

*Development of Film Industry*

government have found other things so much more pressing that the resolution had to languish on the order paper month after month. Only at the end of the day, on a Friday afternoon, when those who have been able to do so have taken off by plane or train, are a few of us left to deal with this matter. This is not something to be left to the last, let me assure you, Mr. Speaker. This is an attitude that will only ensure the eventual dismissal of those things which we should like to think are uniquely Canadian.

Having voiced those words of gratitude to the minister for bringing this bill before this house, I think I must also say that the bill leaves a great deal to be desired, because at this point it has really recognized only the fact that Canada needs to have its own feature film industry. It does not go very far beyond that recognition, I am afraid.

It is all too easy, and it has been all too easy in the past, for governments—not only this one but other governments—to say that the answer is simply to create a foundation, to give that foundation money, and everything will be off to the races. It just does not happen that way in most cases, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure it will not happen in that way with one of the most competitive, and I think one of the most complex, industries that function in the world today. As I say, I do not believe this is true, but I think that if it were true the minister would see that merely setting up a foundation which occasionally would hand out money and awards through some kind of subsidy to a production company to ensure the development of a self-sufficient and worthwhile feature film industry would only be the height of naivety.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that in what this bill spells out we are taking the first step in creating an agency which becomes concerned about the problem. But this is not the first bit of legislation which I think will be necessary, if we really believe that a feature film industry should be encouraged to develop in this country.

I have some fear about this because the government has shown, by its willingness to let this matter languish for a period of time, that it considers this is not really an issue of priority. I am afraid that we do not have a cabinet at present which can be called a cabinet of "swingers". Perhaps the Secretary of State (Miss LaMarsh) is the only swinger of the group, but it does take more than one or even two swingers to make a thing like this go; and I think she will have to have some

converts if we are to put muscle behind this ambitious proposal.

For instance, Mr. Speaker, I think that if we are to be serious about the establishment of a feature film industry in this country something must be said about distribution, certainly something more than simply saying that the film will have a certain amount of content and that certain agreements will be entered into. Many countries have found distribution to be the overriding problem facing film producers. You see, Mr. Speaker, in many cases the problem is not getting together enough money to make a film; the problem is what is going to happen to the film after finally it has been produced.

We know that in Canada the whole question of distribution comes amazingly close to what may be termed a monopoly. I think unless we have some answer to this problem, and unless we have some knowledge of how these films are going to get from the producer to the distributor to the exhibitor, then we will only do a very small part of the job and in a very short time we will frustrate the very people we are trying to encourage in this embryonic industry.

I think too that it would be pointless, particularly in this country or in this house, to think we can do everything to ensure the development of this industry. Because this is a federal state some of the questions that will face us in the encouragement of this industry will of necessity have to be resolved by provincial legislatures and provincial governments. I think this is an area in which the minister and her colleagues must take some lead. If she is serious about seeing not just half a dozen films made for centennial year, or for next year, or until the money runs out, but seeing an industry develop in this country, then the provinces must be encouraged to take the necessary steps to ensure that the final product is shown.

If the minister does not do this, I think the situation will be very similar to the situation which occurred last year and which was featured in a report in the *Toronto Star*. I do not have the date of the clipping I have from the *Star*, but let me read some of the problems encountered by one person who apparently was able to get the money to put together a film worth looking at, a film called "Nobody Waved Goodbye". This film was made by a man called Don Owen, and this is what Robert Fulford had to say about it:

But now consider "Nobody Waved Goodbye", by Don Owen, perhaps the best feature made so far in English speaking Canada. It was a Toronto film,