

CHAPITRE XV/CHAPTER XV
OFFICE NATIONAL DU FILM
NATIONAL FILM BOARD

1069.

DEA/2755-40

Note de la direction de l'information
Memorandum by Information Division

[Ottawa], June 17, 1949

ANNEX¹

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND THE
NATIONAL FILM BOARD

1. In 1922, the Canadian Government Motion Pictures Bureau was organized as a division of the Department of Trade and Commerce to handle the production and distribution of motion picture films (and later, still pictures), on behalf of the Canadian Government.

2. In 1938, Mr. John Grierson came to Canada, at the invitation of the Government, to make a survey of government film activities. As a result of his survey, the National Film Act was passed on May 2, 1939. On September 2, 1939, the National Film Board was created. The Board consisted of two Cabinet Ministers, three senior civil servants, and three members of the public noted for their interest in and knowledge of films. The Government Film Commissioner, as senior executive officer, is responsible to the Board. The National Film Board itself reports through the Chairman of the Board to Parliament, but is not directly attached to any one department of Government.

3. The relevant sections of the Act concerning the advising of Government departments on the production and distribution of films, both at home and abroad, read as follows:

Section 9. The Commissioner...shall (a) advise upon the making and distribution of national films designed to help Canadians in other parts of Canada to understand the ways of living and problems of Canadians in other parts; (b) co-ordinate national and departmental film activities...; (c) advise as to methods of securing...co-operation in the production, distribution and exhibition of Government films; (d) advise upon and approve production, distribution and exhibition contracts...; (e) advise as to the distribution of Government films in other countries.

It may be doubted whether those who drafted the Act can have foreseen the problem which might arise ten years later; and whether it was their intention that

¹ Cette note fut rattachée à une note au sous-secrétaire, en date du 17 juin 1949.

This memorandum was annexed to a memorandum to the Under-Secretary dated June 17, 1949.