

'Lest we forget' that October

by M.P. MacKenzie

It seems appropriate that this week the words "Lest We Forget" were broadcast repeatedly on radio and Television and Michel Brault's brilliant film about the October crisis, "Les Ordres," played at the Rebecca Cohn on Sunday night. The characters in this film were all victims of the implementation of the War Measures Act in a time of peace but the extent to which they were victimized was probably unrecognized outside of Quebec before now. The distribution of Brault's film in English Canada should force us to examine exactly what can and did happen in this free and democratic country of ours. It must never happen again.

Of the 450 people arrested in Quebec under the powers of the War Measures Act "Les Ordres" deals with only five, and these five are actually composed of characteristics of the 50 or so victims Brault interviewed - they are not and do not pretend to be real people. The film is a work of fiction but one based on fact to the extent that everything in the film happened to someone but not necessarily to the person one sees it happen to in the movie.

It is extremely difficult to review this film using the same criteria one would use to review any other film. Technically this is, of course, possible but the subject matter is somehow so explosive and so personal to Canadians that a simple movie review is not enough - it can't do Brault or the film justice. Though I have just seen the film I feel that I should have viewed it at least three times before even attempting to write about it.



Michel Brault, award winning director, filming a sequence of "Les Ordres".

The camerawork is truly amazing - it is really so good. Even a noncritical film goer can easily understand why Brault is considered one of the best cameramen in the world. It is also obvious that as a director the man is a perfectionist who demands and gets the best from his actors. One gets the distinct impression that the actors, technicians and director worked together as a team. There are no stars, only consistently good performances from everyone.

The subject matter of "Les Ordres" is volatile and emotional

and could easily lead to overacting and moments of melodrama. It is a tribute to all concerned, actors and director, that this never happens. The impact of the film lies in its believability, its reality, despite the unbelievability of such events occurring in Canada. The actors could have destroyed this but didn't.

Though certainly one could say that the events were not as terrible as they could have been, the torture political prisoners face in other countries, one must keep reminding oneself that all this

happened here in Canada. Excusing ourselves for these events on the basis that things are worse elsewhere is no excuse at all. The fact is that innocent people were arrested for absolutely no reason, apparently almost at random, deprived of all their rights, imprisoned for an indefinite time period, and some were even tortured but no one, or at least very few, were ever compensated for the government's cruelty.

Most of us have read about the things that happened to people during the October Crisis but reading about the horrors and actually seeing them happen in "Les Ordres" are two different things. The film provided an impact the printed word can never have. I doubt that the War Measures Act would ever again be invoked for anything short of a major world war but just in case I think "Les Ordres" should be mandatory viewing material for all politicians, police officers and high school students in Canada. Its merits go far beyond its excellent technical aspects. It is proof positive that political torture can happen here - Lest We Forget.

Christmas concert

The Dalhousie Chorale's first presentation of the season will be on Monday, November 14 at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, Dalhousie Arts Centre at 8:30 p.m. The concert will feature not only the chorale but seven of Dalhousie's distinguished performance faculty and an orchestra of 30 members of the Atlantic Federation of Musicians, Local 571.

The first item in the programme is a showpiece for Philippe Djokic (violin), William Valleau (cello), Peter Bowman (oboe) and David Carroll (bassoon): Haydn's Sinfonia Concertante for soloists and orchestra. The soloists have all appeared in Halifax earlier this season with the Dalhousie Chamber Soloists. On this occasion they will be heard with orchestra: concertmaster Jan Bobak and conductor Peter Fletcher.

The Dalhousie Chorale will perform Haydn's Mass in Time of War. The 85 member chorus was selected by audition in September by Music Director Peter Fletcher and consists of students and faculty from many different university departments, as well as members of the community. The chorale made a notable impression with its performance of "Belshazzar's Feast" at the end of last year. The Mass in Time of War makes heavy demands on the choir and also on the four soloists. Elvira Gonnella and Philip May, mezzo soprano and baritone soloists, are already well known to Halifax audiences in recital, oratorio and opera. The soprano soloist will be a Dalhousie voice student, Ann MacDonald.

A special feature of this concert will be the Halifax debut of tenor soloist, Jeff Morris. Before coming to Dalhousie as a voice faculty member Jeff Morris was the principal tenor of the Basle Opera

House in Switzerland where he sang over 15 major roles. He also appeared with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, La Scala in Milan, the Oldenburg Staats Theatre, the Munich Staats Theatre and the Chicago Lyric Opera. Since arriving in Canada, Jeff Morris has already been engaged by Mario Benardi to

perform in "The Queen of Spades" and to cover the role sung by John Vickers at the National Arts Centre this summer. In addition to singing the Haydn Mass, Jeff Morris will be singing two operatic arias from Mozart's "Don Giovanni".

Tickets for the concert (\$3. and \$2. students \$1.) are available at the Box Office Dalhousie Arts Centre. Tickets may also be purchased for the second concert in the chorale series on December 8th featuring Bach's Magnificat, Britten's Ceremony of Carols and Schutz's Christmas Oratorio.

Canadian Entertainment Conference

by F. Perina

The Canadian Entertainment Conference, 1975, was held at Toronto's Harbour Castle Hotel from October 10-14.

Most of the major Canadian Universities were represented. The exact number of delegates was never revealed, but there were approximately 450 people in attendance at various times. This number includes the industry representatives who actually made up a good portion of the total attendance. Maritime schools represented were U.N.B., Memorial and Dalhousie. A disappointing turnout - probably due to the unusually high cost of attending the Conference.

The keynote speaker for the affair, Bill Billard, manager of Maple Leaf Gardens, opened the four-day session with a brief talk on professionalism, or rather the lack of it, in Canadian University Entertainment. He expressed hope that the continued support of the C.E.C. would eventually overcome this deficiency.

Every evening from 8:00 p.m. five acts were showcased in the comfortable surroundings of the elegant "Harbour Room" of the

Hotel. I found the showcases to be most enjoyable, although none of the acts were really outstanding. The acts were mostly rock oriented with a good number of fine folk acts smattered in between. Of all, the most impressive were "The Dudes" an excellent Montreal-based rock band, "Garfield", "Ray Materick", "Heartaches Razz Band", and a unique jazz group called "Man-eige". After the showcases ended, agents and colleges got together for shop-talk. This is when most of the business was accomplished.

One of the most significant developments of the Conference was the dissolution of the C.E.C. as such, and the creation of the C.P.C. (Canadian Programming Conference). Joe Recchia, long-time organizer and creator of C.E.C., resigned as Chairman. The Board of Directors of C.P.C. from the previous year, were asked to make proposals for the future of the C.P.C. organization based on the schools' needs. It was unfortunate that the Maritime representative of the Board of Directors was not in attendance at the Conference, as the Maritime contingent didn't have a spokesman who could fully explicate their relations with C.E.C.

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