

NFB AND SOUTH AFRICA

Canada's National Film Board is serving as a model for a government film complex being established by the Republic of South Africa. Three visitors from that nation were in Montreal recently for first-hand observation of National Film Board operations in suburban Saint-Laurent: Mr. Wynand Smit, the architect responsible for the design of the new accommodations that will be required for the South African Board's operations; Mr. E.S. Hinds, executive producer; and Mr. R. van Wyk de Vries, technical manager.

TIES WITH NFB

The new South African Film Board has numerous ties with its Canadian counterpart. For instance, the report recommending establishment of a South African film unit was prepared by John Grierson, who wrote a similar volume 25 years ago that resulted in the formation of Canada's Film Board.

About four years ago, when South Africa considered setting up a film board, Mr. A. Crous of Pretoria paid an extended visit to the NFB in Montreal. He prepared a study of the Canadian Board's operations and later was responsible for developing the legislation that led to the establishment of the National Film Board of South Africa in the spring of 1964. Mr. Crous is now general manager of the South African Board; the act under which it operates is based almost directly on Canada's National Film Act.

COMPARISON OF TWO BOARDS

The South African Board now has approximately 120 employees, is able to equip eight camera-crews and has the technical facilities to handle production of 60 ten-minute reels of film each year. Canada's National Film Board is about five times as large, having more than 600 employees and 40 units of camera equipment. Its average annual output is more than 300 complete motion pictures, some of them of feature length.

During their visit to Montreal the South African group has worked closely with Gerald G. Graham, director of technical operations for the National Film Board. Mr. Graham is familiar with many of the problems facing the new South African film-making organization, since he acted as liaison between the Film Board and its architects in planning the present NFB building on Côte de Liesse Road.

MINERAL GALLERY FOR ROM

Plans for a "jewel-box" gallery of mineralogy, financed by a \$15,000 grant from the International Nickel Company of Canada Limited were announced recently by the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. Construction has already started on the gallery, which will open in 1967, Canada's centennial year. Two years of intensive planning by ROM curators and display experts have produced designs for a gallery employing push-button displays, films, slides and models. Dr. W.E. Swinton, ROM Director, says that the grant will make possible "an important new

step in general education". "This will be the first museum gallery to teach the science of mineralogy, in addition to showing specimens," he adds. "It is fitting that this departure in education should take place at Toronto, because Ontario owes so much to its rich mineral deposits, and because of the significance of the museum's mineral holdings. At last the collection can be shown to advantage."

A VOYAGE OF EXPLORATION

The core of the display will be specimens from one of the half dozen most important mineral collections in the world. However, the gallery will be a long way from the additional panorama of flat cases containing bits of rock. Curving walls and passages will carry the visitor on a voyage of exploration. At the entrance he will see a full-size cave with stalagmites and stalactites. Further on, microscopes will permit him to see crystals forming. Working models will show him the structure and properties of minerals and the equipment used to study them. At the end, he will be able to use his new knowledge to identify the sample minerals by hardness, weight, color and feel.

Throughout the gallery, the brilliant colors of the natural minerals will be set off by wall cases and indirect lighting.

One section of the gallery will be devoted to the ROM's collection of gems and semi-precious stones. Another will be devoted to a systematic display of some 1,300 different minerals laid out according to chemical composition, forming a three-dimensional mural 130 feet long, occupying two walls.

CHIEF DESIGNERS

The gallery design has been headed by John Hillen, display chief (mineralogy), and Dr. J.A. Mandarino, curator of mineralogy. Mr. Hillen was display chief for renovations to the ROM geology galleries completed in 1962 under a grant from the J.P. Bickell Foundation. Dr. Mandarino is in charge of a mineral collection which contains some 200,000 specimens. Several of them are new minerals identified by ROM scientists. More than 70 per cent of the world's known minerals are represented.

NEW MARINE PHONE SERVICE

Cheaper radiotelephone calls are now possible from Canada's West Coast to ships at sea by means of a new Department of Transport long-range marine telephone service at Vancouver, British Columbia. Calls to ships on the high seas were previously made via United States stations, a practice that resulted in extra long-distance charges between the caller's phone and the U.S. relay station.

The new Canadian service also makes possible quicker and cheaper telegrams to ships outside the range of normal coastal stations. Its service is beamed on the Pacific's major shipping-lanes and operates in the 4, 8, 13, 17 and 22 megacycle high-frequency bands.

The transmitting and receiving equipment used was designed and made in Canada and is the most modern available.