would
otherwise have little contact with the outside world. In an editorial in the Ottawa Citizen, critic Elmore Philpott commented on the high quality of the Board's wartime work. He ended by stating "The return to Peace will make it necessary for Canada to decide what to do with this flourishing wartime baby. Under no circumstances should Canada disown the Film Board. The job it has done in the War is no less valuable than could be done in peace."3


Relations with government departments could generally be described as very good, during the War. Press releases from sixty sponsoring organizations issued between 1941 and 1945 were unanimous in their praise for the wartime work of the Board. Beneath the surface, however, the situation was not so smooth as it might have seemed. Grierson, at times, went roughshod over ministers in telling them what kinds and how many films their departments needed, or whether a film should be released in a French version. At the time, not all departments were so enlightened as to want to spend two or three thousand dollars more in order to reach French Canadians.

Being on good terms with Prime Minister Mackenzie King, who overruled these ministers, Grierson won most of his battles. In the end, he almost always was vindicated because he was right and the films pleased the sponsors. Nevertheless, Grierson incurred the personal wrath of a number of ministers, deputy ministers and others. This ill-feeling was carried through the post-war years and directed at the Board.
Many of NFB's post-war problems lay within the structure of the Film Act itself. While not a government department, the Board lacked the financial freedom of the corporate state of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. NFB, therefore, was required to fit its financial operations into the general scheme used by the government departments. The form used, however, made no provision for income from any outside source. NFB received half or more of its income from other government agencies. Trapped in the paradox of being a business operation, functioning in a governmental context, the Board had to get along as best it could using a combination of improvised methods.

During the first three years of the War, the volume of business conducted per year climbed rapidly from less than one hundred thousand to something over two million dollars. Staff had to be hired on short notice, many of them were inexperienced and nearly all were confounded by the mélangé of bookkeeping systems. The Auditor General and the Comptroller of the Treasury sent in men to check on the irregularities in the Board's treasury and administration. A few employees who had attempted to increase their incomes under the cover of the confusion were fired and prosecuted. The Auditor General and the Comptroller finally succeeded in working out a feasible, though far from satisfactory plan, whereby the Board was provided with a minimal amount of working capital under an estimates clause. At the end of the year, however, estimates often had to be figured several different ways.

Normally a department received funds only through a single, annual appropriation from Parliament. Included in these estimates were provisions for supplies, equipment, travel, special services, etc. For
each there was an allotment and a provision to transfer funds from one
allotment to another. For most departments whose functions and amount
of work varied little from year to year, the system was satisfactory.
For NFB, the problem was complicated by the fact that an undetermined
amount of its money came from other departments for services rendered.
It was impossible to determine a year in advance, what departments would
want which films produced and how much they would cost, until the film
had been requested and preliminary research conducted.

By allowing the Board to present an annual estimate for services
to be rendered, this was then used as working capital -- supplies could
be bought and equipment repaired. At the end of the fiscal year,
March 31, the amount had to be returned to the Consolidated Revenue Fund
with the result that travel advances and stores had to be translated
into cash. Frantic efforts were made to get other departments to pay
their bills before the end of March. When this did not happen - and
this was frequently - camera crews found themselves stranded and pro-
jectionists were unable to continue on their circuits until the treasury
was able to issue checks on the new year's funds.

Other financial problems with regard to film budget estimates
occurred. If an estimate was high and a film cost less than was expected,
the department was charged only the actual cost. If, however, an esti-
mate proved low and a film budget went over the estimated cost, the
Board paid for the excess. Financial irregularities were tolerated
during the War. Afterwards, however, NFB was expected to keep its books
like the other departments. Budgets, however, had to be kept for the
films produced, which would include such costs as scripting, shooting,
location work, animation, editing, special effects and music. The budget had to be based on the various stages of production, and cost had to be covered in the same manner. This required keeping two set of books --one set budgeting expenses in the departmental manner, the other in the film-making manner. At year end, they had to balance. A number of attempts were made to get a new act allowing for fixed-price film contracts and proper continuous working capital. No action was taken and the situation continued.

Difficulties came to the Board in large numbers. Not only was there the bookkeeping agony, but with the decline in the number of sponsored films, Parliament also saw fit to trim the Board's annual appropriations during the post-war years. The staff was cut back from a peak of 787 to about 500. Most of those who were dropped were projectionists on the various circuits. Production personnel also felt the squeeze and a number of less productive individuals and those who had been hired for specialized work, did not have their contracts renewed. Budgets were reduced for all the production sections. This forced the staff to practice a spartan kind of film-making; with few exceptions their films met the demands. Expensive techniques and gratuitous effects were eliminated. While mistakes were made, they were generally those of omission -- resulting in films that were sometimes drab -- but clear and straightforward in their approach.

During the War, relations with commercial film production agencies were cordial. NFB made it its policy to provide assistance and encourage independent producers. Entire films were sub-contracted to Associated Screen News, Crawley Films and Vancouver Motion Pictures. This work was
not a benevolent handout. These producers provided vital services, without which the Board could never have accomplished the large-scale programs that it set up during the War. A.S.N. made all of the release prints for the "Canada Carries On" series and did much of the Board's other laboratory work. They also supplied equipment and did recording. Film Laboratories of Canada made the release prints for the "World In Action" series. Crawley and Vancouver Motion Pictures provided footage as well as completed films.

The production cut-backs and budget reductions which curtailed much of the Board's activity had the same effect on the commercial companies. With no more "WIA" series there were fewer sponsored films requested. It was a matter of simple, conservative arithmetic. The complaints against the Board were loud and bitter, and according to Majorie MacKay, at that time head of distribution research, inconsistent.

The (commercial producers) were crying for more orders from the Film Board. They were also crying that the Film Board was taking bread out of their mouths by unfair competition. Since the Film Board did not have to recover the costs of its building and equipment nor make a profit, it could underbid commercial producers on films. On the other hand, as one group of commercial producers charged this, another group was saying that the Board's films were wastefully extravagant and that they could make the films more cheaply for the government departments. On one point, they all agree...The Film Board should stop producing films for other departments and these should be made by the private producers.4

4Majorie McKay, History of the National Film Board, p. 61.

The commercial producers did not, however, want the Board abolished; rather, they wanted it to be reduced to its 1939 status of a distribution
agency. The rural circuits and the development of the Film Councils had created an audience of several million. Such a guaranteed audience would be quite sufficient to convince a manufacturer to sponsor a film. There was also the even larger, in terms of total numbers reached, international audience which had been built up by the Board's overseas distribution program.

The commercial producers did have a fairly legitimate complaint in the realm of what NFB considered interpretive films. There were no arguments over ethnographic subjects or films about art galleries and music festivals. However, the independents insisted that the subject of Canada's industrial development should be made the exclusive domain of the commercial producer. In the United States, with the exception of films on the war effort, industrial films had always been made by industrial film companies. In the United Kingdom after the termination of the EMB unit, films for industry had been sponsored by industry and produced by independent companies.

The line between a promotional and an interpretive film is admittedly dim, but judgments based on fear have never clarified this definition and the situation in Canada during the late 1940's was no exception. The commercial producers opposed NFB being given corporate status since they felt that this would allow the Board to increase the range of its production. They made a specific request that the Film Act be revised to prevent the Board from making films other than those sponsored by government departments or that fell within clearly-defined cultural areas.

Similar problems existed with the Still Photo Division. In producing picture stories of Canada's industrial growth, staff photographers
had made it a practice to give plant managers, mill and mine operators a set of eight by ten prints for their help and cooperation in letting their operations be photographed. According to the thinking of the Board, this would act as an inducement to other factories, mills, etc. to seek the services of a commercial photographer. The result, however, was that the plant which was photographed would order more prints from the Board and the others who had heard of the situation complained of unfair treatment. The Commercial and Press Photographers Association complained of the competition because the Board's prints were sold at less than the commercial rate.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce, along with the Vancouver Board of Trade, condemned the Film Board for its unfair practices. The conflict soon reached the House of Commons. Some of the criticisms were intelligent, others vitriolic tirades. On July 12, 1946 Gordon Fraser, M.P. from Peterborough, began the first of what became a series of attacks on the Board's financial operations. Charging that 700 members were far too many, he called for a "fumigating." As Grierson and Legg had predicted, the post-war battle cry was "economy." There was also an unexpected twist -- that of subversive activity. Communist spy scandals in the Government had broken shortly after the war, and a generalized "Red" witch hunt was on. Although the Board had nothing to do with the Gouzenko incident, a secretary who had worked there briefly was involved, thus the Board was looked on with suspicion since it was an information organization. In addition to accusing the Board of wasting money, Fraser
suspected that it existed to "defend those accused of espionage" and
that the materials NFB produced were all for the Liberal Party and that
practically everything had a political twist to it.5

5"Film Board Needs Fumigating," Ottawa Citizen, July 12, 1946.

Five days later Norman Jacques, M.P. from Wetashiwin, made the
following statement:

I have not the time to deal with more than one or two
items of unnecessary government expenditure. I should like
to refer, first, to the Film Board, which, I understand, has
700 employees and whose sole purpose is propaganda. I take
it that the people of Canada, the grown-ups, the adults, like
the people of any other country, want to be amused, entertained
by the radio. They do not need to be educated, they do not
need to be instructed, and of those who say they do I ask:
Who is to do the teaching? Who is to do the instructing?
I believe that the Film Board and the Canadian Broadcasting
Corporation have for years been the means of spreading
communism, and that is very largely owing to their propaganda
that we have the situation that we undoubtedly have in
Canada at this time. Do not let anybody make the mistake of
thinking that when we have rounded up the last of the spies,
that is the end of communism and the end of traitors in
Canada.6

6Excerpt from Speech, July 17, 1946.

Jacques' blast was answered by Brooke Claxton, Minister of the
Department of Health and Welfare and also chairman of the Film Board, who
dismissed the charges that the Board was responsible for spawning a Red-
spy network. Jacques, in turn, repeated his charges that the Board pro-
duced propaganda and nothing else. Both the Ottawa Journal and the
Citizen supported the Board praising NFB for its excellent work for UNRRA and labeling Jacques as a reactionary. Both the Film Board and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation were, at the time, under fire because of the spy scandals, and while there was no evidence, the Citizen urged them to be careful that while there was room for "radicalism," there was none for "communism."

In August of 1946 Fraser dropped his accusations of propaganda and communism and concentrated on the Board's financial state of affairs demanding that McLean produce and account for such picayune items as the exact amount Grierson had spent for taxi fares during his term as Film Commissioner. Fraser continued his questions throughout 1946 and 1947. By 1948 they had become regular affairs. Such simple statistics as taxi fares, phone bills, and travel expenses were difficult and time-consuming to produce. When presented they were confusing to read. Needless to say, this did not please Mr. Fraser. His accusation that the Board was "dabbling in celluloid" and that the quality of the films produced was low, brought letters of protest in the Ottawa newspapers. Fraser, at that time, had also taken up the cause of the commercial still photographers and complained of unfair competition, not only in the stills field, but in terms of all of the Board's activities.

In the United States the various government departments have documentary films. The making of the films is turned over to commercial companies. There is no overhead in the government. The pictures are made by these commercial companies and they are generally satisfactory because these companies have not only real motion picture producers but their own engineers, the best that can be obtained, and their own technicians. Here in this country, we just have a Motion Picture Board without any direction at all. No one knows just what the set-up is. Our system of control of film production is under a socialistic policy.
It curtails the expansion of the motion picture industry. In this country a motion picture firm is afraid to expand because it does not know what might happen the next day. . . In Canada we have three motion picture firms and they are all doing a good job. They make splendid pictures in spite of the fact that they have opposition from the National Film Board which is financed out of the taxpayer's money. 7

7 Excerpt from Speech - February 25, 1949

The Canadian Film Weekly, which had traditionally been the voice of the film industry, spoke in favor of NFB in backing up the Ottawa Citizen in the latter's repremands of Fraser. While Fraser had been continually charging that the Board was wasting money, and describing it as "a hungry white elephant asking more money each year," the Board was actually having its budget cut severely. Film Weekly cited the example of the proposed 1948 budget, which Fraser claimed was $818,409 more than the previous year and was in reality $211,274 less. Charging that "the politicos were whacking away at NFB," Film Weekly went on to discuss the matter of film costs. "These," they commented, "seem to horrify legislators, but are not out of line compared to commercial companies." They cited, as an example, the Board's eight top-budget sponsored films of 1945-46. These accounted for a combined cost of $130,377. During that same year NFB had sub-contracted $141,833 worth of films to commercial producers. Fraser's complaining, Film Weekly felt, was unjustified since much of what he was calling the Board's "expenses" were actually going to the commercial producers. The Board, they felt, must be judged by the quality of its products which in their opinion, was excellent.
'Is it the desire of legislators and newspapers,' Film Weekly asked, 'to deprive our country of its share of a great art and the benefits of a new industry by weakening the infant industry of today and restricting its growth so that it will have no appeal to domestic and foreign investors? Canada may soon have a commercial feature industry. We should value the film medium as the radio of CBC. There is a need for Canadian films to build the character of the nation - to counter the influence of the American features that fill theatres.' The article concluded that if support was not given, 'Talented Canadians will be driven to leave the country to make films in the United States. NFB should be helped not condemned -- given better facilities and new buildings.'

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8"Badgering the NFB," Canadian Film Weekly, June 18, 1947, p. 1, 10

Through 1948 and into 1949 the controversy continued, centering more and more on the Board's financial operations. By that time both the supporters and the critics of NFB were urging that a full investigation be made. McLean welcomed the action. He had grown tired of continually having to explain the inadequacies of the Board's financial structure. Emotions had become an important factor by 1949 and the minister responsible to the Board, Robert Winters, was faced with making the decision of what kind of investigation would be carried out and by whom. A House committee would not have been welcomed by the Board any more than the House would have been ready to accept, at face value, the Board's briefs on its business and administration. Winters found that both sides were amenable to having a qualified outside party to conduct the investigation. On November 15, 1949, he appointed the Toronto Management Consultant firm of J. D. Woods and Gordon Ltd. to make a thorough survey of NFB with particular emphasis to be placed on the Board's business procedures.
At the same time, the Toronto Financial Post was preparing a series of articles on the Board. Among the muddle of charges and countercharges of the past, the Post's reporter turned up one new and newsworthy event, that the Defence Department no longer used the Film Board on classified projects and that films dealing with secret developments were being made by commercial producers. The Post described the situation as a "terrific blow to NFB pride and prestige," and cast doubts on the possibility of the policy being changed until the R.C.M.P. had made a complete investigation. The editorial concluded, "NFB officials declare their intentions of breaking through this barrier; insist that they must be given a monopoly of national defence movie business, but there is presently no indication elsewhere in Ottawa that this policy will be changed under present conditions."9

9Kenneth Wilson, "Film Board Monopoly Facing Test?" Financial Post, Toronto, November 17, 1949

The editorial was read in the House of Commons. Brooke Claxton - the Minister of Defence and one-time NFB chairman, answered the charges explaining that clearance by the R.C.M.P. was standard practice, that NFB employees were being screened as rapidly as possible and that owing to the large staff of the Board the job of running background checks on everybody took a long time. He also pointed out that the two companies who were making classified films had less than twenty employees each and were cleared in a short time. The Post evidently, did not consider
Claxton's statements to be of any great significance and continued the series on the Film Board. Other papers picked up the story and the accusations of possible disloyalty continued.

For Ross McLean the situation was indeed frustrating since the Board had no way to answer the charges. One possibility lay in the report made to the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences. Established in April of 1949, under Vincent Massey, Chancellor of the University of Toronto, the Commission sought to prepare a survey on the state of the arts in Canada. NFB along with a number of government agencies prepared a lengthy report on its activities.

Submitted on July 19, 1949, the report ran in excess of seventy pages. It summarized the Board's work in production and distribution, and the scope and effect of the films on the Canadian public, as well as discussing the relations established with other nations and the effects of Canadian films abroad. There was a section on the other services provided by the Board, i.e., the production of still photos, film strips, posters, models and displays. In general, the brief had the appearance of a colossal annual report. It went much farther, however, in describing all activities of the Board, particularly with regard to the cooperation with various groups in planning and distributing film on the non-theatrical circuits. The major difference from an annual report came at the end, where specific requests were made for new legislation and corporate status.

Although thorough and honest, the report was couched in terms of how and what NFB had done and was doing. The information, although obtained from a great many cooperating agencies, was not expressed in the
form of direct quotes, but rather as interpreted by the NFB staff. The chairman of the Board, Robert Winters, publicly disassociated himself from the report, stating that it was not Government policy, that he did not subscribe to it, and that it represented only the opinion of the Board.

McLean's hopes of gaining at least a modicum of credibility for the Board were gone -- for the moment. He urged all of the staff to cooperate with the Woods-Gordon investigators and set to work preparing another report to the Massey Commission--one that would include direct statements and not interpretations of the Board's work with cooperating groups.

For the time being nothing could be done. The articles continued as did the attacks in the House and both had increased in intensity. The charges of poor management, wastefulness, and lack of cooperation, were frequently heard. Those whom Grierson had offended brought complaints of high-handed treatment and of not being given the kinds of films they wanted. The commercial interests redoubled their efforts to force the Board out of film production. Robert Winters defended the Board against the charges of the film industry and urged that the critics wait until the Woods-Gordon report was completed.

Supporters of the Board were few, but M. J. Coldwell - leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, now the New Democratic Party - was one of the few to challenge the commercial interests saying - "We should see that vested film interests in this country, who fear that the
Film Board interferes with their private gain and private profits in this field, do not propagandize members of Parliament as they have attempted to do."¹⁰

¹⁰ Excerpt from Speech, December 1949

The Ottawa Citizen carried the fight further stating,

"...It seems clear that the attack on the Board represents a concerted effort by a group of small Canadian film producers and laboratories to destroy the Board; and that behind this group stand the most powerful movie interests in the world, located in Hollywood. It seems fair also to draw the conclusion that the baiting of the National Film Board in connection with the security screening simply meant the use of another weapon to destroy it. Other government departments are also screened, but none has been subjected to this assault."¹¹

¹¹ Ottawa Citizen, December 28, 1949

On December 15, 1949 a meeting of the Board was held. The subject of discussion was the renewal of Ross McLean's term as Commissioner. He knew of the meeting, but it was not until the news was released to the papers that he was aware of the decision. W. Arthur Irwin had been appointed to replace McLean.

The entire staff was shocked; it was the hardest blow yet to fall. There were plans for a mass resignation, but McLean pointed out that such a move would help neither him nor the Board, that he was expendable but the Board was something that they had all worked to build, that the best
and only sensible thing to do was to continue work and do the best
they could. Writing of that time Marjorie McKay described the situation
thus:

...There was one general assumption - Irwin was the 'hatchet
man' who would preside over the destruction of the Film Board.
He knew nothing of films, either the production or distribution
of them. He had never evidenced any interest in the Film
Board or any aspect of its operation, as far as the staff
knew. ...There was another accepted fact. If anyone resigned
it would be generally believed that he had been asked to
leave since he was considered a security risk. Most felt
that a devil's own dilemma faced them; if they stayed, they
would be out of a job sooner or later, as the Board was
reduced to a cipher; if they left now, they would forever
be branded as a security risk and wouldn't get a job in
Canada or the United States.\footnote{McKay, History of the National Film Board, p. 73.}

McLean was promptly offered a job with the UNESCO films section which
he took. The goodbyes were tearful and the staff gave him a new car for
a going-away present. At the end of the month he left for Paris. The
staff waited to see what would happen. Irwin did not take office until
the first of February. Little work was accomplished and morale hit
bottom.

Irwin was not a film man. His background, like that of McLean, was
in journalism. He had been the editor of MacLeans Magazine, and although
it had run a favorable article on Grierson during the war, it had since
taken no part in the Film Board controversy. When he heard of the morale
situation, Irwin left Toronto and met with the senior staff to discuss
some of the more pressing issues and in general see that things were kept
moving until he took over officially.
. . . he showed himself willing to learn and anxious to have the cooperation of the staff. As one of those present recalled the meeting in the Roxborough, the highlight was when he asked if sometimes the Board didn't produce films which were not any good. There was a shocked silence for a moment. Irwin broke it by saying that while he didn't know motion pictures he had edited a magazine and every once in a while the article or story which had seemed first rate when it was started, turned out to be a dud and not usable. Didn't that ever happen with films, he asked plaintively? . . . Everyone relaxed since there was at the time a film nearing completion which would have to be junked. It happened rarely, perhaps once every three or four years he was informed.13

13Ibid., p. 74.

The critical problem at the time was the Woods-Gordon report. As Irwin was coming in, the Management Consultant team was completing the survey. On March 22, 1950 the report was presented to Robert Winters. Smaller by half than the brief submitted to the Royal Commission, the Woods-Gordon report was a lucid and precise work discussing the Board in terms of its activities and functions, the difficulties under which it had to work, its organization, its business administration, and its relations with government departments and outside organizations. While covering the same ground as earlier reports, the survey brought to light a number of facts which had not been mentioned previously or which had been obscured in a mass of statistical data.

In discussing the activities and functions of the Board, the report gave a brief outline of its development. NFB had grown without the proper accompanying legislation to keep it functioning smoothly. It was set-up as an advisory body, but was forced by circumstances to engage in
production and distribution of films. Later, these activities were expanded to include a number of other media - still photographs, film-strips, displays and designs for posters and publications. In a very short time production was being conducted on a large scale, providing continuous employment for several hundred people. The majority of them had to be hired on contracts which expired every three months.

The lack of trained staff, the fact that operations were conducted in ten separate buildings - old, inefficient and dangerous - was duly reported, along with the annoyances of the temporary nature of employment. The lack of working capital was severely criticized and the Board was praised for its efforts in overcoming the situation. A problem that officials had not been aware of, was that film production in Canada had unique physical problems.

. . .The Board had to do shooting on locations everywhere across Canada. This had been costly due to the traveling and living expenses involved. Furthermore, the Canadian climate has made it necessary to do the bulk of the shooting during four months in the summer. Film production, therefore, has been not only costly, but also difficult to plan and control because of its seasonal nature.14

14J. D. Woods & Gordon Limited, National Film Board: Survey of Organization and Business Administration, p. 5.

The report made it quite clear that since the purpose of the Board was both to provide services to government departments and to produce and distribute films to create an interest in all aspects of Canada, its operations were decidedly different from those of other government departments. One solution would be granting corporate status. However,
this would not give the Government equal control and responsibility in its relationship with NFB with regard to determining Board policies and activities. The solution proposed, was to give the Board a greater degree of financial autonomy. The report also questioned the propriety of a crown minister as an equal member of the Board, thus being in a position where he could be overruled by other members of the Board. It was also felt that the minister had to devote an unduly large amount of time to NFB affairs and that Board members themselves should not be responsible for matters of day-to-day administration.

The organization of the production and distribution arms of the Board were seen as adequate in terms of the existing situation. However, there was a need for streamlining the operation which could be effectively done if the other requirements were met. Woods and Gordon proposed making the number of existing production units flexible to meet demands as they came. The point was to keep the organization tight with a small number of people reporting to a Director of Production. This position had formerly been held by an Executive Producer who was also responsible for a production unit. With these conditions, the report approved of the existing system which had been reduced at the end of the War from the twelve units to four. They were as follows:

Unit A Agricultural topics, French Programs, English and French versions, foreign versions and interpretive films. (Guy Glover)

Unit B Films sponsored by government departments, scientific and cultural films and animation. (Tom Daly)


Unit D International affairs, special projects. (Michael Spenser)
Distribution was in need of revision, particularly in the non-theatrical section. Because of the circumstances Irwin had not had an opportunity to complete his own review of the situation, so it was suggested that no major changes be made until the Commissioner had completed his investigation. Nevertheless, the report recommended a similar streamlining, including such changes as removing the Distribution Section of the Graphics Section and placing it under a central distribution section; transferring the Print Sales and Stores Sections to the Administrative Services Department; placing the Specialized Promotion Section within either the Distribution Department or the Planning Department; and finally, bringing the Information and Information Screening Sections under Distribution, and the public relations work done by the Information Section under the control of the Film Commissioner. This new Distribution Section was envisioned as being organized as follows:

(i) Programming and Promotion - responsible for distribution planning, preparation of promotional material (i.e., the Information Section), and formal screenings.

(ii) Domestic Distribution - responsible for circuit planning distribution contracts, training of field staff and administration of regional offices.

(iii) Foreign Distribution.

(iv) Research and Reports.15

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15Ibid., p. 21.

The Administrative Services Technical Development Sections required little change. Technical Developments remained untouched and the services were formally divided into Accounting, Personnel, Libraries and
Miscellaneous Services. Business Administration, however, needed improvements; although the investigators praised the work done by the staff, they felt there was a need for some changes. Most of these had been blocked by the Board's legal status. With this changed, the proposed recommendations would make it possible for the Board to have the freedom it had so long sought - in accounting, making estimates and contracts, obtaining working capital, purchasing equipment and obtaining a centralized plant to house all of the Board's operations.

In determining the Board's relations with other government departments, Woods and Gordon surveyed the departments with whom the Board had dealt most extensively. The need was seen for closer cooperation between the Board and the departments. Many of the problems were those of communication which could be facilitated through a series of regular progress reports, made by the Board, on films while they were in production and continued throughout their period of distribution. By the same token, it was felt that the departments should make their requirements known to NFB well in advance. There was also the recommendation that the commercial methods of making advances to the Board on the basis of the various stages of work completed on a film be adopted, rather than paying on a monthly basis as had been the case. Recommendations were also made to curb the ever-present (since 1919) problem of independent departmental production of photographic materials. When the still photo sections of several departments had taken over work which had previously been done by the Board, the explanation had been that such work "kept the staff
occupied." The report stated emphatically that these units should do only specialized work and that such duplication of efforts defeated the purpose of such an organization as NFB.

The report was decidedly in favor of the Board, reflecting in many respects the reports of McLean and Grierson that had served to bring NFB into existence. Rather than calling for reductions, the report insisted on expansions and improvements. It made it quite clear that the Board was a business operation and would have to be run accordingly in order to succeed. It also stressed that this operation must fit into the structure of the Federal Government.16

16 For a complete list of recommendations see Appendix C.

The next step was to turn the recommendations of the report into a legal document. Irwin and the staff worked on a draft which was completed by late Spring. On June 21, 1950 the resolution proposing the new act was introduced in the House. Discussion of the bill was calm and unemotional. The Woods-Gordon report had met with full acceptance and the security checks were completed. Out of the 580 employees, only three were found to have been security risks. The charges made by The Financial Post were disproved, and it was commonly agreed, that the Government and not NFB had been at fault for not recognizing the need for changes in the Board's structure. The National Film Act was given Royal Assent on October 14, 1950.

The new Film Act was much more detailed and specific than the Act of 1939. The makeup and duties of the Board members were clearly set
forth, as were the purposes of the Board with regard to its rights and duties as a film producing agency. The main deviations from the 1939 Act were that the Board was both to produce and distribute films in the national interest and to represent the Government in its relations with commercial film producers. One important new development that was to have a far-reaching effect on the Board's creative outlook was the provision to engage in research in film activity.

NFB was also given a variety of new powers, particularly in the desired area of financial affairs. The Board had complete control over government film and photographic material production. For the first time NFB had a flexible accounting system and the freedom to make contracts in accordance with the demands of the films to be produced without being bound to the conventions of the Civil Service Act. Provisions were instituted along the lines of the Woods-Gordon report allowing the streamlining of the accounting system and providing NFB with an annual operating fund.

Of equal significance were items which the Act did not include. In spite of the various campaigns which had been waged, none of the Board's production activities had been curtailed or even limited. In fact, relations with government departments were made closer than before. Neither were there any new regulations inserted requiring the Board to sub-contract any specified amount of its work to commercial production agencies.17

17 For a complete text of the new Act see Appendix D, "An Act Respecting the National Film Board."
By November of 1950, a second report by NFB to the Royal Commission had been completed. In this brief, emphasis was placed on reactions to the National Film Board by well over a hundred civic and social organizations. Included were groups interested in the arts, theater, ballet and music; associations representing various cultural groups, educational, farm, labor and women's organizations. This material along with the recommendations in the Woods-Gordon survey and the provisions of the National Film Act of 1950, provided the basis of the final and most far-reaching document on film to be issued in the decade.

After reviewing the history and present status of the Board, the report recommended that the work of NFB be further developed and expanded in the areas of distribution, production, procurement of and evaluation of films, research and experimentation. The Board was seen as having two significant social aspects which served to create interest in film in Canada: first, that it popularized the documentary and educational film throughout Canada - particularly through the rural circuits; second, that NFB demonstrated artistic and social possibilities of Canadian-made films dealing with Canadian subjects and that these films had been received with enthusiasm both in Canada and abroad.

The report was full of praise for the work of the Board in developing its distribution system, but critical of the fact that operation had been cut back and that many of the circuits were on a purely voluntary basis. Urging expansion and development of new areas, particularly in the Northwest Territories and parts of Newfoundland, the report made recommendation to grant the Board sufficient funds to expand its field staff and
increase the number of release prints of its films. Efforts to expand commercial distribution were proposed, as well as the creation of outlets in sparsely settled parts of the country which were not presently being served.

One duty not specified in the new Film Act, but given emphasis in the Massey Report, was the function of film evaluation and procurement. This was to include building and circulating a collection of Canadian and worthwhile foreign films. The job of maintaining a film collection was to be handled by NFB but the cataloging, reviewing, and circulation of such films were to be services of the newly established Canadian Film Institute (formerly the National Film Society) working in conjunction with the federations of film councils.

The production of films dealing with Canadian art and Canadian life was seen as one of the Board's major contributions to the country. While praising the work of NFB the report recommended improvement in the French-language films -- that they emphasize contemporary subjects and deal less with the picturesque aspects of Old Quebec. Improvements with regard to the Board's educational films urged the use of experts in the field as advisers. The provisions in the Act for experimentation met with enthusiastic approval. Such work, it was felt, was necessary to the production of good films and could benefit all in the film industry in creating films to meet Canadian needs.

While the industry challenged the Board's right to produce films, the Commission disagreed on the grounds that to meet Canadian needs effectively as an advisory and coordinating body the Board would have to produce films as well. The Commission also had serious doubts as to the ability
of the commercial companies to produce films of equal quality, to those of the Board. They pointed out that many commercial producers had been aided by NFB both directly by technical assistance and indirectly by having their films distributed through the Board's circuits. In conclusion, they stated that there was a place for both commercial and Government film production, that the Board should not produce for private companies and that it should price its still photographs according to the commercial market.18


With the issuing of the reports and the passing of the Act, the Board was not only vindicated, but had achieved a stronger position than ever before. With Irwin in charge, the task of reorganization was pushed ahead. In October 1950 the Displays Division was transferred to the Department of Trade and Commerce. In January 1951 Posters and Publications was placed under the Department of Public Printing and Stationery. The Graphics Division was thus dissolved and the Filmstrip and Still Photo sections were established as a branch of the Production Division.

Donald Milholland was appointed Director of Production and placed in charge of the four units as well as of the Music, Titling and Animation Departments which in addition to the Libraries had been brought under Production. The Distribution section was divided into three main sections -- Canadian, International and Commercial. Administration was organized into four sections: Accounting, Personnel, Libraries, and General Services. The Technical Operations branch became responsible for
all of the laboratories as well as opticals, camera, projection, negative cutting, engineering and technical research. The reorganizing involved a fair amount of difficulty. There were those on the staff who felt Beveridge should have been retained as head of Production; others complained that they were being organized out of existence; many still distrusted Irwin. In a matter of months, the situation had improved considerably and staff morale soared. The Film Board was once again a happy place to work.

Relations with the commercial producers did not heal quite so easily. As could be expected, the amount of work NFB had placed with commercial producers had decreased considerably during the past two years. The Board was also providing still photos at cost to government agencies and selling them at commercial rates to all others. In 1950-51, however, the situation began to change and more contracts were granted, Relations did improve, but never again reached the closeness that existed during the War years.

In looking back at the post-war crisis, the question that looms largest is how close did the Board come to extinction? Those who worked there felt that things were teetering on the thin edge. At times they undoubtedly were. An exact answer to this question is impossible, but certain observations can be made. NFB survived for the following reasons. First, the Board was doing an excellent job in fulfilling its objectives. Films of high quality which met national needs were produced in a sufficiently large number to provide a steady stream of new materials flowing to the Canadian public. Second, an extensive distribution system
was-maintained and release prints were supplied in sufficient quantity so that the films reached a large segment (over half) of the population who received them with enthusiasm.

The world, however, is not a just place and virtuous works alone will not justify the existence of such an organization particularly when it is challenged on even the flimsiest of evidence. Though large and powerful, the Film Board was, and still is, nearly powerless when faced with a direct assault. NFB controls no newspapers or magazines through which it can speak. Its films do not propagandize directly for itself. If such a film were to be made, it would do more harm than good because such a film would undoubtedly be seized upon as a prime example of unfair competition, propaganda, and a waste of taxpayer's money. NFB, therefore, needed an advocate to plead its cause. In this case it was the Woods-Gordon management consultants. If one were to pick the decisive factor in the crisis, it would be the decision to give the Board a hearing and have investigations made. It would have been quite possible for the Board to have been judged and voted out of existence in Parliament without public hearings. This was exactly what happened to the Crown Film Unit in England which, following post-war difficulties, was dissolved about the time NFB was getting back on its feet. Similar political pressure brought about an end to the struggling United States Film Service in 1940.

With the decision to investigate the Board, the entire conflict was brought into the proper perspective. It is a well-known fact to students of public opinion that small, well-organized pressure groups can exert a political force far in excess of their numerical strength. The
commercial industry succeeded, for a time, in doing just this and had there been no investigation, there would probably be no Film Board today. Notwithstanding the fact that the commercial film producers had increased from three companies in 1945 to twenty by 1950 they remained a rather small voice crying in the wilderness. If there had been a more vigorous industry it possibly might have had enough power to force the Board out of production in spite of the surveys and the hearings. As things stood, however, the investigation served to bring out the industry's weaknesses and publicize the Board's strengths.

The role of the press in the struggle was an interesting one. The Board was effectively attacked through the newspapers even though it was generally praised and defended. In terms of all of the reference made to NFB during 1945-1950 the ratio of favorable to unfavorable articles on the Board was between three and four to one. Yet much of the favorable material was in the form of film reviews and articles on the development of the rural circuits and as such was not directly related to the Film Board - to industry conflict or to the matter of internal security and the expenditures of government funds.

Of equal importance to the Woods-Gordon survey was the Massey report which gave voice to hundreds of small, civic groups which would have otherwise gone unheard. The commercial producers were located in the cities with easy access to politicians and the press. Rural groups, with whom lay the most vigorous support, did not have this advantage and could voice their approval, which they did, only through small, weekly newspapers, newsletters, reports to the Board and sporadic letters to the editor. This approval did not have any great effect until it was gathered
into one large brief, presented to the Massey Commission and from there dispensed to the press and the members of Parliament. The report and the Film Act secured a strong position for the Board, but by no means was it rendered immune to attack. As of this writing, the industry (now much stronger) is calling for a "redefinition of the Board" and the Board (also much stronger) is continually working to do just that - hoping there will be no misconceptions as to its objectives and its means of fulfilling them.
CHAPTER IV

PROBING THE CANADIAN MILIEU

The beginning of a new era in the Board's development, distinctly different from the one that preceded it was marked in 1950. This decade could best be called that of "Canadianism" in which one of the original tenets of the Film Act -- that of presenting a national-cum-international interpretation of Canada -- was fulfilled.

The post-crisis period began with a clearing of the political air as W. Arthur Irwin took over the position of Film Commissioner. For many on the staff, it was their initial experience in working with someone from the world of business. Both Grierson and Ross McLean had had a background of government service. Irwin, with his experience as a magazine editor, was accustomed to dealing with creative people and yet had a sound knowledge of the operation of a large organization.

Grierson had come to build a new organization. McLean had taken over in a period of major readjustment. Irwin now came for what purpose? Those who had worked closely with the Woods-Gordon team were optimistic. They felt that Irwin's job was to rebuild the Board with all the tools which McLean had lacked.1

1McKay, *History of The National Film Board*, p. 75.
In accordance with the findings of the Massey Commission, Irwin sought to emphasize what the Commission considered to be the Board's main strengths - the social values of Canadian films on Canadian subjects. A serendipity arrived with the news of a tour of Canada by Princess Elizabeth and The Duke of Edinburgh. A two-reel film record of the event was to be made.

It was decided that such a film would have a better chance at broad theatrical distribution if it were in color. Speed was the main issue because the tour was a topical event and the film, to be effective, had to be in theaters as soon as the tour ended. Six months had elapsed between the end of the 1939 Royal Tour and the appearance of Royal Visit on the screen. Sixteen millimeter Kodachrome film was soon rejected on the basis of poor quality and the time consumed in making thirty-five millimeter release prints. Experiments had been made with a new single-emulsion thirty-five millimeter film. Called "Ekta Color," it was the predecessor of the now standard "Eastman Color" film. Chances of getting satisfactory results were estimated at about fifty-fifty by Technical Director Gerald Graham, but Executive Producer Tom Daly was willing to take the risk. Irwin was also willing. A script by Leslie McFarlane was roughed out and a team of eight cameramen - headed by veteran Osmond H. Borradaile and under the direction of David Blairstow - began shooting. From the start, the situation had all the earmarks of disaster. During the three weeks of shooting there were only five good days. Rain and fog followed the Royal Tour across the continent.

However, the rushes that came in were almost unbelievably good - soft, lustrous color with a sharpness and subtlety unmatched by even the
best "Hollywood Technicolor." The theatrical distributor was shown the film and agreed that the possibilities went far beyond a two-reel issue of "Canada Carries On." The final cut was completed and the film was in theaters across the country in forty days after the completion of the tour. Turning out a feature in less time than is usually spent on a one-reeler was an accomplishment exceeding even the best efforts of the wartime "blitzes."

Royal Journey (1951) ran five reels, tracing the path of the Royal Couple across Canada that followed nearly the same route as the Royal Visit a dozen years earlier. The resemblance in the two films, however, is slight. Royal Visit is a long newsreel. Royal Journey is a film, constructed in sequences - each with its own theme. The first sequence - Quebec City - reflected the color and pageantry of the capital of French Canada. The Royal plane emerges from a gray sky, cannons boom a salute as the couple enter an open car for a tour of the city ending with an inspection of troops.

In Ottawa activities center around the Peace Tower and the National War Memorial where war veterans are greeted by the Princess. The crowds break into a run as the car proceeds to Parliament. In Toronto the mature voice of Elwood Glover relinquishes the sound track to a pseudo-teenager who manages to gush a "gosh, golly" or "gee whiz" into nearly every sentence. A housewife type takes over for the Winnipeg sequence where the Royal Couple attend the ballet. In Regina the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and endless fields of wheat create the image of the prairies. Calgary's "Stampede" heralds the West which emerges in the green-misted Rocky Mountains of British Columbia.
Nautical themes are introduced in Vancouver as the party boards the "H.M.C.S. Crusader." Traveling east through Victoria and Edmonton they stop briefly at small towns where all turn out for an event of a lifetime. A tumultuous welcome in Montreal and a flying trip to Washington, D. C. are relieved by an idyll in the snow-filled Quebec woods where the candid camera unobtrusively follows the Royal sleigh. Princess Elizabeth, smiling and relaxed, pats the shaggy head of a horse. Gales whip the Maritime Provinces - the last part of the tour. Most of Newfoundland gathers at Portugal Cove for the last glimpse, waving and straining to see as the camera records the final images of the tender churning out to the waiting "Empress of Scotland."

**Royal Journey** rises far above its predecessor as a film. It is not simply a record of the tour, but a portrait of Canada and Canadians as well. The sequential structure and the cutting keep the film moving at a rapid pace. It's main strength, however, is the excellent color photography which brought rave reviews from Canada, England and the United States, where the film had a fine distribution record. In Canada alone, it was reaching a million people per month. The most unfortunate aspect of this film was the use of the pseudo-regional narrators with their clumsy attempts at humor. This idea stemmed possibly from a fear of appearing snobbish and thus not being "of the people." Whatever the reason, this kind of hokum dragged its muddy feet through a number of what would have otherwise been good films of this period. **Royal Journey** was only one in an increasing number of films which served to build a mosaic of the Canadian scene and to develop styles and themes of filmmaking that were to become identified with the National Film Board.
The most obvious influence of the film was to set a precedent for Royal visit films, integrating the visit with an image of the Canadian Nation. The three Royal Visit films of the 1950's followed the same pattern as Royal Journey. The Sceptre and The Mace (1957) presents the opening of the twenty-third Canadian Parliament. The occasion is an illustrious one - the first time for Canada's Parliament to be opened by a reigning monarch. On a deeper level, the event is viewed in terms of the nation's constitutional development. Royal River (1959) followed the Queen on the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, yet the major theme of the film is the history of the river and its influence on Canadian life and development from its discovery to its present role of Canada's chief waterway.

Cultural Canada was first shown in the one-reel films on Canadian artists - in films such as West Wind and Klee Wyck which consisted of pans and dissolves of paintings with an occasional attempt at a kind of dramatic re-enactment. Lismer (1952), Varley (1953), The Jolifou Inn (1955) - the work of Cornelius Krieghoff were added to the list. This kind of film still exists; its basic format unchanged - a cinematic dead-end. Yet, uniqueness emerged in Gerald Budner's The World of David Milne (1962) where quotes from Milne's letters provide a biting commentary on Canadian life and art, working in counter-point to the dry, sparse style of his water colors. Paintings are matched in one dissolving sequence to create an animated form similar to those of McLaren's La poulette grise. Though excellent, The World of David Milne remains frozen in the limits of the form.
New approaches to artistic subjects were first explored in films such as *Listen to the Prairies*. *On Stage* (1950) described the activities of an amateur theatrical group discussing the process of putting together a production. *Opera School* (1951) written by Lister Sinclair and directed by Gudrun Parker used a dramatic format to tell of the work of Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music. Marie Burton (Marguerite Gignac) prepares for a career as an opera singer. Her first audition is followed by a long trek through the halls of the building as she receives copious instructions as to her classes in voice, acting, etc. That evening she stares in her mirror and sees herself as a Wagnerian Brunhilde. Her attempts to fit this image are frustrated as she is informed that she is better qualified for light opera. The big opportunity arrives in her third year of study when she gets a role in one of the annual operatic productions. The final part of the film follows the rehearsals and a portion of the production "The Marriage of Figaro."

This last section of the film works quite well as the tension builds in preparation for the opening night and in the presentation of a segment of the opera. Marguerite Gignac has a flair for comic opera and sings quite well. Unfortunately she plays the first half of the film in comic opera style as well, aided and abetted by the director with some rather heavy-handed sight gags.

A similar cuteness prevailed in *A Musician in the Family* (1953) directed by Gudrun Parker. A young prairie-farm boy wants above all to play a trombone so he practices faithfully every day, galloping home from school to play in the barn before an audience of tolerant beasts. His father regards music as a waste of time and feels that his son should
be spending his time learning to run the farm. An intelligent neighbor
and a sissified music teacher persuade him to let the boy participate
in a Provincial music contest. The boy plays rather poorly, but is
commended by the judges for his spirit and devotion. The father is won
over and as the boy gallops home on his horse the scene fades out.

Although Opera School and Musician overstate their case, the films
are photographed and lit in the best Hollywood manner. In a rather back-
headed way it may be said that in their overstatement the films empha-
sized the real and earnest desire on the part of many Canadians to pur-
sue things cultural. Coming out of this desire was The Stratford Adven-
ture (1952) by Morton and Gudrun Parker.

Stratford Adventure used color and forty minutes to present the
story of the creation of the Shakespearean festival in Stratford, Ontario,
Beginning with a brief bit of "All's Well that Ends Well," the camera
cuts away to the nearby Shakespeare Garden and to Tom Paterson - the
theater's founder. Through re-enactment, the story is told of the first
meetings and of Paterson's vote of $125 from the city council to study
the feasibility of building a theater. From this unpretentious start the
plan takes a great leap forward when Tyrone Guthrie of the Old Vic Com-
pany agrees to come as an adviser. Members of Old Vic supplemented by
Canadian actors begin work on the first production, "Richard III." The
entire town has become Shakespeare conscious, helping to make costumes
and forming Shakespeare study groups. Money is raised and soon a
theater. The biggest worry is alleviated as crowds pour into Stratford
for the festival.
Though the film at times bogs down amidst Shakespearean quotes and such needless asides as an "advice-to-a-young-actor" vignette with Alec Guinness, it succeeds in presenting a vivid picture of Canadian community life and once again affirming the Canadian quest for culture. *Stratford Adventure* received a number of awards and has had a long history of distribution.

Development of cultural themes was by no means limited to English production. French film-makers were working with similar ideas - *Côté cour...côté-jardin* (French Canadian Theater), *Shadow on the Prairie* (The Royal Winnipeg Ballet), and *Jeunesse Musicales* (music camps for children) are typical examples. The profiles of contemporary artists were an important part of the French Unit's television production in the early 1960's. The animated films in the "Chants Populaires" series and those that followed in the same genre were also a part of the cultural-interpretative output of the Board.

The dramatic form which had been tried on a limited basis during and after the War had been used almost exclusively for didactic purposes, in training and illustrative films, such as *The Connors Case*. The concerns of the 1950's were turned again to this form, this time for interpretive ends, developing stories which were centered around the character rather than oriented toward a plot.

*The Son* (1951) written and directed by Julian Biggs is one of the first and best examples of these new films, dealing with a situation common in rural Canada - that of a son leaving the family farm to look for other employment. The story of the son's revolt is told in a narrative that shifts freely through time filling in the background of
his life. The business of buying supplies and medicine for a sick cow sends his thoughts back to the first calf he raised. The calf is born on screen - a nice touch - and a turn away from the "B" movie treatment of such subjects. The film ends with the conflict being settled amicably as the son is made an equal partner. The story is tied together perhaps a bit too neatly, yet the film, on the whole, works quite well. Biggs used a Thornton Wilder "Our Town" approach to his subject and succeeded in making a good film about farmers - one of the most difficult jobs a film-maker could attempt.

The Son along with L'homme aux oiseaux represents the two major dramatic efforts of the early 1950's. A fifteen-minute film - Each Man's Son (1953) from the novel by Hugh MacLennan - dramatized a segment of the novel, a character study of Dr. Daniel Ainsile, a physician in a Cape Breton coal mining community at the turn of the century. In a similar mood was Stanley Jackson's film Cornet at Night (1963). Though made ten years later, it was an adaptation of a short story by Sinclair Ross. Cornet is a subtle film, evoking the loneliness of the prairie. Set in the early 1930's, it recreates a brief incident in the life of a Saskatchewan farm boy who brings an out-of-work musician home to help with the harvest. It soon becomes obvious that the man is unable to do the heavy work. Yet, the sense of failure is transformed to one of deep and honest appreciation as he plays for the boy in the evening. The family listens and all share in the rare gift of the music. When he departs the following day, the sense of loss is not for the man as a worker, but for the new meaning he has brought into lonely lives.
Because of the high cost of theatrical feature films, the ideas developed in the early short dramas were not exploited until the 1960's when such features as Drylanders and Le festin des morts were produced. The short format, interpretive films (usually a half hour) continued in a less-polished form as television drama, appearing first in the Board's 1955-1958 television series "Perspective." The greatest development and the one that laid the foundation for the features was the French-language series "Panoramique" of 1957-1959 which serialized long stories dealing with French-Canadian subjects dating from the depression through the post-war era.

Under Irwin, a program of films was initiated to present a portrait of Canadian man for an international audience - an idea that went back to the Grierson years and such films as Peoples of Canada. The new look, however, was to focus on individuals rather than types, using a straight documentary approach rather than a symphonic one. Only about a half-dozen films were actually produced within this proposed series. Most of these were one reel in length and released in "Canada Carries On."

Man in the Peace Tower (1951) by Roger Blais and Lister Sinclair was one of the first. A narrative prelude of Canada's place in world affairs is accompanied by a montage of shots of the Peace Tower in Ottawa. The camera then follows Robert Donnell - the Dominion Carillonneur as he walks up the various levels to the bell console. The narrator explains the workings of the system as Donnell checks out the equipment. The camera quick-cuts to faces of people in the street as the concert begins, dissolving to shots of the bells, panning to shots
of rooftops and scenes of the 1939 Royal Visit. The narrator recalls "memories of the past." The film concludes with shots of children at play representing "hopes for the future."

A more direct approach was taken in Citizen Varek (1952). Post-war immigration brought many people to Canada. Their problems of adjustment are shown in this film via flashbacks in the lives of several immigrants who are taking their final oaths of citizenship. All have overcome fears and disillusionments and achieved a good life in Canada.

Another kind of interpretation focused less directly on international affairs, but was international in its conception, by presenting a dynamic image of Canadians in their community. Farewell Oak Street (1953) directed by Grant McLean is a hyper-dramatic essay of the wonders wrought by slum clearance. Opening with a shot of children playing in a playground, the scene cuts to the same children playing in a rubble-filled slum - "Oak Street as it used to be." The comparison continues with a look into the life of the Brown family. A health officer brings the son home because he has lice in his hair. The narrator points out that there are other vermin in the place as well. There is a brief scene as a lecherous type - complete with a candy bar - attempts to grab the teenage daughter. After a number of other little cameo bits showing the grubby life of the community, slum clearance comes. Regent Park replaces Oak Street and clean low-cost housing brings happiness to all. In a low-key way, the film is as sermonizing as Willard Van Dyke’s The City, yet the little cameo bits fail to build into an effective whole.

The semi-dramatic form was abandoned for straight drama in Herting-Hunt (1953) by Julian Biggs and Leslie McFarlane. The twin themes of
free enterprise and team spirit are developed in this story of the operation of a west-coast herring boat. The plot centers on the race of one ship and her crew to get their quota before the fishing ground is closed. The first attempt at a catch is bungled by a young member of the crew. Tension builds as the closing time draws nearer. The man is given a firm but gentle lecture and sent back to his job. A large school is detected and dynamism of the activity builds without the aid of dialog as the fish are netted and hauled in.

The local administration of justice in Canada received a similar dramatic treatment in Country Magistrate (1953) by Robert Anderson. The magistrate's court handles ninety-eight percent of all criminal cases in British Columbia where the film is set. A sampling of these is seen through the eyes of a typical magistrate. He emerges as an important community figure; a man who must have a social, as well as legal, knowledge as he works to uphold the law on one hand (over-ruling a father's attempts to "buy off" his son on a second offence of theft) and restraining police power (helping a husband and wife to settle a domestic quarrel out of court) on the other.

The international program, as such, disappeared with Irwin's departure from the Board in 1952 when he became High Commissioner to Australia. The idea, however, continued - embodied in an ever-widening variety of films - although there never emerged any international-interpretive program per se. The major drawback of the original program was that it never clearly defined its objectives and the films that were produced were short, expensive and covered a relatively narrow range of topics.
The nearest approach to a series was a group of films released under the title "Faces of Canada." Produced by both English and French film-makers, eleven films were completed in the series between 1952 and 1954. The emphasis was on portraying the common men of Canada, using an intimate approach and focusing mainly on straight character study rather than dwelling on large themes of social significance. The films were low-budget productions, most of them running less than one reel. They also served as a training ground - giving some of the younger film-makers an opportunity to try their hand at originating films.

The results were interesting, though for the most part not scintillating. Film portraits included such figures as The Charwoman - a semi-humorous study of one of the custodians at Ottawa's House of Commons. The film follows her through her routine work, while the sound track carries her thoughts of a better lot for her daughter. Dick Hickey - Blacksmith offers a study in quaintness and nostalgia as Hickey moves about his Ottawa valley smithy. As he works, he discusses his trade and the early days when the blacksmith was an important craftsman doing all metal work for an entire community.

Other titles included such subjects as The Photographer, The Taxi Driver, The Station Master, and The Motorman. All have since been withdrawn from circulation. With the exception of The Photographer, which achieved a kind of quiet satire, the films were of competent though not exceptional quality. The single exception was Roman Kroitor's Paul Tomkowicz - Street - Railway Switchman (1953). Tomkowicz is a Polish-born Canadian whose job is to keep the trolleys of Winnipeg running. During the winter, this means clearing the tracks of frozen mud and ice.
As the camera follows him on his rounds, Tomkowicz talks about his past - Nazi persecution in Poland and his coming to Canada. Sound and narration are used in counterpoint to bring out the tough, stoic personality of the man. The rush of the wind through the dark frozen streets, the far-off whistle of a locomotive work in an unobtrusive way to create an aura of loneliness. In a brief sequence the overhead line becomes disengaged and the trolley stops. The dozing passengers are barely aware that their trip has been interrupted as Tomkowicz reconnects the line - a ghostly figure seen briefly through steamed windows - before disappearing into the night.

Kroitor lavished time and patience on the film, working on it periodically for a year. Original tape recordings of Tomkowicz were not intelligible enough to be easily understood. Kroitor on his second try found a Toronto broadcaster whose voice fit the image perfectly. Street-Railway Switchman is one of those films that improves with each viewing. The subtlety of its construction results in a portrait that goes far beyond the simple reportage of the rest of the series. Still in distribution, the film has won awards in Canada and at the Edinburgh Film Festival in Scotland.

With the departure of Arthur Irwin the Commissionership was passed to Albert W. Trueman. Trueman was a well-known educator who had served as President of the University of New Brunswick. He had also been on the Board of Governors of both the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Film Board. For once the change of Commissioners was achieved with an unprecedented lack of histrionics.
The Irwin years had been good ones. The tensions of the crisis had subsided. Irwin had proved to be an excellent administrator. He had worked to draft the new Act and to reorganize the administrative structure on a sound basis. He had established good relations with the Canadian Government. Even the severest critics who had been demanding a "cleanup" and calling for someone to "get the Communists out of the Film Board," were silenced by the efficiency of the operation and the rise in the quality of the films. Film festivals had come into their own by the 1950's and NFB productions were winning awards on two continents, adding another laurel to its crown and a sandbag to its defenses.

Production and distribution statistics were also favorable. By 1952 theatrical bookings in Canada had increased to approximately 8000 for the year as compared to a little over 5000 for the previous year. The non-theatrical audience in Canada was also increasing. Showings were up fifteen percent over the previous year and this audience had grown by more than a million. Community interest in the Board and its work had continued to enlarge. There were 343 film councils operating in Canada and 334 film libraries. Nearly 8000 organizations belonged to the councils, showing NFB films to an estimated eleven and a half million people. Nearly a million tourists had been exposed to the Board's films in Canadian showings at parks and resorts. Theatrical bookings abroad
had reached 16,000 - twice that of the previous year. NFB films were also reaching an international non-theatrical audience that had grown to more than eleven million. ²


Sponsorship of films from other government departments had increased to the highest point since the War years. Much of this work - $300,000 worth - had been sub-contracted to private film producers. While not all of the grumbling of unfair competition was ended, serious attacks were abandoned as the small producers - along with the rest of the Canadian economy - prospered.

The one major difference in Irwin's role as Film Commissioner, which set him apart from Grierson and Ross McLean, was his lack of direct involvement with production - a situation he deeply regretted. The administrative work, lack of film-making experience, and the taint of early hostility on the part of the staff kept close personal relationships from developing. Thus, most of the instrumental production responsibility was placed in the hand of the Director of Production. This situation continues to the present day.

Irwin left two major problems facing the new Commissioner - the logistics of moving the Board to its new location in Montreal and the coming of television. The Montreal move was one of the improvements instigated by Irwin in the reorganization of the Board that followed the Woods-Gordon Report. The physical inadequacies of the production plant in Ottawa were the most obvious reasons for having better facilities.
More than the cost of the new plant, however, was at stake. Ottawa was a relatively small community with a limited talent pool. In a large city, such as Montreal or Toronto, talent would be available and could be more readily hired for contract work. This also applied to technical staff - which, it was felt, would be of higher quality and also more readily available. There was also the availability of alternate and additional technical services to compensate for breakdowns and heavy work loads.

The need for contact between the staff and creative people in other areas to provide for mutual stimulation and exchange of ideas was increasing - a situation which did not exist in the cloistered and bureaucratic atmosphere of Ottawa. On a deeper level was the possible future connection between the Film Board and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Whatever form of collaboration would take place, a physical proximity would be desirable if for no other reason than to establish a ready liaison to eliminate overlapping and duplication of services.

Irwin pressed for Montreal as the best location on the basis that it would offer the greatest number of cultural advantages. With the exception of the French film-makers who were overjoyed at the prospect, most of the staff was opposed to the move - having, after ten years, grown accustomed to Ottawa. Many were householders and had husbands or wives who were employed elsewhere in the city. A detailed brief - stating the case for remaining - was prepared by a group of the senior production staff led by the Director of Production, Donald Mulholland.

Commissioner Trueman was concerned by these feelings and presented the report to the Board members. It soon reached Prime Minister Louis
St. Laurent. To his satisfaction the situation had already been thoroughly discussed in cabinet meetings and policy set - the move was final.

Hue and cry was raised by civic Ottawa at the news. Newspapers, who at times had been critical of the Board, rushed to stop the move. Musical, theatrical, and artistic groups complained most bitterly of the loss, since many staff members had been deeply involved in such organizations. The was only one of the ironies of the plan which placed the new Film Board on Côte de Liesse Road in the industrial suburb of Saint Laurent - a good five miles from the center of the city.

While the new building had all of the facilities, not to mention cleanliness which was lacking in the old, those who moved there in 1956 found that they were as isolated as ever from the artistic community. The luncheon meetings with artists, writers and television people that Irwin had hoped for, never materialized. Cultural activities since flourished in Ottawa with the creation of the National Arts Centre, but the chances of NFB ever moving back would seem slight, at least as long as Canada remains one country.

Albert Trueman continued working along the guidelines set up by Irwin, striving to promote the interpretive program of films and leaving the business of production strictly in the hands of the film-makers. While Irwin's contributions were mainly in terms of his work inside the Board, Trueman rendered valuable service outside. An excellent speaker, he met with educational and community groups over the country, explaining
the work of the Film Board and creating for it an image of an organization devoted to public service and working for the good of Canada at home and abroad. He saw the Board as a major force, working for national education and national unity.

...I am confident that our audience is beginning to learn something about Canada as a whole, by being given materials of thought which in their selection range from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Arctic to the American border; and further by the use of material so selected and so skillfully presented as to reveal the comparisons which may be made between — say — one part of our country and another; to indicate contrasts too, to suggest similarities, to involve their common humanity.

This is one of the major ways, I believe, in which we may possibly build up a sympathy and understanding among our people which will contribute importantly to the enrichment of the country's sense of unity. Not, mark you, by talking in a grandiose manner about Canada as a whole, but simply by showing as honestly and objectively as possible, the life of Canada in its rich variety of aspects: fishing, lumbering, manufacturing, mining, commerce, the professions, the arts, social life, housing, prisons, climate, geography, adventure, sport, the far north, intellectual life, science, technology and so on and so on.

With a program like this, we have a chance to use our knowledge of the trees, in some degree at least, as a means of knowing the woods. ...I should think that one of the dangers the world faces today is exactly this: that people are called upon as never before to have opinions about national and international matters, i.e., to think; and they are tempted to do their thinking without the necessary information. This is another way of saying that too many opinions may be formed from feeling and prejudice.

Consequently, communication of honest and accurate information in an interesting and attractive form is more important than ever. It occurs to me that the documentary film, if it is objective and interesting in its manner of presentation is a valuable means of helping people acquire these necessary materials of thought. Your thinking about Canada must depend on what you know about Canada. ...NFB in the production and distribution of documentary film seeks to inform the people about their country, to give them in honest and attractive form some, at least, of the materials of thought, not to propagandize, not to
disseminate messages, but to show them through the eye-gate and ear-gate the rich variety of Canadian life, for the most part in the insistent present, confident that in this way our citizens may be helped to be better citizens, and Canada a stronger and more united country.3


The interpretive films of the mid-1950's continued along the same lines as those in the international program, but the breadth and depth of the coverage was greatly expanded by the inclusion of a number of new types of films. Trueman was greatly impressed with the work of the film councils in community education. The film council, a uniquely Canadian institution, had made a number of major contributions - the first being the tremendous job of non-theatrical distribution. Developing the film circuits following the War, the councils also improved the effectiveness of distribution working closely with representatives from the Board. Membership in the councils cut across racial, social, geographic and linguistic barriers. In this the councils represented an accurate cross-section of the country and by feeding back information to Board representatives, provided invaluable information on national educational needs.

In regard to such operations, the occasional charge of partisan propaganda was still raised. This, Trueman answered by saying:

I cannot think that the danger exists. If it did exist, I can tell you that I would certainly be one of the first to fight against it. But how can it exist, as far as the NFB is concerned, when the Board itself does not in effect control its own system of distribution? What would happen
if the films produced by the National Film Board lost the 
approval and the support of the film councils? The councils 
would stop using them and stop distributing them.  

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Albert Trueman, *Speech to Summer Film Institute at Queens University*, July 1953.

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In an effort to improve such non-theatrical use of films, a number 
of films were produced to encourage group discussion. *Let's Talk About 
Films* dealt specifically with the problems of film discussion demon-
strating ways by which group leaders could stimulate group discussion. 
Two series of films explored a variety of social situations under the 
titles "What Do You Think?" and "What's Your Opinion?" The former series 
of eleven films presented five-minute dramatic events involving teen-
agers.

The situations were not resolved, leaving the viewers to thresh out 
their own endings. The problems concerned social situations involving 
value and behavior codes. *The Majority Vote* (1953) posed the question 
of whether an elected group representative has the right to support a 
position opposed by the majority of the electorate. In this film a 
high school student council representative votes in favor of an unpopular 
ruling which would curtail a number of extra-curricular activities. 

*Being Different* (1957) questioned non-conformity. A junior high 
school boy has become interested in butterfly collecting. He is cautioned 
about such interests by a friend who compares him to a former classmate 
who always played the cello and thus became an "out person." In the 
end, the boy is faced with a choice of spending an evening watching
television with friends or meeting with a boy whose father collects
insects. Other films included Choosing a Leader (1957) - popularity
versus ability; The Honest Truth (1954) - holding unpopular views; The
Public's Business (1955) - the ethics of using a public office for per-
sonal gains.

The "What's Your Opinion?" series, begun in 1955, was aimed at adult
audiences and focused on broader social and civic matters. Community
Responsibilities (1955) examined the role of the citizen in the
community. A man approached by two friends is asked to work on a
community service project. He declines on the grounds that he needs his
time for his own work. His friends disagree on whether he is shirking his
civic duty. Leaving It to the Experts (1955) questioned the individual's
need to be informed about international affairs - are world problems
something that should be discussed exclusively by "the experts?" Making
a Decision In the Family (1957) brought parents and teenagers together
in a conflict of personal versus family happiness as a teenage daughter
must decide between going to a family gathering or to a party with her
friends. Both film series, though they offer little if any cinematic
merit, met with great success in community groups and remained in dis-
tribution for more than ten years.

The question of television production was solved by degrees as NFB
producers edged into the new medium. From the first, television's
greatest value was its potential as a distribution medium. In keeping
with the interpretive program, the Board's first television venture "On
the Spot" was initiated in 1953. "Sur Le Vif" - its French counterpart,
began a year later. The two series reported on aspects of community life from all over Canada at the rate of one fifteen-minute film per week.

While theatrical distribution was beginning to decline, the question arose as to the possibility of using the television films in community distribution. The film-making policy of the Board, was and still is, to keep the films as flexible as possible in terms of format, keeping in mind the possibility of multiple channels of distribution and multiple uses of each film. It is therefore not surprising to find sponsored films in classroom use and classroom films in theatrical showings.

The early "Spot" and "Vif" films were not well suited to community use, but those of the second and third year of the series were. Both programs were expanded to thirty minutes and the subjects were of a less topical nature. Such films as *The Mountie Crime Lab*, *Child Guidance Clinic*, *Chosen Children*, *Career College* and *Forest Wardens* had a circulation life in excess of five years. Later television film, produced with more finesse and larger budgets, were readily acceptable for community and classroom use. By the mid-1950's qualitative differences between television and theatrical films had all but vanished, by the 60's stylistic variations had disappeared as well.

The ethnographic film which had been pioneered during the War years by such people as Laura Boulton took on a new look in the 1950's. The wartime style of straight reportage in one-reel of sixteen millimeter color continued in the post-war era with such titles as *Eskimo Summer* (1947), *Indian Canoeman* (1947), *Indian Hunters* (1948), *Arctic Dog Team* (1949) and *Caribou Hunters* (1950). In 1950 a new kind of film emerged
twenty to thirty minutes in length, which probed these same subjects with a poetic insight inspired by the work of Robert Flaherty and developed by NFB film-makers into one of the styles that has become synonymous with the Film Board itself.

The Longhouse People (1950) written and directed by Allan Wargon is a poignant study of declining Indian religion. The Iroquois who still worship in the traditional manner are few. The film opens with a silhouette of an Indian against the sunrise. After praying, he walks back to his farmhouse, changes his buckskins to work clothes and begins his plowing. The longhouse, once the meeting place of the six Iroquois Nations, has taken on the function of a church. Few attend, but these faithful practice the solemn ritual of a rain dance. Rain comes, and all share in the harvest. As summer gives way to fall, the old chief asks for a healing ritual. Masked members of his tribe enter his house at night and pray for his spirit. In the longhouse, the news of his death is taken stoically; an old man sings while other bow their heads. A new chief is selected and a boy is sent to other tribes with the news, as those present dance in celebration. With the possible exception of one or two sequences, the events in the film were re-enactments. The blending of events is so skillful that the believability of the film is threatened only by the fact that so much is shown.

A similar re-enactment was used in Angotee (1952), written and directed by Douglas Wilkinson. In episodic style, this film covers the first eighteen years in the life of Angotee - an Eskimo boy. In Land of the Long Day (1952) Wilkinson followed the life of an Eskimo hunter and his family through the four months of summer when Baffin Island is
exposed to continual sunlight. Using a straight documentary approach, the story begins in the late winter when the sun first appears on the southern horizon. The winter house is too damp for comfort and the family moves out. The May thaw brings seals to the surface and hunting begins. The life of the summer has no schedule - the fish are caught, whales harpooned and equipment is readied for the winter to come. The film concludes with a series of short scenes - of September storms which give way to October blizzards, driving the sun back to the southern sky.

A more poetic style was used in *The Living Stone* (1958) by John Feeney. An igloo glows with an eerie blue light, inside children listen to an old man telling a story of the goddess of the sea and how she controls the movements of the seals and other animals of the ocean. Unwrapping a stone carving of the goddess, he tells of the hunter who made it. The scene dissolves to the young hunter as he begins working his last piece of carving stone. False dawns brighten the southern horizon, until spring arrives with the northward flight of geese.

"Now most of the carving is done for white settlers and the tourist trade," comments the narrator. The scene dissolves to a montage of carvings of hunters, seals, and mask-like faces of gods and demons. Summer ends with a celebration and dancing that lasts into the night. The scene dissolves from the reflected images of the dancers against the sunset to the red glow of the lamp of the storyteller in the igloo.

Minimal narration and a sparse score by Maurice Blackburn tied the elements of this film into a beautifully compact unit, successfully integrating the sequence (by Colin Low) of lights and shadows playing over the pieces of sculpture. Slightly less successful was Feeney's
Kenjuak (1963) which used a similar approach to deal with Eskimo graphic arts. The flow of this film, while excellent, does not match that of The Living Stone.

One of the finest of these films was the first to examine the changing life of the Canadian Indian. Circle of the Sun (1960) by Colin Low and Tom Daly, approached the subject through the experiences of Pete Standing Alone - a Blood Indian from Alberta. His life as an itinerant cowhand and roughneck on the oil rigs over the country have taken him away from tribal life, yet he always returns to the traditional summer encampment and celebration.

The new-generation Indians who come to watch, but not to participate, appear riding down the highway on motorcycles. In the camp Pete tells of the past encampments - of how they grow smaller each year. He discusses the various dances honoring totemic animals. The camera cuts between the dancing figures and shots of the actual animals, from the sun to the circle of tents on the ground to the circle of chiefs and elders inside. Outside the young people simply watch. The circle of the sun - the traditional religion will soon disappear; the older generation will die and none will come to take their place.

The use of counter-point - visually playing one image against another - as well as in the use of narration and music played against the visual elements - works to make Circle an outstanding film. Each shot is composed with the loving care of a prize-winning still photo, yet the film is far from static. All elements function to tell about
the people - what they think and how they feel. All six of these films worked toward this end and met with success, collecting thirty-eight national and international film awards and receiving wide distribution.

While there was no set program of international interpretive films, as being distinct from national films, Trueman, like his predecessors McLean and Irwin, recognized the importance of films for an international projection of the Canadian image. He reaffirmed Grierson's philosophy in setting forth an articulate statement of what the international role of the Board should be. Unlike the program of the 1940's which had to be geared for winning a short-term hot war, the program of the 50's was created in the uncertainty of the cold war and directed toward long-range aims. In defining this information program abroad, Trueman saw as the immediate goal the securing of commercial and political benefits. Explaining that this idea be given a liberal rather than literal interpretation.

I think it quite inadequate if it is interpreted to mean that all information abroad must have a direct and specific relation to business and politics. . . It seems to me that in the long run the best way to secure commercial and political advantage is to recognize that the policy must include two methods of attack on the problem, both methods having the same ultimate although not the same immediate purpose.

Method one is to supply and distribute information designed to establish, in so far as it may be possible, a climate of feeling and opinion favourable to this country; and method two is to make whatever immediate points we have to make, by specialized types of information dealing directly with commerce and politics, in the belief that this second goal will be more frequently and effectively reached the more thoroughly and intelligently we make use of the first method.

I do not think of method one as the inevitable fore-runner of method two, or that nothing relating to method two should be done until method one has been employed for
a given time. I think of them as being carried on simultaneously and in planned relation to each other.  


Trueman went on to point out further differences, i.e., that the first method would be a long-term affair and its effects cumulative. As such, its success would depend on planning and consistent support—support that would be difficult to secure since the first method deals with intangibles. Many people would thus be inclined to attribute the success of the program to the short-range direct method. The partnership of governments to which Canada belongs should be developed to include a partnership of peoples.

Here I believe, we enter an area of ignorance and misunderstanding which, when examined, is truly shocking. How much does the ordinary man actually know about his fellow man in other countries—countries from whose fate that of his own country is inseparable? Precious little, I dare say! I know it is so in my own country—I believe it is so in all others as well.


In stressing the need for removing fear and suspicion from the minds of people over the world, Trueman did not view the program as a world-saving measure to eradicate ignorance, but one allowing other people to know how Canadians live and what the country is like, revealing by these
means the fact that people are much the same in terms of human nature, needs, and aspirations all over the world. Foreign policy he felt, must be the concern of the individual as well as the statesman.

This places an increasing responsibility on the producer of mass media since it is through such means, particularly film and radio, that most people, especially those in countries with low literacy, will gain this knowledge. Documentary films will play an important role by creating a sympathetic response providing, of course, the films are well made. Trueman assessed the work of the Board thus:

I feel that I can say without reservation that we have had proof of the efficacy of film at the Film Board. Recently I visited the Canadian Embassy in Paris where I discussed our film distribution with the officer in charge. Most favourably impressed by her efficiency and the record of distribution which our books show, I was even more impressed by the reply which she gave to my question 'How generally speaking, are our Canadian films received?' Her answer was something like this. 'Our films are liked very much. We hear that the users appreciate their technical excellence; and, of course, the fact that they are about Canada is important because there is a tremendous interest here in Canada. But they are also liked because they are not regarded as propagandist, and this fact elicits favourable comparisons with films from certain other unspecified sources.' This is not a verbatim report of what the official said, but I think it is a fair reconstruction. In England and the United States, I have personally heard similar observations, all of which have added to my conviction that our films are contributing to the high regard in which Canada is held abroad.7

7Ibid.

Many of the films in the general theatrical program, produced under the Trueman regime, followed the pattern initiated by Arthur Irwin in his international program. Diggers of the Deeps (1954) by Grant McLean
used a straight documentary approach to study the coal mining industry, taking as an example the mines on Cape Breton Island. The story is one of automation as hand methods are replaced by a mechanical digger. Older men worry about their job security, as the narrator points out the irony of the fact that coal from the mines made the steel for the digger. The end of the film is left dangling, however, on the statement "But coal men know that it is mechanize or die and are for any method of getting coal out more cheaply."

*Strike in Town* (1955) showed collective bargaining in the setting of a small one-industry town. A strike in a furniture factory poses a threat to the entire community. Negotiations become deadlocked, offering little hope of a quick settlement, yet this democratic process ultimately presents the best solution to the problem.

Themes of industrial development were presented in longer films and covered a wider variety of subjects. *Road of Iron* (1954) by Walford Hewitson and David Blairstow was a four-reel epic telling of the development of the Ungava iron deposits in northern Quebec. Several years in production, the film documented the building of the railroad into the interior, beginning with the first confirmed reports of the size of the deposit and ending with the first train load of ore to be brought out. While the film is an excellent chronicle of events, narration is excessive and the pace is slowed by cut-away sequences to a press conference in Montreal that is used as a device to bring out statistical information. Later efforts of the 1950's included short reports of similar specific developments, e.g., *Down North* (1959) - a report on developments in
mining, lumbering and other industries in the District of Mackenzie; and *Industrial Canada* (1958) - a broad survey of industrial development in Canada since the Second World War.

Other interpretive films ran a wide gamut in terms of both style and subject-matter - focusing on how Canadians work and live. *Frontier College* describes a unique program of adult education where university students spend their summers working in lumber camps and on railway section gangs. The program founded by Dr. E. W. Bradwin, is aimed at raising literacy levels among new immigrants and culturally deprived "old Canadians." The film follows the experiences of one student who is a railway section hand by day and a teacher by night.

A different kind of film is *Corral* (1954), by Colin Low and Wolf Koenig, which gives a brief portrait of the Canadian west without a single word of commentary. Backed by an excellent score by Eldon Rathburn, the camera follows a cowboy as he rounds up a herd of wild horses. Working with a dog, he skillfully maneuvers the herd into a corral. Singling out a half-wild bronc, he ropes him. The horse fights until the hand of the cowboy touches his nose and he slips a halter over his head, saddles him and rides off across the prairie. *Corral* moves with a lyric beauty that evokes the spirit of the west and the communication between man and animal.

The film is an outstanding example of the subtle possibilities of the motion picture, using the simplest of devices. Originally intended as a part of "Faces of Canada," *Corral* was Low's first attempt at actuality film - making. Shot on his summer vacation, the results were so good that Tom Daly, his executive producer, urged that Low be
given enough money to polish the film. The end result won, among other awards, first prize at Venice. It also marked the point where Low divided his efforts between animation and documentary film work.

In *Farm Calendar* (1955) — a four-reel film by Roman Kroitor for the Department of Citizenship and Immigration — rural life in eastern Canada is shown with the careful, deliberate style reminiscent of Georges Rouquier. In a direct manner, the film follows the routine of rural life on the farm of Donald Sloane, an Ontario farmer of Dutch ancestry. The image is of a good life, one of hard work and of changing tempos as the activities of planting and harvesting give way to the relative calm of the winter when time is spent in maintenance and preparation for another year.

Other films on immigration took a more direct approach, as did *Citizen Varek*, in describing life in Canada. *The Newcomers* (1953) made a fast survey of the work and life styles of those from Europe who had recently become Canadians. *Canadian Venture* (1955) presents personal accounts of life in Canada by recent British immigrants. This type of film has continued to prove successful as is witnessed by the production of *Why Canada?* (1964) which interviewed a number of new citizens with varied and interesting backgrounds including a chanteuse, a glass blower, and a lamp manufacturer.

Broad interpretive films dropped the heroic approach of *Peoples of Canada*, yet maintained, in part at least, the symphonic style of that film. Roman Kroitor's *The Canadians* (1959) — a revision of a 1956 film
Introducing Canada pieces together clips from a number of earlier films. The result is a montage film that falls very flatly between a humorous and a dynamic approach to the subject.

A unique modification of the symphonic style was the long - five-reel - Canadian Profile (1956) by Allan Wargon. Viewing life in Canada through a series of vignettes rather than a montage of shots, Profile chronicles life in Canada at a time of social and technological change.

In Newfoundland, a father and son work cleaning their fish. They see a new processor that will save hours of work; the father is reluctant to invest in such a plan. His son, however, realizes it is their only hope of continuing their business. In Nova Scotia a family prepares to leave, looking for a better life elsewhere. A young couple marry and move to the city. In Montreal a young French-Canadian student goes against his family's wishes by declaring that he will study sociology rather than the traditionally accepted disciplines of law, medicine or theology. The pace is bright as the stories dealing with people from all walks of life move westward across the country.

In 1956, Trueman left the Board to become the director of the newly created Canada Council. He was replaced by Guy Roberge - a French-Canadian lawyer with a bi-cultural outlook, an interest in the arts, and an expert diplomat when it came to dealing with government officials. Roberge was the youngest Commissioner to date; he was also the first to hold the job who was completely bi-lingual.

The Roberge administration began with three important events - the final completion of the Montreal move and the beginning of production in that city, the rise in television production, and the expansion of
French-language production. Both French and English production were heavily engaged in television work and it was in this area that much of the emphasis of interpretive film-making was being placed. International concerns were reflected in the television "World In Action" series which presented a multi-part study of the British Commonwealth. The "Comparisons" films fulfilled Commissioner Trueman's statement of a need for films to let people over the world know how one another live and think. The French-language series of "Passe Partout" and "Panoramique" were the first to explore the milieu of contemporary French Canada. These marked only the beginning of groups of films that plunged into the historical, social, scientific, cultural and artistic stream of Canadian life.

At the same time, production for theatrical and non-theatrical audiences was expanding to include a greater range and number of subjects. Canadian history was one of the themes to be developed in the 1950's. Before this time, the subject was practically untouched. With the exception of a few minor efforts in the 1940's, the only major film to deal with the subject was J. Booth Scott's *Heritage*, made for the Motion Picture Bureau.

First of the new historical films was a modest effort entitled *House of History* (1954). Using the television technique of Bernard Devlin's "On the Spot" series, the camera explores the home of William Lyon Mackenzie. Two boys enter the house and are given a tour by a colorful guide whose telling of Mackenzie's life convinces them that he was not just a dim, sullen figure in a painting, but a kindly man and yet a fierce fighter for justice.
The Canadian West and Northwest held a fascination for Daly, Low, Kroitor and Koenig of unit B. This interest led Colin Low and Wolf Koenig to the Yukon Territory on a trip which resulted in two films. The first was Gold (1955) by Low and Koenig with a score by Eldon Rathburn. The simplicity of this short film belies its subtle sense of irony, letting the idea of stupidity and waste come through the straight reporting of placer mining in the present-day Yukon. An aerial shot opens the film following the trails of rock and gravel - once creek beds - that have been churned and washed into a surrealist landscape by dredges that are inching their way along the channels for the last time. The few ounces of gold dust that are recovered from several tons of mud must ultimately be separated by hand. The dust is spooned into flat boxes and picked over. Finally, the last trace of unwanted material is blown away, before the gold is melted into a small, unimpressive block. Overshadowed by such contemporary films as City of Gold and Corral, Gold stands out as a unique work - a classic of its kind.

The second film - City of Gold (1957) - was the work of the same personnel with the addition of Roman Kroitor and Pierre Berton who wrote and narrated the commentary. The idea for the film began with the discovery by Low of photographs of the Klondike gold rush of 1897 in the Dominion Archives. On the strength of this material, the trip was made and actuality material was shot. More photographs were found in Dawson City. This resulted in a large collection that allowed a good selection of material, most of which was the work of two photographers who had a similar style. This was the first opportunity that the film-makers had to use straight photographic material. In the past films, such as
From Cartier to Confederation French Canada 1534-1848 and Age of the Beaver, used historical photos, paintings, and graphics augmented by contemporary artwork to fill in the gaps. The results were never very exciting.

The main problem with City was to go from actuality material to the still photographs and avoid a "let down" feeling. This was done through the editorial process by refining the opening sequence to include less and less movement. The film begins with scenes of contemporary Dawson City. As the narrator discusses the life of the people and reminisces on the past, the shots become more static - weeds blowing past deserted buildings, grave markers, a rope on the deck of an old ship. The first still is of clouds and mountains. The transition at the end reverses the process, returning to the present via the buildings with shots of picks and shovels lying as if placed there by the men in the photographs. The first detectable movement is a shot of a dusty book - in the background there is a slight shimmer of reflected sunlight.

The second innovation in the film was the way in which the still photos were shot. Avoiding the usual clichés of fast cutting to give the illusion of movement, which usually succeeds in calling attention to the fact that the visuals are static, photos were selected showing people in "rest" positions. The miner is seen not swinging his pick, but at the instant after he has put it down. Thus the camera can remain on the picture for as long as it is interesting. The objective is to keep the mind of the viewer moving. To this end, the visuals are carefully ordered - a close-up of a man's face is followed by a panning shot in the direction of his gaze to some object of interest.
Camera movement was plotted using a device invented by Kroitor which could be moved across art work and mark dots at regular intervals on an overlay. This allowed exact plotting of panning shots to follow the organic structure of the photograph avoiding the straight pan that makes it appear flat. In the final shot of the celebration of a combined Dominion Day and Fourth of July, the panning shots of faces in the crowd are almost like a motion picture.

Story is always the weakest part of such films, and it was not until the end that Pierre Berton was brought in to do the script. Berton was excited and took the film-maker's idea far beyond their hopes. His growing up in the area, like finding enough of the right photographs, was a bit of added luck. City of Gold is, without a doubt, the finest film of its kind by anybody's standard. It has been called the best documentary of the decade. To date, it has won seventeen international awards.

Later efforts along the same lines were less successful. Days of Whiskey Gap (1961) by Low, Kroitor and Koenig combined photographs and actuality shooting with engravings of the period to tell the story of the mounted police in the taming of the Canadian West. Lack of historical material severely limits the scope of the film and the mixing of media destroys the visual continuity. Included, however, are interviews with a scout, a sheriff, and a woman pioneer who settled the west in the 1870's and 80's, thus providing a fascinating insight into the era. The end result is more an interesting document than an articulate film.

The Gold Seekers (1962) combined recent actuality films with historical footage to explore another less exciting, yet equally important gold
rush that opened Northern Ontario and Quebec at the turn of the century. The compilation technique is used to compare the "then" and "now" images of Val d'or, Colbalt, Kirkland Lake and other boom towns and the great mines that are now shafts filled with rusting machinery.

With the Forest (1965) by John Spotton, the City of Gold style is recaptured with considerable success though it does not achieve the perfect balance of the original. The clearing of the land soon becomes a major industry as Canadian lumber begins to compete on the world market. Historical photographs and engravings relate this saga of the lumbermen, of the boom and bust industry that began with the cutting of huge trees for ship building, medium-sized trees for railroad ties and finally, the present-day operation where the woods ring with the roar and crash of automatic cutters and strippers that harvest the small trees for paper pulp. Ending on a sober note, the film leaves unanswered the question of how long the forest will last.

The social geography of Canada was mapped in a group of films describing the life and work of various peoples in Canada. Unlike the international films of 1951-53, e.g., Herring Hunt, these films approached their subject in a matter-of-fact way, avoiding the over-blown dramatics that often pervaded such earlier efforts. The films, designed mainly for classroom and community use, placed their emphasis on giving an accurate description of the work process and at the same time a description of the men who choose these particular kinds of work.

In Arctic Outpost (1960) John Feeney departed from his usual poetic style to give a straight reporting of daily life in Pangnirtung a tiny community on Cumberland Sound, Baffin Island. The focus of the film is
on the function of the community institutions the Hudson's Bay Company store, the mission hospital, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Post, and the Government School.

A more cohesive style existed in the films of Guy Cote whose work, made up the majority of the films in the series. *Fishermen* (1959) dealt with east-coast fishing, presenting a problem facing many men who are self-employed - giving up one's own boat and leaving the freedom of the traditional small operation for a job on a large boat in the increasingly mechanized fishing industry. *Railroaders* (1958) described in detail how the combined efforts of dispatchers, signalmen, telegraphers, and track crews are needed to keep the system functioning. Set in the mountains of British Columbia, the film uses many of the techniques of *Street Railway Switchman*, playing images of the comfortable passengers inside the train against those of section gangs working in the bitterly-cold night outside.

Other title in the series included *Cattle Ranch* (1961) and *Roughnecks* (1960) - a portrait of the transient and dangerous life of the men on an oil-drilling crew. The most recent addition was *Miner* (1965) - a study of hard-rock mining filmed in Sudbury, Ontario. Similar contemporary efforts were being made in French production with such films as *Chantier coopératif, Les bûcherons de la Manouane* and *Normétal* giving the social geography films a bi-cultural base.

The role of Canada in international affairs began to appear in NFB films only on a very limited scale after the end of the theatrical "World In Action" series and the switch to national peacetime themes in "Canada Carries On." Early efforts were slight. *Hands Across the Sky*
(1954) was a ten-minute report on Canadian participation in the Colombo Plan aiding industrial development in West Pakistan. Similar films were *War On Want* (1954) -- Canadian -- UNESCO aid to South East Asia, and *Indochina* a three-reel film on the recent political history of the area and Canada's role in the mobile truce teams in peace-keeping operations.

*Blue Vanguard* (1956) produced for the United Nations by Ian MacNeill and Dennis Gillson, was one of the first films to deal with the large-scale U.N. peace-keeping operations in which Canada was a major participant. Opening with a shot of the armistice demarcation line across the Gaza Strip, the scene cuts back to a brief synopsis of the conflict of six-months earlier. Step by step, the process of Israeli, British and French troop withdrawal is shown, along with the setting-up of the cease-fire line, the clearing of sunken ships and mine fields until order is at last restored. Postmark U.N.E.F. (1965) and *You are Welcome Sirs*

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8Because of the controversy over the Suez Conflict, which raged within the United Nations for a considerable time, the film was never released by the U.N. on the grounds that it would probably do more harm than good simply by calling attention to the incident. In view of the 1968 situation in the Middle East, it is doubtful that this film will be released in the foreseeable future.

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to Cyprus (1965) documented similar peace-keeping assignments.

Without a doubt, the most exciting film to deal with Canadians abroad was Don Owen's *You Don't Back Down* (1965). Using cinéma vérité, the film takes a very gutsy look at the life of Dr. Alex McMahon - a volunteer from the Canadian University Service Organization working in Nigeria. McMahon's clinic is in a small, back-water town that is just beginning
to experience some of the feelings of modern affluence, but is still rooted in poverty. His patients range from a teenage boy embarrassed and tearful because of a severe case of acne to a woman whose nose has been grafted into place after it had been bitten off in a fight. His first skin graft - a nine-hour operation - has failed and will have to be redone. It is a life of ironies. The leper children are those who, thanks to the clinic, have the best care. At the end of the film he explains his situation, that "you can't back down and must try things that you would not attempt outside of a large hospital; that the medical utopia of no fees and complete freedom does not exist. People will pay with what little they have and you must accept it."

While individual films provided a wide range of subject matter, the mainstay of the Board's national interpretive program was "Canada Carries On." With the tremendous expansion of television and concomitant decline in theatrical distribution, the theatrical series became an item of doubtful value in the area of interpretive production. While "Canada Carries On" had run for more than two decades, it had slowly and steadily deteriorated since the war. Gone were the large block titles and threatening signature theme, and with them the fast-cut, high-pressure style of the Grierson years when the series had been the voice of the War Information Program.

In the times that followed the subjects changed, running the gamut from arts and crafts through sports and floods. In the early 1950's the international theme waxed, then waned in later years to include almost anything that was of topical interest. But from the Board's
point of view subjects could not become too topical, since the films would have to be placed in non-theatrical distribution with a distribution life-span of at least five years.

Two common aspects of the series were the length—twelve to twenty minutes—and a minimum of dialog, thus allowing for easy translation of the films into a number of foreign languages. In the mid-1950's the series was still running in several thousand Canadian theaters and was disseminated through Canadian Government posts abroad.

These two conditions posed a limitation on the style of the films, confining them to a rather straight form of reportage. In spite of this, Nicholas Balla—the series producer for fifteen years—was able to turn out a steady supply of even-quality films. He was able to use films from other units and received two to three issues a year from French Production. When television came on the scene, the situation changed in a number of ways. Production demands raised the quota for all of the units, but French Production, which was most deeply involved in television, was able only to produce an occasional "CCO" item. A second problem was the matter of length and style. Television required films to fit half-hour and hour time slots, thus increasing the length of a great number of films produced. Conversion to the one to two-reel format of "CCO" consequently became more difficult.

There was also the matter of forms. Drama and cinéma vérité were almost impossible to cut down and these forms had a great amount of dialog. Television was also dealing with topical matters, bringing them to the audience much faster than had ever been possible with theatrical showings. No one was able to come up with an alternative plan and
"Canada Carries On" was concluded in 1959 along with "En Avant Canada" - its French counterpart. "Eye Witness" and "Coup d'Oeil" the one-reel news series - met a similar end at the same time. Both series, however, were continued on a non-theatrical basis. Given a new format, they featured a single topic and subject matter that was less transitory in nature, covering scientific, industrial and social subjects. These new series "Screen Magazine" and "Ciné-Magazine" remain in production as of this writing.

The major change that took place under the Roberge administration and which structured the production for the future was the shift from the unit system to production pools. At one time two units produced all the Board's films; by the end of the War, the number had increased to twelve. After the War these were consolidated into five. In 1953 a television unit was created. Soon the demands for material were so great that all five units went into television production and the original television unit was disbanded. French production expanded and became one unit, then two, bringing the total units to seven by 1963.

Television was the major cause of the expansion. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation required series of films to fill thirteen or twenty-six time slots per year. By 1960 the policy had been relaxed allowing the Board time for specials and slots for films in existing CBC series. Nevertheless, there were still problems of keeping a steady flow of high-quality material.

Each unit was headed by an Executive Producer and had its own staff of producers, writers, directors and editors. Each drew upon the camera, sound, music and laboratory departments for services. There was little
shifting of personnel between units and often the result was a drop in film quality when one unit had to turn out an entire television series. Often one unit would be over-worked while members of another would have little to do. The harassed Executive Producer was often ignorant of both the availability and capability of such persons. The lack of interchange was also felt to be detrimental to creativity. As production increased and the hierarchical structure became more rigid, many film-makers felt that they had little to say about the selection of their subjects.

All of the units centered around the Executive Producer - a man who had to combine the talents of film-maker, critic, mentor and administrator. The demands upon him were not only tremendous, but increasing. The new Director of Production, Grant McLean, appointed to the position following the death of Donald Mulholland, decided that the system would have to be changed. Costs had been increasing and output was not increasing fast enough.

The new system consisted of a program committee of senior producers, representatives of the film-makers, and a coordinating producer who all would draft a program and meet at regular intervals to hear proposals from film-makers. There was also a production committee - working in an advisory capacity on matters of production standards, development, staff policy, recruitment and training. This group would consist of some of the program supervisors, the Coordinating Producer and the Production Manager. A third committee was to advise on salaries.

The film-makers were now free to work for any program producer. Production pools were created for individual productions and dissolved when they were completed. The mobility had its drawbacks. Many felt
that while mobility was good, teams that had evolved in the units were broken up and that the "instant team" never worked as well. Newcomers complained of difficulties in finding a place to start - in the past they had been adopted by units. In terms of production, the quality has not appeared to suffer. Complaints have waned and the system remains in a state of equilibrium which will continue until the next crisis.

The shifts in the area of production were accompanied by changes and improvements in the Board's system of distribution. During the 1962-1963 year, an extensive study was conducted to determine the nature of the NFB audience and how it could best be reached; to find out what films were being used, how they were used, and thus plan for the future.9


Until this time, film distribution had undergone a number of changes both drastic and gradual. Needs were met with immediate actions, but no long-range plans were made. As the distribution system grew larger and more complex, the need for reorganization on a large scale became obvious.

With the end of the War, non-theatrical film circulation began to shift from direct distribution by the Board to voluntary agencies. By the early 1960's there was a shift to distribution through local government outlets including public and regional libraries and various extension services. There was still a variety of techniques in use in terms of getting films to audiences and the role of the NFB representative was as varied as his territory. In areas where local self-operation was a
working reality his job was that of a long-range planner of film programs. Where this was not the case, the job was still a "one-man-band" affair where he had to move small film packages to various groups.

Though much of the Canadian population has been moving to the cities, great numbers remain on farms or in small communities - islands of population separated by dozens or even hundreds of miles of prairie and wilderness. In this sense, parts of Canada resemble Polynesia. In such an environment film distribution has been a problem of logistics and transportation. By comparison, in the eastern sections of the country with their dense urban populations, distribution has been a matter of intensive promotion and effective use of mass media to compete with other films, as well as other media. In both the urban and rural areas, a myriad of audience needed to be served -- pockets of English in Quebec; French in the prairies; Indians, Eskimos, and communities where the predominate language might be Dutch, German, or Italian.

In non-theatrical distribution the demand for prints remains in a constant state of flux as populations shift, institutions change their functions and films go in and out of circulation. The NFB representative sells what prints he can, but also loans great numbers on a cost-free basis - most of these go to areas of low population. Population density continues to be one of the great problems of distribution. In large cities where promotion is heavy, demands for prints may suddenly increase. In Toronto with its Metropolitan Film Pool, such demands can be met. Similar systems are being considered in other cities. In thinly settled areas with high transport costs and no large film outlets the
burden of supply rest on the Board. Thus, the ratio of NFB-owned prints serving these areas when compared to the cities is in inverse proportion to population density.  

10 Gray, Ibid., "Film Supply for 16mm Distribution," p. 3.

Distribution offices have thus been faced with four basic problems - not enough films to meet all audience needs and to allow for future expansion, an over-supply of old and out-of-date films, a lack of access to all new film titles and a promotion-created demand which outstrips available supplies. The problem of film supply has been alleviated by consolidating small voluntary units into the larger systems and placing the circuit programs and film deposits under the administration of these agencies. This system has worked successfully in both the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Withdrawing old films presented less problems than getting enough new films into NFB offices. Much of the difficulty lay in the fact that the NFB libraries, while well stocked for general distribution purposes, were not equipped to provide spot bookings direct to users. This policy of spot bookings also put the Board in the position of competing with its own outlets. The solution was to withdraw as much as possible from spot booking and push for more print sales, thus freeing the Board's library prints for preview and promotional use.

The promotional demand problem left the impression that the Board could not provide what it promised in its publicity and that the distribution operation was inefficient. One solution was to catalog films
coming out of television and theatrical release by the date that sufficient prints were available rather than by the non-theatrical clearance date.

By 1960 the non-theatrical audiences had grown in size and sophistication. The "general audience" concept had long since vanished and distribution and promotional activities were being directed toward groups with specific interests. The great majority of these were educational and related institutions, such as libraries, which maintained the film deposits and arranged screenings. With the increase in size came an increase in the complexity of the distribution system.

Six major types of organizations emerged to meet the problems of getting films to audiences. Oldest among these was the sixteen-millimeter film circuit. Begun in 1942 as a direct NFB operation, control shifted mainly to voluntary organizations in 1945-46. Only a few of these still resemble the old traveling shows of the War years. Such instances are the screenings in Northern Quebec and the Northwest Territory where the circuit points are serviced by officers from Forestry, Fisheries, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Of the 600 circuits in operation as of 1961 approximately one-third of these were serviced directly by the Board; the remainder as operated by school and library systems or film councils.11

The film councils, formed early in 1945, were the first of the voluntary organizations to distribute NFB films. Originally, the councils functioned as community interest groups as they took over the NFB circuits. Later, they began to evolve into various types of special interest groups; these were later incorporated into federations which circulated and maintained large blocks of films. Basically, the film council is a group of community representatives who provide films from a community-operated depot. The council's direct program activities include such things as showings in support of community campaigns, showings for children and special groups, and sponsoring local film festivals.

The impact of television began a leveling off in the number of film councils. As the new medium began to saturate the country, audience figures for adult community shows declined markedly. Another more basic change came from the centralization of community and county services and their transfer from voluntary to public tax-supported agencies -- schools and libraries. In 1961 there were 488 councils as compared to 500 in 1946. The councils fall into three, almost evenly divided categories -- healthy and successful; in difficulty but carrying on; and failing.12

12 Gray, Ibid., "Voluntary Film Groups," p. 9.

In sections of the country the council is vital, fulfilling duties that will not be assumed by local government for a number of years. The
ultimate fate of this organization will undoubtedly be decided by need. It is for this reason that new councils are being created in some areas while in others they are passing out of existence.

In assessing the future of film councils, the Board's distribution division took a self-critical look at some of its activities. At times, it was felt that the councils were being asked to perform promotional duties on behalf of the Board and that the Board did not always serve the real interest of the councils. In many instances, there were too many small councils. Often these were saddled with a plethora of organizational rules, suitable for a Provincial but not a small community service. Consolidation was a partial answer, but reorganization would also be needed.

With the decline in importance of the film councils, other institutions assumed a more important role in film distribution. Public libraries were among the first of these. In 1945 libraries stocked mainly war information, cartoon and travel films. After the War, demands for films turned more to cultural and educational subjects -- a trend that increased in the 1950's as television became the major entertainment medium. The libraries serve schools and adult community audiences, often working in cooperation with film councils. The library books films and equipment while the council promotes and publicizes the service and provides training.

Film depots became the grass-roots points of supply for films outside of urban areas. Located in schools, businesses, community centers, churches and sometimes in private homes, they are watched over by a dedicated member of the community. The depots may contain less than a
dozen titles or at most twenty-five exclusive of circuit programs and spot bookings. The depots are closely linked with NFB as a source for many of their rotating films.

Linking all of these small organizations are film federations and purchase pools which were begun in the early 1950's. These organizations circulate blocks of five to thirty films to member libraries and councils at intervals of from one to three months. Catalogs are issued to members who pay for a membership in much the same way an individual buys a share in a cooperative. By 1963 nineteen of these were in operation combining urban and rural centers - serving an estimated 690 film libraries, depots and councils.13


Working in a physically larger area have been the Provincial film libraries operated by government departments and universities. Most of this service is to schools and departmental extension agencies, though some offer films to a wide variety of agencies including public libraries and film councils. Some distribution is through spot bookings, but most is through long-range extension programs. The service is professional rather than massive - aimed at specialized groups rather than generalized audiences - booking single films or film packages to various agencies. The Provincial libraries upgrade film selection by providing training and assistance to professionals in other agencies.

The interlocking and overlapping of functions of these various organizations present NFB not only with the problems of distribution
mentioned earlier, but also with the extremely difficult task of audience measurement. While it can be determined how many people in each type of group saw NFB films, it is not possible to determine accurately the proportion of the total population being served. While all showings are open to all group members, not all people will attend every program.

In the past, as has been indicated earlier, much promotional effort had been directed toward fragments of a vaguely defined non-theatrical audience. In reality it was found that a great number of the films seen by these groups were not chosen by the groups or their leaders, but by outsiders - guest lecturers and speakers who presented an evening's program on their special subject. Other outside influences are the federal and Provincial departments that prepare film packages.

In the middle and late 1960's the promotional emphasis has been carefully directed to selected targets. Foremost among these are the agencies with a vested interest in special films and who will take them to the groups. Of second importance are the groups themselves, but mainly at the National and Provincial level - the point being to capture the interest and possible endorsement of NFB films by these groups. The next targets are the local group leaders, these are to be reached mainly through the Provincial and district offices. The local film group, however, becomes a primary target in the case of "institutional" films that meet their particular interests, e.g., films that promote a local area or films on community problems.

As of 1963 the distribution division's efforts were aimed to an "elite" of frequent film users - teachers, industrial supervisors and
extension workers. Since then, more efforts have been directed at community groups with special interests. The Board has worked directly with such organizations in planning film programs. Special catalogs have been prepared on such subjects as travel and wild life, and human relations. The latter have proved to be very successful with educational and community groups.

The Board, both as a producer and distributor of media, is working toward the fullest possible utilization of its films - keeping audiences informed of the films being produced and giving the selectors of the films additional training and experience through summer film institutes. The first of these was held in 1965 - co-sponsored by the Board and the Canadian Education Association. It has since become an annual workshop to expose teachers to the latest in visual media and bring them together in face-to-face meetings with those who made the films.

With the departure of Guy Roberge, who became the representative of the Quebec Government in London, the Commissionership was passed to Grant McLean. McLean served as Acting Commissioner from 1965 to 1967 when he left to form his own educational film company - the Visual Education Centre. Julian Biggs became head of production and the Commissionership was filled by the appointment of Hugo McPherson, who holds the job at this writing.

McPherson, like Trueman, has an academic background. A student of Marshall McLuhan, though not a McLuhanite, he has taught literature in several universities including Toronto, Western Ontario and Yale in the United States. As in the past, the Film Board will be the major
communication arm of the Government, yet its future role - as envisioned by McPherson - will become increasingly complex and varied.

...We are in the midst of a major communication revolution of multi-media and environmental cinema. While the day of the documentary on a single screen is not completely past, it is certainly time to devote more effort to research and experimentation to new films, new types of films and new uses of film.14

14 Hugo McPherson. Interview

It is under the Commissionership of McPherson that new directions are being taken to expand the use and value of film. The most vital and exciting step has been made in the area of interpretive film-making under the Canadian Poverty Program - to utilize film in an active (using) situation in addition to the standard passive (viewing) situation.

The Canadian Government Poverty Program under the title "Challenge For Change" was begun in 1966 as a cooperative effort of a number of government departments and agencies including the National Film Board. Film ideas for the program were discussed among the staff, but no action was taken until the Privy Council Office proposed sponsoring a film on urban poverty, under the Privy Council's Special Planning Secretariat.15

15 The S.P.S. is roughly equivalent to the United States Office of Economic Opportunity. S.P.S., however, is very small and acts as a coordinating body while O.E.O. is a large operational organization.
The film's purpose was to arouse public interest and concern for the problems of the urban poor. Originally intended as a thirty-minute production, it was expanded to an hour and given initial release on television. *The Things I Cannot Change* (1966) was produced by John Kemeny and directed by Tania Ballantyne. Using the cinéma vérité camera the film examines three weeks in the life of the Kenneth Bailey family. Bailey - an ex-seaman and unemployed cook - lives in Montreal with his wife, nine children and a tenth expected. The family's poverty is not the dirt and squalor of tenements or of rural areas, but the grinding, frustrating poverty of trying to live a middle-class existence without the means to do it. The apartment is neat though cheaply furnished. To qualify for welfare, Bailey must sell the furniture. When the money is gone then he can receive aid. Bailey refuses and the family lives on a meagre diet supplemented by bread from the local Catholic church.

Bailey is an articulate man and it was, in part, for this reason that he was selected for the film. Through his free-flowing reminiscences of a wretched childhood, interspersed with a self-styled brand of socialism-damning a welfare system that makes it impossible to save, thus forcing people to live on the edge of affluence - Bailey emerges as a cocky, but compassionate man attempting to give his family a decent life.

In the course of the film he moves from crisis to crisis climaxing in an attempt to collect on a personal debt that leads to a street fight and eventually a confrontation with the police, but fortunately
with no prosecution for Bailey. As the tenth child is born, the family continues its marginal existence and Kenneth Bailey resigns himself to accepting "things I cannot change."

The film created both public and governmental interest and led to increased research within the Board, on what it could do to help the program. Among other things, the researchers concluded that poverty was not an isolated problem, but a factor in the basic issue of bringing about social change, and hence, came the title of the program. The second and major fact to emerge was that the entire program was going to be larger and more expensive than had originally been planned. The new proposal, by the Board, was for a film program where half the funds would be supplied by NFB and half by the other participating government agencies. The film activity will be an overlapping affair that would

16 Of the seventeen participating agencies, the most prominent are the Departments of National Health and Welfare, Manpower and Immigration, Labour, Fisheries, Agriculture, Justice, the Solicitor General's Office, The Atlantic Development Board, and Prairie Development Committee.

not, as in the case of standard sponsored films, serve the ends of any one department.

Not all of the agencies were able to produce their full amount; $350,000 was raised and the budget will be larger in the coming (1968-69) year. The program will be operated through an inter-departmental committee chaired by a representative of the Privy Council Office. At present this committee acts only as a consultant and has no control over the production operation. This had led to a certain amount of
friction. The system now calls for the films to be discussed and planned in the committee; they will then be produced by the Board who will screen the films for the committee in the completed stage.

Following the completion of *The Things I Cannot Change* the NFB staff formed a production team of film specialists from both Production and Distribution to work under the umbrella of "film utilization." All members will be involved in the production process from the stage of planning to that of finished product. All of the films will be tested and evaluated in the field before release. Those that do not prove successful will be reworked until they are - and some may be scrapped completely. This joining of production and distribution forces represents a very important step in bringing together the two divisions of the Board - a plan that had been strongly advocated by the distribution study of 1963.

The films produced in the program will be of three types. The first is directed to the middle and upper-class audience and will serve to create a favorable climate for the program and inform the public of the causes and conditions creating and perpetuating poverty. *The Things I Cannot Change* is the first in this group of films. Second in the group will be *The Calibogy Fiddler* (1968) directed by Peter Pierson. Using professional actors and a dramatic story, *Fiddler* is a look at the cycle of poverty showing how it is passed on from one generation of a family to the next. The plot centers on the struggle of a young girl to break out of the system by getting an education and a job. This film, as are most of the future productions in this category, is an hour in length and will receive its initial release on network television.
The second type of film will be aimed at specialists who will work in the field—members of the Company of Young Canadians, sociologists, and social workers. The films will be used for training these people by providing descriptions of the various programs in action.

_Elliot Lake - A Report_ (1968) directed by David Hughes and D'Arcy Marsh dispenses with narrative commentary to present "on screen" statements of the people involved in an experiment in moving Indian families out of depressed reservations and into the community of Elliot Lake—a semi-abandoned mining town in northern Ontario. The site provides low-cost housing and job training by the Centre for Continuing Education. The project is about fifty percent successful—half of the trainees return to the reservation. The analysis of the situation through the statements of both the Indian trainees and their white instructors reveals the prejudices and misunderstandings on both sides.

In a similar vein—though on a smaller scale—is _Pow Wow at Duck Lake_ (1968) by David Hughes, D'Arcy Marsh and Douglas Keifer. Here the camera is present at a confrontation between Indian students and Jesuit teachers at a residential school. The exchanges are hot over the issues of the quality of education at the school, and the kind of preparation the students are getting for a job market that demands an increasing number of skills.

Less emotional, though more revealing, is _Indian Dialog_ (1967) also by Hughes, Marsh and Keifer. In a round-table discussion seven Indians debate the meaning of readiness for self-government. All share a dislike for the attitude held by the Department of Indian Affairs which to them represents a continual state of "becoming ready" for self-rule.
The talk shifts to more basic issues of the Indian's having to adapt to and being judged by standards imposed by white society. That the Indian is unwilling to sacrifice freedom for material gains is only one example of this social conflict. The need to adopt white technology is keenly felt, yet there is a fear of the concurrent destruction of Indian language and culture by increasing the forces of social erosion that have long been at work. Though no solutions are presented, one interesting proposition based on the ideas of Marshall McLuhan is put forth, namely, that in an increasingly automated society with a growing amount of leisure time, the Indian may prove an indispensable teacher of crafts and sports and an example of the psychological aspects of the enjoyment of recreation.

*Indian Dialog* represents the latest step in the evolution of the ethnographic film. The interpretation of the Indian and Eskimo by the white film-maker in the films of the late 1940's found him interesting and a bit quaint. By the 1950's the films reflected a romantic image often containing overtones of the tragedy of a dying culture. It was with *Circle of the Sun* that the Indian first had anything to say about himself and then it was filtered through a script writer. *Because They Are Different* (1964) called for an understanding of the unique problems of the Indian, but most of this opinion came from the white-power structure.

The contemporary Indian appeared in *The Indian Speaks* (1967) to discuss such matters as discrimination and his role in contemporary society. In this film, sponsored by the Department of Indian Affairs, while the subjects freely voiced their opinion, they were chosen to
present a positive image. Positivism was a fine idea, but unfortunately many of the basic issues and problems went unmentioned -- dropped in favor of the poignant image of the personal problems of a beautiful young Indian stenographer.

By no means are all of the films in this group devoted to the problems and progress of the Canadian Indian. Other titles are concerned with matters that are universal -- Legal Aid and The History of Poverty are broad in scope. Plan Van Man will deal with community projects as will Saul Alinsky -- a film on the work of the American innovator of successful ghetto cooperatives.

Most of the films will use the cinéma vérité approach and the single system camera - reminiscent of the early television efforts where the camera remains an ever-present member of the group observing the exchange of ideas. Films, such as Duck Lake, Indian Dialog and An Encounter at Kwacha House (1968) - a discussion of job discrimination among Halifax Negroes - are not cinematically exciting, but create a strong feeling of presence on the part of the viewer, and function as an agent of communication unbroken by editorial manipulations.

The third type of film can best be described as a use of films rather than a style - employing the motion picture in a program of direct communication to those affected by poverty and change. Many of the pilot films will be released in the silent eight millimeter format and will run about four minutes. These films will serve as a tool of the social worker to use in the home, projecting the film on a kitchen wall if need be. It has been found that poor people live in isolation.
Mothers with small children, for instance, are almost always in the home and thus, cannot get to theaters or community centers for showings.

One of the early films will demonstrate way a mother can entertain pre-school children with materials that are available in most homes, by making starch and salt clay and finger paints. Another film will show two girls applying for a job. Aimed at women of working age, the film will stress the importance of dress and attitude in affecting an applicant's chances in an interview with a prospective employer. Sound film would be most effective, but lack of standardization in eight millimeter systems prohibits its use.

While the main program is under the direction of producer John Kemeny, Colin Low is developing a special program for regional and community resource development in the Maritime Provinces which are suffering from the pressures of a dwindling fishing economy. The community development project is based in the Memorial University of Newfoundland, working through the University's Department of Extension and Community Development Service.

The role of the NFB will be to establish a film unit and use film in a way which will stimulate community and inter-community development to improve and, in some cases, make possible articulate leadership where none has existed. 17 The first experiments, begun in 1968, are

17 Colin Low, Interview.

taking place on Fogo Island -- a sixty by nine mile piece of land of the northeast shore of Newfoundland -- with a population of 6000 living in
ten small communities. Fishing will no longer support the population with the result that about seventy percent are on welfare. The Government has made some efforts at resettlement and industrialization with limited success. One possibility is to build a cooperative fish-processing plant. To work, such a plan will have to overcome the problems of low literacy and the lack of a local government. There is also the matter of fear — of the Government, of losing jobs or of angering neighbors. To date, the people of Fogo have been completely dependent upon the fish merchant and clergy for all legal aid and advice on community affairs.

The Fogo project began with the shooting of 20,000 feet of sound film on which the people discuss their problems and some of the possible methods of solving them. The film will then be edited to about four hours in length and shown to the people to give them a chance to see their own assessment of the situation. The next showing will be for the sociologists and community welfare workers at the University — giving them an opportunity to see directly the people’s feelings in their entire breadth and intensity. If some sections of the film are applicable to the problems of the larger Newfoundland community, they will be shown on television and probably used by the various government agencies in Ottawa for training purposes and may eventually end up on national television. Thus, the film will go through a number of metamorphoses over a period of years.

The film will also serve as a measuring and checking device to give the people a chance to see the physical evidence of the progress — or lack of it — as various government-aid programs are carried out. As
in the general training program films will serve as teaching tools. In this particular instance they will serve in an inspirational capacity as well. One projected film - Longliner - will show how this boat, mid-way between a punt and a dragger, can be built on the island and will make the fishing industry more competitive. The focus of the film will not be "how to do it," since the boats are already in limited use, but will show the advantages and problems of building such boats with government aid. Moreover, the film will show how to get the program started.

The success of the Fogo experiment will require two or three years to be determined. If the project does prove fruitful, similar efforts will be tried in other parts of the country. While some preliminary shooting has already been completed, the Newfoundland program will begin on a large scale in the Summer of 1969. The University will establish a course in the role of film in community development. The trainees will be local extension workers and possibly students from the Department of External Affairs who will be able to apply these techniques in other countries. The plan is for the University to provide the space, and NFB the teaching staff and equipment. Part of the students and financial support will come from External Aid.

According to Kemeny, who will coordinate the entire program if it proves successful, it will be phased out and moved in a modified form to Alberta leaving the operation in Newfoundland under Provincial
control. Training of the University personnel has already begun and in 1969 the Board will begin training Indians as film-makers.18

18John Kemeny, Interview.

Challenge For Change will receive special promotion through the Board's distribution system to gain the widest possible awareness. As interpretive film-making, the project has brought the documentary back to the grass-roots level of communicating to people with sympathy and concern. The program is a definite move away from the sophisticated, intellectual documentary that at times becomes so overloaded with cinematic techniques that the content becomes lost in a colorful montage. This kind of film-making has, at times, led to criticism of the Board for living an ivory-tower existence. Challenge For Change is a re-affirmation of the principles set down by John Grierson in 1938. It is impossible to say exactly what effect one project will have on the Board's future. In terms of interpretive film-making, it will certainly be significant.
CHAPTER V

TELEVISION PRODUCTION

The influence of television on the National Film Board began innocuously during the latter part of the Second World War. Although the Board's great concern was projecting the image of Canada via theatrical news films and through rural circuits, this image was beginning to shine feebly through the cathode-ray tube--first in the United States and later in Great Britain.

Television emerged in the United States after fifteen years of costly experimentation. In 1941 the Federal Communications Commission licensed four stations to operate on a regular commercial basis. On July 1, the National Broadcasting Company's station WNBT began telecasting. WCBW, owned by the Columbia Broadcasting System; WRGB, owned by General Electric; and WPTZ, owned by Philco, soon followed--giving service to New York, Schenectady and Plattsburg. By the end of the War the number of stations had increased to six. Television programming followed the pattern set by radio, i.e., dividing the broadcast day into segments of fifteen, thirty, and sixty minutes. The subsistence fare was of necessity simple studio programs and films, particularly short films. Networks and distribution companies began a frantic scramble for suitable material. NFB proved to be a desirable item. By the end of 1945 well over a hundred had been televised.¹

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Use of the Board's films increased with the number of stations and by 1950 American telecasts of NFB films had quadrupled. The British Broadcasting Corporation began using NFB films during that year but only on a limited basis and the United States continued to be the largest market. In 1951 the American TV bookings numbered 1,523—three times the figure of the previous year. In 1952 this figure nearly doubled. The staffs of both the NFB and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation were well aware of television's potential. Although no stations existed in Canada, there were 25,000 television receivers in operation.

The American experience had proved that television could provide the Board with a new and important channel of distribution. But the implications of the medium went much farther. Television could reach a large audience simultaneously; above all, it would be possible to reach an audience regularly. Rural circuits had provided the nearest approach but the fact remained that at least seventy-five percent of the total audience for the Board's films saw them on an irregular basis, or in a sequence over which the Board had no control. Of necessity, each film had to stand as a complete unit of information. While it was initially possible to structure film programs on the rural circuits by the 1950's, they were run almost entirely by independent groups working through film libraries and film councils. These groups, not the Board, were responsible for putting together individual film programs.
The thinking of the Board, at that time, was that each film should be a complete unit and if it was to carry a message, that message would have to be an explicit rather than an implicit one. The dramatization of social problems, one of the Board's major concerns, could best be served by an implicit presentation. In the "Mental Mechanisms" series, psychological disorders were explained by a narrator commenting on bits of dramatic material. In the open-end discussion series--"What Do You Think?" and "What's Your Opinion?"--five to ten-minute dramatic bits presented unresolved situations involving such values as keeping abreast of national and world affairs, and choosing proper leaders.

One alternative to these was the feature-length dramatic film. Film-makers, such as Sergei Eisenstein and V. I. Pudovkin, had used the feature with great effectiveness to provide the Soviet people with a vivid telling of the social, as well as the military, revolution which had shaped their country. Films, such as Battleship Potemkin, October, The General Line, Arsenal and Ivan, all served to build a heroic image of and for the Soviet people.

At NFB, however, feature production was a touchy subject. By the early 1950's considerable interest had developed. Several short dramatic films had been made, some excellent, others inept. Hour-long films had also been produced, but they were low-budget documentaries. While no direct ruling regarding features had ever been made a kind of precedent had been set by Grierson in his early advocacy of short films. After the completion of Royal Visit in 1940, the Board had produced no film in excess of one hour. The post-war crisis and investigation had also left its mark. It was quite possible that any would-be Canadian
feature producers might view the Board's entry into the field as a further example of unwelcome and unfair competition. Nevertheless, the possibility that the Board would make feature films still existed and after a suitable cooling off period might improve.

Television offered greater and more immediate possibilities than features. No precedents existed, inside or outside of the Board. A series of thirty-nine half-hour shows could encompass the material of half-a-dozen features. Its creators would be allowed a wide latitude in the number of stories to be told and the degree of detail to be included in each one. The three types of films—shorts, features and TV series—were viewed in light of the following paradigm:

The impact such a show (TV series) can make greatly surpasses anything which one feature film can ever do. But, just as a fifteen-minute short is the equivalent to a motto (in terms of word propaganda), just as a feature film is equivalent to a speech, so is a year-long television show equivalent to a novel in which the most important things are left unsaid, and must be left unsaid, within the framework of an interesting story (or series of stories). Thus, secondary points of information can be dealt with at length either implicitly or explicitly but the main theme should not be evident until the audience discovers it for itself.2


The CBC had its own ideas about television which did not include sharing the production end of the operation on a half-and-half basis with the Film Board. Since 1936 when it began operating a national radio broadcasting service, broadcasting had traditionally been under control of CBC. Rather than being an extension of film, the broadcasters saw television as an extension of radio. It would thus be
under the jurisdiction of the corporation whose duty it was to maintain
and operate stations and networks, to originate and secure programs from
within or outside of Canada, and to make contracts with producers and
performers for the purposes of creating programs.\(^3\)

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\(^3\) The Canadian Broadcasting Act, 1936, p. 3.

As the day approached when Canadian television would become a
reality, feelings of concern among the production staff reached a peak.
The situation was best described by Director Raymond Garceau:

Before this menace to our existence, the household split into
four camps: 1. those who moved to toss in the sponge and
join the enemy camp; 2. those who would continue with business
as usual, i.e., true-blue documentaries only; 3. those who
would prefer to engage the enemy on his own ground with a string
of films to prove we were better, even at television production;
4. finally (this was the smallest group) those who said this
was the time to found a Canadian film industry of a solid sort,
equal to all tests and all demands.\(^4\)

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\(^4\) Raymond Garceau, The Jottings of Young Garceau, #5, p. 4.

The television question was considered by the Massey Commission.
The section of the report on the new medium was written with an air of
cautions, voicing worries and warnings of the dangers of commercialism,
American influence, and dull programs. As things turned out, these
fears were not without grounds. The Commission agreed with the CBC
position that television had closer ties to the radio broadcasting
system in Canada than to film production and distribution. The
recommendation was made that direct control of television production be given to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and that CBC should proceed with program production and network broadcasting as soon as possible.

In the Commission's final comment a place was made for NFB with the statement:

There is one additional point which should be noticed but upon which we do not propose to make recommendations. Since television programmes are costly and since national television networks in Canada cannot be expected for some time, it seems probable that extensive use will be made of film in television programmes. We understand that in the United States films occupy about twenty-five per cent of all television broadcasting time, and that this percentage will no doubt increase. It therefore seems apparent to us that in the interest of economy, and in accordance with the implications of accepted broadcasting and film policies in Canada, there must be close co-operation between the National Film Board and the C.B.C. in the production of films and in their diffusion by television. The National Film Board could not possibly produce all the films or even all the sorts of films which the C.B.C. will probably require, even if it were desirable for the Film Board to do so; and it would be regrettable if the Film Board were to become merely or principally a supplier of films for television purposes. But the Film Board can and should act as principal adviser to the C.B.C. on film matters, including their production by private commercial producers and their procurement from abroad, and the C.B.C. in turn, through the use of a proper proportion of National Film Board films, will no doubt be able to extend very greatly the effectiveness of the Film Board's work and Canadian appreciation of it. We can also readily believe that in the broadcasting and filming of events of national importance, whether in politics, the arts or in Canadian life generally, there will be many opportunities for close collaboration between these two important governmental agencies.\(^5\)

\(^5\)Report Royal Commission on the National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, p. 305.
The Board's role of "principal adviser" to the CBC as it turned out was not an important one when CBC began its production. The first television station located in Toronto began operation in 1952. Others soon followed and by 1953 the CBC network was operating a coast-to-coast service. Although both NFB and CBC had studied the problems of television programming in the United States, it was not until production actually began that the full impact of the demands of the medium were felt. The television monster devoured great quantities of material which increased as the broadcast schedule was expanded to meet the demands of the viewing public. As more programs were created to fill the air space, the rivalry of a few years ago vanished in the irony of this new situation where the demand for products far out-weighed the supplying abilities of both CBC and the Film Board.

When the Film Board made its first move into television production, it was not with any great plans for a series of interpretive dramatic programs, but rather with a series geared to the laws of expediency. Donald Mulholland as director of production was responsible for the new venture; he had doubts about the strength of the Board's production units and their ability to produce quality material in the volume required by television. He yielded to the pressures brought to bear by the younger members of the staff, and in 1953 the television phase of NFB began.

Most of the enthusiasm for television was generated by the French staff. Bernard Devlin and Roger Blais proposed series ideas. Blais favored a cultural program featuring such subjects as the Montreal Symphony and dramatized works by important Canadian authors. Devlin
suggested a group of fifteen-minute "tele-visit" films—to be made on location using an on-screen narrator. Mulholland and Ian Smith, a new arrival with considerable American television experience, gave Devlin's plan the go-ahead, and shifted Blais' ideas to the regular film program.

Although having had no previous television experience, Devlin realized that such programs would have to be made fast and cheap since the Board's commitment to CBC was to deliver a fifteen-minute show every week for twenty-six weeks. These would have to be produced at a cost not exceeding ten percent of the budget required for an ordinary film of comparable length which limited the budget to $1,000 per film.

Devlin believed that the series could meet this requirement. He was impressed with a test film made with the single-system Auricon cameras, at that time just coming into use. The Auricon—a motor-driven, sixteen millimeter camera—was fitted with a galvanometer to record synchronous sound on the film while the picture was being shot. Such a system was much less expensive than the double system of film-making, then generally in use, which necessitated the synchronizing of the camera with a separate sound recorder. Single-system shooting, however, required that the director know exactly what he wanted before he started filming. There was little chance for second-guess editing and the adding of music or sound effects as with the double system.

Devlin began experimenting with the Auricon, working to add variety and flexibility to the system which had, to date, been used almost solely to record statements and speeches cut into television news programs. He did find a way by creating a system of film-making which had its closest relation in live television production. The director was
required to be a complete film-maker. He had to know the exact place to make a cut while shooting. Music, sound effects and off-screen commentary had to be tape-recorded in advance and fed into the camera at the proper time during the shooting. Late cues, improper recording levels and bad cuts meant that a whole sequence would have to be done over.

As it turned out, Devlin himself was about the only person who could master this technique of "instant film-making." He, along with cameraman John Foster, soundman John Locke, editor David Mayerovitch, and Fred Davis—an Ottawa radio announcer—as the talent, began the series which was given the title, "On The Spot."

Research was done on stories and an outline and commentary were prepared by Devlin. On the following day the story was filmed. Davis, microphone in hand, conducted the audience on a tour to some place in Canada, talking with the people there and ad-libbing much of the commentary. After a less-than-successful attempt to do a show on one of the local paper mills, a film was prepared on the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Crime Laboratory. The Mountie Crime Lab (1953), released on October 6, 1953, marked the Board's first step into television. Later, programs took viewers to a judo school in Hull, Quebec; to an Air Force parachute school in Manitoba; to the Winnipeg Ballet; to the Zoo in Stanley Park; and to the Vancouver Chinatown. Film was sent back from location and on the basis of written notes or a telephone call from Devlin final editing was done at the Board. While on the west coast, Devlin took the opportunity to fly to Korea and Japan to film Korea After the War (1954) and On Leave in Tokyo (1954)—two programs about Canadians serving with the United Nations Forces.
Fifteen-minute slots were becoming difficult to find by 1954 and it was decided to make "On The Spot" into a thirty-minute production and continue it on the weekly basis. It was becoming more difficult to play the game of "instant film-making." Other directors and cameramen were called in to work on the series since the job had become more than Devlin's crew could handle. He was, at this time, producing "Sur Le Vif" for the French television network. "Sur Le Vif" used Gil LaRoche as the screen personality and covered events of interest to French Canadians. Beginning October 17, 1954 the series was fifteen minutes in length and shot in the same manner as the first "On The Spot" programs. "Sur Le Vif" was composed of original material. There were no dubbed versions of the English-language series and no duplications of subject matter. The emphasis was on the activities of French Canadians—the Montreal Police Department, trappers and prospectors, the Royal 22nd in Germany, and historic Montreal. Devlin produced "Sur Le Vif" for twenty-six issues—until 1955 when it was dropped.

The "On The Spot" series continued in the thirty-minute format until 1955 when it, too, was dropped in favor of a new series. The longer programs followed the same pattern as the short series, but were planned to a greater degree and dealt with the subject in greater depth. They also tended to cover more serious subjects, although this trend could be seen in some of the later fifteen-minute films, e.g., Chosen Children (1954) which approached a cinéma vérité treatment of the work of an adoption center.

One of the more noteworthy of the half-hour films was Survival in the Bush (1954), where the narrator—Robert Anderson, along with
cameraman Doug McKay—is put over the side of a boat in a lake somewhere in the Quebec bush. The two are fortunately accompanied by Jean Baptiste, an experienced woodsman, who demonstrates the arts of fire building, fishing, canoe construction and even trapping bears with local materials and no tools other than an ax.

**Survival in the Bush** and **Chosen Children** were two of the more successful of the series because of their ability to capture a sense of immediacy. This was not always the case and awkward situations developed where the narrator was required to learn as he went along, e.g., "Well, I don't know much about nuclear reactors so I asked Dr. Windgate to. . ." Such programs ended with many thank-yous and put the narrator in an apologetic position. This was, however, corrected in the latter part of the series where the narrator became more of an informed reporter with an air of confidence about the subject giving bits of information and basing his questions on partial knowledge instead of total ignorance.

Unlike films on the rural circuits which were aimed especially at that audience, "On The Spot" and to a degree "Sur Le Vif," were designed for a vague "general audience." By the very nature of the series, not all programs could interest all people. While those living in the Maritime Provinces would be interested in an on-the-spot report from a strike-bound herring cannery in Halifax, a farmer in Manitoba would switch channels immediately. It was obvious that future programs would have to center around items of a more universal appeal.

Two weeks after "On The Spot" was launched the Board began its second series, "Window on Canada." Under the supervision of Ian Smith, "Window" was a thirty-minute weekly program composed of a panorama of
NFB films. Film critic, Clyde Gilmore, acted as the host to introduce and comment on the films as well as to provide transitional material when more than one film was used. Five months later, in March of 1954, "Regards Sur Le Canada" was begun. Essentially a French version of "Window," "Regards" used the same films dubbed into French. The exceptions were a number of productions originally made in the French language, e.g., the Ti-Jean films and L'homme aux oiseaux.

There was no particular theme or style to the programs. The subjects varied from Birds of Canada to Maps We Live By, from Feelings of Rejection to How to Build an Igloo. In most instances the films were simply introduced and shown in their entirety including credits. This eased production costs, but resulted in calling attention to the fact that the viewer was watching "old films" and not a television program. The feeling was that if completed films were to be used, they should be stripped of credits and even sound tracks when necessary so they would lose their identity as films. Commenting on the situation, Director Guy Côté stated:

... This may displease the author and the director of the film, but it will make a better TV show. Radio-Canada does this to some extent in "Aux Quatre Coins du Monde." One recent Sunday the programme announced that for the next half hour we would go to the four corners of the earth; "First, how Ukrainian Canadians spend Christmas." Then followed what looked like our Ukrainian Christmas, but with its sound track removed and two live announcers, talking about the pictures on the screen. Bits of information were given and comments were made on the side (such as "doesn't this girl look pretty?"). The programme was certainly not a roaring success, but it was one stage more comfortable than if the original (film) had kept its identity on TV.6

Although there were none in the series which could be called original productions, some new films were premiered on television. Attempting to bring a sense of immediacy to the older films was difficult since few could be effectively used, in the manner described above, without extensive re-cutting. Short films, however, fared much better, particularly if they could be built around a central theme. The program on Norman McLaren--*An Interview with Norman McLaren* (1954)--brought the film-maker before the camera to discuss his films and techniques which were then demonstrated by showing several of his films, thus giving an excellent portrait of an artist and his work. Such a program, though, was the exception rather than the rule. The necessity of turning out a film per week in each language did not permit more than a limited amount of this kind of production. "Regards" ran until April of 1955, "Window" until April of 1956.

The use of the on-screen narrator in both of the series determined the shape and format of the program. The style was awkward and put severe limitations on the film-maker in terms of the kind of a subject and the method of approach he could use. Both Devlin and Grant McLean, who had recently moved into the television unit, decided to drop this style and produce all future programs as films, with the style of the program being determined by its content. Television in Canada was becoming increasingly sophisticated and there was a need for new types of programs that could deal with a variety of subjects and have a more general appeal.
Television had suddenly become a major distribution outlet. By 1955, of the 235 films produced by the Board, 117 (50 percent) were given their first showing on television. Of the 122 original films produced in the 1954-55 year, 65 (53 percent) were given television release. Of the 113 versions and revisions, 52 were televised.\(^7\) The number of original films produced was more than a 50 percent increase over the previous year. The four series were being used on all twenty-five Canadian television stations along with a number of other NFB films booked on a spot basis. The total television bookings were 2,574; the previous year's total was 704.\(^8\)

\(^7\)Annual Report 1954-1955, p. 5.

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 7.

To meet the production demands, it was necessary to increase the staff and to shift a number of people from other units into television production. Gordon Burwash, Robert Anderson, Julian Biggs, William Weintraub and Tom Farley were among the first to make the shift. They were soon followed by a number of others. The plans to include dramatic programs in the forthcoming series prompted the contract hiring of writers such as M. Charles Cohen and Canadian novelist Charles Israel.

Two original half-hour series—"Perspective" in English and "Passe Partout" in French were begun in the 1955 season. During the year, work was also begun on a series about the Commonwealth for release.
in the 1956-57 season. The French television unit had to be greatly enlarged since there were fewer French film-makers with experience.

"Perspective" began in December 1955, two months after "Passe Partout."

Social purpose themes predominated in this series, but there was still a considerable amount of reportage of the "On The Spot" variety, although without the on-screen narrator. The opening program, Raw Material (1955), dramatized the work of the John Howard Society in rehabilitating criminals. In a carefully arranged confrontation planned by a John Howard man, a convict is released, reunited with his wife and, thus, is inspired to return to society. Intensely emotional dramas of this type composed at least a tenth of the total series.

**Monkey on the Back** (1956), directed by Julian Biggs, presented another "typical" case—in this instance, a drug addict who forsakes home and family in order to get enough heroin. The story, told through a series of flash-backs, begins with a shot in a shabby room of a social worker facing the camera. He reads a poem written by the now-deceased addict. In the episodes which follow, the addict, after his wife tells him she is leaving him, returns home and gives himself a shot. A narcotics agent who had seen him on the street later apprehends him. In jail, the addict goes through an agonizing period of withdrawal. After being freed, a social worker finds him a job, but he returns to drugs. In the final shot the social worker discusses the problems of addiction.

Similar examples were **Portrait of an Alcoholic** (1957); **The Street** (1957)—the rehabilitation of a prostitute; and **The Cage** (1956) in which a business executive nearly commits suicide in his attempts to drive himself to keep up his social and business career. After a time it
became evident that the thirty-minute format was not well adapted to such high intensity drama. Plots had to be contrived in order to collapse long periods of actual time, characterization was minimized, and the endings were at times ludicrous.

Historical dramas fared better since they dealt with dramatic situations based on fact. The Legendary Judge (1958) chronicled the life of Matthew Baillie Begbie who brought law and order to the gold mining camps of British Columbia in the mid-19th century. Wolfe and Montcalm (1957), directed by Donald Wilder, was an elaborate studio production in the style of live television drama of the 1950's. Using mainly close-ups and medium shots, battle scenes are given an impressionistic treatment. The focus of the film is on a character study of the two men. Excellent acting, however, could not completely compensate for the claustrophobic camera work.

More successful were low-key dramas where a greater amount of time could be devoted to character development and less to preaching a socially significant message. Saskatchewan Traveller (1956), written by William Weintraub and directed by Donald Haldane, portrayed the life of an aging salesman who is fortunately the antithesis of Arthur Miller's Willie Loman. Using voice over narration, the salesman reminisces about his past life as he goes about his rounds. He comments on the hotels—how they are now safer and cleaner, but less friendly. His sales have been falling off and he has been given the job of training a new man. The young salesman, full of "volume and efficiency" talk, subjects his partner to a time test selling bulk candy to a market manager. The salesman's pitch is interrupted twice by children buying gum and he fails to make a sale. The
situation is soon reversed when the young man finds that high pressure techniques are met with a solid resistance; a mutual respect grows as they make the rounds of markets and general stores of Saskatchewan. Homespun humor and excellent acting made this film one of the best of the series. It was, above all, believable.

Character development and drama were well balanced in The Yellow Leaf (1956) which explored the problems of an old woman who is pressured by her daughter and son-in-law to enter a home for the aged. Joe and Roxy (1957) entered the world of teenage love without the trauma which seems mandatory in most efforts on the same subject.

The dramatic approach was used successfully in One Day's Poison (1958) which depicted the role of a Poison Control Center in saving a child's life. The dramatic format did have its limitations, one of the greatest being time. Quality original dramas could not be produced at the rate of one a week. The series was concluded in the spring of 1958.

"Perspective" films were made using a camera mounted on a chest harness. Lights and other equipment were carried by the production crew in a station wagon—a far cry from the 1940's when all sound shooting done on location required several trucks and generators, Klieg lights and hundreds of yards of cable.

The shooting time and production costs were brought down to one-third of that needed for the standard procedure. Directors learned to develop the new-found mobility of the camera for the dramatic form. Double system shooting was made possible with the "Sprocketape" recorder developed by the NFB technical staff. This lightweight device combined
with the light self-blipped Auricon gave the film-makers the equipment
needed for cinéma vérité—opening the way for the famous "Candid Eye"
films.

The end of "Perspective" and "Passe Partout" evoked a sigh of
relief from many on the staff. The Board's thirty-minute dramas were
looking steadily worse as the competition grew stronger. Television
production was no longer a matter of filling the gaps in the broadcast
day. NFB programs on television did not exist in a vacuum as did films
on the circuits. By the mid-1950's there were many dramas on the air,
some produced by CBC, others imported from the United States and nearly
all were purely for entertainment purposes. Producers felt that the
audience did not enjoy being preached at. Moreover, the dramatic pro-
gram was not economical. It required much more time and effort to
create and could convey less than an information film of comparable
length. An information series, stripped of dramatic camouflage, could
thus find an audience with a natural curiosity about matters of social
and political import.9


Films with a political-international concern all but vanished with
the conclusion of the theatrical "World in Action" series. A few of
the "Canada Carries On" issues approached these subjects in films,
such as Canada World Trader (1946) and The People Between (1948)—an
excellent study of Chinese refugees caught between the Nationalist and
Communist armies.
One of the strongest proponents of this type of film was Ronald Dick in Unit "C". He had worked on the old "World in Action" series during the War and saw the possibilities of re-creating a series dealing with the international political situation. His film, *Germany Key to Europe* (1953), proved that the post-war world was as challenging and intriguing a subject as the wartime one. *Germany* provided the link between the old "WIA" series and the television "World in Action." In style the film was close to the Legg films of the 1940's as it pieced together a careful study of Germany in the post-war period. The effect of four-nation rule, the blockade, the airlift and the evolvement of two Germanies are set in the context of the larger east-west struggle. The pacing was relaxed and the narration pitched in a low key, presenting rather than pushing the content of the film.

In creating a new film series, Dick was aware of the availability of a great deal of stock footage collected in libraries all over the world. He also realized that television now offered a greater potential audience than could ever have been reached by the old series in theaters and, in addition, could be reached simultaneously. He proposed to the head of the Unit, Nicholas Balla, the idea of making one or two films on the Commonwealth countries. Balla and Mulholland agreed as did the Film Commissioner. Because of the CBC requirements, however, there would have to be a series of thirteen, twenty-six, or thirty-nine half-hour programs. Dick settled for thirteen and began working with William Weintraub assembling material. Douglas Tunstell and Marion Leigh helped in collecting material. The pace was frantic since the series, proposed only a few months earlier, was to begin in the spring of 1957. The
situation was also complicated by the Board's move to Montreal which was then being completed.

It was felt that the program should be moderated by an expert in the field rather than by merely a pleasant personality. The series, then, would be given an air of authority. The film-maker would also have a greater degree of freedom. Matters which for diplomatic reasons could not be expressed as the views of the National Film Board could be presented as those of the expert. The job was offered to Edgar McInnis, President of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. McInnis accepted and worked enthusiastically with Dick on the project. While the series was released under an old title—"World in Action," the content was new and the style was geared to the slower-paced, more intimate medium of television. The use of compilation techniques and the objective of interpreting nations to each other remained the same.

The first group of programs, "The Commonwealth of Nations," began in April of 1957. The opening program—Ten Days that Shook the Commonwealth (1957)—is a look at the relationships between the Commonwealth countries and the stresses placed upon them by Britain's role in the Suez crisis of 1956. The second and third programs—Portrait of the Family and Four Centuries of Growing Pains—summarize the past and analyze the present status of the Commonwealth. The fourth program—Crisis in Asia (1957)—gives a review of the painful and often bloody road to independence taken by India and Pakistan. This program emphasizes the strengths of the system, illustrating the bonds that have kept these two nations in the Commonwealth after they had gained their independence from the British.
One of the more interesting of the series was *The Invisible Keystone* (1957) which discussed the British governmental and legal systems, showing how they have come to serve as a unifying link between the Commonwealth members. Poverty and abundance and programs of mutual aid are covered in one program, while aspects of colonialism are treated in two.

*Black and White in South Africa* (1957) used material from early South African feature films, as well as newsreel footage. The presentation is a clear and unemotional discussion of the development of the racial policies in South Africa from the arrival of the first settlers to the present. The importance of the black African in an economic system created on the basis of cheap human labor is pointed out along with the resultant need for apartheid and other social sanctions to maintain the situation.

Although this film de-emphasized the sensational, official complaints were lodged by the South African Government. It was in anticipation of this kind of an event that a man such as McInnis had been selected as the moderator. The response to the program was favorable in other parts of the Commonwealth.

The series concluded with a look ahead to the future of the British Colonies in Africa and the developments in the emerging nations of Ghana and Nigeria. "The Commonwealth of Nations" represents the first true series produced by the Board. Unlike "On The Spot" and "Perspective" which were loosely assembled groups of films on social problems and Canadians, "Commonwealth" was a carefully integrated set of films. It was conceived as a single film in thirteen half-hour
parts, which together formed a comprehensive study of the Commonwealth, yet each part was a single unit and could stand by itself. Television gave this film space and a weekly rhythm which made the parts available on a regular basis to a large audience.

While the Board had produced groups of films on a central theme, e.g., "Mental Mechanisms," it was not until the creation of "Commonwealth" that the series idea was attempted on a large scale. Television proved the ideal medium for the long drama such as those produced by the French Unit in the "Panoramique" series and for an episodic telling of history, such as the thirteen-part "Canada at War" produced in 1962. These, however, were limited in their non-theatrical use since each part was dependent on the one that preceded it, particularly in the case of the dramas. This was later solved by cutting the programs together into a single feature-length film.

It was in the non-theatrical use--especially in the classroom--that "Commonwealth" proved eminently successful. Sales of the series to universities in and outside of Canada were good. Prints sent to Australia were telecast by the government network. In the United States the series was seen over National Educational Television. Reactions were favorable and several proposals were made to expand and continue production along the same line. CBC had relaxed some of its requirements, thus allowing the Board to produce series of less than thirteen parts.

The most attractive element of the "Commonwealth" was the flexibility of its structure, having the parts being related to, but not dependent on one another. This cluster type of series developed
rapidly during the 1960's. They were shown on television, but designed primarily for non-theatrical and classroom use.

In the spring of 1958 Ian MacNeill produced a four-part series— "New Nation in the West Indies." "New Nation" continued "World in Action" on the same path as the "Commonwealth," painting a detailed portrait of the newest member of the Commonwealth. At that time the focus of the series was on the background of the country and how the federation of the islands brought new strengths and responsibilities to the West Indies.

The third series, produced by Morton Parker, departed from the compilation film to return to the dramatic format. The six films released under the title, "The Nature of Work," studied the pressures and responsibilities that fall on individuals—from clerks and production-line workers to the vice-president—who work in a large industrial plant. These films were an extension of the series "Labour in Canada" produced by Parker several years earlier. In this new group, however, emphasis was placed on the relationship of the individual to his job rather than on the interaction of people in a work situation as was done in the earlier film—The Grievance.

In the first of the series, The Clerk (1958), the conflict between the man's expectations of his job and the true nature of the work is examined. The film raises the question of whether an industry is obliged to make dull work interesting simply to please an employee.

This theme was expanded and intensified in Man on the Assembly Line (1958). The boredom and frustration of line work is dramatized in one day in the life of a line worker. His day begins with a
breakfast discussion of his getting another job. Both he and his wife conclude that he can't afford to quit. At the truck assembly plant he goes through a noisy morning of sticking bolts through holes. During the lunch break a new man is brought in. All tell him about the work. The line worker reads mockingly from the manual describing work in the plant, explaining that the line man is nothing but another cog in a big machine.

Subsequently, the man is pulled from one job to another without an explanation. Time passes and he begins to worry if the foreman has forgotten the early break he promised him so he could pick up a swing for his children. He works furiously, keeping an eye on the clock. The time for the break passes and he is given no relief. A tour group comes by and the leader pauses by him explaining how "this man is making trucks." The worker blows up, lectures the group and passes out bolts as souvenirs. He is sent home by the foreman.

The film incorporated a narrative commentary by a labor expert, similar to that used in the "Mental Mechanisms" films. The integration of this material and the quality of the acting were considerably better. The series has been used extensively in labor and management discussion groups. The half-hour dramatic format for such subjects still proved a problem. As drama, they were not completely successful.

On December of 1958, "World in Action" returned to the compilation film, this time making use of archival materials available in Canada, England and the United States. "Women on the March," produced by Douglas Tunstall, was a two-part study of the struggle for equal rights by women. Although most of the film covers suffrage movements in
Canada, England and the United States, the universality of the movement is pointed up by the inclusion of material from France and the Soviet Union, as well as a number of other European and Scandinavian nations.

Utilizing both film and still photos, the series approached the problem not only from a political, but from a social, angle. Emphasis is placed on the fact that political equality is only a part of the fight, that ultimate goals are social equality with equal access to jobs and salaries comparable to those paid to male counterparts. In 1959 "World in Action" drifted back to Canadian content with a three-part series by Peter Jones--"Salute to Flight." Aviation was an excellent subject to choose, since the airplane was, and is, one of the most important means of bringing the people of Canada together. In the Beginning a Wilderness of Air (1959) reviewed the arrival of the air age in Canada, with films of early attempts at flight including the first flight of J. A. D. McCurdy's silver dart.

Double Heritage (1959) is perhaps the best of the three. It covers a development unique to Canada--the era of the bush pilots and the mapping of the vast northern territories. This story is followed by another grimmer one as these same men exchange cameras for machine guns, and fly the Bolingbrokes, Anson's, Mosquitoes and Hurricanes in the air battles of World War II.

The Golden Age (1959) no longer poses the question can men fly, but probes the limits of how fast and how far. In this final program the jet age in Canada is examined, with a brief look to the past and a long look to the future when the proposed global air routes of the 1940's and 50's are vast, electronically-controlled highways in the sky.
Because of the necessarily low budgets and the need for fast production, the compilation films were beginning to look increasingly alike. Although several more series had been planned, it was decided to postpone them indefinitely with the possible exception of a group of films dealing with Canadian-American relations. This project was started by Ronald Dick shortly after the "Commonwealth" series was concluded.

"World in Action" lasted through May of 1960, surviving on a few "one-shot" programs and a final three-part series on Canadian history from 1919 to 1939. William Weintraub's "Between Two Wars," although well done in terms of the above-mentioned limitations, could not but invite comparisons to the National Broadcasting Company's "Project XX" series. In two one-hour programs--The Jazz Age (1956) and Life in the Thirties (1958)--the eras of prosperity and depression were covered in an exemplary manner. With a careful blending of an original score, poetic narration and pictorial flow, these films created a harmonic whole. Expensive production was something the Board could not afford. "Between Two Wars" could never appear as more than a pale copy of the American original.10

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10 It is interesting to note that "Project XX" was at this same time borrowing ideas and styles from the Film Board. The Real West (1961) used historical photographs, narration and music in a style based directly on NFB's City of Gold. Even with Gary Cooper and a large budget, it failed to match the poetic finesse of City.

In January of 1959, a new English-language series, "Frontiers," was launched. As with the French series, "Temps Present," begun at
the same time, "Frontiers" made use of dubbed versions--in this case from its contemporary. The emphasis of the program was in the physical and social sciences. Typical subjects included The Mine Makers, Conquest of Cold, Report on Cancer, and Men and Automation. Here also, the use of versions allowed more time to be spent on the original programs.

The approach taken in these films was straight documentary with none of the television conventions found in the earlier efforts. The frontiers of education, as well as science, were covered in programs such as The Gifted Ones (1959) produced by David Blairstow. Narration is kept to a minimum and the activities of the children and their teachers are covered with a moving camera and synchronous sound. Class discussions and children's comments on music and literature give a lively look at young minds in action. Interest lags, however, when educational experts discuss the role of the school in educating exceptional children.

"Temps Present" and "Frontiers" marked the point where the production staff finally gained control over the television limitations. Through the use of versions, professional polish of the kind given theatrical films was achieved, but the dream of producing two series of original productions in both languages was not realized. Both were concluded in the spring of 1960. This move allowed the English and especially the French television production teams to devote their full efforts to the two original series which were then in progress.

"The Candid Eye" emerged in 1958 as a reaction against the "On The Spot" and "Perspective" type of film-making. The group responsible
for the series was in Unit B, producing sponsored and cultural films. In earlier years they had opposed television production, mainly on the grounds that it required fast, sloppy work. Later, through the screening of British Free Cinema films, such as *Mamma Don't Allow*, interest was kindled in the possibilities of cinema vérité. Roman Kroitor—one of those who began "Candid Eye"—described the situation as follows:

There was a style of film-making for television, at the Film Board in those days, which was dramatic. We believed that the standards of those films weren't really as high as they should be in respect to the credibility of the acting particularly, and thought that the best way to cope with that was to go out and quote the real world, and see what was there, because there were marvellous people around that weren't being put on the screen. Beyond the point of making interesting films with real people, also we always saw that series ("Candid Eye") as just leading to something else, something further in that, once when it had established a certain kind of believability of acting and a certain kind of real image of the world as opposed to a fictionalized one, we felt that one could then return to fiction-type films, scripted films, but operating on the basis of the sort of reality that had been on the screen in front of people, that is, you could never after the "Candid Eye" kind of programme return to corn-ball soap serial-type films. No one could.11

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While working under the leadership of Tom Daly, Executive Producer of the Unit, "Candid Eye" was produced by a team composed of Roman Kroitor, Wolf Koenig, and Terence Macartney-Filgate, sharing production, direction, editing and camera work. Stanley Jackson did narration, James Beveridge some of the editing. Additional cameramen included Gilles Gascon, Michel Brault, Georges Dufaux, and John Spotton.
The first film, *Days Before Christmas* (1958), sought to capture the spirit of the last frantic week before Christmas. The film cannot help but cover the usual clichés of department-store Santas and children's choirs, but it shows them in a new light—as they actually are. The camera also records bank guards collecting money, people jamming airports and railway stations, and those who cannot go home attempting to communicate by telephone. A taxi driver, in a sync-sound sequence, drives while discussing the lovely midnight masses and where the best bootleggers can be found. The film, directed by Macartney-Filgate, was edited by Kroitor and Koenig from a great quantity of material shot in Montreal by a number of cameramen. It achieved a visual excitement that made all previous television work seem gray and dull by comparison.

Later efforts covered small subjects. *Country Threshing* (1958) was shot in three days on a farm which used an old stationary threshing machine. Unfortunately, the style drifts back to that of some of the Board's earlier agricultural films. It was obvious that three days allowed too little time for getting adequate coverage. This was avoided in *The Back-Breaking Leaf* (1960) which covered the tobacco harvest in Ontario. Using a jazz score blended with indigenous music, played by the men who worked in the fields, Leaf captures the flow of the work, the endless stooping, picking, and bundling in the airless rows where the heat often reaches one hundred degrees.

Others in the series covered a variety of urban and rural subjects. *I Was a Ninety Pound Weakling* (1959) takes a half-wry, half-serious look at the brave few who fight back—via exercise, dieting and yoga—against the flab brought on by abundant living. The same light touch
graces One Third Down and 24 Months to Pay (1960)--an indictment of the automobile from "honest Joe's" lot to the freeway.

Glenn Gould On and Off the Record (1959) is a probing two-part look at one of Canada's outstanding young musicians. In the first half hour Gould is followed to New York for a recording session. He emerges as an easy-going craftsman as he selects a piano and performs Bach's "Italian Concerto." In the second part, a different Gould emerges--an introspective man practicing in his lake-side cottage, looking forward to future concerts with feelings of joy and dread.

Unlike previous series which were sold in large packages, and therefore had to be ground out like so much sausage, "Candid Eye" was sold on a single program basis as public service. The fourteen half-hour shows were broken into two groups of seven; the first was aired in the fall of 1958-59, the second in the fall of 1959-60. With the exception of Threshing, all of the films were shot and edited at a rate befitting motion pictures and it is herein that much of the success of the series lies. Awards won at film festivals in Cannes, Anvers (Belgium), and New York gave evidence of the high quality of all of the films in the series--far superior to any of the past efforts. With only a few exceptions, all remain in wide circulation as films.

The significance of "Candid Eye" has been far-reaching in its influence on both documentary and dramatic film-making at the Board. As Kroitor predicted, the vérité style brought an end to the serial drama of the "Perspective" films. The greatest influence, however, was on the films made in the 1960's.
Throughout the 1950's and 60's the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation had been expanding its own production facilities. Once limited to a single production unit, CBC has since created large units in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. With the expansion of CBC's activity, as well as the influx of packages of American programs, the importance of the Film Board as a producer of television material diminished. This was welcomed within NFB since the pressure of television production was beginning to force the staff to lessen its efforts in other areas.

In 1960 the CBC relaxed its requirements on the production of series films, giving the Board the option of having NFB films televised on an individual basis as specials and as part of existing CBC programs. Series were still produced, but at a more leisurely rate and the producers were not required to fit them into packages of thirteen, twenty-six and thirty-nine half-hours. Liaison between the Board and CBC has become increasingly close, with the network functioning as a showcase for the presentation of NFB films. The present (1968) agreement gives CBC the exclusive first-run to between thirty and fifty films per year.

With this change of policy, the stylistic trends set by NFB television series in the 1950's became blurred as a wide variety of films were televised in "vegetable soup" programs, such as "Documentary 60," "Explorations" and "NFB Presents." French productions were released in English-language versions. "Les Brûlés" was boiled down to four half-hours entitled, "The Promised Land." "Temps Present" was also released in English. The three major forms developed in the
1950's--drama, compilation, documentary and cinéma vérité--were continued and refined in the original series productions of the 1960's.

The historical dramas of the "Perspective" series provided the base for over a dozen more. These half-hour portraits of famous Canadians and important events in Canadian history were re-introduced in 1961 on the "Explorations" series. The following year they were released in a "Canadian History" series and still later in "Explorations." *David Thompson* (1964), directed by Bernard Devlin and written by M. Charles Cohen, was filmed on location in the Pacific Northwest. In the part of Thompson, James Douglas was effective in his characterization of the man who explored and mapped more than a million square miles of Canada.

*Charles Tupper* (1961), directed by Morton Parker and written by Joseph Schull, featured William Needles as Tupper and Budd Knapp as Joseph Howe in the story of the bitter conflict between the two Nova Scotians over the question of joining the Federal union.

In style and quality these films were an improvement over similar previous efforts. Yet, despite the high technical polish in the acting, settings and costumes, many of the films suffer from claustrophobia. Much of the "action" is talk which takes place in interior settings on medium and close shots. *A Question of Identity* (1966), directed by Bernard Devlin, succeeded in achieving a more lively telling of events in this drama of divided loyalties among Ontario farmers in the War of 1812. A part of the success of this film lies in the fact that Devlin was not confined to a specific event and could freely fashion his own script.
The international aims and compilation techniques of the "World in Action" television series had a broad influence. "The Earth and Mankind" (six parts 1961) and "The Crossroads of the World" (seven parts 1962) were direct descendants of the "Commonwealth" series. The former discusses the problem of population and food supply. People by the Billion (1961), the first of the series, combines animation with stock newsreel footage to document the changing balance between man and his living space. Through historical woodcuts and engravings, plagues and other disasters are shown controlling population. A montage of film sequences demonstrates the war being waged against these age-old enemies via pesticides, sanitation programs and medical clinics. The resultant increase in population is next seen clogging cities. Migration, war and conquest are soon dispensed with as possible solutions to the problem. The one course of action is a combination of more food production and a controlled birth rate.

In the following four half-hours, the present-day system of food production and distribution is discussed on a global scale—describing new ways to provide a greater quantity and more equitable distribution. In the final film—Challenge to Mankind (1961)—a panel of authorities, including India's Madame Pandit, as well as experts in the field from Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom discuss implementation of possible solutions.

"The Crossroads of the World" follows very closely the structure of the "Commonwealth" series in its examination of the Middle East. Sun Sand and Sea (1962) and The Impact of the West (1962) provide a background of the region, tracing the origin of the Islamic culture from its beginnings to the conquests by the French and later the British
in the 18th century. The remaining five half-hours plunge into the milieu of the contemporary Middle East—examining the social and political aspirations, comparing them with advancements being made in such nations as the United Arab Republic, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Algeria.

Similar in concept to "The Earth and Mankind," but more limited in scope, was "Lewis Mumford On The City" (six parts 1963), produced by Ian MacNeill. In this past, present and future look at the triumphs and failures of urban living, Mumford provides a somewhat rambling commentary on the problems of urban sprawl, pollution and automobile congestion. Though the visual part of the film jumps from city to city picking up examples from over the world, there is too much coverage and not enough critical exposition of the effects on the population of crowding, cars, pollution and sprawl.

Beginning in 1959 and continuing through 1967 the "Comparisons" series produced by Julian Biggs has been one of the major efforts in international interpretation. To date, fourteen hour and half-hour films have covered the social, artistic, educational and religious aspects of life in Europe, Asia, Africa and the West.

Best of the series was the hour-long Four Families (1959) which compared the lives of middle-class farming families in India, France, Japan and Canada. After each sequence, narrator Gordon Burwash and anthropologist Margaret Mead discuss the subtle differences and similarities in such aspects of living as the rearing of children. The matters of discipline and expectations regarding work, responsibility and respect for elders are seen as key factors in shaping a distinctive national character.
Later films in the series compared teachers, artists, fishermen, actors and grandmothers. Unfortunately many of these were denied the perceptive commentary of such persons as Margaret Mead. According to the NFB catalog the aim of the films is to "reduce the strangeness between people, to show that despite differences in language and customs there are many basic similarities." In some instances the emphasis on finding similarities is carried to such a degree that the impression is that of seeing the same story three or four times.

The compilation documentary again turned to the subject of recent Canadian history with the series "Canada at War" (thirteen parts 1962). Dusk, the first half-hour, begins in the last days of peace. Brief scenes note the end of the League of Nations and the rise of dictatorships in Italy and Germany. The Canadian attitude is indifference to events abroad and concern for matters at home. For many the big event of 1938 is not Munich, but winning the world's hockey championship. The Canadian Army stands at 4,000 men, two tanks, 200 planes and thirteen ships.

The War begins and country after country falls before the crushing force of the German war machine. The liner Athenia is sunk by a U-boat with a number of Canadians aboard. One of the survivors tells of his experience. British forces make their miraculous escape at Dunkirk. While Churchill asks for "blood, sweat, toil and tears," Mackenzie King speaks to the Canadian people of a military draft.

The Battle of the Atlantic begins; Canadian convoys play a deadly game of tag with the U-boats. King is heckled at Aldershot for his stand on conscription. Two Canadian units—the Winnipeg Grenadiers
and the Royal Rifles--are sent to strengthen the British force at Hong Kong. The Japanese strike at Pearl Harbor and the War becomes global. In Canada the people accept full mobilization. Rationing and salvage drives become a part of daily life. Churchill speaks in Ottawa of the German declaration to wring England's neck like a chicken, commenting "some chicken . . . some neck."

Dieppe becomes a grim milestone in Canadian history as Canadian troops suffer heavy losses in the raid that paves the way for D-Day. As the tide of war turns, Canadian forces fight in the air against Germany in Europe and North Africa. Canadian ships run supplies to Russia. With the D-Day landings, flash-backs bring to mind the memories of Dieppe.

The Canadian advances in Europe had all the qualities of those made by the British and Americans except fame. In Italy the Canadian First Division storm the German-held town of Ortona, suffering heavy losses in fighting that literally rages from house to house. The sweep through France and into Germany offers the Canadians a series of small, bloody battles, such as Pas de Calais and the mopping up of V-bomb launching sites. The Canadian Third Division leads the attack on the Scheldt estuary. In the final assault on Germany, Canadian divisions fight in the Reichwald and Hochwald forests and break through the Siegfried Line. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the series is some of the side lights, e.g., the sequence in _V Was For Victory_ (1962) where the Canadian Army in Holland sets up a relief program for the Dutch people, providing desperately-needed food and medical attention.
The last film—The Clouded Dawn (1962)—takes the series beyond the usual ending for such films which ties the package with a neat end—parades, homecomings and victory celebrations. Following shots of the Japanese surrender, the scene cuts back to A-bombed cities and scarred Japanese civilians. The mood of horror is broken, finally, by shots of typical homecomings in Canada as soldiers and sailors embrace wives and girl friends. There are also some atypical homecomings—the severely burned, the amputees, the basket cases. The return to civilian life offers returning veterans rehabilitation, education, loans for housing and business. One of the first businesses to flourish is war surplus. Trials and executions in Germany, spy scandals in Canada gnaw at the complacency of those who would return to the isolationist ways. Canada emerges as a middle power in the United Nations—charting its own course in the cold war.

The final sequence cuts from scenes of school children and fields of ripe wheat to a convoy churning through heavy seas; from scenes of logging and farming to a squadron of fighting planes; from people fishing and hiking to a line of soldiers, as the narrator gives the casualty figures on the sea, air and land. The track is completely silent for the last shots of gutted buildings in a blasted Europe.

Visual material for the series was gathered in the standard compilation manner—gleaned from footage shot by the various branches of the armed forces. The episodes were then constructed around this collected material. "Canada at War" emerges as more than a rehashing of the war which had already been ground over by a number of American and British television series. Yet, "Canada at War" is not simply a
recounting of Canadian achievements, but a skillful blending of the
Canadian role into the larger conflict. The tone of the series is one
of quiet pride—a sharp contrast to the horn-tooting of most American
series. About the only criticism that can be made is that there was
too much under-playing, for it was obvious that the Canadian losses—
though numerically smaller—were proportionately as great as those of
their allies.

In terms of its technical and cinematic excellence, "Canada at
War" compares favorably with such American efforts as "Air Power,"
"The Twentieth Century" and the American Broadcasting Company's "The
Valiant Years." This latter production probably draws the most com-
parison. While it is admittedly superior, it must be viewed in the
light of a number of factors. Based on the six-volume telling of
World War II by Winston Churchill, "Years" used the talents of a
number of narrators including Richard Burton as the voice of Churchill.
Considerable original footage was shot and combined with historical
material. Richard Rodgers composed the score and writers, such as
William Shirer and Quentin Reynolds prepared individual episodes.
In all, a staff of nearly 200 worked to prepare twenty-six half-hours
at a cost of about two million dollars. The thirteen issues of
"Canada at War" were the work of writer-editor Donald Brittain who
along with composers Robert Fleming, Eldon Rathburn, Maurice Black-
burn and Ken Campbell fashioned the pictures and sound for the narra-
tion of Budd Knapp. The total production staff consisted of ten
people who made the series under producer Stanley Clish for $425,000.
Historical compilation was further refined in the one-hour Bethune (1964) by John Kemeny and Donald Brittain. In this film the technique was used to create a biography of one man—Dr. Norman Bethune. Using historical film, still photographs, and interviews with friends the Canadian surgeon emerges a Hemingway-sized hero. Historical footage of Bethune operating his famous medical unit in Spain during the Civil War is carefully supplemented by re-enactment. The camera is used subjectively returning to the hospital where Bethune worked and the cottage where he lived after recovering from drastic lung surgery. The use is minimal and effectively blended into the film by the voice of Michael Kane as Bethune. Scant film of Bethune in China exists. Yet, the use of this combined with still photos of his mule-back and cave hospitals during the Sino-Japanese War are perfectly matched by the scene of the operation where he inadvertently cuts himself causing fatal blood poisoning. Bethune is a remarkable film—amazingly successful considering the shortage of material.

Compilation has proved to be an excellent means for dealing with subjects of broad scope. Two such films deal with various aspects of the electronic society—The Living Machine (1961) by Roman Kroitor, Wolf Koenig and Guy Cote; and The Child of the Future How Might He Learn (1964) by Theodore Conant, David Green and Jean-Claude Labrecque. The Living Machine deals ostensibly with electronic technology, but becomes a philosophical discourse on whether man or his machines will inherit the world of tomorrow. Part one of the hour-long film is concerned with the "thinking machine."
From the talking robot at the 1939 World's Fair, the scene jumps to an I.B.M. computer that can translate Russian into English and weather data into a weather map. "Such a computer can do the work of a man's lifetime in half an hour," explains the narrator. "It also made possible the first hydrogen bomb." The computer is matched against Arthur Gladstone--New York City checker champion. Gladstone manages to win, but only by playing a game of unorthodox moves.

While the first part of the film is hinged on the checker game, the second is framed by astronaut Allen Sheppard's space flight. In the manipulation of symbols the machine is superior, but "artificial intelligence" is only one capability of the machine. An electronic model of a frog's eye demonstrates sensory perception by buzzing when presented with a fly-shaped object. The core of the film is an interview with mathematician Dr. Warren McCulloch who foresees the machine replacing man. Anthropologist Margaret Mead feels that the real concern is the knowledge of total destruction and thus the machine has become the new myth. The film ends with a tracking shot through a museum--past sculptured heads of primitive men--a billion years of history. The scene cuts finally to Sheppard as the narrator asks, "A machine may take him to a new environment or explode . . . what is it like to float free . . . what in another billion years?"

In a more immediate tomorrow The Child of the Future poses questions and answers in educational technology. Anchor men for this free-wheeling cinematic discussion are Dr. Marshall McLuhan--then of the University of Toronto--and Dr. Jerome Bruner of Harvard. Using the same stylistic approach as The Living Machine, The Child of the Future examines how
the new technology is being put into use at all levels of education. The techniques and programs demonstrated range from the use of self-contained "programmed lessons" studied on an individual basis and requiring little assistance from a teacher—to sophisticated "teaching machines." One of these is an elaborate typewriter whose cold voice comes through a loudspeaker to instruct pre-school children in creative writing. On the whole, however, the future classroom is more fascinating than frightening.

The post "Candid Eye" cinéma vérité films continued with the same format and style, yet new developments soon began to appear. **Lonely Boy** (1961) could well have been another issue of the original series. Produced by the same group--Kroitor, Koenig and Daly—the film traces some days in the life of Ottawa-born pop singer Paul Anka. Anka first appears singing to screaming crowds of teenage girls who later surge around him for autographs. Brief "voice-over" narration telling of his background is followed by an interview with Anka. He tells of how he decided, at age fifteen, to shape up and become somebody. Irvin Feld, Anka's manager, tells of "grooming Anka" and of "Paul's obligation to his talent" with a respect verging on the religious. Yet Anka's musical talents are shown to be rather modest. The quality of his personality is ultimately revealed as one of tenacity. The price of fame is isolation and loneliness. Between concerts he dozes in the back of his car. Two girls in a convertible pull alongside, honking and waving. The exhausted Anka pays little attention.

While **Lonely Boy** captured the eclipse of Paul Anka, **Ladies and Gentlemen: Mr. Leonard Cohen** (1965) takes a close look at the rise of
Cohen as he returns from his home in Greece to "renew his neurotic affiliations." The camera follows Cohen on his tour of Montreal--to television interviews, public readings, parties, bars and to his three-dollar-a-day hotel room, which he calls his "oasis in the desert." Cohen like cheap hotels and here he holds a one-way conversation with the camera. He appeared in his first film in 1937--taken by his parents. As the scene cuts to this film, he reads a poem about home movies and the memories of his childhood as he is seen circa 1937 in a Montreal park. Bit by bit pieces of his background are put together--his rebellion against his wealthy parents, his wanderings over the world. The scene fades out and a piece of leader whips by announcing a postscript--à la Jean Rouch's *Chronique de un été*. Cohen gives his reaction to the film, as the scene cuts to shots of him sleeping and taking a bath. "Caveat emptor" writes Cohen with a finger on the steamy tiles. Finally, with a changed self-conception, Cohen walks down a street, into the heart of the city.

It is now twenty-five years since NFB entered into television production. It was this phase of the Board's history that has had the greatest impact on the films in the 1960's. The pressure of the medium proved that good work could be turned out in less time and for less money than had been previously thought possible.

"Candid Eye" brought about the adoption of cinéma vérité which now pervades much of the Board's documentary film-making, as well as some of its feature production. The French "Panoramique" served as the basis for later feature films. "World in Action" resulted in
the production of series films and clusters of films dealing with large-scale social and historical matters. In a sense, the television era was a test--similar to that which faced the Board during the War years. In this case instead of merely passing the test and meeting the immediate needs, the Board laid the groundwork for future creative expansion.
CHAPTER VI

FRENCH PRODUCTION

That Canada is a nation of two distinct cultures has long been a fact, but the full implication of this condition has been slow in coming. The isolation of the Provinces lessens daily - rapid transportation and the growth of mass media have served to bring about confrontations between the peoples of Canada. Cultural differences often dissolve as Canadians blend into the social mainstream of "North America." At the same time these confrontations reveal a number of basic differences and in the case of French Canada vis-a-vis English Canada, raise the ominous question of cultural versus national survival. In 1939 this question was overshadowed by other more immediate concerns - the ending of the depression and the beginning of the Second World War.

The advent of sound films and of the depression cost the Motion Picture Bureau most of its international audience. The films of the 1930's began to turn from an international "selling" of Canada to a national "interpretation" of the country. This interpretation, however, was by and for English Canadians. The MPB was an English-speaking, English-thinking establishment. No French personnel were on the production staff, with the result that films about Quebec were oriented almost exclusively to portraying the quaint and the scenic.
The later films, such as *Heritage* and *Royal Visit*, were released with French-language sound tracks, but these were simply translations in the same sense that the titles on the earlier silent films had been translated. There was no attempt to make revisions in either picture or commentary to render them more suitable for a French-Canadian audience.

With the establishment of the National Film Board in 1939, the situation had changed little if any. The official attitude was that French Canada and English Canada were simply Canada and what was good for one - that being English Canada - was good for the other. The major objective at the time was winning the war. John Grierson was well aware of the importance of national unity and recognized the need for films to promote the war effort. He was also aware of the fact that French Canada had to be reached, not only via the French language, but via the French culture - a problem that could be solved only by the hiring of French production personnel to produce original French films.

A seemingly simple operation at first, the creation of a French unit was a slow process. Although Grierson was consulted on personnel matters, it was not until June of 1941 that he became the chief agent for the production and distribution of films. Both of these duties resided with the Motion Picture Bureau's Frank Badgley who also hired the staff. Once the Bureau had been absorbed by the Film Board, Grierson insisted that all of the Board's major films should be made available in the French language. There was no set policy that films would be made originally in English and then rendered into French. Films had to be made by those who had the necessary skills. These were
English Canadians and British importees from the General Post Office film unit. Few of these spoke French and consequently, the majority of the Canadian trainees were English Canadians.

It was thus not surprising that the Board's first "original" French-language release Un du 22 ième (1940) was made by Associated Screen News. 22ième was directed by Gerald Noxon - one of the few bilingual staff members of A.S.N. Released as the ninth issue of the "Canada Carries On" series, the film was decidedly different from the fast-cut compilation works of Stuart Legg. Using original footage the film traces several days in the life of a young recruit in the famous Royal Twenty-second - an outstanding French-Canadian regiment. The young soldier tells his girl friend about the army, while cut-away shots show training and camp life. The film concludes as he is picked up by a truck taking him to join the regiment. While differing from Legg's films, 22ième was more a reflection of the unsophisticated, easy-going style of A.S.N. than of a French-Canadian style or point of view. Yet, the film did show that French-Canadians were playing a part in the war effort. That alone made it unique.

The first French-Canadian film-makers were not taken on the staff of the Board until 1941 and production of original French materials did not get under way until about the middle of the War period. Grierson's initial contact with the needs of French Canada came through Philias Cote' - the first French Canadian to be appointed to the senior staff of the Distribution Branch. Cote' joined the staff in 1940 and worked to bring NFB films to French Canadians in all parts of the
country. Of equal importance was his unofficial role as Grierson's adviser on matters of distribution. Cote left the Board the following year and there were no senior French-Canadian officers in the branch until 1944.

To meet the responsibility of bringing information to the French-speaking population - since original production was impossible - resulted in negotiations with Paramount Pictures. NFB obtained release rights to their French-language newsreel "Les Actualites Olympiques." No sooner was the deal closed than France fell to the Nazis and original material from that country ceased to flow. The arrangement was never satisfactory since the Canadian content to the films was negligible. Their greatest value, it turned out, was as stock shot material for the Board's own films. To reach French-Canadians, the Board had to produce original French-Canadian films. The great expansion in production came in 1942 when an enlarged news film section was created to produce "The World In Action" and later "Front Line Reports," "Eyes Front," "Canada Communiqué" and the first original French films under the series title "Les Reportages."

Vincent Paquette, coming to the Film Board in December of 1941, became the first French-Canadian film-maker to join the staff. The following year he established a production office in Montreal which served as the headquarters for those gathering material for "Les Reportages." Paquette worked mainly as a liaison person for this series. In 1943 he relinquished these duties to Francoise Zalloni and returned to Ottawa to assume the responsibility of the French-language
Program and to act as head of the newly-created French Unit. By 1943 there were six film-makers from Quebec - Georges Ayotte, Jean-Yves Bigras, Jacques Brunet, Paul Lamoureux, Jean Palardy and Pierre Petel under the supervision of Paquette. Yet original films were not produced in any great number, for the unit existed in name only. Like their English-Canadian counterparts, the French-speaking newcomers were trainees and as such were put to work on whatever jobs needed doing. Much of this work included the editing of stock shots and the preparation of French versions of the "Canada Carries On" and "World In Action" series.

Instead of producing original films in a French unit, the French Canadians were utilized in various English units - first in apprentice positions and later as cameramen, animators and directors. In the last years of the War their names began to appear on credit titles. Jean Palardy's Singing Pines and Vincent Paquette's Mother and Her Child were typical examples. The animated films of Georges Ayotte and later René Jodoin and Jean-Paul Ladouceur appeared in the "Chants Populaire" series of animated films.

The important fact was that by 1943-44, although there was an increasing number of French Canadian film-makers, there were relatively few French films. The originals produced for "Canada Carries On" were basically English films. While the scripts might have been written in French, they were translated into English for approval by the Production Director. The French Canadians who made the films were trained by British and English-Canadian film-makers. As a result, their early
efforts differed little, if at all, in style. The only recognizable feature of these films was that they occasionally dealt with French-Canadian subject matter.

"Les Reportages" was the major exception and the films in this series could be called the first French productions. Begun in 1943 "Les Reportages" was released at the rate of approximately two per month. The one-reel series followed a newsreel format - containing between one and eight items. The equivalent of the English language "Front Line Reports," "Les Reportages" contained bits of news from the war fronts and, in some cases, used complete versions of the English series. There was always a certain amount of duplication since all of the news-film series drew their stock footage from the same newsreel pool. "Les Reportages," however, was composed mainly of original material focusing on aspects of wartime Quebec. Les Reportages #1 (1943) includes four items - military mass in Montreal, the four Lemay brothers enlist in the army, a mayor joins the army, and the unveiling of a large gun at the city of Sorel.

Such home-front activities were typical of the series during the War years. With the finish of the War, the focus of "Les Reportages," as well as that of all the series, shifted first to subjects of post-war recovery. Reportages #81 (1944) covered the UNRRA meeting in Montreal. Reportages #94 (1945) discussed the problems of family budgets and the role of youth in the post-war era. By 1945 the multi-item newsreel structure was dropped and the films covered a single item. Essouchment #115 (1945) described the work of a French
Canadian genealogical institute. This particular item was attractive to a specialized audience and had a long distribution life. Wartime and international concerns disappeared - replaced by strawberry harvests, summer sports and the Montreal Zoo.

In 1946 the series name was changed to "Coup d'oeil" and continued as a one-to-three subject newsreel until 1953. The name was changed again to "Ciné Magazine"; the series was released only on a non-theatrical basis. It continues in this form at present. The style has remained unchanged as has the subject matter, which is still concerned with topical bits of Canadians drawn from the general pool of newsreel footage.

With French-Canadian film-makers being taken on in several units their number increased. Composer Maurice Blackburn was added to the music staff in 1942. Yves Thériault was brought in from the stills division and newcomers Pierre Bruneau, Victor Jobin, Yves Jasmin, Raymond Garceau, and Roger Blais joined the staff bringing the total number to seventeen by the end of the War. The organization was still loose and it was not until late in 1944 that an attempt at consolidating the French talent was made.

Guy Glover, then involved with "Canada Carries On," was given the additional assignment of acting as producer of the French Language Program. Glover's bilingualism and production experience made him an ideal choice for the job. Vincent Paquette then became producer in charge of the newly formed unit dealing with health and welfare films for both English and French-language programs.
While French production was at last on a small but firm footing, the post of distribution adviser - formerly held by Philias Cote' - was still vacant. Paul Thériault, who had joined the staff as liaison officer in 1944, was given the newly-created post of French Secretary. What had formerly been an unofficial job as an assistant to the Commissioner had become a key position in the Board's production and distribution system.

The French Secretary acted in an advisory capacity. He was responsible for all of the relations between the Film Board and French Canada and French-speaking communities in Canada and France. His duties included judging all films produced in the French language, dealing with French or French-Canadian affairs, promoting the circulation of the Board's French-language films and assisting the French Branch of the Information Section. This included advising on the selection of the films to be sent to French-speaking countries. He was also responsible for the recruitment of and assisting in the selection of French-speaking personnel for the Board. In short, he was the political, social and economic consultant to the Board on all things French.¹


With the beginning of the post-war era the situation had improved. In spite of post-war budget cuts a number of French-Canadian filmmakers were employed. Thériault, sensing that the unit was mired in
an excess of versions and low-grade productions, sought to bring in new talent to increase the amount of original French-language filmmaking. Among the notables who came were Bernard Devlin and Fernand Ménard in 1946 and Jacques Bobet in 1947.

Although the Board was facing difficult times, French-language production increased during the post-war era. A number of French-Canadian film-makers continued to work in English-Canadian units, making English-language films and French versions. Vincent Paquette served as producer-in-charge of the Health, Rehabilitation and Welfare Unit; Jean Palardy as a director with "Canada Carries On." Victor Jobin worked as an editor in the Armed Services and Rehabilitation Program and Raymond Garceau became an assistant director in the Agricultural Unit. With the exception of René Jodoin, who left the Board between 1947 and 1954, the French-Canadian animation continued producing the "Chants Populâriques" and "Chansons de Chez Nous" series.

As was the case during the War, the English-language films made by French-Canadians showed little if any difference. Raymond Garceau described one such effort:

I made a film with the stuffy title Horizons of Quebec (1952). They wanted this to be in true NFB style, noisy enough for theatres but with the solid English documentary treatment like Stuart Legg at his best. Lots of action, machines, racket and clouds, with a narration that sounded big, dramatic, cavernous with music to match of the kind that has long haunted the depths of this noble institution.2

2Raymond Garceau, The Jottings of Young Garceau #5 Translation by Roland Hill, p. 4.
Original French productions with a unique look about them were at last beginning to emerge but certain old notions were slow to die, according to Garceau.

As specified by NFB principles a French Canadian was no longer a sort of folksy curiosity but:
1. an English Canadian who spoke French;
2. a French Canadian who spoke English;
3. a French Canadian who could correctly interpret the English ideas.

Raymond Garceau, The Jottings of Young Garceau #4, p. 3.

In 1946 a new theatrical series was initiated. Called "Vigie," it served in much the same manner as "Canada Carries On." "Vigie," however, dealt almost exclusively with French-Canadian subject matter. Unlike "CCO," films in the "Vigie" series were not limited to a monthly one or two-reel reportage. While early films looked much like the versions in "En Avant Canada" the later efforts began to take on a decidedly different appearance, ranging in length from one to three reels and varying in form from straight documentary to drama. The term "series" must be applied lightly since there was no coherence of style, form, or length. It was rather a convenience, which facilitated the booking of French-language films in theaters. The films appeared approximately ten times a year, first in theaters in the Province of Quebec and later, on the rural circuits. In English versions the majority of the films reached the rest of the population as part of "Canada Carries On."
Early titles in the series covered various aspects of the agricultural, industrial and cultural life of the French-Canadian people. *Montee* (1949) dealt with farmers' unions. *Vieux airs* ... *nouveau pas* (1949) described the role of folk songs and dances in present day recreational activities. A good example is *La terre de Cain* (1949) directed by Pierre Petel. This chronicle of life on the north shore of the St. Lawrence, begins with the return of spring. Nets are dried and readied for the salmon fishing season - the main occupation of those who live in the small villages in this harsh land. Changes are coming and a medical station, a school, and a cannery are some of the innovations. But the Hudson's Bay Company is still an important part of the community, providing supplies for the Indians who begin their trapping runs to the north. The film moves with a subtle poetic rhythm that matches the flow of the river and reflects the unaffected life of the people. The photography of Julian St. George and an excellent score by Maurice Blackburn succeeded in making this a winner of a Canadian award as the outstanding short film of 1950.

While a very good film, *La terre de Cain* did not offer any great departure from the English-inspired documentary style then in vogue. Yet, the relaxed pacing and poetic approach were indications of a different aesthetic rooted in the background of French education with its emphasis on the arts and humanities. Their concern with people and with the human condition gave rise to an interest in the dramatic format among those in French production.
Abitibi (1949) is a fairly typical example of the earlier attempts. The film surveys some of the more recent developments in the Abitibi region of Quebec. The town of Val d'or is one of the mining centers where gold along with other minerals is mined. A young man, seeking employment, soon finds himself in conversation with two miners at a local restaurant. As they discuss the various opportunities, the scene dissolves to the various activities under discussion - clearing farm lands of stumps, mining, logging, prospecting, building an air field, laying water pipe and railroad track. In the end, the man decides to stay and takes a job in a mine.

In its structure the film is hardly remarkable. Nevertheless, Abitibi was a deviation from the straight reportage films of "Canada Carries On." Dialog appeared in occasional war-time issues of "COO," but the dramatic format had practically disappeared in the post-war era. The acting in Abitibi, though stilted, was superior to most of the Board's earlier efforts and was one of the first films to demonstrate the French-Canadian inclination toward making dramatic films.

Maree montante (1949) carried this trend farther and achieves a great deal more. Written and directed by Jean Palardy with an original score by Robert Fleming, the film takes a look backward to the depression which had begun for many in the 1920's. In the opening shots Cape Breton fishermen pull in a poor catch as one of their number (in voice over) talks of how incomes are now supplemented by work on farms and in mines, and of the cooperatives. In a flash-back he tells of the times when children went to school hungry and the
price of fish dropped so low that there was no point in going out.
With the establishment of the Commission for Cooperatives an organizer
is sent. Enthusiasm grows slowly as a cannery is built and a credit
union established. Combining first person narration and dramatic
sequences, this film achieved a sense of believability previously
unmatched.

This exploration of various aspects of Canadian culture led to
an increasing number of films which sought to create a deeper inter-
pretation of the country. In emphasizing French contributions, Roger
Blais chose one of the more austere aspects - a Benedictine Monastery -
and proved that the lives of the monks were not so isolated and with-
drawn as one might expect. His film Les moines de Sainte-Benoît (1951)
is a careful assessment of monastery life, examining the daily ritual
of working with the hands - in the fields and in the dairy making cheese.
The devotion to prayer and to humble living are well-known features of
such an institution. The film probes beyond the obvious to point up
the creative work done by the monks whose style of life gives them time
for composing music, painting, writing and devotion to a number of
other studies, and thus contributes to the larger Canadian community.

While Abitibi portrayed the present-day state of this frontier
development, there were no films on the history of the colony. Bernard
Devlin - the grandson of a former colonization minister - saw an
excellent opportunity to produce a long dramatic film on one of the
more recent episodes of Quebec history. Working with Raymond Garceau,
he prepared a feature-length scenario based on the novel "Nuages sur
les brûlés" by Hervé Biron. While the idea might have been acceptable to the director of production, the cost $32,000 was not. Though it was rock bottom for a feature, Donald Mulholland considered it too large a venture for the Board. The script was temporarily shelved to be brought out later as a television serial. Devlin re-worked the idea as a two-reel short - *L'abitis* (1952).

The result is an excellently paced film, using the first person narration of *Maree montante* but without the former's lengthy verbal reflections. The story of the colonist's venture into the Quebec wilderness is one of fear and uncertainty as the people leave the depression-poor cities of the 1930's to try their luck on the land. The agony of pulling dozens of stumps with a hand winch to clear an acre of ground is an eloquent summation of all of the back-breaking work needed to improve the land in order to collect the fifteen dollars monthly living allowance from the government. The passage of time is measured by the burning stumps, the deep plowing, the first harvest and the deaths of those unable to survive the harsh life. Simplicity and brevity make this film one of the best documentaries of the early 1950's - a time when some of the Board's films had tended to become cluttered with an over-abundance of expository details.

Though features were out of the question, half-hour dramas - such as *The Connors Case* - had done well enough theatrically to justify further efforts in the eyes of Mulholland. Devlin and Jean Palardy remained convinced that the dramatic form was an excellent means of probing the French-Canadian character and did not share the reticence
of most English-Canadians about attempting drama. An original script by novelist Roger Lemelin and an original score by Maurice Blackburn formed the base of Devlin and Palardy's *L'homme aux oiseaux* (1952). A modest comedy, this film served to re-create Lemelin's characters of Quebec city's upper and lower town. The central character is the bird fancier - a free-wheeling type who, in spite of a wife and son, is more interested in reading, taking walks and watching birds than in holding a job. Being fired troubles him only slightly and his disinclination toward work bothers him only when he is accosted by members of the working world. Considering employment as a fireman and later as a longshoreman, he is soon discouraged by the hazards of each. Rumors and gossip convince his wife that he has been not only fired, but jailed. A frantic search convinces her that he may be leaving forever, but the final tearful parting - as he sails away on a ship - will be short-lived. The camera reveals that it is only the ferry crossing the river. He has at last found a job with fresh air and freedom - as ticket-taker on the boat.

*L'homme aux oiseaux* exemplifies the rule of "it's not what you do, but how you do it." Perhaps its most notable quality is its lack of flaws. The fast pacing and the subtle use of sight comedy - in short, the light touch - gives the film a polish which time has not dulled.

It stands as an important mark in NFB production; the first successful venture into film comedy - a clear break from the dreary heavy handedness of *The Boy Who Stopped Niagara* and *Opera School*.

Throughout the post-war era, production and distribution of French-language films had expanded at a slow pace. Distribution to theaters
covered the urban areas, but the rural population was reached only in part by the traveling circuits. This system had not proved as successful in Quebec as it had in other parts of Canada. The charges and investigation of 1949 through 1951 worsened this situation. Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis toughened his stand against the influence of the Film Board and for a brief time banned all NFB films from the Province. Even with the lifting of this restriction, both theatrical and non-theatrical bookings declined. There was also the problem of competition from abroad. With the French film industry again in operation, distributors were getting all of the product they wanted and felt no strong compulsion to take materials from the Board. The film dialog between French and English Canada was no longer a matter of securing national unity to promote the war effort. New reasons had to be found. The question had arisen - if French-language films reach only a small declining audience in Quebec how much emphasis should be placed on French production? In light of the fact that the English-Canadian audience had been increasing left little doubt in the minds of some.4

4McKay, History of the National Film Board, p. 75.

Commissioner Ross McLean, fighting to hold the Board together, could do little at the moment. Nevertheless, his concern over the French situation was real: It has become evident that there is ground for improvement in the over-all planning, co-ordination and execution of our national French language program.
in production and distribution of films, filmstrips, photographs and other informational material.\(^5\)


Little action, however, was taken. Paul Thériault, the French Secretary, was asked to follow more closely the French Language Program.

The move towards autonomy for French production came under the new Film Commissioner, Arthur Irvin. The freedom was given him by the 1950 Film Act allowed implementation of the necessary changes that McLean could not make. Thériault's advisory position was made official and the appointment of Donald Mulholland as Director of Production strengthened the administrative chain of command. On November 8, 1950 Bernard Devlin was given the responsibility of producer of all original films in unit A. Jacques Bobet was placed in charge of all versions and revisions. Guy Glover remained the executive producer, but delegated authority in order to assume the additional responsibility of Coordinator of the special International Program.\(^6\)

\(^6\)Donald Mulholland, *Memorandum, November 8, 1951.*

With these appointments there was at last something that could be called a "French Production Unit," headed by a French Producer. Budget cuts and lack of work had sapped the morale of the French-Canadians.
Devlin's first move was to strengthen the existing set-up. Weaknesses existed in a number of areas including writing, editing and production. Devlin sought recruits from Radio Canada and the French Canadian Theatre. He proposed that these people be hired on a contract rather than staff basis and trained, the idea being to avoid the attitude of "j'ai une bonne job au gouvernement" (why should I strain myself-ism). Those proving valuable and versatile might be taken on permanently. Development progressed at an even pace through the early 1950's. While the unit did not enlarge greatly, those who were in it were finally given the opportunity to operate it. Both the quantity and quality of films began to increase.

French film styles began to emerge and diverge in much the same way as they did in English production. L'homme aux oiseaux remained the outstanding single example of dramatic films in the theatrical program. The non-theatrical program, however, with its lower budgets permitted a greater amount of production. French-Canadian rustic folklore provided the basis for a group of three films dealing with the exploits of a super-strong boy named Ti-Jean.

Ti-Jean s'en va-t-aux chantiers (1953) written and produced by Jean-Palardy was the first. By way of introduction, a father gathers his children to listen to a story. A narrator then takes over and supplies dialog for all characters. Ti-Jean, a rotund boy of about twelve, emerges from a frozen wood riding a large and equally rotund horse. Upon being laughed at when he asks for a job in a lumber camp, Ti-Jean grabs an axe and fells a tree in a matter of seconds. Similar
exploits include hauling huge piles of logs to the river, knocking
the camp's boxing champion off a saw-horse and eating immense quantities
of food to the amazement of all - with the possible exception of
audience members over the age of six. Ti-Jean's lumbering experiences
were followed by two similar children's epics - Ti-Jean s'en va dans
l'Ouest (1957) wherein he helps bring in a wheat harvest; and Ti-Jean
au pays du fer (1958) where his feats of daring-do are applied to iron
mining.

The cultural aspects of Canada were emphasized in the French-
language production as well as in the English. The kind of films that
began with Listen to the Prairie and continued with On Stage and Opera
School were echoed by French-Canadian counterparts. Roger Blais who was
at the time working in both French and English production produced a
film of a different quality. Shadow on the Prairie (1953) was an
original ballet work with a score by the Board's Robert Fleming,
choreographed by Gweneth Lloyd and performed by members of the Royal
Winnipeg Ballet. The theme of the settlement of the Canadian West
centers on a young couple. The loneliness of the empty horizons which
turn to a vast frozen waste drives the wife to insanity. While shot
on a small-stage set, Director Blais successfully re-created the
vitality of a live performance through skillful camera movement and
cutting which did not destroy the rhythm of the dance.

While a more conventional film - Juenesses musicales (1956)
directed by Jacques Giraldeau - gave a careful account of how this
organization to encourage young people's interest in music began in
post-war Belgium and spread over Europe and eventually to Canada. Filmed at the Lake Magog summer camp in Quebec, images of the dedicated young musicians are intercut with a discussion of the organization led by the Canadian director of the group - Gilles Lefebvre. The film runs nearly three-quarters of an hour which is too long. It fortunately does not try to go the route of *Opera School* and become "cute."

In the same manner as the English "Canada Carries On," films took on a diversified look in the post-war era; the French "En Avant Canada" did the same not only in the versions but in the original films as well. With the end of the "Vigie" series a great number of the French-language original films played theaters as part of "En Avant Canada." These films were in much the same style as *Abitibi, La terre de Caín,* and *Marée montante.*

*Les aboiteaux* (1956) directed by Roger Blais and written by Léonard Forest used a dramatic format to discuss the work of the Maritime Marshlands Reclamation Administration. The dikes protecting farmlands along the Bay of Fundy have existed for nearly three centuries. Labor shortages and general indifference have led to a point where the situation has become critical. The warnings of an old dike keeper go unheeded until heavy rains begin crumbling weak sections. Sand-bag brigades are organized. The fight against the rising water ends as a Reclamation Administration bulldozer arrives, like the cavalry, at the last moment. While the film makes a valid object lesson the dramatic approach lacks subtlety and hence weakens the impact of the film.
Midinette (1955), written by Léonard Forest and directed by Wally Sutton, sought to show that the lot of the factory girl was more than dull work. Marielle Rousseau finds that the garment factory where she works offers an abundance of recreational and educational activities.

Au bout de ma rue (1958) directed by Louis-Georges Carrier takes the audience on a tour of the Montreal waterfront as seen through the eyes of a small boy. What would have ordinarily been a pedestrian kind of travelog emerges as an excellent bit of observation - thanks to the photography of Michel Brault and a fine score by Maurice Blackburn.

The third major development in French production paralleled the English interests very closely. This was in the making of national-cum-international films interpreting the Canadian character. A number of the films in the "Faces of Canada" series were produced in the French unit by Raymond Garceau. Le bedeau (1952) followed the routine of Monsieur Eusèbe as he officiates at weddings, funerals and christenings in a small Quebec village. Le cocher (1953) is a character study of Onesime Lamothe, driver of one of the horse-drawn carriages that take visitors around the sights of Quebec City. Le notaire (1953) with its verse commentary and humorous approach follows in the path of Le bedeau in its description of this rustic sage from a small Quebec village. In the same style, though not in the same series, was Garceau's portrait of the mayor of Granby - Monsieur le maire (1953).

A deeper more serious study was Le médecin du Nord (1954) by Jean Palardy. In the frozen barrens of northern Quebec a dog sled comes slowly toward the camera in a world of solid white. In it is
Doctor Paul-Leon Rivard. He confers with other physicians and some patients by radio. He is the only doctor in a small hospital run by a paper company. His practice is 6000 patients in an area of 20,000 square miles. Traveling by sled, railway speeder, plane and on snowshoes, he treats lumbermen and trappers, delivers babies, and tests Indian children for tuberculosis. An unobtrusive camera allows the work and personality of the man to come through as he quietly goes about his job of saving lives which are totally dependent upon him.

The quality of work improved under Devlin's administration. A small number of recruits was taken in and several of those who had been with the unit were given senior status as directors and producers. In 1953 Devlin departed the French Unit to go into television production in the English-language program. Television was the catalyst that changed the French unit from a small film-making operation into a production organization that has more than tripled in size since 1950. Though smaller than English-language production, the French programs had become equally complex. Between 1952 and 1954 the distribution situation changed radically in Quebec. The political pressures and foreign imports which had frustrated the Board's efforts to expand distribution through the existing theatrical and non-theatrical channels became less important with the growth of the French Television Network. The network's demands for the first run of NFB material soon equalled both other forms of distribution. While Radio Canada's use of NFB film was less than that of the CBC English network in terms of the number of program hours to be filled, it was greater in terms of
percentage because of the shortage of Canadian-centered material in the French language. The Quebec audience soon grew tired of old French features and dubbed American programs. Although audience figures were low in comparison to the English network, the fact remained that television had provided the first truly effective distribution channel for French-language films and thus an answer to the question of French-language production emphasis.

There had been significant improvements since the dark days of 1949-50 when as Raymond Garceau put it,

Good year or bad, the National Film Board's annual report would swear that at least a hundred films were made by the French unit. But it would be more truthful to say that only five or six were truly original productions. The rest were really translations of English productions.

Garceau, More Reflections from Raymond Garceau #5, p. 3.

In the mid-1950's the question was not whether there was a need for French-language films, but whether there was a need for original French-language films. The "Sur Le Vif" series produced by Bernard Devlin and "Regards sur Le Canada" were the first to reach French Canadians. "Regards" and its English counterpart "Window on Canada" were simply re-plays of existing films, while "Sur Le Vif" was original material. Although produced in French and dealing with French-Canadian subject matter, the series had little direct influence on the rest of French production since Devlin and his crew were producing both "Sur Le Vif" and "On The Spot" under the English program. "Sur Le Vif,"
while moderately popular, offered little more than a superficial reportage of things French-Canadian. To be effective, films would have to have a deeper appeal—which meant giving recognition to the fact that there were qualities unique to the French-Canadian audience. The situation was best described by Guy Côté in a proposal for future films in the Board's French program.

...I'll stick my neck out and say that good shows for English-Canadians are not necessarily effective shows when translated for La Belle Province de Québec. Whenever I sit back and try to look at some of the Board's past films as one of my compatriots might (at home on a T.V. screen, or in a village hall on a movie screen) I often feel uncomfortable—not because I disagree with what the film is saying, but because it just doesn't seem to have the right approach. In extreme cases, some of these films even arouse actively hostility...I will try to explain the reason for this in as objective a manner as I can: there is no question of evaluating here whether the French-Canadian's religious idealism makes him a better citizen than the English-Canadian's social awakedness.

The French-Canadian adolescent, fresh out of classical college, starts life fully equipped with a set of principles, carefully indoctrinated during those long years of religious influence. The French-Canadian's religion involves dogmatic acceptance as well as inner belief, and his mind often views with suspicion any departures from orthodoxy. He has been told that heresy is around him; he will close his mind to certain influences, for these may well appear to him as attacks on his principles (which, by definition, are inviolate). It is very difficult, even in human and social matters, to educate the French-Canadian adult by intellectual methods: although his personal philosophy may be deep-rooted, it does not stand critical examination because he had never intelligently understood its real foundation; he finds it easier to accept his teacher's word, just as he accepts his faith's dogmas. Often the French-Canadian is neither ready, nor willing to re-examine his social thinking. When he argues he will do so emotionally, and use words such as 'humanité,' 'patrie,' 'devoir,' 'charité.' Strangely enough, this same French-Canadian has a great capacity for putting his entire confidence in other people: this absolves him from having to think critically (which is convenient) and explains the long record of demagoguery which political Quebec has known.
I think it is almost impossible for anybody but a French Canadian to speak to, and influence French Canada. (Mackenzie King did it, but he was a genius.) Outside ideas are 'foreign' ideas and 'being in the family' is a criterion of competence. I once knew a French-Canadian widow, more than sixty years old and in distressing financial straits, who refused to accept a competent friend’s advice about the administration of her money simply because he was not 'in the immediate family' and who preferred instead to lean on the counsel of a first cousin, a person of lesser experience and wisdom, whose blood ties inspired in her a blind faith which, in a way, was rather wonderful to see. Into this context, place Ottawa's own National Film Board, a Federal body. The make-up of our whole sociological thinking stems from a different tradition. On the intellectual plane, at international intellectual conferences, French and English can meet and understand one another's ideas. It is in the vulgarisation of these ideas that the roads diverge. An English-Canadian mind cannot vulgarise for French Canada.

I will take an example. The concept of the 'small town' and its community pride is one long dear to our film programme. In N.F.B. films, the citizens of the community all buy the local newspaper (because it has editorials about civil liberties) and dutifully support the Town Council in its welfare work. The citizens may get drunk New Year's Eve, but they do purchase the occasional Mentor Book and encourage their sons to take up 'that sort of thing' (meaning the arts). They are full of admiration for the suburban supermarket and will vote for the new recreational center at the next elections. They recognize the place of the Postman in their community and may even wave at him as he gaily goes down the street (followed by a dog). They never write Justice with a small "j" and they settle brawls by democratic discussion. They go to church at Easter, give the occasional dollar to the Salvation Army and plan to buy a split-level bungalow and a new Buick next year. They are being rather unjustly described right now, but that is the way some of them appear, through our films, to the French-Canadians. Little wonder, then, that the social content of our productions (with which no one can quarrel) does not come across to that huge segment of the French-Canadian population whose thinking remains traditional and non-Americanised.  

8Guy Cote, Passe Partout In 1956, pp. 16-17.
It might be added that the reverse is often true with regard to the image of the French-Canadian as seen via an English version - an image which may come across as a caricature of Coté's description - where the French-Canadian is seen as a naive, emotional person - an easy dupe for an unscrupulous member of his own closely-knit group, unwilling to listen to the voice of reason that comes from the outside. It must be admitted that these images may appear as caricatures to some members of the intended audience - a reaction caused, in part, by a lack of technical skills on the part of the film-makers. This is by no means to minimize the importance of having each group interpret for itself, but rather to point out the extreme difficulties of such interpretation - that even when done by members of the same group things may go awry and for an outsider to attempt such interpretation is inviting disaster.

In 1955 the French Unit began its first large-scale interpretation of French Canada with a series of films for television called "Passe Partout." To produce enough material for weekly half-hour series required additional staff. Raymond Garceau, Victor Jobin, Fernand Dansereau, Jacques Bobet, Léonard Forest, Roger Blais and Jean Palardy along with Bernard Devlin composed the nucleus of the French television unit. A number of others were hired and trained by this group.

The new series would, at last, be able to deal with matters of social consequence with the option of using either a documentary or dramatic format. Straight, factual reportages of the "Sur Le Vif" variety would also be included but would be freed from the strict
conventions of that series, allowing each program to be shaped by the
demands of the subject matter.

The first program in the series *Les Canadiens Français de l'Quest*
(1955) was released in October. It follows the same general style as
the "Sur Le Vif" programs, using a narrator to tie the whole thing
together. The difference, however, is that *Canadiens* is much broader
in concept and smoother in execution. Although a narrator is used, he
is a personality and not merely a transitional device. Moreover, he is
believable in his role of reporter as he travels in western Canada
interviewing a farmer in Saskatchewan, members of a French-language
theatrical company in Winnipeg and a Museum curator in Vancouver. They
discuss why they left Quebec, how they are being accepted in English
Canada, and in general the lives of French individuals in the west.

Although this film could hardly be considered a spectacular
beginning, it was an exploration into the modern French-Canadian milieu
and not an image of the quaint, picturesque world of handicrafts.
*Que Dieu vous soit en aide* (1956) was a dramatized reconstruction of an
actual trial. Divided into two parts, the first deals with the hearing
of testimony and the making of charges. The second part focuses on the
jury and the deliberation of the evidence. In this examination of the
administration of justice the viewer is asked to give his own verdict.
The problems of social welfare and the necessity for town planning
were dramatized respectively in *Le cas Labrecque* (1956) and *Le vieux
bien* (1956).

One of the most ambitious of the series was a two-part drama on the
growth of labor unions in Canada. *Alfred J.* (1956), written by Fernand
Dansereau and directed by Bernard Devlin, traces the life of a worker through ten years of depression and war. Alfred, a machinist, finally gets a job. He is one of the lucky ones because the year is 1936. An organizer appears at the local union hall. Few attend the meeting but Alfred is one of these. The discussion of better conditions, more jobs and better pay is taken to the manager. The demands are rejected. Through more meetings interest is aroused and a strike is planned. When the movement is strong enough, a strike is called. The management will not bargain. The deadlock is finally ended by the outbreak of the Second World War forcing everyone to return to work.

During the war there is little change in conditions. At the War's end Alfred is offered a position with the management. He discusses it with his wife. Later at a dinner in the union hall he makes a speech discussing the problems that lie ahead. He meets the manager the following day and refuses the job having decided that the movement needs him more.

In its style and conception, Alfred J. was similar to Soviet realist films - not to those of Dovzhenko and Eisenstein with their symbolic heroes and mass heroes, but rather to the Russian films of the 1930's, such as the Vassiliev brothers' Chapayev and Alexander Zarki's Baltic Deputy where the protagonist was a man who could easily be recognized as one of "the people." He became a hero in the revolution and usually died in and for the cause. It was in this latter aspect that Alfred J. differed. There was no glorious revolution. Rather, the film depicted a low-key struggle of the French-Canadian
worker to achieve collective bargaining and a fair wage. Alfred is a quiet hero whose sacrifice is known only to his wife and himself.

Alfred I. was the first step in presenting a serious dramatic portrait of the French-Canadian worker to the French-Canadian audience. Moreover, it was produced by French-Canadians in the French language. The popular success of this type of film was evident when the dramatic series "Panoramique" was begun in the following year.

The remainder of the "Passe Partout" series was a mixture of dramatized documentaries and reportage films with emphasis on the latter. Tu enfanteras dans la joie (1956) dealt with natural childbirth. Pas un mot (1957) visited a school for pantomimists and featured the artistry of Guy Hoffman, who tells a story with gesture and facial expression, uttering not a word. Amitiés Haïtiennes (1957) was a two-part program on Haiti. The first part dealt with the history and culture of the people, the second with Canadians in Haiti working to aid the country and explaining the part Canada is playing in welding stronger ties with that Caribbean nation.

In terms of the goals sought by the French Unit - reaching the French-Canadian audience with original materials tailored especially for them - "Passe Partout" could be considered only a partial success when it concluded in April of 1957. Although recruiting was going on, the staff was not large enough to turn out an original half-hour every week. Nearly half of the series was composed of dubbed versions of the English-language series "Perspective." Nevertheless, "Passe Partout"
was a significant development in French production - a milestone in the change from bilingualism to biculturalism.

Television's expansion of the French Unit was accompanied by an internal strengthening of the organization. The position of French Secretary and Special Assistant to the Commissioner had been vacated by Paul Thériault in 1952 and remained empty until 1954 when he was replaced by Pierre Juneau. Juneau had been with the Distribution Branch since 1949. He was well equipped to handle such matters, having had experience with the problems of finding films that would appeal to French-Canadian audiences.

The Board's move from Ottawa to Montreal in 1956 not only proved to be a great boost for French morale but facilitated the hiring of new staff members. Producing films of high quality in sufficient quantity would always be the main problem in the Board's television output. One answer was, of course, dubbed versions. In 1956, a French versions unit was created under Jacques Bobet; most of the "World In Action" sub-series were thus prepared for broadcast over the French network as "De L'Empire au Commonwealth," "Les Antilles Anglaises," "Le Monde du Travail," "L'Essor Feminin," "Un Demi-Siècle D'Aviation Canadienne" and "L'entre Deux Guerres." These were all incorporated under the general series title "Temps present."

One of the severest critics of the "Passe Partout" series was Bernard Devlin who felt that while individual programs had merit, the series lacked continuity and style. Point out that;
Finding subjects destined to 'make better citizens' out of Canadians is an objective, not a theme. I feel we need a theme to give our program direction and inspiration. I think that the lack of theme has been directly responsible for our difficulty in getting subjects to date, also in directing writers how to tackle the subject we assign them. Ours is probably the only program on T.V. without one - and it shows. 9


Devlin proposed a series which would present the Canadian public with some of the social, economic, and scientific issues that were facing them at the time - to answer the questions of "where are we going and what is happening to us, what do we choose among the ideas and systems around us?" As examples of possible programs, he proposed investigations into the depletion of natural resources, in providing food as well as power, the challenge of atomic power, and the explorations of "Man's last great frontiers" - the ocean floor and space travel. 10

10 Devlin, Re: Passe Partout (Part 2), pp. 1,2.

While this particular idea was not given immediate approval it became the basis for the Board's English-language series "Frontiers" which was initiated in 1959 - two years after the conclusion of "Passe Partout."

At the time, the major consideration was with reaching the audience. Grant McLean and Pierre Juneau both favored pitching forthcoming series to a "mass audience" - attempting to reach as many as possible. Devlin
agreed, but raised the question of technique, emphasizing the dangers of attempting to direct a program to intellectuals one week and the working class the next—pointing out that such a move would probably drive away both audiences. In an attempt to reach the greatest number, he felt that a dramatic presentation of information would be most effective, echoing the philosophy of Stuart Legg in his final summation, he stated:

I for one believe that when Documentary loses the 'common touch,' it becomes an inbred thing, living off itself and its parasites—and eventually dies. I do not believe in the Jesuitical principle of talking to the Directing Classes only.  \[1\]

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\[1\] Re: Passe Partout, p. 2.

The problem of reaching the "mass audience" was complicated by the undeniable bilingual, bicultural differences in the country. One series might do well in reaching the majority of English-Canadians. As a French version it would probably be less effective. Both Devlin and Juneau agreed that interpretive films for French-Canadians would have to be tailored for them and should deal with problems and points of view that were directly familiar. The idea of the Abitibi settlement was again put forth—this time in a multi-part television series dealing with some of the social aspects of recent French-Canadian history. The series was called "Panoramique."

"Panoramique" was begun in 1957, and like "The Candid Eye" was a reaction against the reportages and half-hour dramas which had preceded
it. Unlike the English unit the French staff did not choose cinéma vérité, but adhered to the dramatic format. The success of Alfred J. persuaded men, such as Guy Cote, to examine the drama film with a critical eye rather than abandon it completely. His conclusion was that:

A half-hour show is a very unsatisfactory dramatic length; indeed, writers do not usually attempt more than one or two "real and complete characters" in a half-hour TV play. The rest should be stock characters, stereotypes, or buffers so that the audience will concentrate on the important elements (which need time for development). In a longer dramatic show, the number of complete characters increases, and this makes possible a complexity of human relationships which is proper to the classical conception of drama. In a sketch, on the other hand, all the characters must be stereotypes, i.e., the audience must recognize them for what they represent, not what they are.12

12Cote, Passe Partout In 1956, pp. 29-30.

The new series was conceived as dramatic half-hour programs that would tell a single story in from two to eight episodes. The twenty-six films were aired in the fall of 1957, through the spring of 1958, and in the spring and fall of 1959. "Panoramique" was a grand project and required the combined efforts of nearly everyone in the French Unit. The only exceptions were those who worked on the versions which comprised the programs in "Temps Present."

"Panoramique" began with Les Brûlés (1957-58). Produced by Guy Glover and Léonard Forest and directed by Bernard Devlin, using the script based on the Biron novel. In eight episodes, a group of some fifty men and their families are followed through the depression of
the 1930's. Living in the poverty of the city at the depth of the depression, people hear of a colonization plan which will give them free land in the wilderness of northwestern Quebec. Leaving wives and families behind, the men set out by train and later on a crude paddle boat for the "promised land." But, the land must be cleared before anyone will be paid his living allowance. A few soon give up - preferring the poverty of the city to the back-breaking effort of cutting trees and pulling stumps. Most remain and, encouraged by the cure who accompanied them, continue the work. The agronome sent by the Colonization Society is first rejected, being blamed for the inefficient supply system. He is later accepted after he proves himself and helps to organize the work. A foreman and a bookkeeper are chosen; a cooperative store is set up and later a sawmill.

The story has its scoundrels and heroes, but the latter triumph and the community grows. Wives and families adjust to the shock of the surroundings and the colony survives fires and storms. Love flowers with the usual triangular difficulties. The cure, sensitive to such problems, brings in five young school teachers who find little trouble in being assimilated into the group. He is presented with a church and is for once at a loss for words. In the closing sequence, the joy of the celebration of St. Jean Baptiste day is mixed with reflective feelings of the hardships of the past.

Les Brûlés featured a large cast including folk singer Félix Leclerc, and such familiar figures from French theater and television as J. Leo Gagnon, René Caron, Pierre Defresne, Roland d'Amour, Aime...
Major, Jean Lajeunesse, Georges Bouvier, Roland Bedard, Henri Poulin, Nana de Varennes, Camille Ducharine and Lucille Gauthier.

Stylistically Brules was very close to the Soviet realist films of the 30's and had as an antecedent Alfred J. The acting, however, was more believable and all of the characters existed as three-dimensional people.

Il était une guerre (1958) directed by Louis Portugais was the second story of the series. Covering the War years on a smaller scale, Guerre returned to an urban setting to dramatize, in a five-part story, the effects of the War on one family - in particular, a young man who marries hastily to avoid the draft. He is soon drafted and sent to the front. At the end of the War he returns and must face a married life with a wife whom he must learn to love.

Guerre represented the transition between the problems of the depression generation and those facing the young people in the post-war world. La maître du Perou (1958), written and directed by Fernand Dansereau, returns to a rural setting in the post-war era. The difficulties facing a Quebec farmer include not only the method of running his place but the future ownership since his sons are turning to other interests.

Pays neufs (1958), Les 90 jours (1958) and Les mainsnettes (1958) - the final three films in the series moved into the world of business and industry. In Pays neufs a young mine inspector quits his job and pursues the risky game of "wildcatting" in the northern wilderness. Les 90 jours returns to the theme of the factory and the strike where
workers rebel against a management who would build a new recreation arena in lieu of improving the safety conditions in the plant. In Les mains nettes a domineering executive disrupts the dull routine of an office. The white collar workers, having no union, are at the mercy of the man and must submit to his wishes or be fired.

"Panoramique" had at last succeeded in realizing the dream of the French-Canadian staff - to present to the people of Quebec (and, for that matter, French Canadians in all of Canada) true images of French Canada - stories, characters, and sympathies which had not been created by or filtered through the English-Canadian mind. As opposed to "Perspectives" loose collection of social dramas, "Panoramique" presented a dramatic, social history of French Canada since 1930. Audience reaction among the French population was highly favorable. Many English Canadians who saw the series, however, were annoyed by the attitudes expressed. While the films were not anti-English, they were pro-labor and anti-management. They did not view World War II as a national crusade, but as something to be avoided.

"Panoramique" was not only exclusively for French Canadians, it was also by French Canadians. Those in the unit at the time readily admit that for a year they worked on little else. The series was the first real move towards the dramatic feature film. All the programs in the series were released in the non-theatrical film circuit and again on television as "one-shot" feature-length films. In the next few years the same group (Devlin, Forest, Portugais, Jobin, Dansereau, Groulx and Claude Jutra) who had worked on "Panoramique" made the Board's first French-language theatrical features.
Structurally as well as stylistically "Panoramique" served to consolidate the unit. In March of 1957 Léonard Forest was appointed Executive Producer of the French Language Program and Pierre Juneau became Executive Director. As such, Juneau planned and coordinated French operations including the program of production and distribution and the personnel and public relations services.

In 1958 a new position was created in order to facilitate French production research. By this time the unit had grown large enough that responsibility for original production was divided between two Executive Producers. Léonard Forest handled the television production while the general program was shared with Louis Portugais. A year later the work was consolidated under Forest. Victor Jobin and Jean Roy became assistant producers.

The size and complexity of the "Panoramique" series made it the training ground for a number of young French-Canadian film-makers who had come to work at the Board. While the series tested the mettle of the film-makers and proved that the unit was capable of turning out credible material under the pressures of television time limits, it gave little range for the development of new and individual styles. It was in this respect that the "Temps Present" series offered great opportunities. Early in 1959 original productions began to make their appearance.

One of the first of these, produced by Louis Portugais, was Jour de juin (1958). This film marked the entry of French television production into the style of cinéma vérité. The day in June recorded
by the NFB cameras was June 24, St. Jean-Baptiste day. The film opens
with the morning preparation for the annual parade in Montreal. The
significance of the celebration is shown to be as much historical as
religious, and the cameras cover the French dances and floats telling
of the history of Quebec. Jour is brought to an end as the parade
breaks up and gaily-papered streets are left to the ministrations of
the department of sanitation.

Jour de juin was an impersonal film lacking in the insights of
those in the "Candid Eye" series. In this respect it represented only
a slight advancement beyond straight reportage. It is important to
note though, that at the same time the first, and one of the best French
cinéma vérité films was being produced in the theatrical program.

Les raquetteurs (1958) by Gilles Groulx and Michel Brault, began as a
three-minute segment for "Coup d'oeil" and ended as a seventeen-minute
film. The structure of Les raquetteurs is simple in its coverage of
the International Snowshoe Congress held at Sherbrooke in February 1958.
The film achieves a subtle kind of humor unmatched by other similar
NFB efforts. Without droll narration and camera trickery the events
simply unfold. The welcome, the parade - complete with heavily-bundled
drum-majorettes, and the races are marvelous bits of natural social
satire that have been equalled only by Richard Leacock's Happy Mother's
Day - a look at the effects of the birth of quintuplets on the town of
Abilene, Kansas.

The success of Les raquetteurs lies in the fact that it is a
carefully built personal view - unlike Jour de juin which was a "camera
"Blitz" shot in a single day by a half-dozen cameramen. While the cinéma vérité style began with these two films, it was not generally adopted by the French film-makers until three years later. Most of the original productions in the first two-years of "Temps Present" adhered to a straight and occasionally a poetic style of documentary.

During the first season of original production the majority of the films followed the pattern set by the "Faces of Canada" series, yet in style and scope they went far beyond the five-minute sketch, to create half-hour profiles of prominent French Canadians involved in the arts. 

*Fred Barry, comédien* (1958) directed by Claude Jutra is a good example. Barry - one of the grand old men of French-Canadian theater - looks back on a long career. Entering an empty theater, he greets the director and chats with other veteran members of French theater. What could have been nothing more than a discussion of old times is turned into a provocative and nostalgic portrait of the actor. The stooped figure of Barry - alone in the theater - is a melancholy sight, but the viewer's feelings of pity for him are soon dismissed as he is joined by friends. Talk of the old times is skillfully intercut with bits from films in which Barry appeared. As he leaves the theater he carries the aura of one who has led a long and vital life.

Other profiles in the series used similar techniques although they lacked historical footage and had to resort to intercutting recent film material with a studio interview. Profiles included in the 1958-59 season were *John Lyman, peintre; Henri Gagnon, organiste; Félix Leclerc, troubadour; Germaine Guévremont, romancière; Pierre Beaulieu, agriculteur; Marius Barbeau, anthropologue.*
Required to produce only a limited number of originals allowed the film-makers to concentrate more time and money on their films. As could be expected, the quality improved and most of the French originals in the "Temps Present" series were equal to those produced for theatrical release. Outstanding among these was Les petitssoeurs (1959) produced by Léonard Forest and directed by Pierre Patry.

The camera enters the closed convent of Les Servantes de Jésus-Marie and remains there for thirty minutes to capture five years of convent life. Behind steel gates, cowled nuns pray, forbidden to look upon the face of the world. At the end of the service the gates are opened briefly only to those who take communion. One of these is Micheline Robert, who will soon join the order.

Micheline parts with her family and begins her first day. She is followed through her first blessing, the evening meal, and to the small room that will be hers for the rest of her life. The prayers and work during the days that follow form an almost unchanging pattern. After one and one-half years, she becomes a postulant. She is allowed to see her family again. After five years she takes the vows which bind her for life.

The somber serenity of the convent life is enhanced by the use of trucking shots which move the action at a stately, but far from stolid pace. Although the film is a re-enactment, it is intensely believable. The collapsing of time is achieved by sparse narration without attempts at make-up changes. The convent is a place where time is measured by the duties of the day - duties which ignore the passage of years.
By the 1960 season a number of films, in the same manner as *Les petites soeurs*, were presenting a close look at the lives of average French Canadians. *Le notarie de Trois-Pistoles* (1961) directed by Georges Rouquier and Raymond Garceau explored aspects of Canadian culture which could only be hinted at in the "Faces of Canada" films. Hervé Rousseau, the notary, becomes more than an interesting character as he is followed through his work. The film goes beyond simple observation to provide a look at the customs, geography and history of the community. *Le notarie*, focusing on the personality, showing how he relates to his work and surroundings is as much Garceau's film as it is Rouquier's.

One of the finest examples of this was Garceau's next film *Alexis Ladouceur, métis* (1961).\(^\text{13}\) Living a solitary life, with little verbal communication the personality of the man is brought out through careful observation. Garceau's camera follows Ladouceur with a care verging on reverence as he goes about his daily rounds of work - fishing in Lake Labiche, Alberta. The life of the French-Indian métis is an aspect of the French-Canadian culture that prior to this film had been dealt with in only the most cursory manner. In the same year Garceau made a second film about French Canadians in the west, *Rivière-la-Paix* (1961), a candid look into the lives of French Canadian and Franco-American farmers living in the northern part of Alberta.

\(^{13}\)This film in a slightly revised form is in release as *L'homme du lac*.
Garceau's style of building his films into balanced wholes, was perfected in *Les petits arpents* (1963). The human as well as the physical topography are blended into this documentary of changing times in rural Quebec. "The little acres" - the small family farms, traditionally passed down through the generations are no longer capable of supporting a family. The film gives a sympathetic portrait of the men who are forced to sell out and find some other means of making a living. The problems of the changing rural scene affected Garceau deeply. His concern with the problems of readjustment led him to become one of the initiators of a series of films on these problems the following year.

There were very few dramas in the "Temps Present" series and none of them ran longer than an hour, these being presented in two parts. Fernand Dansereau's *La canne à pêche* (1959) used the thirty minutes to relate the story of how a fishing rod brings a little girl and her father together with a new understanding of each other and a renewed love for the countryside.

*L'héritage* (1959) directed by Bernard Devlin, was an hour drama that returned to the theme of rural life. Based on a short story by Philippe Panneton, *L'héritage* tells of a young man - played by Albert Millaire - who returns to the farm left to him by his father. His enthusiasm for putting the place in operation grows as he feels that at last he will be independent. A local girl - Martha Mercure - is attracted to him and together they embark on the risky but profitable venture of tobacco growing. Things go well at first as the plants are nurtured in the rebuilt greenhouse. At the critical stage of growing,
however, rain fails to come and the entire crop is lost. The girl is seduced by a local farm worker. Fortunately, she is truly loved by the tobacco grower and the film ends with the two returning to the city to start a life there. Though the plot of the film could be described as "l'opera savon" the situations are basically strong. Unfortunately the pace is slowed by a multitude of lingering shots whose length outlasts their meaning.

Far better was Devlin's Dubois et fils (1961). Following in the same general direction as Les mains nettes and Pays nouveaux, Dubois et fils emerges as the best long drama of the series. Moving backward and forward through time the film explains the crisis caused by the retirement of the head of a small company. The firm is in the traditional French manner - a family business. The owner-manager is faced with problems of failing health and scheming relatives. French sons who are less competent, but are direct heirs, vie with English sons-in-law who have the necessary skills as well as driving ambitions. Old and loyal employees fear for their jobs under the threat of possible reorganization. While it is a drama of talk rather than action the pace is upheld by good dialog.

Unlike many of the earlier dramas, Dubois et fils does not conclude with a neat end. The funeral of Dubois - the scene which opens the film takes on a new and ominous meaning as it appears again at the close. An era has ended and the future will be decided by a power struggle which may ultimately destroy the business. The one certainty is that things will not remain as they once were.
Cinéma vérité came to the fore front in the 1961 season, with a variety of interpretations. *La lutte* (1961) was the combined effort of Michel Brault, Marcel Carrière, Claude Fournier and Claude Jutra. With tongue-in-cheek solemnity, the quartet's candid cameras explore the sport of professional wrestling. In a special school aspiring pros are taught the arts of facial agony and mat choreography. In the ring at the Montreal Forum, the good guys are mauled by the bad guys while the little old ladies lust for revenge until virtue triumphs and the villains receive a thorough pummeling. Snatches of Bach's "Concerto in G" accompanies the activity - an excellent use of one of filmdom's new clichés to denote ritualistic behavior.

Gilles Groulx in his film *Golden Gloves* (1961) examines the sport of amateur boxing with a light-hearted seriousness. Focusing on two principal hopefuls - Ronald Jonas, a young Negro recently from the United States, and Georges Tibault, a Montrealer. The cameras of Guy Borremans, Brault and Jutra follow the men in the best style of the vérité technique, observing the workouts, the horse-play and the quiet moments of reflection when inner tensions flow through the insouciant exterior.

Michel Brault and Claude Jutra in *Quebec-U.S.A. L'invasion pacific* (1962) attempt once again to play the game of reporting the humorous event. When the event is simply there, as in *Les raquetteurs*, the result is an outstanding film. When it is partially manufactured as in *La lutte* the humor is at times strained. *Quebec-U.S.A.* is an almost completely manufactured event dealing with the tourist onslaught. The
film shifts between the hand-held coverage of the adventures of an American couple discovering Quebec city and cinematic broadsides aimed at the herds of rubber-necks with their Brownies, Polaroids and eight-millimeter movie cameras. There are excellent bits in the film but unit is lacking. There are at least two films, both about five minutes in length, buried in this thirty minutes of footage.

The tendency toward a rather straight sort of reportage of the Jour de juin variety continued through the 1962 season with such films as A Saint-Henri le cinq septembre (1962) and Boulevard St. Laurent (1962). These candid studies of people on the streets, though interesting, lack the depth of the more personal films made by one or two film-makers which create a sense of consciousness that goes far beneath the surface. Two such films are Voir Miami (1963) by Gilles Groulx and Clément Perron, and Marc Baudet's Salut Toronto (1964).

The point has been made that each cultural group benefits most from films dealing with its cultural milieu made by film-makers who are of that culture. Furthermore, when those from outside this culture attempt to interpret for it, the results are films which are "not right." While this is often true it must be added that such films can bring to light an interpretation which is new and unique and thus become truly bicultural, offering interests and points of view applicable to two audiences.

Voir Miami follows French Canadians to that city and through them takes a look at American beach culture. As the rockets thunder off the launching pads at Cape Kennedy, they attract only the passing
attention of the Americans. From the film-maker's point of view this is an incongruous reaction since it is from this place that man will soon venture to other planets in the greatest adventure of the age. Miami is "super America" - a world of tomorrow which is at the same time enamored of the pleasures and delights of the moment.

\textbf{Salut Toronto} ventures closer to home although it records an impression of a Canadian city which to many Canadians is a strange place. Unlike Miami, which is seen through a series of comparisons, Toronto is peeled away a layer at a time. The obvious comes first - the stock exchange, the streets and new buildings, the external influences of American culture. Second are the people. Immigrants of thirty nationalities arriving at the rate of one hundred per day add a cosmopolitan atmosphere initially unnoticed. The owner of a French bookstore comments on her feelings about the people and her acceptance into the community. University students, French and English, engage in coffee-house discussions decrying the brain drain and the lack of appreciation for the arts. Community life reflects cultural activities from a number of countries. Surface impressions are important to many who complain that it is an ugly city. In clubs piously closed on Sunday, strippers prance throughout the week.

In the same manner as the "Candid Eye" series, the vérité films of the French evolved out of the frustrations with and reactions against stolid documentary films and plodding dramas. There was, of course, the undeniable influence of the Kroitor, Koenig, Macartney-Filgate films. But while the "Candid Eye" represented a style of a closely-knit
group, the films in "Temps Present" were more the works of individuals, in both style and approach.

The last vestiges of what could be called a television reportage style ended with a group of six films under the title "Ceux Qui Parlent Francais," produced by Monique Fortier. Run in the "Temps Present" series of 1963, the "Francais" films explored various aspects of the status of the French language and culture and how it is changing in parts of the world. **A l'heure de la décolonisation** (1963) used a technique reminiscent of the Lewis Mumford "City" films. Fast cuts of speeches by Charles De Gaulle, and independence demonstrations in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Indo-China are interspersed with studio commentary by Harvard University's Professor Stanley Hoffman. The stock footage used in the film is so generalized that nearly all information is conveyed by the commentary. A slight improvement was **De Montréal à Manicouagan** (1963), a cinematic tour up the St. Lawrence, examining the historical as well as the modern industrial sights, ending at the huge Manicouagan dam. The first of two films dealing with France **La France revisitée** (1963) - follows Jean LeMoyne, a French Canadian for twenty-five years, on a visit to his homeland, where he talks of the changes that have taken place. **Petit discours de la méthode** (1963) also surveys France, this time probing the industrial scene giving an account of that country's recovery from the effects of the Second World War.

**Rencontres à Mitzic** (1963) and **Rose et Landry** (1963), the last films in the series, dealt with the French culture in Africa. Using
the style of cinéma vérité Mitzic presents the problems faced by Gilles Gervais, a young French-Canadian teacher working in the Ivory Coast. Rose et Landry in a similar style follows some days in the lives of two young Africans - giving them an opportunity to give their views on the past and future of their culture.

"Temps Present" concluded in 1964 and with it ended some of the pressures of television series production. "Temps Present" was never beset by the rigors of time as was "Panoramique." This problem had been alleviated by mixing versions with originals and enlarging the production staff, thus enabling the French film-makers to polish their material and achieve a level of quality far above that of "Panoramique" and equal to the best of the films made for theatrical release.

Although "Panoramique" had a definite theme and worked well as a contiguous television series, it was difficult to distribute through other channels. There was the necessity of cutting the stories to feature length and even then they did only passably well as non-theatrical items. While "Temps Present" did not have a set theme it did have themes in it. In addition to a number of versioned English series - Mumford on the "City," "Comparisons," "History Makers" etc., there were original theme ideas. Thus there was a cluster of films dealing with French culture, the portraits of the artists and writers, and a group of dramatic films portraying the changing role of the French-Canadian woman under the series title "Femmes au travail." Best in the latter group was Caroline (1964) by George Dufaux and Clément Perron. The film pictured Caroline, played by Carol-Lynne
Traynor, as she goes through a day which happens to be her wedding anniversary. She day-dreams and window-shops on her way to work, chided by an inner voice about her hopes and fears. At the telephone company, she becomes the dulcet voice and ready ear that is the heart of such an institution. Throughout the day the little disappointments and frustrations of home and family play on her mind. At the end of the day she is greeted by husband and child with flowers and presents.

In *Fabienne sans son Jules* (1964) a night club entertainer finds that success demands only more success, that fame is not enough to give her satisfaction that her life lacks. *Il y est un soir, il y est un matin* (1964), like *Caroline*, deals with the theme of office and home life. Here, however, the central issue is the conflicts within the office, the competition of the business world. In *Solange dans nos campagnes* (1964) a teenage girl learns to face the realities of the working world. The films are sensitive and at times a bit "soapy." Directed primarily at female audiences, they represent a sort of "Ladies Home Journal" school of film-making.

Film production for the "Temps Present" season of 1964 varied only slightly from that of the following year when the Board's releases were inserted into existing television series produced by the CBC and as hour-long " specials." The basic difference between the "Temps Present" films and those of previous series was that the "Temps Present" films were designed primarily as films which would have their first run on television rather than as television programs which would then be distributed as films, i.e., the "Sur Le Vif," "Panoramique," and to a degree the "Passe Partout" films.
"Temps Present" closed the stylistic gap that separated television from theatrical production. At the same time its structure, or lack of it, allowed film-makers to experiment with a variety of techniques and to approach their subjects from a personal point of view. This trend began with the vérité films of the late 1950's and reached its apex in the years 1962-1964. While many of these films were incorporated into a television series, a number were not being released theatrically or within CBC-produced programs.

The films of the 60's differed not only in appearance, but in attitude from those of a decade earlier. The degree of this change can be clearly seen in such a film as Jour après jour (1962) written and directed by Anne-Claire Poirier. "Hell" is working in a paper mill, or in any kind of place that numbs the mind and crushes the spirit of a human being. Switches are pulled and the monster machine and its human slaves begin the endless job of converting pulp to paper. "100 million trees; 10,000 lumbermen; 10,000 lonely women; forty villages; one ministry," chants the narrator while defining paper as something to "wrap, pay, communicate with . . . perhaps." Wheels grind, dials are set, levers pulled, logs are poked into grinders and workers play ice hockey. Statistics of maximum and minimum age and wage scales are read off with those of the size, length, width, and weight of the paper rolls. Dancing workers, on their off hours, sway to a wildly-playing jazz band while the sound track carries only the syncopated beat of a brush hitting a cymbal. Men are covered by loops of paper flying off an immense roller as the narrator reads the Ten Commandments ending
the "thou shalt nots" with . . . "but you'll pay the union dues and Canada too."

This is not the world of Midinette where little Marielle Rousseau discovers all of the "fun things" there are to do in the factory recreation program. It is a world of boredom, at least for a creative person, such as a film-maker. Whether this is actually the case for those who work there is impossible to determine, for while the narrator speaks - in blank verse - of stupid routine, the visual part of the film is a cinematic tour de force, out of Ruttman by way of Lorentz and Resnais. With a different track it could well become - the "Romance of Paper-Making in Canada." Nevertheless, the film is an intense personal statement demanding that life must have meaning, that man has a right to be human.

A different, but equally personal view of work is evident in Normetal (1959) by Gilles Groulx. Using a straight documentary approach, Normetal uses understatement and simple observation to describe and comment on the nature of work. The town of Normetal is a bleak place clustered around a mine in Northern Quebec. All roads lead to the mine. Underground the men go about the business of drilling, blasting and loading ore. Above the ground children sit in school and study. At the end of the day children crossing the school yard mingle with miners changing shifts. It takes no great imagination to see that the girls will soon become wives and the boys will follow their fathers into the mines.
Above all, the films of this era were involved with people - their hopes, dreams and aspirations. *Les dieux* (1961) by Jacques Godbout and Georges Dufaux enters the world of the art school, temple of the new gods. L'ecole des Beaux Arts de Montreal offers opportunities for the talents of young Canadians. The study is hard and the hours long. A new student searches for a room to live in. A local cafe owner discusses the students, whose work adorns the walls of his coffee house. When their training is completed, many depart for Europe and New York. The sequences of this film, which explain the students and their work, are tied skillfully together with trucking shots and smooth narration which pictures and comments upon the life and work of the young artists.

In a similar style is *Pour quelques arpents de neige* (1961) by Gilles Gascon and Georges Dufaux, but its tone is entirely different. The quiet introspection of *Les dieux* is exchanged for a mood of ambition, hope, fear and driving enthusiasm. Immigrants leave a ship through the crash and din of moving baggage and loud-speaker instructions in a variety of languages. Faces scrutinize the strange money of the place called Canada which will soon be home. People separate through the immigration center, passing signs offering church services in half a dozen languages. On a train, faces stare out at the vast snow-covered countryside. "Canada is more than an idea, now it is a place with air and a landscape. Here everything is new and unknown. At home every stone has a history." As a train custodian comes through the car the narrator comments - "even this sweeper will become a millionaire."

The film draws its strength from the powerful images of faces and
hands - hands that hold the immigration literature and magazines -
images of the future, and worn snapshots of families at home - memories
of the past. While the train vehicle is an excellent idea - having
various people getting off as it crosses the country - the film stops
rather than ends, leaving a number of people still on board and con-
cludes with a parting line of narration about their possible future
but which fails to pull the film together.

The activities of teenagers have been delineated in a number of
NFB films. In most of these the teenager is dramatized as one whose
main interests are illicit sex, thievery, and putting down members of
all generations. The teenagers of Le temps perdu (1964) are fortunately
exceptions. Michel Brault uses real teenagers to answer the question of
what goes on in the mind of an adolescent girl. Celine is such a girl,
who wonders why things don't work out. The hand-held camera captures
the last week of summer vacation for Celine, Nicole and Louise. At
summer camp they swim and canoe, discuss marriage, sex, religion and
reach conclusions which would shock no one. A love letter from a boy
friend is read aloud to the hilarity of all. There are brief sequences
of boys in a neighboring camp holding similar discussions. This part
of the film was not followed up and should have been expanded or
dropped - preferably the latter. The film ends where it began with
a sigh from Celine as she stares at the winter world of her drab neighbor-
hood. With its loose structure and excellent score by Stephane Venne
the film achieves an easy intimacy in its portrait of the world of a
young girl.
The dynamism of movement was only a part of the film *Golden Gloves* but this aspect kindled the interest of several film-makers, most of them in French production, to use vérité techniques in making sports films. Two early efforts were *Natation* (1963) and *Le Ski* (1964), the first showing—much as did *Golden Gloves*—the training and preparation of Olympic swimmers. *Le Ski*, a short made for the Department of National Health and Welfare, spent most of its length on the business of skiing itself, without going into an elaborate discourse on how it is done. By the following year films were being made exclusively on this premise. *Parallèles sur grand soleil* (1965), directed by Jean Dansereau and photographed by Bernard Gosselin and Georges Dufaux, covered the gymnastics competition of the fourth Pan American games in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The structure of the film is simple—a following of the final eliminations in free-style gymnastics as Canadian, American and Latin American athletes go through the grueling routine. The takes are long and the tension of the contest builds under the lens of cameras that follow every move.

A refinement of style is Jean-Claude Labrecque's *60 Cycles* (1965) with a brief commentary and a map showing the route of the race. The film plunges into the tour du Saint Laurent—the world's second longest bicycle race. A bit of jazz music introduces the cyclists as they glide down a highway in a telephoto shot. Through countryside and towns, the cluster of riders jockey for position while being covered from every conceivable angle. The superb photography and dynamic cutting build the film into a masterful piece of color cinema. The
music gives way to the natural sounds of the country and the frying
hiss of narrow tires on pavement. There is a crash and it is bloody -
a reminder of the ever-present danger of this high velocity sport.
With a final circuit of a park the racers finish - then stagger across
the pavement barely able to stand.

The grace and simplicity of 60 Cycles were not carried over to
Un jeu si simple (1965) directed by Gilles Groulx and photographed by
Jean-Claude Labrecque and Guy Borremans. That Canadians take hockey
seriously goes without saying. In Un jeu si simple it becomes an
almost mystic rite. Action sequences dissolve from black and white
television kinescopes to full color. Slow motion skaters drift and
turn, accompanied by the organ of Bernard Legace playing a Bach fugue.
There are interviews with players, comments from spectators and films
of the demonstrations when Maurice (Rocket) Richard was given a long
suspension. The film has about everything except structure.

The influence of the television experience found its way into all
forms of production including the short films produced mainly for non-
theatrical, non-television distribution. Claude Jutra's Rouli roulant
(1966) took the sports theme to a new high of sorts. Over panning shots
of a quiet Montreal park, a narrator warns of the dangerous crew who
roams the city - a threat to old ladies, small children and dogs. This
is followed by a close-up of a skate board with a skull and crossbones
painted on it. The dangerous crew then appears, perhaps a dozen of
them roaring down a hill. The photography is some of the most exciting
since 60 Cycles as the teenagers weave down curving hills with the grace
befitting professional skiers. The police put an end to this and further activities are on the floor of an indoor roller rink. Although sidewalk surfing has departed the scene, this film retains its lively quality, a part humorous – part lyric poem of youth.

The poetry of movement is eloquently captured in *Escale des cies sauvages* (1964) by Jean Dansereau and Bernard Gosselin. Using little more than sparse music and natural sounds with some of the most beautiful color nature photography in the Board's output, migrating flocks of Canadian geese are followed on their route from Baffin Island to North Carolina. Black and white film is used to comment visually on those whose pleasure is taken by blasting the birds out of the sky with a shotgun.

*Le monde va nous prendre pour des sauvages* (1965) by Jacques Godbout, Francois Bujold and Gilles Gascon dealt with static material to create a poetic film of excellent quality. Paper dolls made by Mic Mac Indian children illustrating tribal legends are the subject matter. The children did not want to be photographed, commenting "the world might take us for savages." They appear, however, hovering around the edges and in the background of shots dominated by the kite-like dolls which hang from trees, lie by roadsides and perch in boats like garish insects. The rhythm of this short film is in the cutting and in the sound score of combined indigenous sounds and electronic music by composer Ginette Martenot. The key to the film is color without which it would fail.
A more instrumental use of the vérité and Nouvelle Vague ideas developed in the 1960's is evident in *Percé on the Rocks* (1964) by Gilles Carle. The film uses almost every technique known to cinematographers to encourage tourists to see the pierced rock on the Gaspé. Poking fun at home movies and Fitzpatrick travelogs, it pumps vitality into what would ordinarily be a dull mood film.

The television special of an hour or more in length presented an opportunity for the creation of the first feature-length films, both drama and documentary in French production. This gave the film-makers a final freedom they had never had before, even in the pre-television days when distribution requirements made it difficult for almost any film in excess of thirty minutes to find a wide enough audience to warrant production.

*Pour la suite du monde* (1963) directed by Pierre Perrault and Michel Brault, is a 105 minute essay on the people of Île-aux-Coudres and the revival of the porpoise hunt. Outside the small church, two of its members discuss the effects of the earth and moon upon the souls of the island's departed who watch over the population. They conclude that the souls have done a good job since the island has never suffered any serious disasters nor has anyone been drafted into the army for as long as anyone can remember. In the home of Alexis Tremblay, a farmer, his son Leopold discusses the possibility of reviving the porpoise hunt. Alexis fails to dissuade him and Leopold sets out to get the backing of some of those who participated in the last hunt forty years before. Among those were Abel Harvey, a master fisherman, who describes how and
where the trap must be constructed. At a meeting in the church the project is put to a vote and it is agreed to revive the hunt. Shares are sold and the stock holders have to provide the necessary number of stakes which will be driven into the river bottom to form a corral which will trap the porpoises. Father Simon gives his support and admonishes all to behave themselves during Lent.

After the ice breaks up construction begins, harpoons are made and talk turns to the time when 300 were taken in a single year. The trap is completed and blessed. There is minor controversy as to whether masses should be said for the departed souls to ensure a good catch. Some favor the masses after the souls have produced some porpoises. Days pass and the trap is watched constantly. Finally a porpoise - actually a white beluga dolphin - is in the trap. The first catch is carefully transferred to a small pond; it will be sold later to the New York City aquarium. The beluga is carefully placed in a truck, accompanied by Alexis and Leopold, taken to New York and placed in a tank. Back on the island, all wait for the herds of porpoises that will surely fill the trap until at last the river is once again sealed by the ice of winter. All agree that it was a great thing and assure one another that next year will bring the big catch.

In its conception the film owes much to Rouquier and Garceau in its careful and sensitive attention to details in capturing the flow of life of the island community. Unfortunately the attention to detail becomes so involved that the pacing is exceedingly slow. This is always the problem with such a film, since to shear it down to the essentials
of the plot is to destroy its true purpose - that of describing the life of the people, which *Pour la suite* does with skill and sensitivity. This problem, however, remained unsolved in *Le regne du jour* (1967) which followed Alexis Tremblay on a trip to France.

Somewhat better was *Huit témoins* (1965) by Jacques Godbout, who used vérité techniques to explore the problems of juvenile delinquency. This hour-long film gives voice to eight young men frustrated by lack of education and by menial jobs that will lead to nowhere. Driven by the vicious circle of defeat, they are easily demoralized and find crime as the only possible means of escape and in that they admit there is no real hope. For some of them, there is Boscoville, a school where rehabilitation is possible. An understanding of the problems emerges as the boys have an opportunity to work with teachers and psychiatrists who possess a sympathetic understanding of these crushing problems. While this film does a good job of explaining the problem of delinquent youth and what is being done by way of rehabilitation, it is spread a bit thin and would be strengthened if the eight subjects were cut to half that number or even limited to an in-depth study of one.

In his position of Senior Assistant and Executive Director, Pierre Juneau had an increasing amount of control over French Production. He worked to expand production, fighting to get the necessary monies to support the expansion of the early 1960's and to get promotions for French personnel into executive positions. As of 1960 the production program was shared by Bernard Devlin and Fernand Dansereau - both executive producers. The following year Dansereau assumed full
responsibility. In 1962 French Production was reorganized into two full-sized production units - unit F, under Fernand Dansereau and unit G under Jacques Bobet.

On January 1, 1964 the hopes of the French staff were fulfilled when Pierre Juneau was appointed Director of Production (French) which placed French and English production on an equal footing. Juneau was in the same position as Grant McLean, the English Director of Production, with money to administer and with a direct responsibility to the Film Commissioner.

Juneau put administrative order inside French Production, improving the administrative structure by placing the production program under four executive producers - Jacques Bobet, Marcel Martin, André Belleau and Michel Moreau. The latter was to develop a new phase of production - school films. Juneau also created a training program for incoming film-makers. He had definite ideas about what films should and should not be produced and as a Director of Production initiated a number of projects. This administrative control was considered a mixed blessing since much of the freedom which had prevailed up to that time was gone and complaints began to be heard that film-makers could no longer make the films they wanted to. A number of staff members left. While a good part of this was natural turnover, some of the complaints were justified. The overall effect of Juneau's administration, which ended with his departure to Radio Canada in 1966, was exceedingly positive. He built for French Production a solid internal structure which was greatly needed.
Replacing Juneau was Marcel Martin, who remains in the position of French Director of Production at the present time (1968). Under Martin, a greater degree of creative freedom exists. Whether this will result in significant changes in the type of film to be produced remains to be seen. To date the changes have been minimal, reflecting the trends which had begun in 1964-65. Most noticeable is the increased number of long films produced for a first run on television and then for non-theatrical and occasionally theatrical distribution in the case of certain dramatic films.

Regards sur l'occultisme (1965) by Guy Cote' and Arthur Lipsett is a two-hour dissertation on the occult. Part one deals with magic and miracles; part two with scientific investigation of spirits. Filmed mainly in France, where a surprising amount of black magic still exists, the coexistence of occult beliefs and those of Catholicism are explained in interviews with local people and the cure of the village of Oizon. Further explanations of the role of occultism are discussed by anthropologist Robert Amadou, Phillippe Encausse from the field of parapsychology, and Andre Barbault - Vice President of the Centre National d'astrologie. The second part of the film probes mainly into the scientific investigation of psychic phenomena including trance states and extra-sensory perception.

L'occultisme is an unusual and unique document - probably the only film to make a serious study of the occult, exploring its social as well as scientific implications. It is less successful as a film. Long statements by the various experts, while interesting in terms of
content, are visually dull – a problem which will always be the bane of such efforts with no better example than The Days of Whiskey Gap. There is also the dubious practice of including the mystique of the horror films which, though interesting, is not closely related to the central theme under discussion. L'occultisme is a worthy piece of compilation cinema, an area of film-making which is drawing an increasing interest in French production.

Antonioni (1965), a co-production by the Film Board and Idi Cinematografica used compilation techniques to discuss the work of the Italian film director, combining interviews with Monica Vitti, film composer Giovanni Fusco, and fellow director Cesar Zavattini with clips from Antonioni's films. The development of the man and his work is shown, but there are gaps and Antonioni lacks the smoothness of the half-hour profiles, such as Fred Barry.

The hour-long film fared better. La bourse et la vie (1965) explains the workings of the stock market with the aid of John Kenneth Galbraith and Nicolas Darvas. Images d’un concours (1966) followed the training of young musicians in the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. The impact of Marshall McLuhan and the communication revolution investigated first in The Child of the Future was given a unique and different approach in Comment savoir (1966) by Claude Jutra and Jean Le Moyne. In four sections this seventy-minute film attacks the problems of learning and the new teaching methods being applied at various levels. Les réformes, the first part, deals with the sensory base of discovery, teaching very young children to know things by seeing and touching.
Le technologie... du nouveau dans la classe demonstrates the recent advances in audio-visual instruction. La notion de programme follows this idea to the next logical step - programmed instruction, dealing with the theoretical base as well as with the application, using some of the new teaching aids designed for this form of instruction. La communication des connaissances, the final part, explains the frontiers of research in education. Rapid teaching techniques in the University School at Pittsburgh, symbolic logic for ten-year-olds at Stanford and finally, the huge Columbia City communication center, point to the future direction of the educational revolution.

Comment savoir is an excellent film. Well paced and clearly organized in its explanation of the subject matter, it stands as a coherent document unlike the "razzle-dazzle" of The Child of the Future which serves more to impress than inform. A more popular approach to the technology of communication and the impact of the mass media was taken in a two-part film on this subject - Télévision est là (1967) and Image, que me veux-tu? (1967).

Few sponsored films have been made in French Production, mainly because most government departments require only English-language films with French versions. This situation was beginning to change in 1965 and may well change more in the future. In 1964 a group of three Quebec Provincial Ministries along with the Federal Government financed a series of twenty-three films under the project title, ARDA - Aménagement rural et développement agricole. Working with experts from Le bureau d' aménagement de l'est du Quebec, the NFB team of Pierre Lemelin,
Jacques Villalonga, Joseph Champagne, Claude Pelletier, Gilles Gascon and Michael Hazel under the direction of Raymond Garceau and André Belleau completed the project in 1966.

The program was directed toward the peoples in the lower Saint Laurent and Gaspé regions of the Province. It had two aims: first, to provide the population a means of expressing itself before the camera and thus provide an inventory of the social and economic problems of the area and bring these to the attention of the people; second, once this public sensitivity had been aroused - to provide the basis of a plan for solving these problems.

Films one through thirteen served the first aim. #1 Inventaire d'une colonie gave the people in the colony of Saint Octave an opportunity to discuss the problems facing them and thus allowed a self-confrontation with the situation. The same kind of self analysis was used in #4 L'agriculture, #5 Les pêcheries, #6 La forêt and #11 Les jeunes. Other films, such as #2 L'aménagement régional pointed the way to increased productivity through resource management, in this case shifting crops to fit the soils and climate of an area. Others, such as #13 La tourbière and #7 Les cooperatives analyzed individual problems using local people as well as experts.

The second group of films provided the necessary information for programs of improvement. #14 Les crevettes demonstrated the necessity of marine research - proving that profits can be made by fishing for new species when a standard type no longer exists in sufficient numbers. An inventory of the problems of coastal and sea fishing as well as a
plan for their solution was the subject of #21 La pêche côtière and 
#22 La pêche lautorrière.

The use of film as an active tool of social change rather than as 
a passive form of education and entertainment is an important shift in 
the Board's scheme of production, harking back to the 1940's when films 
made direct appeals and were brought to the public by itinerant pro­
jectionists. These new films, while stylistically unsophisticated, 
have vitality and immediacy that never existed before. Part of this 
is the result of technology - the light-weight camera, and synchronous 
recorder that make possible the cinematic capturing of the important 
moment when it is happening. It is also, in part, the result of a 
sensitivity of the film-makers which has grown through twenty years of 
experience. The ultimate success of the project will take time to  
measure. To date the evidence indicates that it has been very successful.  
As of this writing the English Production Section is undertaking a 
similar kind of information program, though on a much larger scale, to 
promote Canada's poverty program.

In 1968 the French Production Section is developing rather than 
enlarging, assuming new functions rather than increasing its personnel. 
There is no longer the need to sell the idea of original French produc­
tion. There is, however, the matter of French production having a 
stronger voice on policy matter, namely the kind and number of films to 
be produced. Prior to the splitting of production this voice was very 
small; now it is stronger. As of the present, the Board's division 
of staff reflects the population split of the country. The French
personnel numbers one-third of the total. In the same manner production money is divided two-thirds to English, one-third to French. This causes some friction since French production delivers the same number of films to television as does the English and thus has less money for shorts and classroom films. In this latter category there is a drive for more money, inspired, in part, by requests from the Quebec Department of Education for better French-language school films.

In its present state French production is organized along the same lines as English production with some differences. Under the French Director of Production is a manager - a rough equivalent to the English Coordinating Producer. There is also a similar program committee. On the French side there are six members - three chosen by the Director of Production, Marcel Martin - the other three by the film-makers. Appointments of this latter group, however, must be accepted by Martin. There is also a secretary appointed by him. The committee is composed of directors, producers, administrators and film-makers. It examines every proposed film project and all films at each stage of production. The committee meets twice a week; Martin is present at one of these meetings. As head of French Production he has veto power. If, however, he uses it, he must defend his decision. To date the system has been working quite successfully.

Most of the production emphasis is still directed to television. In the 1966-67 year, half the films were designed for broadcast. Radio Canada now has a contract with French production for twenty-two half-hours of film per year. The network covers a part of the cost and does
not specify the content. Film ideas are worked out by mutual agreement. All of the films are put into non-theatrical distribution following their use on television. The hour-long format while desired by television is not a good length for non-theatrical use, particularly in the classroom, and must be revised or split into two parts. Non-theatrical distribution of French films is increasing not only in schools but in ciné clubs at the high school and college level. Efforts are being made to tailor films to fit special interests in the same manner as is being done in English Production. French Production is working more closely with Distribution to determine these special interests and reach them with appropriate films.

Although production has been divided, the relation between French and English Production has been constantly improving. Tensions have relaxed since French Production now has its own personnel. The recent creation of a French Animation Section did seem unnecessary to some, but it is nothing more than the logical development that began with the production of the first original French film. For ideas to be transferred from the mind of a writer-director to a film, they must be understood at all levels and stages of the production; thus the necessity for animators and cameramen who speak the French language and are of the French culture. This does not prohibit the exchange of personnel between the two production bodies which does occur, though the shift is still mainly on the level of cameramen and sound technicians.
The French and English Sections operate differently but side by side. Each is autonomous, yet the objectives are identical. Biculturalism is a working reality at the National Film Board of Canada. It is a single institution composed of two distinct and unique parts.
CHAPTER VII
FEATURE FILMS

The place of the feature film in the scheme of Canadian cinema has remained uncertain for the more than fifty years that such films have been produced in the country. Since its arrival in Canada, film has been used primarily to serve the needs of business and government with few attempts to make it into anything resembling an art form. The question has been raised - why does Canada have no studios producing feature films for theatrical distribution? Smaller, less wealthy nations, Sweden and Denmark for instance, have been able to produce such films, if only in a limited number, and have gained a reputation for artistry of international proportions by way of their films.

Since 1914 Canada has produced only 200 feature films. In that year, when D. W. Griffith was putting the finishing touches on The Birth of a Nation (1915), the first American feature, Canadian film-makers had already completed four features. Dollard des ormaux (1914?), produced by Doctor Ross of the British American Film Company, used native Caunauwagenay Indians in this re-enactment of the Battle of the Long Sault Rapids. Dollar Mark (1914) produced by the World Film Company, Mariner's Compass (1914) and
Evangeline (1914) both produced by the Canadian Bioscope Company, began what might appear to have been a budding "Hollywood North."\(^1\)

\(^1\)Peter Morris and Larry Kardish; *Canadian Feature Films 1914–1964*, p. 1.

This, however, was not the case—since these feature film-makers faced many of the same problems that were crippling the efforts of the aspiring newsreel producers of the day—Ouimet and James. Distribution was the most critical. Although increasing, the number of theaters in Canada was small. The products being shown were almost exclusively American. The production, distribution and exhibition network which had developed in the United States during the first decade of the century soon spread across the border, bringing Canada into its sphere of influence before any indigenous system could develop. As early as 1904 American companies were filming north of the border, capturing the beauties of Canada "American style." Thus, Canadian production was hit hardest where it hurt the most—in the pocketbook. While four features pre-date *Birth of a Nation*, no one remembers them. Perhaps, they might have had some merits, but even this is an unanswerable question since no negatives or prints of any of these films are known to exist, as is unfortunately the case with most of the Canadian features of the silent era.

The limited possibilities of Canadian distribution and the competition of American films both north and south of the border made
feature production a very risky gamble and one that few backers were willing to make and then only on a relatively small scale. Most of the features produced were low-budget efforts - $2,000 to $5,000 - which often did little more than break even on their returns.

Though the possibility of a "Hollywood of the North" was exceedingly small, one producer, Ernest Shipman, did succeed in completing a dozen features between 1919 and 1922 which had successful distribution in both Canada and the United States and to a lesser degree in Europe. Shipman is also notable for his efforts to keep the content of his films Canadian, basing them on the works of popular Canadian authors, or dealing with Canadian themes which he shot on location. **Back to God's Country** (1919), **God's Country and the Woman** (1920), **The Golden Snare** (1921), **Nomads of the North** (1921) were all adapted from the novels and stories of James Oliver Curwood. The works of Ralph Connor were dramatized in Shipman's later films, such as **God's Crucible** (1921) and **The Good-Fer Nothing** (1921) and **Sky Pilot** (1921). **Cameron of the Royal Mounted** (1921), also based on a Connor story, was the first of the Mountie epics. **Cameron**, as well as four of the other films, was directed by a Canadian - Henry MacRae - and used Canadian actors. Later, however, he made use of both American talent and production personnel, a trend that other producers soon followed to a point where by the 1930's there were as many Americans appearing in Canadian films as Canadians. Shipman was an early advocate of tariff legislation against American films and urged the founding of a strong Canadian industry. Potential backers,
however, failed to rally to the cause. His last film, *Blue Waters* (1923), left the stockholders with nothing more than an unsalable negative.2


One notable exception in this trend toward low-budget films was *Carry On Sergeant* (1928). Bearing no relationship to the bawdy and lucrative British films of three decades later, *Sergeant* still holds the record as Canada's most expensive film. At a cost of $500,000, the nine-reel film was made at Trenton, Ontario, using the studios of the Ontario Motion Picture Bureau. Presented to its backers as a sure winner, the film was directed by Captain Bruce Bairnsfather, creator of a popular cartoon character "Old Bill," a down-trodden foot soldier. The film made use of a number of Canadian army troops in a supposedly humorous and nostalgic story of Sergeant MacKay during the First World War. The film was completed just at the time sound was coming on the scene and had to be released as a silent feature. This, in addition to its overall ineptness, doomed it to instant failure.3 The major


significance of this film is that it is one of the very few of this era that still exists.
The coming of sound increased the cost of motion pictures and drove the Canadian producers to rely more and more on American and occasionally European directors and stars to insure distribution in the United States. A Canadian company—Central Films—released a dozen such films during the 1930's. The product differed little from the low-budget efforts shot in Canada by 20th Century Fox, First National, Columbia and Republic which represented only a few of the major studios that found the Canadian scenery a good background for outdoor films. A number of the more talented Canadian actors and directors moved to Hollywood, among them King Vidor, Louis B. Mayer, Jack Warner, Mack Sennett, Mary Pickford, Walter Huston, Walter Pidgeon, and Raymond Massey, to name only a very few. Throughout the 1930's and into the 1950's Canada was a country where films were made rather than one that made films. A very good case can be made for Canada as a kind of cinematic no-man's land inhabited by actors and directors on their way up and on their way down.

Indigenous production was limited mainly to French-language films which were rarely distributed outside of Quebec. Some, e.g., Un homme et son pêche (1949) and Le curé du village (1949) were based on successful radio serials. Others were light comedies and historical dramas, e.g., Le gros bill (1949) and Etienne brûlé, gibier de potent (1952). Outstanding among these was a screen adaptation of Gratien Gelina's stage success Tit cog (1952) which won a Canadian award as film of the year. This success, as well as that of the theater at Stratford, Ontario, resulted in a filmed version of Tyrone Guthrie's production of Oedipus Rex (1956).
Television brought about a sharp decline in theatrical attendance and thus added another pressure to the feature business, yet a small trickle of films in the $50,000 to $250,000 class continued to be produced in both French and English. The quality remained low because of a general apathy toward this form of production. There was no outcry demanding a native industry and films of Canadian content. Most of the audience appeared quite satisfied with the American films they were getting. Backers also grew tired of putting money into the failures of well-meaning Canadians, as well as the schemes of "fast-buck" artists whose plans for the "Great Canadian Feature" ended when they departed the country with the backer's money.

In this milieu of failure was situated the National Film Board, before it the Motion Picture Bureau. The Bureau, under Frank Badgley, had produced three long films which it had hoped would reach a large enough audience to bring back some measure of the prestige, as well as revenue, that the Bureau possessed in its heyday of the 1920's. While distribution was fairly good within Canada, the films attracted scant attention outside the country.

John Grierson's attitude toward long films had been shaped by his experiences with the Empire Marketing Board and General Post Office units in Britain. He was convinced that long films, particularly dramatic features, were far too expensive and only slightly more effective than shorts. In a government organization, where funds were limited and demands unlimited, long films, he felt, simply could not be justified.
It was only after the war, and after Grierson, that production demands relaxed enough for long films even to be considered. Those that were produced - Mother and Her Child and Exercise Musk Ox were little more than lengthy shorts both in their conception and budget. Royal Journey and Canada at the Coronation were bigger films, but though large and expensive were essentially reportage and their length was determined mainly by the subject matter. Royal Journey at a cost of $89,000 set a firm price tag on color features. While this is about the lowest figure at which a quality film could be brought in, it was considered far too much for a production that would have to be financed strictly out of the Board's own pocket. At the time, even $32,000 for the first proposed filming of Les brûlés was considered to be excessively high.

The pressures of television had a very profound effect on the prevailing attitude toward feature production. The shock of having to turn out a great quantity of material in a relatively short period of time forced the production staff to find new means of producing films at costs and within time limits approximately one-half of those needed for the standard theatrical films. The Auricon techniques developed for "On The Spot" and used extensively in "Perspective" led to the development of more sophisticated equipment - a light-weight, blimped camera that could be hand-held and a cordless synchronization device for camera and recorder. "The Candid Eye" series developed skill and subtlety in the style of cinéma vérité while "Panoramique" proved that long films were not as expensive as they might appear when the cost
was spread over a series of films. These television series in themselves were expensive, costing as much as a medium-priced feature.

It is not at all surprising to find that the Board's first feature films were originally designed for television. The idea for Drylanders (1963) originated with David Blairstow who was at the time producing the "Frontiers" series. One of the subjects he chose was the South Saskatchewan Dam. An interesting sidelight of the project was the story of a family who had been among the first to settle the area, and had kept their farm in operation throughout the depression and the dust bowl. The dam would finally give them a dependable source of water. 4

4McKay, History of the National Film Board of Canada, p. 143.

The film was planned as an hour television special, but CBC was not interested. The idea caught the interest of Executive Producer Peter Jones who saw in it the possibility of a feature which might also be telecast. After twenty-five years of production, the Board made the final move, deciding to produce a seventy-minute drama in wide screen. The "Superscope" process was used which widened the image with an anamorphic lens in printing, after the film had been shot and processed in the usual manner. This allowed the economical distribution of prints in both wide and standard aspect ratios. The film was directed by Donald Haldane and based on an original script by M. Charles Cohen. Two well-known stage personalities - Frances Hyland and James Douglas - appeared as Dan and Elizabeth Greer, a clerk from the city and his wife who have decided to homestead in the west.
The film begins with a panning shot labeled "Saskatchewan 1907" as Dan and his family in a wagon loaded with their belongings creep slowly across the empty prairie. They meet a wagon going east - its occupants a man and his wife, who sit in a cataleptic silence, as he tells of the winters, the death of their son and warns the Greers that by staying they are making the biggest mistake of their lives. In the evening Dan discusses the "challenge of the land" which his wife has already begun to hate.

The arrival at the homestead excites Dan though it is nothing more than a stake in the ground. Pulling up the stake, he runs exuberantly about marking the location of the future house, barn and out-buildings. A neighbor, named McPherson, soon appears and offers aid in the construction of a sod house. In a montage of shots the soddy is finished. Inside, Dan and Elizabeth unpack. He takes an ornate vase out of a box. Firmly, she demands he put it back "until we have a decent home."
The days that follow are seen through a slow series of cuts of Dan plowing and Elizabeth washing clothes. At the end of a particularly grueling day, she begs him to go back. He refuses and we see Dan against the sunset as the scene slowly fades out.

The new wheat brings the family rushing out to view it. Elizabeth discusses the progress of the wheat in voice over shots of wheat blowing in the wind. Dancing feet introduce a gathering at the McPherson home. Elizabeth and Mrs. McPherson discuss the hardships and merits of the country while the children chase after a gopher and find a porcupine. The testing of the wheat is done by throwing a hat into the field. The hat does not sink - supported by a bumper crop.
At home Elizabeth (in close-up) puts out the vase. In voice over, she speaks of her belief that things will be better. In the night a hailstorm flattens Dan's entire crop.

Winter comes with a panning shot of the desolate white landscape as Elizabeth tells of borrowing food from the neighbors. The scene cuts to Dan as he leaves the McPhersons' bringing food, then to Elizabeth playing with the children, and back to a close-up of Dan's boots slogging through the snow. Snow blows in his face. Inside the soddy the children ask, "When is Daddy coming?" Dan falls in the snow. Elizabeth puts a lamp in the window. Dan staggers, there is a close-up of the lamp. Elizabeth turns it higher. Through the blizzard Dan sees the light and stumbles in the door.

Spring comes with a close-up of the vase followed by cuts of Dan plowing and wheat waving. Elizabeth tells of how Dan became a "real farmer." The years pass in a montage of wheat fields and threshing machines. A barn appears and Colin - the oldest son - is drafted for World War One. The passing of more years is achieved in a shot where license plates arranged in chronological order are tacked to the side of the barn. The events of the next few years - Colin's return, marriage and first son - are presented via brief scenes and dated by the license plates.

A second montage of threshing heralds 1928 - "the biggest harvest" - and once again Elizabeth foretells doom over an out-of-focus shot of the sun, and a close-up of cracked, dry earth. Elizabeth stands on the porch with clouds of dust blowing in her face. Dan sits glassy-eyed through the church service. Elizabeth and a friend discuss his
condition concluding that "nothing is wrong with him that isn't wrong
with all of us." At home Russ, the youngest son, makes known his
intention of trying his luck in the city, declaring, "All this land
can raise is dust." His statement is met with hurt looks. Men
gaze up at the empty sky. Dan is browbeaten by a Government Agent
as he picks up relief supplies. Elizabeth reads the letters from
Russ describing his difficulties in the city. These are illustrated
by cuts of closed factories and soup lines — from the MPB's Youth is
Tomorrow.

Dan is seated on the porch as a car drives up — the McPhersons
are pulling out. After a tearful good-bye they leave in a cloud of
dust. "By 1938 Dan was a broken man" intones Elizabeth as Dan wanders
aimlessly around the dusty yard. At the dinner table Colin's son
complains of the food. Colin slaps him. A heated argument between
Colin and his wife ends as Dan collapses in the yard.

The family waits until the doctor appears at the top of the stairs
and shakes his head. There follows a montage summarizing the history
of the Greer family to this point; Elizabeth reminisces on the sound
track. The scene dissolves to her seated by Dan, now a corpse, on
the bed. Colin walks the land in despair. The sun is crossed by a
cloud. Rain begins to fall as the camera cuts to Colin, to the porch
roof, to the license plates on the barn, to Dan's grave and finally,
to Elizabeth who wonders sadly, "Dan, why can't you be here now?"

Drylanders embodied most of the clichés known to film melodrama
and invented a few new ones. The acting was "stage" acting and the
style of delivery called attention to the fact that the Greers were
actors "acting" rather than people "behaving." The film does have one significant quality - its basic aim. Following in the path of Ernest Shipman, Drylanders plunged directly into the Canadian milieu for its story and used a wholly Canadian cast and crew. The situation is a very strong one. Though it deals with a regional subject, it expands beyond mere regionalism in its telling of the settlement of the Canadian west. Unfortunately it is devoid of humor and lacks the verve of such contemporary efforts as the CBC television series "Cariboo Country" that portrayed the lives of the British Columbian ranchers and Indians in films, such as Philip Keatley's hour drama, How to Break a Quarter Horse (1965). Unlike the films in the television series, Drylanders had the bearing of a big film, with careful camera set-ups, wide screen and a concern with important historical subject matter. Thus, it established a first point of reference on which future film could be based.

For the Distribution Branch of the Board, Drylanders offered a new challenge to provide the film a sound promotional backing. Critics on both sides of the border received the film warmly. It received more than 200 theatrical bookings in the first six months of release and soon recovered its $200,000 production cost.

The Board's second English-language feature - Nobody Waved Goodbye (1964) - approached the feature mode from an entirely different point of view. Begun as a half-hour television drama on the problems of contemporary youth along the lines of Phoebe, The Game and The Merry Go Round, it was parlayed by director Don Owen into an eighty-minute, $70,000 feature.
Two teenagers - played by Peter Kastner and Julie Biggs - discuss life and their possible future. It is soon apparent that the boy is not one who could be called "typical." His statements are negatives, a list of his grudges against the world. The first indication of his personality comes out when he arrives home in the evening. After being refused permission by his father (Claude Rae) to take a new company car out for a spin, the action shifts to the battle of the dinner table where Peter's mother (Charmion King) waits until he has finished his story of the day's events before confronting him with the fact that the school office had called and that he had not been there. His father tries to pass off the incident, but the bickering continues. The scene cuts next to the living room where Peter begins needling his sister's boyfriend - a dentist - accusing him of "being like everybody else - out to grab a quick buck." The dentist sucks on his pipe and is thoroughly miffed.

The parental argument continues in the kitchen as Peter makes a half-hearted attempt to study. He slams out of the house and takes the new car and picks up Julie. In the car, Peter suggests they run away and get jobs. He runs a red light, is picked up and jailed. When his father comes to the station, Peter is terribly hurt and shocked when he is given a lecture and stunned when his father refuses to bail him out.

Peter's cockiness has not been dimmed when he reports to his probation officer, treating the interview and the entire incident in a cavalier manner, barely condescending to show up for the next meeting. He also initiates an attack against the officer for being out for a dollar, etc. He promises to be a "good boy" and in the next scene
steals a book in a store. After another day of cutting school Peter
goes out for an evening of folk singing as Julie bows to the wishes of
her parents and stays in. When he returns home in the evening, his
mother is waiting up and lectures him not to get involved with Julie
but to fulfill her own plan - go to the university and get a law
degree. Peter retaliates with his usual charges of materialism and
leaves the house. After an evening on a park bench he takes a cheap
room and begins job hunting.

An interview for a clerking job leaves Peter amazed that the pay
is only $40 per week. He begins high-pressure tactics and is curtly
informed that this is not the kind of job he would want. In the next
scene he is washing dishes in a restaurant. His next job is stamping
tickets at a parking lot. The owner shows him how to short-change
customers and demands a kick-back. At night Peter sees Julie - they
ride on the subway and argue about money.

At the lot Julie tells him that he has failed his exams at school.
His mother later appears and over a "fancy" lunch promises that the
fighting at home will stop if he will come back and work with a tutor
for a few weeks so he can graduate from high school. Peter's enthu-
siasm dims when the plans include his not seeing Julie for the five
weeks he must study. He sulks and then argues. In the evening he and
Julie visit a friend. Peter gives his "I don't want" speech. "Then
what do you want?" asks his friend, but the scene ends with no answer.

The Probation Officer lectures Peter on his nickle and dime
stealing, telling him that he is a smart kid and must make an important
choice. The choice is to return to the lot where the owner demands
his kick-back from Peter's thefts threatening that if he doesn't, he will not be able to get a job anywhere else. In his room that evening Julie comes; she has decided to leave home and go with him, demanding that he get the necessary money.

At the car showroom his father criticizes Peter's sloppy dress. They go to a barber shop where Peter attempts to wheedle $300 "as a gift from a father to a son." The refusal is angry - "Not even a loan! You're a bad investment!" The scene cuts to the lot. Peter hesitates about ten seconds before robbing the till and stealing a car. The scene cuts ahead and Julie is with him. She demands to know where he got the car. When he admits he stole it, she forces him to stop and gets out. She tells him she must have security - she is pregnant. She walks back along the highway as Peter drives away - tears streaming down his face.

Nobody used the hand-held technique of "Candid Eye" and was shot with the NFB-designed camera. John Spotton's camera work followed the action with a fluid skill - zooming in and out on the characters rather than cutting. The effect was at times sloppy but it achieved a kind of intimacy and immediacy that was almost totally lacking in Drylanders. The sharpness of the image was also amazing, since it was shot on sixteen millimeter film and released on thirty-five. An excellent score by Eldon Rathburn gave a welcome boost to the pacing.

In its intent, Nobody is an unusual film. While it first appears as the standard assessment of the generation gap that invariably sides with youth, it emerges as a slashing attack on suburban middle-class society. Inherent in this lies the film's greatest problem - the
characters. They are almost totally lacking in sympathy with the exception of Julie who remains ill-defined, a would-be object of pity who becomes little more than a battle casualty. The parents are a composite of the maternalistic, overbearing, insensitive qualities spawned by post-war affluence. Peter is a similar caricature of today's "smart-ass" teenager, whose iconoclastics offer not one constructive thought or action. The ludicrous visual symbolism of Drylanders has been replaced by verbal cues. No one needs to ask Peter "what do you want to do?" In this scene, the fade-out is a "cop-out" because this character would undoubtedly have a fast answer. Thus, the plot moves more by the dictates of a preconceived notion of how he should behave. In the same manner the book stealing - to prove that he is still anti-social - and his father's calling him a "bad investment" give a comic-strip quality - hard-edged, gaudy and flat - to the entire family. In the luncheon scene with his mother this pattern breaks and in the interchange human warmth emerges if only in a brief flicker. For it is only in this scene that Peter and his mother talk to each other rather than at each other. Even in the scenes with Julie, tenderness does not emerge which dulls the final part of the film where their relationship begins to parallel that of Peter's parents.

An interesting comparison can be made with Canadian Larry Kent's feature, Sweet Substitute (1964), made the same year. Kent's $10,000 wonder was also shot on sixteen millimeter and blown-up for theatrical distribution. The results were gray and grainy and the acting wooden. Yet, the film managed to bring its characters to life and add an ironic twist ending to its story of teenage sexual frustration. Most important,
it succeeds in that all-important goal of creating a willing suspension of disbelief.

Nobody received mixed criticism when it first appeared - most of it bad. Labeled "harsh" and "dreary," early distribution figures were low in Canada. Once it crossed the border things improved markedly as American critics found merits in its fresh approach to a subject which had been raked over by films and television since the days of James Dean and Sal Mineo. As American distribution grew, Canadian critics took a second look and found a number of favorable things to say. With this renewed interest came bookings and the cost of the film was soon off set.

Perhaps the most important element about Nobody was its style and approach. Using the hand-held camera and a certain amount of improvisation, it pointed toward a new freedom of expression which emerged in Owen's next dramatic film - Notes for a Film About Donna and Gail (1966). This fifty-minute film was produced originally in sixteen millimeter for television and has yet to see theatrical release which is unfortunate, for it is an excellent film.

Both girls appear first with the titles. The film essay begins with Donna (Michele Chicoine). The camera follows her on the street as the first-person narrator tells how he was attracted to her. In a restaurant the narrator (unseen) and Donna chat. Her statements about her past life are punctuated with freeze frames which serve to place each statement under scrutiny. As the camera follows her out, the narrator ponders her story of a wealthy background comparing it with other versions of her life which she had told, concluding that she
probably came to Montreal from a small town. A title panel announces
the second segment of the film "Donna and Gail Become Friends."

Amid the roar and racket of a garment factory, Donna is led to
a sewing machine and given hasty instructions which serve only to
confuse her. Gail, (Jackie Burroughs) working next to her, shows her
how to run the machine. The friendship grows and the narrator fears
the influence of Gail, whom he feels to be a coarse person, on the
sensitive Donna. The girls take a room together.

"On Boys," the third segment of the film, the girls are followed
through an encounter with two young men at an amusement park. The day
ends with the two couples in a parked car. This last sequence is seen
in two versions. The second ends with Gail refusing to participate
in the casual love-making, demanding that Donna leave with her. "The
Further Fortunes of Donna and Gail" foretells the eventual disinte-
gration of the relationship. At the factory, Donna's lateness and poor
work can no longer be tolerated. The foreman takes them aside, and
in one of the best scenes in the film quietly explains that the team
must be broken up. The girls both quit and enjoy their new freedom.

At a laundromat, the narrator chats with Gail gaining insights into
her personality. She emerges as the strong half of the couple, as
Donna lapses deeper into a state of infantile helplessness - sleeping
most of the day, refusing to look for a job, depending on Gail for
everything. The break-up finally comes when Gail makes a final at-
tempt to urge Donna to get a job imploring her to get dressed for one
of the few job interviews that looks promising. After she leaves,
Donna makes a half-hearted attempt at washing up, drinks a Coke,
finally breaking down in a fit of despair. She tears up the room and falls weeping on the bed. This final gesture - a kind of backhanded cry for freedom makes the final separation. Gail returns, surveys the mess, Donna looks at her and the scene fades out. In a brief epilogue, the camera takes separate glimpses of the girls on the street as the narrator comments on the possible future of each, summing up briefly the effect they have had upon each other.

The title and idea of this film began literally as notes by journalist Gerald Taaffe, who had observed two such girls. A script was prepared and later discarded in favor of the original notes which sought to capture the consciousness of a man trying to observe two girls - indulging in the voyeurism that all people engage in. The crux of the film was not centered on re-creating the characters, but rather in capturing the dynamics of the relationship. It is based on the assumption that there is very little that one can say about other people with any assurance and that which is said is tentative.5

5Don Owen, Interview.

Donna and Gail is the most original drama to come out of the Film Board, combining ideas of cinéma vérité with those of such an intensely personal film as Roman Kroitor's Paul Tomkowicz. The resulting vérité drama fulfills Kroitor's prediction of the future development of the ideas pioneered by the "Candid Eye." Donna and Gail is not without its faults. The most common of these is that what is said on the narration
track, i.e., description of character and changes in character, is not always borne out by the visual part of the film. Its original approach of "cinema de voyeur" shifts to that of "voyante" at the point in the film where the girls room together and the narrator says that the rest is speculation, yet, they are followed through the most intimate scenes with the same cinematic ease. The camera work of Jean-Claude Labrecque is excellent although some of the pictorial effects, e.g., the freeze frames of Donna at the beginning and the long filmograph sequence of stills of the two girls, supposedly taken in a penny arcade photo machine, are fast becoming clichés. Nevertheless, these are minor flaws in a major film which will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on Canadian dramatic features.

The most obvious and immediate influence of Donna and Gail was on Owen's latest feature - The Ernie Game (1967) - co-produced by NFB with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The film was one of three such productions in thirty-five millimeter color. The film opens with Ernie (Alexis Kanner) being evicted from his room. Wandering helplessly about on the street he picks up a girl named Donna (Judith Gault) who is similar to, but not the same as, the Donna of Owen's previous film. This Donna is responsible enough to have a nice apartment and sympathetic enough to take Ernie home with her. Ernie talks seriously of writing a novel about a man who has just been released from a mental hospital. He plays games of hide and seek with a manic seriousness that gives him a kind of crazy charm. He leaves; the next day finds him at a party where he meets Gail (Jackie Burroughs). This is the same Gail though she is now a relatively prosperous designer of mod
clothes. She has known Ernie before and wants nothing to do with him, but finally weakens to his joking and pleading. Gail, too, urges him to write. He spends the next few days and nights hopping between the two apartments.

An incident occurs on the street where a girl touring the city asks him to take her picture. The camera fascinates him and he shoots up all her film. He applies for a job at a city recreation center and is sent to the employment center where he pours out his story of his desperate desire to write to a kindly social worker. All he needs, he tells her, is a typewriter, so he can type and sell the novel, ending his plea in a fit of sobbing. He is given a typewriter as a loan. Declaring that this is his salvation, he leaves and heads for the nearest pawn shop to exchange it for a camera. Snapping pictures, he heads for Donna's place. Through the window he sees Donna and her child and a man who is undoubtedly the father. When he finally enters he informs her, with an air of controlled emotion, that his mother has just died.

Ernie is a strain. The game of taking care of him begins to wear on Donna as she washes and feeds him, cuts his hair and demands that he look for a job. Ernie appears on the street with a sample case in hand, confidently he walks to a door to make his first attempt at selling. Another salesman is already working the street. His smooth pitch and easy rapport fills Ernie with a sense of instant defeat. He drops his case and steals the other salesman's car. Thus, the Ernie game has been escalated another notch.
Gail refuses to take him in any more and he now depends wholly on Donna. He sleeps most of the time, rifles her purse for money, answering her criticisms, that he is not a man, by loftily informing her that he is a Saint.

In one of his night-time ramblings - pursuit of an attractive and slightly drunken girl - Ernie meets Steve (Derek May) who first acts as the girl's protector, but after she has been steered off proposes to Ernie that they sleep together. Ernie considers the idea and decides against it, but he goes with him anyway, and agrees enthusiastically with Steve's plan for a robbery. The target is a movie theater. The two walk in, Ernie with a gun concealed in his pocket, and asks an usher about a lost wallet; according to plan they are directed to the manager's office where receipts are being counted and there is a large, open safe. Inside, Steve nods at Ernie, Ernie smiles knowingly, the manager looks puzzled. The camera circles the room with cuts of the faces of the manager, his assistant, Ernie and Steve. The latter finally leaves in an embarrassed silence. Steve is furious; Ernie ecstatic.

Steve's tongue lashing is not without effect as Ernie vaults out of the car and into a drugstore. A long trucking shot follows him as he strides down the main aisle, the gun held stiffly at arm's length, past row after row of glittering merchandise. Confronting the lone pharmacist at the back, he matter-of-factly demands the money. Steve's surprise at their success turns to horror as Ernie begins casually talking of the adventure in a bar. Angrily he drags Ernie out and hits him. Ernie makes a half-hearted attempt to kill Steve who grabs the
gun, takes his share of the money and runs. The Ernie game has now become more desperate than funny - car theft, armed robbery and above all, failure and rejection. He sees Donna on the street. She tells him to get away, that she never wants to see him again. He wanders about the city, accosts a girl in a library and asks her if she is happy. He goes to Donna's apartment. Calling a doctor, he inquires about donating his "mind" to science. He makes two more calls - trying to find someone who will talk to him. They all hang up.

Between calls he swallows sleeping pills. He takes the last of the pills and calls Donna, tells her what he has done and that she is the only one who can save him. The film ends where it began, with a shot of Ernie looking out of a window.

The Ernie Game is a full-sized, fully polished film - a logical progression from Donna and Gail. The character of Ernie immediately invites comparison with the protagonists of such films as Morgan and Georgy Girl. A similarity exists, but only on the surface. The grandiose antics of Morgan can never be taken seriously and the Georgy Girl is always entertaining with no real doubt that she will come out less than a winner. Ernie, on the other hand, is a very funny man, but he is also a bore - a lost, spoiled child, demanding infinite love and infinite patience. Ernie is a pathetic figure who fancies himself a saint, yet by the standards of our time is a superfluous person and herein lies the root of the film which presents his case and asks the question - does this person have the right to exist?

In Nobody Waved Goodbye, Donna and Gail and Ernie Game Owen, seeks to evoke the spirit of the time and the sensitivity of a generation, to
register the environments of two cities - Toronto (Nobody) and
Montreal (Donna and Gail, Ernie Game). The concern with the individ-
dual is on the manifold subtleties of character and how it reflects
the environment. The biggest problem is making a film about people
who are not particularly interesting, as realistically as possible,
and yet not bore the audience with the realism nor come up with neat,
pat answers. One possible key to this is the use of real situations
and real characters. Ernie Game, like Donna and Gail, began with a
real situation - in this case - in the form of two dialog scripts of
an autobiographical nature by a former mental patient.  

6Don Owen, Interview.

While Donna and Gail was finished as "Notes" its loose structure
was, in part, the result of a lack of funds to make it into a full-
length feature. Though modest, the $200,000 budget and use of color
have had an effect on The Ernie Game which was not always beneficial.
The inclusion of the lush party scene, complete with Leonard Cohen
strumming his guitar and of Gail surrounded by a collage of hats and
fabrics while she makes a phone call, works against a feeling of
intimacy and reality created by the rest of the film. Much of the
shooting was done on the streets of Montreal which served to create
an image of the city free of the clichés of skyscraper tilt pans and
trucking shots of Place Ville Marie. The photography, again by Jean-
Claude Labrecque, used the candid style to achieve the surface observ-
vations which reveal so much.
The second English-language NFB-CBC co-production Waiting for Caroline (1967) is a story of love in contemporary Canada. Caroline (Alexandra Stewart) is a beautiful girl with an attractive apartment in Montreal and a French lover (François Tasse) and an English lover (Robert Howay). The triangle at the beginning favors the French Canadian, whom Caroline has decided to marry. Her English lover returns determined to win her back. The meeting of the rivals occurs tastefully in art galleries, and in the snow-covered Quebec countryside where beautiful horses snort steam into the chill air.

The two men meet and the contest becomes more intense as each attempts to keep track of the other particularly with regard to his activities involving Caroline. Thus, the three spend an increasing amount of time together. At the country home of the French Canadian's family he scores most of the points; the situation is reversed later, when Caroline finds that he is semi-engaged to a French girl. She asks him to come with her to her home in Vancouver. His rival, hoping he won't show up, takes Caroline to the airport. At the last minute he arrives, and all three fly to the west.

In contrast to Montreal, Vancouver is lush and green. Both men are invited to stay by Caroline's father who is soon to be married for a second time to a friend of Caroline's—a girl her own age. The engagement is announced at a large and colorful party. With this event the pressure on Caroline increases. The rivalry begins to take on a aura of humor as both men are frustrated by Caroline's inability to reach a decision. The French Canadian weakens first and returns to Montreal and his fiancée. Although the field is now clear, Caroline
remains undecided. Her other lover also departs leaving her to her thoughts as she drives her sports car through the British-Columbian countryside.

This film, made at a cost comparable to *The Ernie Game*, is briskly paced and beautifully photographed by Dennis Gillson. But, despite its exquisite color and party music by The Jaybees, it offers a glossy surface that overlies very little. The film is perhaps best summed up in the words of the co-writer and director, Ron Kelly, in a statement he made approximately a year before *Waiting for Caroline* was begun:

> You know, I think it's important to be professional about it. If someone comes and asks me to do a film it may not be the film I would want to do myself if I were given carte blanche, but if I say 'yes', I think it's only fair that they get the best I can give them on that given subject, and I do this. But, I've been doing too much of that lately and I want to do less. There's an awful danger in doing films only professionally. You get glib about it, you get slack, you know you can do a slick, smooth-looking film that everyone will love, will be happy about, it will be totally meaningless. I can do it quickly, within the budget or close to the budget and everyone thinks I'm fine. But it's pronely a complete bit of nonsense. It will be seen once and never thought of, and I thought I was doing a lot of these, simply to make money, and I don't want to do that any more.

7Ron Kelly, *The Film and Ron Kelly*, p. 16.

It is not surprising to find that the most intense interest in the feature film was generated within French Production. The experience of "Panoramique" served as the groundwork for the production of long films as did the independent French film movement which was emerging in
Quebec at the same time. Pierre Patry's *La corde au cou*, Claude Jutra's *A tout prendre* and Gilles Groulx's *Seul au avec d'autres* made outside of the Board, had attracted some critical acclaim. Although the budget for French Production was smaller than the English, the French film-makers pressed for feature films. After the financial success of *Drylanders* and of the feature-length television specials, in particular *Pour la suite du monde*, which was given theatrical release, the decision was made to produce a modest dramatic feature.

*Le chat dans le sac* (1964) was a contemporary of *Nobody Waved Goodbye* using the same production technique and dealing with similar subject-matter. Yet it is spiritually a very different film. "I'm nineteen, I go to school, I like luxury. I don't get along very well with my mother," says Barbara (Barbara Ulrich) as she faces the camera. The camera cuts to Claude (Claude Godbout) "Frankly, I'm rather lost, to tell the truth." He holds up books and pamphlets on revolutionary activity. In this manner, two members of the French-Canadian "now generation" introduce themselves. Several more cuts elaborate on their sympathies. They make love and exchange views on life. Claude as an aspiring journalist looks for a job as a reporter. His interview with a newspaper editor fails to get him a job as their discussion revolves around the writing of views versus the reporting of facts. Claude meets Barbara and tells her of his increasing disgust with the hypocrisy that abounds, the father confessors and the double-talking universities.

Barbara, who is Jewish and attends a university, does not share his enthusiasm for the revolutionary cause, but she loves him. Their
discussion continues as Barbara and Claude visit friends and walk the streets of Montreal. The relationship begins to strain as Claude becomes more frustrated with the general political situation and his inability to do anything about it. As a photographer he covers mundane assignments, such as a competition of drum majorettes, which he describes as "the new folklore."

Claude announces to Barbara that he is going to the country. She is hurt but accepts his decision. At his family's place in the country, he stares at the landscape and walks through the snow-covered fields. Barbara in her room stares at the mirror and says that she feels lost. Claude's feelings are similar as he walks the fields.

In the next scene he brings her to the house. They make love and listen to the news on the radio of the armory raids. In the days that follow Claude walks and waits, watches a girl iceskate on a pond and reads Barbara's letters. He returns to Montreal briefly. He takes her to her parent's home and returns to the country.

Though Claude and Barbara are more three dimensional than Peter and Julie, they are equally boring. Jean-Claude Labrecque's excellent photography cannot cover the fact that director Gilles Groulx does not have a story but merely a loose collection of political and social sentiments. There are moments of humor and charm, but these are punctuated by long sessions of introspection. Although the cost of the seventy-four minute film - $46,000 - was much lower than Nobody Waved, it did not do well theatrically even in an English version and critical reaction was not favorable.
A similar effort, with a similar fate, was Arthur Lamothe's Le Neige a fondu sur la Manicouagan (1965). Made as an hour television drama and then released theatrically, Neige was shot in thirty-five millimeter using a conventional style at a cost of $65,000. The setting is the huge Manicouagan Dam in northern Quebec. Monique (Monique Miller) and her husband Marc (Jean Doyon) have moved to the dam site, where he works as an engineer. That Monique was happy when she first came is revealed in voice over conversation with her husband as he shows her around the site and the camera follows the process of the work and of Monique and Marc as they walk through the bleak snow-covered landscape.

Gradually she succumbs to the boredom of living in a trailer, with no one to talk to but lumber-jacks, construction workers and an occasional wife, such as herself. Relations with her husband become increasingly strained. The camera follows her into the cafeteria and recreation hall, where workers amuse themselves, twisting to juke-box music. She takes a casual interest as two workers stamp on pop bottles causing them to skitter across the floor and spin on their ends in top-like fashion. Monique buys a magazine and walks back to the trailer in a series of lingering long shots.

Her thoughts dwell increasingly on her home town of Shawinigan and of a young man she once knew. The scene cuts back and forth between her meeting with the man (Gilles Vigneault) and her life at the construction settlement. Though he is now dead, his stories of the valley in Mexico where he lived, remain with her. The boredom and frustration finally drive her to a decision to run away. She drives to the airport,
the only route in and out of the settlement, and watches as the small plane comes in for a landing. Her resolve weakens, and she remains standing at the window as the plane leaves.

Neige is basically a half-hour film that runs sixty minutes, containing little more, in terms of plot and meaning, than such television half-hours as Caroline and Fabienne. The extra length is achieved through shots that linger far beyond the point where they convey any additional meaning. There is no better example of this, than the pop bottle scene - a cinematic aria shot from every conceivable angle and apropos of little. Neige was yet another attempt to deal with the problems of boredom and yet not bore the audience. It failed.

A far more satisfying effort was La vie heureuse de Léopold Z. (1965) directed by Gilles Carle. Seventy minutes in length and made at a cost of $90,000, Léopold Z. was French Production's most expensive film to date. It was also the first attempt at comedy since L'homme aux oiseaux. The plot is slender, centering around one of Canada's famous products - snow.

The temperature is a brisk 18° as Léopold Z. Tremblay (Guy L'Ecuyer) begins his day. The voice of his supervisor snaps over the telephone, "Are you going to finish in time for midnight Mass?" This is the question that Léo himself is wondering about as he tinkers with his snow plow. Snow is falling; it is the day before Christmas; his son is going to sing in the Mass; and he has yet to buy a present for his wife.

Léo roars off and begins his day clearing the streets. He carefully plows his way to a finance company - his first stop. The
film breaks into a "hard sell" animated commercial for the office which ends as Léo signs on the line "Léopold Z. Tremblay" and emerges with a handful of cash and in hook up to his eyeballs, on his way to buy his wife a fur coat. An unmanned snow plow blocking traffic is not an unobtrusive sight. The supervisor Théo Lemay (Paul Hébert) finds Léo and demands an explanation, which Léo gives in an unruffled manner. Théo is the type of boss that is also a friend and as Léo's patron gives him much sage advice on how to avoid being henpecked.

After the coat is purchased, Léo and Théo proceed to a cabaret where Josita (Susanna Valery) (the cousin of Léo's wife) is rehearsing her songs. In the pleasant haze of music and good Canadian beer, the troubles of the day are momentarily forgotten. The gold-bricking ends and Léo must finish his work. Fortunately the snow stops falling and Léo dashes up the steps of St. Joseph's Oratory just in time for the Mass.

The plot line is thinner than the stuff from which Jacques Demy weaves similar films. Yet, Léopold Z. moves at a bright pace. Much of the film's charm is the result of Jean-Claude Labrecque's camera that creates an essay on snow, as it drifts in hazy clouds over the skyscrapers, swirls across the frozen St. Lawrence, and is scraped, plowed, dumped and blown into small mountains along the streets. Credit must also be given to the bright score by Paul de Margerie which more than once adds momentum to scenes that would otherwise drift into banality.

Léopold Z. is a happy film and was good enough to win a Canadian film award as the best feature of 1965. Canadian and American critics
were generally favorable in their reviews, and the distribution record indicates that the public is also kindly disposed toward the film. In an English version it has been shown in both Canada and the United States. It had a better return than either Chat dans le sac or La neige a fondu, even though it was a seasonal item.

In the same year as Léopold Z. was released, French Production completed its major drama film Le festin des morts (1965) was directed by Fernand Dansereau and written by Alec Pelletier. The film was based on "Les relations des Jésuites" - the notebooks of Jesuit missionaries in New France reporting on their activities between 1632 and 1672.

A brief narrative prelude explains the conditions of the 1630's - of how the Huron Nation once numbering 30,000 has been reduced to about 2,000 by the ravages of warfare and disease. The camera trucks through a Huron village cutting to the interior of a lodge where the remaining Chiefs discuss the fate of the missionaries that have come to help them. Here is stated the problem on which the film builds, defines and refines throughout its eighty minutes.

The Jesuits have come to help, yet their presence has brought disease and famine. "Why have you done this?" they are asked. "Why do you not kill our enemies, the Iroquois?" Père Jean de Brébeuf (Alain Cuny) can offer no explanation, but that the situation is in the hands of God. The questioning continues and at length Brébeuf, his young disciple (Jean-Guy Sabourin) and the rest of their group are condemned to death. As Brébeuf and the young Jesuit walk back to their hut they discuss the death they must face and how the attitude of the Indians has changed. The scene cuts to the torture of an Iroquois warrior. The
brave screams as red-hot rocks are rubbed over his chest. Brébeuf
gives him a drink of water. They discuss God; the brave says he will
die as a warrior—showing as little pain as possible. He is doused
with boiling water and dies in agony.

The discussion continues; Brébeuf doubts that he will be able to
withstand the torture. Again the scene returns to an earlier time as
Brébeuf explains to the village Chief how to build a simple stockade.
The medicine man passes them and Brébeuf warns that he is an evil man.
The chief answers that he is merely a sorcerer, and that such men are
needed assuring Brébeuf that he does no harm. Brébeuf is unmoved. "In
France he would be put to death for blaspheming against God," he answers.

The young Jesuit walks through the village recalling the day when
he first had to share the Huron's feast. In the lodge he is told that
it is the custom to eat everything. He refuses. "You love Heaven enough
to go without meat? If it's such a wonderful place why don't you kill
yourself?" The brave picks up an axe. "It would be a sin against God,"
he answers. "Then let me do it"—comes the reply. "It would be a sin
if I even permitted my own death." The brave grins and hands him a bowl
of food. He drops it with a gasp. There is a quick cut of the bowl
and beside it a boiled human hand.

The season that follows brings drought. Day after day water is
carried into the small cleared field, yet the crop dies. In the
village the medicine man demands that the wooden cross, set up by the
priests, be destroyed. The young Jesuit is stricken with smallpox that
has begun to make its deadly round. The medicine man enters the hut
and offers to share his medical knowledge in return for that of Brébeuf. The latter rejects him, saying that he is in league with the devil.

The epidemic spreads; a woman demands to know why her husband went to the Heaven of the French, protesting that he will not know anyone there. Though the Chief believes in the sincerity of the Jesuits, he is unable to comprehend why the famine and disease has accompanied them. While Brébeuf remains a moral and physically strong man, steadfast in the faith, the young Jesuit begins to have doubts, of himself and of the mission. A chief from a neighboring village enters carrying a package wrapped in bark. He is met by the young Jesuit. The Chief opens the package - it contains a dead child. "I have trekked a week to get here. Is it true?" he asks, "that in your land of the dead the child may get to Heaven?" "Has he been baptized?" asks the Jesuit. "No." Baptize him." The camera cuts to the Jesuit - overcome by agony and frustration, "I can't," he answers, "because he is dead. Since he did not die a Christian he cannot get into Heaven." The Chief listens impassively, covers the body and walks away - as the Jesuit looks after him, crushed and hopeless.

Later when the Jesuit hears that the Chief has fallen ill he goes to administer last rites. The local medicine man offers to help but the Jesuit demands that he leave. He baptizes the Chief who quietly admonishes him for his treatment of the medicine man. The conflict continues even as the Chief is buried. The medicine man places the Chief's weapons with him. "These customs do nothing to help the human soul reach Heaven," says the priest. The medicine man shrugs. "They are
his and of no use to us," he replies. After the funeral the medicine man conducts an erotic ceremony honoring the Gods of life and death.

The scene flashes forward to the morning of the execution. Brébeuf has drawn up a testament to be sent to Quebec. The Chief enters. They have been granted a reprieve. The council has decided that killing them will merely cause the Gods to become more angry. The young Jesuit, resigned to death, must again face life. Brébeuf gives him permission to return to Quebec, but he decides to stay on.

In the final scene the young Jesuit again resums his narrative - warfare and plague have crushed the Hurons. Brébeuf and the others have been killed in a massacre. Alone he staggers through the empty snow-covered forest. "For the first time since I've come to the end of the world, I no longer have the desire to return to France. I'm free! At last I'm free!" he cries and collapses in the snow.

*Le festin des morts* is a grim and beautiful film of the tragedy of cultural conflict, a theme that is as old as recorded history - as vital as any problem today. It is, perhaps, the first film to deal intelligently with this situation. Certainly it is the first to use the conflict of Indians and Jesuit missionaries which gives the film a quality of uniqueness that caused critics to state "Le cinéma Canadien s'affirme vraiment" the Canadian cinema has truly affirmed itself.

Ideas, however, often fare little better than their execution. It was in this that *Le festin des morts* will stand out as an example of craftsmanship. The dialog is tight, formal and to the point - building the film's case. Yet, the characters, while caught in the formal roles of their cultural and social positions, behave like people - filled with
frustrations and doubts - and on the part of the Indians a compelling desire to understand, a desire that transcends the process of cultural destruction to create an ironic tragedy of almost classic propositions.

The episodic structure of the film with its shifts of time allows the story to be constructed according to the logic of the situation rather than by straight historical development. This would have resulted in a retarded pace and increased length, or in jerking the plot along in the manner of Drylanders, which covered a comparable time period. All of the eighty minutes of Le festin des morts is used to present its case. The film had a large cast, all French Canadian with the exception of Cuny who was most familiar to audiences as the melancholy intellectual in Federico Fellini's La Dolce Vita. The Indians were played effectively by Jean-Louis Millette, Yves Létourneau, Maurice Tremblay and François Guillier in the main roles. The sensitive photography of Georges Dufaux evoked the stark and primitive quality of the setting. For these sets, an exact replica of a Huron village was constructed at Mascouche, twenty miles northeast of Montreal under the direction of Wilfred Jury - Dean of the Faculty of Archaeology at the University of Western Ontario.

The first showing of the film was on the French CBC network, which shared a part of its cost. Reviews in the Quebec papers praised the film comparing it favorably to the works of Bresson and Bergman. Theatrical distribution, however, was disappointing - particularly in lieu of the $300,000 production cost which made the film the Board's most expensive to date. That the film has not had a better reception is a
sad commentary on the Canadian audience, though it is hoped that in
the future the situation may change.

Since Le festin des morts, two more feature films have been made
in French Production. The first of these was Yul 871 (1966) by Claude
Godbout. The cryptic title refers to the airline code name of Montreal
and the 871 to the flight number that brings Jean, a French business
man (Charles Denner), to that city. For two days he wanders around
Montreal partly on a business deal to buy heavy machinery, partly in
search of his parents from whom he was separated during the war.

In a park in Montreal he meets a little girl he can talk to
(Francine Landry) and later a big girl named Marguerite (Andrée
Lachappelle) with whom he has a love affair. His adventures with her
include a visit to a bizarre shooting gallery and gun store operated
by her friend, Antonio (Paul Buissoneau). The plot appears to thicken
as Jean purchases a gun. There are several flash-backs to a scene of
refugees fleeing on a country road — the last memories Jean has of his
family.

His search for his family takes him to a large warehouse where he
observes the activities of the watchman — possibly his father. Jean
follows the man to his home, watches him and his wife at dinner and then
leaves — apparently satisfied with his search, although he makes no
further attempt to establish any form of contact with the elderly couple.

In the meantime, Jean conducts his business and pursues his re-
relationship with Marguerite. She has disappeared and Jean goes looking
for her. After much driving and inquiring, he meets Antonio who informs
him that she has gone shooting. At last Jean finds her in a field
popping clay pigeons with a shotgun. He attempts to rekindle the love affair, but she does not want to continue seeing him. In his last meeting with Marguerite he confesses that he loves her and then departs for France.

Reviews of the film ran from scathing to lukewarm; but even the director had admitted that it is a failure. Though it has had some distribution, it is not anyone's idea of $165,000 well spent. Despite the nouvelle vague techniques and the superb photography of Georges Dufaux, the film is a self-destroying vehicle with at least three different plots - none of which is resolved. Louis Malle did the same thing in *Zazie dans le Métro*, playing this element for laughs and in the process created a very funny film. Yul, however, was meant to be taken seriously.

*Le Grand Rock* (1968) by Raymond Garceau was the first French color feature produced in conjunction with CBC in the same manner as *Ernie Game* and *Caroline* and at a comparable cost. Harking back to some of the ideas and sentiments of the "Panoramique" series yet attempting to blend a rustic setting with contemporary youth drama, *Le Grand Rock* emerges as a rather uneven action film.

*Big Rock* (Guy Thauvette) is a young man with a cabin in the woods, a trap line, and a girl (Francine Racette). His troubles begin when he decides to marry her. His friends prepare a wild impromptu party for him at the local tavern where he is smeared with mustard and baptized with beer. Rogène, his girl, is then brought in and made to embrace him after he has been tied to a wooden cross. The wedding that follows is a more sedate affair with the traditional dancing at the reception.
The first hint of trouble is the long passionate kiss Rogéne receives from Johnny (Jacques Bilodeau) an old rival.

Rock and Rogéne have moved into a white frame house. The trapping is not going well and Rogéne, desiring children, demands that Rock get a better job which he does - driving a bulldozer by day and working as a bartender in the evenings. Johnny, in the meantime, has managed to take Rogéne riding on a "skiddo" on two occasions, making it plain that he is available if she tires of married life.

A confrontation between Rock and Johnny occurs in the bar where Rock works. He succumbs to Johnny's baiting and a fight ensues. The hand-held camera is effectively used to follow this action, keeping it moving, rather than resorting to the usual cut-aways. Rock pays for the damage, quits and goes home to get drunk. He tears up the place, throwing a beer bottle through the television set to silence a program on marital relations and tops it off by throwing his wife's clothes out the window.

The following day Rock is caught poaching a moose. Having now a fine and no job, the proposal of one of his friends - to rob a bank - is too tempting to pass up. Rock surprises Rogéne with a new car he has borrowed. The robbery is hastily planned, but it is to be the bank where Rogéne works. The police see Rock and his partner enter the bank and shooting begins. While his partner is killed on the spot, Rock, using Rogéne as a hostage, escapes. Though masked, she recognizes him by his boots. While Rogéne is held in the police station, Rock is pursued into the hills. In a barn, he discards a rifle near the cross
from his wedding party and heads for his cabin. Surrounded, he is shot and killed.

Though the pacing is fairly rapid, the plot is not well constructed. While the events follow one another, they are not always motivated and as such are not always believable. Nevertheless, the plot is a definite step away from the introspective and intellectual concerns of Le neige a fondu and Le chat dans le sac.

Though the Board has been producing features for five years, no set policy regarding subject matter exists, and there is no better evidence to support this than the variety of these films that have been produced to date. The feature has been incorporated within the Board's basic objectives and as such is endowed with a unique set of strengths and weaknesses. The feature is perhaps the most universally accepted and widely distributed type of motion picture. It reaches an audience which cannot be reached via shorts and it holds their attention longer, and hopefully, more closely. It can thus present a more subtle message.

The feature can play a major part in the establishment of a national identity which is, of course, one of NFB's principal aims. It has only been in the last few years, with the exception of Ernest Shipman's efforts, that recognizable Canadians in a Canadian milieu have appeared in Canadian feature films. The need for such films is probably more pressing within Canada, than outside the country where the Film Board has already built a solid reputation through its short films. In Canadian theaters, the films shown are almost exclusively American and if they include Canadian characters, they are presented "American style."
Cost is and will remain one of the main considerations. A feature requires tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars. If it does not have good distribution the money is gone — money that could have been put into a great number of short films. A two-reeler is always much safer than a feature. While it may not make nearly the impression, it can have an important long-run value not only as a primary informational function, but as a secondary carrier of Canadian identity. Though not intended as such, the "Mental Mechanisms" series and the films of Norman McLaren have in many instances come to represent Canada through a standard of quality that has created a critical reputation of world-wide proportions. In this manner, all of the Board's films work to build an image of Canadian thought and Canadian skill. If the films are good, they speak of the competence and imagination of those who made them and audiences take note of this — recognizing Canadians as people to be seriously considered.

Features, however, have the power to carry social messages with greater impact than any short could usually hope to achieve. Films, such as Drylanders and particularly Le festin des morts represent the Board's major effort in producing socially important feature films with qualities that stamp them as "uniquely Canadian." Le festin des morts while an excellent film, has died at the box office — which means not only a money loss, but also a failure in reaching a significant number of people with its message. As such, this film and presumably future films of this type, cannot be justified.

The question may well be raised as to the long-term value of such a film. Helicopter Canada, for instance, has had an excellent short-term
distribution, plugging the wonders of Canada coast-to-coast to lure the tourists to see everything from Expo 67 to the big woods. Because of its topicality this type of film soon wears thin and must be replaced by another. While no statistics are available, the distribution life of such a film seldom lasts more than five years. _Le festin des morts_ may continue to find a small but select audience in the art house and collegiate circuits and will remain a durable film for an indefinite time period. The question is then - Should films be made for posterity? The answer, at present, is no - pending the future success of _Le festin des morts_.

The commercial failure of _Le festin des morts_ and the commercial success of _Nobody Waved Goodbye_, which pursues a universal rather than a uniquely Canadian theme, give rise to the question of the Board's producing features which aim to have a high entertainment value. _Waiting for Caroline_ and _The Ernie Game_ could well be placed in this category. The answer is vague. Entertainment-for-entertainment's-sake films are officially out of the picture and always have been. The entry of the Board into feature production was based not only on the need to project the Canadian image, but to help pioneer the commercial development of Canadian features as well. Experimenting with new techniques _Nobody Waved Goodbye_ and _Donna and Gail_ and to a degree _Yul 871_ broke ground in the area of low-budget production. In its subject matter _Le festin des morts_ can certainly be considered an experiment.

In the last two years a number of events have occurred which are bringing about a re-assessment by both Production and Distribution of
the role of the feature film. The financial failure of *Le festin des morts* and of *Yul 871* present two very good reasons not to push ahead with such experiments - the price is simply too high and the sacrifice in terms of shorts-not-made is too great. Even with additional money from the CBC, if the popular reception of such films remains the same, they cannot be justified. It must be remembered also, that the CBC as an investor expects the film in which it invests to be attractive to a reasonably large audience. If, however, NFB film-makers move toward the entertainment field and make films that make money - there is a good chance that they will incur the wrath of the private industry and not, it may be added, without some justice.

The recent passage of Bill C - 204 - The Canadian Film Development Corporation Act - has served the purpose of discouraging costly experimentation by NFB as well as any potential moves by the Board into the entertainment field. Briefly, the Act provides for a creation of a corporation to invest government money in private feature film productions on a profit-sharing basis and for assistance for the producer in securing distribution for these films both in Canada and abroad.8

8 *Canadian Film Development Corporation Act*, pp. 3-4.

With this multiplicity of pressures the position of NFB as a feature producer is tenuous though not untenable. At present the values and objectives of the Board's future films will include the pursuit of high professional standards (though at low cost),
experimentation, and the emphasis on Canadian content, particularly subjects not likely to be chosen by commercial producers.

The major failure of NFB features is the lack of literary values. Dull plots and clumsy dialog have destroyed technically good films. The cost of good writing is not, in film terms at least, that much more expensive than bad writing. The high budget - in excess of $200,000 - would also disappear for the reasons already mentioned. The possible exception may be future co-productions with CBC. The direction these will take will almost certainly be dependent on the success of the three such films released during 1967-68. As of this writing four sixteen millimeter color features Ce n'est pas la faute a Jacques Cartier by Clément Perron and Georges Dufaux, Mon amie Pierrette by Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, Kid Sentiments by Jacques Godbout, and Un jour d'un été by Marcel Carrière are in varying stages of completion. These will be released first to television with the possibility of theatrical release via blow-ups as yet untried with a color feature film. One thirty-five millimeter color production Chant premier by Gilles Groulx is also in the works. Using a dramatic format it will probe the milieu of the chansonniers - the poet-folk singers of Quebec - and will feature Georges Dor, Christian Bernard and Mouffe.

In English production the next move is dependent on the results of the two color features. Don Owen has plans for a third film - Going to Gainsville - which will follow along the same philosophical problems raised in Donna and Gail and The Ernie Game. Though it is too early to plot the course of the Canadian Theatrical Cinema, even the part played
by the National Film Board, a configuration is developing for a kind of cinema that is vigorous, commercially successful and, at the same time, Canadian!
CHAPTER VIII

FIIMS FOR SPONSORS

In addition to the interpretation of "Canada to Canadians and to the world," the National Film Board is responsible for the production of films and visual materials sponsored by the departments of the Government and related federal agencies. The sponsored film is the oldest kind of production - dating back to the earliest work of the Motion Picture Bureau when the task of film was to promote tourism in Canada. Though the Board now produces fewer sponsored films than in the past, it still retains this duty. While some films are made within the Board, an increasing number are subcontracted to private producers.

After the establishment of the National Film Board the sponsorship program was not only the mainstay of the film work, but practically the sole reason for its being during the first years of its existence. After John Grierson was appointed Film Commissioner, the job of liaison between the film-makers and the sponsoring departments passed to him from Frank Badgley. In the days of the Motion Picture Bureau, this was an uncomplicated process. The operation was small and the sponsored films, with few exceptions, were slight variations of a standard-model travelog. With the separation of the Bureau from the Department of Trade and Commerce and with the tremendous demand
for a variety of films to promote the war effort, liaison work became
difficult and complex.

Grierson's manner of dealing with sponsors often involved "telling"
them rather than "asking" them about the types of films to be made.
The resultant ill-feeling towards the Board and towards Grierson
lasted throughout his term as Commissioner. That Grierson didn't make
more enemies among sponsors could be partly explained by his dual role
as Film Commissioner and head of the Wartime Information Board (1943-
1945). All public information films including the "World In Action"
and "Canada Carries On" series were financed through the Wartime In-
formation Board. Their content and format were determined by Grierson
and Stuart Legg.

As the number of sponsoring departments increased, the demands
for a greater variety of films began to cause problems. Many of the
film-makers were inexperienced. Attempts to team them with veterans
were made, but this could not always be done and they often had to
work on their own. This situation was worsened by the lack of com-
munication between the government departments and the Board. Grierson,
Legg and Deputy Commissioner Ross McLean made the initial contacts
with department officials but were not always able to follow the pro-
jects through to completion.

Often, for example, all that a film-maker knew about a sponsored
project was that he was to be at a certain place at a specified time
to make a film for the Army about frost bite. Friction between the
sponsor's representative, usually an information officer, and the film-
maker resulted. Fears, lack of knowledge and poor planning created
bitter conflicts, many of which could have been avoided if the needs of the sponsor had been clearly stated and were in the minds of both the sponsor, representative and the film-maker at the outset.

This vagueness in planning led to a defensive attitude among the production staff and a feeling that they were the people who were going to soak up the subject matter and then explain it to the sponsors as well as to the audience to be, in short - all things to all men. The films which resulted were usually successful, but they had a tendency to be pious and ponderous in their approach to the subject. The sponsors approved the films, but often with a vague feeling that the message was not quite the one they wanted to put across.

It is difficult for a beginning film-maker to be free in a sponsor relationship. Having no reputation and few, if any, films to show, this is quite often the first work he will do for the Board. By the same token a department official new to the film game will be reluctant to try original ideas or let the film-maker try them. This was often the case at NFB during the War, and it showed in the quality of the films produced. Experience, however, made improvements. As the Board grew, so did the quality of its films and the closeness of its ties with government sponsors.

While most of the films produced during the War years were done under the auspices of government agencies, it is perhaps unjustified to refer to the post-war period as the era of sponsored films. While fewer total sponsored films were produced during the years 1945-1950 than during the War, a greater variety of films was being made for a larger number of sponsors.
NFB had proved itself capable of turning out good work under the pressure of war-time needs. In the post-war years this quality began to appear in the Board's sponsored films. For the Department of Health and Welfare there were films on nutrition, dental hygiene, a national health plan, rural health, mental health and social welfare. Films such as *Stanley Takes a Trip*, *Teeth Are to Keep* and *What Makes Us Grow* were aimed specifically at children. For rural audiences there were titles such as *Rural Health* and *Get Rid of Rats*. A fairly typical example of these was *Out Beyond Town* (1947) produced by Evelyn Cherry and Raymond Garceau.

The film explains the fundamentals of rural sanitation. The narrator explains how everyone knows that the country is a healthy place to live and a farm is a good place to grow. This statement flows over a series of cuts of daily farm activities ending with a shot of a pan of dish water tossed on the ground near the pump from which a boy gets a drink. A doctor comes and takes the boy to the hospital. The next day a health inspector pays a call and takes a water sample. He advises farmer Wilson on how he can improve his place. There is a cut of the sample being analyzed in a laboratory followed by cuts of Wilson fixing up his place. This is followed by several poorly integrated scenes of improvements that have been made at the local school. The health officer returns to the farm. There are cuts showing how Wilson has improved things. His wife tells how he has done more than the officer suggested. The last scene shows the boy being brought back to complete his recovery. Cinematically *Out Beyond Town* was not much of a film. It did, however, do the job it set out
to do - making the necessary points clearly and succinctly. It was this simple and unsophisticated approach that made films of this type an effective means of reaching rural audiences.

Pre-natal care was the subject of Vincent Paquette's Mother and Her Child (1947) directed to a non-theatrical audience. The film served as an object lesson in proper care for expectant mothers. Avoiding the short "pamphlet" film in which all the necessary information would be crammed into one or two reels, Mother and Child took an hour to present the information at a leisurely pace. The film demonstrates - using dialog and narration - how a mother-to-be should take care of herself during the period of pregnancy and the post-natal care of herself and child. The use of color adds a pleasant touch, yet the pace would bore those other than women planning to become mothers.

One of the most ambitious projects done for the Health and Welfare Department was the famous "Mental Mechanisms" series - The Feeling of Rejection (1947), The Feelings of Hostility (1948), Over Dependency (1949), and The Feeling of Depression (1950). Rejection, produced and directed by Robert Anderson, opens with a low-angle shot of a swinging light on a cord. A rather plain girl is pressing clothes on an ironing board. Her name is Margaret and she gives in to her pretty sister's demands to finish the work while the sister goes out on a date. Margaret, next seen on a psychiatrist's couch, complains of physical ills which have no organic cause. In a series of flash-backs, Margaret is seen as a silent "good girl" always giving in to other people's
demands. At the end she is in group therapy and seems to be responding well.

Anderson's *The Feeling of Hostility* is perhaps the best of the series. The opening shot shows a man setting a charge in a quarry. There is a quick cut of an explosion and a fast dissolve to a wreath on the door of his house. His daughter, a child of about five, returns home one day as her mother is giving a bridge party and wanders unnoticed through the house. In school she seeks affection from her teacher. At home she resents her mother's plans to remarry. In a series of brief vignettes she is seen maturing. She helps others in their work and excels in school. She is not asked to dance in one scene and the narrator makes a brief reference to a romance that failed. She is last seen as a successful career girl sitting alone in her room, not quite sure why she has failed in her relations with other people. At the end a psychiatrist, sitting behind a desk, discusses the case, pointing out how such feelings are common and how these people are best helped.

All of the films in the series followed the same basic style in developing the story. The viewer was hustled through a series of events tied together with a few lines of narration. In thirty minutes, one of the films covered thirty years of a character's life. While all of the information was presented in a clear and orderly manner, the films were devoid of any feeling of personal involvement by the viewer. The information was mainly on the sound track where an off-screen narrator explained the meaning of each scene which was so short and static that it might as well have been a still photograph on a slide or in a book.
It is interesting to compare these films with Sidney Meyers' *The Quiet One* (1949) which told the story of an unwanted little boy, who throws a rock through a window. In a series of flash-backs his problems are gradually revealed and at the end of the film he begins to emerge as a person, participating with others, learning to love, but not to make excessive and jealous demands upon others. Narration is kept to a minimum. The story of the boy's aimless wanderings through the streets of Harlem, of the rejections by his mother and grandmother, and his attempts to buy friends are eloquently and subtly told with the camera.

The film covered only a short period in the boy's life - at most a year. His problems were not spelled out in technical terms and no solution was tacked on at the end. While the "Mental Mechanisms" series moved from point to point spelling out the developments of personalities, *The Quiet One* built to create a lasting poignant image of a boy who desperately needed to love and be loved.

*The Quiet One*, however, was only a single film produced for New York's Wiltwyck School for Boys on a shoestring budget. "Mental Mechanisms" was an interrelated set of films which could be used in classrooms and fitted into appropriate slots in a course on Mental Hygiene. Being the first of their kind, the films have gained a wide reputation and are still being used. The success both in terms of the production and distribution of these films makes an excellent case in point for the validity of the Film Board type of operation. Plans are being discussed to re-make these films in up-dated versions. It will be interesting to see whether the project will involve dusting off the
scripts and raising the hem lines or taking a fresh approach to the subject matter.

Films on child development and the welfare worker were also produced. Almost as popular as the "Mechanisms" series was the "Ages and Stages" series produced for the Department of Health and Welfare by Crawley Films and distributed by NFB. These films provided coverage of the normal growth, physical and psychological, of children from the age of one to fifteen.

A Friend at the Door (1950) by James Beveridge chronicled the work of social workers in British Columbia. A worker visits an old man in the mountains whom he can see only by crossing a chasm in an ore bucket. A girl with an illegitimate baby seeks help in tracing the father. Two boys are in juvenile court; one is placed in the custody of his parents, the other is sent to reform school. The social worker travels, by car, ore bucket, boat and even by a railway hand car to meet his people. In the end of the film the old man is permitted to stay in his retreat; the boy at home readjusts; the boy in reform school goes to work on a ranch; the girl with the baby gets a job and can keep her child. Like "Mental Mechanisms" Friend emerged as more of a note book than a film. There was no live sound but copious narration. As a result the viewer never got a chance to know any of the characters as a person. The effect was, that while constantly being told that the service was personal the film was highly impersonal, this was best illustrated by the great number of travel scenes - most of the film time was spent traveling.
Largest of the Health and Welfare films was the half-hour
*Challenge: Science Against Cancer* (1951) directed by Morton Parker.

In the report of the latest developments in cancer research, the subject is treated with a rather ponderous solemnity. In a medical clinic the camera singles out an elderly man. As he is followed into the examination room, the narrator - Vincent Massey - discusses the mysterious killer - cancer. While doctors examine a slide, the scene dissolves to an animated sequence demonstrating the normal growth of a cell and then the "wild" cancerous cells, dissolving to a close-up of a small skin cancer on the face of the elderly man. In the laboratory the various methods of testing are demonstrated - the growing of tissue cultures, etc. Each process is illustrated by animation. In a short coffee-break sequence in the laboratory, the state of research is discussed. As the narrator gives a summation of the problems and voices hope for the future, the man seen earlier is shown being given X-ray treatment. The film ends on an up-beat with shots of scientists working in laboratories and hospitals. The narrator gives his final summation of the challenge and the work that lies ahead.

*Challenge* was the first film to explore scientific questions on a grand scale. As a first attempt it is successful. Yet the animation of Evelyn Lambart and the voice of Raymond Massey cannot help the film from becoming dull in places. The approach, however, is valid and was refined and polished in such later efforts as *Universe* and *The Living Machine*.

The agricultural program was also expanded in the post-war era with the continuation of the type of films produced during the War.
Most of these were produced by Evelyn Cherry for the Department of Agriculture. They ranged from simple instructional films, such as *How to Build a Better Hog Self-Feeder* and *Winter Care of Dairy Cattle* to object-lesson films showing the advantages of new technology. *Soil for Tomorrow* (1946) encouraged people to give up farming sub-standard land and demonstrated new farming techniques. *Farm Electrification* (1946) showed how the initial high cost of bringing in power, could be reduced by having everyone in the community subscribe.

War production was no longer a matter of concern after 1945, but the Department of Labour was still interested in films. Production generally fell into two categories - interpretation and safety. The resultant films bore such titles as *Local 100*, *Teamwork Past and Present*, *Take It Up With L.M.P.C.* and *Date of Birth*. The second group was the series "Accidents Don't Happen."

Donald Fraser's *Date of Birth* (1950) tells of the problems facing the older worker. It opens with a fast montage of shots of football teams, athletes and people in reducing salons, while an aggressive narrator praises the virtues of youth. There is an abrupt cut to an elderly man reading the newspaper, adding a final ironic touch to the previous scene with the statement "Wanted - experienced driver not over twenty-five." In the following scene he is interviewed for a job by an officious young man who informs him that he is too old. The case of the older worker is built through a montage of examples of workers in their fifties and sixties. The narrator comments on the better attendance record and lower accident record of workers in this age group. Decisions to change policy can only be made at the top level.
As the worker presents his application to the camera, the narrator asks "Why should a man be frustrated by one question - date of birth?" Although heavy handed, the film made its points. It was revised in 1960 and is still in wide use.

Under Fred Lasse and Donald Mulholland a group of seven films on industrial safety was produced between 1946 and 1955. In *Handling* an off-screen narrator introduces the viewer to "the world's safety expert" - a man swathed in bandages who groans. There is a dissolve to a series of factory-work scenes. The narrator asks what is wrong. Again the scenes are shown and the mistakes in lifting, stacking and loading are pointed out and corrected. The final shot is of the expert who groans again. *Safe Clothing* used the same style, but took it farther. In a little drama where the narrator supplies all the voices, Machinist Brogan is taken in hand by Foreman McCardle and plant nurse Gilfillan, strapped to a table and operated on. Foreman and nurse trade stories of mangled workers as she trims Brogan's long necktie, removes the cuffs from his pants and the sleeves from his baggy sweater. The stories they tell are supplemented with pictures, such as a ring on a finger, complete with half a yard of tendon wound up by a drill press. *Clothing* remains a bizarre and highly effective little film with a style that lies somewhere between a "Pete Smith Specialty" and *Un chien Andalou*.

The bulk of production made for the Department of Veteran's Affairs came immediately after the War. The two major aims of this department's films were interpretation and rehabilitation. In style they were much the same as those produced in the last year of the War,
emphasizing the problems and prospects of returning to civilian life. These films had titles such as *Land for Men* and *The Road to Civvy Street*. Others dealt with the technical aspects of rehabilitation. *Road to Recovery*, *Limbs to Order*, *New Limbs for Old* were concerned with training and equipping the handicapped.

*The Third Freedom* (1946) by William D. Dix went a step farther and probed the problems of employment. The result was a straight-pitch film almost identical to *Date of Birth* demonstrating the abilities of handicapped workers - mostly amputees - and comparing their records with the non-handicapped. The film was promoted for programs of job analysis and ended with a final pitch from the Commanding General of the Canadian Forces in Europe, praising the work of handicapped veterans.

The Department of Mines and Resources and The Department of Fisheries sponsored a few post-war films and cooperated in the production of others. The Fisheries films were simple, modest productions with titles that left few doubts as to their content, e.g., *Better Boneless Cod* and *Cutting and Packing Boneless Cod*. Mines and Resources produced a variety of films showing the development of the nation's mineral wealth. *Yellowknife* (1946) told of the development of Canada's first air-age city and how it was carved out of virgin territory to mine the aluminium which lay beneath the ground. *Science at Your Service* (1949) covered developments in metallurgy and mineralogy, focusing on laboratory testing and the experimental aspects of mining and refining of ores, fuels research and the testing of metals. Another kind of film, designed specifically for classroom use, was the series...
on "Birds of Canada." Produced jointly by the Department of Natural Resources and NFB the series served to acquaint children with the habits of birds that live in the deep woods and the prairies and are thus not often seen, as well as with the more common species that may nest in one's own back yard.

The Defense Department reduced the number of commissioned films with the end of the War. Several recruiting and training films, however, were made, e.g., Hygiene for Health and Psychological First Aid. For distribution to the public the role of the peacetime army was shown through such films as Exercise Eskimo, Exercise Lemming, Exercise Polar Bear and Exercise Musk Ox. Like Ordeal by Ice these films were released theatrically, and kept the public abreast of the latest developments in army maneuvers. Of these films Exercise Musk Ox (1946) is of minor interest, but its hour length and theatrical release qualified it as the first NFB feature. In reality, it might best be termed a "long" since its structure and context differed little from similar shorts. Musk Ox, photographed by Sgt. Roger Racine, is a newsreel report of the test run of a group of army snowmobiles on a thousand-mile trek through the wastes of northern Canada. The journey, while long, is basically without incident. Although fortunate for the men participating, there seemed to be little that editor Doug Wilkinson could do to give life to the footage.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police began sponsoring films during this era not only for training purposes, but for explaining the work of law-enforcement agencies. R.C.M.P. File 1365, The Connors Case (1947) by Donald Mulholland was a dramatic film, thirty-five minutes
in length. The opening scene is of a courtroom - the off-screen narrator explains in a matter-of-fact voice, that the job of the police is to make it tough on criminals. There is a cut to a close-up of a roll of money in the hand of Connors - an implement salesman. He and four farmers finish dinner and leave the restaurant. Outside, a man whose face is obscured by shadows asks for a ride. Connors takes him and drives off. There is a cut to a dark house; a light is turned on. Connors' wife calls the police. The desk sergeant calls the local constable, later the restaurant and several of the farmers. No one has any information.

The next day the officer visits and quizzes the people. The car turns up a day later in Winnipeg. There is a bullet hole in it and blood. Straw is found and matched to a variety grown in an area some distance away; dogs are used to hunt through the stacks in the fields; the body is found. In the lab finger prints are found matching a known criminal - William Fenn. A search begins in Montreal. First, with an ex-girl friend and later, with an old friend three plain-clothes men converge on the latter's apartment. Fenn had left on a ship, they were told. A patrol boat sets out in pursuit; a signal flashed to the ship is answered. "Fenn was put ashore in Halifax." There is a dissolve to the waterfront. The police sight a figure in a row boat, jumping out he disappears into a warehouse. They close in. Fenn, now seen clearly for the first time, fires one shot in panic, then realizing he is trapped, gives up. The scene dissolves to the courtroom. A trucking shot following a policeman walking down a street ends the film in a dissolve to a montage of police activities.
The Connors Case used amateur actors very effectively, keeping dialog to a minimum and using only terse narration. At first The Connors Case might have appeared to be nothing more than a typical American "cops and robbers" film of the 1940's. It was, however, underplayed to a point where it became a bit stodgy. The characterizations were shallow, but for the first time the actors were completely believable. In style, the film was perhaps closest to such contemporary British post-war films as Odd Man Out (1947) and The Blue Lamp (1949). The focus of the action was not on the criminal, but on the police and the methodical business of tracking down the killer. In this aspect the film anticipated the television Dragnet series.

Perhaps the most important film of this era was Drug Addict (1948), also by Donald Mulholland, made for the Department of Health and Welfare and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Drug Addict opens with a cover shot of poppy fields. An off-screen narrator tells how the opium is collected. There is a cut as a smuggled package is dropped from a ship to a rowboat. In a small room the package is opened. An old man smokes an opium pellet in a pipe. Most addicts, however, use it as heroin. A series of close-up cuts shows how a shot is prepared and the drug injected. A fade-out and a fade-in proceeds to the next step in the journey of the heroin. The drug is cut for the first time with milk solids, then packed in a suitcase. The camera follows the case as it is loaded on a train. The bag is claimed and sold to a local distributor. The product is cut again and sold to peddlers, who cut it a third time. The peddler places the drug in the finger of a rubber glove which he holds in his mouth so
it can be swallowed and recovered if he is caught. There is a cut to a shot of a small group of addicts waiting to buy. The peddler walks past a car; two detectives leap out and grab him. A shot of a cutting room being raided, and one of the addicts in jail follow.

The narrator points out that addiction is often viewed as a crime, some can be cured but unfortunately much addiction begins in jail. The camera shows a young man talking with addicts, in the next scene he buys his first shot. "He is able to stop now without ill effects," says the narrator. The man sends his wife out; she is seen making a pick-up on the street. "Many turn to theft." (Cuts of shoplifting.) There are also those who have means available, who through use of drugs during illness or by choice have become addicts. (Cut of a wealthy addict preparing a shot.)

A discussion of cocaine and its hallucinating effects take place in a short vignette of a man seeing insects crawling over his face. The R.C.M.P. enforces control only and is seen checking drug stores. The narrator explains the manufacture of synthetic drugs. In a sync sound interview, the Director of the Department of Health and Welfare pleads the case for a special treatment as well as for control. Jail is not the answer.

Drug Addict used non-actors - some actual addicts - in most of the parts, and the scenes of buying and selling were carefully re-enacted. Interestingly enough, while the set-ups were those of a feature film, the content differed little, if at all, from productions which have covered the same ground with the cinéma vérité camera.
While Drug Addict may seem dull and hackneyed by today's standards, it is mainly because the same ground has since been covered many times. The true significance of this film is that it was probably the first one made on the North American continent ever to deal with the subject of narcotics! In the United States, the production code forbade Hollywood even to touch on the subject. As a result, Drug Addict was denied entry into the United States for a time. It was not until 1955 that The Man With the Golden Arm was released - without the MPAA seal of approval. A year later NFB made a half-hour drama Monkey on the Back, dealing with the plight of an addict who finally died from an overdose. Both of these films accented the sensational side of addiction, with liberal amounts of footage devoted to the agonies of withdrawal. Even the recent Storm Signal (1966), produced by Drew Associates, where real addicts were followed for several months with hand-held cameras, appeared in such a slickly polished final form that the young couple seemed about as three-dimensional as the characters in a soap opera. Drug Addict, while somewhat dulled by the generalized approach and lack of characterization, still remains an intelligent and unemotional attempt to deal with a problem of international significance.

Another sponsor for a significant number of NFB films was the United Nations and its related agencies. In addition to films dealing with U.N. subjects released in the "CCO" series, a number of newsreel items were prepared for UNRRA. There were also commissions for special films. Hungry Minds, made for UNESCO, dealt with the necessity of educating the children of the world. The People Between, filmed in China, presented a sympathetic picture of the hardships endured by
civilians caught between warring armies. One of the longer films was *Maps We Live By* (1948). Beginning with a discussion of the first maps in existence and the misconceptions that existed for centuries about the size and shape of the earth, the film explains new methods of map making and maps use in advancing the welfare and solidarity of the members of the U.N.

The sponsor-film-maker relationship has changed since the War years and with it the attitude of both sponsors and the production staff. Through close cooperation at all stages of production, the abilities of both parties have been made clear and the role of each made specific. The sponsor is now the undisputed subject expert while the film-maker is the professional communicator and the expert at putting ideas across. Although such a statement may appear so simple and obvious as to seem ludicrous, it must be noted that the achievement of this kind of relationship as a working reality has been the product of many years of constant effort. This effort has been on the part of a small group of men whose talent lies in their ability to get people together and create an atmosphere that elicits the best efforts of all concerned.

The Liaison Division of the National Film Board did not suddenly arrive but grew out of the necessity of improving relations with sponsoring departments. Liaison officers were employed as early as 1943, but the division, as such, was not created until 1946. At present, the staff is composed of five officers and a staff of approximately twelve.
From the earliest days up to the present, the system of having film-makers working directly with sponsors has been faced with several basic problems. The first responsibility of the Board is to see that the sponsor’s needs are met and that his money gets him the kind of film that will fill his needs.

To deal with these touchy problems, the liaison officers are chosen on their abilities as detectors and path finders. The two most important qualities are broad experience as communicators and a personal aptitude for getting people together. It is not really so surprising to find that chief liaison officer Victor Adams and two of his four staff-officers come from the field of education. As a good teacher strives to inspire and bring forth the best work of his students, so the liaison officer works to stimulate and inspire the thinking of both film-maker and sponsor. This experience as a communicator, however, goes beyond inspiration and all of the officers have a broad background in the mechanics of film distribution and utilization. Since the officer’s greatest concern is the use of films and their successful presentation of a message to an audience, this background is more desirable and important than experience in production or with a department.

Film-makers and sponsor representatives are poles apart in attitudes, backgrounds and ways of working. While a gray-flannel department man might take an instant dislike to a young film-maker — long of hair and beard — this might not suit the Board, for the man, in spite of the sponsor’s protests, could be an eminently competent person.
The job of the liaison officer as described by Adams is:

"...to keep in close contact with all of the operations of the departments he serves and to help the people directing these operations decide what visual materials they need, then after preliminary discussions, to get the right producer at the Board interested and get the production made. When the film is initiated, the work of the officer is three-fourths done. His main objective is finding out what needs to be made and turning aside things that should not be films and would best be pamphlets, etc. He must see that the Board's policies are maintained with respect to the sponsoring department and to see that the latter is satisfied with the materials they get. While a film-maker can say 'I'll do it and to hell with it' a liaison officer can't. He must live with that department as well as with the film-maker."  

Victor Adams, Interview.

In his work, the liaison officer is mainly involved in guiding a film through the dangers of its early stages where it is an idea and is thus most vulnerable. He arranges and chairs all meetings between the sponsor and the film-maker. Both of them work directly through the officer until the film has reached the research stage. The officer must be careful not to let the preconceived ideas of the sponsor, or his own for that matter, determine the course of the film in the early stage. Discussions are limited to the message a film will carry and the audience to be reached. The film must be kept open, in terms of style and structure until the producer is brought in; so he can design a film to do the job with complete freedom.

Once again, the task is not a simple mechanical process of calling in a film-maker. Each film-maker and each sponsor has unique
qualities; thus the right persons must be matched. If the wrong personalities are involved, the result may be a failure. This does not mean simply getting a congenial relationship between the filmmaker and the sponsor representative, but rather one which will result in an effective film. Friction is sometimes deliberately created by putting an imaginative film-maker with a representative from a department which is known to be stubborn and conventional in outlook. Often this situation will result in the film-maker's lifting the subject above and beyond the immediate wants of the sponsor. There is always the chance that things may go wrong and this may necessitate a change of the film-maker, since the Board's responsibility is to the sponsor who pays for the film.

The dual responsibility to please sponsors and to produce worthy films is one continually facing the Board. When the sponsor comes for advice, the project is carefully studied by liaison and production personnel. These people decide whether or not the film should be made. If the department demands that a particular film be made, the Board, by the nature of the Film Act, must comply even though it means a bad film to their credit and a poor use of production talent. Such films are rare and one day may, hopefully, disappear altogether. On the credit side, these films, as has been mentioned, can give experience to novice film-makers.

Almost without exception the problems of sponsored film-making are felt most acutely by the young and inexperienced. This applies to people as well as to organizations. It takes great courage to move toward a good film. The conventional is always safer, but the good
film - and especially the outstanding film - is a product of the unconventional from a person who will try something new. If he is successful, the result may be a "classic." This kind of daring, however, cannot be limited to the film-maker alone. There must be a courageous sponsor who is willing to take the risk with him. Perhaps the most critical stage in the production of a film is when the sponsor is asked to forego the conventional and try a new approach. Since the Film Board is a long-established organization with a reputation for quality work both sponsored and Board originated, it can afford to take chances.

Here again, the same holds true on an individual basis. Once a person begins to make good films, he becomes less defensive and realizes that he isn't the only one with good ideas. He is willing to do "nuts and bolts" films and is able to suggest ideas and approaches which had not occurred to the sponsor. Often, if he is a good salesman, he can sell a sponsor on an idea or even a complete film. Such a case was a forest-fire clip by animator Ryan Larkin.

The assignment, by the Forestry Branch of the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, was simply to produce a thirty-second film cautioning people of the danger and waste of fire. The result shows a cigarette convert a fox, a bird and a deer in a lush forest, into a mass of twisted skeletons and gutted stumps. The sound track carries only the roar of the fire. The film works with the gentle subtlety of a kick in the stomach. The sponsor was overjoyed.

The Drag (1966) directed by animator Carlos Marchiori and produced by Wolf Koenig and Robert Verrall was a film tracing the growth
of a boy into a man on the scale of his smoking habit - from his first puff as he is seduced by advertising until he seeks psychiatric help in an attempt to stop. A swinging score by Don Douglas and imaginative techniques made the film an attractive item for the Department of National Health and Welfare. Although no commission had been made, the Department paid for it after it was completed. When an idea is obviously good, there is little difficulty in convincing people. The difficulty lies in attaining a reputation and building up a number of successful films. Really great films are a rarity whether produced under the aegis of a department, the Film Board or an individual. When they do occur, they are the result of a coherent total vision by those who make them.

In the same manner as Popes commissioned paintings requiring a specific subject matter, sponsors can only state requirements and they are not always pleased with the results. The fact remains, that the great work is the free work of creative people. When interests parallel and a sponsor wants the artist to do his best work, few problems arise. Nevertheless, there are mechanical problems that prevent this ideal situation from occurring.

In many instances, the sponsor's representative, while he may be an excellent communicator with the spoken and written work, knows little about the film medium. This situation has improved greatly over the years, but is far from perfect. In terms of production, this lack of experience often indicates that when the department has a communication problem which it has not been able to solve through the usual verbal of written channels, i.e., statements for the news media, pamphlets,
displays, etc., film is tried as a final resort. Sometimes the film can help; if only in part. In others, it is a waste of effort and money.

The role of NFB is as much to advise a department how it can best spend its money as it is to produce sponsored films. To an extent, the Board feels that it has fulfilled its responsibility if it has pointed out the pitfalls and difficulties. Yet this is a difficult thing to do for a number of reasons. The potential of a particular subject is difficult to assess. When faced with this problem some people - often competent film-makers - will simply throw up their hands in despair, and yet, in the hands of the right person a good film will result and occasionally a great film.

The question which next arises is, in view of the somewhat dubious potential of a film, how much film-maker talent can be applied to the subject and to what effect? How can the combination of the sponsor (subject expert) and the film-maker (film expert) create a worthy film? Much of the responsibility for making such a film work lies with the film-maker. If he takes an attitude of resignation simply to go through with it; the film will undoubtedly be poor. The incident will remain an unpleasant memory in the mind of the sponsor and a bad film will be added to the record of those who produced it.

By accepting the task and doing the best he can, the film-maker is usually able to absorb the message and weave it into the action of the film. Such a case was the cartoon film *It's A Crime* (1957) produced for the Federal Department of Labour by animators Gerald Potterton and Colin Low, and written and directed by Roman Kroitor and Wolf Koenig.
The film, as specified by the department, was to discuss the problem of the slump in winter employment and to show how this could be avoided if businesses and industries planned their projects so that outside work could be done in the summer, thus leaving the winter months to do inside finishing work. Examples to be used would relate mainly to construction work and would show such things as how buildings under construction, could be shielded and heated allowing work to go on inside.

If done as a straight report, such a film could only be a bore. Therefore, a light touch was used. The employment situation in Crime is investigated by an erudite gentleman burglar (voice by Guy Glover) who laments his loss of revenue during the winter as he opens safes and finds instead of cash, financial statements. As he is pursued through empty buildings by police, he comments on how the situation could, with planning and foresight, be improved and no one would have to suffer unemployment from an annual winter lay off.

That time and talent were lavished on this film was obvious and it comes off rather successfully, but its success is that of a brilliant job of camouflage and salesmanship. It has achieved wide exhibition theatrically and has been shown in a number of international film festivals, indicating that the efforts were worthwhile. Crime is a "message" film and as such was intended to reach as wide an audience as possible. In this, it differs from two related films, House Building in Winter (1961) and Winter Construction? It Can be Done (1958), sponsored by the National Research Council of Canada to serve as demonstrations of construction techniques.
Unpromising subjects cannot always be made into good films, no matter how much effort is made to dress them up. One solution under consideration, where a film with little cinematic potential must be made, is a proposed kind of inexpensive film made along the lines of the "On The Spot" television series - using an on-screen narrator and being shot with a single-system camera. Such films not only could save time and money, but would be a useful training ground for beginning film-makers. Their greatest value would be in dealing with subjects which would be for a limited audience, e.g., directors of psychiatric hospitals; or limited use, e.g., demonstration of military or scientific equipment that will soon become obsolete. Some of these films will offer more opportunities than others. Those that offer little should be made as neatly and quickly as possible. The alternative is, of course, to try to sell the sponsor on an original idea.

One of the most perplexing questions in sponsored film-making is one which has been hinted at already - namely, who is the sponsor? In the case of NFB, sponsors are government departments and related agencies. These are usually represented, at production meetings, by an information officer. Technically, this man is supposed to represent the views of the department and has the power to approve the course a film is to take - that is, of course, after approval of the general objective of the film has been given by others in the department. It is on this point that problems begin. Often the information officer will not have this authority and will arrive with a dozen or more directives from above. On occasion the department or agency may be represented by an actual committee.
Such a situation makes it almost impossible for a producer to make a film that will be approved, and sometimes impossible to make a film at all. One of the first things that the liaison officer will try to insure is that the maker of the film will be responsible to a single person representing the sponsoring department. The beginning film-maker most often falls into this committee situation, but it can happen to anyone.

Whenever possible, the producer and the liaison office try to deal with the top man in the sponsoring department. Underlings are often less imaginative and are in the situation of having to please a number of people whom they don't understand. These uncertainties are passed to the film-maker, leaving him to figure out who must be pleased and with what.

Although less common today than in the past is the problem of the sponsor representative who appears with a script or, even worse with footage which has been shot by someone in the department. Departments are allowed to make record footage of scientific experiments and tests for their own use. Difficulties arise when they want this converted into a film. The film is often improperly exposed, focused and composed, the scripts completely verbal. Unless stopped, the result will be a film that may appeal to the sponsor but will bore the intended audience.

Usually, the situation can be resolved amicably if respect can be generated on both sides, for there are professional attitudes involved. In some cases, department officials are adamant and the result is an artistically bad film. But, even such a "bad" film about a special subject does result in a degree of communication and may have more
impact than a printed bulletin. It can also be carried around in a can and shown to people. The argument in favor of this kind of film can be expressed as "You tell us we can do better, but we have achieved some purpose and are happy."

This is not to say that record footage, when well made, cannot be of great value. A good example of this is *Riot Gas* (1964) - a short training film in a series produced for The Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The objective of this film is to demonstrate various types of tear gas, explain their use, and stress the value of gas in saving lives by limiting the possibilities of serious injury. The record footage made by the police was edited at the Film Board and a sound track and sync sound commentary was made for the open and close. *Riot Gas* is hardly a cinematic work of art, but it gives a much more graphic demonstration of the subject matter than could ever be achieved in a pamphlet. For this reason the subject is well suited to the film medium.

Not all the sponsored films, as has been mentioned, are made within the Board. The job of sub-contracting is far from simple. The Board's policy of getting the right man for the job is not limited to those who work within the Board itself. In recent years the demand for film has been greater than the Board can produce. The usual practice on sub-contracting major productions, is to commission the script in the Board and have the film made outside. On the shorter, straightforward films, invitations are sent out to all Canadian film companies. The Board then makes a recommendation to the department. In cases when the script cannot be done by the Board, $200 to $500 are budgeted by the sponsor to the recommended companies to do research on the
topic and produce ideas. The contract is awarded to the one with the best idea.

As the Board has grown in size and skill, so have the independent production companies which now number 136. Crawley Films, largest of these companies, is one of the main producers of commissioned productions.

One of Crawley's major projects was the "Ages and Stages" series—a group of six films produced between 1949 and 1957 for the Department of National Health and Welfare. This series on child development is of a style and structure close to the Board's "Mental Mechanisms" films. Using a number of children in actual living situations, the series emphasizes the key factors in the social and emotional growth of the child from age one to fifteen. The series has won a number of awards and shares a popularity equal to that of "Mental Mechanisms."

Two other films — Why Won't Tommy Eat (1948) and Food for Freddy (1953) — dealt with the subject of nutrition for children. Both award winners, they were also sponsored by the Department of National Health and Welfare. Though many of Crawley-sponsored films deal with children, they cover a range of topics for a number of sponsors. Alouette — Canada's First Satellite (1963) was an entirely different kind of film. Produced for the Defense Research Board, the film describes in narrative style the building and launching of the Canadian satellite, Alouette, which was placed in orbit to transmit information on solar disturbances affecting tele-communications.

Small companies as well as individual film-makers have also been given an opportunity to make sponsored films. Although their work has
been limited to simple narrative film, the quality of the productions has been quite good. For the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ian Scott and John Drewry of Scott Films made Labrador Diary (1963) — a good record film of a topographical survey into the Ungava region of Labrador. The Beaver Makes a Comeback (1953) produced by Stephen Greenlees Films, was made for the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. Comeback shows how a government-sponsored beaver conservation program aids the Indian population of the James Bay area gain a better standard of living. Everybody's Handicapped (1953) produced by Graphic Associates Film Production for the Federal Department of Labour won several awards for its treatment of the handicapped industrial worker.

Whether the film is produced in, or outside the Board, it must do a job. When it does it well, sponsors will want to have better films made. This has been the situation at the Board as the sponsored program has grown through the years. In the 1940's there were perhaps two or three good companies. There are now at least fifteen capable of equalling the quality of NFB. These companies are doing a great proportion of the Government work which NFB could not handle on its own.

The high number of sponsored films produced during the war has since leveled off at a point where they amount to between thirty and forty percent of the Board's total output. The method by which these films are conceived and produced has been brought from the vagaries of the War years into an era of regularity and planning. Not all films go through the same stages, but most of them follow a set pattern.
The flow of ideas is a continuing process between the Liaison Division and the government departments. When there is a need for public communication and the sponsor and liaison representative agree that this need can best be filled by a film, a requirement meeting is set up. This process can best be illustrated by tracing the history of a series of films made for the Penitentiaries Service of the Department of Justice.

Talks between the liaison officer and department officials had been going on for a period of eight months. The liaison officer was enthusiastic about an idea for a set of training films. He sought out members in the department who had similar feelings - most knew that they wanted something but were not sure of the form it should take. A senior producer - Walford Hewitson - was invited to do a survey.

His findings were presented at a requirement meeting - this could be considered the first stage of production. At the meeting the producer, the liaison officer and the department representative met to set up the criteria for the project. This includes defining the audience - in this case persons with a professional interest in penology since the films would not be for general distribution. Other criteria include the number of films, whether they would be black and white or color, their length, whether they would be released in foreign language versions - and most important of all - their content. In this case it was decided to make six films and four filmstrips to be supplemented later by other visual materials.

The program is then presented as a package. The producer assigns research and writing to a writer-director. Costs are figured for the
scripting phase. A fixed price is placed on the film or films. This allows the department to put a value on a film in terms of how much they can justify spending. On a cost basis, the sponsor is often disturbed when a film goes over the budget. On the fixed-price basis the Board accepts all over-budget costs. The research by the writer-director is given to the producer who decides whether the idea is worthy of a film. The department pays for the initial research whether a film results or not. Such research can indicate what media will best suit the needs in a particular case and can prevent a department from spending forty to fifty thousand dollars to make a dull film.

Once the producer's plan is presented, the department sets up a committee, in this instance under the Director of the Penitentiary System, to discuss the needs of the producer's package. When an agreement is reached, a request is made to the Treasury Board for the necessary funds. The producer is then given the "go ahead" to select directors to make the films. Scripting and research usually cost between three to four thousand dollars for a major film. When the script is completed, it is presented to the department and the department is billed once when the script is completed and again when a final draft is accepted by them.

The script now has a price-tag attached. Upon acceptance, a crew is commissioned and production begins. The department is then billed for the work in three stages: first, at the initiation of production (40%); second, upon acceptance of the cutting copy (30%); and finally, on the acceptance of the final test print (30%). The sponsoring
department must give approval at several stages, i.e., of the shooting script, the cutting copy, the commentary, the final interlock and the test print.

Once the film is completed, a representative from the Board's Distribution Branch is brought in and a meeting is held to decide the future role of the film. At this point are considered the number of prints to be made, the foreign language version, the sales, and whether there will be cross-country premiers or if the film will simply be placed in the catalog. In the case of the "Penitentiaries Personnel Training" series there were no premiers and sales were restricted to special groups. Sales to other governments are also limited because the films propose a particular philosophy of penology.

The films themselves, represent one of the largest sponsored projects the Board has undertaken in recent years - the series being completed in 1965. The first film - The Correctional Process is almost a feature lasting fifty-two minutes - nearly twice the length of the others. It explains the overall objective of the series and discusses the problems and the philosophy of penology in Canada. Custodial Procedures and Control of Inmates deal with the security system in both minimum and maximum security institutions. Procedures provides a general survey, while Inmates uses a semi-dramatic form to show how small failures by security officers can result in an escape from even a maximum-security prison.

The Prison Community deals with dual codes of behavior which exist in all corrective institutions. Allied with this is Types of Inmates which utilizes sync sound interviews to illustrate several
basic types of criminal personalities and how they are likely to behave in the prison situation. **Attitude in Supervision** serves to show officers the need to develop an effective attitude in dealing with their main responsibility - inmate supervision.

These six films, while they represent a major production effort, are seen by few people, as is the case with a number of sponsored productions. A few films made for the Department of National Defense by Frank Spiller are identified only by code numbers. There have been several technical films of a non-classified nature which have proved quite useful in classroom use. Many of these were produced for The Royal Canadian Air Force. Animation was frequently required and for this Spiller set up a special sub-unit for technical animation.

**An Introduction to Jet Engines** (1958) directed by Rene' Jodoin is an outstanding example of such a film. Using animated cut-away illustrations, the film describes the working of various types of engines beginning with the simplest form of ram-jet to the more complex turbo-jet. Using a clearly defined hard-edge style of animation, *Jet Engines* does an excellent job of explaining a pithy subject. It has been dubbed into a number of languages and has won international awards in Canada and Italy. Similar efforts released to the public include *Antenna Fundamentals*, *Physics of Underwater Sound* and the six-film "Radio Navigation" series as well as *Explosives - A Construction Aid*, all produced for the Royal Canadian Air Force.

While such specialized films find an audience in the non-theatrical field, the majority of sponsored films reaches the public in other ways. Many, though generally available, are intended for special
audiences, with a special message. The agricultural films, both sponsored and Board originated, are an example of this type of film. *Marshland Pasture, Muck Soil Development, Western Wheat and Science for the Farmer* are directed to one segment of the population. The films use a straight-forward approach and have as their objective instructional ends. In more general distribution are "message and information films" that have as their objective a large segment of the total audience. Here would be included films such as *The Drag* and *It's a Crime*, as well as similar efforts, e.g., *A Day in the Night of Jonathon Mole* (1959) a fantasy drama directed by Donald Brittain for The Federal Department of Labour.

*A Day* deals with the cause of prejudice. In the mythical land of Adanac, Mole, a petty official, is elevated to the rank of judge with the right to judge those he thinks are inferior. The defendants are being tried on the charges of getting jobs above their social station. While this film is aimed at the business and labor audience, its overall message concerns prejudice which can occur in any situation.

These films differ from the third major type of sponsored film which serves to build an image and describe the work of a particular department. *The Searching Man* written and directed by Dennis Miller and produced by Guy Glover for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is a demonstration of the latest developments in mining and metallurgy. Scientists discuss sulphide minerals, a man takes a section from a tree to check for mineral traces, a magnetometer glides behind an airplane to detect minerals in the earth, a thermal piercing drill - like a huge acetylene torch - burns into the frozen earth,
pure nickel powder is rolled into sheets and stamped into coins in one operation. These images are cut in a rapid-fire manner and driven by a powerful jazz score. The result is a mosaic film that sustains a continuous high level of interest throughout its entire twenty-one minutes.

In a similar but differently structured manner, *Above the Horizon* (1964) directed by Roman Kroitor and produced by Tom Daly for the National Film Board and the American Meteorological Society, builds a case for the weather forecaster. Beginning with a discussion of the causes of weather phenomena illustrated by animation, the viewer is then presented with scenes of how these phenomena of heat and cold, smog and storms affect man. Weather phenomena are simulated in the laboratory and in the climax of the film are studied first hand as a hurricane-watch plane flies into the eye of the storm. *Horizon* is a low-key film and succeeds in building a respect verging on awe for the power of weather phenomena and a dignity for the meteorological profession.

Somewhat less successful efforts in this genre of film are *5000 Miles* and *The Enduring Wilderness* (1964) produced respectively for the Department of Public Works and the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources. *Miles* traces the development of the trans-Canada highway and while the significance of the road is mentioned, the film drifts off into the pretty-picture land of Kodak commercials. *Wilderness* fares a bit better in its discussion of the role of national parks in preserving parts of Canada in their natural state. But, it
too, becomes mired in beautiful scenery softening what could have been an effective statement to keep wilderness areas from being destroyed.

Such a move, however, would be changing the intent of the film, which is to show what the parks are doing. While this would result in a hard-hitting film, it would not be what the sponsor wanted. For such problems there is no set solution and it is overcoming such problems that is and will be the major goal of those who take part in the production of sponsored films.

The following three examples are films that reflect some of the existing problems and at least one solution. These are not to be considered as "typical" films with "typical" problems. While the discussion in the earlier part of the chapter dealt with a number of isolated individual problems, it must be remembered that making a film, like performing a surgical operation, is a unique task and that no two are alike. It is not simply a matter of dealing with a single job or even one at a time. Before an appendix can be removed, a diagnosis must be made, anesthesia given, an incision made, severed veins clamped, etc. If the producer cannot in the same manner deal with a number of concurrent problems, the operation may be successful, but the film, like the patient will be dead. The sponsored film producer, unfortunately, faces a situation no surgeon must endure—having the patient direct the operation.

An Essay on Science (1963) might best be described as a monument to "you can't please all of the people all of the time." The film was directed by Guy Cote and produced by Tom Daly for the National
Research Council of Canada. Essay began with a request by the Council for a film which would attract young people to careers in scientific research, give a guided tour of the laboratory facilities, impress the public with the importance of scientific research and demonstrate to industry the benefits of a practical testing service. To do this adequately, would have required three to six films and there was only enough money to make one.

Côté proposed that a film be made on the philosophy of science. Such a film could deal with the tremendous diversity of the work of the Council and serve to break down many of the stereotyped ideas people hold about scientists and their work. In addition it could make the work of scientists, which is admittedly difficult to comprehend, more understandable. The film would thus arouse the interest of student and industrial groups, without being aimed specifically at them. There were fears in the Council, however, that the film would be too slick and not give enough information regarding the method of scientific research.

The film which was finally produced followed the lines of Côté's proposal. Opening with a series of cuts of "men of science" - the main research people at the Council - followed by a shot of one of the phenomena studied - sunspots, and the tools of research - an atomic clock and a radio telescope. The next segment covers the buildings from the air and proceeds with a series of vignettes dealing with the work within. Beginning with an exterior shot of aircraft, icing study, the viewer is next taken through a series of strange and wonderful laboratories where studies of color perception, sound,
and narcotic drugs are being conducted. The camera explores each
as the narrator explains the work being done and discusses its
application.

In the following sequence a group of scientists listens to one
of their colleagues lecture. The narrator discusses what they study
and the camera leaves to truck through the well-stocked library.
Passing through a special workshop where a glass-blower fashions
elaborate specialized equipment the film ends in a spectrographic lab
where a flash of fluorescent gas is seen in slow motion and scientists
study its contents. The narrator concludes that the scientists' job
is to reveal the order of the universe.

On seeing the cutting copy, the scientists were for the most part,
outraged, complaining that the poetic narration confused rather than
explained. There was also some resentment to the baroque organ score
by composer Maurice Blackburn. The commentary was changed according
to the wishes of the various scientists and they were mollified,
though the actual content had changed very little. Essay was released
and won awards in science film festivals in Canada, Australia and
England.

The story, however, does not end here. Fears that the two-reel
version was too long and too abstruse, led to the preparation of an
eleven-minute version of the film - The Way of Science (1965). Using
the same visuals in considerably abridged form, Way was an attempt to
pitch the message in the style of The Searching Man. The original
narration was dumped in favor of a simplified version that would
confuse no one. The reasoning behind such a move was sound because
theatrical distribution could be increased and the film could also find an audience among junior high school students where it would pique their curiosity and stimulate their interest in scientific research. The film that resulted, however, is neither The Searching Man nor a short Essay On Science. The puerile narration contains little substance and fights the organ music throughout the entire film - one attempting to pick up the pace and the other slowing it down.

Coté himself admits that the original film is a "hermetic" idea and that the commentary is a bit verbose, but that the short film was neither a popular nor a serious achievement. The scientists of the Council, however, were much happier with the short version than with the long one feeling, evidently, that it would reach many and mystify none.

Such a situation is something no director wants to get involved in but often he has little choice. Coté was the first person to accept the job, but not the first to consider it. Working with multiple sponsors is something that all film-makers try to avoid, but it is not always possible. In this case, however, the problem goes far beyond this. Basically, it would seem that the original demand for six films was never really relinquished and the agreement to produce one film was only a matter of cost expediency and that this film was to do the work of six. Essay made a valiant attempt to cover as much as possible without degenerating into a celluloid encyclopedia article. Nevertheless, it was conceived more on the film-makers terms than the sponsors'. The creation of the short version added a light touch,
but at the cost of making a mediocre film. The greatest failure was that the sponsor was dissatisfied. If this happens too often, it can pose serious problems for the Board or, for that matter, for anyone undertaking sponsored film work.

One alternative is to bow to sponsors' wishes and produce a film to a set of exact specifications. Such a film is *Better Housing for the Atlantic Provinces* (1965) directed by Gordon Sparling and produced by Guy Glover for the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The task to be performed was explaining the new housing act - how it could benefit the average Canadian by providing low-cost loans for building or renovation through a variety of plans. The point was also to be made that these plans included such projects as loans for housing projects for senior citizens, the construction of hospitals and of university buildings.

The film itself followed exactly the outline above - inter-cutting shots of houses being renovated and built with close-ups of the appropriate explanatory pamphlets. The result is a film which is static with a narration track that delineates each picture. It is a non-film or rather a filmed pamphlet. The sponsor was greatly pleased and praised the film for its "lack of film-maker frills." This is not the kind of film that Sparling, Glover or NFB wants to make. Yet, it was made and it will be followed by perhaps two more of the same kind.

It is unfortunate when a sponsor regards the film-maker as a personal and rather suspect slave who must be given strict orders and watched carefully to see that they are carried out. A case can be made for this film on the grounds mentioned earlier - it appears
on a screen, may be shown to groups and carried in a can, although it is no different from a pamphlet. Since this is true, the film is not useless. Such an attitude ignores the basic potential of the film medium and fosters the distrust of the creative person.2

2This same sponsor gave free reign to a group of artists to design its pavilion at "Expo 67." The result called "Man In The Community" was one of the most imaginative and thought-provoking creations in the entire exposition.

When trust is placed in the film-maker and a set of rigid requirements are not laid down, good things can happen even in some of the most unpromising circumstances. Such an example is Fields of Sacrifice (1963), a four-reel film written and produced by Donald Brittain for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

When the idea of producing a film about war cemeteries was proposed to the Board late in 1960, it was not greeted with enthusiasm. Veterans Affairs had not sponsored a film in a number of years - their last commission having been made at the close of the War for information films to do specific jobs in a specific way. The results were rather drab. The subject of war graves could not, in itself, be viewed as highly cinematic.

The film was to be used by veterans' organizations to explain why Canadians had fought in four wars, how they were honored and how veterans were being aided by the Department. The Department envisioned the film as including material on memorials and cemeteries to show that the graves are well kept and give those who might never
see them in person a look at these consecrated places. Coverage would be from the Boer War to the Korean War. There would be a comparison of weapons in the various conflicts. The "theme" of the film, however, was left open to the Board. Later ideas broached by the Department included material on the Vimy pilgrimage, as well as hospitalization and rehabilitation facilities. These comments were passed to the Board via Colonel Lucien Lalonde - the Deputy Minister of the Department. Lalonde was well aware of the difficulties of making such a film interesting, but stressed that the film should serve as a living memorial to the sacrifices and achievements made by Canadians.

Following the initial meetings, an outline was prepared by writer Stewart Nutter for Peter Jones - the executive producer of the film. This provided a starting point for the producer-director of the film, Donald Brittain, who was then completing the "Canada at War" series. Brittain rejected the notion in the proposal of using the present-day activities of veterans visiting cemeteries, etc. The idea, although well wrought, was basically a latter-day Salute to Valour. He chose, rather, to focus on three aspects - the graves, the life going on about them, and the conflicts of the past. While this would provide the needed element of life to the film, the manipulation of past and present with implications to the future would thread a fine line between the glorification of war and nihilism.

Prior to shooting, Brittain spent time screening existing films on war cemeteries, as well as such related works as Georges Franju's L'hotel des invalides (1952) and Alain Resnais Nuit et Brouillard (1957). L'hotel synchronized comments of tour guides with shots of
weapons displays to create a searing indictment of militarism, while
Nuit intercut shots of Nazi death camps past and present to explore
the memories of horror.

The next step was to decide what the limits of the film would
be and how it should be structured. To cover all monuments and ce­
meteries would be impossible. It was finally decided to include only
those of the two world wars and limit the area to monuments and
cemeteries in Europe. After the selection of places, decisions had
to be made on the order in which they were to be shown — whether the
memorials of the two wars were to be separated or combined. After
trying some twenty different combinations, Brittain chose to begin
with the second war and work back to the first, jumping from place
to place geographically but tying the elements together on an emotional
basis.

The production of the film caused some anxious moments as the
costs went well over the allotted budget. The original proposal
had to be dumped and the subsequent scripts were altered to avoid
duplication of "Canada at War." The final film was built without a
set script. As a result a great deal more footage was required to
insure adequate coverage.

The film that emerged showed no scars of the battle waged to
produce it. Using the phenomenon of memory, Fields of Sacrifice com­
bines elements of the above mentioned works of Resnais and Franju, as
well as of Dore Schary's The Battle of Gettysburg (1955) to create an
eclectic film that blends its elements with a subtlety that surpasses
all three. This is because its eclecticism lies in ideas and the
approach rather than in quoting a shot here and there and splicing them together.

The memories of French fishermen and farmers recall by means of narration and an original score by Eldon Rathburn, the day the Canadians landed. Sound effects are used to echo the activities of the past as orders are shouted through decaying buildings; the camera follows the path of planes that no longer exist as they sputter to life and take off from a field now overgrown with weeds. The transition to the First World War is done simply as the camera cuts to a monument of World War I pock-marked by bullets of World War II. A candid camera studies an old woman in a cafe - "the mademoiselle from Armentiers - she didn't know what the words meant, but she laughed along with them for she knew they would be dead the next day." Sheep graze on Vimy Ridge and the narrator gives the report of the day in 1917 when the charge was made that cost 11,000 Canadian lives. The film ends with an air shot of the monument and the nearby cemeteries that hold most of the 100,000 Canadian war dead.

The film went beyond the best expectations of the sponsor, and has won awards in Canada and the United States. That Fields came off as well as it did is at least a small miracle, but the explanation for its success cannot be credited to luck. It was a classic example of a sponsor who was willing to let the film-maker experiment, and to state requests in terms of ends without demanding that these be achieved by certain means. The role of Colonel Lalonde cannot be underestimated in the course of this film, for it was through his
understanding of the situation that the opportunities to make an outstanding film were created.

With the completion of Fields, a new and closer relationship was established between the Board and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Future producers will, hopefully, not have to wage up-hill battles to gain departmental confidence in any understanding of their ideas. This may not, however, be the case with the National Research Council or the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The three sponsored films discussed, were faced with a variety of individual problems. While circumstances varied, the difficulties were rooted in the need, on the part of the sponsor, to understand the basic demands regarding the particular film and its capacity to convey a limited amount and variety of information, and on the part of the film-maker to make this clear to him. It was on these points that Veterans Affairs was able to obtain an outstanding film by agreeing to limit the breadth of its requirements in favor of a depth approach on two main ideas - to say something of the meaning of sacrifice and to show that the graves are well kept.

The problems facing sponsoring organizations go beyond the production of an occasional film to meet a specific need. Until a coherent information plan is created - designed to anticipate the overall media needs of these organizations - requests for "six in one" films and "movie pamphlets" will continue to arise. The first step toward achieving such a program was the package of films and filmstrips produced for the Penitentiaries Service. The series demonstrated
the effectiveness of film as an instructional tool when used in the proper manner.

In fulfilling its obligations to the sponsoring organizations the Board realizes that sponsors are subject and not media experts and that they cannot be expected to transform themselves into the latter. By the same token, it is obvious that film-makers working for sponsors cannot exist unto themselves. They must become "communication specialists." Therefore, the whole issue of whether a film is right or wrong must not be viewed within the confines of the film medium alone, but how it operates in the total perspective of communication as part of a multi-media approach.

Multi-media as an idea has been with us for some time, but it has been only in recent years that this idea has been put into general use and has been accepted by sponsors. A contemporary example is a package for the Canadian Wildlife Services to promote duck identification among hunters. Included in the package are a sixteen millimeter sound film on the principles of duck identification - showing the various species on the water and in flight; a number of eight millimeter loop films - each showing a single species in flight, taking off and landing; a duck identification book and an instruction book containing color pictures of the birds and information on using the materials in the package. The package is now being tested by the Service where it will be evaluated and suggestions made for improvement and modifications.

Such a project is a positive move toward informing sponsors about the various kinds of media and pointing out their unique
advantages. The Board, however, has gone beyond this and is now engaged in the task of planning with various departments long-range visual information programs. To date (1968) the "five year" studies—the approximate scope of the programs—have been completed for three of the major sponsoring departments—Manpower and Immigration, Labour, and National Health and Welfare. The purpose is to give the departments a clear picture of their needs and a plan for meeting them. The surveys are conducted by senior producers, working as an NFB contribution to the work of the particular department.

The report by Ian MacNeill for the Department of National Health and Welfare was limited to a problem of information on mental health. Needs were determined through a survey of people in the Mental Health Division and then by a series of interviews of ninety people in the field, e.g., psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, teachers, guidance counselors, psychiatric nurses, general physicians, etc. in eight Provinces of the country. Available films on the subject were screened and analyzed along with the more important publications. On the basis of this information, proposals were made in terms of the major objectives of the program. These included increased research funds, improved legislation for public mental hospitals and patients, as well as the promotion of better understanding of the mentally ill and the recruitment of better and more people into the field.³

³Proposals to the Department of National Health and Welfare from the National Film Board of Canada for a Five Year Production Programme of Films and Filmstrips on Mental Health, p.3.
The films previously made by the Board for the Department were analyzed and their strong and weak points were discussed in the context of their success in reaching audiences. The discussion also dealt with the film medium in general, pointing out that films must be carefully tailored to do special jobs and reach special groups, that money must not be wasted on superficial shotgun films aimed at a netulous middle-class public.4

4 Ibid., p. 5.

MacNeill next provided a brief background on public attitudes toward mental illness. The final half of the report is a set of proposals, dealing first with the scope of the program in terms of goals of prevention, detection, treatment, and rehabilitation. These proposals are then couched in terms of the limitations of the knowledge in the field, public attitudes, variations in standards of care, etc. In light of these considerations five groups of films are proposed in terms of priority - films dealing with children; films dealing with institutional settings; films dealing with the elderly; miscellaneous films on such subjects as alcoholism, stress and anger; and finally, general films for use by general physicians, clergymen and community health services.

This report on mental health is not complete nor universal. It is concerned with only a part of health education and, as MacNeill himself admits, even this is limited - there being no research and hence, no proposals regarding forensic psychiatry. The report, and
its two companions dealing with labor and immigration, can be considered along with the use of liaison personnel as the Board's most outstanding contributions to the field of sponsored film-making. It is certainly the best insurance against the production of films that waste the time of the film-maker and the money of the sponsor.

This idea did not, of course, evolve in a vacuum but has emerged through the developments made in television production during the 1950's when the first opportunity arose to produce sets of films to encompass ideas too large to be grasped in a single thirty or sixty-minute film. The same approach is now being used in the film and related visual materials being produced by NFB in packages for classroom use.

Throughout the development of the sponsored production there was evolved in the Board a basic philosophy which pervaded not only the thinking in the Liaison section, but the thinking of the film-maker as well. In the final creation of the film, it is his mind that brings it to life and this has resulted in the high standard of the Board's sponsored work. This philosophy is aptly put by Tom Daly who has served as producer and executive-producer on two decades of sponsored films.

The artist must care about the real values in the world, with a philosophy based on a universal belief in humanity, where there is a place for everybody. Even when you disagree with somebody there is a part of him you can respect. If you have this feeling for a sponsor there is something that you believe in and wish to do and can do for him that comes in his area of interest. Other things you cannot do and because you don't believe it, it wouldn't be any good.
The film-maker of this outlook is the most important. The Film Board is so arranged and by policy wishes to attract such people knowing that they will be difficult, but with the right kind of difficulty. These people won't always follow procedure or stay within a budget or do things in a neat way. But, they are the original thinkers, whereas the neat ones - the follow-the-book people may be comfortable to work with, but the films they make will be dull. The creative people will take ideas and make something of them, and give the sponsor a richer, better film.\(^5\)

\(^5\)Tom Daly, Interview.
CHAPTER IX

ANIMATION

The animated film arrived, rather than emerged, in Canada in much the same manner as the motion picture itself. The pioneering, most of which was done in secret, began in France with the work of Emile Cohl in 1904 and in the United States with that of Stuart Blackton two years later. It was in the American milieu that the animated film flourished.

In 1913 the animated film had become a commercially successful item — a wiggling version of the Sunday comic strip. The process was laborious and expensive — a terrific undertaking for one person. Winsor McCay's one-reel Gertie the Trained Dinosaur (1909) required 10,000 separate drawings.¹ In 1913 Raoul Barre organized the first studio to produce cartoon films. Others soon joined the field and by 1915, there were four major producers — Barre, John R, Bray, Hearst International Film Service, and Keen Cartoon Corporation. While a number of independents were making films, the process was becoming increasingly sophisticated. Traveling backgrounds were used with the figures painted on clear sheets of cellulose nitrate which were then laid over the painted paper background. Sixteen different drawings were placed over a background to create one second of movement. With sound films, this was increased to

¹Halas & Manvell, The Technique of Film Animation, p. 14.
twenty-four. This technique allowed the use of elaborate backgrounds that did not have to be re-drawn for each frame. It also created a smooth accurate motion. The technique, known as "call animation," was done in an assembly-line manner, as cartoon series, using the same characters, were turned out in increasing numbers.

In the 1920's the animation process grew more and more complicated as it was refined to give a more accurate sense of motion. By 1928 there were five major producers in the field - the Fleischer Brothers, Paul Terry, Screen Gems, Walter Lantz and Walt Disney. None of the top producers of 1915 were in existence. The field was as cut-throat as any in the industry. Animators moved rapidly from studio to studio often taking with them their employer's uncopyrighted ideas.

Synchronous sound was added to the animated film in 1928. Color which had been successfully demonstrated as early as 1916 was re-introduced in 1932. By 1935 practically all cartoon films were in color. By 1937 Disney Studios had perfected a multiplane animation stand which could move a number of superimposed backgrounds at varying speeds behind the animated characters, creating an illusion of depth which had never before been possible. By this time the animated film had become a big-budget operation as Disney, and later the Fleischers, began producing animated features at costs in excess of a million dollars. By 1941 six of these had been produced -- Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1937), Pinocchio (1940), Fantasia (1940), and The Reluctant Dragon (1941) by Disney; Gulliver's Travels (1939), and Mr. Bug Goes to Town (1941) by the Fleischers.²

²Andre' Martin, Family Tree of the Origin and Golden Age of the American Cartoon Film 1906-1941.
In Canada the situation with regard to the animated film was similar to that of the feature. American production soon controlled the market, providing exhibitors with their entire supply of animated cartoons. While there was always a small demand for Canadian features, and news-films with Canadian content, there was evidently none for indigenous cartoons. The appeal of a mouse throwing a brick at a cat was universal.

Animated films were first produced in Canada in 1941. Before this time animation existed mainly in the simplest forms - moving titles and charts. Associated Screen News was probably the first organization to use animation in any form. Harold Peberdy of the A.S.N. art department was doing diagramatic work in the early 1930's. Later he drew cartoon characters for sections of a film for the Royal Canadian Air Force — G and You (1940) — which illustrated the effects of increased gravity in power dives by airplanes. In the Motion Pictures Bureau all such animation work was done within the titling department and consisted of diagrammatic work using black and white ink on paper techniques. The best example of this can be seen in the Bureau's 1936 film Unlocking Canada's Treasure Trove, where moving art work showed sectional views of a mine shaft.

The first animated films in Canada were the work of the Film Board's Norman McLaren who began his career in 1933 as a student in the Glasgow School of Art. It was there that he developed an interest in film and first experimented with the idea of creating motion pictures by circumventing the camera entirely, by drawing and painting directly on the film base itself. He later discovered that Len Lye of the General Post Office film unit was using similar techniques to promote the work of the Post Office.

In 1937 McLaren joined the GPO staff - making both animated and live
action films. *Love on the Wing* (1937) was his first film to use the direct hand-drawn technique to convey information — in this instance to publicize the air-mail service. In 1949 McLaren left the GPO to work briefly for the Film Centre before coming to New York. There he made five, short experimental films, drawing not only the picture but a sound track as well, to create a synthetic musical accompaniment.  

3A complete McLaren Filmography is given in William E. Jordan, *Norman McLaren: His Career and Techniques* and André Martin, *Norman McLaren*

Grierson needed all the competent personnel he could get, not only to make films, but also to train the Canadian recruits. An animation section had proved useful to the GPO unit and would be an absolute necessity to the Film Board for the up-coming "Canada Carries On" and "World In Action" series. McLaren answered the call and was soon put to work. His first job was a two-minute trailer for the Post Office promoting early Christmas mailing. A hand-drawn film of this length was usually a two-month job, McLaren was required to finish it in two weeks. The resulting — *Mail Early for Christmas* (1941) — set letters and cards dancing to "Jingle Bells" played by Benny Goodman. A multiplane effect was created by drawing on two strips of film which were then superimposed for the final print. *V for Victory* (1941) marches a Chinese-red V across an aquamarine background metamorphosing it into Morse code, marching feet, and finally, into an appeal to buy Victory Bonds. *Hen Hop* (1942) used a similar treatment to the same end on a stylized hen with a barn-dance theme rather than a stirring march.

All of these films were hand-drawn — one frame at a time. The original
art work was done in black and white and then painted on color stock. The two-color Warnercolor film resulted in a combination of red-orange and blue-green. A greater range was achieved with the three-color Vitacolor process which was used for his next two films. *Five for Four* (1942) used Albert Ammon's "Pinetop Boogie" to promote wartime saving. *Dollar Dance* (1943) had an original score by Louis Applebaum with lyrics by Guy Glover and featured a dancing dollar sign who encouraged bond buying, promoted saving and warned of the dangers of inflation.

The demands on McLaren were soon more than he could handle. Jean-Paul Ladouceur and René Jodoin were recruited from L'Ecole des Beaux Arts and James MacKay, George Dunning, Arthur Price and Lawrence Hyde from the Ontario College of Art. Grant Munro and Evelyn Lambart came shortly thereafter, along with Guy Glover who soon shifted into the "Canada Carries On" unit. Under McLaren, the animation department became an official entity in 1943.

Training was done on the job. Unlike American studios where the cell method was used almost exclusively and the operation could be broken down into a number of steps, NFB animators were required to produce a wide variety of work in a short time and at minimal cost. This required development of a number of techniques. These included series of ink drawings on paper, chalk drawings which were erased and redrawn to create motion, painting on glass over art work on paper (used for map animation), jointed cut-out figures, drawing and painting directly on the film, a limited amount of cell animation, as well as model animation where three-dimensional objects were photographed with a traveling camera.

The emphasis in the training was to teach the animators to think in terms of whole films - of complete ideas. McLaren found that those who
were good at static art did not always excel in creating animation. The first principle that he sought to get across was that:

The art of animation has very little to do with the art of drawing and painting. It is the art of action, of movement and as such is much more closely related to dancing or pantomime or any kind of action that involves time. Drawing and painting don't do this. Animation is a time medium. The first thing that you teach people is that it is how you manipulate time that counts. It is the difference between one frame and the next that counts.  

4 Norman McLaren - Interview

Much of the early training was done on the "Canada Carries On" and "World In Action" series which required considerable map animation. The most elaborate example was in the "WIA" Global Air Routes showing the pathways for a proposed world-wide air travel system. Once the techniques had been mastered, the department plunged into original film production. In keeping with the Board's policy of producing interpretive Canadian material, two series of films were launched in 1944 - "Chants Populaires" and Let's All Sing Together." Released both theatrically and non-theatrically, the two series were purely for entertainment and provided a welcome relief from the war news of "CCO" and "WIA."  

5 "Chants Populaires" had since been used in teaching French in both Canadian and American Schools and colleges.

In terms of their overall concept, there was no difference between the two animated series. They used the "sing-song" format sans the bouncing ball, the words appearing on a title panel, and were sung again after the song had been illustrated. In "Chants Populaires" French-Canadian folk
songs were sung by the Alouette Quartet. English folksongs by the Four Gentlemen were used for "Let's All Sing." Each film contained two songs; all were in black and white. The films in both series were one reel in length and released six times a year.

Chants Populaires #1 (1944) included "En roulant ma boule" and "A la claire fontaine" drawn by James McKay and Laurence Hyde respectively. Using limited movements, they told the story of a prince who shoots a white buck and of a lover who lacked a bouquet of roses and thereby lost his lady. Chants Populaires #2 (1944) used puppets for the first song, "Envoyons d' l'avant nos gens," by Jean-Paul Ladoceur, a song of the French-Canadian lumberjack. The animation was of a very limited variety—moving the figures and the camera—with no attempt at the kind of articulation being developed at the time by such animators as George Pal or Jiri Trnka. The second song "Auprès de ma blonde," by George Dunning used ink drawings to create a series of tableaux to illustrate this sixteenth century song.

One of the more interesting of these films, in terms of techniques, was Chants Populaires #5 (1944). The first song "C'est l'aviron" by McLaren used a series of white gouache drawings on black paper. The camera was dollied toward the static drawings and the film cranked back so that the next drawing would overlap the last. The series of overlapping double exposures sent scenes of rocks and trees, faces and clouds drifting past the bow of a canoe as it bobbed and rocked down a river. This created a multiplane effect by an optical process. Such an illusion of depth had so far been achieved only by the Walt Disney Studios using a specially built, exceedingly expensive multiplane animation stand. The second part of the film "En passant" by Alexandre Alexieff represented the only piece of work done by a non-Film Board artist. Images were created by the
shadows cast by a mass of pins set in a screen, which were moved in and out to create the visual patterns of the busy mill, the church and animals of "en passant." Chants Populaires #6 by McLaren used a chalk drawing of mountain scenery, which was applied and then rubbed out, to create shifting patterns of light and shadow to accompany "Là-haute sur ces montagnes." The second half of the film was re-use of "C'est l'aviron."

"Let's All Sing Together" - the English counterpart of "Chants Populaires" was produced by the same people, with the exceptions of Arthur Price and Grant Munro who did not work on the former. The songs were not uniquely Canadian and the series was not so original or interesting as "Chants Populaires."

"Let's All Sing Together #1 (1944) used animated paper cut-outs for "Daisy Daisy" and "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" by Arthur Price; and "Home on the Range" and "Alouette" by René Jodoin and Norman McLaren, in a style which anticipated McLaren's Le Merle (1958). Let's All Sing #2 included "Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet," "The More We Are Together" and "Carry On" by René Jodoin; and "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze" by Grant Munro. This latter song was one of the first to make use of articulated paper cut-outs - a technique used by Munro very effectively with "My Darling Clementine" which appeared in Let's All Sing #6 which used drawings to create the petit-point quality of a nineteenth century sampler.

Both series were terminated at the end of 1944, with a total of twelve films being finished, a rather remarkable achievement considering the small size of the staff and the amount of other work they had to do. This included not only the "MIA" and "CCO" map work, but the production of a large number of one to three-minute trailers, plugging everything
from bond buying through agricultural management to warning of the dangers of wartime gossip.

The War years, served to develop styles, ideas and techniques which were to place a stamp of uniqueness on the Board's animation which continues through the present. It was also during this period that the basic work program was formulated, which divided the output into three major categories; service work - animation sections for other non-animated films, e.g., "CCO" and "MIA;" sponsored work - complete films made for various government departments and offices, e.g., trailers for the Wartime Price Control Board and the War-time Information Board; and the general animation program of films initiated by the Animation Department, e.g., "Chants Populaires" and "Let's All Sing."

With the coming of the post-war era, the production emphasis in animation shifted, as it did in all areas, to subjects of more general interest. The termination of the "World In Action" and the shift to peacetime themes in "Canada Carries On" decreased the map work to a point verging on non-existence. New areas were opening up as the Board began to take its first steps into the realm of classroom film production.

The Impossible Map (1947) and Time and Terrain (1948) were two notable contributions from animation. Evelyn Lambart's The Impossible Map used simple, object animation to give a lucid explanation of the problems of presenting an accurate picture of the earth on a flat map. The film opens with a brief explanation of the original purpose of maps - to serve as a pictorial record of a person's travels - and of how this has changed to a presentation of the relative size, shape and relationship of one land mass to another. The roundness of the earth is the major problem - illustrated by a grapefruit with a map drawn on it. The grapefruit is
then flattened with a rolling pin resulting is a distorted, though flat image. A knife then slices a similar grapefruit through the equator and then the poles. The peelings are placed under a clear cell on which appears the flat version of the map. This is repeated with a turnip sliced into sixteen sections which spread themselves flat to form a Mercator Map which appears on the overlay - making the point that an undistorted map of the world can only be conceived as a globe. The Impossible Map retains a quality of freshness and originality that has yet to be equalled by similar and more recent efforts - a model of what an educational film can be.

The second film - Time and Terrain - was the work of Colin Low, who had joined the staff in 1945. Time and Terrain owes its style to Disney's Fantasia in describing the geological history of Canada, although Low's volcanoes and glaciers are simplified as befits scientific animation. The film presents a straight historical approach in showing the rise and fall of mountains and the advance and retreat of glaciers. Both the approach and style anticipated one of the Board's fine instructional films - Introduction to Jet Engines - made ten years later for the Royal Canadian Air Force.

As part of the sponsored work, two animated films were produced for the Department of National Health and Welfare by James McKay and Grant Munro, Stanley Takes a Trip (1947) and Teeth Are to Keep (1949). Both were "message" films urging, respectively, proper diet, and proper dental care. Both used fully articulated paper cut-outs.

Stanley tells of a small boy who did not eat a proper breakfast. He is assisted by several farm animals, who take him through the countryside to secure the proper foods. The film came under criticism from educators on the grounds that it advocated stealing - apples are taken from an
orchard. *Teeth* presented a similar story following a day in the life of the Smith family, which begins when the baby cuts his first tooth. The family goes on a picnic where the essentials of proper dental hygiene are illustrated. The film offended no one. The style was, nevertheless, interesting, appealing, and led to Munro's illustration of Stephen Leacock's *My Financial Career*.

Though the sing-song format offered a limited range for expression, the idea was not dropped completely and a new series "Chanson de Chez Nous" was created in the image of the old "Chants Populaires." The difference was that the new films simply illustrated the song, were in color, and were released non-theatrically on an irregular basis. One of the first of these was *Cadet Rousselle* (1946) by Grant Munro. *Rousselle* was the first film to make use of articulated metal cut-out figures, giving greater durability and more sophisticated illustration. They could be painted, whereas the paper cut-outs had to be of colored construction paper and would curl up if painted. The technical competence and artistic quality of Rousselle was above that of most other wartime efforts in its illustration of the French folk song, recounting the mis-adventures of a clownish Napoleonic soldier and his problems with disobedient dogs - and tricky ladders.

Norman McLaren, whose interests had always been in making films rather than in administrative work, turned over leadership of the department to James McKay in 1946. McLaren continued to engage in training work and to develop the technical and artistic path of animation. His *Little Phantasy on a Nineteenth Century Painting* (1946) used chalk drawings to turn Arnold Bocklin's "Isle of the Dead" into a psychedelic experience. Clouds change and shift, figures grow, melt, and metamorphose into birds and corpses.
The shifting lights which gave soft romantic effects in "La-Haute" create disquieting and macabre patterns.

The chalk technique was further developed in La poulette grise (1948) which was released as a "Chanson de Chez Mous." The film was the first to use color and developed the images through a series of overlapping dissolves rather than by changing them on the art work as was the case with A Little Phantasy. The pictorial results combined with the voice of Anna Malenfant singing this old French-Canadian lullaby of the gray hen that nests in the church, yields a softness and subtlety to the movement which could not be achieved by other means. This method of animation was later used on one of the Board's major films - Science Challenge Against Cancer.

During the post-war years, McLaren also pursued the technique of working directly on the film base itself. Hoppity Pop (1946) and Fiddle De Dee (1947) synchronized abstract figures to barrel-organ music and violin rendition of "Listen to the Mocking Bird." The latter film was made without reference to the frame lines in the film. The technique was refined by using two strips of hand-painted film to create multiplane effects in Begone Dull Care (1949) which McLaren made in collaboration with Evelyn Lambart. One section of this film makes use of black leader which is scratched to create images. All of the abstract images are without reference to frame divisions and are cued to move in a free-flowing manner - sometimes in synchronization, at other times in counterpoint to the music of Oscar Peterson.

After the departure of McKay in 1949, leadership of the department was taken over by Colin Low. Low had recently returned from a year's stay in Europe where he had visited the Czechoslovakian State Film School and saw the work in puppet animation being done by Jiri Trnka. Low was
enthusiastic about the idea of using articulated three-dimensional figures since they were much more interesting than the stiff figures being slid about from the days of the early sing-songs - up to *Sur le pont d'Avignon* (1951).

Based on Low's description of the Trnka films, Jean-Paul Ladouceur made use of articulated puppets in sing-song versions of "Barbara Allen" and "Jack Was Every Inch a Sailor" in *Sing a Little* (1951). The film was technically successful and enough enthusiasm was developed to use the system for a fifteen-minute children's film on pedestrian safety.

*One Little Indian* (1954) is the story of Magic Bow - a little Indian boy who comes to the city with a rodeo. He entertains the audience with various feats including the resurrection of a moose whom he had shot. Once he is on the streets of the city he is confused by the traffic. Fortunately, a kindly lady explains the meaning of traffic lights and a policeman warns him not to walk between parked cars. A green-faced man who sells wind-up penguins that wander into the street, tells Magic Bow of the dangers of not looking before crossing a street. Magic Bow, having become wise in the ways of traffic safety, rewards all of his new friends with tickets to the rodeo.

*One Little Indian* was a big project - fifteen minutes in length - requiring the combined efforts of Low, Grant Munro, Evelyn Lambert and a number of others. It was a very popular film - winning a number of safety and children's film awards. It also finished puppet animation at the Board, mainly because it "finished" the animators. The work involved was staggering. Much of the effort had been in the construction of equipment to do puppet animation. This was later used in the model and special effects work for *Universe* which was begun in 1955. Low hoped to establish
a special effects department, but the demands for such work were not great enough to justify the cost of its creation.

The idea that cell animation did not have to be so exorbitantly expensive became apparent in the late 1940's and early 1950's when U.P.S. productions (an organization composed mainly of ex-Walt Disney artists) began producing the "Gerald McBoing-Boing" and "Mister Magoo" series using a limited form of cell animation. Content was given a higher priority, movements were simplified, characters and backgrounds were abbreviated, resulting in a more graphic, less realistic style. This was soon adopted at the Board, giving its work an every broadening range.

The first film of this type by Wolf Koenig was produced for the Federal Department of Labour. Entitled Teamwork Past and Present (1950), the film outlined the development of labor-management relations through the ages. It was not a particularly outstanding film. The second effort - The Romance of Transportation in Canada (1953) - was a very successful effort. Animated by Colin Low and Wolf Koenig the film used a jazzy score by Eldon Rathburn and commentary by Guy Glover in its witty history of the unique problems that Canadians have faced in moving about their country since the days of Jacques Cartier. The film was very popular in Canada, and had a long run in New York's Radio City Music Hall.

The cell technique was used extensively in a number of sponsored films during the mid-1950's. After Teamwork the Department of Labour sponsored The Structure of Unions (1955) - a humorous approach to the subject of organization of labor, and later the excellent It's A Crime (1957) on the subject of winter construction. The Royal Canadian Air Force commissioned a number of training films which were then placed into general distribution - mainly for classroom use. Outstanding among these are
Rene' Jodoin's *An Introduction to Jet Engines* (1958) and Grant Munro's humorous film on hyperventilation *Huff and Puff* (1955)

More animated films were also made specifically for the classroom. Though the staff had been increasing in size since the war, and numbered more than a dozen at the time, the quality of some of these films was low. The ideas were good, but often the projects were simply too big to be done effectively by one or two persons. *Family Tree* (1950) by George Dunning and Evelyn Lambart was such a film. Fifteen minutes in length, it used cut-outs and static art work in a lecture approach to the settlement of Canada. Slightly more effective was Colin Low's *The Age of the Beaver* (1951) which used various types of art work to give a brief history of the fur trade in Canada. It was animated by the filmograph method of cutting and moving the camera over flat art work to create movement. Though the film is rather dull, the technique was used effectively and formed the testing ground for the filmographic technique used in *City of Gold* made six years later. In the same style as *Time and Terrain* was *Riches of the Earth* (1954) by Sidney Goldsmith and Barrie Helmer. In addition to giving a geological history of Canada, the film presents a clear discussion of how the various mineral resources are created, deposited and are now being located and utilized.

Largest of these films was the thirty minute *A Is For Architecture* (1959) produced by Tom Daly and Robert Verrall. Using limited animation and filmograph techniques on prepared art work, the film presents an analysis of architectural styles through the ages, emphasizing the changing concepts of building and explaining how the architecture reflects the culture in which it is created. The pacing is slow, and the movement from
one segment to the next fails to compensate for the static qualities of the individual shots.

The training and experimental work of Norman McLaren were carried to China when he left the Board in 1949 to work on a UNESCO experiment in fundamental education. While in China he trained a number of students in simple animation techniques and supervised films on eye sickness, clean water and a balanced diet. When he returned to Canada in 1950, he com-

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6 Examples of some of this work can be seen in "Window in Canada" An Interview with Norman McLaren.

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pleted a short film - Pen Point Percussion (1950) - which demonstrated the techniques used in two of his cameraless animation films - Dots and Loops - made before the War.

McLaren was becoming widely known for his work and film-makers the world over were interested in his techniques. The British Film Institute commissioned McLaren to do a film for the 1950 Festival of Britain. The result was an animated film in three dimensions - Around is Around (1950) - made in collaboration with Evelyn Lambert. The opening sequence of the film shows eight planes of stars. The depth illusion was created by punching each animation cell on which the stars were drawn, with two sets of registration holes so that the art work could be photographed from a right and left-eye position. Panning shots of stars and clouds in three dimensions were created by a frame stagger on the negative, using two identical prints with one running a certain number of frames ahead of the other. This method was used to give depth to the slowly revolving Lissajous figures and other patterns produced on an oscilloscope by Chester Beachell.
of the Board's technical section.

The success of Around is Around gave rise to a second production for the British Film Institute - Now Is the Time (1951). The opening sequence for the film is built up of twelve flat planes of clouds painted on black cards, which were moved horizontally and revealed in a series of cross fades under the camera. The same material was then shot from a mathematically calculated left-eye position. A sequence of appearing and moving suns was done the same way. In the sequence where a little man dances in and out of the screen plane, the animation was hand-drawn on clear leader. Prints from a left-eye and right-eye position were then made in an optical printer by a lateral shift in the position of the lens in the printer.7


McLaren continued with other developments refining and developing various techniques. Chalk River Ballet (1950) made with René Jodoin, used the chalk technique to abstract ends. This technique was later brought to its highest level of sophistication with A Phantasy (1952) combining pastel with cut-out figures in a seven-minute surrealist ballet with an original score by Maurice Blackburn. By 1956 the pastel technique had been abandoned in favor of cut-out papers. Rythmetic (1956), made with Evelyn Lambart, played mathematical games with cut-out paper numbers. While an interesting idea, the game runs out before the film does. The same can be said for Le Merle (1958) which used the same technique to illustrate the title song.

New ground was being broken with both the technique of working
directly on the film base and with the animation of live actors. The latter technique had been pioneered, but never fully developed, in the early 1900's. Known as "pictilation" it involved moving actors short distances, and photographing the movements one frame at a time in much the same way that articulated puppets are moved. The result of McLaren's first experiment was Neighbors (1952) - an eight-minute essay on the stupidity of war. Two men, played by Jean-Paul Ladouceur and Wolf Koenig, sit in chairs before paper-cut-out houses. On the dividing line between the two lots a small flower pops up in the grass; both men examine it; the perfume of the bloom sends them skating happily about the grass. But happiness soon gives way to possessiveness as both build a picket fence - each one routing it so the flower will be on his side. Pushing and shoving soon gives way to a full-scale fight. Pickets are torn up and as the two smash away at each other, the flower is trampled under foot. Their faces, contorted with rage, become those of painted savages as make-up is applied a bit at a time. In the end, both are killed and a flower appears on each grave - an ironic tribute. Submitted to the Motion Picture Academy of the Arts, the film won an Oscar as the best short film of 1952.

In both the Spanish Civil War, which McLaren had photographed, and the Korean War, which was then being fought, innocent people often suffered the most - a fact that shocked him deeply. He therefore included, in the original version of the film, a scene where the wives and children of the two men are dragged from behind the cardboard houses and bludgeoned to death. At the request of the International Film Bureau - the film's principal American distributor - the sequence was cut on the grounds that this violence would upset children. It is ironic that this cut was made since the film is a neat reversal of standard cartoon violence which is
pointless, an end in itself and the basis of much of the action.\footnote{McLaren discusses Neighbors at length in "Living with Neighbors" - an interview with Guy L. Cote in Robert Hughes, ed., \textit{Film Book 2}, pp. 15-18.}

The situation has changed little since 1952. The violent cartoons remain violent and NFB has had distribution problems in the United States with its 1966 film \textit{Toys} - an illustration of how the toys of war can all too easily glorify war itself.

In making Neighbors, McLaren found that single-frame shooting was only a partial solution to the problem of movement. It was soon found that to work effectively the film had to be shot at a variety of speeds ranging from one frame every five minutes to sixteen frames per second. \textit{Two Bagatelles} (1952) waltzed Grant Munro around a backyard and marched him up and down a ladder to synthetic music created by photographing tonal patterns from printed cards on the sound track. Pixillation was combined with animation of objects in \textit{A Chairy Tale} (1957). This time the ballet is a duet between a man (Claude Jutra) and a chair (animated by Evelyn Lambert) to the music of Ravi Shankar. Man chases chair and chair sits on man before the two finally reconcile their differences and resume a normal relationship.

Though the technique of working directly on the film base would appear to be exhausted almost at the very outset, McLaren found it to be a fertile testing ground for new ideas. In \textit{Blinkity Blank} (1954) retinal fireworks are created through flash-frame animation where images of fantastic animals fight, procreate, explode and materialize in one and two frame images separated by black leader. In \textit{Serenal} (1959), \textit{Short and Suite} (1959, and
Mail Early for Christmas (1959) earlier techniques were combined in varying new ways. A vibra drill was used to etch the film in the latter two films giving the figures a saw-tooth quality.

Development and change continued into the 1960's as the department took on more staff and a broader pattern of film-making. Colin Low, whose interests were turning more to documentary production in 1963 left the department under the direction of Wolf Koenig who served as interim head until the position was taken over by Robert Verrall in 1964. Verrall began as a student trainee in 1945, working first on some of the sing-songs and map animation and later on such larger productions as The Romance of Transportation.

By 1965 the department had grown to its present (1968) size of approximately twenty staff members. The variety of the work continues to expand. The department is now engaged in five main classes of animation, school films, television work, theatrical films, technical animation and experimental production. The animation production program, however, is still basically the same three-fold division - sponsored, classroom, and department films.

In the last decade the biggest demand for animation has come from the burgeoning program of classroom films. Much of the new ground has been broken in the production of films for young children. The Peep Show (1962) by Kaj Pindal follows the adventures of "Peep," a small round chick, who pops out of an egg and has to discover for himself what he is, and what he can do. The style of drawing is akin to that of children's art work. Along the same line was The Animal Movie (1966) by Grant Munro and Ron Tunis. Using ink on paper to achieve a luminous water color effect the action is accompanied by an imaginative sound and music score, in this film
where a small boy learns about animal locomotion first hand. A monkey helps him climb a tree—which he can do—but not without assistance, and he is unable to swing from branch to branch. He can ride on the back of a horse—which he does—but he is not able to gallop like one. He also finds that he can not glide over the ground like a snake, nor spring like a grasshopper which he watches intently as it is pursued by a bird. A fall in the water gives him a chance to swim, but not like a porpoise.

In the end he is picked up by another boy in a flying saucer—a man-made device that can take them through the air and under the water faster than any of the animals.

Word and image games, are the subject of Eliot Noyes’ Alphabet (1966) which used black ink on back-lit white glass to present a word and an image for every letter as the film metamorphoses its way from "A" to "Z" to the accompaniment of a bouncy jazz score. Barn dance music is used for Rene’ Jodoin’s Dance Squared (1961) with paper cut-outs to describe the geometrical properties of the square. The same treatment was used in Notes on a Triangle (1966) which divided and recombined this shape in several hundred combinations.

For older age groups the classroom program attacked more serious problems, concentrating on putting across ideas and concepts which could not be easily visualized by conventional photographic means. The Origins of the Weather (1963) used cell techniques to illustrate the effect of solar heat on the earth’s atmosphere, the cause of the continual movement of air masses over the earth. Animation is combined with actuality film to complete the demonstration and tie the art work concept with reality.

Actually and animation are skillfully blended in Robert Verrall’s and Joseph Koenig’s Energy and Matter (1966). Animation and live action are
freely intercut in the opening examples of energy, e.g., a steel spring (animation) which is then seen in a clock (live action). Other live examples include a cutting torch and a magnet. Through animation, energy is visualized in a cumulus cloud, is changed to rain, and in a river turns a turbine to make electricity. The sun as a source of energy is explained through its conversion of hydrogen into helium. This process is duplicated on the earth in shots of a hydrogen bomb explosion. The convertibility of energy into matter and vice versa is given a unique visualization as the grain structure of the film is coarsened in a shot of a pile of stones visualizing them as a collection of molecules to match the pointillist style of the animated image of the sun.

Standard cut-out techniques, but an original graphic style, was used by Pierre Hébert in his film The Population Explosion (1967) presenting a succinct analysis of the problems of over-population and a survey of some of the possible solutions. Gone forever is the "spinach is good for you" approach of Stanley Takes a Trip.

Single concept, eight-millimeter loop films have become one of the Board's newest additions in the educational field. Two series have been produced in the Animation Department. Under the direction of Sidney Goldsmith, forty mathematics films in five areas—sets, functions, geometry and topology, reasoning, and applied concepts—were completed in 1966. Since mathematics is essentially non-verbal abstraction of pattern, the silent format proved successful. A variety of techniques were used, including objects, cut-outs, and cell animation—each being used where it was most applicable.

In 1967 Evelyn Lambart completed a group of five loop films, each about three minutes in length, dealing with basic machines. A goat and a
rooster (articulated metal cut-outs) demonstrate the lever, the wheel and axle, the pulley, the incline plane and wedge, and the screw. Although the films are a set meant to be shown in the above order, each one is a complete unit. For both series of films, animation was used in order to isolate the important information, excluding distracting material, which could not be done if actuality film was used.

Sponsored films continued to be produced, though not in quite the quantity as during the 1950's. Outstanding among these was The Drag (1965) by Carlos Marchiori for the Department of National Health and Welfare. Cell animation is used with a new freedom — the overlay cells being backed by such materials as textured cloth and, in one instance, aluminum foil, to provide a gaudy background for one of the sex sirens in this film on cigarette advertising.

Much of the sponsored work has been in the form of television spots which have replaced the theatrical trailers as one of the principal training grounds for new animators, allowing them to try new ideas and techniques. Two composite films, Hors d'oeuvre (1960) and Pot-pourri (1962), contain samples of these one-minute films admonishing tele-viewers with "be careful" "watch the following," "look both ways" and "why wait for spring"? Do it now."

The theatrical program has continued to evolve along the lines developed in the 1950's. The golden days of U.P.A., with its films of social satire and political comment remain an important influence. In the past decade, several films have been produced which have achieved a similar interpretation of Canada. My Financial Career (1962) by Gerald Potterton and Grant Munro used paper cut-outs in an adaptation of Stephen Leacock's short story of his first dealings with banks. Stanley Jackson's dry narration is per-
fect in this tale of an attempt to establish a small account that soon leads to a high-level talk with the bank president, who believes the young depositor is a Pinkerton agent. Flustered and humiliated, in his final dealings with a teller the man deposits then unthinkingly withdraws his entire account.

The Great Toy Robbery (1963) by Jeffery Hale and Cameron Guess collects most of the clichés of Westerns into a six-minute horse opera. Santa Claus is parted from his toys by a gang of outlaws. The guitar-playing hero proves absolutely useless when he encounters the bandits. "Can I play with your toys, fellows? Huh, please, can I, can I, can I?" he begs and is sent away by the nastiest snarl this side of Victory Jory. The voices - all by Richard Gilbert - add the needed touch to make this film work.

The contemporary scene, and the frustration of modern living are treated in several films. What On Earth (1966), by Kaj Pindal and Less Drew, views the automobile problem from the lofty position of "The National Film Board of Mars." The Martians mistake the car for the dominant life form on our planet, but this is justified by the manner in which the surface is plowed and paved, obliterating forest and city alike to make super-highways. Most interesting is the auto-breeding ritual which consists of suicide and reincarnation as the cars drive to grushers and melters, there they are recreated and rush to the roads - with feline snarls of power. People are briefly dispensed with, identified as a low form of parasite.

In The House that Jack Built (1968) the beanstalk tale is given a new twist in this essay on the hopes and dreams of modern man. Jack is an average type of middle-class person who holds a dull office job. His dreams of escaping the uniformity of his existence are realized when he
trades his broken-down car for some magic beans. His trip to the top of the beanstalk brings him in contact with a giant—financial variety—who has a magic mirror. Jack steals it and through its powers becomes "unique." He soon finds that he has only escalated his situation. His house is now big and fancy, his problems also. "Ya crummy, two-bit mirror," He screams. "I'm tired of being unique. I want to be different!" He smashes the mirror and in a flash grows a second head. Thus ends this comment on materialism by Donald Arioli - writer and voice actor - and Ronald Tunis who did the animation.

Older styles of films are still being produced and meeting with success. The sing-song format is still effective in an up-dated form I Know An Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly (1963) by Derek Lamb and Kaj Pindal used garishly colored figures with cell animation in this humorous folk song sung by Burl Ives. Christmas Cracker (1962) combined the talents of Norman McLaren, Jeffry Hale, Gerald Potterton, and Grant Munro in three short vignettes—animated Christmas toys, a dance in the snow, and a fable of a man who attempts to put a star from the sky on his Christmas tree.

Animation has also been used to probe more serious ideas. Toys (1966) by Grant Munro and Margaret Wescott makes a stringent comment on the game of war. Children watch a store window filled with Christmas decorations. The toys, mostly benign teddy bears and such, give way to a glittering array of miniature ordnance as the eyes of children widen in awe at the display. With a few stiff movements and then with full articulations "G.I. Joe" and his Slavic, Teutonic, and Oriental counterparts being moving over a sand-table battlefield - bombing, bayonetting, machine gunning and burning one another in one of the most gruesome fights to be recorded on film in a long while. The message is obvious.
In recent years the experimental animation program has expanded. Though it is still the smallest part of the department's work, it is one of the most important - allowing film-makers to break new ground by trying their own ideas. Animation is cheap, requiring little expenditure of film to perform a number of experiments. Two sixteen-millimeter cameras are maintained expressly for this purpose. The main investment is the animator's time outside of working hours. If successful, such a project can, and often does, lead to a budget for the film in the regular theatrical or non-theatrical program.

The precedent of the "divine right" of the animator to experiment was set by Norman McLaren, who recognized the need to try things, from the beginning of his experience in the field. Criticism from outside has at times been raised that such experimentation is wasteful, expensive, and, therefore, unnecessary. This is simply not the case. In the same manner that the Film Board produces a wide variety of films for a multitude of purposes, the Animation Department is required to produce animated film to meet a variety of needs which require a corresponding variety of techniques. It would have, for instance, been possible to set up a cell animation production line by the end of the war and to produce all films in this manner, thus eliminating the need to experiment. The cost would have been staggering and the amount of animation footage produced could never have approached the amount that has been turned out using multiple techniques.

There is also a second cultural aspect to the experimental program which cannot be measured in terms of money. Through the Board's system of international distribution, the experimental and avant-garde works of Norman McLaren have had a major impact on the "film world," gaining an international reputation for Canada and the Film Board at film festivals.
throughout the world. While the name of McLaren has yet to reach the status of a household word, the dancing images of his films are the first called to mind at the mention of the National Film Board.

McLaren's work through the 1960's has continued with the techniques that he had developed in earlier years, but with an emphasis on refining and stripping them down to the essentials of pure movement. *Lines Vertical* (1960) and *Lines Horizontal* (1962) by Norman McLaren and Evelyn Lambart explored the mathematical possibilities of lines etched directly on the film without reference to frame divisions. The lines blend, cross and curve to music by Maurice Blackburn and Pete Seeger respectively.

This movement study was further developed in *Mosaic* (1965), where the *Lines Vertical* and *Lines Horizontal* are placed on top of each other. The resultant image is of the square points of the intersections. These combine, subdivide and explode in regular geometric patterns. Rapid color changes keyed to synthetic music by McLaren play with color fusion and after images, using complementary and opposing colors.

Movement and musical form were again explored in *Canon* (1964) which combined the talents of McLaren with those of Grant Munro, using cut-out figures, animated humans and a cat to demonstrate visually the characteristics of this musical form. The direct progression from *Mosaic* is McLaren's *Pas de deux* (1968) where he abandons animation for live-action photography, but uses a number of the techniques evolved in previous films. Two dancers - Margaret Mercier and Vincent Warren - were photographed against black background thus eliminating spatial cues. The dance, choreographed by Ludmilla Chiriaeff, was filmed at varying speeds and the images printed over one another to create multiple stroboscopic figures that move with the airy delicacy of an Alexander Calder mobile. While the timing of the movement
is perfect, the cuts are less than satisfactory since they were not choreographed as part of the dance. Originally planned in color with a different hue to each image, budget limitations necessitated the use of black and white. The film, however, does not suffer appreciably since the movement — the key element — is intact.

Under McLaren a new generation of experimental film-makers has produced some excellent animated films. Their developments are more those of theme and idea than of technique, though much of their work utilizes the technical developments pioneered by McLaren. Pierre Hébert in Op Hop Hop Op (1966) and Opus 3 (1966) used black and white geometric figures drawn on the film base in a game of retinal dazzlement manipulating different figures and synthetic sounds in varying patterns. In Perspective (1968) similar geometrical figures are given random movements which are then programmed by a computer into varying patterns as are synthetic sounds to create the accompanying musical score.

Ryan Larkin, working in charcoal, has produced two films in the chalk technique. Cityscape (1964) used semi-abstract forms which shift and change, backed by a sound track of traffic and other noises of the city. All movements and changes were done on the art work under the camera. In his second film — Syrinx (1965) — he used dissolves in the manner of La poulette grise combined with changes in the art work, resulting in a sense of movement which is perfect. In three minutes the Pan legend is told as the satyr pursues the maiden through a dense forest in a series of dissolves. Though he is able to catch her, he can never hold her as she disappears — metamorphosed into rocks, trees and mists. The rejected Pan sadly holds reed pipes, longing for the vanished image as the notes of Claude Debussy's flute solo — 'Syrinx' — die away.
In Developing (1968) Larkin turns again to an urban theme. Using colored ink on paper, he studies the movements of people on a street. People wait at bus stops, stare out of windows. Walking figures appear—these include a fat man whose body is a boiling mass of color; a teenage hood, hands in pockets, surrounded by a shimmering veil of color that blazes a warning. There is a hip-swinging girl and a mechanical many-footed walker. The number and speed of the figures increase until the screen is filled with tiny figures drawn on the film, rushing madly about. The action is stopped and the scene cuts to the sedentary figures waiting at the bus stop.

Arthur Lipsett took a different approach employing techniques that have been used, for the most part badly, by the American underground filmmakers. His first film—Very Nice Very Nice (1961)—is what might be called a study of contemporary western culture. The sound track was built first—composed of word bits from stock footage of old NFB documentaries. This was combined with filmographed faces, bits of advertising and news photos. Lipsett's sociological diagnoses finds the patient very sick, very sick, as he scores on all things which degrade the quality of human existence. Children romp in parks as trash piles up in the cities, junked aircraft lie in stacks—a fitting surrealist monument to human folly. "And they say the situation is getting worse," says a soft voice ending in a quiet giggle. "What is good" what is of value?" asks a voice. But the answer is only a meaningless," Auuuumm." At the end there is no platitude, only laconic applause and the statement, "Bravo, bravo. Very nice, Very nice."

Lipsett's quests and questions are pursued in his films in ever narrowing circles. 21-87 (1964) uses similar techniques in measuring the meaning
of life, the substitution of a number for identity. *Free Fall* (1964) concen-
trates mainly on human faces, making visual comparisons with the 
hurried scurrying of insects. The symbolism has become increasingly per-
sonal in these latter films which operate, according to their maker, at 
several levels. The filmograph techniques were abandoned completely in 
*A Trip Down Memory Lane* (1965) which is a sort of three-dimensional news-
reel using large sections of historical newsreel footage — including a 
funeral procession in Indiana, a Navy blimp disaster in which three sailors 
fell to their deaths. The fragmentation of the material which threw it 
into new juxtapositions in *Very Nice* is not there, with the result that 
the blocks of footage revert to a kind of grotesque parody of their origi-
nal meaning.

Distribution of these experimental films is growing as they find their 
audiences in the art house and collegiate circuits which are beginning to 
emerge. The experimental program, however, will not expand greatly in the 
future, nor, would it seem, will any of the others with the possible excep-
tion of classroom production and the enlargement of the recently created 
French animation section which will work mainly on French-language class-
room projects.

Because of the range of needs, the Animation Department will never 
become a one-technique operation, nor will it become a factory. The policy 
of having one man making one film or at most a three-man team on a film 
will continue. This precedent was set by McLaren and has been borne out 
by the high quality of the films produced. The few large group efforts 
have mainly been on big projects in cell animation or in cases where one 
person needs aid on an exceptionally big job. According to Director Robert
Verrall the department is at an optimum size—meeting the requirement of "Critical mass" — having enough depth of talent to be able to produce in all techniques. A larger unit would become cumbersome. Therefore, there will be more subcontracting of work, mainly in the sponsored area.

Verrall has achieved a double benefit out of this by having the subcontractors come to the Board and produce the film there, thus giving NFB animators the opportunity to be exposed to new ideas. Today, such guests have included Canadian Carolos Marchiori; and American John Hubley who is working on a classroom film. It will be in this area that much of the future effort will be put, not only in terms of producing quantity but in terms of up-grading quality as well. The illustrated lecture will no longer suffice and if "Stanley" takes another trip, it will be filled with wit and wonder.
CHAPTER X
SUMMARY, METHODS AND CONCLUSIONS

The National Film Board of Canada represents the most successful democratic government film production unit in existence. In 1965 the National Film Board celebrated its silver anniversary - twenty-five years of service to the cause of national communication in a democratic nation.

Even today the Film Board's twenty-nine years of existence may seem a rather modest achievement as compared to Hollywood film production, but it is a major one when compared to the United States Film Service; the British Empire Marketing Board, General Post Office and Crown Film unit; or the units set up in similar countries that failed to survive for more than a decade. The NFB, however, has done more than survive. It has produced a long list of excellent films that have been praised for their public service value, as well as for their artistic merit.

Before the formation of the National Film Board, commercial film production in Canada was limited to three independent companies in Vancouver, Montreal and Ottawa. These could hardly be considered as competition for Hollywood, whose products then and now provide the bulk of Canadian film entertainment.

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From time to time small groups of enterprising Canadians formed companies to produce feature films. While approximately 300 of these were finished between 1914 and 1965, none of them ever received wide enough distribution to do much more than cover the original production cost and many of them did not even do this. The key to a successful film industry lies in the producer’s ability to get his films into theaters, not simply to make them. The large theater chains in Canada were—and still are—controlled mainly by American and British interests. This served to complete the vicious circle surrounding the independent Canadian film-maker. Without assurance of distribution, money to produce films was difficult to obtain. When investors were willing to risk money, they were never willing to risk very much and the films produced were low budget and often hastily made products with a lackluster quality which destined them for obscurity.

The commercial companies wisely stayed out of the feature film game contenting themselves with the production of theatrical shorts and films for industry. Even this latter opportunity was not as lucrative as one might think. Many of the Canadian industries were subsidiaries of American firms and thus used the same American-made promotional and advertising films as the parent companies.

Associated Screen News of Canada, begun in 1920, was the first company to emerge. It was begun as a branch of an American newsreel company. When the American company went out of business two years later, ASN of Canada continued on its own, providing news footage of
Canadian events to all major film companies in the United States, the United Kingdom and France. In 1932 ASN began its own series of original theatrical films. Running between ten and twenty minutes in length, the series called "Canadian Cameos" covered topical bits of Canadians. This series continued until the company was sold in the mid-1950's and became Associated Screen Laboratories.

The other two pre-National Film Board companies were Vancouver Motion Pictures and Crawley Films, which were established just before the War and received most of their early work from the National Film Board. Thus, throughout the first thirty years of the century, Canada had little to offer in the commercial motion picture field. Bordering the United States with its well-developed industry, Canada found itself much in the same relationship as Belgium to France - overshadowed by the high-quality, high-quantity output of a powerful neighbor.

The one avenue open to Canadian Film development was government film production which developed well before similar efforts in both the United States and Great Britain. The Provinces of Ontario and Saskatchewan both had film units in the 1920's which produced films for the provincial departments. These were, in part, educational films, but served mainly to promote tourism. The depression of the 1930's brought an end to the activities of both these organizations.

The two Provincial units were organized on the same basis as the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau. This organization had its beginning in 1914 with the establishment of the Exhibits
and Publicity Bureau by the Department of Trade and Commerce. Films were first produced in 1916, with a series called "Water Power," to survey the hydro-industrial resources of the country. By 1921 the unit had grown in stature and became the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau. Other government departments were required to consult the Bureau on all media needs. Films, still photos and slides were to be prepared for all departments by this central organization. This situation was short lived. The Department of Parks and Agriculture soon obtained exemptions and set up their own units.

The MPE, however, was kept busy producing travel films for the Department of Trade and Commerce. These became the mainstay of its activity. The films were distributed throughout the United States, Latin America, Europe and even the Far East. The Bureau soon achieved a wide reputation for its pioneering, attracting the attention of many other Commonwealth countries and encouraging them to embark on similar ventures.

The depression and the advent of sound films struck the Bureau a one-two punch. The Provincial film units were discontinued almost immediately and the Motion Picture Bureau was forced to continue silent film production. Distribution figures plummeted. The Bureau was in an awkward position since much of its distribution came via films supplied at cost to the Canadian National Railway and several Canadian shipping lines. These commitments had to be honored, yet they brought no revenue. Theatrical distribution which would have brought in the needed funds to procure sound equipment had practically disappeared because no one was interested in silent films.
Sound equipment was finally obtained in 1936. With the loss of its international audience, as well as the tourist trade, the Bureau began to focus its efforts more on a national "interpretation" of Canada than on an international "selling" of the country. The films of the 1930's depicted the role of Canada in the First World War through two feature films, *Lest We Forget* (1935) and *Salute to Valour* (1937); other major productions were *Heritage* (1938) and *Unlocking Canada's Treasure Trove* (1936) which dealt with agriculture and mining. While distribution figures improved, the Bureau was by no means in the favorable position it had held previously. The competition from other departmental units hindered development. A report from Ross McLean in the Canadian High Commissioner's Office recommended improvements.

In 1938 the Canadian Government invited John Grierson to study the situation and submit a plan for a unified government film-producing organization. As a result of his proposal the National Film Act was passed on May 21, 1939, creating a National Film Board with authority to devise, from all the government departments' separate requirements, a unified policy; an integrated production schedule; and a plan for distribution to meet the needs of the respective departments.¹

¹Forsyth Hardy in John Grierson, *Grierson on Documentary*, p. 21.

Thus, the National Film Board was born out of the need for national and international education which Grierson had recognized.
in the early 1930's. Public speech and writing could not cope with communication needs in an increasingly complex world. Information had to be disseminated on a rapid mass basis. At the time, the power of the motion picture as an instrument of propaganda had been demonstrated in the USSR and Nazi Germany. If the free world was to survive, all means of public information and education had to be used to challenge the authoritarian standards. Either education is for democracy and against authoritarianism, or it is for authoritarianism. The day of standing aside is over because the issue has become too vital. It is from now on an instrument of the state with a part to play in fulfilling the democratic idea. It has the job of relating the individual to the responsibilities of that idea.

2Grierson on Documentary, p. 157.

John Grierson, the first Film Commissioner of the seven-man Film Board, had considerable control over Canadian film-making. As he saw it, the Board was to act as a public service agency to create in the Canadian people an understanding of the Nation's past, present, and future role in the world. As he put it, "A country is only as vital as its processes of self-education are vital."

3Ibid., p. 23.
On June 11, 1941, the Motion Picture Bureau was absorbed by the National Film Board into one organization. Grierson now had powers to decide the course of production. A number of outstanding British film-makers including Stuart Legg, Stanley Hawes, Raymond Spottiswoode and Norman McLaren were brought in to produce films and train the growing number of staff members.

Leisurely development was not possible since films were becoming a war weapon, helping to unite the Canadian home front and telling of Canada's contribution in the war effort. Two major film series were launched, "Canada Carries On," which covered home front and war activities and "World In Action," which dealt with broad political issues. Both were released in French as well as English to provide an in-depth political analysis of the issues involved in the War.

Theatrical distribution increased rapidly both in Canada and abroad. In Canada, however, theatrical distribution was only partially effective in getting the films to the population which was divided evenly between urban and rural areas. To reach the rural group, traveling projectionists were sent out with programs of films dealing not only with the war effort, but with subjects on child care, agriculture and nutrition. Similar circuits were set up in cities to reach workers through factories and trade unions.

By the end of the War the Film Board had grown from the thirty men in the Motion Picture Bureau to a staff of more than 800. Grierson and the British film-makers departed, leaving the operation in charge of Ross McLean who had been Grierson's assistant since the beginning of the War. The operation was run entirely by Canadians -
men, such as Tom Daly, Guy Glover, Vincent Paquette, Stanley Jackson, James Beveridge, Donald Fraser and Michael Spenser.

With the end of the War the demand for war subjects ended. "World In Action" was dropped and "Canada Carries On" was changed to cover topical subjects of general interest. Films for government sponsors were now for peacetime needs and packaged as units dealing with various subjects. A good example is the group of four films made for the Department of National Health and Welfare. The "Mental Mechanisms" series—The Feeling of Rejection, The Feeling of Hostility, Over-Dependency and Feelings of Depression produced between 1947 and 1950—have received world-wide acclaim and are still in use. Similar groups of films treated agricultural and industrial subjects.

The post-war era was one of recovery, and at the same time, one of conflict. Beginning in 1946 a number of politicians and members of the enlarged commercial film industry sought to have the Film Board discontinued, charging that it was competing unfairly with the film industry and was a waste of government money. A full investigation was made by the independent firm of Woods and Gordon and by the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts under the Hon. Vincent Massey.

As a result of the investigation, the Board was found to be doing an excellent job though it was hampered by a poor budgeting system which treated the Board as any other Federal Department, failing to take into account the fact that unlike other departments the National Film Board received revenues as well as spent money. In 1950 the Film
Act was revised to give the Board adequate working capital and a new budgeting system.

The Board entered its third phase under the new Film Commissioner, W. Arthur Irwin. Distribution increased in the 1950's as more film circuits were formed. Operation of these had been turned over to community film councils after the war. Although the Board supplied the films, it was the public that kept the operation functioning.

Film production turned more to a national-cum-international interpretation of Canada. The feature-length color film *Royal Journey* (1951) focused world attention on the Queen's visit to Canada. Films, such as *Opera School* and *Musician in the Family* dealt with the growing interest in the arts; *Roughnecks*, *Railroaders*, *Herring Hunt*, and *City of Gold* provided a social geography of Canada. The animated films of Norman McLaren drew world attention with their inventive techniques.

Under the third Commissioner, Dr. Albert W. Trueman, the Board entered the television era in 1953. Quality dramatic films began to emerge along with a Canadian brand of cinéma vérité which was introduced in a series called "Candid Eye." In 1956, a French Canadian, Guy Roberge, was installed as the Commissioner. More and more, production was becoming a bicultural affair as French-Canadian filmmakers were being hired and were producing films. The Board's move from Ottawa to Montreal and the demand for French-language television material speeded this process.

Television is still a dominant influence in the 1960's as the Board goes into its twenty-ninth year of existence. Under Commissioner Hugo McPherson, however, new ground is being broken. Three
feature films have been produced, *Le Grand Rock*, *Waiting for Caroline* and *The Ernie Game* as a part of the Board's contribution to Canada's Centennial. The huge multiscreen labyrinth at EXPO-67 constructed by the Board was one of the most popular exhibits. On a less spectacular, but more important level, is a group of films for the Canadian poverty program.

These are of three types. First: films to educate the general public with regard to the problems in the country. These are comparable to the films shown on network television in the United States discussing the plight of the poor. Second: films to provide information for professional workers in the field. These consist of filmed interviews and discussions that serve to give a direct voice to the poor. These are much the same as the encounter between Negroes and whites on the first Public Broadcast Laboratory program of this season. Third: films that can hardly be called films at all. It is rather a use of film as a measuring and teaching tool. Motion pictures are used to record conditions and statements by the poor about these conditions.

As various projects are initiated, the films are used to discuss and analyze the progress, or lack of it, in the various communities. In some cases the local people are being taught by the Board's staff to make these films themselves. This is a new and active use of the film medium which has implications that reach far beyond its standard passive use of reportage and gives the poor a public voice they have never had, as well as an opportunity to look critically at themselves from a new perspective.
With the exception of a 1951 doctoral dissertation there has been no critical writing on the National Film Board of Canada since the 1951 work, "Documentary Film and Democratic Government," by Richard MacCann of Harvard University. MacCann's work is an excellent study of the rise and fall of the United States Film Service, a film-board type of organization that existed in this country from 1936 to 1940. His study touched briefly on the British Government units under the Empire Marketing Board and General Post Office as well as the National Film Board of Canada. His assessment of the latter was brief, critical and cursory, influenced to a great degree by the charges, which at the time, were being leveled at the Board. Since then he has completely reversed his position which makes his early assessment of little value. He is at present engaged in re-working his study to include the work of the United States Office of War Information in film production and the activity of the United States Information Service. In this work (to be published) the section on the National Film Board will be deleted.

John Grierson's book, Grierson on Documentary, originally published in 1946, has been revised and reprinted, but contains no really new information on the National Film Board of Canada. Perhaps the biography of Grierson, now in preparation by Professor Jack Ellis of Northwestern University, will contain some new information, not only on the Film Board but on Grierson's British units. These books have been mentioned briefly in a number of works, namely, the Arts Enquiry's The Factual Film, and Paul Rotha's Documentary Film, which give fair historical accounts but offer little more than Grierson's own book.
Perhaps the most interesting study is a report on the only state-sponsored film board to exist in America - "The North Carolina Film Board: A Unique Program in Documentary and Educational Film Making," by Elmer Oettinger of the University of North Carolina. It gives an excellent account of this unit in the 1966 Yearbook of the Society of Cinematologists. The North Carolina Film Board is important since it was set up by former NFB of Canada personnel and based on the Canadian model. Its rise and fall adds considerable evidence to the strength of the structure of NFB of Canada.

In making an analysis of the National Film Board of Canada a critical historical approach was used. Comparative studies of similar organizations would be extremely valuable, but as has been indicated above, little published information exists. Unpublished reports and memoranda from units in Australia, New Zealand, Ghana, Nigeria, Puerto Rico, South Africa and Israel are used to provide information in an attempt to make judgements regarding the success of NFB of Canada from a comparative point of view with the hope of determining what problems are common to all such operations. This information has thus made it possible to formulate explanations of the success of NFB of Canada which can be applied on a broader basis to assess the progress of a similar organization and to provide information for the planning of a proposed organization.

The hypothesis or objectives of the study are thus analyzed on a comparative basis to determine the following:

1. First, there is a relationship between the success of a film board in a particular country and the formal structure
of that film board, i.e., its position in the overall governmental structure, its administration, its production and distribution methods, and its personnel.

2. Second, there is a relationship between the success of a film board in a particular country and that country's national predisposition to foster this form of government film production, i.e., the type of government, the attitude and strength of the existing commercial film industry, and the attitude of the public toward this form of governmental information dissemination.

3. Third, the National Film Board of Canada has unique features that can be singled out in its formal structure and in the national predisposition of Canada that are integral to its success as a producer of films of artistic and educational merit.

Because of the limited funds and the limited staff, i.e., one person, this study had to be directed to an analysis of NFB of Canada with only limited attention to research on related organizations. Although the author did not obtain as much material from these secondary sources as he would have liked, enough data was gathered to permit the stating of several general principles to promote, if not insure, the survival of a film board.

METHODS

Preliminary research on the project was begun in March of 1966, by collecting all information on the National Film Board available at
The Ohio State University. This consisted of a small amount of printed material found in The Ohio State University Library. Ten annual reports and some historical material were also obtained from the NFB information officer in Montreal. In addition, provisions were made for previewing of number of NFB films. These were provided from the Board's New York Office. By mid-June approximately seventy films had been screened and analyzed.

On June 23 the author arrived in Montreal to begin the first period of information-gathering. This first trip was spent mainly on paper work - analyzing the materials in the NFB library and screening a representative group of films. By the end of July notes had been taken on some 150 additional films. Notes and Xerox copies of about 500 unpublished documents, as well as press clippings, reports, etc., dealing with the various activities of the Board were collected.

Returning to Columbus on August 4, the next two months were spent organizing the data and transferring a large amount of hand-written notes to type script. The second job was to prepare for the second trip in September. This involved the listing of documents that had yet to be obtained and the preparation for the interviews to be conducted.

Returning to Montreal on October 3, the author spent until November 4 interviewing about fifty members of the NFB staff. On this trip, two days were spent in Ottawa gathering information on the Liaison and Still Photo sections of the Board which are still located there. In addition to the interviews, library research and the screening activities were continued. At the end of the stay, a mass
of material, more than equalling that of the previous trip had been collected. By now enough data had been compiled to complete a first draft on eight of the ten chapters of the final dissertation. The problem now was one of filling gaps rather than gulls. During the period of October 4th, 1966, to May 1st, 1967, materials were organized and an outline of the dissertation was prepared. In November writing was begun and by April the first three chapters totaling 166 pages were completed.

A third trip to Canada was made May 1 through May 26, 1967. By this time enough material had been compiled to complete a partial draft of the dissertation. During this trip, the author presented the first three chapters to members of the staff of NFB who read them and provided many useful comments. Interviews and film screenings continued. Emphasis on the interviews was with questions on how the film-board type of operation helped or hindered creative activity and with the kind of training the film-makers received. Historical information was also gleaned from these sources. Annual reports and documents offer mainly statistical information, thus interviews were needed to fill in the facts behind the dates and figures. This included the problems involved in making specific films, and relations with other film-makers, government officials, and commercial film producers. The interviews also served to check the accuracy of some of the information found in written form. This checking worked both ways. Two deaths - Hugh O'Connor and Donald Fraser - both of NFB, slowed progress to a degree. In the case of Fraser, it made it impossible for the
author to have access to a report prepared by Fraser on the Board's first program of classroom films.

Screening films was one of the author's most time-consuming activities. Most of these were available within the Board's film library. Some, however, had to be brought in from a storage building several miles away. These were mainly thirty-five millimeter prints of early NFB and MPB films. A professional projectionist was provided by the Board to show these films. Most of these archival prints, fortunately, were screened during the summer of 1966 and the spring of 1967.

On July 23, 1967, a fire swept through the National Film Board's storage building at Beaconsfield, Quebec. The building, a metal shed, was not equipped with fireproof vaults, a cooling system or even a water sprinkler. As a result the entire contents, some 47 million feet of film, most of it the highly explosive cellulose nitrate variety, went up in a very spectacular fire. To describe this loss as staggering would be a wild understatement. The Board lost the originals and protection prints of all of its productions from 1939, the year of its creation, to 1952; and all of its news film from 1942 to mid-July 1967. The Canadian Film Institute which also had film stored in the building, lost nearly all of its collection of Canadian and other film - totalling 1 million feet - some of this material dated back to 1920.

The worst loss was to CFI since the raison d'être of its archive has practically vanished. It is highly doubtful that any of this material can ever be recovered via the discovery of additional prints. The Film Board fared somewhat better. Although the news-film collection
is gone forever, the majority of the films can be "reconstituted" as one of the Film Board wits put it. Requests have been sent out to all major libraries and depositories operated by the Board and probably to such places as The British Film Institute and the Museum of Modern Art. Thirty-five millimeter positives of many of these films still exist and can be used to make additional prints.

The Board also has, in its Montreal vaults, a number of sixteen millimeter release prints of these early films. It was from this collection that the author was obtaining the majority of the prints that were screened for this study. Because, in some instances, these were believed to be the only ones in existence, it was necessary to get clearance before screening them. In a few cases where no other copies could be found, the author was unable to see the film, as was the case with films that had been destroyed.

With the completion of a final trip to Montreal, September 17, to October 14, the necessary information to finish the study was gathered. This included interviewing an important resource person—Gordon Sparling. Sparling has been in the motion picture industry since the early 1920's. He worked for Associated Screen News, the only newsreel company to survive in Canada, as well as for the National Film Board. He is also engaged in film research and has provided a great deal of valuable information.

The second task in the study was to look at the major films produced by NFB during the past year. The remainder of the work included interviews with a number of film-makers who were on location shooting films or were otherwise not available during earlier
visits. The author was also able to talk with the new Film Commission­
er Hugo McPherson, who was appointed in the summer of 1967. An
interview with the Acting Commissioner, Grant McLean, regarding the
future of the Board, its production potential and plans for expansion
yielded important information.

The author was fortunate in being able in interview Stanley
Hawes, an ex-NFB film-maker who is now head of the Australian Com­
monwealth Film Unit. Mr. Hawes provided new insights into the problems
faced by both the now defunct General Post Office Film Unit in Britian
and his own active unit in Australia. What he said strengthened the
findings that all such government units face similar crises and
growing pains.

The problem of screening films and conducting interviews was
mainly one of logistics. More important was the problem of selection.
The Board's output from 1941 to 1968 stands at something over 6500
original films. A complete list is now being compiled to facilitate
print restoration. Number alone made it impossible to screen all the
films. Therefore, a choice had to be made. The purpose of this study
was to judge the influence and success of the Board, thus a random
sampling was found to be unsuitable. While such a selection would
result in a statistically reliable cross-section of the Board's pro­
duction, a number of highly influential films, i.e., those reaching
great numbers of people, winning critical acclaim and affecting the
work of film-makers elsewhere, might well be missed. Therefore, the
films screened and discussed were selected to give a total picture
of the Board's work. These can be described as: 1. Representative
films - those which typify a particular style or technique or work, a particular subject matter and a particular time period. 2. Exceptional films - these may be either critically acclaimed or condemned. These are generally large-budget films that have received wide distribution and critical attention. 3. Key films - these may fall into the exceptional category, but not always. Their significance is that they set a trend or developed a technique that influenced later production. The selection of these films was on the basis of: 1. Critical reviews in books and magazines. 2. Annual and other reports on production and distribution prepared by the Board. 3. Interviews with NFB production and distribution personnel. While this method is far from perfect it was the only feasible plan. The research plan consisted of one man - the author - who had to travel 600 miles to Montreal and whose stay in that city was limited by his financial situation to a few months.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In terms of the first objective, i.e., the relationship of success of a film board to formal structure, the following can be noted. The legal status of the National Film Board of Canada was very important to its success. When John Grierson presented his plan for the Board he pressed for and received a governmental Act, passed by the Canadian Parliament, to establish the National Film Board. This Act spelled out in clear terms the duties of the Board, making it sole producer of government films and giving it a regular annual budget and freedom to set up its own film program.
The importance of these elements becomes obvious in comparing the National Film Board to its predecessor, the Motion Picture Bureau, or the units led by Grierson in England. The MPB was a good plan in name only. Without the strength of an act of Parliament, other departments soon formed their own units which lowered the efficiency of the operation. It was also tied directly to the Department of Trade and Commerce and as such served mainly as an arm of this one department, producing travelogs rather than interpretive films in the national interest.

This was not the case with the British Empire Marketing Board film unit which allowed film-makers a wide latitude in subject, the object of EMB being to promote Commonwealth Trade. However, when the EMB was dissolved in 1932 the film unit was without funds. It was only through the skill of Grierson and others that the unit was moved intact to work for the General Post Office. Here again the situation was much like that of the MPB, with the unit having to limit its subject matter to fit the needs of a single government agency.

The importance of a regular and guaranteed source of money cannot be underestimated. Grierson learned that this can only be achieved through strong legislation giving the film unit a permanent status. The United States Film Service of Pare Lorentz suffered from this problem; as did the North Carolina Film Board. The United States Film Service began under the Resettlement Administration program in 1936. When this was dissolved the unit moved to another agency. After several moves, the Film Service ran out of agencies that would finance it, and thus, it ended after a short, though memorable, career.
The North Carolina Film Board was budgeted on an "experimental" basis. After making several films that were politically unpopular, the budget was simply not renewed. The British Crown Film unit that was the third incarnation of the EMB-GPO operation met a similar end, voted out of existence, not because it was unpopular but because it was simply felt to be unnecessary. When the National Film Board of Canada came under attack, putting it out of operation was not a simple matter since it required a Parliamentary investigation to terminate it. This gave the Board an opportunity to present its case, which it did, and happily won a new lease on life.

The distribution policy of the Board was also instrumental in its success. The MPB found itself ham-strung in the late 1920's and early 1930's when nearly all of its budget was going into the production of great quantities of prints which were supplied at cost to the railways and shipping lines. Distribution of the silent films thus continued, but at the cost of a world-wide theatrical market that could have been maintained had the Bureau bought the necessary equipment to produce sound films.

Grierson made it a strict policy that there would be no "giveaways." Theatrical chains would have to buy the Board's films. Free films were often refused on the basis of "if it's free it can't be any good" and "if it's free it's probably propaganda and also not good." His judgements proved to be right. Nevertheless, the total audience had to be reached. It was to achieve this that the traveling circuits were begun, but even here the free element was minimized as the people themselves were urged to buy the projection equipment.
through the film councils and to take over the mechanics of moving
the film packages from community to community. The loyalty and
support of this audience was critical when the Board came under
attack.

The personnel of the NFB has always been hired on the basis of
ability to learn and an interest in creative work. Unlike the civil
servants of the MPBi, the Film Board staff was recruited on a trial
basis; those who showed promise were kept, those who did not were
released. Most of those who remained gave as their reason the cre­
avive freedom the Board offered. Such a situation attracts the type
of person who is willing to experiment and try new ideas and dis­
courages those who are not. This coupled with the fact that the
Board produces a greater variety of films than any organization of
comparable size would seem to be the reasons for its record of out­
standing films.

In terms of the second objective - national predisposition
toward the Film Board operation - the following seems to hold true.
Democratic governments appear to be the only type of governments that
will tolerate such an organization. Many countries in the Communist
Bloc have state film agencies but these are all directly controlled
by the party in power and are used to disseminate party philosophy.
This does not explain the role of the "National Film Board" of the
Republic of South Africa, whose regime is not "democratic" by American
standards, yet is supposedly based on the Canadian model. Nor does
define the role of the United States Information Agency which is
independent of both parties, yet disseminates information only to
other countries and is forbidden by law to distribute films within the United States itself.

Within democracies, tolerance of a film board seems to depend mainly on the strength and attitude of the existing film industry. In the United Kingdom the Empire Marketing Board unit did not arouse any great opposition in the private film industry, evidently because it was not considered large enough to constitute a threat. In the United States the United States Film Service met with minor opposition from Hollywood. It was not, however, until the War that Hollywood felt that there might be a threat from government film production. With the end of the War the industry lobbied effectively to see that the large office of War Information organization ceased its internal dissemination of films. The success of this is evident today in the policy of the aforementioned United States Information Agency, not to produce for internal consumption.

In Canada there was no film industry to complain when the Motion Picture Bureau was created. Even when the National Film Board was established there were no outcries since the Film Board began as a regulatory and not as a production agency. The relationship between the Motion Picture Bureau and Associated Screen News, the only large producer, was good. A.S.N. did sound recording for the Bureau and some processing. While A.S.N. might have liked the Bureau restricted or abolished, no overt moves were made to that effect.

During the War, production was booming. With contracts from a host of newly-created Federal agencies, the National Film Board subcontracted a considerable amount of work, work which served in many
instances to subsidize budding film companies. The period of happiness ended with the War. With its budget cut and fewer contracts, the Board no longer provided work for the industry which had grown on the war-time boom. Communist "spy" scandals in the Canadian Government and industry charges of unfair competition nearly destroyed the Board.

It was at this point and only in the case of this one particular film agency discussed herein that anything that could be called "public opinion" played a part in its destiny. The investigation into the Board's activities included surveys of the film councils and other small organizations using its product. While NFB was being attacked in the press and in Parliament, it was being highly praised and vigorously defended at the grass-roots level. It was this support that was the key factor in the Board's surviving the crisis of 1950.

In singling out features that have made the National Film Board of Canada unique it becomes obvious that these are interlocked in a legal-administrative-philosophical whole. Strong legislation, i.e., the Film Act, provided a dependable operating fund, a legal base safe from instant political liquidation and an autonomous production policy. This, in turn, proved attractive to talented film-makers who produced good films. The circuit distribution program brought these films to the people who benefited from them and suggested ways to improve them. These people supported the Board in its hour of need; voicing their support through the channels opened by the investigation surveys which were a result of the legal strength of
the Film Act. While this is over-simplifying what actually happened, it does bring into focus the main strength of the National Film Board of Canada and the reason for its success.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although it is possible to enumerate a number of principles explaining how the National Film Board of Canada was established and flourished in that country, it is not possible to transfer these principles into a set of rules that can be applied anywhere and that will guarantee the success of a comparable organization. While the film agencies discussed in this report are similar, they are not matched. Each was subject to a number of individual pressures which were unique.

In discussing the success of the National Film Board of Canada, the role of Grierson and his forceful personality must not be minimized. The Motion Picture Bureau had in writing a provision whereby it was the sole producer of government films. However, there was no one in the Bureau who was willing or able to make this a working reality. Grierson had advantages that those in the MPB did not. He had had similar experiences and frustrations and it must be admitted that in England he had not been able to do much about them. Coming to Canada, however, he arrived as "The Expert," a man with an outstanding record and no human failings. Thus equipped, he was able to push through his plan for the Film Act without an undue amount of criticism or opposition. It must also be noted that the War, coming when it did, had a profound catalytic effect on the growth
of the Board. Had the NFB developed in a peace-time situation, it is
doubtful if its expansion would have been nearly so rapid.

Nevertheless, the soundness of the legal-philosophical, adminis­
trative ground work of the National Film Board of Canada cannot be
denied and it would seem that while these bases cannot be applied as
rules for success, they certainly appear to be worthwhile guidelines
for it. Therefore, as guidelines - the following are presented as
a base for a governmental unit of the Film Board type:

1. Strong legislation insuring the unit of:
   A. A dependable source of budget money.
   B. A clearly defined role in the government structure,
      e.g., to produce all films for all other departments.
   C. An autonomous administration allowing it to function
      as a free agent determining its own production program,
      e.g., to produce films to interpret Canada to Canadians
      and to peoples over the world.
   D. The power to defend itself via open hearings if
      attacked.

2. A production policy that will attract creative people,
   i.e., one allowing film-makers a certain amount of free­
dom to engage in experimentation in producing Board films.

3. A distribution program that will get the Board's films
to the audiences. This may use existing channels; i.e.,
   theaters; television or newly created ones; i.e.,
circuits.
4. A system of feedback from the film users that will provide information as to their relative success. This includes liaison with audiences by field representatives to determine the value of the films - how they are received and used and to discover what needs exist and how they may be met. Another kind of liaison is needed between the Board and the sponsoring departments who commission films to be made. NFB of Canada does both. MacCann, in his study, places heavy emphasis on this aspect.

Using the above guidelines, the question that next arises is one of their application. Perhaps the best case can be made for their use in setting up film boards in emerging nations. This has been done in two African Republics, Ghana and Nigeria, in 1962 and 1963. The initial success, unfortunately, has been curtailed by the civil disorders that have beset both of these countries in recent years. Nevertheless, the units in Australia and New Zealand appear to be functioning well, providing a kind of public information that could not be produced by private enterprise.

It is this ability that makes the film board a valuable asset to any government. Although commercial firms could easily make all the films needed by government departments, they are not willing, nor could they be expected to produce information films which could not insure a monetary return. It was in the public information area that both the United States Film Service and the North Carolina Film
Board operated, and so it would seem, could continue to operate, with
the political climate permitting.

At the university level where photography departments provide
film production services for other departments and in certain cases
for state agencies as well, a film-board production set-up would bene­
fit the state or university as well as it would a nation.

Considerable refinement is needed of the guidelines for success
presented in this study so that they may be more clearly stated and
new ones added. As indicated earlier, studies of film board operations
around the world are needed. To date the information is fragmentary
and often superficial. No good comparative historical studies of
these organizations exist. More important, the information already
collected has not been readily available in any written form to those
desiring it, e.g., government or other organizations wishing to create
a film board. Thus, the second major recommendation would be for the
information obtained from the proposed studies to be made readily
available. It is indeed ironic that in this age of mass communication,
information on the workings of important mass media producers is
passed almost exclusively by the oldest form of communication — word
of mouth.
APPENDIX A

REPORT BY JOHN GRIERSON ON THE
FILM NEEDS OF CANADA

1. POLICY

Government film propaganda falls roughly into four categories.

(a) Educational or informative films designed to fit into the educational system and create a body of general knowledge about a country, department, organization or product.

(b) Trade publicity films designed to recommend or sell a particular product to the public.

(c) Departmental films designed to fit into the specialized educational schemes of a department; e.g., a film to teach farmers better methods of marketing.

(d) Prestige films designed to convey ideas and create loyalties with regard to a country, department or organization. They are generally of a documentary type, i.e., they bring alive in narrative or dramatic terms some particular aspect of community life and achievement.

2. Educational, trade publicity and departmental films are, as a rule, circulated only to non-theatrical audiences. (Tourist publicity films are an exception.) They are shown in schools, halls and other community centres. They are distributed from central libraries or are taken around to schools and public halls by travelling projection units. These travelling projection services have to be set up and maintained.

3. Prestige films, because of their narrative and imaginative content, circulate to the theatres. Such prestige films, made for the British Government, have achieved large commercial success in the British theatres. They are also a vital factor in the success of trade publicity displays. Programmes of trade publicity films need the support of this more imaginative type of film if they are to make wide and deep public appeal. These films are also of first class importance in the educational film field. By bringing alive different aspects of a country's life and work in an imaginative way, they build up in the younger generation, an effective system...
of loyalties. Such films are in great demand by teachers as an essential factor in the teaching of modern citizenship. (At a time when there is so much talk of sectionalism in Canada, they might be of particular value in emphasizing national perspectives to the Canadian people.)

4. The production methods and policy of the Canadian Government should be considered in the light of all four requirements. The military relation between artillery barrage and infantry advance has its counterpart in the relation between background propaganda and foreground (or direct) publicity. All experience in the field goes to show that neither is effective without the other. An ideal propaganda policy would see to it (a) that the idea of Canada is dramatized and brought into the imagination of the home country, (b) that information about Canada is made an integral part of the public's general knowledge, (c) that direct trade publicity is organized to make the fullest use of the pro-Canada sentiments thus created.

5. Much misunderstanding and inefficiency has resulted in the past from a failure to see this propaganda process as a whole. In Great Britain several organizations have concentrated on direct (produce selling) publicity films to the exclusion of selling the idea (i.e., qualities, skills, national perspectives) of the organization. The greater business success which has attended the wider conception has gradually broken down their attitude. Government Departments like the G.P.O., Labour, Health and the Scottish Office, and commercial organizations like Gas, Oil, Electricity, Imperial Airways, have accepted the wider policy. It is significant that the Millers Mutual Association, regarded by many as the most die-hard "direct publicity" exponents of all, have reversed their policy and will produce this year's most ambitious documentary film on Britain's wheat supply. The reason for this change of front has been the larger public attention and prestige obtained by the G.P.O., Gas and others. Their films have found access to the theatres, they have received newspaper attention and, in some cases, front page notice, all over the country and they have, to everyone's realization, changed the public's disposition toward the organization in question. A classic example of the prestige policy in propaganda is the Gas Association's sponsorship of films on nutrition and on London's fifty years of social progress. Producing several films of similar public interest each year, the Gas Association has been complimented by newspapers and public alike on its progressive public service; the idea of gas as a modern, scientific product has been built up, and the disposition towards its direct publicity has altered dramatically in consequence. An even better example would be found in the propaganda work of the G.P.O. but, insofar as gas represents one of the most difficult subjects for propaganda, its success is the more remarkable and significant.
6. A government has an ever greater call to use this deeper approach to propaganda than any commercial organization, if only because of the superior opportunities which are available to it. Unlike many commercial organizations, it has access to the educational system and can there plant the idea of Canada in terms of both imaginative appeal and curricular information. Because of its national standing and the dramatic materials from which it can draw, it has much easier access to the theatres than any commercial organization. Because of its part in the British Commonwealth, there are, so far as Britain is concerned, sentiments now latent in the public mind which only await an imaginative propaganda approach to be made active.

7. WEAKNESS IN PRODUCTION SET-UP

Examination of Canadian Government film work suggests that this wider and more penetrating attitude towards film propaganda has not been matured.

8. The Canadian Government has an interesting record in film propaganda. It began its film work years before the British and other Dominion Governments. Its films were the mainstay of the Empire Marketing Board when, in 1931, it set out to create a demand for films in schools and community centres. In fact, Canadian films enjoyed a practical monopoly in this field between 1931 and 1934. Since then, there have been remarkable developments, chief of which has been an increasing demand for films of a documentary and prestige type both in the theatres and the non-theatrical field. By building up and meeting that demand, British Government Departments, the South African Government and large British industries have tended to take the propaganda limelight from Canada. To a field which has become more and more sophisticated in its requirements, Canada has provided few films since 1931. Its propaganda policy is still directed to the provisions of films of the departmental and trade publicity type. While these are competent, Canada is out of date in that it produces no prestige or documentary films at all, and is not organized to do so. With theatres, schools and public organizations providing remarkable opportunities for instilling the idea of Canada into British and other publics, it has today little or nothing of first-class quality to give.

9. The three principal weaknesses I find are:

(a) Lack of a considered directive policy with regard to propaganda for Canada as a whole. (This calls for a policy committee.)

(b) Lack of a strong creative film unit which might carry out that policy and interpret it in imaginative terms; with which goes the failure to realize the full possibilities of the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau and the failure to give it adequate responsibility and support. (This calls for a change of policy regarding the Motion Picture Bureau.)
(c) The parochialism of the different departments; the fact that the departments pursue their own departmental interest, each in its own way, without regard to the propaganda interest of Canada as a whole. (This calls for co-ordination of Government film activities.)

10. **POLICY**

The Minister of Trade and Commerce should set up a continuing committee whose specific duty would be to keep Canadian propaganda film policy under review, keep in touch with Government film work, and advise the Minister from time to time as to its problems and its further possibilities. This Committee should be a small one of, say, six or seven members, and the government film officer should attend its meetings. A representative of the High Commissioner in London should be a member; and it would be valuable to have on it one public figure associated with the press, and either the chairman or director of the C.B.C. The Committee should also aid in drawing up the production schedule for the year insofar as it can be made out. To this end, close contact should be maintained, through its executive officer, with departments of the Government and with the Chairman of the Canadian House Committee, particularly during the period prior to the opening of the production season. The suggestion that outside members from the press and radio be added to the Committee is included partly for the freshness of viewpoint which outsiders might bring and partly because the alliance of press and radio should be sought if Canadian Government propaganda is to be given the fullest public notice and support.


The correlation of the film work of the departments and the relation of departmental to national requirements, will need a great deal of work and considerable time to effect. As hereunder indicated, the building up of the creative power of the Motion Picture Bureau will be similarly arduous. It would be an advantage, therefore, at the beginning, to separate the function of the executive officer of the Committee and the function of directing the Motion Picture Bureau.

The executive officer, acting temporarily as government film officer, will be responsible for the work of coordination and helping the Committee make its word flesh. I envisage that a proportion of Government film work would go to outside commercial units, though all of it would remain under central Government supervision and control. It would be the work of the executive officer of the Committee, therefore, to establish standards of quality and economy applicable both to the Bureau and to the outside commercial units used. The Director of the Bureau will have his work cut out to raise the standard of the Bureau as high as available manpower permits it.
Both functions will require, of course, technical film knowledge of the highest kind. The executive officer will, in particular, require an imaginative sense of national film possibilities as a whole. After the preliminary stage, the function of executive officer to the Committee and supervision of the Bureau should be combined in the single role of Government Film Officer.

As the Government's expert in translating the propagandist needs of the Government into film the Government Film Officer should be given appropriate status and responsibility. Such responsibility should carry with it the necessary authority and power of initiative. In the matter of films, he should have appropriate authority in all departments and he should be free--within the limits of governmental responsibility--to discuss the development of his film work in public. He should not, as at present, have to seek prior authority for the minutiae of his departmental work.

Regarding the use of outside commercial units for a proportion of the work (though under central Government control) I need only point to this argument. While appreciating the advantage of building its own Bureau to the highest pitch of efficiency and setting a national standard of quality, a Government might rightly be criticized if it did not at the same time take advantage of all the film abilities and machineries available to it inside its own country. In a country like Canada, where so much is expected of a relatively small population, this may be specially advisable.

12. CREATIVE MAN POWER

The Bureau should be given more creative manpower and there is no use hoping for any development of Canadian Government film propaganda without it. Captain Badgley is widely respected for his technical sense and for his talent in making contacts, and without question the technical capacity of his plant is very high. I have heard it professionally described as the best equipped small plant on the continent. It is, therefore, an asset of value and importance to the Government. But the technical capacity of the Bureau is far in excess of its creative capacity; and the first is useless without the other.

Captain Badgley's staff consists entirely of technical functionaries and he is himself expected to look after all creative activities in respect of scenario and editorial work. The abilities required for film production are various and different, and it is too much to expect one man to combine all the virtues necessary. It is common practice everywhere in film production to see that the producer is supported on the creative side with every inventive ability which can reasonably be brought to his service and that he is free to employ special experts both as assistant producers and as scenario writers, as occasion demands. This is not done under the system now operating.
The Bureau suffers too, from the permanence of its staff. Film making, like all creative processes, requires a continual flow of fresh ideas. This is particularly necessary in view of the swift development of film technique, the intense, competition between different countries for place on the world's screens, and the continuous need for experiment. A permanent staff, and particularly one comprised wholly of technical functionaries, is not likely to build up a body of criticism and be fully sensitive to new developments on the creative side of cinema.

Outside experience indicates that the most efficient, most economical and progressive method is to mix permanent staff with temporary staff brought in for set periods on a fee-paid basis. The permanent staff insures departmental order and solic continuity. The temporary addition of assistant producers and scenario writers whose abilities are specially suited to a particular film, means the introduction of fresh ideas and a certain amount of drive. In the case of a group of films, now being produced in Great Britain, the sum of $500 has been allowed on each film for scenario work alone. With this sum, the producer has been able to pay the fees of three, four and even five temporary scenario writers, collating their ideas in the final scenario. In each case, too, a special assistant producer has been paid a fee of $1,000 to $1,250 to carry out actual production under the film officer's supervision. I suggest that a similar method be adopted in the case of special prestige films produced by the Bureau.

The essence of the method is that half the value of these additions is that they are temporary additions, working to a single purpose. The Bureau should be put in the position of picking and choosing from among the experts available in any country according to the nature of the film to be made. It may be that the government film officer will wish, by relatively frequent employment, to develop young Canadian writers and directors, but the temporary factor has, nevertheless, a virtue of its own.

It is my proposal that in the case of prestige or documentary films, steps be taken (a) to secure a temporary associate producer for each film, (b) to employ a scenario writer to supervise the scenarios of all films on the annual schedule; (c) to employ occasional scenario or idea men, as required. They should be employed on a fee-paid basis and not by the week. The best associate producers available in Great Britain or the United States should be sought to begin with, preferably from Great Britain. They should cost $1,250 to $2,000 a picture. (A larger figure might, of course, be necessary in special cases.) Such fees should be included as part of the scheduled cost of production of the particular film to which the outside expert is assigned.
13. TRADE PUBLICITY FILMS

I am satisfied that the Bureau, is in general, adequately equipped for the production of trade publicity films. It may be felt that the standard achieved by certain British and United States units is higher than the present Canadian standard. I do not believe there is anything in this outside achievement which the Bureau cannot match or even better if scenario power is added to it. The addition of scenario power to the Bureau is far more economical than introducing units from outside; and, taking the long view, it will be far better for Canadian production to create a growing point at the Bureau than to bring in outside units, however able, for a purely temporary purpose. Scenario power should be added to the Bureau by the Temporary employment of scenario writers expert in trade publicity film work. It is another question if trade publicity films dealing with materials in Great Britain are called for. Here, English companies should be given an opportunity of quoting for the whole production.

14. EDUCATIONAL FILMS

A good prestige film will, as a rule, worry more about the spirit of the subject than about the detail of it. The trade publicity film will not, as a rule, be exactly suited to educational requirements. A series of films is wanted which will concentrate on giving information but in precisely the right proportion and order which suit the requirements of educational curricula. The section of this report dealing with the Imperial Institute indicates this need for films which will fit into the teaching of geography and history. Only a few silent films are required and little or no new photography or production need be undertaken, but, for circulation in Great Britain, they would have to be arranged under the supervision of someone acquainted with British teaching requirements. No Dominion has yet produced an authoritative set of films specifically for teaching purposes. They would assist the schools and undoubtedly be most welcome addition to the Empire library this winter. The sole additional requirement, from the point of view of the Bureau, would be the addition of an educational expert from Britain for a period of from three to four months, on a fee-paid basis; the fee to be drawn from the sum allocated for the production. The alternative would be the production of a series in England, the required material being sent over from the Bureau. Under this latter arrangement, however, the choice of the most suitable illustrative material would present some difficulty. Expert educational advice should be taken to ensure that the series made for Great Britain is also useful for Canadian and United States circulation.

15. CO-ORDINATION OF THE FILM ACTIVITIES OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

At present the Motion Picture Bureau is too much regarded as a section of the Department of Trade and Commerce, and the attitude of other departments is determined accordingly. While maintaining it
under Trade and Commerce for purposes of discipline and rations, it would be wise to have its position redefined as, in principle, the central agency for the film work of all departments. This involves a radical alteration in Canadian Government film activities and it is worth putting down the state of affairs in some detail. Co-ordination seems to be a crying need.

16. TOURIST FILMS

I gather that at least four departments of the Government engage in tourist publicity. Of these, the Canadian National Railways is presumably a special case, but some co-ordination might usefully be effected between the propaganda services of the Dominion Travel Bureau, the Parks Bureau, and the Department of Trade and Commerce. Though the Dominion Travel Bureau receives a large vote for publicity, none of this is spent on films. Responsibility for tourist films, which it might reasonably be expected to share, is assumed by the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Parks Bureau.

17. The Film Bureau's tourist films are made in interesting circumstances. One might gather from the Bureau's production of tourist films that it was a policy decision of the Department of Trade and Commerce to give tourism first place in its propaganda. But it seems to me not so much a matter of policy as of cheapness. I am told that the real reason for the scenic emphasis is that it is only from organizations like the C.N.R. and the C.P.R., that the film bureau gets active cooperation—that is to say, transportation and a sharing of costs—and that, given similar cooperation by other Departments, the production schedule for the year might very well be different. It appears to me that, while this may have been sensible practice in the past, it is not a solid basis for work in the future. The production schedule for the year should surely be determined after a careful balancing of propaganda requirements from the national point of view, rather than by the degree of friendly relationship with particular organizations. It may be that on a considered production schedule, in which all the propaganda interests of Canada were weighed and related, tourism would still be of first importance. If so, some attempt might be made to relieve the Department of Trade and Commerce from part of the necessary outlay by seeing to it that part of the grant of the Dominion Travel Bureau was devoted to the support of tourist films.

18. Equally important is the need to bring the making of tourist films under a single schedule of work. In the past, the Parks Bureau has been independent on its film work. It has spent a considerable amount of money but has not used the technical facilities provided by the Government at the Film Bureau. As already pointed out, the technical capacity at the Film Bureau is high and it could, in fact, take much more technical work than it does, without need to increase its facilities or staff. It would represent an economy to the Government to keep the Bureau's machine working at a higher pitch. Instead of using this machine, the parks bureau has been paying for
outside facilities. Its method has been to give a commercial company full use of its films for a period, in return for the developing of its negatives and the supplying of a print. This would seem to amount to selling distribution rights of a film for as little as $50.00. No doubt this policy could be defended on the score that valuable theatrical distribution is thereby secured, but one wishes that the disposal of government film properties and the production of films were under some central control and determined on a calculated policy. It is unsatisfactory that the Bureau and the Parks Bureau should both make tourist films independently of each other. They have been working at cross purposes. Apart from the possible wastage of government money through the purchase of outside facilities, there has been no understanding in production. It has been possible for both film units to schedule the same subjects for production, and, in fact, follow each other into a particular location, with double expense to the government in respect of personnel, equipment and travelling. In one case, the request for a film of Prince Edward Island was made to both Departments, and a film on this subject was undertaken by both Departments. Two units proceeded to the location, worked separately and to different script ideas; and it was only in a later stage that the films were combined in a single final picture. The separation of the two Departments has been so marked in the past that the Film Bureau has not been able to draw freely on the film materials of the Parks Bureau even though it was prepared to pay for them.

19. In distribution, the same situation obtains. When a request for Canadian films was received from South Africa, the films actually went out in two shipments; one from the Film Bureau and one from the Parks Bureau, the Film Bureau, to England and the distribution of Parks films in that country has had a limited relation to the distribution system governed by Canada House. If, as a result, Canadian films are anywhere and everywhere competing with each other as to terms and conditions of distribution and borrowing and, in general out of control from a propaganda point of view, this is only to be expected.

20. This piecemeal and undisciplined disposition of production monies and distribution monies in the tourist field should be eradicated. A production schedule covering the interests of the Parks Bureau and the Tourist Bureau should be drawn up each year. The Government's own production facilities should be used to a maximum; the various grants made for tourist propaganda should carry their proportion of the cost; a creative personnel should be engaged which will give the most effective film results and, one hopes, introduce more variety into the style of these films. Distribution to the general public should be effected through one channel, the Film Bureau, and a common policy laid down governing the terms and conditions of borrowing. If the Parks Bureau and the Dominion Tourist Bureau wish to engage in some specialized forms of
distribution, there is nothing to prevent an arrangement by which a central organization (the Film Bureau) handles all general distribution to the public, while the particular Department retains prints for specialized showings through its own office and lectures. Nor, if production is centralized in the Film Bureau, is there anything to prevent the supervision by a particular department of the making of films intended for its specialized uses. What seems intolerable is that particular departments, out of departmental vanity, should be permitted to create film systems of their own ad infinitum, multiply the basic expenses of the Government film services, and forget the propagandist interests of Canada as a whole in the process.

21. It seems clear that coordination of the Government's film activities must be effected if there is to be planned progress in film propaganda. It would mean considerable economy. Even more important, however, is the fact that an imaginative account of Canadian materials and resources is impossible under present conditions. The Departments make their own educational films; the Department of Trade and Commerce--also pursuing its own immediate function--makes trade publicity films; and it is no one's responsibility to give a national perspective to any particular subject. If, as I have suggested, trade publicity cannot be effective without a solid background of national or prestige propaganda, this responsibility falls naturally to the Department of Trade and Commerce, and its Motion Picture Bureau is the natural instrument for carrying out the work. At the same time, the Departments must be brought to look beyond their own departmental interests and participate in the larger propaganda scheme. They can all provide first rate themes for national propaganda and an imaginative rendering of their work would represent valuable public relations for the departments concerned.

22. PROPOSALS

I have the following proposals to make in respect of co-ordination and co-operation:

The Committee, which I suggested should keep the activities of the Motion Picture Bureau under review, should also keep under review the film activities and possibilities of other departments. If the Chairman of that committee is the representative of the Ministry of Trade and Commerce, two members are chosen from outside the Government Service and one member is the representative of the High Commissioner in London, the two remaining members might well be drawn from different departments every year rather than build a large committee on which every department had its representative. Members would thereby be encouraged to relate departmental to national requirements.

The functions of the executive officer of the committee and his relationship to the Motion Picture Bureau have been sufficiently indicated in Paragraph 11.
23. The following arrangements should be aimed at: Production: (a) All departments should work through the Government film officer and the fullest use should be made of the technical facilities of the Government Film Bureau. In certain cases it may be found advisable to cooperate with outside commercial units, but all such work should remain under the control of the Government film officer. (b) Departments should be free to supervise films which are to be used for their own specialized lecture or educational service, but (c) where films are intended for distribution to the public, translation into film terms should be regarded as a professional matter for the Government film officer and his associate producers. (d) The cost of films which perform publicity services for which special monies have been voted, should be either borne on the publicity votes concerned or shared by the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Department concerned; possibly on the lines of the Department of Trade and Commerce providing its permanent personnel and equipment and the cooperating department meeting the other costs of production. This would mean relating the annual production schedule to the publicity monies available in the Dominion Tourist Bureau, the National Parks Bureau, the Mines Department, the Agriculture Department, The Fisheries Department, etc.

24. DISTRIBUTION

(a) The present depressing multiplicity of distribution services should be eliminated. (b) Contracting for theatrical circulation should be regarded as a highly professional and skilled affair and better done through the Government's responsible film organization. (c) Non-theatrical circulation is capable of vast development both at home and overseas and a central agency is necessary. There will otherwise be unnecessary expense in maintenance, circulation, clerking and contract services. The Government should, in fact, maintain a central library in which all non-specialized films are held and from which all non-theatrical requests are met. (d) The central library should be the single channel through which films pass to the other countries. (e) If travelling non-theatrical units are to be developed in Canada, a central distribution service would be the proper agency to look after it. (f) Under this arrangement, there would be a single catalogue for Canadian Government films, a single system of contacts with schools and other organizations, a single system of contacts with overseas and foreign distribution services and a single bargaining point for theatrical circulation. (g) The specialized educational use of films should remain a matter for each department, and there should be no difficulty in determining where distribution for the general public leaves off and specialized circulation begins. This would mean the retention by certain departments of film projectors and a small library of films. The maintenance of both projectors and films should be carried out through the Film Bureau and the sanction of the Government film officer should be sought in the matter of purchase.

While the co-ordination of Government distribution machinery should provide a better service of films throughout the country, it will
be necessary to develop machinery for making Government films better known and increasing the use of films in all valuable fields of circulation. I envisage particularly the need for co-operating with outside agencies engaged in developing the use of films in schools, colleges, and juvenile and adult social organizations. The best central agency for this purpose is the new and powerful Canadian Film Committee, which has been set up to coordinate non-theatrical film activities throughout the country. By its multitude of contacts, it will be able to perform an essential complementary service to the Government distribution machinery, particularly by encouraging newspaper and public attention, and coordinating demand. It would obviously be immensely more economical to co-operate with the Canadian Film Committee than to set up special public relations machinery for the Government's film work. I accordingly recommend that a minimum of Ten Thousand Dollars ($10,000.00) be set aside in the film vote for services to be performed by the Canadian Film Committee.

25. DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRIBUTION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

In view of previous reports from Canada House on the piecemeal nature of film distribution in the United Kingdom, it is sufficient for the purposes of this report to indicate the principal weaknesses as under:

Canadian films are sent to Great Britain by different government agencies. There is no consultation at the time of export and the films are not distributed to a central organized plan. There is an uneconomical overlapping of services. The public's mind is muddled as to where to get films. The propagandist impression given by Canadian films is undirected and out of control.

Canadian films in the United Kingdom have been given into the hands of various agents. There is no centralized control of their maintenance and distribution. For all one knows, films that have thus got out of control may now have ceased to serve Canadian interests.

Canadian films are not circulated under a considered propaganda policy by which the various types of films complement the others' influence. There is no machinery for keeping circulation under review and securing the most effective use of the films sent over from Canada.

The position of the Canadian Section of the Empire Library is unsatisfactory. New prints and new films are wanted. But there should be machinery for seeing to it that the opportunity provided is intensively exploited.

Specialized circulation of trade publicity films has been greatly developed by other propagandist organizations and the Canadian Government has as yet taken little or no account of the possibilities in this field. It has no adequate machinery for exploiting the field
directly, nor for cooperating with other propagandist organizations in the use of screen space.

Circulation of documentary films to theatres has likewise been developed by other propagandist organizations. The Canadian Government has no present machinery for keeping the Motion Picture Bureau informed of requirements and possibilities in this field and for advising it in the matter of theatrical contracts.

26. **REQUIREMENTS**

The principal requirements in the United Kingdom are:

(a) The co-ordination and direction of the non-theatrical distribution of Canadian films in the United Kingdom (and at a later stage, in Europe).

(b) The fullest use of all avenues of non-theatrical circulation.

(c) A planned approach to British schools.

(d) The creation of a trade publicity road shows service for showing films on specific products to specially selected audiences.

(e) The regular supply of films to theatres.

27. **PROPOSALS**

I recommend that the Film Committee temporarily set up at Canada House, should continue to function. It should direct the distribution of all Canadian Government films in the United Kingdom. Its present personnel consists of a representative of the High Commissioner, the Chief Trade Commissioner, the Trade Publicity Officer and a paid advisor expert in this particular field. This personnel should be continued though possibly the Chief Trade Commissioner may wish to be represented by Mr. Avery.

A full-time Film Officer should be appointed to carry out the policies decided upon by the Committee, and see to the development of film circulation, through all useful channels. All Canadian film activities in the United Kingdom should be centralized in his office.

28. I recommend that a policy be laid down from the beginning which will ensure the development of Canadian films along all useful channels. There has been a tendency on the part of other Dominion governments in London to build up a central distribution machine in their own offices. The result has been to create vested interests and prevent the full use of such organizations as the Empire Film Library. My view is that the fullest use should be made of any existing agencies which have already built up a valuable system of
of contacts. The role of the Film Officer in the United Kingdom should be to make as many of the established agencies as possible do Canada's work for it, at as little maintenance cost as possible. Domestic mechanism should only be set up to cover specialized distribution purposes, e.g., trade publicity and film lectures. It is likewise important that there be an even development of all distribution services; non-theatrical circulation should not be developed at the expense of theatrical circulation, nor vice versa.

29. Facilities should be provided to the Film Officer for receiving films, viewing films and dispatching films to the various agencies. These facilities should, if possible, be centered at Canada House. At the same time, he should be encouraged to travel as light as possible.

30. The equipment of a small theatre at Canada House would, among other practical advantages, be of great service to the High Commissioner and his staff in (a) keeping them in touch with the latest developments in film propaganda from Canada and elsewhere and (b) providing a most valuable medium for hospitality and public relations.

One of the most useful practices at the G.P.O. was the frequent showing of its films in its own theatre to selected audiences from Whitehall and other authorities. The Ambassadors of Germany and the U.S.S.R. have made similar valuable use of projection facilities within their Embassies. I urge strongly, therefore, that a small, finely equipped theatre be added to the equipment at Canada House.
APPENDIX B

THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

At the time of writing the National Film Board of Canada is the only independent Government film office specially constituted for this purpose though similar Boards are planned in other countries. The Act setting up the National Film Board of Canada provides a useful example of how such an office can be constituted. The organisation and achievements of the Board over the past three years are instructive and are therefore given in brief outline.

a. AN ACT TO CREATE A NATIONAL FILM BOARD

Assented to 2 May 1939

His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as the National Film Act, 1939.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,
   a. 'Board' means the National Film Board;
   b. 'Minister' means the Minister of Trade and Commerce;
   c. 'Commissioner' means the Government Film Commissioner appointed under this Act;
   d. 'Director' means the Director of the Government Motion Picture Bureau;
   e. 'Bureau' means the Government Motion Picture Bureau;
   f. 'Film' means Motion Picture and 'Film Activity' means activity in relation to the production, distribution or exhibition of motion pictures.

3. i. There shall be a National Film Board consisting of the Minister, who shall be Chairman, another Member of the King's Privy Council for Canada, and six other members, to be appointed by the Governor in Council, three of whom shall be selected from persons outside the Civil Service of Canada and three from officials of the permanent Civil Service or of the Civil or Defence Services of Canada.
   ii. Of the members of the Board, the Chairman and the other member of the King's Privy Council for Canada, shall hold office during pleasure; the other members of the Board, subject to the provisions of subsection four of this section, shall hold office for three years; provided that of those first appointed, one-third shall be appointed to retire in one year, one-third in two years and one-third in three years.

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iii. Retiring members shall be eligible for re-appointment.

iv. Each member, except the Chairman and the other member of the King's Privy Council for Canada, shall hold office for the period of his appointment, but may be removed for cause at any time by the Governor in Council.

v. In the event of a casual vacancy occurring in the Board, the Governor in Council shall appoint a person to fill such vacancy for the balance of the term of the member replaced.

4. No fees or emoluments of any kind shall be payable to or received by any member of the Board in connection with services rendered as such member, but members shall be paid actual travelling and living expenses necessarily incurred in connection with the business of the Board.

5. No one shall be eligible for appointment to the Board as one of the three members from outside the Public Service of Canada, who has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, individually or as a shareholder or partner, or otherwise, in the production, distribution, or exhibition of photographs or motion pictures, or in the manufacture or distribution of photographic or motion picture apparatus.

6. The Board shall discharge such duties as the Governor in Council may request it to undertake, and particularly, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, review Government film activities and advise the Governor in Council in connection therewith.

7. The Board shall administer such sums of money as may be annually appropriated by Parliament for the work of the Board.

8. i. There shall be a Government Film Commissioner who shall be the chief executive officer of the Board, and responsible to it, who shall be appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Board and paid such salary as the Governor in Council may determine.

ii. The Commissioner may hold office for a period not exceeding three years, but shall be eligible for further appointment; provided that he may be removed from office for cause at any time by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Board.

iii. The Commissioner shall not be subject to the provisions of the Civil Service Act or of the Civil Service Superannuation Act; but, if a civil servant is appointed to the post of Commissioner, notwithstanding anything in the said Acts, or any other Act of the Parliament of Canada, if at the time of his appoint-
ment such civil servant is a contributor under the provisions of the Civil Service Superannuation Act he shall continue so to contribute; his service as Commissioner shall be counted as service in the civil service for the purposes of the Civil Service Superannuation Act, and his widow and children, or other dependents, if any, shall be eligible to receive the respective allowances or gratuities provided by the said Act; and in the event of his being retired from his office for any reason other than that of misconduct, he shall be eligible in accordance with the regulations made under the Civil Service Act for assignment to a position in the civil service of the class from which he was so retired, or, in the alternative, to receive the same benefits under the Civil Service Superannuation Act as he would have been eligible to receive if he had been retired under like circumstances from the position in the civil service which he held immediately prior to his appointment to the post of Commissioner; such civil servant appointed to the office of Commissioner shall, moreover, continue to retain or be eligible to receive all the benefits, except salary as a civil servant, that he would have been eligible to receive had he remained under the Civil Service Act.

iv. In the case of the absence or inability of the Commissioner to carry out his duties for any reason or in the case of a vacancy in the office of Commissioner, the Board may, subject to the approval of the Minister, appoint an Acting Commissioner.

9. The Commissioner in carrying out the duties imposed upon him by this Act shall at all times be under and subject to the directions of the Board and shall

a. advise upon the making and distribution of national films designed to help Canadians in all parts of Canada to understand the ways of living and the problems of Canadians in other parts;

b. co-ordinate national and departmental film activities in consultation with the Board and the several departments and branches of Government work;

c. advise as to methods of securing quality, economy, efficiency and effective co-operation in the production, distribution and exhibition of Government films;

d. advise upon and approve production, distribution and exhibition contracts and agreements in connection with film activities of the several departments of the Government and, in respect of these, act as intermediary between such departments and the Bureau and between such departments and commercial firms;

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e. advise upon all departmental expenditure in the production, distribution and exhibition of films;

f. represent the Board in its relations with commercial newsreel and non-commercial film organisations;

g. advise as to the distribution of Government films in other countries;

h. co-ordinate and develop information services in connection with Government film activities.

10. i. All departments of the Government before initiating the production of any film shall refer the matter to the Commissioner who will arrange for the production in accordance with the provisions of section eleven.

ii. The Director of the Bureau shall act as advisory officer in the purchase, maintenance and use of all film apparatus by Government departments and shall approve the terms of such purchase.

iii. The purchase of film apparatus shall be reported by the Director to the Commissioner who shall keep a record of such purchases and advise departments as to the most economical and efficient disposition of film apparatus after purchase.

11. All processing and production of films by and for Government departments shall be undertaken by the Bureau, except where the Commissioner agrees that the work can be done through officers of other departments and that the results obtained will be technically adequate and economical, or where the Board considers the use of commercial firms advisable in the public interest.

12. i. The Director of the Bureau, notwithstanding anything in the Civil Service Act, may, with the approval of the Commissioner, employ temporary personnel as and when the production of particular films or groups of films so requires.

ii. The Director may expend to the best interest of a production any moneys which have been appropriated for such production, in accordance with the scheme of work agreed to by the party, or parties, authorizing the production.

13. i. There shall be a committee, hereinafter called 'the Committee,' which shall consist of the Commissioner, the Director, and one representative of each Government department engaged in film activities, to be appointed by the Board, on the recommendation of such departments.

ii. Members of the Committee other than the Commissioner shall be departmental officers directly interested in the production and distribution of departmental films.
The duties of the Committee shall be to advise the Director in the development of a central Government film distribution service and a public information service in regard thereto.

iv. The Commissioner shall be the Chairman of the Committee and it will report through him to the Board.

v. No fees or emoluments of any kind shall be payable to or received by any member of the Committee in connection with services rendered as such member, but members shall be paid actual travelling and living expenses necessarily incurred in connection with the business of the Committee.

14. i. There shall be a Central Government Film Distribution Service.

ii. The Director of the Bureau shall be the Director of the Central Government Film Distribution Service and he shall, subject to the other provisions of this Act governing distribution, take all possible steps to secure quality, economy and efficiency in the operation and development of such service.

iii. All Government films shall be distributed by the Central Government Film Distribution Service, except in cases of commercial or specialised departmental distribution approved by the Commissioner, and the Bureau shall serve as repository for the storage and preservation of all Government film negatives and shall be responsible for the disposition of all Government films other than those for which specialised departmental distribution has been authorised.

15. The Governor in Council may make such regulations as may be necessary for carrying out the intent of this Act.*

b. THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

 Until 1941 there was no film production industry in Canada other than three small independent units in Montreal, Ottawa and Vancouver, and Canadian film activities were confined mainly to dis-

* Orders in Council subsequent to this Act have decreed:
  a. 'that the control and supervision of the Government Motion Picture Bureau, with the exception of that section of the Bureau concerned with the production and distribution of still photographs, be and it is hereby transferred from the Department of Trade and Commerce to, and vested in, the National Film Board' (11 June 1941).
  b. 'that the control of that section of the Motion Picture Bureau concerned with the production and distribution of still photographs be and it is hereby transferred from the Department of Trade and Commerce to, and vested in, the National Film Board' (8 August 1941).
  c. 'that the Poster and Bulletin Division of the Wartime Information Board be and it is hereby transferred to the National Film Board' (15 June 1943).
tribution and exhibition, under strong United States influence. Thus a great opportunity existed for the development of a centralised film agency.

Before the passing of the National Film Act in May, 1939, some twenty organisations were concerned in a small way with film activities, in addition to the National Film Society, various film organisations maintained by the provincial governments and the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau (concerned mostly with films to encourage tourists) which was absorbed by the National Film Board in 1941. Under the Act, the National Film Board was set up to co-ordinate and direct all Government film activities. The Board is in-control of activities which in Britain were divided amongst the Films Division of the Ministry of Information, the Crown Film Unit, Film Centre, the British Council, the British Film Institute, and the Service Units. It maintains its own production, laboratory, distribution and non-theatrical exhibition services, and at the same time employs all technical services available commercially. Through its Commissioner, it advises the Government on all matters relating to the film industry, and is in charge of all wartime priorities on equipment and film stock needed for military or Government use. The Board maintains large photo-services, graphics and displays departments. Photo-services supply matts, still and photo-stories to all Press outlets in Canada and abroad. The graphics section does all the art and layout work for many Government departments. The displays section constructs and distributes display material (photo-murals, collotypes, wall hangers, and photo-gelatine sheets) in support of Government information campaigns.

The National Film Board has been described as 'a body within the framework of government but free from the routine inhibitions of civil administration.' The Board itself consists of two Ministers, one of whom is Chairman, three Civil Servants and three members of the general public. It is administrative and determines policy. It speaks in Parliament through its Chairman. The Board's chief executive officer is the Government Film Commissioner who reports once a month to the Board, and is left completely free in the interval to perform all the executive duties referred to above. His terms of reference are that he should, under the direction of the Board, be responsible for the production of films of national interest, co-ordinate the film activities of all Government departments, and generally represent the Government in respect of its film interests both at home and abroad. Among the most remarkable of his executive authorities is the provision, under Section 12 (1) of the

* The Act was drafted by John Grierson at the request of the Canadian Government in 1938.
† This appointment was held by John Grierson until his resignation in 1945.
APPENDIX C

PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF
WOODS - GORDON REPORT
FOR NFB REORGANIZATION

1. Ministers of the Crown should not serve as members of the National Film Board. Instead the Government Film Commissioner should be responsible to a designated Minister who, in turn, should report to Parliament.

2. The members of the National Film Board should consist of the Government Film Commissioner who should be Chairman, five representatives of the public chosen to represent the five main regions of Canada and three senior Civil Servants; meetings of the Board should be held quarterly.

3. The members of the National Film Board should recommend the overall policies to be followed subject to the approval of the designated Minister. The Government Film Commissioner should be responsible for carrying out such policies.

4. The designated Minister should approve the appointment of senior officials of the Board and of all other matters requiring the confirmation of Treasury Board or of the Governor in Council.

5. In the interim form of organization which is proposed, the senior officials, in addition to the Government Film Commissioner, should be the Advisor on French Language Production and Distribution; the Secretary, and five Directors of Production, of Technical Operations, of Planning, of Distribution and of Administrative Services respectively. The positions of Executive Officer (Production) and Co-ordinator of Graphics should be discontinued. (The Graphics Division should be integrated with other sections of the Board.)

6. No purchases, expenditures or commitments should be made until approved by the Director of Administrative Services or by an authorized assistant.

7. The Board should be responsible for keeping its own accounting and cost records and should be permitted to keep such records on an "accrual basis" rather than on the "cash basis" followed by government departments. Receipts and payments should continue to be handled by the Comptroller of the Treasury.
8. Annual appropriations for the Board should be made available in two Parliamentary votes, one for operations and the other for the purchase of equipment.

9. The costing methods should be changed to reflect all production costs and expenditures in the costs of individual films.

10. The Board should be provided with a permanent working capital fund of not less than $700,000.

11. The work of the Board in Ottawa should be centralized and suitable accommodation provided.

12. The Board should be permitted to hire employees during pleasure, such employees to continue, as at present, to be exempt from the terms of the Civil Service Act but to be given an opportunity to contribute under the Civil Service Superannuation Act.

13. The Government Film Commissioner should review every activity in which the Board is engaged to see whether any of them should be curtailed or transferred to other government departments or agencies.

14. Consideration should be given to transferring to the Department of External Affairs the responsibility for non-commercial distribution of films abroad, except possibly in the United States.
APPENDIX D

CHAPTER 185.

An Act respecting the National Film Board.

SHORT TITLE.

1. This Act may be cited as the National Film Act. 1950, Short title. c. 44, s. 1.

INTERPRETATION.

2. In this Act, Definitions.

(a) "Account" means the National Film Board Operating Account established under section 18;

(b) "accounts receivable of the Board" means the payments due and owing to the Receiver General in respect of operations of the Board and any amounts that in accordance with this Act are due and transferable to the Account from appropriations made by Parliament;

(c) "Board" means the National Film Board;

(d) "Commissioner" means the Government Film Commissioner appointed under this Act;

(e) "department" means any department or branch of the Government of Canada and any agent of Her Majesty in right of Canada;

(f) "film" means motion pictures, still photographs, photographic displays, filmstrips and such other forms of visual presentation as consist primarily of photographs or photographic reproductions;

(g) "film activity" means any activity in relation to the production, distribution, projection or exhibition of film;

(h) "inventory of the Board" means the stores, supplies, materials and equipment held by the Board, and finished or partially finished work of the Board in respect of the cost of which payment has not yet been received or transferred and credited to the Account nor included in accounts receivable of the Board; and

(i) "Minister" means the Minister designated by the Governor in Council for the purposes of this Act. 1950, c. 44, s. 2.
RESponsibility of Minister.

3. For the purposes of this Act and subject to its provisions, the Minister shall control and direct the operations of the National Film Board. 1950, c. 44, s. 3.

National Film Board.

4. (1) There shall be a National Film Board, consisting of the Commissioner, who shall be Chairman, and eight other members to be appointed by the Governor in Council, three of whom shall be selected from the public service or the Canadian Forces, and five of whom shall be selected from outside the public service and Canadian Forces.

(2) Subject to subsection (3) each member of the Board, other than the Commissioner, holds office for three years, but may be removed for cause at any time by the Governor in Council.

(3) Of the members first appointed, three shall be appointed for a period of one year, three for a period of two years and two for a period of three years.

(4) A retiring member of the Board is eligible for re-appointment.

(5) When a member ceases to be a member before the end of the term for which he was appointed, the Governor in Council shall appoint a person to be a member for the remainder of that term. 1950, c. 44, s. 4.

Eligibility.

5. No person is eligible for appointment to the Board who has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, individually or as a shareholder or partner or otherwise, in commercial film activity. 1950, c. 44, s. 5.

Fees and expenses.

6. A member of the Board, other than the Commissioner or a member of the public service or Canadian Forces, may be paid such fee for each meeting of the Board he attends as may be fixed by by-law of the Board, and the members of the Board are entitled to be paid actual travelling and living expenses necessarily incurred in connection with the business of the Board. 1950, c. 44, s. 6.

Meetings.

7. (1) The Board shall meet at the call of the Chairman but, in any event, not more than three months shall elapse between meetings of the Board.

(2) Five members of the Board constitute a quorum.

(3) Each member has one vote in the transaction of the business of the Board and if the number of votes is equal the Chairman has an additional vote.
(4) The Board, with the approval of the Minister, may make by-laws not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act with respect to the conduct of the business of the Board. 1950, c. 44, s. 7.

8. The Chairman shall furnish a copy of the minutes of each meeting of the Board to the Minister. 1950, c. 44, s. 8.

PURPOSES OF THE BOARD.

9. The Board is established to initiate and promote the production and distribution of films in the national interest, and in particular

(a) to produce and distribute and to promote the production and distribution of films designed to interpret Canada to Canadians and to other nations;

(b) to represent the Government of Canada in its relations with persons engaged in commercial motion picture film activity in connection with motion picture films for the Government or any department thereof;

(c) to engage in research in film activity and to make available the results thereof to persons engaged in the production of films;

(d) to advise the Governor in Council in connection with film activities; and

(e) to discharge such other duties relating to film activity as the Governor in Council may direct it to undertake. 1950, c. 44, s. 9.

POWERS OF BOARD.

10. (1) Subject to the direction and control of the Minister, the Board may, for the purposes for which it is established,

(a) make, project, exhibit or distribute or cause to be made, projected, exhibited or distributed films in Canada or elsewhere on behalf of the Board or on behalf of other departments or persons;

(b) determine the manner in which moneys available to the Board for the production of a film may best be expended in the production thereof;

(c) acquire personal property in the name of the Board;

(d) enter into contracts in the name of the Board, including contracts for personal services;

(e) dispose of personal property held in the name of the Board or administered by the Board on behalf of Her Majesty, in processed form or otherwise, at such price and upon such terms as the Board deems advisable;

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(f) acquire in the name of the Board copyrights in any literary, musical or artistic works, plays, songs, recordings and films;

(g) acquire in the name of the Board and use any patent or patent rights, brevets d’invention, licences or concessions;

(h) make arrangements or agreements with any person or organization for the use of any rights, privileges or concessions; and

(i) do such other acts and things as are necessary or incidental for the purposes for which the Board is established.

Actions, etc. may be brought in name of Board.

(2) Actions, suits or other legal proceedings in respect of any right or obligation acquired or incurred by the Board on behalf of Her Majesty, whether in its name or in the name of Her Majesty, may be brought or taken by or against the Board in the name of the Board in any court that would have jurisdiction if the Board were a corporation that is not an agent of Her Majesty. 1950, c. 44, s. 10.

Production of films for departments.

11. (1) Except with the approval of the Governor in Council, no department shall initiate the production or processing of a motion picture film without the authority of the Board, and the production and processing of all motion picture films by or for departments shall be undertaken by the Board unless the Board is of opinion that it is in the public interest that it be otherwise undertaken and authorizes it to be so undertaken.

Transfer of appropriations.

(2) Where the Board has undertaken a film activity at the request of a Minister or other person presiding over or in charge of a department, there may be transferred out of the moneys appropriated by Parliament for or available for expenditure by that department to the National Film Board Operating Account such sums to defray the costs incurred by the Board for that film activity as such Minister or other persons and the Board agree. 1950, c. 44, s. 11.

Contracts involving more than $15,000.

12. Notwithstanding anything in this Act, the Board shall not, unless the approval of the Treasury Board has been obtained on the recommendation of the Minister, enter into a contract involving an estimated expenditure in excess of fifteen thousand dollars. 1950, c. 44, s. 12.

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13. (1) With the approval of the Treasury Board, obtained on the recommendation of the Minister, the Board may formulate a plan of organization for the establishment and classification of the continuing positions necessary for the proper functioning of the Board and the establishment of rates of compensation for each class of position, having regard to the rates of compensation and conditions of employment for comparable positions in other branches of the public service and outside the public service.

(2) With the approval of the Treasury Board, obtained on the recommendation of the Minister, the Board may amend or vary a plan approved under subsection (1).

(3) Subject to the plan of organization approved under this section and subject to subsection (4), the Board may, notwithstanding the Civil Service Act, appoint persons for a term or during pleasure to fill the positions established by the plan, prescribe their conditions of employment and provide for their promotion, salary and salary increases, but the provisions of the Civil Service Act relating to political partisanship and payment of gratuity on death apply to the persons appointed under this section.

(4) The appointment by the Board of a person to a continuing position at a salary exceeding five thousand dollars is not effective until approved by the Governor in Council.

(5) Each officer or employee employed by the Board under this section shall, before entering upon his duties, take an Oath of Office and Secrecy in the form set out in the Schedule.

(6) The Commissioner, if immediately prior to his appointment he was a contributor under the Civil Service Superannuation Act, and every person who

(a) immediately prior to the 14th day of October, 1950,

(i) was employed on the staff of the Government Motion Picture Bureau, and

(ii) was a contributor under the Civil Service Superannuation Act, and

(b) immediately after the 14th day of October, 1950, is appointed or employed under this Act, continues to be a contributor under the Civil Service Superannuation Act; and, for the purposes of that Act, his service under this Act shall be counted as service in the civil service and he, his widow, children or other dependants, if any, or his legal representatives, may be granted the respective allowances or gratuities provided by the Civil Service Superannuation Act.

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(7) Where a person who continues to be a contributor under the Civil Service Superannuation Act by virtue of subsection (6) is retired from his position under this Act, he may be assigned to a position in the civil service for which he is qualified or he may be granted the same benefits under the Civil Service Superannuation Act as if his office or position had been abolished. 1950, c. 44, s. 13.

14. The Board may, notwithstanding the Civil Service Act, employ such persons in positions other than in continuing positions in the plan approved under section 13, as may be required from time to time for the operations of the Board and may determine their remuneration and conditions of employment. 1950, c. 44, s. 14.

GOVERNMENT FILM COMMISSIONER.

15. (1) There shall be a Government Film Commissioner who shall be appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Board and paid such salary as the Governor in Council may determine.

(2) The Commissioner shall be appointed to hold office for a period not exceeding five years but may be removed from office for cause at any time by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Board.

(3) On the expiration of his term of office the Commissioner is eligible to be re-appointed as Commissioner.

(4) In the case of the absence or inability of the Commissioner to carry out his duties for any reason, or in the case of a vacancy in the office of Commissioner, the Board may, subject to the approval of the Minister, appoint an Acting Commissioner. 1950, c. 44, s. 15.

16. (1) The Commissioner is the chief executive officer of the Board and is charged with the administration of the operations of the Board and may, subject to the by-laws of the Board, exercise all powers of the Board in the name of the Board.

(2) Subject to the by-laws of the Board, the Commissioner may authorize officers or employees of the Board to act on behalf of and in the name of the Board. 1950, c. 44, s. 16.

FINANCIAL PROVISIONS.

17. (1) The Board shall submit to the Minister an annual budget for each fiscal year showing the estimated revenues and expenditures of the Board for its operations during that fiscal year.

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(2) The Board shall establish and maintain an accounting system satisfactory to the Minister and all books of account, records and papers of the Board shall at all times be open to the inspection of the Minister or of such persons as he may designate and the Comptroller of the Treasury. 1950, c. 44, s. 17.

18. (1) An account shall be established in the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purposes of this Act to be known as the National Film Board Operating Account.

(2) All expenditures made by the Board, other than expenditures for the acquisition of capital equipment for the Board's own use, shall be shown as expenditures in the Account and the Board may, subject to subsection (4), make expenditures for the purposes of this Act, other than for the acquisition of capital equipment, from moneys in the Consolidated Revenue Fund, which shall be shown as expenditures in the Account.

(3) There shall be shown as receipts in the Account:

(a) all moneys received by the Receiver General in respect of operations of the Board,

(b) amounts transferred from appropriations made by Parliament for the operations of the Board, other than for the acquisition of capital equipment by the Board, in respect of expenditures that have been incurred in operations of the Board for which the moneys were appropriated, and

(c) amounts transferred from appropriations for expenditure by other departments for film activities, in respect of expenditures that have been incurred by the Board for films undertaken by the Board for those departments.

(4) The expenditures made by the Board and shown in the Account shall not at any time exceed the receipts shown in the Account by more than seven hundred thousand dollars or such lesser amount as may be fixed by the Treasury Board.

(5) At the end of each fiscal year the value of the inventory of the Board and accounts receivable of the Board shall be determined in accordance with regulations to be made by the Governor in Council, and if such value, added to the receipts shown in the Account, exceeds the total of expenditures shown in the Account and liabilities in respect of operations of the Board then due and payable, an amount equal to the excess shall be transferred to the Consolidated Revenue Fund as revenue, but if the value is less no amount may be shown as receipts in the Account.

Amounts to be shown as receipts in the Account.

Maximum expenditures.

Value of inventory.
may be credited to the Account to meet the deficiency except pursuant to an appropriation by Parliament for that purpose. 1950, c. 44, s. 18.

19. Except as otherwise provided in this Act, the Financial Administration Act applies in respect of operations under this Act. 1950, c. 44, s. 19.

REPORTS.

20. (1) As soon as is practicable after the end of each fiscal year the Board shall submit a report of the operations of the Board for the fiscal year in such form as the Minister may prescribe.

(2) The Minister shall lay the annual report of the Board, made under subsection (1) before Parliament within fourteen days after the receipt thereof if Parliament is then sitting or if Parliament is not then sitting, within fourteen days after the commencement of the next ensuing session. 1950, c. 44, s. 20.

21. The Board shall furnish to the Minister at such times and in such manner as he may require, such statements or reports in addition to those required by the provisions of this Act in respect of its business or operations as he may require. 1950, c. 44, s. 21.

SCHEDULE.

OATH OF OFFICE AND SECRECY.

I, (A.B.) solemnly and sincerely swear that I will faithfully and honestly fulfil the duties which devolve upon me by reason of my employment with the National Film Board and that I will not, without due authority in that behalf, disclose or make known any matter which comes to my knowledge by reason of such employment. So help me God. 1950, c. 44, Sch.

EDMOND CLOUTIER. C.M.G., Q.A., D.S.P.
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