

Development of Film Industry

Citizen of November 11, 1965, entitled "Canada cool to foreign film makers".

Montreal (CP)—Claude Giroux, Montreal-born president of Allied Artists, the U.S. film distributors, says Canada offers no inducement to film makers to make movies here.

Mr. Giroux, a leading figure in the United States, movie industry, is attending the 98th technical conference of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers.

He said in an interview Monday that Canadian banks are conservative and lack knowledge of the film industry. They know nothing, he said, about production guarantees which are given by foreign distributors.

"When you go to the banks and say 'here is a guarantee from an Indian distributor and an Italian distributor and a French distributor to pay \$100,000 each when the picture is finished—now lend me \$300,000 and I'll make a film here' they get a glassy-eyed look.

"They don't understand that making a film is like building a house. You get a construction loan and a completion bond and after that you convert it into a mortgage."

What is needed, he said, is a film agency similar to the industries. Such an agency would be knowledgeable about films and would therefore be in a position to endorse guarantees, he said.

This bill will, to some extent, solve the question of raising money, one of the factors which was hitherto been lacking.

In the course of the debate last June, the hon. member for Moose Mountain (Mr. Southam), I believe it was, said he had some knowledge of the film industry and suggested the figure of \$10 million mentioned here did not amount to very much. I do not know whether it is sufficient or not, but I do know that some of the smaller European countries such as Sweden, Czechoslovakia and Denmark have turned out very good motion pictures on small budgets, pictures which have made a good deal of money for their producers. One such production has been running in Ottawa for a number of weeks. It is called "Dear John" and it is, apparently, a small budget picture. They just used a bedroom most of the time, but it seems they have the necessary ingredients for success.

An hon. Member: Explain.

Mr. Prittie: The question of distribution and the desire of the industry of some kind of guarantee being given for the distribution of films produced in this country by Canadian film makers has already been mentioned. This is most important. Speaking last June, the minister said that co-operation by the exhibitors and the established companies would be expected. I notice that in writing up the debate the *Globe and Mail* of June 21 made this comment in a headline: "Import quota hint if Canadian movies are not shown more often".

[Mr. Prittie.]

I think this was implied in the minister's speech last year and I would certainly agree that if this co-operation is not forthcoming all possible steps should be taken by the government to make sure that Canadian films, assuming they are good ones, do get the exhibition facilities which they deserve, not only here but in other countries of the world, and that if necessary we should use import quotas for this purpose. After all, many other countries do this.

There is one other matter to which I should like to refer. It concerns the relationship of the National Film Board to the established private film producing industry in Canada, however expanded that may become. A week ago today I addressed a question to the minister. The representative of one of the international unions, in this case the International Union of Film Photographers, had protested the fact that the National Film Board and the C.B.C. were co-operating to make a film—the particular film he had in mind was entitled "Waiting for Caroline". It is being filmed in Quebec City and in Vancouver. He was protesting on the grounds that by making this film the National Film Board was exceeding the mandate given to it by parliament.

I understand the C.B.C. and the National Film Board have made arrangements to produce three feature length films. In reply to my question the minister said this, as reported in *Hansard* of January 20, page 12037:

I have seen Mr. Cole of I.A.T.S.E. and listened to his complaints. He did complain that the present activities of the National Film Board were not within the provisions of the act. As the hon. member knows, as a minister of the crown I am not in a position to give a legal opinion, but anyone may look at sections 9 and 10 of the National Film Board Act and see that this sort of endeavour falls within them.

● (5:00 p.m.)

The minister continued on the next page:

Mr. Cole has demanded that a collective agreement be signed with his local in Toronto, a demand which the film board has rejected on the grounds that the board will not instruct its employees to join any particular union. In fact, I am informed that the employees of the film board have joined other unions, particularly Le Syndicat Général du Cinéma.

Mr. Cole has also threatened to prevent distribution of a film now being prepared, and has even threatened to disrupt further an infant industry which all hon. members have indicated they would wish to see flourish in this country. It seems to me that it would be a most short-sighted approach on the part of cameramen and other individuals associated with film making, to cause a disruption which would sabotage the efforts of government and prospects for the industry to grow in Canada.