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The Discursive Economy of the Emergence of the Canadian  
Feature Film: Discourses of Dependency and the  
Governmentalization of a Displaced National Cinema,  
1957-1968

Michael Dorland

A Thesis  
in  
The Department  
of  
Communications Studies

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at  
Concordia University  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

June 1991

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## **ABSTRACT**

**The Discursive Economy of the Emergence of the Canadian Feature Film:  
Discourses of Dependency and the Governmentalization of a Displaced  
National Cinema, 1957-1968**

Michael Dorland, Ph.D.,  
Concordia University,  
1991

This dissertation examines the problematic of the transition to a new medium of communication, represented by the feature-length film, in the Canadian context of the late 1950s and 1960s. Specifically, the dissertation focusses upon the role of the state in the conversion of an emergent desire to make feature films into an institutional framework for assisting a commercial, feature-film production capability, and how this assumed discursive form.

To account for the extension of the state into the discursive, Foucault's theory of governmentality is resorted to, in which the state is articulated as a field of continual redefinition of agenda and non-agenda. To map out the emergence, within such a field, of discourses about the Canadian feature, a model of discursive economy is proposed, organized around the major categories of surfaces of emergence (changes in non-discursive practices) and instances of delimitation (discursive practices). Particular attention is given in the Canadian context to the changing horizon of cultural policy, the impact of television upon filmmaking practices, the rise of statisticalized representations of private sector



growth in program production, and changes in the international political economy of feature film production. It thus becomes possible to clearly track the emergence of a private sector discourse of feature film production, its mobilization of a discursive formation within the state apparatus and, as a result, the policy framework that would gain institutional form with the establishment of the Canadian Film Development Corporation (1968).

Contrary to predominantly nationalist and auteurist interpretations, this dissertation demonstrates that, in the period examined, the dominant discourse which framed policy for the so-called film industry was a commercial discourse in which nationalism was subordinated to international trade imperatives. Not only is the emergence of the Canadian feature form shown to be integral to the institutional system of communications in Canada, and in particular its retreat from a conception of public service, but as well it is seen how feature film development is inscribed within technologies of governance, particularly in the continuity of mercantilist conceptions of the transition to capitalist modernity.

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Montreal, June 1991.

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## Chapter One

### Displaced National Cinemas and the Problematic of the Canadian Feature Film

...in the system of laws which has been established for the management of our...colonies, the interest of the home-consumer has been sacrificed to that of the producer with a more extravagant profusion than in all our other commercial regulations. A great empire has been established for the sole purpose of raising up a nation of customers who should be obliged to buy from...our different producers....[T]he home-consumers have been burdened with the whole expence of maintaining and defending that empire. - Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, Bk. IV

#### 1. Displaced National Cinemas and the Problematic of Canadian Feature Film

Writing in May 1990, Time magazine staffer Howard G. Chua-Eoan surveyed world demand for American-style entertainment and found it insatiable: "Hollywood is ever ready to please, titillate and excite for the price of a movie ticket" (Chua-Eoan 1990: 48). Hollywood, however, had fundamentally changed: it was "no longer American, but a disembodied, stateless, multicorporate entity that happens to take lunch somewhere in the vicinity of Los Angeles" (ibid.: 54). In its transformation from making movies "solely for the American market" to transnationalism, this stateless, multicorporate entity had displaced the various corporate entities of national cinemas (e.g., France, Italy, Germany) that had once proffered resistant markets to its global hegemony. Of particular note was the fact

that "English-speaking countries have been reduced to American cinematic colonies." Thus,

In Canada....Ottawa's attempts to diminish the virtual U.S. monopoly over film rights...have been fought off by Washington. Meanwhile, in Australia the industry cramped up....Movies that could not be marketed abroad - those without American-style production quality - were no longer made....(T)he British movie industry has withered (ibid.: 51).

Even in this simplified and journalistic form, such a restatement of the 'media imperialism' thesis<sup>1</sup> is open to objection, and principally to the charge that the thesis tends to represent the dependent industry as a passive recipient rather than as a working system. As Tulloch has remarked with respect to the Australian film industry of the 1920s, the media imperialism thesis

generally ignores [the dependent industry's] organizational density and the variety of social groups within and around it, some of which have the power to mobilize state action. The complexity of the local struggle is downplayed (Tulloch 1982: 40).

Also downplayed by the media imperialism thesis is the complexity, not only of the local struggle of the dependent industry, but, particularly with respect to Canada, Australia and Britain, of its articulation within a common spoken language. As Tunstall has remarked,

Mutual use of the English language was crucial in American entry to the British and Commonwealth markets [as of the 1920s]. This entry both consolidated English as the world media language and

---

<sup>1</sup> The media imperialism thesis argues that a dependent economy within the capitalist world system tends to absorb the media content and consumer values of the dominant power, and that when the dependent economy produces its own film and TV material, it reproduces at a technically less sophisticated level the dominant content. For classic statements of the media imperialism thesis in English, see Schiller 1969, Boyd-Barrett 1977, Tunstall 1977 and, for detailed discussion, Lee 1980

gave the American media a flying start into the world market (Tunstall 1977: 124).

On the basis of mutual language Tunstall makes the case for the cartel-like integration of American and British media "into a single industry" with an enormous competitive advantage in white Commonwealth nations and in ex-British Asia and Africa. Within the dominance of Anglo-American media, Canada and Australia would play important parts as members of the Anglo-American team, as test markets for media exports and as competitive broadcasting importers, paying higher prices for media imports than most countries (Tunstall 1977: 125-133; also Jowett 1977:5-13).

However, the other side of this linguistic commonality would be the configuration of Canadian, Australian and British cinema in the form of what Dermody and Jacka have termed "displaced national cinemas" (Dermody & Jacka 1987: 10)--neither First World (Hollywood and continental Europe) nor Third World in an antithetical opposition to Hollywood, but (always ambiguously) in between. A shared language in a context of Hollywood cinematic domination would reinforce the disarticulation of displaced national cinemas not only in economic terms but, more importantly for our purposes, conceptually as well. In economics, disarticulation is a characteristic of an unintegrated or peripheral economy in which firms are not connected to each other in the same way as firms in the dominant economy. In other words, there is disarticulation between technology and social structure; because of this, peripheral firms cannot internally generate equipment or other capital goods but must import them. This contributes to further structural deformation of the peripheral economy in which the assimilation of imported technologies are luxury products in the context of the

periphery (Evans 1979:28-29). Thus the ensuing disjunction of film industry organization between the exhibition-distribution (or consumption) of an imported cinema in Canada/Australia/Britain and the scarcity of resources allocated to the production (or manufacture) of Canadian/Australian/British cinema. Such structural disarticulation would systematically disequilibrate not only the subsequent development of national policy with respect to the dependent industry, but as well the reception context of movie-going audiences for whom the cinematic 'norm' has historically been the cinema of elsewhere<sup>2</sup>. Needless to say, disarticulation makes conceptualization of a displaced national cinema particularly difficult to the extent that such a conceptualization also bears the characteristics of disarticulation.

This, perhaps the most notable of a variety of displacement effects<sup>1</sup>, has, furthermore, made study of the history of Canada, Australia or Britain's displaced national cinemas a consistently problematic and belated endeavor. As recently as 1983, academic study of British cinema history was "in its infancy" (Curran and Porter 1983:1). Australian film scholars such as Dermody, Jacka and Turner have commented on the lack of serious study of Australian cinema until the mid-1980s; as Dermody and Jacka put it, "Australian film and its 'problems' were, frankly, a

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<sup>2</sup> As Nowell-Smith remarks of the British context, though the implications are pertinent for any other 'national' context: "The hidden history of cinema in British culture, and in popular culture in particular, has been the history of American films popular with the British public. The strength of American cinema was never just economic, and cannot simply be attributed to the lower cost of American product offered for export" (in Auty and Roddick 1985:151-152).

<sup>3</sup> For recent British examples, see Nick Roddick's article "'If the United States spoke Spanish, we would have a film industry...'" in Auty and Roddick 1985: 3-18. Also Charles Barr's insightful discussion of British cinema organized around the two poles of collective amnesia and critical schizophrenia in Barr 1986:1-30. For a fascinating 'British' perspective on the American film industry as "the missing link in attempts, Marxist or otherwise, to make connections between films and society", see Puscombe 1986 [1975].43-63.



bit lowbrow, un-French and not at all Nietzschean" (Dermody & Jacka 1987:10). If, in the intervening years, with the maturation of film historical research and scholarship (see Allen & Gomery 1985), the study of British and Australian film history has made some significant progress<sup>4</sup>, that of Canada has scarcely advanced from Peter Morris' assessment in 1978: "the study of Canadian film history is still in an embryonic state of development" (Morris 1978: i).

The Canadian context (and its study) distinguishes itself most obviously from that of Britain and Australia by, on the one hand, greater immediate proximity to the United States and, on the other, by the linguistically differentiated enclave represented by Quebec with, as a result, possibly greater disarticulation in the development of a Canadian 'national cinema'. As Piers Handling remarked in an early anthology devoted to problems of Canadian film history,

What struck me in assembling an anthology of this kind is the amount of film that we have produced over the decades and how little of it is...part of our collective consciousness. Exploring Canadian film is analogous to meeting...person[s] suffering from amnesia. Their past is no longer remembered. It has no considered relationship to their present (Handling & Véronneau 1980: viii).

As co-editor Pierre Véronneau would observe, the displaced past of Canadian film history correlates to a striking degree to its instability as an object in time (here in the context of a survey from 1898 to the present).

We soon discover that it [Canadian cinema] never focused on one particular area....It is impossible to grasp the cinema in Canada: it disappears in one area, crops up in another, moves from west to

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<sup>4</sup> Of the British context, Barr for example writes that "Unquestionably it [British cinema] has...become much more thoroughly known, classified, and perceived. Many of the ..gaps...have been filled....in some academic and critical quarters, British cinema has become as serious an object of study as Hollywood or European. Yet the impact of this work has, to date, been distinctly limited" (Barr 1986:2).

east, splits up, dies, is reborn, etc. (Handling & Véronneau 1980: xii-xiii).

If Canadian cinema as an unstable object in perpetual movement is difficult to grasp over time, greater clarity may be provided by focussing, instead of an undifferentiated 'Canadian cinema', upon the development of one specific form: the feature-length film. But, here as well, attempting to historically situate a more clearly delimited object is subject to temporal slippage. Not only because there is no standard measure in the Canadian literature as to what length of footage constitutes a feature-film in the Canadian context,<sup>5</sup> but also because of the Canadian feature's relationship to the polemical existence of a film industry capable of producing feature-length productions. The furore occasioned by Joyce Nelson's 1988 polemical study of the influence of John Grierson upon Canadian filmmaking, which provoked an energetic debate in English-language daily newspapers and cultural magazines,<sup>6</sup> turned on her charge that

Grierson saw no reason for Canada to have a commercial film industry or to engage in its own feature-film production. In 1944, he recommended to the Canadian government that any such attempt in the post-war future would be too difficult, costly, counter-productive, time-consuming, and essentially unnecessary. For Grierson, the Canadian desire to make Canadian feature films was a

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<sup>5</sup> Turner 1987 for instance opted for a definition of the feature as "any audio-visual document available on a film support, irrespective of content, running more than 60 minutes" because such a mensuration "permitted the inclusion of the maximum number of films" (x). If Canadian film scholarship tends to favour a length of 60 minutes and up as a definition of a feature (e.g., Houle & Julien 1978, Coulombe & Jean 1988), the state funding apparatus appears to favour a length of 75 minutes and up. See for example National Film Board of Canada Archives, Film Policy 262, Langford 1977.

<sup>6</sup> See for instance Verrall 1989a, 1989b, Newman 1989. I am grateful to Robert Verrall for sharing this material.

sign of 'old-fashioned nationalistic nonsense' (Nelson 1988: 166, 89-90).

Leading the Griersonian counter-charge to refute Nelson's suggestion that a Canadian postwar feature film industry could have been developed, Susan Schouten Levine would respond that "A fundamental question today [1989] is why are Canadian films not distributed in our theatres. But that was not the question then [1944], as there was no Canadian feature film industry existent" (Levine 1989:13, emphasis added).

In the perception of Australian film scholars, the Canadian situation presents, as Graeme Turner, for one, recently put it, "a...clear-cut case of continuing colonisation" (Turner unpublished paper [1990]:13). In Dermody and Jacka's account, the Canadian film industry, while undergoing a revival in the late 1960s in much the same way as the Australian industry, "became what is now little more than an off-shore branch of Hollywood....The result has been a reasonably large body of Canadian-produced films effectively indistinguishable from the American product...and at present there seems no prospect of improving the situation" (Dermody & Jacka 1987: 140)<sup>7</sup>.

Sylvia Lawson, reflecting upon some problems and issues for film history in Australia, would situate the problematic of on-again, off-again film industries (such as those of Australia, Canada or New Zealand) within a shared contextual paradigm of an ambivalent decolonization: "not that of the single national society, but that constituted by all ex-colonies which cannot easily shed their colonizations" (Lawson 1979: 66). These societies, while post-colonial within the

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<sup>7</sup> In volume II of their study, Dermody and Jacka would be less charitable: "The Canadian industry seems to have internalised completely the American belief that Canada is a poor, pale copy of itself" (Dermody & Jacka 1988:37).

English-speaking world, were not post-revolutionary; instead of inheriting the collective birth-trauma of anti-imperialist rebellion and revolution with all this implies in terms of aggression, defence, and the rewriting of history, such ex-colonies, in their would-be film history and filmic practices, might narrate "(n)ot history...but histories which cross and tangle with each other; [and] which are necessarily provisional" (ibid.: 64). In such contexts, "the pursuit of 'film history' runs inevitably into the thicket of questions we might perceive as 'film and nationality' or film, the global system of production and exchange, in its relation to specific societies" (ibid.: 66). For Lawson, the difficulty of film history in the English-speaking ex-colonies is that it is confronted with a double colonization to be recouped into conscious knowledge: 1) not a struggle against American cultural imperialism as much as survival in spite of "Hollywood's tidal wave", and 2) perhaps more importantly, "also and more bitterly, the political and cultural apathy of their own society" (ibid.: 66). Because the ex-colonies were "politically divided, socially and culturally fragmented" (and in the case of Canada, linguistically fragmented as well), they could not set about decolonization, "in film practice or anything else, with the single-mindedness of the Cubans or the Chinese." Accordingly, in her late '70s assessment of the state of Australian film history,

There has been no strong consensus...on the value of probing back through Australia's eighty years of on-again, off-again film production. Nonetheless....with increased research skills, funding, and energy going into the preservation and rescue operations of the national film archive, oral history being collected at something past the eleventh hour, theses written, and a series of critical/historical texts in production, a general project could be said to be under way. Some local scholars and critics have seen it, however, as merely xenophobic.... (ibid.: 66).

Central, then, to the possibility of historical understanding of the intermittent film industries of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or Britain is their entanglement within "the polemic for the revival of feature production" (Lawson 1979: 64), which, in one or other form, survived the long hiatus of the collapse of indigenous, pre-sound feature production in the 1920s to re-emerge in "the sixties and seventies [as] ...revived industries and film cultures emerging, both shackled and enabled by the politics of public financing" (ibid.: 66).

This is to say that the problematic posed by displaced national cinemas is more than that of intermittent survival or concomitant (and regularly proclaimed) demise; it is a problematic of emergence. As Roddick states it in the British context:

the paradox...central to any understanding of British film....more than anything else...[is] the ability of the British film industry to re-emerge, phoenix-like, from its own ashes at regular intervals ever since the advent of the talkies (Auty & Roddick 1985: 6).

As a contribution to the history of displaced national cinemas, this dissertation examines the problematic of feature film emergence in the Canadian context.

## 2. The Imaginary Film Industry

In their study of the Australian feature film revival of the 1970s, Dermody and Jacka propose a model of the Australian feature film industry, not as an economic object, but as the articulation of a public idea, an imaginary construct upon which another imaginary construct, Australian national identity (see White 1981), is seen substantially to rest. This public idea is produced by and constituted as 'talk'--the rhetoric of lobbyists and journalists, the speeches and statements of politicians, the annual reports of government bodies, the pamphlets

and documents of contending interest groups within the industry, and finally in the films themselves.

As a result of all that talk and declaration, 'the industry' was already an over-determined and even fetishised object before it had any claim to material existence (Dermody & Jacka 1987: 26, also 23-27, emphasis added).

Thus a methodological starting-point in the study of displaced national cinemas would be recognition that, in the historical polemic for feature film revival, the "over-determined and fetishised object" that has survived over time, since the collapse of an originary 'film industry' in the 1920s<sup>8</sup>, has been not a film industry per se, but elements of a film production infrastructure sufficiently established to support the periodic emergence of discursive formations that produce 'talk' about an imaginary or potential industry. It is the survival of these production elements which makes possible the continuation of the polemic. For instance, Roddick attributes the phoenix-like re-emergence capability of the British film industry to "the paradox of an infrastructure without...an industry to go with it" (Auty & Roddick 1985:6), as a result of which production facilities, although having become overseas bases for proto-Hollywood production, also provided continuity of work for British technical personnel, if not directors and stars. In the Australian context, Lawson would find that "what we have is a small-scale motion picture industry, not--or not yet--an Australian cinema" (Lawson 1979:68). Or, as Dermody & Jacka put it with greater precision, "In economic and industrial terms, 'the [Australian] film industry' is small, uncertain, insecure,

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<sup>8</sup> In the Canadian context, for instance, the emergence of feature film policy in the early 1960s is predicated upon the presupposition that "a fairly effective film industry could have been established in Canada before the coming of the sound film." See Ch. V below.

seasonal, fragmented, artisanal and entrepreneurial" (Dermody & Jacka 1987:23).

In Dermody and Jacka's model, the Australian feature film revival (i.e., a significant moment in the historical continuum of industry-as-talk) would be framed by the two major discourses of Australian cinema, "Industry-1" or indicatively the discourse of a national cinema and "Industry-2" or the discourse of commercialism, the two together constituting what this dissertation will term a discursive economy, "the verbal force-field in which the industry has been conceived, argued and legislated for, and put into public circulation" (Dermody & Jacka 1987: 197). Industry-1, the discourse of the producers (but also many directors, writers, actors, and union leaders) who became established in the '70s, articulated

a certain style of film-making (modest, artisanal, democratic); a certain style of film (socially concerned, gentle, humanistic, sometimes didactic, but non-confrontational and often aesthetically timid), and a certain politics of Australian film culture--against the monopolies, somewhat distrustful of America and its cultural domination of Australia, in favour of government regulation and safeguards on the Australian character of the industry...( Dermody & Jacka 1987: 198).

Industry-2, the discourse of initially the traditional distribution/exhibition interests and latterly of the film financiers, packagers, brokers, and producers who emerged with the tax incentive legislation of 1980, is 'reactionary':

anti-intellectual, anti-film-buff, anti-art, anti-government regulation of the industry, scornful of Australian nationalism and the concern about U.S. domination, concerned with the mass audience, bums-on-seats, box-office dollars and the business of film (as against film as art or communication) (Dermody & Jacka 1987: 199).

Each discourse functions as the alter ego of the other, structuring a binary

discursive field of oppositions (art/industry, national/international, culture/commerce) articulated as "a melodrama that depended for its sense upon the convention of the absence of a middle ground" (Dermody & Jacka 1987: 197). For Dermody and Jacka, "the life of this industry as a double personality is especially striking" for it structures both an operational discursive space and at the same time establishes its limits. It allows 1) "the industry at any one time to say one thing, and be the other", 2) an oscillation over time of the balance between Industry-1 and Industry-2 that evens out

into an uneasy, uncertain, unconfident stasis, leaving the industry neither one thing nor the other, neither a repository of the values of a potential national cinema nor an aggressively successful business, pushing into foreign territories....Between these two projections lies a zone of inertia, in which the past is being replayed for an audience that seems to have lost interest, patience, and any remnant of loyalty (Dermody & Jacka 1987: 200),

and 3) it establishes the aesthetic patterns that define the limits of Australian feature production as "a narrow field of conservative aesthetic choices, repeated over and over" (ibid.: 201).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> In volume II, Dermody and Jacka explore the three main aesthetic patterns or de facto genres that emerged in the Australian feature by the mid-1970s. The most conspicuous was what they term "the AIC genre" of the official state culture which offer a picturesque and literary Australianness (lyrical qualities of the bush set off by tasteful period costume and art design), the second genre are social-realist, social problem films, relegated generally to a lower-budget stratum and strongly imprinted by the government documentary film-making tradition; the third genre are "entertainment" films consigned to the limbo of low-grade 'world cinema' that espouse "a cold aesthetic of pure commercialism, of pseudo-American or mid-Atlantic placelessness." See Dermody & Jacka 1988. To the extent that the present dissertation is only incidentally concerned with the aesthetics of the Canadian feature film, detailed discussion has been deferred to post-doctoral research. One notes, however, that the 'Australian' film genres correspond closely to the 'Canadian'.



The importance of Dermody and Jacka's model is that it establishes the rigorously dualistic nature of the discursive economy of a displaced national cinema (such as Australia's), and suggests compellingly that the aesthetics of displaced national cinema are, as well, effects of the discursive economy in which it functions.

### 3. Problems in Assessing Canadian Cinema

The end of the 1980s saw various attempts within the Canadian film 'industry' to provisionally assess the course of its recent development against the background of some 20 years of public funding of Canadian feature film production. For Cinema Canada editor Connie Tadros, availing herself of the opportunity for an overview occasioned by the 150th issue of the magazine ("Cinema Canada has been judge, plaintiff and defendant of--as well as witness to--the growth of an industry"), that development would be succinctly summed up in her title, "From Community to Commodity" (Tadros 1988: 5-14).

For Tadros, the developmental options faced by the Canadian film 'industry' had until the mid-1970s been clear: "One either participated in a communal adventure toward the creation of a national cinema, or one was reduced to a commodity in the American marketplace" (Tadros 1988:9). As she wrote in the 150th issue's accompanying editorial,

The growth of the industry has been phenomenal since 1972....fed by tax shelters and a weak dollar....It has not become an independent industry, despite the rhetoric. The producers who seem most solid today are those working with Americans on projects for the U.S. market. Paradoxically, the filmmakers we show off at festivals have nothing to do with this part of the industry (Tadros 1988:4).

Instead of "a truly national Canadian film industry", Canada had ended up

with a bifurcated production infrastructure, "working in the American marketplace, or working within the confines of government subsidy in Canada" (Tadros 1988:13). An initially articulate national cultural vision of "(p)roduction, distribution, information and promotion, supported by government policy [that] would surely develop into a viable community" (ibid.:6) had resulted instead in a dependent, subsidized 'industry', "one so dependent upon public funds and tax measures that divergent points of view find no expression" (ibid.:14):

Without the financial backing of the government, the Canadian film and television industry would wither...having used all the funds available yet having failed to secure its own market to support its efforts (ibid.:13).

In Tadros' account, this bicephalous production 'industry' consisted of a dominant component, working and identifying with the American entertainment industry, that had managed to make substantial economic strides ("Never has there been so much money circulating nor so many people at work. Never have there been so many foreign sales of Canadian programs, nor so many companies which seem solidly structured to persevere" [ibid.: 13]), but at the expense of a national vision of cultural production, and a dominated component, the subsidized creature of government policies, from whose production margins emerge "not [the] industrial products of a healthy, private industry" (ibid.:12), but (English-language) independently produced authors' films and (French-language) productions of public support through government agencies, the films that "the government...takes on the festival circuit to impress the world with our ability" (ibid.).

How this two-headed production 'industry' had come into being was more difficult to explain. Tadros attributes varying degrees of emphasis to various

factors.

The role of federal film policies and agencies: “Inadvertently, misguidedly, or simply cynically, the federal government had so orchestrated its policies and agencies that it had delivered the Canadian industry into the hands of the American marketplace” (ibid.:12). Tadros’ premise here is that “a healthy, independent Canadian industry must have production, distribution, and exhibition components” (ibid.:6). “One must control distribution if one is to create the marketplace for interesting Canadian productions which might eventually liberate the government from its role as primary banker to the industry” (ibid.: 9). While her account recalls Secretary of State John Roberts’ abortive 1977 distribution legislation (“He knew that...[a]n industry without a strong distribution sector would be no industry” [ibid.:9]), Tadros also recognizes the fact that Canadian producers “were not concerned with distribution” (ibid.:8). The question, posed here but not answered, of whether the Canadian government aspired to be ‘liberated’ from its role as primary banker is one to which we return below (see Ch. 7).

Because (as we shall also see below in Ch. 2) the question of the role of the Canadian state in film industry development is a complex one, Tadros shifts her emphasis from the in/coherence of state film policy to the more conspiratorially suggestive explanation (recalling Joyce Nelson on Grierson) that the “final arbitrators” of policy would be, not the state, but

Canadians...who left for Hollywood long ago and those who depend on Hollywood today...[who] convince[d] our government that

economic independence for the Canadian film/television industry is unnecessary and unrealistic (Tadros 1988:9-10).

Shifting the locus of explanation further from the sociological to the sociopsychological, Tadros suggests that the difficulty in assessing the development of the Canadian film industry is that "ultimate pressures" on the course of that development were not external (neither the U.S. film industry nor the Canadian Hollywood lobby) but internal to the Canadian 'national psyche', specifically the "Canadian lack of will to seize our independence" (Tadros 1988:9) in its various manifestations: "the lack of government will to expropriate the American theatrical distributors" (ibid.:11), and inevitable consequence: "our vision has collapsed...corrupted by the lack of government will" (ibid.:13).

By a logic of elimination, Tadros' explanatory model decants to the by no means uninteresting one of a fantasy, and specifically the phantasms of a production milieu distinguished by a characteristically timorous relationship to discourse: "the ability of the milieu to deceive itself became truly phenomenal" (8); "What no one said but everybody knew was that Canadian films were now being made almost exclusively because of the highly artificial financial situation..." (8); "No one dared remind the community that the films had to be seen..." (8, emphases added). This self-deceptive discourse, articulated more by what it does not say than by what it does, developed in interaction with a state apparatus functioning in response to it, i.e., given to "totally misguided readings[s] of the industry workings" (8) in a context of policy development Tadros characterizes as "(t)he great lie" (9).

Not surprisingly, the result is considerable talk in a conceptually incoherent discursive arena.

During this entire period [1972-1988], the federal government remained committed to making this industry work. As if fascinated by the magic of the image, its power and the power of the people it attracted, minister followed minister, promising measures, adjusting old ones, trying to get it right (Tadros 1988:9).

If one turns to equivalents such as produced by representatives of the Canadian film 'industry' as a business, one finds, within significant contrasts, similar problems. For industry lobbyist Peter Mortimer, addressing a 1988 Toronto conference on the strategy of Canadian culture in the 21st century in his capacity as executive vice-president of the Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers, what characterizes the Canadian film production context is "that the government has always been the deciding factor in the development of our industry in Canada" (Mortimer 1988:129). The difficulty is that government commitment to film industry development has been historically erratic, conceptually obscure, and politically more apparent than real, and to such an extent that it

...is a real conundrum if there is indeed a political commitment to development of a viable, market-based Canadian film industry producing high-quality Canadian films and television programs (Mortimer 1988:142).

As Tadros had also indicated, one of the constants of government commitment to film industry development appears to be systematic misperception of the 'reality' of the Canadian film 'industry'. For Mortimer, the 'reality' of the industry is that "Our industry is a complex, somewhat artistic business, which is commercially driven", "an industry with high employment and export earnings capabilities, which also has the ability and a goal to tell

entertaining stories from a Canadian perspective and communicating Canadian values and dreams to Canada and the world" (ibid.:142, 144). Why, then, did the government continually misperceive this "somewhat artistic business"? For Mortimer, the roots of misperception could be traced back to 1967, "when it [the government] first became seriously involved with building an indigenous industry" (ibid.:132). Because the government, at that time, "chose"<sup>10</sup> not to deal with the Canadian distribution question,

At that point it closed its eyes to the economic realities of the film industry. It emphasized 'cultural' objectives at the expense of the commercial ones which are the norm of the industry everywhere. It balked at the idea of upsetting the American [M]ajors due to exaggerated fears of economic reprisals in other areas.... (I)t kept its eyes shut to the necessity of an economic role for Canadian distributors in the Canadian market. It had convinced itself that if it could just help the producers make their films these would somehow get distributed and make money for all. That way revenues would accrue to the production companies and--voila--a developed Canadian industry would result. The naivety of this view defies belief....(Mortimer 1988:133).

As a result of this historic refusal and the distortions caused by "the cultural theme which permeates government policies towards this industry" (ibid. 1988:143) (a cultural rhetoric which, paradoxically, "secured the many advantages our industry has enjoyed under successive governments" but now ill serves "a maturing industry and hard business realities" [ibid.]), the government now faced three developmental options for the industry's future:

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<sup>10</sup> For Mortimer, "the Canadian government has always been in awe of the Americans, especially their film industry and has never felt inclined, let alone able to take them on. The idea that a few stalwart Canadian producers deserved any entree to the American market in return for the Americans' very successful exploitation of our market was never seriously addressed" (Mortimer 1988 130)

an American-controlled Canadian industry, which is essentially what we face if that is where we have to go for production-financing; a government-controlled industry, fuelled by 100 cent tax dollars, through Telefilm, the NFB and the CBC; or, our preference, an independent, Canadian-controlled industry, fuelled with 29 cent dollars through private investment [and income tax credits]...which allows producers to develop some real, independent, financial strength (ibid.:144, emphasis added).

But the choice, Mortimer noted, "is theirs, not ours", because of the historically deciding role the Government of Canada has played in the development of the industry. If it made the right choice, "we can envision a day when that role ceases to be so deciding because the industry has developed some real strength of its own" (ibid.). Furthermore, if Canadian producers and distributors could "get their act together" sufficiently to speak "with one voice" to the U.S. industry, backed by the legislative support of the Canadian government, a new, less imbalanced, relationship with the American film industry would quickly follow. For that to happen, however, the government must first help the Canadian industry develop internal, financial strength.

Some of Mortimer's points would be extended in an essay long-time Toronto-based independent distributor Martin Bockner published, in a 1989 Variety review of Canadian entertainment, entitled "Don't knock Jack Valenti; blame the Canadian government instead." Reviewing 20-plus years of government intervention, film assistance, creation of film investment agencies and promised government action, Bockner would find that

...we are, across the board, in worse straits now than in the mid-1960s. Governments in this country have acted largely without input from the industry itself, or ignored what input they got. That

has been the major stumbling block to a healthy, truly domestic film scene (Bockner 1989:34).

Like Mortimer, Bockner returned to the mid-1960s to identify the roots of the problem, in the 1968 creation of the state film funding agency, the Canadian Film Development Corporation, established to assist the private sector in funding feature films. "The corporation's main shortcoming in its first 10 years was its refusal to recognize the importance of a healthy distribution sector" (ibid.). This refusal

began the pitting of one sector against another and the distrust and parochialism that exist to this day, with producers and distributors sniping at each other and crafts and unions believing neither one (ibid., emphasis added).

In Bockner's account, there had never been any necessity for outside intervention (particularly in the form of Motion Picture Association of America president Jack Valenti) in the development of the Canadian film industry "because every time the Canadian government has tried to intervene in recent years, it has done his [Valenti's] work for him better than he could have hoped for" (ibid.). Bockner briefly details a calamitous course of development since the late 1960s that culminates with the Canadian Film Development Corporation's early 1980s renaming to Telefilm Canada and the abandonment of feature film for television production. "The feature film industry was sold down the river and quickly ground to a halt" (ibid.: 38), only to rise again when "(s)aner minds began to prevail [and l]obbying on behalf of the...film distribution sector began in earnest" in the mid-1980s.

What these accounts underline, however tentative each may be, is the extent to which discursive constructs about Canadian cinema--specifically the Canadian



feature film in relationship to a production 'industry' enabled by public financing-are organized around the emergence of feature film production within the temporal framework of the decade of the 1960s about which little is, in fact, clear, although much is presumed. In the pages that follow, this dissertation will gradually fill in the lacuna of Canadian feature film emergence by means of two broad and interconnected strategies: 1) by articulating the discourses of each of the separate discursive formations whose 'talk' has constituted the discursive economy of the Canadian feature and 2) re-contextualizing these discourses within an interpretation of the development context of Canadian cinema drawn from dependency theory.

#### 4. The Problematic of Quebec Feature Film Emergence: the 1960s

If, as was seen in Dermody and Jacka's model, a displaced national cinema is structured dualistically, what further distinguishes the Canadian context of the 1960s is that such a dualistic structuration not only prevails with respect to the political economy of film 'industry' organization, but it is infinitely multiplied and reinforced by the enviroing social and political organization of Canada as a cultural duality. "Canada," writes historian Kenneth McRae, "offers almost a classic instance of a two-fragment society" (in Hartz 1964: 219 ff.).<sup>11</sup>

Not only does fragmentary dualism bear upon contextual organizing structures, it applies as well to the political economy of language in Canada and particularly so in the 1960-70s context of a politicization of language from a communications device to a symbol of membership in a collectivity (see Jackson

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<sup>11</sup> See Hartz 1964.3 ff for the theoretical framework of a theory of fragmentary development. The Canadian duality is discussed in Lévesque 1959, Wade 1960, Congrès des Affaires canadiennes 1965, and constitutes the framework of inquiry for the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963-1970)

1977: 61-76; Coleman 1984: 183ff). At some risk of oversimplification, the problematic of feature film emergence in the Canadian context is considerably complexified in that it takes place diachronically in two languages at a time of rising contestation and renegotiation of the political, economic and cultural relations between Canada's two founding (or colonial) language groups.<sup>12</sup> Accordingly, Quebec film historian Pierre Véronneau, in an article addressed to an American audience, has recently situated the problematic of the Canadian feature (whether in English or in French) as that of an "unexpected emergence" (Véronneau 1990: 213, emphasis added).

The complex of methodological problems that the 1960s emergence of the Canadian feature continues to pose to scholarship may thus help explain the fact that the period remains still largely a neglected one.<sup>13</sup> The Canadian feature film would appear to exist in scholarship very much as an over-determined and fetishised object; less as an object in itself with clearly demarcated fields and topics of investigation (e.g., aesthetic, technological, economic, social, etc.) than as the designator of a site of unresolved (political, ideological etc.) contestations whose objecthood remains problematic. As an object of knowledge, the Canadian

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<sup>12</sup> As, indeed, Chua-Eoan recognized implicitly in his *Time* article, writing that "In Canada it is the French cinema based in Quebec that thrives. Its English counterpart is nearly moribund" (Chua-Eoan 1990:51). Also cf. Dermody & Jacka 1988: 36-37. Not only does the duality of Canadian feature film development further problematize the media imperialism thesis, but the apparent 'health' of Quebec cinema in recent years can be ascribed, in part, to its occupying a marginally larger share of screen time (8 per cent) than the share held by Canadian cinema nationally: "steady at less than two per cent" (Masse 1985:n p). According to a recent assessment, if Quebec cinema with some 20 commercially released features per annum occupied in 1990 about 8 per cent of screen time, "Nous avons atteint à peu près le maximum de temps-écran auquel il nous est possible d'aspirer" (cited in Perrault 1990:C6).

<sup>13</sup> Among Quebec film scholars, Yves Lever of Ahuntsic CEGEP is currently working on what will be the first monograph specifically on Quebec cinema of the 1960s, developing a thesis that appears in embryonic form in Lever 1988:183 on the alienation of Quebec's emerging film directors from the "réalité ambiante" of the Quiet Revolution.

feature remains entrapped within what Metz has termed the problematic of the "good object" (Metz 1982:6-16)<sup>14</sup>. Perhaps such an entrapment may be largely as a result of the fact, observed by Hayden White, that

societies feel the need to fill areas of consciousness not yet colonized by scientific knowledge with conceptual designators affirmative of their own existentially contrived values and norms (White 1978:153).

Certainly, in the Quebec context, the 1960s emergence of the feature film at first glance bears all the signs of the "good object". As Lamonde and Hébert put it, "Indice du dynamisme de la créativité culturelle du Québec, le long métrage pour le cinéma au Canada s'avère un phénomène essentiellement québécois" (Lamonde & Hébert 1981:132). Such affirmativity translates readily into the widespread belief that the decade 1965-1975 constituted the "golden age" of Quebec cinema (see, for e.g., Carrière 1986, *passim*)<sup>15</sup>, but in a progressive decline as a result of the rise of commercial values. More nuanced accounts (such as Véronneau 1987) nonetheless frame the emergent feature as an object within the larger ideological continuum of the struggle for Quebec's 'national' affirmation, specifically "la présence constante d'une conscience culturelle

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<sup>14</sup> "...I am struck by the extreme concern [the cinematic writer: critic, historian, theoretician] often reveals - a concern which gives him an odd resemblance to producer and consumer - to maintain a good object relation with as many films as possible, and at any rate with the cinema as such...[as] a plea, a claim for legitimacy and an appeal for recognition...the persistent drama of an adherence that sometimes becomes a kind of entanglement - the revolt against an enforced marginalisation .. Discourse about the cinema is too often part of the institution .." (Metz 1982:9, 13, 14).

<sup>15</sup> Such assertions become repeated in the undergraduate publications of contemporary Québécois students. See, for instance, Caroline Massé, "Etre ou avoir: le cinéma québécois des années 80" in a supplement on the social imaginary ten years after the 1980 referendum, in the student paper of the University of Montreal, *Continuum* XIII: 27, week of 9 April, 1990, 20

nationale...en même temps que la montée graduelle de l'affirmation de l'identité nationale des cinéastes" (Véronneau 1987:128).

Closer inspection, however, reveals an historiographical difficulty in Québécois cinematic writing over where to locate, and how to account for, the interplay of continuity/discontinuity with respect to the emergence of the Québécois feature in the decade 1965-1975. The possibilities would appear to be three:

i) discontinuity caused by creation of a second federal cinematic institution: if there is, by existentially contrived consensus, postulation of aesthetic, technological and social continuity between made-for-television documentary and fictionalized series production of the late 1950s and the "direct cinema" documentary shorts produced by certain French-language filmmakers (i.e., employed as civil servants) at the (state-owned) National Film Board and the emergence of the desire to make feature-length films (and in some instances to actually do so) in the early-mid 1960s, then a factor of discontinuity in the development of such a public service cinema<sup>16</sup> must be adduced to the 1968 establishment of the Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC or SDICC

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<sup>16</sup> In an illuminating article on the convergence between a Griersonian conception of public service cinema and the Reithian conception of public service broadcasting, John Caughie provides the following definition of public service cinema: "The concept of a public service cinema has neither currency, continuity, nor an institutional stability to compare with that of the BBC. The idea of such a cinema appears in Grierson as part of a vision of a British art cinema which would be protected from commercial imperatives in order that it might serve the public by reflecting it to itself, educating it, informing it and entertaining it, without having to face what Grierson saw as the inevitable commercial pressure of pandering to it. Without the institutional base of a public corporation, such a cinema clearly could not exist as a coherent thing, and it disappeared on the one hand into sponsored cinema, supported by government or industry for public relations more than public service, and on the other hand into an art cinema which became increasingly socially exclusive. But it continued to exist as an idea, fuelling the case, in the 1940s and the 1970s...for subsidy and forms of state patronage marking out a crestline of British film..." (in Barr 1986:189-205).

in its French acronym) in support of private-sector, commercial feature filmmaking. The late critic Patrick Straram provides an extreme formulation of the discontinuity when he wrote that, "à fin [sic] de préserver le monopole du cinéma américain ici,"

Ottawa, par la mise en place de la SDICC...a tué le cinéma québécois....un cinéma québécois qui au début des années 60 stimulait tous les nouveaux cinémas dans le monde (Straram n.d.:37).

A less extreme version is provided by André Pâquet<sup>17</sup>, who nonetheless states the discontinuity as follows:

...en 1968, la création de la Société de Développement de l'Industrie Cinématographique Canadienne...qui, sans pour autant rejeter d'office le type de cinéma en place, a néanmoins favorisé le développement d'un cinéma plus commercial, de type industriel. Les films de cette période ont alors établi les règles d'une production axée sur le modèle cinématographique dominant (in Carrière 1986:111).

For both, the discontinuity stems from the politically motivated (and, in Straram's view, genocidal) displacement by a dominant, industrial model of film development of a spontaneous, innovative Quebec cinema that had emerged slightly earlier in synergistic formal correspondance with the social and cultural ferment of an increasingly nationalistic notion of Québécois identity.

More subtle is screenwriter-film director Fernand Dansereau's 1974 analysis of the unexpected emergence of, and the all too immediate domination exercised by the functionaries of the newly created CFDC upon, Québécois cinema:

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<sup>17</sup> Writing as the cinema officer of the Quebec Délégation générale in Paris.

Les fonctionnaires d'un pays colonisé ne sont pas moins colonisés que la population. Les premiers administrateurs de la SDICC ne surent chercher autre chose que la reconnaissance de l'autre. Les critères qu'ils établirent dès le départ, pour l'aide qu'ils proposaient de nous accorder, visaient à nous faire réussir dans les schémas empruntés ailleurs. Ainsi, on nous imposa le scénario rigide et précis d'autrefois, que notre expérience du direct avait invalidé et qui à son tour invalidait le direct. Nous sommes tombés dans le piège. En tant que groupe, la collectivité des cinéastes s'est laissée assimiler (Dansereau 1974:82).

The difficulty with these accounts is not only that both the emergence as well as the displacement of Québécois cinema occur through agencies of the federal Canadian state, but, as Dansereau suggests, that the 'colonisation' of Quebec cinema occurred with the agreement, if imposed, of the local filmmaking community.<sup>18</sup>

ii) previous discontinuity within the federal cinematic institution: Because of such difficulties, Véronneau situates discontinuity several years earlier, with Pierre Juneau's 1964 appointment as the first director of French Production at the National Film Board<sup>19</sup>. Juneau's tenure in NFB management coincided with the hesitant general release of features produced by the Board such as The Drylanders (1963). Echoing NFB producer Jacques Bobet's 1966 assessment of the 1963-64 period that culminates with the creation of an autonomous French Production as "une contre-révolution"--since it officializes an organizational retreat from the sighted Promised Land of the Canadian feature (Bobet 1966:5)--Véronneau sees

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<sup>18</sup> As Pierre Maheu would remark, "...la domination, chez nous, n'est pas brutale...elle est sournoise, médiatisée, elle n'est le fait de personne" (Maheu 1964:2).

<sup>19</sup> At the cost, unfortunately, of the demonization of Pierre Juneau as the privileged individual subject, which Véronneau liberally indulges in. For a trenchant critique of such a historiographical strategy, see Cohen 1986.

this organizational shift as the crucial discontinuity in what might have been the otherwise unbroken development up to that point of an original Québécois cinema in the course of a 'natural' progression towards the feature form. It is this organizational rupture that will give rise to despair among filmmakers, leading to a rash of resignations from the Board (Groulx, J. Dansereau, Gosselin, Arcand, Brault, followed by Carle and Lamothe) and departures for an embryonic private sector, as hostile, one should add, to the NFB's continuing role in film production generally and features in particular as a counter-part, emergent private-sector in English Canada (see Ch. III & IV). For Véronneau (as for Bobet), the historical importance of this moment of rupture is nothing less than the overnight destruction of a 15-year period of the 'primitive accumulation' of "le capital culturel le plus original que le Canada ait jamais eu" (Véronneau 1987:49-53; Bobet 1966:7; Dorland 1984).

iii) subsequent discontinuities caused by the Quebec state: A third approach to the discontinuous emergence of the Québécois feature in the 1965-75 decade consists in situating key discontinuities towards the latter part of the decade, particularly in the light of political anxieties occasioned by the coming to power of the Parti Québécois in November 1976<sup>20</sup>. Thus, Pâquet reads the mid-1970s modifications to tax legislation that, along with the creation of the CFDC, would constitute the federal government's two major film policy initiatives of the decade, as a punitive strike directed against Quebec culture in general and film

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<sup>20</sup> Which came to power on a program of good government and a commitment not to undertake unilateral moves towards independence but to first consult the population by referendum in this regard. The referendum, held in May 1980, in which the Parti québécois government asked for a mandate to begin negotiating Quebec's separation from Canada, returned results of approximately 60% against; 40% in favour

culture in particular which, among other things, would result in "une longue période de chômage pour les meilleurs de nos cinéastes" (in Carrière 1986:112)<sup>21</sup>. More productively, Picard has argued that Quebec cinema of the Péquist period (1975-85) has been overdetermined by the state without whose policies and capital it would not survive. Quebec cinema thus has entertained far more extensive relations with the state apparatus, its directives, norms and rules than it has with a public. The recurring passéisme he analyses in the content of the features of the Parti-Québécois decade, with their emphasis on the cinematic adaptation of the literary patrimoine.

ne doit pas étonné. Ces films ont été conçus pour les organismes d'Etat....La tendance passéiste résulte uniquement d'un Etat subventionnaire timoré (Picard 1987:100, emphasis in original).

If Picard's text is a welcome addition to the scant literature on the role of the Quebec state in the political economy of the Canadian feature, the above discussion of the historiographical problem with respect to the emergence of the feature in the Quebec context serves to highlight the fact that, for all the envioning discursive affirmations of Québécois national identity/culture, the Québécois state is significantly absent as a variable throughout the period of emergence. As Latour for instance remarked in 1975:

(d)epuis novembre 1963 [le Québec] a fait figure de parent pauvre...et s'est même permis le luxe de laisser pourrir la situation

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<sup>21</sup> Actually, the coming to power of the PQ would, in one observer's view, find "le cinéma québécois...installé dans le plus total marasme. Conséquences: démobilisation d'un peu tout le monde, conflits stériles entres producteurs et techniciens; 'lobbying' intensif auprès des 'autorités' là où on pouvait en trouver; tentatives désespérées pour trouver des solutions, malheureusement très souvent aussi vaines que grandioses....le cinéma québécois ne pourra jamais traverser une période plus nélaste que celle qu'elle vient de vivre" under the outgoing provincial government See Jean-Pierre Tadros 1976:5.



par une inaction et une impuissance de tous les instants....(Latour 1975:2).

Within the period that will concern us (particularly 1959-68), the emergence of the feature film in the Canadian context is mediated through the agency of the cinematic institutions of the federal state, principally the NFB, and after 1968 the CFDC, that will constitute the two principal sources of public financing of the emergence of a cinema that, paradoxically, as Pâquet puts it, "était principalement porteur du message 'Québec'" (in Carrière 1986:112).

The question that will preoccupy us, then, is why is it at this particular, historical moment of the emergent desire to produce feature films--and not at an earlier moment--that becomes conceivable the intervention of the Canadian state within an economy of film production (the feature) from which it had hitherto steadfastly abstained. As Audley puts it, "Until 1968, any efforts to develop a Canadian film industry were focussed on non-commercial, non-competitive production" (Audley 1983:218).

To attempt, as this dissertation largely proposes to do, to isolate as the crucial variable the role of the state in the conversion of an emergent desire into an institutional framework for assisting an emergent, commercial feature film production capability involves more clearly situating the state within displaced national cinemas. For now, pending more detailed development below, it must suffice to note that, within the dualism of displaced national cinema, the state introduces (and consolidates) additional ambivalence. As Dickinson and Street remark at the conclusion of their historical study of the relationship between state and cinema in the British context:

The system of state aid was not designed to replace or to compete with commercial finance, and it failed to reverse the long-standing trends towards monopoly and American control. Nevertheless, it represented a commitment to the maintenance of a production base in Britain (Dickinson & Street 1985:248).

In their study of Australia's cinematic "doubled industry", Dermody and Jacka wonder obliquely whether "such a bifurcation could be expected of any state-subsidised (but not controlled) commercial industry" (Dermody & Jacka 1987:197). One of the traits they identify is that state policy in such an (ambivalent) context of emergence becomes what they term "a policy of no policy":

The unkind reading is that lack of declared policy covered for lack of vision, conceptual work, and detailed analysis of the outcome of past funding decisions; that it resulted from cumbersome bureaucratic structures derived from inappropriate public service models; and that what operated in the vacuum were fluctuating, undeclared, provisional positions, hastily adopted and lightly abandoned: a kind of film-by-film adjustment of virtual policy....(Dermody & Jacka 1987:27-28).

Certainly these--an ambivalent commitment to maintaining a Canadian production base framed by virtual policy--are two characteristics also to be found in the Canadian context. Véronneau, for instance, remarks how "L'ONF s'engage dans la voie du long métrage avec tellement de prudence et de parcimonie..." (Véronneau 1987:49). Guy Roberge, Canadian Government Film Commissioner at the time (1957-1966), repeatedly uses the word "prudence" to describe both himself and the policies he would advocate for Canadian film industry

development as chairman of the NFB and principal advisor to the government in matters of cinematographic policy.<sup>22</sup>

That being said, however, one must further remark upon the extent to which the 1960s context of feature film emergence in Canada paradoxically takes place within a spatial expansion, particularly with respect to Canada-Quebec relations, of the respective spheres occupied by 'state' and 'nation' and the resulting increase in the size of the conceptual territory within Canadian social and cultural existence subject to, what we shall term (following Foucault) governmentality (see Ch. III). Resnick has suggested that the 1960s are particularly significant in that they witness an inversion of the two major developmental spheres of the Canadian polity. English-Canadian development began with a (strong) state structure to which a (weak) concept of nation would come to be associated in particular historical circumstances (e.g., the 1960s) in which "the temptations to enhance the nationalist functions of the central government increased" (Resnick 1990:212). Contrariwise, the development of Quebec had been marked by a strong, popular nationalism, but "not...enough weight [has been given] to the relative absence of a state tradition in Quebec." Indeed,

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<sup>22</sup> Interview with the author, Ottawa, 14 May, 1990. In Roberge's case, the prudence was characterological but also dictated experientially by professional (legal) familiarity with the long-standing, historical hostility of the Canadian private sector in film production and broadcasting towards the public-sector NFB and CBC, by sensitivity to Canada's dualistic structures of constitutional jurisdictions particularly in the cinematic sphere (e.g., that both exhibition and regulation [i.e., censorship] fell under provincial jurisdiction), and finally the prudence entailed in attempting to shift the developmental orbit of Canadian cinematic production from an American sphere of influence to a European (or more precisely, French) one. Much of the substance of Roberge's remarks has been confirmed in interviews with Pierre Juneau (Montreal, 4 & 18 April, 1990) with the difference that in Juneau's perspective there was little awareness in the NFB of American influence: "...on était tellement loin de pouvoir y faire quelque chose que ça ne se discutait pas" (interview, 4 April 1990)

The strength of this nationalism may well have been a reflection of the state's weakness....It is only after 1960 that Quebec governments became a good deal more interventionist, leading them into increasing friction over financing and powers with Ottawa (Resnick 1990:218, 208, emphasis added).

To better grasp the thrust of such assertions, however, demands a more detailed discussion of the place of the state within Canadian economic development, and cultural discourse in particular.

## Chapter Two

### The State and its Discourses

Only he who thus conceives of mercantilism will understand it; in its innermost kernel it is nothing but state making—not state making in a narrow sense, but state making and national-economy making at the same time; state making in the modern sense, which creates out of the political community an economic community and so gives it a heightened meaning. —Gustav Schmoller, The Mercantile System and its Historical Significance (1914)

There are always two aspects to governmental power, the action itself and, like an additional consciousness, the raison d'Etat for such action.... —Karl Marx, Kritik der Hegelschen Staatsphilosophie

#### 1. The Problematic of the State in Canadian Discourse

Philip Resnick has argued compellingly that the problematic of the state continues to elude not only the specialized academic disciplines within the Canadian context but also the Canadian polity at large. In part, this is because the character of state power itself in modern societies is “protean....no single, overarching theory can capture it in all its dimensions” (Resnick 1990: 3). As well, the dualistic political, social and intellectual organization of Canadian existence, with the discordant (or at least separate) perspectives such a structure gives rise to<sup>1</sup>, has further militated against a broader understanding of the

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<sup>1</sup> The editor of a recent survey of research in Canada writes, “one is struck by the persistence of two

problematic of the state in Canada. Accordingly, Resnick writes, "...in this country writing about the state (and indeed civil society) has barely proceeded beyond square one" (Resnick 1990: 152). In this light, the pertinent questions he raises with respect to the state are:

How should we define the state? What ought to be its proper sphere of activity? Is there some boundary between civil society and state? What is the relationship between state authority and that other crucial mechanism of modern society, the market? What scope does the modern state leave to the individual citizen, and what mechanisms might we envisage to enhance citizen input and control over those—in public and private spheres—who act in their name? These are some of the questions any discussion of the state should seek to address (Resnick 1990: 134).

Glaringly absent from such an enumeration, though perhaps implicit within the first three questions, is the question of the role played by a particular culture as a fundamental dynamic constitutive both of state authority and a social order. As Raymond Williams reminds us, these fundamentally stately functions of culture are precisely those that are most easily forgotten:

There is one aspect of the State in relation to culture which is almost always forgotten because we absorb it so very early that we can hardly recognize it...It is worth remembering that the State has always had this double sense: it is not only the central organ of power, but of display - indeed often specifically the public pomp of a particular social order....embellishing, representing, making more effective a particular social order or certain preferred features in it....(T)he State as a public power...merely enhances itself with the arts,...engages in its own reproduction using the arts and culture for its decoration and imagery, and not really for the development of the arts themselves (Williams 1984: 3, 5, emphasis in original).

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distinct intellectual discourses in Canada: the English Canadian and the 'Québécois'. Differences are found in the objects of study, as well as in the conceptual approach and methodology. Echoes of this duality can also be found in the writings of Canadianists abroad" (Linteau 1990: 8).

In this perspective, what would characterize Canadian cultural discourse in relation to the state would be the particularly blurry nature of the interaction between the two.

Broadly speaking, what is at issue in the problematic of the Canadian state is the politicization of cultural discourse that simultaneously collapses the possibility of distinguishing the political from the cultural and at the same time widens it by the mediating creation of a statist culture. The resulting dilemma for the putative autonomy of cultural production is well put by historian Ramsay Cook:

The history of Canada for the last century or more has, in part, been an attempt to nurture a distinctive culture, in the broad sense of that term. Indeed, it has probably been believed by people concerned about such questions that only when Canada had developed a distinctive way of life, or culture in a broad sense, would it produce culture in the more restricted sense of works of imagination or intellect.

...Canadian cultural nationalists want to preserve, or develop, a set of social or cultural values that will guarantee Canadian distinctiveness from the United States. Once that is understood, it is not difficult to comprehend the cultural nationalist's conviction that state intervention, direction, and even ownership must be seen as fundamental to the whole process of differentiating Canada from the United States. It is not merely that the state alone has the resources necessary to finance cultural survival...it is also that a statist...approach to culture would in itself be evidence that Canadian culture is different...(Cook 1977: 17, 16).

In a similar vein would another Canadian historian, Arthur Lower, make the following highly approving comments on the 1951 Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters & Sciences (Massey-

Lévesque). This "classic document" made it clear that

(t)he Canadian state now turns to the highest function of a state, building the spiritual structure (the word is not used in the religious sense) of a civilization, the material foundations of which it has already sturdily laid (cited in Woodcock 1985: 53).

To the extent that there is no perceived discrepancy between the material foundations (reminiscent of the marxist economic base) and the cultural superstructure erected by the 'nation-building' state, all is perhaps well and good so far as it goes. Except that the politicization of culture engendered by the nation-building state not only risks producing "sub-state nationalism" (see Resnick 1990: 147) as in the case of Quebec, but the coherence of state control over the various apparatuses that constitute its social or economic base, not to mention the cultural superstructure, is also highly problematic. And even more so from the perspective of an oppositional politics of cultural development in a context of cultural dualism, here that of public- and private-sectors, in which the state allies itself with the (ideologically speaking) wrong side. From precisely such a perspective, Jody Berland observes that

In culture, as in other industries, the Canadian state has served largely as an agent for international accumulative strategies, rather than as an agent of national development. Even those signposts of public national service such as the CBC have been increasingly positioned as convenient infrastructures for the subsequent commodification of their services. The state, by developing and relinquishing these institutions, contributes to what has been called the process of 'administrative recommodification' in the organization of culture. This process increasingly overpowers the government's defense of culture as an 'autonomous' realm in the arts... (Berland [1985]: 69).

The problematic of the state, therefore, also (as with displaced national



cinemas) alternates between the structural dualities (see e.g., Berland [1985]: 70, 73) of autonomy and determination. This dualism would particularly plague the attempts of Canadian political economy to grasp the nature of the Canadian state.

## 2. The State and Canadian Political Economy

At the center of the debate over the Canadian state would be the question whether the federal state functioned like other capitalist states or held an exceptional status within the Canadian political economy. The resulting split between what one polemic has termed “‘nomothetic’ internationalist Marxists” (for whom Canada is largely a site in which to confirm the workings of the general marxist diagnosis of capitalism) and “‘ideographic’ nationalist political economists” (for whom Canadian political and economic structures present unique features) led Gordon Laxer to point to “the schizophrenic character” of Canadian political economy (Laxer 1989:178). For Laxer,

debates within Canadian political economy have tended to...methodological extremism...using history to validate theories rather than trying to understand and explain history. The debates often seem to a dialogue of the deaf (Laxer 1989:179).

If marxist theories of the capitalist state in general may be categorized broadly according to instrumentalist-fractionalist positions (the assumption that common inputs-social background, education, connections, kinship, etc.- result in common ideological and political positions among those that run the state apparatus) and structural-functionalist positions (that the output functions of state activity assure the cohesion of a social formation and the reproduction of capitalist domination), it is the latter that has been the dominant tendency among English-Canadian theorists (Laxer 1989:184; also Stevenson 1983 for an excellent review of the literature). Thus, drawing upon the influential work of James

O'Connor (1973), Panitch enumerates "three distinct functions" of the Canadian state: 1) capital accumulation, 2) legitimation and 3) coercion (Panitch 1977:8). The first, and clearly most important function, breaks down into four main "tasks" : 1) providing a favourable fiscal and monetary climate for economic growth via private enterprise, 2) underwriting the private risks of production at public expense, 3) creating a capitalist labour market and absorbing the social costs of production, and 4) producing the technical infrastructure for capitalist development (ibid.: 14). However, in sharp contradiction to the "relative autonomy" thesis (the institutional separation of the state from the sphere of production and particular classes) favoured by structural-functionalist theories of the state<sup>2</sup>, Canadian structural-functionalist theory would distinguish the Canadian state by a notable absence of relative autonomy.

It has been the very lack of relative autonomy of the state, the sheer depth of its commitment to private capital as the motor force of the society, which, when combined with a weak industrial bourgeoisie and a strong financial bourgeoisie cast in the mould of an intermediary between staple production and industrial empires abroad, explains the lengths to which the state has gone in promoting private capital accumulation not only for the domestic bourgeoisie but for foreign capitalists as well (Panitch 1977:16-17).

Paradoxically, the Canadian state had performed its accumulative function so indiscriminately in providing the basis for capital accumulation to facilitate national economic development that the economic basis for that development was forfeited.

The result of this policy was economic growth indeed, but a

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<sup>2</sup> "The distinguishing feature of the capitalist state is its institutional separation from the process of accumulation" (Wolfe 1989:91).

distorted growth which removed from the Canadian state, given the sheer dominance of foreign capital over the economy, much of the substance of its political sovereignty (Panitch 1977:18)<sup>3</sup>

Parallel with over-development of the Canadian state's accumulation function, the other functions, particularly legitimization<sup>4</sup>, were least developed. As Panitch puts it: "In contrast with the accumulation function where the Canadian state had been a forerunner,... in terms of legitimization the state's role has not been comparatively active, imaginative or large," although "in respect of the coercive function, the state's use of its coercive powers to maintain or impose social order has also been much in evidence in Canadian history" (ibid.: 16-17,18).

Attempts to account historically for the accumulative role of the state in Canada's "distorted growth" would be the work of the non-marxist currents in Canadian political economy that have been termed the 'old' and 'new' political economy. The old political economy—the staples approach developed in the 1920s by Innis, Mackintosh and others in the so-called "Canadian school" of economics—had argued that Canadian economic history was distinguished by a resource-based economy of raw materials (staple products) with export markets in more industrially advanced economies. As a result of export-led staples development, the locus of Canadian economic activity had shifted from staple to staple and across particular geographic areas within Canada (e.g., fishing and the Atlantic region; the fur trade in Lower and Upper Canada; pulp and paper in eastern Canada; wheat and mining in the Prairies, etc.). The rise and dominance

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<sup>3</sup> In later writings, Panitch would come to the conclusion that "the degree to which the state is relatively autonomous cannot be given in the abstract. It can only be assessed through concrete analysis of the balance of forces at each particular conjunction" (cited in Laxer 1989:189).

<sup>4</sup> Following Weber, legitimacy reveals "the ultimate grounds of the 'validity' of a domination..." (cited in Habermas 1973:96)

of economic elites and the formation of a mercantile class in particular followed from intermediary positions of control in the extraction, transportation and export of staples for external manufacture in the imperial centres. The staples approach would be extended by the new political economy as of the 1970s.

A central point of debate concerned whether, by the mid-19th century, Canadian staple development had laid the basis for an industrial economy (similar to that of other industrialized nations) with a dominant industrial class closely linked to the state and centred upon the development of a vital domestic market for the consumption of surpluses (Pentland 1950; Stevenson 1983: 16-17). However, the historical persistence well into the late 20th century of an overdeveloped resource sector, an underdeveloped manufacturing sector and continued dependence upon foreign ownership produced the argument that, contrary to other industrialized capitalist economies, the Canadian mercantile class had not been displaced by an emergent industrial class. Instead, massive importation of foreign capital could substitute for an emergent industrial class in a unique synthesis of limited industrialization and continued staples-export. Foreign capital would provide Canada with advanced industrial production while the continuing prosperity of the mercantile class would be assured through ownership of railways, banks and service sectors—and continued control of the Canadian state (Naylor 1972; Williams 1986; Stevenson 1983). Such a strategy of import substitution industrialization “became the basic approach [to Canadian economic development that] has persisted to the present” (Wolfe 1989: 101). As Wolfe puts it,

The unique features of the ISI strategy were that it protected an indigenous manufacturing segment of capital production largely for the domestic market while relying on the continued export of staple

resources and accomodating the inflow of foreign multinationals (Wolfe 1989:101).

The debate has ranged diachronically across Canadian history and synchronically from the federal state to the provincial states, seeking to infer the structure of the Canadian capitalist class (and instrumentally of the Canadian state) from the shifting alliances of classes (or fractions of classes) in a theoretical hegemony that would evidence a mediating agency by the Canadian state in Canada's economic development. Specifying the linkages between state and classes has been particularly controversial (Clement 1977; Stevenson 1983; Wolfe 1989). Further complicating the picture was the post-1960 rise of regional bourgeoisies, particularly in Quebec, Alberta and British Columbia. In Stevenson's summary:

The politics of Canada and actions of the state at the federal and provincial levels can largely be explained by the rise of these new fractions...and the conflicts that have been generated between them. Thus, we have conflicts between the comprador and indigenous fractions of the Canadian bourgeoisie, the indigenous Quebec bourgeois fraction and the Ontario fraction..., between the indigenous Alberta fraction and the Ontario fraction (you can't tell your fractions without a program) (Stevenson 1983:21).

But, as Pratt and Richards have remarked, the struggle between an indigenous bourgeoisie and "province building" regional bourgeoisies is contingent upon an absence of conflict between the comprador and indigenous bourgeoisies (that remains latent) since the "federal provincial conflict does not pit the Canadian bourgeoisie against the multinationals" (Pratt 1977; Pratt & Richards 1979).

Following Abrams (1988), Laxer has pointed to a fundamental ambiguity in marxist (or neo-marxist) theories of the capitalist state that seems especially

germane to the Canadian debate: namely, the dualistic necessity of the state as the contradiction between the idea of the state as an abstract and formal teleology and the state as an omnipresent concrete entity.

If the state in capitalist society could be given sufficient powers either by imbuing it with all-knowing agents who could foresee the long-term consequences of their actions (...instrumentalism) or by making the whole thing sufficiently abstract and imbuing the state with teleological functions that somehow always kept the bourgeoisie in power (structural-functionalism), perhaps the edifice could be saved (Laxer 1989:184).<sup>5</sup>

### 3. The State and the Question of Canadian Development: Dependency Theory

The debates within political economy bring to the fore the normative question of the nature of Canadian economic development.<sup>6</sup> Whether between Canadian marxists, neo-marxist anti-Innisians or left-Innisians, the debate on the Canadian state had turned on "the emphasis [to be] given to the internal/external dialectic in the Canadian social formation" (Drache 1983:27); one side (marxists) insisting upon the minimization of externality and the claim that Canadian development

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Claus Offe: "The problem for a theory of the state that wants to prove the class character of political domination consists thus in the fact that it cannot be carried through as a theory, as an objectivating presentation of state functions and their relation to interests. Only the practice of class struggle redeems its cognitive claim...this limitation of the theoretical cognitive power is not conditioned by the inadequacy of its methods but by the structure of its object. The latter evades its class-theoretic elucidation. Simplifying, one can say that political domination in capitalist industrial societies is the method of class domination which does not reveal itself as such" (cited in Habermas 1973:162)

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Schumpeter: "By 'development,' therefore, we shall understand only such changes in economic life as are not forced upon it from without but arise by its own initiative, from within. Should it turn out that there are no such changes arising in the economic sphere itself, and that the phenomenon that we call economic development is in practice simply founded upon the fact that the data change and that the economy continuously adapts itself to them, then we should say that there is no economic development. By this we should mean that economic development is not a phenomenon to be explained economically, but that the economy, in itself without development, is dragged along by the changes in the surrounding world, that the causes and hence the explanation of the development must be sought outside the group of facts which are described in economy theory" (cited in Levitt 1970:26)

has been relatively autonomous, introverted and auto-telic, and the other (Innisians) upon the clearly dominant role of externalities in shaping so-called indigenous developments. Drache summarizes the latter position with its insistence on the "arrested" character of Canadian industrialization<sup>7</sup>:

...Canadian industrialization was directed by and towards an external dynamic at all levels...In reality, so-called indigenous developments and initiatives undertaken by the state and local bourgeoisie...were little more than the reverse side of an externality, an awkward term designating the social and economic relations of colonialism....(I)t is clear that neither the state nor the capitalist class controlled or ever set the pace of Canadian development. The motor forces of development clearly lay elsewhere. State and capital could react; they could influence; they could take initiatives; but they could not control in any fundamental way what happened. They were a subservient state and bourgeoisie, continually on the defensive reacting to events over which they had no real control. Even the idea of 'control' was alien to their political world for the simple reason that there was no fundamental conflict between the internal needs of capital accumulation and their external allegiance....(T)he basic strategy of Canadian capitalism has not changed much over the long-haul. It has remained faithful to its origins: adjustment and accomodation to empire (Drache 1983: 34-35).

The search to locate in externalities Canada's place within a larger framework of capitalist accumulation would give rise to a Canadian variant of dependency theory<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Panitch, as was seen above, had termed Canada's economic development "distorted"; Williams would characterize Canadian industrialization as "arrested" (Williams 1986); Laxer would term Canada's economic development "aborted" (Laxer 1985).

<sup>8</sup> If the attempt to specify the domestic linkages between the Canadian state and the internal system of class inequality has been a field of recurring debate and controversy, theorizing Canada's external linkages to and within larger systems of industrial capitalist accumulation has as Resnick remarks "been the subject of much discussion among political economists over the past two decades" (Resnick 1990 179). For a brief history of (English) Canadian dependency theory, see Brym & Fox 1989. If there

Dependency theory can be considered a theoretical attempt to account for the failures of the strategy of import substitution industrialization, specifically as concerns the continued arrested development of the domestic market. In a dependency perspective, the most important obstacles to (capitalist) development are not lack of capital nor entrepreneurial skills, but the international division of labour. This was analyzed in terms of relations between regions (centre and periphery) in which transfers of surplus capital took place from the latter to the former. Since the periphery was deprived of its surplus, development in the centre implied underdevelopment in the periphery. Since the periphery was doomed to underdevelopment, it was necessary for a peripheral country to disassociate itself from the world market. This disassociation was the task of the national state which, being an impossibility for a state controlled by a dependent national bourgeoisie, therefore implied a process of more or less revolutionary political transformation (Blomstrom & Hettne 1984:69-76).

A less revolutionary political option would entail considering dependency theory as a metaethical critique from within of development theory (as

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can possibly be said to be an undisputed point of agreement in all these controversies, it has concerned the determining role of the Department of Finance within the Canadian state bureaucracy as "the principal means through which the hegemony of the dominant class, as embodied in the accumulative strategy, is organized" (Wolfe 1989 108). The dominant role of Finance in the determination of state policy historically has given it "veto power over any policy deemed inconsistent with its macroeconomic objectives," namely, that "the concerns of domestic industrial development [have] remained subordinated to the overriding preoccupation with Canada's traditional pattern of export-led development" (Wolfe 1989. 108-110, emphasis added; Mahon 1977. 165-198) For applications of dependency theory to the Québécois economy, see Coleman 1984, Saint-Germain 1973; Savaria 1975, Bernier 1976; McRoberts & Posgate 1980. The last-named argue that while the development of Canada as a whole as well as each of its regions has been shaped by various forms of economic dependence, Quebec's economic dependence is paralleled by cultural difference. "Quebec's cultural distinctiveness has placed Quebec at a greater disadvantage...thus reinforcing economic and even political dependence" (McRoberts & Posgate 1980 11-12) Saint-Germain concentrates particularly on the pertinence of dualisms (economic, territorial, functional and social) as categories for understanding the disarticulation of dependent economies (Saint-Germain 1973:20-28).



'imperialism'). Initially, Canadian dependency theory would consist of an economic (or political economy) component deploying a theory of imperialism (or neo-mercantilism) in which the multinational (particularly American) corporation had replaced the state as the locus of economic sovereignty, leading to the progressive de-industrialization of Canada (see Watkins 1968; Levitt 1970; Rotstein & Lax 1972; Laxer 1973; Rotstein & Lax 1974; Saul & Heron 1977). As Robert Laxer would put it,

...Canada is in the grip of the economics and politics of dependency. The large American companies and Canadian financial institutions command not only the strategic heights of the economy—they are also masters of the Liberal and Conservative parties and the state institutions over which they preside (Laxer 1973:11).

From an initial concern with the "economics and politics of dependency," Canadian dependency theory would shift towards a critique of cultural dependency, extending the implications of foreign ownership to the problematic of cultural production in Canada (e.g., Lumsden 1970; Rotstein & Lax 1972). In the Canadian context, dependency theory has been, as Drache & Kroker state, "not just an economic doctrine but an ongoing political reflection on the unequal exchange of power between center and margin" (Drache & Kroker 1983:9) that at its extreme widens to a philosophical critique of "the narrow 'utilitarian calculation' at the heart of Canadian society represent[ing] the limit and horizon of dependent being in North America" (Drache & Kroker 1983:23).<sup>9</sup>

Thus, as the founding texts of Canadian dependency theory, Innis' staples approach implied more than a contribution to Canadian economic history:

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<sup>9</sup> For extensions of the Canadian philosophy of dependent being, see Grant 1965, Kroker 1984.

radicalized, it was a totalizing theory of Canadian society that overemphasized externalities in the Canadian social formation. In this perspective, the state and the internal social system were effects of externality. As John Hutheson puts it:

The staple export sectors have not been merely agents in economic growth. They have dominated the whole of Canadian society through their economic, social, and political ramifications. Canadian society has literally grown around the staple activities and has figuratively grown in their image (Hutheson 1978:23).

A nightmarish vision of Canadian development ensued in which "Canada is stuck in a perpetual trap of resource-exporting, foreign ownership and economic and political dependence" (Laxer 1989: 179). Overemphasizing externalities resulted in Canadian dependency theory's "tendency to reduce the activities of the dependent state to a strict function of the dynamic forces in the imperialist state" (Magder 1987:28). In such a perspective, not only were the externalities linking Canada to an imperial industrial centre always-already dominant, but the communication of externalities was unidirectional as well.

Each imperial centre has its own method of integrating peripheral countries into the empire. The method will be determined by the requirements of the centre country and also by the potential of the peripheral country (Hutheson 1978:56).

Refusing the pessimism induced by such visions, another strand in Canadian dependency theory would find Canadian capitalist development to be far more ambiguous. Instead of being purely an effect of externality, Canada, upon closer inspection, presents "an ambiguous status": "It falls between social formations, having the social relations of advanced capitalism and the economic structures of dependency" (Drache 1983:36). In fact, Canadian capitalism is "deceptive and

contradictory”:

this ‘mix’ of uneven development, dependency and advanced capitalism...defines the fundamentally ambiguous character of Canada as a social formation (Drache 1983:44, emphasis added).

For Drache, “If there is something unique about Canada as a social formation, it derives from the way in which the national question has affected the role of the state” (Drache 1983:40), specifically in the institutionalization of a triple ‘imperialism’ (multinational, bi-national and regional) as the founding of the Canadian state. On closer inspection, Canadian dependency was neither simple nor unidirectional (e.g., in communications from centre to periphery), it was complex and multi-faceted; a system of dependencies with both external (or ‘imperialist’) and internal (or ‘colonialist’) dimensions in interpenetration: an intrication of regional (within Canada), bi-national (Canada/Quebec) and multinational (particularly Canada/U.S.) dependencies producing social, political, and cultural effects that a growing number of Québécois commentators, for instance, would come to consider “perverse” (see Latouche 1983; Rioux 1990).

#### 4. Dependency and the Political Economy of the Canadian Feature Film

If one turns more specifically, within the sphere of Canadian cultural production, to the political economy of the feature film, dependency theory has continued to remain central to a general understanding of the historical development of Canadian cinema, particularly in relation to the United States film industry.<sup>10</sup> As Véronneau has remarked,

...the cinematographic phenomenon in Canada, from its beginnings to the present day, has evolved in relation to that of our American

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<sup>10</sup> As it has also with respect to the Australian context, see e.g. Rohdie 1983.

neighbours....The American domination is not a reality which can be defined in a few propositions....(T)he dominant relationship...between Canada and the United States [takes the form of] an alliance so strong that...in certain areas such as the cinema [it] dictate[s] Canada's behaviour....This alliance carries a different weight depending on whether we are dealing with production, distribution or exhibition. Canada only really gave precedence to its own interests in a very restricted area: that of government film production.... (Véronneau & Handling 1980:xiii).

The application of dependency theory to the political economy of the Canadian feature would be consistent with the general model outlined above, shifting from an economistic to a more culturalistic mode of explanation. As an instance of the former, Pendakur has paralleled the "satellitization" of the Canadian economy as a result of "the post-World War II take-over of Canada's resource industries" (Pendakur 1982:352) with the monopolistic patterns of ownership and policies of the dominant firms in the Canadian theatrical film market to explain "why Canada is dependent upon imported films and why profitability for films made in Canada is limited in the domestic and foreign markets" (Pendakur 1982:352). If in Pendakur the external dimensions of dependency remain vague—particularly as concerns the linkages between the larger context of Canada's economic, political and military dependency on the United States and cultural dependency (e.g., that it is not until 1974 that Canada became the primary foreign market for U.S. features)—the internal dimensions of "the Canadian distribution/exhibition system" are relatively well outlined.

Thus, the Canadian distribution market is characterized by a high degree of concentration in which the eight largest corporations, all subsidiaries of U.S. production-distribution firms, took in 77.8 per cent (using 1977 data as representative) of the total rental revenues from the sale of film and videotape

productions by the 83 distribution companies operating in Canada that year (Pendakur 1982:352). Average annual rental revenue (for 1977) was shared between eight U.S.-controlled majors with earnings of \$2.9 million and 75 Canadian distributors with earnings of \$725,000. The eight U.S. companies paid out 67.1 per cent of the gross royalties to producers of films they distributed that year (1977); no Canadian producer received any royalties from these companies (For a study of Canadian independent distribution updated to 1981-1983, see Lewis 1986).

Exhibition also reveals a high degree of concentration between the two largest circuits, the 100 per cent U.S.-owned Famous Players Canadian Corp. and since 1978 the fully Canadian-owned (former subsidiary of the British Rank Organization) Canadian Odeon Theatres Ltd., which jointly controlled 40 per cent of Canada's theatre screens (1633 in 1977 data), located in the prime urban markets across Canada but particularly concentrated in Ontario, the largest market (in seating capacity). "As a consequence of their dominant position, the two major circuits...share[d]...[57 per cent of] total Canadian box-office revenue" (ibid.:355).

Market relations between dominant exhibitors and dominant distributors are characterized by "monopolistic practices" (e.g., exclusive allocation of first-run films of the U.S. majors to the mutual advantage of the dominant distributors and dominant circuits; block and blind booking of films; key playdates) (ibid.:356-358). Thus, of the 448 features produced in Canada between 1968-1978, 14 were distributed by the U.S. majors, while 100 Canadian features were distributed by eight independent Canadian-owned distributors in the domestic market.

The [distribution/exhibition] system is structured to exclude almost

all Canadian films except by chance...The monopolistic system of distribution and exhibition in Canada, and its adverse impact on unintegrated Canadian-owned companies in distribution and production, has developed over the last 60 years only to the mutual advantage of the major U.S. distribution corporations and their affiliated circuits in Canada...Underdevelopment in the indigenously controlled production/distribution sector is perpetuated by lack of participation for Canadian capital in production, lack of access for Canadian films to Canadian screens, nonavailability of the best playing dates, and extraction of profits by the American majors without any significant investment in Canadian feature films (Pendakur 1982:360, emphasis added).

Despite structural and market constraints upon Canadian features within the domestic market, "Canada is perhaps the only country in the capitalist world that has allowed free access to its feature film market and ownership of its screens by foreign multinationals without any control over the market." Pendakur thus attributes to the state the key role in "the underdevelopment of Canadian cinema and the perpetuation of the dependency status of Canada on imported films from the U.S." (Pendakur 1982:360). In Pendakur's economistic deployment of dependency theory, the dependent state perpetuates cultural dependency by maintaining the underdevelopment of the political economy of the Canadian feature.

Magder, on the other hand, shifting towards the culturalist pole of Canadian dependency theory, situates the political economy of the Canadian feature within a framework of dependent development, i.e., that dependency does not produce only underdevelopment: within dependency, development does take place (for the theory of dependent development, see e.g. Evans 1979). For Magder,

...the history of the cinema in Canada is the clearest example of dependent development...The feature film industry in Canada continues to exhibit the classic characteristics of dependent

capitalist development in the cultural sphere (Magder 1987:3).

Although Magder considers dependency of continued relevance to the analysis of Canadian cultural production, he faults Canadian dependency theory for its tendency "to reduce the activities of the dependent state to a strict function of the dynamic forces in the imperialist state." Instead,

dependency must be analyzed as a process of struggle and negotiation and not as a static relation of domination....Whereas dependency theorists might see Canada's feature film policy as being produced at the behest of the American film industry and the American state, we see it as being determined by forces within Canada as they are influenced by the process of dependent capitalist development (Magder 1987:25-29).

Thus, within dependent capitalist development, Magder conceives the state as "a mediation of the relational struggles within the [dependent] social formation as a whole" (ibid.:9). In this perspective, Canadian feature film production, particularly in the contemporary period, has become the site of

a complex (and by no means uncontradictory) rearrangement of the terms of dependency through which the Canadian state has facilitated the development of large-scale Canadian cultural capital integrated into the expanding international cultural marketplace (ibid.:29)

in the last few years, the Canadian state has successfully facilitated the development of...an 'internal bourgeoisie.' Canada's cultural entrepreneurs do not operate as a 'nationalist' bourgeoisie, they do not articulate a separate political and industrial strategy or project; instead they are 'implicated by multiple ties of dependence in the international division of labour and in the international concentration of capital under the domination of American capital'....In the film and television industries, Canada has reached a state of dependent cultural development. The dynamics of these industries are still heavily influenced by external events and forces,

but there is now an internal and productive accumulation base which shares the fruits of imperialism. This is a significant step in the history of Canadian cultural dependency. Canada's place within the American empire has been upgraded. Yet in stark terms....(t)he basic point is this: while the program production industry in Canada has flourished in the past few years, the level of Canadian content on Canadian television has not increased. Canadian feature films continue to occupy less than five per cent of Canadian screen-time, and there has been only a very marginal increase in productions which have something to do...with 'cultural integrity' (ibid.:444-445).

The difference between Pendakur's and Magder's approaches is not at the level of the structures of dependency which remain the same for both. It is at the level of the functions of the state: for Pendakur, the function is negative (the state as an agent of underdevelopment); for Magder, the state's function is (relatively) positive: the state as an agent of dependent cultural development. By combining the relative autonomy of structural-functionalist theories of the state with dependency theory, Magder enables Canadian dependency theory to break out of its circular entrapment in the dialectic of external/internal factors. However, he has done so less, as he claims (Magder 1987:11 ff.) by emphasizing the state's mediation of the links between politics and power, as by emphasizing the state as a mediating site of communicative practices or the discourses within the social formation. Not only does Magder reveal that (relative) positivity derives from the Canadian state's conceptualization as the intersecting site of the contradictory discourses that have prevailed with respect to Canadian cultural production, but he also demonstrates that such a conceptualization advances understanding the complexity of the phenomenon of dependency in the Canadian social formation. In Magder's words,

the development of a fully coherent explanation of Canadian



dependency would entail a multi-faceted and highly complex framework which would be able to account for an exceedingly diverse range of practices across the whole plane of Canadian society (Magder 1987:423).

### 5. Dependency as a Discursive Phenomenon

British communications scholar Richard Collins has found puzzling the hold of dependency theory on the imagination of Canadian intellectuals, particularly when, in his view, the insistence of Canadian dependency theorists upon the primacy of cultural, social and political factors flies in the face of the more stubborn facts of geography and climate as the decisive factors in Canadian social and economic development. For Collins, “the conditions of Canadian ‘dependency’ and ‘underdevelopment’ have nothing to do with Canada’s social and political order but are essentially geographical and climatic” (Collins 1986: 9). For Collins, the hold of dependency theory on the imagination of Canadian intellectuals stems instead from its being “a fiction conjured into existence...by the fetishization of national economic autarchy” (ibid.:15). Canadian dependency theory (and Innis’ early work in particular), Collins suggests, “give[s] a key role in nation building to Canadian intellectuals—which they have not been slow to seize”:

Innis’ communication theory, the credence...his work on the primary staples commands, and the consequential exclusive emphasis Canadian nationalists have placed on the agency of the state as the only defence against the dominant metropole has produced in the Canadian policy discourse a real blind spot....Innis’ work has been appropriated as a system of theoretical earthworks from which the largely Central Canadian elite that has captured the state cultural institutions and enormous subsidies from the public purse defends its prerogatives (ibid.:15-16, emphasis added).

Other observers of what one might term the sociology of Canadian discursivity have made points remarkably similar to Collins'. Sociologist Michal Bodemann, for instance, has analyzed the relationship between the form of the state and "a genuinely Canadian form of domination with its corresponding ideology" (Bodemann 1984:225, emphasis in original) that widely permeates Canadian political and social scientific culture. For Bodemann, Anglo-Canadian social mythology reveals three predominant discursive themes that "are shared by popular and scientific ideology alike":

- (1) the view of Canada in terms of commodities...; (2) the view of Canada as fragile and in need of a protective shield; and, growing out of this, (3) the necessity to relegate power to a circumscribed elite (ibid.:212).

These three key themes, Bodemann argues, dominated Canadian sociology until well into the 1960s, then spilled over into marxist and liberal approaches: "...the sense of Canada as a fragile, disunited, failing, and generally precarious community is very apparent....[and] only a benign, yet firm leadership can liberate the country from the threat of imminent disintegration" (ibid.:221).

What is most striking to Bodemann about Canadian fragilism is that "despite the odds against it, the Canadian state...has come out of every crisis stronger and more powerful" (221). As well, rather than weakening the central state structure, regionally refracted conflicts (e.g., Quebec) "strengthen the federal state by calling for its, however lopsided, mediation" (ibid.). Thirdly, the strength of central state structures is further evidenced in the "acephalous, passive or conformist" development of local communities in Canada, characterised by political weakness and ethnic division. "The price paid for this form of domination is, most of all, the lack of genuine national culture—but not...[the]

lack of a national ideology" (ibid.: 224, emphasis in original).

In a similar sense, Steven Globerman is very much to the point sociologically, in his critique of the various rationales advanced by cultural nationalists for state regulation of cultural production, when he observes that, within the economy of state cultural intervention, Canadian cultural discourse has shown itself to be economically efficient: it produces income redistribution.

In the Canadian context, and with respect to cultural intervention specifically, it has been argued that the main beneficiaries have been and continue to be a select group of performers, producers, and technical personnel, while the bulk of the Canadian population has been burdened with higher prices for the cultural services they consume... (Globerman 1983:xix-xx, emphasis added).

However, the perspectives opened up by Collins, Bodemann and Globerman alert us to pay particular attention not so much, as they might suggest, to the ideological characteristics of Canadian cultural discourse as to the construction of dependency in the Canadian context as part of the discursive phenomenon Laurin-Frenette has characterized broadly as "[le] discours de l'Etat sur lui-même" (Laurin-Frenette 1978:60).

Their general point could be better restated as follows: Canadian discursivity (e.g., dependency theory) is more than an ideology of nation-building intellectuals; it is a form of communications to and within the state that is unaware of its own discursive effects<sup>11</sup>. Among these effects, on the basis of Collins' model for example, there is an ideological blind spot to Canadian policy (discourse) as regards the efficiency of the state: namely, that it is culturally

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<sup>11</sup> Again, as Laurin-Frenette puts it, "il faut considérer les faits de nature psychiques, relatifs à la nation, comme des intérêts importants, au même titre que les avantages d'ordre économique ou social" (Laurin-Frenette 1978:155). However, instead of "psychique," one would say "communicatif" or "discursif."

elaborated as a discursive fiction of weakness that conceals strong effects. And these effects are strong, particularly within a concealed theory of the state, to the extent that they appear to display immediate social ("capturing state cultural institutions") and economic ("enormous public subsidies") efficiencies.

Emphasizing the discursive aspects of dependency in the Canadian context thus makes possible a methodological framework allowing a return to the specific context of the 1960s feature film emergence of Canada's displaced national cinema. Firstly, in order to grasp the role of the state in the culture of a political economy of dependent development, the state is to be conceptualized as a discursive site and in particular in the form of the emergence of a discursive economy specific to itself that, following Foucault, we will term governmentality (see Ch. III). As the communicative form through which become linked the external and internal aspects of dependency, such a governmentalized discursive economy articulates the shared discursive bases of Canada's various dualisms (political, linguistic, and economic).<sup>12</sup> Cultural sociologist Marcel Rioux, in his recent memoirs, has termed it "l'hypothèse de la double ouverture":

à cause de la double structure sociale et de la double culture (anglaise et française), on peut assez facilement passer de l'une à l'autre et retenir certains éléments des deux. Il me semble que le résultat de la participation des Québécois à cette double structure sociale et culturelle se traduit par l'ambiguïté et l'ambivalence parce qu'il n'y a pas d'opposition perçue entre des choix ou des aspects qui devraient ou pourraient s'exclure....En ce qui concerne l'Etat, les Québécois et les Québécoises sont assez gâtés, car là aussi il y a

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<sup>12</sup> Within a bicephalous theory of the State in which "le discours nationaliste est double ; une de ses versions continue de désigner la nation québécoise comme un sous-ensemble de la nation canadienne, constituée dans l'Etat canadien....cet Etat est bicéphale. Ce double sens aura tendance à se reproduire, tant et aussi longtemps que le gouvernement fédéral sera une instance effective du réseau des appareils de contrôle, dans le champ québécois" (Laurin-Frenette 1978 155-156)

une double ouverture. Québec ou Ottawa ou les deux. Par exemple, si une organisation n'obtient pas ce qu'elle veut de l'Etat du Québec, elle peut aujourd'hui déchirer le fleurdelysé pour embrasser la feuille d'érable; le contraire peut arriver. Maintenir une sorte d'équilibre entre les deux a toujours été une manière de sport national (Rioux 1990:36-37)

Secondly, as regards the emergence of feature film production in the 1960s, it must be emphasized that it takes place within a context of production crisis for the American film industry as a result of which, in Canada, the years 1958-1975 see the market share of new U.S. feature films released for circulation in Canadian theatres reach record lows<sup>13</sup>. In other words, the context is one of a shift in the nature of dependency in the political economy of the feature film, in which a relative decrease of external dependency is substituted for increasing dependency upon the Canadian state. As Resnick has remarked,

The most significant change in post-war Canadian capitalism has been the take-off of the state-sector, by which is meant the combined activities of governments at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. This increase has coincided with the changeover from a still largely primary and secondary industry-oriented economy at the war's end, to a more service-oriented one thirty years later (Resnick 1977:26).

Yet, in the take-off of the state sector—in which by 1971 “fully 22.1 percent

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<sup>13</sup> From a 1946 79.8 percentage of total new features by country of origin released to theatres, the U.S. share had dropped to just over 52 per cent in 1958, falling to 33.1 percent in 1964, and fluctuating in the 30-40 per cent range until 1976, rising to 55 per cent. To be sure, this is still more than twice the market share held by closest competitor France (with a 19.3 per cent average share for 1946-1976 vs. an average U.S. share of 51.4 per cent for the same period). Comparatively, the Canadian percentage of total new feature releases is lowest of all: 1959 - 0.1 (1 feature as compared to 305 U.S.); 1961 - 0.7 (4 features); 1962 - 0.9 (6 features); 1963 - 0.7 (5 features); 1964 - 0.9 (6 features); 1965 - 1.7 (12 features); 1966 - 1.7 (11 features); 1967 - 1.2 (8 features); 1968 - 1.2 (8 features); 1969 - 1.4 (10 features); 1970 - 6.7 (53 features); 1972 - 4.8 (35 features); 1973 - 4.0 (33 features); 1974 - 3.5 (32 features); 1975 - 3.2 (24 features); 1976 - 5.7 (40 features as compared to 380 U.S.). Source: Statistics Canada catalogue #63-207, as reproduced in Lamonde & Hébert 1981, tables 125 & 126.

of the labour force was working for the state or in state-financed institutions" (ibid.:58-59)—if nationalism, defined by Resnick as "a concern that the political, economic and cultural affairs of a territorially-defined polity be controlled and directed by individuals and/or corporations that are members of that polity, rather than by forces outside it" (ibid.:29-30, was a feature of its development, it would not be its most significant characteristic. Rather, its "most significant ideological characteristic...was in the direction of a strong state sector..." (ibid.:210) The ambiguous nationalism of the emergent state sector would, instead, be part of "the great paradox" that Newman found characteristic of the Liberal administrations of the 1960s, namely "an impressive stream" of "progressive" reforms that "set...in train a series of fundamental social changes, but fail[ed]....to explain them or channel them into some rational sequence of priorities" (Newman 1968:45ff).

In the sphere of cultural production, this changeover entailed, throughout the 1950s, the emergence of the discursive economy within which state-support for feature film production would come to be initially articulated. It is to a mapping of the salient features of such a discursive economy that we now proceed.

### Chapter Three

#### **The Discursive Economy of the Canadian Feature Film: Surfaces of Emergence, 1952-1958**

The history of every people ought to be written with less regard to the events of which their government was the agent, than to the disposition of which it was the sign.—John Ruskin, The Stones of Venice

The decade of the 1950s, which as Resnick has remarked (1977:26) saw the take-off of the state sector in the Canadian economy's changeover from a non-urban resource base towards an urbanized service-oriented base, coincided with increased preoccupation within the social formation with questions of cultural production and reproduction. From the 1949 establishment of the Massey-Lévesque Royal Commission—popularly known as “the Culture Commission” (Litt 1990:23)—with its 224 hearings (114 open to the public) in 16 cities across ten provinces and its subsequent Report (1951) with its nostalgic lamentation for the passing of the lost world of traditional culture as a result of mass communications and mass culture, its recommendations with respect to the establishment of television broadcasting in Canada (September 1952), its recommendation that the federal state intervene through direct subsidy in the constitutionally provincial domain of (higher) education<sup>1</sup>, to the institutional embodiment of one of the major Massey recommendations in 1957 in the form

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<sup>1</sup> For the neo-nationalist reaction from Quebec, see Behiels 1988:94-96, Coleman 1984:71 ff.

of the Canada Council, questions of the production and reproduction of culture became increasingly, as the decade progressed, the object of "heavy government involvement", as Maria Tippet puts it.

By the end of the 1940s, then, the federal government had shown itself prepared to act in response to the demands for state involvement...which cultural activists had been making...since the beginning of the century. Recognizing that its ad hoc involvement in the field was already considerable, noting that the field's scope, nature and importance were making it of increased national and international significance...it took the first step in the direction of a coherent, state-supported, federal policy for culture and the arts....Now...recognized as an appropriate object of state attention at the highest level, cultural activity emerged - at first tentatively, then with increasing confidence - into the mainstream of the federal policy-making process (Tippet 1990:184-185).

To more fully grasp the ramifications of such a shift—namely, as historian Donald Creighton would put it, "that...Canadians of the 1950's had not yet been taught to believe that the state was the great dispenser of social and cultural goodies and that unless the state designed and financed a literary or artistic project, its failure was virtually inevitable" (Creighton 1976:249, emphasis added)—it is necessary to appreciate that the state's formalization of the new economy of cultural production and reproduction entailed, first of all, a change in the conceptualization of governmentality.

### 1. Governmentality

The domination of Canadian federal politics by the Liberal Party from the 1930s to the 1980s (with the exception of the two Conservative interludes prior to 1984) not only helped account, in Reg Whitaker's view, for the "weak and underdeveloped nature" of Canadian extra-political organization, it had also strongly reinforced the dominant institutional tendency to transform politics into



bureaucracy and party into state. Whitaker provides a profound insight into what one might term the Canadian 'art of government' in the 1950s:

The Liberal party was an organization seeking not so much to consolidate its distinct partisan identity as to embed itself within the institutional structures of government. Its fulfilment was not so much organizational survival as it was institutionalization as an aspect of government: control over recruitment channels to sensitive levels of office. The deadening of political controversy, the silence, the greyness which clothed political life at the national level in the 1950s, were reflections of a Liberal ideal of an apolitical public life. In place of politics there was bureaucracy and technology. This in no sense meant that Canada stood still. Profound changes were taking place in the nation's political economy. But these changes tended to take place outside the realm of traditional political debate. Instead, it was between the great bureaucracies, whether public (federal or provincial) or private (Canadian and American), that debate and policy refinement took place. The Liberal party had truly become the Government party - an instrument for the depoliticization and bureaucratization of Canadian public life. The vision of Mackenzie King in his almost forgotten Industry and Humanity [1918] had begun to take shape: 'whether political and industrial government will merge into one, or tend to remain separate and distinct' was King's question for the future....He concluded that 'the possibilities are that for years to come they will exist side by side...but, in much, so merged that separateness will be possible in theory only' (Whitaker 1977:420).

But, particularly in a context of the emergence of a new domain of state intervention, it is precisely the separateness of political and industrial government that demands to be understood theoretically.

'The' state, Foucault would insist in an unpublished lecture, is a fundamentally discontinuous entity.

L'État loin d'être une espèce de donnée historico-naturelle qui se développerait par son propre dynamisme comme un monstre froid dont la semence aurait été jetée à un certain moment donné dans

l'histoire...l'état ce n'est pas cela. L'état n'est pas un monstre froid, c'est le corrélatif d'une certaine manière de gouverner. Et le problème est de savoir comment se développe cette manière de gouverner, quelle est son histoire, comment elle gagne, comment elle rétrécit, comment elle s'étend à tel domaine, comment elle invente, forme, développe des nouvelles pratiques. C'est ça le problème... (Foucault 1989a: cassette KS532A).

Foucault would ascribe various names to the particular means of governing that are the objective correlatives of the state: governmental practice, the art of government, governmental reason, etc. More importantly, he would situate the problematic of the state within what he termed variously governmentality or the governmentalization of the state (e.g., Foucault 1979). Understanding governmentality would entail

une enquête approfondie sur l'histoire non seulement de la notion [de gouvernement], mais des procédures et moyens mis en oeuvre pour assurer, dans une société donnée, le 'gouvernement des hommes'....la manière dont la conduite d'un ensemble d'individus s'est trouvée impliquée...dans l'exercice du pouvoir... (Foucault 1989b:99,101).

Governmentality could be understood, in part, as the 'self consciousness' of government: "non pas la pratique gouvernementale réelle...[mais] l'instance réfléchie dans et sur la pratique du gouvernement...la manière dont on a établi le domaine de la pratique gouvernementale, les différents objets, ses règles générales, ses objectifs d'ensemble" (Foucault 1989a, emphasis added).

Foucault's attempt to specify the emergence of a new type of rationality in governmental practices entailed a conscious theoretical and methodological decision to refuse what he termed the historicist reduction, i.e., the historiographical a priori assumption of the existence of a universal (the

sovereign, sovereignty, the people, civil society, the state, etc.) and the subsequent modification of the universal by the rasp of history. Rather, on the basis of such a refusal, Foucault proposed the possibility of a different approach to the problematic of the state:

...maybe, after all, the State is no more than a composite reality and a mythical abstraction whose importance is a lot more limited than many of us think. Maybe what is really important for our modern times, is not so much the State-domination of society, but the 'governmentalisation' of the State (Foucault 1979:20; also Foucault 1989a).

In this perspective, the governmentalization of the state appeared as a singularly paradoxical phenomenon, because governmentality is at once internal and external to the state: "l'état est à la fois ce qui existe mais [aussi] ce qui n'existe encore pas assez" (Foucault 1989a). For the governmental state is both a given, concrete state and "the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the State and what is not"; in this sense, the state (and its discourses) can only be understood in its survival and its limits on the basis of governmentality (Foucault 1979:20-21).

Foucault's historical studies of the emergence of the governmental state between the 16th-18th centuries provide a model of the extension of governmental rationality upwards from the infrarationality of oeconomy and downwards from the suprarationalities of Church and/or Empire into new domains in which "l'état n'existe que pour lui-même et par rapport à lui-même":

Ce qui caractérise la nouvelle rationalité gouvernementale constituée en gros au 16<sup>e</sup> siècle...c'est que l'État est défini comme une réalité à la fois spécifique et autonome....Les gouvernants de l'état doivent respecter un certain nombre de principes et de règles qui surplombent et dominent l'état et qui sont, par rapport à l'état,

extérieures. Le gouvernement doit respecter les lois divines, morales, naturelles, autant de lois qui ne sont pas...intrinsèques à l'état, mais, tout en respectant ces lois, le gouvernement a tout autre chose à faire...(Foucault 1989a).

Whatever the systematization of external obediances that the state owes to other systems (God, Nature, etc.), the emergent, national state has a specific and discontinuous reality in which the state exists only as a plurality of states. The plurality of the state had first taken historical form in the system of mercantilism understood, within a context of permanent competition between states, as a certain organization of production by the state and, within the state, as a certain style of internal management or regulation that 17th and 18th century theorists would term "police" and from which derives the notion of policy (e.g., Delamare 1705, Baudeau 1910). If, in its external relations with other states, the governmental state has limited objectives—raison d'état in a context of international competition admitted that each state has its own interests and so, in the pursuit of its external interests, each state must restrain itself—in internal matters, the governmental—or policy—state ("l'état de police") has unlimited objectives. As Foucault puts it,

Celui qui gouverne selon la raison d'état a des objectifs limités. En revanche, autant qu'il a à gérer une puissance publique qui règle le comportement des sujets, celui qui gouverne a un objectif illimité. La concurrence entre états est le point charnière entre ces objectifs limités et illimités, car c'est précisément pour pouvoir entrer en concurrence avec les autres états..., se maintenir dans un certain équilibre déséquilibré, que celui qui gouverne un état va imposer à ses sujets, à leurs activités économiques, à leur production....[L]a limitation de l'objectif international du gouvernement selon la raison d'état...a pour corrélatif l'illimitation dans l'exercice de l'état de police (Foucault 1989a).

In other words, governmentality is dualistic, consisting of 1) raison d'état as the self-limiting rationality of external relations between states and its correlative, 2) governmentalization as the limitless extension of governmental rationality within the policy state. Theoretically, then, whatever the external constraints upon the activity of the state within a system of states, the internal activities of the policy state are unlimited. Yet, within a given state, while governmental rationality does encounter limitations external to itself such as laws, Foucault is particularly concerned with the limitations upon governmental rationality as they developed within governmental practices; for instance, in the form of the critique of governmental reason that would be posed by liberalism. For Foucault liberalism is inhabited by the principled suspicion that there is too much government. The liberal critique of governmentality is thus more than a questioning of the best or least expensive means by which governmentality can achieve its effects; rather, it asks why government is necessary and this from the perspective of the problematic of "civil society" in whose name liberalism seeks both the justification of government and the ends it should pursue with regard to the development of civil society.

La rationalisation de la pratique gouvernementale, en terme de raison d'Etat, impliquait sa maximalisation sous condition d'optimum, dans la mesure où l'existence de l'Etat suppose immédiatement l'exercice du gouvernement. La réflexion libérale ne part pas de l'existence de l'Etat, trouvant dans le gouvernement le moyen d'atteindre cette fin qu'il serait pour lui-même; mais de la société qui se trouve être dans un rapport complexe d'extériorité et d'intériorité vis-à-vis de l'Etat (Foucault 1989b:112, also 110-113).

However, rather than making the state-civil society distinction into an historical and political universal, Foucault proposes to consider it a form of

schematization proper to the development of the particular technologies of governmentality; here, as the emergence of an internal limitation of the practices of governmental reason. The limitative process, according to Foucault, is never definitive, is not established in individuals by fundamental laws, but is drawn by governmental practices themselves, in the operations of government, according to a negotiated division between agenda and non-agenda:

cette limitation ne va pas s'imposer définitivement, mais par transaction au sens très large...par toute une série de conflits, d'accords, de discussions qui ont pour effet d'établir un partage entre ce qui est à faire et à ne pas faire...(Foucault 1989a).

This is to say that governmentality and its delimitation are functions of discursive practice.

## 2. "L'économie des discours"

Bearing in mind Foucault's definition of the state as the one which exists and that which does not yet exist enough, the extension of governmental rationality into the sphere of cultural production in Canada entailed, on the one hand, widening the territory of national cultural production<sup>2</sup> and, on the other, within that increased spatiality, limiting further extension of governmental rationality.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Which would become as a result quite extensive. For instance, the Massey-Lévesque Commission, conscious of the unprecedented nature of its task, would define its mandate as concerned with "the needs and desires of the citizens" in relation to science, literature, art, music, drama, cinema, broadcasting, as well as the relationship between scientific research and national development. See Report 1951:3.

<sup>3</sup> A model illustration of the expansion of governmentality together with its own internal principle of limitation is provided in Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent's 1956 decision to recommend creation of the Canada Council to Parliament: "An extensive national cultural policy has been gradually developed...although many Canadians may feel that, in certain sectors, it has been too modest and timid...This policy has been aimed at strengthening and developing our main cultures without attempting to impose either of them upon any Canadians. It is based upon the principle that private initiative has the main responsibility in most aspects of our cultural development. It has provided financial assistance to individuals, voluntary organizations and institutions in order to support them

To grasp this process of the extension and limitation of governmental rationality, it is necessary to recur to a text of Foucault's that predates his studies of governmentality.

In L'Archéologie du savoir (1969), Foucault posed the problem of the emergence of discursive events within the space of discourse in general (e.g., science, literature, politics). Within the project of a description of discursive events, the question Foucault raised was the following: "comment se fait-il que tel énoncé soit apparu et nul autre à sa place?" (Foucault 1969:39).

...ce qu'on essaie de mettre sous le regard, c'est...cette irréductible—et bien souvent minuscule—émergence. Aussi banal qu'il soit, aussi peu important qu'on l'imagine dans ses conséquences, aussi vite oublié qu'il puisse être après son apparition, aussi peu entendu ou mal déchiffré qu'on le suppose, un énoncé est toujours un événement que ni la langue ni le sens ne peuvent tout à fait épuiser (ibid.:40).

To bring out the emergence of the statement (l'énoncé) as a discursive event, Foucault's analysis privileged the "groupes de discours peu formalisés et où les énoncés ne paraissent pas s'engendrer nécessairement selon des règles de pur syntaxe" (ibid.:42) that very schematically constituted the human sciences. While the precise philosophical status of the Foucauldian énoncé is a matter of disputation (see notably Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:esp. Ch.3), Foucault's work generally, beginning with L'Archéologie du savoir, has been proposed as relevant to "reflection on the practice of the theorization of film history" (Bruno 1984:41-55). For Bruno, film history in the light of Foucault

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without attempting, however, to control their activities. Finally this policy has also included the setting up of several public agencies, deemed essential for the development and the adequate expression of our cultural life" (cited in Ostry 1978 68-69). For further discussion, see this chapter, section 3 below

need not make the drastic choice between a humanistic and an economic approach. The study of film may be the study of the industry, analysed as an apparatus regulating the network of power/knowledge relations...(Bruno 1984:45).

For our purposes, given Foucault's later preoccupation with governmentality as, one might say, the énoncés of government, we shall argue that L'Archéologie du savoir proposes a model of discursive emergence pertinent to the description of the unformalized discursive practices of Canadian cultural production and, among them in particular, the emergence of a discursivity pertaining to the feature film. We term this field of emergence a discursive economy.<sup>4</sup>

Economy because the production of énoncés does not derive from an abundance of germination; on the contrary, "c'est une répartition de lacunes, de vides, d'absences, de limites, de découpes" (Foucault 1969:157). If lacunary, the enunciatory field is not infinitely transparent nor is it merely a translation of operations or processes that take place elsewhere (e.g., in minds, conscious or unconscious; or in constitutions). Foucault asks only that it be taken in its own empirical modesty, as the site of discursive events, regularities, relationships, determinate modifications and systematic transformations; "bref, qu'on le traite non point comme résultat ou trace d'autre chose, mais comme un domaine pratique qui est autonome (bien que dépendant) et qu'on peut décrire à son propre niveau (bien qu'il faille l'articuler sur autre chose que lui)" (ibid.:160). Within a discursive economy, the énoncé is an 'economic' good—finite, limited, desirable,

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<sup>4</sup> In L'Archéologie du savoir, Foucault speaks of "l'économie de la constellation discursive" as well as "l'économie des discours" within which a discourse or discourses are distributed. In Foucault, such an economy spans the range from partial ensembles, regional compatibilities, potential coherent architectures, to formal systems. What matters particularly is that the volume of the discursive economy is never fully occupied by the discursive formations within it. See Foucault 1969 88-90, 158.



useful, something to be passed on and preserved, which has value because of its rarity, and is therefore capable of appropriation, is repeatable, reproducible and transformable. The analysis of discursive formations takes as its object this compacted wealth in the attempt to determine the singularity of the system that produces it:

C'est donc, en un sens, peser la 'valeur' des énoncés. Valeur qui n'est pas définie par leur vérité, qui n'est pas jaugée par la présence d'un contenu secret; mais qui caractérise leur place, leur capacité de circulation et d'échange, leur possibilité de transformation, non seulement dans l'économie des discours, mais dans l'administration...des ressources rares (ibid.:157,158).

If, in marxist terms, one might say perhaps that a discursive economy is the field of emergence of a mode of production of cultural capital<sup>5</sup>, Foucault prefers to describe his enterprise as the definition of the positivities of discourse:

Décrire un ensemble d'énoncés non pas comme la totalité close et pléthorique d'une signification, mais comme une figure lacunaire et déchiquetée; décrire un ensemble d'énoncés non pas en référence à l'intériorité d'une intention, d'une pensée ou d'un sujet, mais selon la dispersion d'une extériorité...ce n'est certainement pas mettre au jour une interprétation, découvrir un fondement, libérer des actes constituants....c'est définir le type de positivité d'un discours (ibid.:164).

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<sup>5</sup> Poster, in his discussion of Foucault's challenge to a marxist theory of history, argues that Foucault surpasses the marxist conception of mode of production with what Poster terms the mode of information more pertinent to the transition of advanced capitalism to an information society " ..the labor premise can no longer be the first principle of critical theory. Domination cannot be theorized from the point of view of the labor activity .. A new logic is called for that conceptualizes the social field on a different basis ..I would maintain that Foucault's category of discourse/practice begins to meet the criteria for the new premise. When discourse is theorized as the prominent feature of the social field, a new logic of domination is suggested that follows the model of technologies of power.. [T]he logic of discourse/practice finds its justification in the proliferation of information technologies." (Poster 1984 53-54) In the context of this dissertation, rather than mode of information, it might be more productive to speak of mode of communication

To sum up, then, Foucault proposes a descriptive approach to identify the emergence of enunciatory events (discursive units at first and eventually discourses) less by the singularity of their objects than by their dispersion across a discursive economy in which a discursive formation produces the object about which it speaks. Emerging against a horizon that is preconceptual and prediscursive<sup>6</sup>, the process of discursive formation is initially characterized by a field of non-discursive practices (ibid.: 82-83,90,100-101) that Foucault terms surfaces of emergence, followed by the development of rules of formation and the formation of discursive objects across a range of sites that comprise instances of delimitation (ibid.:56,57,83,98). Both constitute the particular discursive fields and institutional ensembles in which the emergent discourse achieves initial differentiation as sets of relationships that permit the further formation of discursive objects. A discursive formation may be said to result from the stabilization of such sets of relationships among instances of differentiation (ibid.:60).

Bearing in mind that the two major categories of surfaces of emergence and instances of delimitation correspond respectively to the extension and limitation of governmentality discussed above, the remainder of this chapter examines the four surfaces of emergence pertaining to changing non-discursive practices in Canadian cultural production that will enable the progressive delimitation of discursive formations within the discursive economy of the feature film.

### 3. Discursive Economy of the Canadian Feature Film: Surfaces of Emergence

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<sup>6</sup> "[C]e prédiscursif est encore du discursif" (Foucault 1969 101) and it may be defined as follows: "Derrière la façade visible du système, on suppose la riche incertitude du désordre; et sous la mince surface des discours, toute la masse d'un devenir pour une part silencieux un 'présystème' qui n'est pas de l'ordre du système, un 'prédiscursif' qui relève d'un essentiel mutisme" (100)

### 3.1 The Horizon of Cultural Policy

In his essay on the development of Canadian cultural policy, Bernard Ostry suggested that, in a historical assessment of Louis St-Laurent's undistinguished "years of comfortable power" (Ostry 1978:69), one speech would rank high. This was an address by the prime minister at a November 1956 national conference of Canadian universities in Ottawa convened to discuss Canada's crisis in higher education. It was written by his economic advisor, former Laval University social scientist Maurice Lamontagne. A "cultured politician; a rare bird in Ottawa's longitudes" (Newman 1968:248), Lamontagne, as Secretary of State in the early 1960s, would become the first government minister responsible for the development of Canadian policy with regard to the feature film. The 1956 speech thus not only establishes the discursive horizon for the extension of governmentality into the cultural sphere, it establishes the discursive terms that will govern subsequent discussion of the feature film by the state, particularly that the object of policy is the reproduction within the sphere of cultural production of the patterns of Canadian economic development: "...it is now time for our cultural development to parallel what has taken place in the economic field" (Bissell 1957:249-257).

For St-Laurent/Lamontagne, Canada of the mid-'50s was experiencing the highest level of economic prosperity in its history and one of the highest rates of industrial expansion in the world<sup>7</sup>. If, as the conference proposed, there was a

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<sup>7</sup> As Ostry, for instance, puts it "The Canadian people were carried along on a tremendous surge in wealth and education. There was a sense of confidence and optimism in moulding one's future. . .[O]ne can see how symbolic was the euphoric Report of the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects, published in 1957. In any case, the need for culture was being widely discussed, though not often in the context of nation-building. The major urban centres saw cultural facilities as necessary to attract new industry, reflecting the growing sophistication of business executives and rising expectations

Canadian crisis in higher education, the existence of such a crisis "reveals that our national development suffers from a serious weakness[:]...our cultural progress has not kept pace with our industrial expansion" (ibid.:249).

In the economic field, Canada at the time of Confederation had consisted of "several depressed regional economies...more directly linked with the United States than with each other." As a result of appropriate national policies and increasingly competitive economic relations with the U.S., the economic unification "of our territory, which seemed artificial not long ago, now appears to have been largely achieved and to have become almost natural" resulting in "[a] distinct and strong national economy" built around the realization of "gigantic projects" through private initiative and appropriate government policies. "This admirable accomplishment has largely taken place as a result of private initiative, but it would not have been possible without active government support" (ibid.:249).

Cultural development, however, had proceeded far more slowly and in its underdevelopment recalled the earlier phases of Canadian economic development ("depressed regional economies"): "...notre pays est formé de plusieurs régions culturelles qui n'ont pas suffisamment de relations entre elles et qui sont trop exclusivement soumises à des influences communes extérieures au Canada" (ibid.:249-50). This was not alarming in itself so long as exterior cultural influences "ne soient ni déterminantes ni seules à agir en même temps sur toutes nos régions, car, alors, les sources de notre vie culturelle cesseraient d'être canadiennes" (250). To forestall such an eventuality, "il faut nous mettre résolument à la tâche et tenter de revivre, sur le plan culturel, l'expérience que

nous avons faite dans le domaine économique” (emphasis added).

Collective action in the cultural field should thus be based on three fundamental principles: 1) the development not of a unitary culture (“une culture unique et uniforme”) but the reinforcement of regional cultures, in particular the two principal Canadian cultures; 2) cultural development in all its aspects must be left, as much as possible, to private initiative: “il ne faut jamais oublier que la culture réside d’abord dans les individus, dans les groupements privés et les institutions” (250); 3) in this, the role of the state is to support and encourage individuals and private groups in domains left to their own initiative, not to attempt to control them. However, it is up to the state to establish the agencies without which culture could not fully express itself. It is the duty of the state to assist and encourage private initiatives without attempting to overtake them, although private initiatives left to themselves cannot accomplish everything. The gap between Canada’s cultural and economic development results not from an inherent superiority of business over the arts and sciences,

il provient en partie du fait que les activités culturelles ne sont pas aussi rentables que l’activité économique et peut-être surtout du fait que l’Etat n’a pas accompli dans le domaine culturel le rôle qu’il a exercé sur le plan économique (ibid.:250-251, emphasis added).

In the second part of the address, St-Laurent/Lamontagne reviewed the constitutional bases for the federal government’s right of intervention in certain cultural domains as an extension of royal prerogative in matters of taxation, the disposition of public monies, and federal transfer payments to the provinces, noting that provincial legislatures also enjoyed the same royal prerogative. Most importantly, the review of constitutional and legal literature concluded that

Le gouvernement fédéral a donc le droit d'offrir son assistance financière dans tous les domaines de la culture et il lui appartient de déterminer à quelles fins elle est offerte et qui peut en bénéficier. En d'autres termes, ces problèmes relèvent d'une politique culturelle nationale...(ibid.:252, emphasis added).

St-Laurent/Lamontagne then briefly demonstrated that the interventionary claims of national cultural policy were historically based, dating back to the 1842 creation of the National Museum, first of a number of national cultural institutions, that would be followed by the Public Archives, the National Gallery, the National Research Council, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the National Film Board and the National Library. A number of federal programs designed to provide assistance to individuals and organizations in the cultural field were also reviewed. "This brief description shows that an extensive national cultural policy has been gradually developed by the Canadian government, although many Canadians may feel that, in certain sectors, it has been too modest and timid" (253). Reiterating in English what in French had earlier been the three principles fundamental to "our collective effort to develop our cultural life", the speech noted that the policy of setting up public agencies "deemed essential for the development and adequate expression of our cultural life" was "strongly supported" by the Canadian people, as attested by the Massey hearings. Furthermore, Massey had recommended that the fundamental principles of "this traditional policy...be strengthened and extended to new fields of cultural activity" (254, emphasis added).

While the remainder of the speech went on to announce the government's decision to recommend to Parliament creation of the Canada Council (which need not concern us), its concluding peroration would make the point that the

imbalance between cultural and industrial development was not particular to Canada but part of a global disequilibrium characteristic of contemporary material civilization. Quoting Bergson in a 1932 text<sup>8</sup>, the speech oddly misreads the philosopher's point and instead stakes Canada's eagerness to draw from this disproportionate growth a liberating expansion of intellectual and moral energies. Not only did Canada want to be a source of such energies, its role in international diplomacy had demonstrated that it was already. "With that purpose in mind, we must further develop and enrich our national soul..." (ibid.:257).

The 1956 speech clearly illustrates Foucault's notion of governmentality in that internal regulation of "the national soul" by the policy state is predicated upon extension of the national economy into the sphere of international cooperation between states. As a surface of emergence in what will become the discursive economy of the Canadian feature, the 1956 speech establishes the prediscursive and preconceptual horizon (which, recalling Foucault, is still discursive) against which film policy will emerge in increasingly clear outline, as we shall see below (particularly in Ch. V), conceptualized within the state as a strategy of economic development within a new sector of national cultural production (the feature film) destined for export. Such an emergence, however, presupposes changed non-discursive practices which we examine next in the context of a second surface of emergence, the establishment of Canadian

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<sup>8</sup> The quotation reads in part "La nature en nous dotant d'une intelligence essentiellement fabricatrice, avait ainsi préparé pour nous un certain agrandissement. Mais des machines qui marchent au pétrole, au charbon, à la 'houille blanche' sont venues donner à notre organisme une extension si vaste et une puissance si formidable, si disproportionnée, que sûrement il n'en avait rien été prévu dans le plan de structure de notre espèce. Or, dans ce corps démesurément grossi, l'âme reste ce qu'elle était, trop petite. D'où le vide entre lui et elle. Le corps agrandi attend un supplément d'âme." The reference is not given in the speech.

television in 1952.

### 3.2 Introduction of Television

"On ne dira jamais assez," writes André J. Bélanger in the Quebec context, "l'influence que l'avènement de la télévision a eue sur les mentalités" (Bélanger 1988:129). In the same vein, Véronneau, following the research of Gérard Laurence, remarks on the decisive role the arrival of television played in fracturing the ideological monolith of traditional Québécois society and in giving the Francophone filmmaker, particularly at the National Film Board, "une antenne directe auprès de la population pour lui communiquer ses messages par des autres canaux que ceux, traditionnels, de l'église, de l'école ou de la famille" (Véronneau 1987: 107). One could debate the ideological effects of the beginnings of television in Canada—as Véronneau notes, Laurence's work in public affairs programming research speaks not of dissidence but of dissonance. On the other hand, it is certain that the number of telecasts of NFB films in Quebec between 1952-1964 was at least nearly two-and-a-half times as numerous as in any other province and over three times as numerous as in Ontario<sup>9</sup>

At the opposite end of the Québécois strong effects proponents, Rutherford argues that the impact of Canadian television only confirmed what was already there, beginning with "the basic structure of Canadian broadcasting ...[which] ensured that the television scene, like the radio scene before it, would be full of American messages" (Rutherford 1990:41). For Rutherford, Canadian television,

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<sup>9</sup> As the Board reported to Fowler II (1965), in the 12 years from 1952-1964, there were 51,235 telecasts of NFB films on local stations. By province, this total breaks down as follows: BC (inc. Yukon) 4998, AB & NWT 4825; Sask. 4572; Man. 2957; ON 3812; QC 12,208; NB 2444, NS 2751, PEI 808, Nfld. 1860. See National Film Board of Canada Archives (hereafter NFB/CA), Minutes of the Board, 71st meeting, Montreal, March 19, 1965, appendix 9a



contrary to the quasi-revolutionary hopes it had aroused, would prove an ineffective instrument both for policies of Canadianization and more generally for overcoming "existing cultural realities":

...in Quebec where there remained a lively tradition of the popular arts, television was the vehicle for a brand of drama that did express something local, but in English Canada where the tradition was feeble at best, television couldn't work any miracles (Rutherford 1990:385).

While one might further debate the issue, it may certainly be strongly suggested that television profoundly impacted both discursive and non-discursive practices that would directly bear upon the emergence of the Canadian feature film. Before television, the possibility of seeing films either about Canada or made by Canadians (more often than not, the same thing) was distinctly limited, outside the productions of the NFB. And, within the NFB, these were in turn limited to certain formats, genres and structures<sup>10</sup>. "Today," would write NFB director of production Donald Mulholland in a 1959 confidential report to the NFB Board of Governors,

the National Film Board supplies almost the only reference to Canada in Canadian cinemas with its theatrical shorts...[and] is almost the only Canadian source of film about Canada for use in schools....With the advent of television to Canada, NFB was presented with a channel of distribution to the public which it could not ignore (NFBCA, Minutes of the Board, 43rd meeting, appendix

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<sup>10</sup> For Pierre Juneau, for instance, the output of the Board particularly until the development of its television production, was a cinema "totalement au service du progrès social". "Si vous regardez le catalogue [des films], vous avez d'autre part [des titres comme] comment construire un machin pour nourrir les pores, comment construire des silos horizontaux plutôt que verticaux, comment améliorer la culture de la pomme de terre tout un éventail de choses extrêmement prosaïques. Et alors, de temps à autre, comme dans le film de Bernard Devlin sur comment organiser des coopératives au Nouveau-Brunswick, vous aviez des moments très poétiques...ça percrait quand même" (interview, 4 April 1990)

9, 2-3).<sup>11</sup>

The extent to which the Board had developed almost entirely within a separate film production-distribution-exhibition economy of its own, an educational, volunteer, and largely rural economy<sup>12</sup>, can probably not be stated too strongly. Jones, for instance, remarks that, in the eleven years between 1939-1950, "the Film Board did not produce a single documentary that speaks to a modern audience" (1981:58). Bobet recalls—incredulously—the creative fervor and technical struggles that surrounded the making of films with titles like La Mammite and Maladie du pis de la vache (Bobet 1966:109). With scant exaggeration, one could speak of the NFB's films as a parallel cinema within Canada aimed primarily at educating schoolchildren, agriculturalists and

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<sup>11</sup> The struggle as of the 1940s between the CBC and the NFB for the control of television remains to be documented and is beyond the limits of this dissertation, although its importance cannot be overstated. As early as 1943, the Board was supplying TV outlets in the U.S. and the U.K. with Canadian films. In a 25,000-word submission to Massey-Lévesque, the NFB predicted that in Canada motion pictures would play a greater part in television than in the United States where a contemporary estimate showed that 25 per cent of U.S. television programs consisted of films. In its brief, the Board detailed its readiness to expand into TV through supplying its large stock of films and more directly by recording live TV programs on film and placing them on circuits serving rural areas not covered by video stations. "When television is established in Canada it will find ready for use a very substantial program and a technical capacity which could not be developed by another organisation except over a considerable period of years." See NFBCA, file 1070, box A-183. For its part, the Massey Report would find "deplorable" the idea that the Board become simply or principally a supplier of films for television; because the Board could not produce all the films or even genres of films the CBC would need, however attractive the idea, the Board was assigned the role of principal advisor to the CBC in film matters. The result would be a dynamic of interbureaucratic feuding that has persisted ever since. Within the Board, the 'loss' of television would, for some producers at least, make the battle for the feature film that much more poignant and this second crucial defeat all the more bitter.

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, until well into the mid-1960s, the political economy of independent (i.e., non-foreign-owned) cinematic distribution/exhibition in Canada would be described by N.A. Taylor, "Canada's largest independent distributor and theatre owner", as "rural": "We are more rural than urban and considering all the circumstances it is remarkable we see as many foreign films as we do." See Gerald Pratley, "Point to Stress: Canada Is 'Rural'", Variety, Apr. 29, 1964, 29, 32.

American tourists.<sup>13</sup> Yet by the mid-1950s this parallel cinema had developed an extensive infrastructure. As Marjorie McKay describes it:

In 1955/56, 14,469,700 people saw the Board's films in Canada in community and school showings. The schools accounted for slightly over half the total. Over eleven million of these people saw the films which had been borrowed from libraries. By now almost twelve thousand organizations belonged to film councils and film libraries. For every National Film Board employee working on the distribution of films to community groups, there are at least 120 organizations and at least 2000 volunteers... Tourist audiences had climbed in Canada to almost 1,200,000 and better still the distribution in the United States had increased to almost four million. In a survey conducted of tourists crossing the border into Canada, almost ten percent stated that their motivation for the trip was provided by [NFB] films. The audience abroad had climbed to more than 17,600,000 and this [i.e., all of the above] was outside the theatres and television (McKay [1964]:102, emphasis added).

To thus additionally be able to access a technology of distribution that by 1960 was within range of 94 per cent of Canadian households and whose extraordinary expansion had "caught on more quickly in Ontario and Quebec than in the rest of the country, in the big cities, and (by a slight edge) with French Canadians" (Rutherford 1990:47,49) was, indeed, a channel of distribution to an urban (or urbanizing)<sup>14</sup> audience that the Board could not ignore. The lack of distribution of NFB films in urban centers was so preoccupying that, by early 1958, one member of the Board of Governors wondered "whether the time has

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<sup>13</sup> Distribution of NFB films abroad by the late 1950s, "considered by the Department of External Affairs to be the most important of Canada's information programs," was assured through libraries in Canadian diplomatic posts and missions and other arrangements, yielding an estimated audience of 18 million annually. See Mulholland's confidential report, NFBCA, Minutes of the Board, 43rd meeting, 3,5.

<sup>14</sup> As André J. Bélanger remarks, "Or, la télévision, monopole d'Etat à l'époque, a introduit des valeurs et des manières d'être très urbaines.." (Bélanger 1988 129)

not come...[for] legislation providing for a 'quota' of Canadian films on programs in theatres" (NFBCA, Minutes, 34th meeting, 4).

However, in the view of the Board, the "central and deciding" factor of its involvement with the television system—and so its connection to the general public in Canada—would be its relationship to the CBC. As an internal report written for the Board in 1986 would put it delicately:

The relationship has not been smooth, and the public interest probably not served as well as it might have been. Since the mandate of each agency has been in conflict from the start of television forward, the piecemeal solutions developed to date have not really resolved the problem (Cox [1986]:1).

### 3.2.1 Changing Practices 1: The NFB and French-language Television

At a general level, part of the "piecemeal solution" would consist in the Board functioning as programming supplier for the start-up of television. As Cox's 1986 review of the NFB and television from 1950-1984 puts it:

The NFB has traditionally subsidized broadcasters during their start-up phase for English-language services, and for a longer period for French-language services (which do not have access to the huge pool of foreign anglophone programming). When these TV services mature, and develop their own institutional production capacity, the NFB's programming is squeezed out because it is aimed at a minority audience and unable to compete with foreign commercial alternatives available at dumped prices....This trend could be seen even before Canadian television began (Cox 1986:1).

More particularly, as of 1953-54, the Board began producing series of films for television. By 1954-55, half of the Board's output was destined for television (Véronneau 1987:25-26), though by 1958-59 this had declined to one third of its total production funds (NFBCA, Minutes, 43rd meeting, appendix 10, 3). By

October 1959, 10 series of varying lengths had been produced in English and nine in French, amounting to 474 films for a total running time of 225 hours—enough to fill approximately two weeks of the Canadian TV schedule (Minutes, 43rd meeting, app. 10, 1-2)<sup>15</sup>. These special series productions, original location documentaries, were rented to CBC which carried them on a sustaining basis, without sponsorship, at rental rates that in 1953 were negotiated at \$200 per half-hour and by the 1960-61 season had been renegotiated to \$8000 per half-hour, which represented approximately half of the production costs incurred by NFB. (Comparatively, rental rates for American or English series were approximately \$2000 per half-hour and \$5000 for U.S. syndicated half-hours dubbed in French [CBC, "Relations with National Film Board," National Archives of Canada [hereafter NAC], RG 41, vol. 343, file 15-6 (part 3), 1]). In addition to such special series, under an arrangement with CBC in which the latter was granted exclusive rights for a two-year period, the NFB also produced annual series of films for first time showing on television in French and English, amounting to approximately 36 half-hours in each language (Roberge to Stewart, NFB Board Minutes, 43rd meeting, 3). The NFB's annual contract with CBC would be cancelled in 1969 (the Radio-Canada contract continued longer), though

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<sup>15</sup> In an October 6, 1959 letter to Dr. Andrew Stewart, chair of the BBG, NFB chairman Guy Roberge listed the series as follows: English series CANDID EYE (7 x 30 min. films, 1958-59); FRONTIERS (16 x 30 min - 1958-59); COMPARISONS (3 x 60 min - 1959); COMMONWEALTH (13 x 30 min - 1957); NEW NATION IN THE WEST INDIES (4 x 30 min.- 1958); NATURE OF WORK (6 x 30 min.- 1958); WORLD IN ACTION (6 x 30 min.- 1958-59); PERSPECTIVE (91 x 30 min - 1955-56/1956-57); WINDOW ON CANADA (78 x 30 min. -1953-54/1955-56); ON THE SPOT (39 x 15 min.- 1953-54; 26 x 30 min - 1954-55); French series TEMPS PRESENT (32 x 30 min - 1958-59); COMPARAISONS (1 x 60 min - 1958-59); ANTILLES ANGLAISES (4 x 30 min. 1958); LE MONDE DU TRAVAIL (5 x 30 min - 1958); PANORAMIQUE (23 x 30 min - 1957-58); COMMONWEALTH (13 x 30 min. - 1957); PASSE PARTOUT (52 x 30. min.- 1956-57/1955-56); REGARDS SUR LE CANADA (38 x 30 min.- 1954-55), SUR LE VIF (26 x 15 min - 1954-55). See NFBCA, Minutes, 43rd meeting, appendix 10, 1-2

Véronneau notes, as of the early 1960s, the progressive "retrait de l'ONF du plan de production de Radio-Canada: l'ONF devra de plus en plus négocier des heures de diffusion et sera plus souvent qu'à son tour déçu des créneaux horaires qui lui échoieront" (Véronneau 1987:28).

From the perspective of non-discursive practices, the move to film series production for television appears to have considerably stressed the NFB. With its output at maximum capacity by the mid-1950s, producing over 100 original new films per year, the pace of increased production would strain the Board's production structures, necessitating organizational modifications that would include increased autonomization of the French production units and the first-time appointment of a French Canadian (Guy Roberge) as government film commissioner. Some of the strain entailed by TV series production is reflected in the dissatisfaction expressed by filmmakers Léonard Forest and Fernand Dansereau in a 1958 memo to Pierre Juneau:

Qui eut osé demander à un individu d'écrire et de réaliser huit demi-heures de film dans la même saison, à un autre d'en écrire sept et d'en réaliser six, à un autre d'en réaliser neuf! (cited in Véronneau 1987:34).

Filmmaker Marcel Carrière sums up the changing pace of production as follows:

Quand je suis arrivé à l'Office [1956], on faisait des films de dix minutes pas plus. Une bobine. Ensuite, ça a été plus long. Ça a été vingt minutes, ensuite trente minutes, ensuite une heure. Puis là, on en fait d'une heure et demie, deux heures. [Pierre] Perrault en fait de trois et quatre heures. Il y a eu une progression comme ça. C'était impensable qu'on puisse accaparer des spectateurs plus de dix minutes à un moment donné avec les moyens qu'on avait. Ce n'était pas du long métrage qu'on faisait (Lafrance & Marsolais

1973:129).

But the point to be underscored, at the level of changing non-discursive practices, is that while there is a formal correspondance between series of half-hour films and the feature form, in the context of NFB production, that correspondance would be one of "arrested development."<sup>16</sup> Thus, the Passe-partout series (52 x 30-minute episodes, from October 1955 to April 1957) "permet...d'accroître les effectifs du groupe de cinéastes francophones de l'ONF...et de familiariser nombre d'entre eux avec la scénarisation et la direction de comédiens" (Houle & Julien 1978:233). If the series presented a hybrid, both formally and ideologically, with its eclectic mix of documentaries, compilation films and dramatic fictions (the 30-minute format reportedly constrained dramatic development [Houle & Julien: *ibid.*]), that proved disappointing both to audiences and artisans, it made possible its successor series, Panoramique.

Given the limitations of Passe-partout's 30-minute format, the Panoramique series (fall 1957-January 1959) consisted of larger, narrative blocs or fictional "mini-series" (Houle & Julien 1978:226): most notably, Bernard Devlin's<sup>17</sup> 4-hour (8 episode) saga of the colonization of Abitibi, Les Brûlés, which would cost \$144,009.74, followed by Louis Portugais's two-hour (4-episode), Les 90 jours, (a drama in a trade-union context) and his direction as well of the 5-episode Il était une guerre, (a drama about the Second World War from a Quebec

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<sup>16</sup> Filmmaker Arther Lamothe, for instance, not long before quitting the Board would complain that it was like training lawyers to only plead parking-ticket cases: "L'ennui...c'est qu'à l'ONF vous avez la possibilité de rester toute la vie apprenti. Faire deux documentaires de 30 minutes par an, en 16mm, noir et blanc, projetés une seule fois à la TV, à 10 heures 30 du soir...et voir des longs métrages d'autres pays. [est] [d]éprimant comme perspective pour le tonus émotif des créateurs. Situation explosive" (NFB'CA, 3082, P-13, Lamothe 1963)

<sup>17</sup> Direction and script

perspective) the latter costing \$62,489.63 (costs given in Véronneau 1987:33). The three major productions of the series were complemented by Claude Jutra's direction of the 4-episode study of oppression in the white-collar universe, Les mains nettes, and Fernand Dansereau's direction of the 3-episode story about a farmer's difficulties, Le maître du Pérou (which he also scripted) and the two-episode Pays neuf in which an Abitibi mine inspector leaves his job.

Houle & Julien ascribe the Panoramique series' considerable popularity to its close resemblance to contemporary téléromans such as Les Plouffe, Le Suivenant, and Cap aux sorciers, but although the Board reedited and reissued the series' two shorter titles as long (nearly an hour) shorts—the four longer titles, held up for rerelease by Radio-Canada, were eventually reedited as feature length films (viz., Les Brûlés, Il était une guerre) and released through the Board's community circuits—the results while deemed “useful” would prove inconclusive<sup>18</sup> and plans for a follow-up series would be dropped (see Véronneau 1987:34 ff).

It is in the context of the planning discussions around the proposed Panoramique II series for the 1958-59 television season that Véronneau situates his account of the emergence of the aesthetic idea of the feature form within French-language production at the Board. For Véronneau, the emergence takes

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<sup>18</sup> In an interview, Pierre Juneau comments on the lack of support for narrative fictions that permeated “tout notre système de distribution”: “. les gens dans ce système là, ç'étaient des gens qui travaillaient avec les mouvements agricoles, les mouvements syndicaux, les écoles et ils disaient 'qu'est ce que vous voulez qu'on fasse avec ça? Nos gens ils veulent pas voir des histoires, ils veulent voir des films sur comment organiser des coopératives...'. Tous nos agents à travers le pays disaient 'qu'est ce qu'on peut faire avec ça? Il n'y a pas de demande pour ça, on peut rien faire avec ça'" (interview, 4 April 1990). While this was certainly true of the early series, by narrowcasting its distribution, the Board “fairly quickly moved into a choice of subject areas which did provide useful 16mm films .. all series of the past two years [1957-59] have produced a high percentage of useful films on topics which are in demand for special interest group programs” (NFBCA, Minutes of the Board, C.W. Gray, Appendix B, Mulholland confidential memo, September 1959, 43rd meeting, App. 9)



the form of a tension between the continuation of a (more cost-effective) documentary approach to series production, backed by English Production and NFB management, and an emergent dramatic tendency within the French unit, whose proponents would argue—somewhat casuistically—that the dramatic form was actually a superior documentary formula for expressing the real. Thus Forest and Dansereau speak of

notre confiance en la validité de la formule dramatique en tant que formule 'documentaire', en tant que moyen d'expression du réel....Pour les 'documentaristes' que nous sommes et voulons rester, la dramatisation n'est pas une solution de facilité...[c]'est un jeu périlleux dont les arbitres se nomment honnêteté, justice, vérité (cited in Véronneau 1987:35).

But such 'aesthetic' arguments would not prove convincing to the Board's management, more concerned with costs. As Véronneau puts it,

Panoramique I s'était avérée...trop luxueuse pour le seul ONF. Radio-Canada avait émis des réserves....Au moment où il fallait décider Panoramique II, la conjoncture ne devait pas être favorable. ...Au plan de l'argumentation en faveur du...long métrage de fiction...les idées étaient semées: il faudrait cependant attendre cinq ans avant que les fruits apparaissent. L'ONF et Radio-Canada préfèrent donc des séries comme "Temps présent"/"Profils et paysages", beaucoup moins coûteuses (1987:36).

As a result, it would be not only to the context of such less costly series production for television (e.g., the half-hour Coup d'oeil series provided the context for Les Raquetteurs [1958], the Temps présent series for Les petites soeurs [1959], La lutte [1961] etc.) but, more importantly, to another form altogether, outside television—the documentary short—that the filmmakers of the embryonic French Production would turn. For the documentary short offered, as

Fernand Dansereau put it, “une direction nouvelle qui ouvrait véritablement une porte à notre expression. Ainsi nous avons inventé au Québec le cinéma direct...[s]ous l’influence de la télévision et du bouleversement stylistique qu’elle amenait...” (Dansereau 1974:82, sentence structure modified).

The direct cinema shorts would be, as Lever points out, “une ‘écriture’ nouvelle imposée par le contexte et les instruments” (Lever 1988:149 ff)—as Claude Jutra stated it, a “fixation quasi sexuelle” with the technical liberation brought about by the relatively lightweight equipment available to television crews that was the envy of Film Board filmmakers (Jutra cited in Marsolais 1974:130). In Lever’s summary,

[L]a télévision impose un rythme de production beaucoup plus rapide, et pour l’atteindre, il faut inventer de nouveaux appareils (caméra légère, nouveaux magnétophones et son synchrone), rendre les pellicules plus sensibles pour éliminer les éclairages sophistiqués. Chaque tournage devient presque une “session d’études”, une école où, sans maîtres, les élèves multiplient les expériences et s’enseignent les uns aux autres, à la mesure des résultats heureux ou malheureux, une nouvelle esthétique. Les nouvelles conditions de tournage changent à leur tour la mentalité des artisans en les rendant plus mobiles...et plus curieux d’expérimenter encore d’autres techniques (bricolage avec des caméras de divers modèles, allongements des temps de développement pour obtenir des effets inédits...) (Lever 1988:149).

Whatever else it was, the direct appeared to the filmmakers concerned as “le seul moyen à l’époque de contourner les censures à tous les stades de la production et, partant, d’imposer un cinéma différent” (Marsolais 1974:129, emphasis added). Marsolais is thus undoubtedly correct (1974:129,130) in seeing both in the direct proper (1958-1960) and subsequently the semi-clandestine passage as of 1963 to the direct-inspired feature-length film, the aspiration

towards a new type of communicative relationship shortcircuiting—the term is Véronneau's (1987:38)—all the hierarchies of communication prevailing within the Board: at the level of the image, at the level of the script, at the level of the crew, at the level of montage and, beyond the Board, at the level of “la fausseté, le ridicule, le grotesque même, de la société québécoise des années soixante” (see esp. Marsolais 1974:122-130).

If there were elements of cross-fertilization between the Board's television output for CBC/Radio-Canada, the emergence of the aesthetic idea of the feature and the direct form, these were discontinuous changes at the level of non-discursive practices. It would require several more years for a discourse to form in Quebec that would merge the idea of the feature with the form of the direct. But at the level of non-discursive practices, the direct, while initially influenced by both the style and the technology of television, would be marginalized by the institutionalization of television. By the early 1960s, as the televisual institution shifted from, as Véronneau puts it, “son rôle de consommateur passif [de pellicule] en celui de déterminateur,” the direct would be rejected as transgressive of televisual norms. According to Véronneau, television's institutional practices marginalized the direct

non pas uniquement en obligeant les films qui lui étaient destinés à prendre modèle sur les formes dominantes en télévision, mais aussi en forçant ceux qui voulaient voir leurs oeuvres bénéficier d'un passage télévisé correct à se conformer à la pratique courante...(1984a:169).

### 3.2.2 Changing Practices 2: Television in English Canada and Series Production

Rutherford has argued that the coming of Canadian television reconfirmed the

basic structure of Canadian broadcasting (1990:41), that is to say, English-Canada's dependence upon American programming. In this sense, CBC (as CTV later) "never had full control of its own schedule" (Rutherford 1990:77, on CTV:116).<sup>19</sup> As Rutherford remarks, "When the Board of Broadcast Governors announced late in 1959 that made-in-Canada programming must reach a minimum of 55 per cent of the schedule, that actually reflected about the limit of what the CBC's English service could achieve" (ibid.:80). With the network peak viewing hours (8-9 pm) blocked out with, in some instances, "as yet unspecified American 'hits'" (Rutherford, ibid.), made-in-Canada programming aired either before or after the imported highlights.

The CBC produced nearly all network shows made in Canada during the 1950s. A mere 2 per cent of the shows telecast on its networks during one week in February 1958 came from 'Other Canadian Sources'. Who could compete? There wasn't a Hollywood North, and the CBC was hardly ready to encourage such, although it did work with private film companies to produce a bit of series drama at the end of the decade (Rutherford:86).

As well, an additional constraint was the fact that "As late as the 1960/1 season, nearly 95 per cent of the made-in-Canada programming on the English network service was live (to air or on tape)" (Rutherford 1990:96). With CBC programmers focussing limited resources on improving informational programming—the national newscast, news specials, documentaries and assorted public affairs programs that absorbed half of CBC's programming dollars and left Drama starved with only 13 per cent of 1965 programming dollars (Rutherford

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<sup>19</sup> Although Radio-Canada produced about three-quarters of its own programming (Rutherford 1990:80), though as we have seen above in terms of relations with the Board, RC's greater latitude with its schedule could prove equally problematic, nor would it prevent RC from becoming the world's largest buyer of imported telefilms (NFB Minutes, 72nd meeting, June 18, 1965, app 7; Firestone 1976:64-65)

1990:130-131)—the development of made-in-Canada filmed television serials in English would be a function of internationalizing American TV production.<sup>20</sup>

Limited in their access to British television by the restriction of imported programming to a 15 per cent quota, some U.S. film and television production companies, in the hope of qualifying as British Commonwealth production, established subsidiaries in Canada in the mid-late '50s to begin producing made-in-Canada half-hour comedy and adventure series<sup>21</sup>. Thus, for instance, the U.S. company Television Programs of America (TPA) would set up Normandie Productions in Toronto in 1956 and, armed with a guaranteed CBC showing, produced the 38-episode series, Last of the Mohicans, with U.S. stars and direction, Canadian equipment, crew and supporting players. The series would be sold to 150 independent U.S. stations and networks in England, France and

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<sup>20</sup> In the US context, if the shift from live dramatic production to the gradual establishment of filmed programming in the 1950s "represented a very real alternative to network dependence" with the development of Hollywood's potential for supplying telefilms (filmed series or serials) that could be distributed alone or in packages to the hundreds of TV stations not linked to the major networks (see Hilmes 1990:148-149), the centralized structure of Canadian television only increased the dependence. As Weir put it, "In a curious and unintentional way, the CBC has given an indirect but important impetus to the sale of such imported [tele]films. Most American organizations producing television films maintain sales representatives in Toronto or Montreal, and the CBC is the single largest buyer. If the film representative can sell the CBC without travel or other additional expenses, he is well on his way, and to accomplish this he makes every effort. To cover private stations, especially those in remote or isolated areas, is much more expensive" (Weir 1965:381).

<sup>21</sup> This would be repeated with the establishment of CTV. See for example "US sees Canada coin potential", Variety, July 26, 1961, which mentions the setting up of NBC Canada Ltd, a Toronto production unit intending to "do...strictly live stuff for Canadian consumption." Establishment of the new network (CTV) "will serve as a strong base upon which to develop a Canadian production operation" to enable "this country's [i.e., US] producers to bypass the tv program quota for Commonwealth countries" (see NAC, RG 41, 15-6 pt. 3). For the Motion Picture Export Association of America, the export lobby of the Hollywood film majors, the establishment of second, i.e., non-state, television networks particularly in Europe as of the early 1960s provided the opportunity to realize the "principal objective [of] an increase in the planned proportion of film to live programming during the early stages of operation." Such an increase would establish a precedent "likely to influence programming patterns for years to come" (MPEA, Interim Report on Television, 21 October 1960, cited in Guback 1986:275).

Central America (see Walker 1957:12,42-43). This venture would be followed by two further series, a sitcom Tugboat Annie (39 x 30-min., 1958) and an adventure series about truckers, Cannonball (39 x 30 min., 1959)<sup>22</sup>.

The impact of these productions on the Canadian production infrastructure, particularly in Toronto, and in the trade press, daily newspapers and monthlies, was dramatic—and a sharp contrast to recent unsuccessful Toronto-based ventures in feature filmmaking. CBC-TV director Sidney Furie's independent, low-budget A Dangerous Age (1957) had been “almost certainly the first Canadian film for decades to merit serious critical attention internationally”—as “a flawed, first feature” (Morris 1974:7-8). Though neither it nor his second feature, A Cool Sound From Hell (1959) (aka The Young and the Beat), received much attention in Canada, the films established his reputation as a director of promise in England, for which he left in 1959. Klenman Davidson Productions Ltd. of Toronto, founded by ex-NFB/CBCers Norman Klenman and William Davidson in 1957, had produced films exclusively for CBC TV, hiring equipment and staff by the job. Early in 1958, they announced ambitious plans for expanded production and permanent personnel (see Canadian Film Weekly 23:3, 15 Jan.

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<sup>22</sup> Rutherford attributes production of Cannonball to Lassie and Superman episode producers, US company Robert Maxwell Associates (Rutherford 1990:376-377), though NFB Commissioner Guy Roberge in a 1959 document lists the production company as TPA-Normandie (see NFBC, Minutes, 43rd meeting, App. 10, 4). According to Rutherford, plans had been announced for further US made-in-Canada series, such as Forest Ranger, Bush Pilot, Trouble Shooters and Hudson's Bay. The 1959 NFB list indicates 39 half-hours of Hudson's Bay in preparation for Northstar Pictures and the pilot shot for The Forest Ranger, with the series in script development by Harvard Films. As Rutherford puts it, “...it all proved a flash in the pan.. Apparently, when the CBC refused to extend automatic support to the new ventures, the Americans decided it wasn't worth their time and money, and the studios readied for the expected boom were left empty” (Rutherford 1990:377). The pattern had well-established precedents in the earlier history of US runaway film production in Canada, particularly in the 1930s, see Morris 1978: esp. 193-194

1958)<sup>23</sup>. Production plans included sponsored documentaries and industrial films, as well as a feature, Now That April's Here (1958) written (based on four Morley Callaghan short stories) and coproduced by Klenman and Davidson and Toronto independent producer/exhibitor/distributor N. A. Taylor. April would be, in the words of one newspaper critic, "a box-office flop of the first magnitude" (Johnson 1959; see also Morris 1974:9). Their second feature, The Ivy League Killers (1959), would be turned down as "not good enough" by Taylor, described by the same critic, as a leading purveyor of "cheap 'B' films of the shock and shriek school" (Johnson 1959).<sup>24</sup> In 1959, Taylor, through his wife, coproduced with Meridian Films of Toronto the horror picture The Bloody Brood that, according to its Variety review, delicately penned by Toronto contrib Gerald Pratley, was saved by "virile direction and deft editing [that]...with the convincing portrayals of

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<sup>23</sup> In a lengthy, unpublished interview with Prof. Peter Morris of York University, Davidson comments that the impetus for feature film production in mid-'50s Toronto came from the margins of the 'industry'. "almost everybody was interested in some way in film drama but mostly it was those other people who weren't involved in film, the majority of film people tended to be extremely cautious. We're talking about the [Arthur] Chetwynds and all those guys, the people who were established in the documentary business, a thousand dollars a minute, sponsored films, don't rock the boat, run your own little company, don't pay much to the people, don't get involved with unions, keep away from ACTRA and professional actors. there was a tendency for the film people, I think, not to be interested. The film media—guys like [magazine editor] Art Benson and [journalists] Dean Walker and Gerald [Pratley] — they wanted features, but there was a kind of artificial stirring up of those those people. The only ones who were interested who were part of the same period are Norman [Klenman] and myself, Sid Furie all by himself; but the other two were of course Julian Roffman and Ralph Foster...the old guys" (T4/S1/p9). Outside the film 'industry,' it was at CBC Drama where "week after week these guys—Silvio Narizzano, David Green, Arthur Hiller, Ted Kotcheff...are knocking off these dramas—and they're doing it, some of them twelve, fifteen a year....the directors [who] had come from stage into television and strayed into film...[T]hat was where the main excitement came, from those television drama directors, they were the ones who really wanted to make the features. There was still a lot of caution in the film industry—because the economics weren't there..." (T3/S2/p 18, T4/S1/p10) (Morris unpublished interview, Feb 15, 1985). My thanks to Prof. Morris for letting me read this wealth of material.

<sup>24</sup> For Davidson's very different account of the fate of the Klenman-Davidson features, see Morris unpublished interview, 1985.

the cast, prevent the entire production from collapsing into comic absurdity” (in Morris 1974:10). The original story property was suggested by Hal Roach Jr., whose father was one of a number of former Hollywood theatrical film producers who struck it rich in the telefilm business. Hal Roach Sr. shifted production from feature film to TV series in 1949 placing his son in charge of the company (Hilmes 1990:151). Bloody Brood producer/director Julian Roffman initially asked Roach’s company to make a feature in Canada (Morris 1974:10).

As the Toronto Star’s showbiz columnist would put it in August 1959, “The uncertainty of the feature film market is in sharp contrast with the buoyant situation of the television filming industry where U.S. money and know-how is turning Toronto into one of the world’s largest production centres” (Johnson 1959, emphasis added). This referred to the spate of studio construction the year before in anticipation of further American series (studios such as Arthur Gottlieb’s Canadian Film Industries where the TPA series would be filmed, and Toronto International Film Studios Ltd., presided over by N.A. Taylor, for the production of television and feature films, which claimed to be “first of its kind in Canada” as the Taylor-owned trade publication Canadian Film Weekly put it [hereafter CFW, 23:10, 5 March 1958]). As Arthur (later Sir Arthur) Chetwynd, then president of the principal Canadian industry lobby, the Association of Motion Picture Producers & Laboratories of Canada (AMPPLC) would report to an industry meeting early in 1958, announcing an increase in association membership from 35 to 42 companies, “The technical corps of Canada’s production industry is being enlarged through training under key personnel imported for American-inspired projects and a profitable trade equipment business has grown around articles [hitherto] not available in this country” (CFW,



23:1, 1 Jan., 1958). As a result of the current upswing in production—in which television films were being for the first time made in Canada by “parent USA companies” for Canadian consumption, whereas they had previously been made “across the line” [i.e., on the U.S. side of the border]—motion picture production equipment could now be purchased in Canada “whereas previously all equipment had to be imported direct from the United States or other countries” (ibid.). Not just equipment, but also “many of the dollars” were actually staying on this side of the border. The fact that the Americans were augmenting their crews with Canadians represented “further training of our film technicians which will reflect on the Industry in later years” (ibid.: emphasis added). Finally, as a result of the expansion in ‘branch plant’ television production, AMPPLC members had begun making regular contact with Canadian government officials to lobby for taxation and customs duty relief for the importation of equipment (obviously, not all equipment was in fact now available in Canada). As Chetwynd confidently predicted, “The future of the Industry...appears bright”.

By contrast to the enthusiasm aroused by American production in Toronto particularly, Canadian-made filmed drama series got off to a shakier start. Reluctant to enter into competition with private Canadian film companies, according to Rutherford (1990:375), CBC’s apparently first extended experiment with filmed drama, the 1957 big budget series Radisson (26 x 30-min. in both English and French, produced for CBC by Omega Productions in Montreal) was bedevilled with difficulties. The production ran way over budget and would cost \$1.04 million, earning back a mere \$146,200 in domestic and foreign sales (Rutherford 1990:375-6). It would be dropped a year after its birth.

A second joint venture in Canadian telefilm in French and English,

RCMP/Gendarmerie Royale, (39 x 30-min., airing October 1959-October 1960), would be coproduced by Crawley-McConnell Ltd. which raised 60 per cent of production costs (Crawley Films of Ottawa—"this Canadian motion picture enterprise which has done more than any other dominion company to develop production for industry and education" [CFW, 23:34, 3 Sept., 1958]—capitalized by Montreal newspaper publisher J.R. McConnell), CBC (20 per cent), and BBC (20 per cent) (Rutherford 1990:377). Rutherford reports one estimate of \$1,365,000 for the series' 39 episodes, or \$35,000 for each half-hour (1990:377), while a CBC document reports the total cost (for its share) as \$312,000 or \$8000 per episode (NAC, RG 41, vol. 343, 15-6, pt. 3). The point, as Roberge (and for that matter Rutherford [1990:377, 379]) remarked about the development of such series production, and particularly the more complex, big budget productions such as Radisson or RCMP is that, since it was doubtful they would be released a second time after their first run on Canadian television, "Obviously, the greater part of the costs of such films must be recovered from markets outside Canada" (NFBC, Minutes, 43rd meeting, app. 10, 5, emphasis added)<sup>25</sup>. As Rutherford reports, though the series was not renewed by CBC for a second season, it aired in Britain, Australia and a number of other countries from Hong Kong to Uruguay, although it was never picked up by the U.S. networks, and some episodes would be rebroadcast by CBC stations in 1965 (1990: 379).

Yet it matters less, as Rutherford for instance argues (1990:378), that such a series as RCMP compared unfavorably to The Untouchables in the eyes of Canadian audiences or newspaper critics. The far more important conclusion that

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Rutherford "It's obvious that the participants expected to make big money through foreign sales, especially in the United States, where they hoped to secure a network contract" (1990:377)

would be drawn by Canadian private-sector film producers from the experience of such series production was that CBC was, in the words of a CFW headline (25:11, 16 March 1960) "Big Brother To Our Film Makers":

Of the \$3,500,000 the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. spends annually on film production, \$2,750,000 goes to private production through over 30 companies or individuals. The Government TV agency is the bulwark of private production (ibid., emphasis added).

The perception of the government TV agency as supportive was in striking contrast to their view of the government film agency. Unlike the CBC, the NFB was seen as "a hoglike hindrance" to the sector's continued growth (see CFW 23:19, 7 May 1958). For this emergent private sector, CBC's encouragement of film production, through financial participation in the series discussed above and "through reserving air time for suitable properties" (CFW, ibid.), provided it with production experience that correlates directly to the emergence of the feature form. On the strength of its series experience, Crawley for instance would announce plans for two theatrical features (see CFW 26:2, 11 Jan. 1961)<sup>26</sup>. More importantly, the contrast between the two government agencies provided the emergent private sector with a rationale for its own further growth—by way of capital-transfer from the public-sector.

### 3.3 Statisticalization and the beginnings of film policy research

A third surface of emergence for changing non-discursive practices in the

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<sup>26</sup> In the summer of 1958, F.R. (Budge) Crawley, president of Crawley Films Ltd., Ottawa, speaking over CBC radio's Trans-Canada network, had stated that while, in his view, a Canadian feature film industry would not emerge in the foreseeable future, "The time is right to attempt the establishment of a Canadian television entertainment film production industry in Canada" This type of production industry, he continued, was now possible on a year-round basis because costs had been reduced to levels where they could be met through a combination of Canadian and world markets. See "Can't See Canadian Feature Industry," CFW 23:24, 11 June 1958

formation of the discursive economy of the Canadian feature film concerns “the science of the state,” namely statistics (Foucault 1989a). However, since our object here is less the accuracy of the data-collection capacity of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics as it is the political and ideological inferences drawn from such data, it may be more appropriate to speak of statisticalization. Carey (1991:137), in the context of a discussion of the telegraph’s effect on the consciousness of time, has referred to “statisticalization” as a correlative of the (Innisian) penetration of the price system. For Carey, “statisticalization” represents

the transformation of the entire mental world into quantity, and the distribution of quantities in space so that the relationship between things and people becomes solely one of numbers. Statistics widens the market for everything and makes it more uniform and interdependent (ibid., emphasis added).

Based in part on enthusiastic interpretation of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics’ annual summary statistics of the growth of motion picture production in private industry, which would show for instance that the 1958 volume of private Canadian film industry production was 297 per cent larger than in 1952<sup>27</sup>, the 1958 annual meeting of the AMPPLC announced the creation of an Industry Development Committee to

act in the nature of a research department for production opportunities at home and abroad....One of its first tasks will be to look into the UK quota system and the Eady Plan, along with the

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<sup>27</sup> As a 1960 confidential memo to the NFB Board would put it, “The principal cause of this increase has, of course, been television. Television has created not only a demand for program film and film services — CBC spent \$2,650,000 with the private film industry in 1957 (33% of total industry volume) — but it has also created an enormous demand for television commercials, most of which are on film” (NFB/CA, Minutes, 44th meeting, appendix 2, 25 (4)).

means used in Italy, France and other countries to develop a domestic production industry. It will also provide information for those directing production and coproduction queries at the industry from other countries. These have increased of late (CFW 23:5, 29 Jan., 1958).

Chaired by producer Ralph Foster<sup>28</sup> of Toronto company Meridian Films, the nine-man<sup>29</sup> committee did not, initially at any rate, engage in any research of its own, but turned to the NFB, requesting it to gather the necessary information on existing government legislation in the development of national film industries in other countries (see Foster to Juneau, 29 August, 1958, NFBCA, file 1170, box A-183). On the one hand, such a request was not surprising as the Board was also an AMPPLC member; on the other hand, the work of the committee, of which the Board was not a member, would produce a brief singularly hostile to the NFB (see Chapter IV); thus, in serving as an information gathering facility for the committee, the Board found itself in the paradoxical position of providing the data for arguments that would be used against it.

Except that the Board, like the members of the Industry Development Committee, appears to have been just as little aware of the legislative measures adopted by other countries in the development of national film industries. As a result, and in response both to the establishment of the IDC and to the fact that, as Pierre Juneau informed Roberge in a memo, "In recent years there have been

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<sup>28</sup> A former journalist and Australian representative of the NFB under Grierson, Foster would be picked by Grierson in 1945 to set up the Australian National Film Board whose first Film Commissioner he became in 1946 (see Bertrand & Collins 1981:106,108-9)

<sup>29</sup> Composition of the IDC comprised Dean Peterson, Peterson Productions, Toronto; Art Jones, Artray, Vancouver; Rev. A. C. Moorhouse, Berkeley Studio, Toronto; Leon Shelly, Shelly Films, Toronto; Jack Chisholm, Showcase Film Productions, Toronto; Alberts Jekste, Atlantic Films & Electronics, St John's, Nfld.; Ed Kostiner, Edward Productions, Montreal; John T. Ross, Robert Lawrence Productions, Toronto; and Arthur Chetwynd, Chetwynd Films, Toronto. See CFW 23:19, 7 May 1958

numerous articles in the press and in trade magazines on the subject, it is now clear that the development of a feature film industry is arousing more and more interest in Canada" (NFBCA: *ibid.*)<sup>30</sup>, the Board at its 21 April, 1958 meeting, undertook to survey "existing legislation in other countries concerning the development of the national film industry" (*ibid.*). A preliminary (one-page) survey of 1956 feature film production in 12 countries [consisting of a list of one-line entries e.g., "Israel (2 feature films in 1956)"] had come to the conclusion that "A National Film Industry exists" in the countries listed, equating the national industry with whatever the annual feature production total. While this preliminary list made no mention of Canada, another copy in the NFB archives has the following entry for Canada pencilled in in ballpoint: "Canada '56-nil '57-2" (see Lochnan to Juneau, 5 May, 1958, 1170, A-183).

The resulting 22-page survey, "Notes on Government Legislation Related to the Development of a National Film Industry in Various Countries," was produced under the administrative responsibility of Pierre Juneau as Executive Director and, according to his covering memo to Roberge, "should be considered as preliminary" ("Notes...", 25 August 1958, 3082, P-13, F.1). Paying particular attention to France, Belgium, Italy, Britain, West Germany and the Netherlands, with briefer entries for Argentina, Brazil, Austria, Denmark and Japan, the report covers in note-form the fields of film legislation, according to the following categories: institutions, importation, exhibition, revenues, money-transfers,

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<sup>30</sup> As well, the Board kept a sharp eye on articles appearing in the Canadian press or policy resolutions by business organizations such as the Canadian Chamber of Commerce critical of the Board. For example, a 1957 article in Liberty magazine entitled "How Canada's National Film Board Squanders Your Tax Money" (with the subhead "Longhair films: Clever but so what?") would generate an internally produced 18-page refutation. For a number of such attacks between 1957-1958, NFBCA, 5-A, B77

financing, and co-production. It indicates "in a general way what some countries have done and are doing to help the development of a national film industry" but does not comment on the effectiveness of the film legislation of each country in achieving intended purposes. The only parallel it draws with the Canadian situation is in the entry on West Germany: "The situation in Germany in some ways resembles the Canadian situation in that many important aspects of film legislation come under the responsibility of the Lander or provinces..." ("Notes...", *ibid.*, 10). Nor does it make any recommendations<sup>31</sup>.

The information in the preliminary report, however, would be considered "extremely useful" by the IDC. "It is precisely what the doctor ordered," wrote Ralph Foster to Juneau, concluding that "if such countries as Sweden (34 features), Norway (14 features) and Egypt (31 features) can turn out that many major films, Canada should be able to do better than the sprinkling of third-raters so far produced" (Foster to Juneau, 29 August, 1958, NFBCA 1170, A-183). Furthermore, Foster considered, it would be useful to have "some information on the amount of help that producers in these countries receive from their national governments" (*ibid.*), for that was the point of the brief the committee would prepare: a rationale for state subsidization (see Ch. IV).

Along with such information-gathering both for itself as part of its responsibility to keep the Canadian government informed on film matters and incidentally the emergent, potentially rival, private production sector, the Board

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<sup>31</sup> To gather such information, the NFB drew upon published sources such as Roger Manvell's *The Film and the Public*, governmental publications such as those of the US Department of Commerce, but particularly made use of the information-gathering facilities of the Canadian state through its embassies as well as the NFB's own representatives in New York and London. This would particularly become the case in the information gathering network established to refute the AMPPLC' brief. See NFBCA, 5-A, B77.

also began to scrutinize skeptically the DBS-supported statistical claims of the emergent sector. Here, we find a striking illustration of statisticalization in that the data suggested an abstract growth for which Board executives had no equivalent personal evidence deriving from experience of working with private sector companies. An exchange of memos late in 1958 between E.S. Coristine, the Board's director of Administration, and Donald Mulholland, director of Planning and Operations, is particularly illustrative of the dilemma of attempting to account for the abstraction of a statistical phenomenon. The problem entailed independently attempting to verify the actual size of the emergent private sector by trying to calculate the direct tax contribution paid by Canadian private motion picture companies. But this proved impossible, among other reasons, because of the confidentiality of income tax data. An alternative method was to attempt to calculate the sales tax paid by individual companies, but this too proved difficult, if not impossible, since Mulholland knew from experience that some private sector films "are presented to us for educational certificates which relieve them of the payment of sales tax." Mulholland would conclude that the companies had exaggerated their employee growth in reporting to DBS:

I have a feeling that a lot of the companies who have reported to DBS have shown themselves with more employees than they actually have all-year round. With 58 companies, the average would work out to about 20 employees per company. We know that the largest company...Crawley's...have a little over 100 employees and we also know that only 6 or 7 companies come anywhere near being in Crawley's class. My guess is that, of the 58 reporting companies, the majority would have between 1 and 20 employees, with quite a lot of weight in the 5 to 10 employee class (Mulholland to Coristine, 23 December 1958, 5A, B77, AMPPLC File Vol. 1, May



1957-May 1959, emphases added)<sup>32</sup>.

Similarly, in attempting to trace the reported growth in the Canadian motion picture rental equipment trade, the Board in April 1958 sent out a questionnaire to 20 companies, receiving replies from two companies listing professional equipment and two renting amateur equipment; 14 companies, including Crawley Films, did not reply. It "is safe to say," the memo from the Board's chief purchasing agent to top management concluded, "that equipment rental is in short supply in Canada and leaves no alternative but to rent from U.S.A", pointing out that this was "a...hazardous and costly undertaking" (Rekert to Roberge et al., 7 July, 1958, 1030, A-183).

The third impossible calculation the Board would attempt to make in the statisticalization of an emergent private sector concerned remittances paid by distributors to foreign countries. Estimating (probably on the basis of data in Canada Yearbook) the distributors' share of total Canadian box office to be \$34,153, 847 (\$28,558,433 from theatrical rentals plus \$5,575,484 from TV rentals), from this total, just over \$12 million could be attributed to

the liberal figure of 20-25%...as operating costs, [with the result that] it would appear that about \$22,000,000 is remitted to the USA on 35mm revenue, less 10% for the withholding tax which is allowed on USA tax returns under exchange agreement with Canada.

Another estimated \$4 million in 35mm rentals flowed out to Britain, France, Italy, Germany, etc., while most of the rental revenue for 16mm for television

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<sup>32</sup> DBS summary statistics up to 1956 showed a growth in number of firms in 1952 from 30 to 59 in 1956, from 386 employees in 1952 to 1,127 in 1956, and production from \$1,331,393 in 1952 to \$3,726,557 in 1956.

(the figure was not given) was also remitted to the U.S. The conclusion drawn was that the Canadian domestic market represented about 7 per cent of the total U.S. world market: "Over the years that proportion appears to have remained rather constant" (see NFBCA, statistical file no 1-3-23, 5A, B77)<sup>33</sup>.

What all this might mean for government film policy was the subject of a memo Pierre Juneau sent Roberge, early in September 1958, accompanying the "Notes on Government Legislation..." which he recommended should be completed and "digested somewhat" before being passed on to the Minister. At the same time, it appeared "certain that this whole matter [the development of a Canadian feature film industry] will be brought to the Minister's attention in the near future."

For Juneau, there were three points to be considered in relation to the Canadian situation. Firstly, many of the legislative means detailed in the "Notes..." to help the development of a national film industry "might be considered, in Canada, to come under the jurisdiction of provincial governments", i.e., if the federal government was to remain uninvolved in such a development. If, however, "by any chance the Government wanted to consider this matter," which of the systems used in other countries could be adapted to the Canadian situation? Juneau's third point suggested a film development bank model that, like the British National Film Finance Corporation, the German province of Bavaria, or the Crédit National in France, could lend respectively 25 per cent,

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<sup>33</sup> In a 28 October, 1959 note in his capacity of secretary to the Board, Juneau would report on a meeting of the Board with N.A. Taylor who explained that "le Canada, dit-il, est un territoire de 6%, ce qui veut dire 6% par rapport à l'ensemble des revenus de distribution de l'ensemble des Etats-unis. Chaque région américaine est affectée d'un pourcentage. Ainsi New York, disons, serait un territoire de 12% ..." (note au dossier AMPPLC, NFBCA, 5A).

42.5 per cent and up to 65 per cent of a film's budget. In Canada, perhaps the Industrial Development Bank "would be of interest" as a model for film financing, noting that in 1957 the IDB had loaned \$35 million to Canadian industries and returned a profit. Such loans which averaged \$60,000 would represent approximately 25 per cent of a film budget of \$250,000, which Juneau pointed out "is more than has ever been spent on a Canadian feature film in Canada."

But before presenting any information to the Minister, Juneau recommended that "we wait" as there was not "a complete picture of all the factors involved." These factors were predominantly internal to the federal state bureaucracy and included the Industrial Development Bank as well as plans within Trade & Commerce for a new section that would study means of helping small industries. External to the bureaucracy remained the problematic economy of the Canadian feature and the fact that "the causes of [the] failures of Canadian feature films" were not sufficiently clear. "Where do we go from here?", Juneau asked (Memorandum Juneau to Roberge, 4 September 1958 [the date is erroneously typed 1953], 1170, A-183, Film Comm., Survey of Foreign Legislation 1953-1962).

### 3.4 Post-industrial cinema

The final surface of emergence to be discussed concerns on-going transformations in the international political economy of feature film production. The 1958 "Notes on Government Legislation....", while not able to clearly point to any dominant pattern, nonetheless reflected the transformations taking place as

of mid-decade. Whether in the increase of the number of coproductions<sup>34</sup>, particularly between France and Italy—in 1957, France produced 127 features, 38 in coproduction and of these 30 with Italy; in the recommendations of the Comité d'aide du film belge (made up of film industry, parliamentary, academic and other representatives) for a screen quota for Belgian films and the state-supported establishment of a film production fund; in the formation in Germany of the Export-union der Deutschen Filmwirtschaft similar to France's film export organization Unifrance Film or Italy's Unitalia; or in the 1957 establishment of the British Film Fund agency to administer a fund to subsidize production of British films with monies raised from a box-office levy (see "Notes...", *ibid.*:9,10,12,16), the resurgence of European filmmaking indicated the onset of a period of rearrangement in the content of the postwar dominance the American film industry had exercised over world markets. In Magder's useful summary of the non-discursive transformations taking place throughout the decade,

...the American film industry was undergoing a period of instability and declining profits. In Europe especially, protective measures had taken their toll on an industry which relied heavily on receipts from exports. Domestically the [1948] anti-trust decrees had led to divestment and corporate reorganization, while the introduction of television had sharply reduced theatrical attendance and forced a reappraisal of production strategies. The studio system of production began to break down, and many theatres were closed for good. By the end of the decade, the major production interests in Hollywood had learned to use their facilities to make television products. For the cinema, production strategies were reoriented to emphasize the release of fewer, bigger pictures utilizing innovations

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<sup>34</sup> According to the "Notes...", "The basic principle of co-production arrangements is as follows: to surrender all rights in the other participating country and part of the rights on all exterior markets in return for participation in the financing of the production" (NFBCA, 3082, P-13, F.1, 7). For a study of Canadian experience with coproduction 1963-1983, see Dorland 1983:13-19.

in colour and cinematography to attract audiences back to the theatre....The decline of the studio system of production, the experience of joint productions in Europe which made use of blocked earnings and local subsidies, and the risk-averse strategies of the distribution companies, each reinforced the trend towards a more decentralized structure of production. By 1960, production in the U.S. hovered around 200 films a year, nearly half the total in the immediate postwar period...In that same year, production totals in France, Italy and Great Britain respectively reached levels slightly over one-half of the U.S. total. American distributors remained firmly in control of the world-wide film trade but they were no longer marketing an exclusively American product (Magder 1987:177-178).

In Canada, by spring 1961, a front-page headline in Canadian Film Weekly would report that "USA Films [represented] Only 43% of Ont. Total", there having been in the previous year "a striking increase" on Ontario theatre screens of British, West German, Greek and Japanese feature films (CFW 26:17, 26 April 1961). Toutes proportions gardées, this 'decline of the American empire' was still a relative one, though perhaps worrisome enough for MPEA chief Eric Johnston to come to Toronto to remind an industry audience that "75 per cent of Canada's screen time goes to American films" (CFW:ibid.)

Attempting to circumscribe the multinationalization of the political economy of late 1950s feature production, Laval film professor François Baby would term it the emergence of "post-industrial cinema" (Baby n.d.:5-13). For Baby, four principal strategies marked the post-industrial cinema that had emerged as part of the continuing crisis of declining theatrical attendance throughout the decade: 1) the reduction of production costs: e.g., downsizing of crews from 100 persons to the 5-10 that characterized the French New Wave and compression of budgets from the \$200,000 range in France to, for example, the \$65,000 of Chabrol's Le

Beau Serge (1958); 2) the rise of multinational coproduction as the principal means of capitalizing production: thus, France by 1966 would produce twice as many features through coproduction as strictly 'national' films; 3) related to the increase in coproduction, the increased role of the national state in establishing film financing mechanisms and; 4) the rise of superproductions that would be particularly characteristic of early '60s U.S. cinema (e.g.: Zanuck's The Longest Day [1962]). For Baby, the catalyst in the emergent practices of post-industrial cinema would be technological, in opposition to an increasingly endangered 'art cinema':

Il n'y a pas si longtemps, c'était encore l'art qui dictait à la technologie son apport dans la production cinématographique. Aujourd'hui la situation est complètement renversée: c'est la technologie qui gouverne et qui fait choisir les sujets à traiter et leur mode de traitement. Le cinéma post-industriel est un cinéma hautement technologique où l'art ne pourra que très difficilement trouver sa place (Baby *ibid.*:12).

From the perspective of changing non-discursive practices, the point to be retained about the multinationalization of production financing mechanisms is that it will provide the competitive international environment that makes possible further internal extension of the policy state within the domestic economy.

In this chapter, against the background of the Foucauldian theory of the discursive economy of governmentality, we have examined four surfaces of the emergence of changing practices—the horizon of an emerging cultural policy attempting to reproduce the economy in the cultural sphere; the changing nature of filmmaking practices occasioned by the introduction of television; the rise of statisticalized representations of the abstract growth of an emergent private production sector; and transformations in the international political economy—as

a result of which primarily non-discursive practices were significantly modified. On the basis of these transformations, discursive forms would now rapidly begin to assume delimitation within the discursive economy, particularly in interaction with the policy state apparatus. It is to a detailed examination of such delimitation that we now proceed.

## Chapter Four

### **Instances of Delimitation in the Discursive Economy of the Canadian Feature Film: Governmentalization, 1958-1962**

That foreign trade enriched the country, experience demonstrated to the nobles...as well as to the merchants; but how, or in what manner, none of them well knew. The merchants knew perfectly in what manner it enriched themselves. It was their business to know it. But to know in what manner it enriched the country, was no part of their business....To the judges who were to decide the business, it appeared a most satisfactory account of the matter....—Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, Bk. IV

Turning to discursive practices proper, we trace out in the present chapter a dual movement of emergence in the discursive economy of the Canadian feature film. Firstly, the emergence of a private sector discourse within the Canadian film 'industry' will be detailed, and secondly its initial mobilization of the Canadian state in establishing the framework within which subsequent discussion of the Canadian feature will be governed. This framework would be, to recur to the terms of Dermody & Jacka's model (see Ch. I), articulated as an "Industry-2" or commercial discourse. The response of the state to the emergent discursive formation of the private producers would be framed within the internal extension of governmental rationality that, in the preceeding chapter, was termed governmentalization. As a result would be formed "a new universe of discourse" (Fortner 1986:32) in Canadian cinema.

#### 1. The Discourse of the Private Producers



The AMPPLC Brief, October 1958-1959

The response to Pierre Juneau's question ("Where do we go from here?") would come from the Association of Motion Picture Producers and Laboratories of Canada's Industry Development Committee which tabled a draft of its brief on 31 October 1958, in time for the association's executive meeting in Montreal in November. This would be held at a downtown hotel, although Roberge had offered the NFB's headquarters as the venue for the meeting. As an NFB memo remarked, the producers' association was about "to take a shot at the Film Board and is ashamed to do so on our premises" (NFBCA, Film Comm., 5A, B77, AMPPLC file, Vol. 1, May 1957-May 1959).

The IDC's 16-page, draft brief, entitled "A Report and Recommendations Concerning the Development of the Film Industry in Canada," urgently requested the formation of a special Government and Industry committee to study the future possibilities of the film industry in Canada. It described Canadians as "a people bent on nationhood", but whose dreams were "obscured by the overwhelming domination of their theatres and television screens by U.S. films and the flooding of their newsstands with U.S. publications" and quoted the Massey Report's observation that [made-in-Hollywood] cinema was "the most alien of influences shaping our Canadian life." In such a context, the draft argued that "a stronger commercial film industry has a useful contribution to make to our national struggle" and served notice that "it is now an objective of our Association to increase our participation in this work" hitherto carried out exclusively by the CBC and the NFB (AMPPLC draft brief, 5A, B77, 3-5).

The draft brief—and the revisions brought to it in the year that followed before its presentation to key federal ministers in October 1959 (see NFBCA,

Minutes of the Board, 43rd meeting, Oct. 26-27, agenda item 11)—was a demand for the development of state policy that would ensure the continued growth of the private production industry. In the view of the draft brief, policy needed to be elaborated in the following five areas: 1) establishment of a special government and industry committee “to study the future possibilities” of the film industry in Canada, 2) identification of lack of investment capital as a major difficulty facing producers and the suggestion that the committee “could discuss means of creating a production finance pool from which a producer could draw on the presentation of signed contracts guaranteeing Canadian, U.S. and British distribution”, 3) recognition of the need for a CBC policy “towards making more time available for Canadian-produced films” and relatedly regulating the numbers of U.S.-produced commercials airing on CBC TV: “in 1957, more than 25 per cent of all Canadian commercials were produced in the U.S.”, 4) identifying the NFB as the major obstacle “in the road to success on which commercial filmmakers have finally placed their feet” and, in relation to this, clarification of future government policy vis-a-vis both CBC and NFB from the perspective that “the film production business.. now face[s] the frustrating experience of being forced to compete with a body which is subsidized by our own tax dollars”, and 5) development of “the most dramatic aspect of film production anywhere in the world...the making of theatrical entertainment features.” If “a reason” for “our lack of success” in the making of theatrical entertainment features in the English-language field “could be that American interests control a considerable proportion of our theatre chains”, it seemed a more significant factor to the drafters of the brief that “apart from Canada, every country of any size has some sort of feature industry of its own.” These feature industries “in every case,” with the exception

of the U.S., “have only existed with Government encouragement and statutory support.” Finally, the draft brief’s demand for government policy claimed to be consistent with “the history of Canada” as “a continuous march” towards nation building, particularly as the continuum from “the great engineering achievements...of [the] transcontinental railways to the cultural enterprises exemplified by the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. and the National Film Board.” AMPPLC members shared “these national ambitions and look to a future in which they shall contribute...to the [nation] building process” (AMPPLC draft brief, 5A, B77, 3-16).

How committed AMPPLC members actually were to the discursive content of the brief is a more ambiguous matter. The November 1958 meeting of the association executive “approved” the proposal that a government and industry committee be formed “possibly to include [study of] a production finance pool for TV series (CFW 23:45, Nov. 14, 1958, “Producers Plan Appeal to Ottawa”, emphasis added). The draft brief was returned to the IDC for revision, a process that would necessitate another 12 months’ work. This included engaging the research efforts of Queen’s University economist David Slater as well as Toronto public-relations consultant Tom Wheeler (see CFW 24:24, June 17, 1959, “Producers’ Brief Coming Along”), though this did not contribute significantly to the tenor of the brief beyond the addition of statistical appendices and a sample log of a week of CBC television programming in French. The final version of the brief would, on October 14, 1959, be presented to some members of the Diefenbaker cabinet<sup>1</sup>, to Dr. Andrew Stewart, head of the newly created BBG,

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<sup>1</sup> According to the NFB, the brief would be presented to Ellen Fairclough who as Minister of Citizenship and Immigration was responsible for the Board; copies also went to her cabinet colleagues at Finance

and in early November to the CBC. Magder cites an MP<sup>2</sup> in the Diefenbaker government who claimed “the PM [was] hot on the subject” of the brief, but there would be no follow-up according to the MP “because of lack of interest on the part of people in the industry itself” (see Magder 1987:203). However, a contemporary CBC document notes that the “AMPPLC subsequently decided to abandon its Brief and expressed a desire to ‘turn the page’ on what had occurred before...”, largely as a result of CBC’s Feb. 1, 1961 statement on Film Production Policy which recognized the “importance of a vigorous film production industry in this country” and made much of the Corp.’s “consistent policy of contracting the majority of its film production to outside organizations” (see NAC, “Relations with National Film Board”, undated, RG41, v.343, file 15-6 [pt.3], 39-41). In this sense, the brief was a strategic document, advancing negotiation positions that could be withdrawn subsequently—if, in the interim, the outcome of negotiation proved satisfactory, as with CBC at the time. With the NFB matters would be more complex (see section 2 below).

Commenting on the draft, the NFB’s director of planning and operations Don Mulholland, writing to AMPPLC secretary-treasurer Frank Young, would observe:

I notice that nowhere does the Brief state clearly and consistently what you want done. It protests, it complains, it calls attention to this or that situation which you feel is undesirable, but nowhere does it say, ‘We therefore recommend that the following actions be taken.’ If I were writing this brief, I should put in a summary page listing the actions I felt should be taken as a result of the arguments

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and National Revenue. A copy “possibly” went to the Prime Minister and a general distribution to MPs and members of the public was planned (see NFBCA, Minutes of the Board, 43rd meeting).

<sup>2</sup> Member for Dorval, Quebec, John Pratt, and coincidentally also an actor. See CFW 26:3, Jan. 18, 1961.

presented (Mulholland to Young, June 17, 1959, 5A, B77, Materials re NFB Study of Brief, 1959-1960).

If Mulholland's advice would be followed—the revised, 25-page brief (October 1959) contains a two-page précis and a concluding chapter of recommendations—both draft and brief remained ambiguous precisely in what they were trying to articulate, namely, a shift in the instances of delimitation that would make possible further extension of governmental rationality, no longer through the agency of the NFB or, to a lesser extent, the CBC, but now as the developmental framework of an emergent private filmmaking sector to ensure its further growth. As the brief recognized, “Canada gives less protection to its film industry than it does for many other industries in this country” (Brief, rev. version, 2); but the difficulty in developing arguments for protectionism was that the very status of the film ‘industry’ itself, qua industry, was not clear. The ambiguity of the brief thus stems, in part, from the increasingly dualistic character of the ‘industry’ it was attempting to advance and, as a result, the instability of its arguments. But because these arguments recur so consistently in the discursive economy of the Canadian feature, four such sites of argumentation warrant further discussion.

#### 1) arguments based on economism

In the previous half-decade (1952-1957), a change had occurred “mainly due to the development of television” (Brief, rev., 2). A private production ‘industry’ of more than 50 companies, “some large, some very small” (2) had emerged to claim a place in the sun as well as opportunities for further growth. The projected future of this new ‘industry’ appeared promising: “Canada now has a unique opportunity to develop a first-class film industry. It can be an industry to make

(sic) a fine contribution to Canadian culture, to open new fields to Canadian artists and skilled technicians and to establish an even greater Canadian 'mark' throughout the world" (1). "The time has come for Canada to develop a robust private industry. Television and Canada's economic growth provide the circumstances which never before existed" (2). Furthermore, "[p]rivate industry can capture a large part of the Canadian market in competition with foreign firms if it is given reasonable protection" (2, emphasis added). Moreover, development of such a competitive industry was in the national interest deriving from "Canada's general interest in a private enterprise system" (14). This general interest implied that "to have a first-class industry, there must exist a vigorous private film industry" (1, emphasis in original). The logic of argument quickly slides from nationalism to economism, not only "because private arrangements provide a climate favourable to the economical production of films" but the notion of competition with foreign firms gives way to a justification for private arrangements that particularly serve "as a competitive test, as yardstick, by which may be measured the performance of government film agencies" (1, emphasis in original). Future private film industry development thus derives from the claim of its comparatively greater efficiency as compared to the more established public sector film agencies, especially the National Film Board: "The private industry in 1957 employed more than 1200 [people], paid salaries and wages of about \$2.7 millions, produced \$8 millions of film products and services and used about \$8 millions of capital equipment and facilities" (5), whereas "the National Film Board employed more than 600 people, provided more than \$3.5 millions of film products and used capital equipment and facilities worth about \$10 millions" (5) and furthermore paid no corporate income tax or local taxes. Particularly in light

of the putative efficiency of the private sector, there was nothing inherent in filmmaking that such an industry need continue to be "a natural monopoly" or "to such a large degree...a state enterprise....There is no rare commodity like [spectrum] space or radio wave channels to be conserved" (3).

## 2) the bigness-smallness argumentative dilemma

The difficulty with justifications derived from nationalist economism is that they tended to become inflated. The 'reality' presented itself quite differently if read as uncertainty as to whether the emergent private industry was actually large or small and, in the latter eventuality, deserving protection precisely because of its smallness. Visions of potential greatness aside, the problem was that "[t]he whole industry...has been a small one" (2). Furthermore, the small Canadian film industry as a whole was internally divided between, on the one hand, the government- or publicly- owned NFB, CBC and several provincial film production units, and, on the other hand, private industry. Despite the recent "impressive growth" of both sectors, the private industry was increasingly "disturbed by a number of changes which make future growth uncertain" (6). In a context where "the Canadian market for films is small" (1), but as well TV programming had shifted from documentary shorts to dramatic filmed programs and teleseries—the latter "almost entirely from foreign sources" (7)—such a shift meant that many of the new Canadian companies that had emerged to produce commercials and documentaries for the television industry<sup>3</sup> now faced competition from all sides. This multi-faceted competitive environment

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<sup>3</sup> "Many of these grew into responsible business enterprises, employing and training technicians and craftsmen; some of the new companies owed their entire existence to the early demands of television" (Brief, rev., 7, emphasis added).

comprised: 1) U.S. and British mass-produced film dramas readily available to Canadian broadcasters as the cheapest possible program sources; 2) of the "small fraction" of dramatic products produced in Canada, "less than half have been the products of the private Canadian film industry"; 3) the development of CBC's own film units—"CBC appears to be getting more and more into the internal production of films for television, even to the point of encroaching into the field of TV commercials productions by making the majority of the 'promotional clips' with their own film and animation units across the country"<sup>4</sup> and 4) the "major block" represented by the NFB which "now contracts much less of its own and government-sponsored work to the private film industry than it has in the past" (ii):

the National Film Board has a large annual government appropriation and capital equipment for which it does not have to pay in order to produce....It has a large program of film-making....The Board also acts as the agent and generally the producer of films for Federal Government Departments (5).

### 3) arguments proposing solutions

The way out of these competitive dilemmas (beyond limiting further growth of NFB/CBC, the need for increased investment capital, and a regulatory "system in which all Canadian television stations, public and private, would undertake to carry a certain proportion of Canadian [privately produced] filmed or videotaped material, including commercials" [10]) would be to gain access to "a

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<sup>4</sup> "Lately, CBC artists have made short animation films to advertise programs, bypassing those members of our Association whose whole business is the production of...cartoon 'commercials'. In Toronto alone, we understand that the Corporation employs a staff of some 26 animation artists and maintains a fully-equipped animation studio to produce film titles and optical effects. We understand that they have more than 100 editors and cutters in Toronto for a wide range of film activities" (Brief, rev ,8)



market...much larger than Canada itself" (10). Britain particularly<sup>5</sup> represented such a market as its 14.5 percent quota on imported TV programming did not apply to Commonwealth-produced programming. Not only could the British "quota system...help enormously in providing markets for Canadian-produced films and videotapes" (10), but—and here the draft version was more explicit than the final brief—based on the "beneficial" TPA experience with series production in Canada, "We would like to see more U.S. companies working here" to take advantage of Canada's quota privileges on British television by financing series production in Canada which could also be marketed in the United States. Once again, the draft is more explicit as concerns the implications of such a development strategy:

Canadian made films qualify as British quota so, presumably, in any quota system introduced here, we would offer the same privilege to British films. This would imply that restrictions will aim directly at U.S. product. To offset this discrimination, there would be the extra inducement to U.S. producers to make films in Canada to qualify for both British and Canadian quotas (NFBCA, 5A, B77, AMPPLC file, vol. 1)<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Speaking in March 1959 to the Toronto Ad and Sales Club, Rodney Erickson, head of TV production and sales for Warner Bros., had told his audience that Canada and Britain were at about the same stage in the development of film production for television. Canada's mixed industry (government and private production) would, he predicted, be imitated as the pattern of television production development "everywhere in the world" with the exception of the US. He urged Canadian producers to take advantage of English's status as an international language and "push television production as a means of earning international currency" (see CFW 24.11, March 18, 1959, "World Imitating Our TV Pattern")

<sup>6</sup> This was literally a reiteration of the Canadian strategy vis-a-vis feature production in the 1920s with respect to the 1927 British film quota. In the view of Ray Peck, then head of the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau, the role of the Bureau was to encourage Hollywood producers to make features in Canada for British consumption. As Peck put it: "American motion picture producers should be encouraged to establish production branches in Canada and make films designed especially for British Empire consumption. I do not entirely agree with the thought that the experiment of allowing American producers to get a footing in Canada would be a dangerous one. We invite Americans to come over to Canada to make automobiles and a thousand and one other things, and why not invite them to

While acknowledging that film production in Canada by U.S. interests "has been of value to us. It has encouraged the building of new studios and has provided employment for local producers and technicians", the brief considered, however, that "Canadian production by U.S. companies is only a partial answer" (10).

The other field of development for the private Canadian film industry would be a feature film industry. While remarking that the feature business was "endlessly complicated," the existence of feature industries were above all a direct function of government encouragement and this "[i]n every case except the U.S...and now even the mighty Hollywood producers are asking government help" (21). While the brief cursorily (and at times erroneously) surveyed government feature film policy in eight European countries as well as Argentina, Brazil and Japan (e.g.: "In Britain, a limited amount of playing time is offered to American films, the rest must be filled with British product" [21]), it could only note that "the Canadian Government has never taken action regarding the lack of feature production here" (22). Listing 1957-58 imports of foreign theatrical features to Canada, the brief noted that "Canada's own record of its native production" (0 features in 1957, 1 in 1958) was "surely of no great pride to the Canadian film maker" (22).

#### 4) arguments from 'history'

Several sections of both draft and brief invoked 'historical' arguments which unintentionally cast an ironic light on the brief's claim that the Canadian film

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come over and make pictures, but make them the way the British markets demand?" (see Morris 1978:177-182)

industry consisted of two principal (and presumably equal) segments, one public, one private.

In the brief's view, the 'history' of the private industry consisted of before television and since television. Before television, theatrical features had constituted the principal form of film production throughout the world. Canada could not compete in this field "because of the enormous costs and risks in small-scale production, the difficulties in obtaining distribution facilities, and the disadvantages of Canada's climate" (4). If a few silent films were once made in Canada, mainly by itinerant U.S. producers, feature filmmaking had stopped almost entirely after the invention of sound-recording techniques "raised production costs and introduced complications into outdoor location shooting" (ibid.). Before the Second World War, "a state of near-paralysis" had characterized industry development.

Creation of the NFB in 1939 "lifted us from...stagnation", not only because of the war but because "the Board...contracted out work to private producers." Although the high quality of the Board's production would set standards in Canada and throughout the world, "the short film did not provide the basis for a mature industry" and the bulk of Canadian consumption of entertainment films continued to consist of imported products.

The current phase of industry 'history' had begun in 1952 with the development of television production largely synonymous with CBC, "the single largest purchaser of filmed materials in the country." That said, the brief went on to object that "CBC uses relatively little Canadian film and of this only a small fraction is produced by Canadian private industry" (4).

Finally, two further historical references are invoked by both draft and brief.

The draft particularly noted that the Canadian film industry had increasingly become "quota conscious" (13) and in this respect recommended its support for "A law fixing a minimum number of Canadian films to be shown on our screens [that would] force local production", arguing furthermore that section 61 of the Ontario Theatres Act provided a precedent "for restricting portions of films to be of British manufacture and origin and fixing such proportions on a monthly or yearly basis" (13).<sup>7</sup> As was seen above, however, such a quota would not apply to U.S. production in Canada. Furthermore, both draft and brief expressed considerable concern that a Canadian quota contain safeguards "to prevent...exhibitors from being forced to show third-rate films", such concern stemming from a reading of the historical experience of "the first quota law in Britain [1927] and the infamous 'Quota Quickies' which nearly wiped out Britain's chances of building a film industry" (13).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The Theatres and Cinematographs Act was amended in 1919 to require that applicants for theatre licenses, producers and distributors be British subjects (see Dean 1981:26)

<sup>8</sup> At a very general level, such a reading is consistent with the view of British film historian Rachael Low. For instance, in her introduction, Low (1985:xiv) states that "The 1927 quota legislation intended to solve all the industry's problems was a failure. Film production doubled during the thirties, but the increase consisted almost entirely of cheap and inferior films, the famous quota quickies [which]...went far to ruin the reputation of British production as a whole." The body of the text, however, lends itself to a far more nuanced approach; for instance, that the 1927 legislation "oversimplified" matters in assuming a similarity of interests between Anglo-American exhibitors and British producers. In "attempting to check advance and blind booking [by distribution subsidiaries of Hollywood producers]...[t]he crucial importance of protecting British production was forgotten in the attempt to check booking abuses. This oversimplified approach was to have a disastrous effect on production as a whole whilst failing to stop block booking" (1985:33). British production expanded, "but not in the way Parliament had intended. The films of reputable British producers continued to be distributed by their own renting subsidiaries or by renters with few or no imports, and were not affected by the quota system. But a large number of producers were soon in business solely to provide quota for importers...In addition [to a large number of small British units turning out quota films for the big importers] Australian, Canadian and extremely long Indian films, almost all of them silent, supplied the renters with footage which was not really expected to leave their shelves" (ibid.:34). With the increased production that result from the 1927 quota, British film production by the early 1930s "was either quality or quota" (115). The number of features increased from 96 in 1929-30 to 213 in 1935-36, and to

Secondly, in discussing the Canadian government's historical inaction with respect to Canadian feature film production—despite which, as the draft boasted, “the handful of producers has grown steadily and investment in film production facilities here reaches millions of dollars” (13)—the brief noted something of a precedent for Canadian government support. “[T]en years ago they did consider the problem of the sums of money flowing from Canadian exhibitors to U.S. production companies”:

The result was the Canadian Co-Operation Project, an activity of the Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. There were hints that the Project would stimulate Canadian production, but, in its final form, it was designed to help conservation of dollar exchange in Canada and achieved a number of references to Canada on U.S. screens (Brief:22).

The significance of this reference will be addressed in section 2 below.

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228 in 1937-38, most of this growth from the quota producers. When the revised, tighter quota came into force in April 1938, production fell dramatically with the elimination of the quota quickie producers (ibid.:198). “Had there been no war the new legislation would certainly have succeeded in raising the average quality of British films whilst reducing their number, by the mere fact that quota quickies were not made any more. The [1938 quota modifications]... also encouraged a reduction in numbers, as well as a more lavish scale of production. We have seen... that the drop in output was regarded in some quarters as proof of the Act's failure, for studios closed and many were unemployed. But, remembering what the quota films had been like, their disappearance can hardly be regarded as a bad thing. Safeguarding the employment of those producing quota films had not been one of the objectives of the Act... The Act did succeed in revolutionising the activities of the American companies, which now either distributed good quality British films, or produced such films themselves” (ibid. 269-270). Other British film historians, such as Dickinson and Street (1985), while agreeing that “‘Quota quickies’ hardly enhanced the reputation of British films” stress that “many British directors and technicians gained valuable experience working on them (Korda, Balcon and Brunel, for example)” (40) and, quoting Brunel: “For most British film-makers, it was this or nothing....many technicians and artists got continuity of employment for the first time and became expert performers in their various fields” (1985:41). Furthermore, among the Dominions, Australian producers notably Raymond Longford were “convinced that the adoption of a quota system is the only method for the encouragement of a local [film] industry” (Bertrand & Collins 1981:29), whereas as we have seen in the Canadian context, the spirit was more one of circumventing the British quota through the encouragement of US branch-plant quota production in Canada. In other words, the Brief's reading of the impact of the British quota was a strategic historical misreading as a result of which quota could never be (and never became) a credible strategy for film industry development in Canada.

For all its contradictions and lacunae—or rather precisely because of them—the Brief's definition of the emergent discursive economy of the Canadian feature was decisive. Not only did it, as will be seen below, contribute to redefining the policy field of Canadian cinema (for the concept of policy field, see for instance McNulty 1988; Doern & Phidd 1983: Pt. Ili), but as well it established the dualistic argumentative fields in which subsequent discussion of the Canadian feature would take place (nationalism/economism; bigness/smallness; quotas/external markets; 'history'/history). These four fields were fundamentally ambiguous (not to say confused) but precisely as such permitted the crucial elisions making possible pseudo-economic arguments deriving from nationalism: for instance, the claim to be able to (re)capture the Canadian domestic market, and given the economic difficulty of such a strategy, its deflection outwards in a (discursive) strategy of entry into foreign markets as an extension compensating for the extant smallness of the Canadian domestic market (and thereby, conveniently, without having to be further concerned with the reasons for its smallness); and pseudo-historical arguments based on a limited and highly selective reading of the film history of other countries as well as that of Canada, in which the operative dimension of the 'historical' becomes the future or past passive conditional: for instance, if the government would do this or that...; had the government done this or that.... Most importantly, however, is that within the discursive space established by such arguments, the 'Canadian film industry' (i.e., the non-distinguished object ambiguously constituted from the confusion of 1] the foreign controlled branches in exhibiting, distribution and services 2] Canadian independent exhibition, distribution, production and services, and 3] the state-administered production, distribution and service sector, but in whose name any

of its components could speak) thereby gained a pseudo-reality that existed particularly in the realm of the discursive as the presupposition that such an industry actually existed. As a result of the Brief, the discursive fiction of the Canadian film industry had been 'transsubstantiated' as a new economic entity within, emerging simultaneously, the discursive space and pseudo-historical time of the discursive economy of the Canadian feature film. As N.A. Taylor predicted in his weekly column in Canadian Film Weekly just after copies of the Brief were presented to members of the Conservative government: "Only one spark is necessary to set ablaze a whole new industry: Government subsidy" (CFW, Oct. 21, 1959:3). However, before proceeding to the Film Board's reaction to the Brief and the resulting shift in the field of government film policy, some further contextualization of the Brief's reading of 'history' is necessary.

#### The Canadian quota debate in television and film, 1959-1961

Enactment that fall of the 1958 Broadcasting Act which created the Board of Broadcast Governors to regulate both the CBC and private broadcasters as equals consecrated a dramatic shift "toward the private sector, and to commercial interests" (Babe 1979:19). Legislatively considered complementary to the CBC from 1936-1958, the private broadcasting sector after 1958 would become its equal. The new legislation, as federal Liberal leader Lester Pearson stated during second reading of the bill, was a move towards "two systems, one public and [one] private, becoming more and more independent of each other" (cited in Raboy 1990:134). "Between 1958 and 1963," writes Raboy, "the system was

reshaped in the image of the private sector, maximizing the potential for economic profit" (1990:137). Fortner (1986) has suggested, as evidenced in the increasingly aggressive discursive posture of Canadian private broadcasters "in the post-Massey Report era", that not only was the balance between private and public sectors tilting as the broadcasting system was reshaped in the image of the private sector, but more importantly for our purposes,

A new universe of discourse was established, one grounded in misconstruction of facts, subtle turns of phrase and redefinitions of key terms. The result was a rewriting of history, a rewriting which would justify new departures from the status quo (1986:32).

For Fortner, such a discursive shift contains significant lessons for understanding the development of public policy:

What happened in the case of broadcasting happens as well in all other arenas of public policy making. The interpretation of history, and the definitions of key terms, are important relevances which circumscribe the truth. Their significance increases as first hand knowledge wanes with the passage of time and the turnover among participants in debate. The stakes get higher. These terms, relevances and interpretations of history determine what is possible and what is unthinkable. To the extent...that history can be altered and definitions changed, new possibilities and impossibilities can be created. In the end the division between the...possible and...impossible are, at best, muddled, and at worst, reversed or made irrelevant (ibid.).

Given the smallness of the Canadian program production industry, what was happening in broadcasting was also happening in film. Not only was the universe of discourse being rewritten, but the BBG's licensing of second-stations in eight major urban centers as of summer 1960 and call for applications for a second (i.e., private) TV network sparked renewed production planning activity in both



feature film and television production as well as increasing interlocks between the motion picture industry and private television licensees. At the center of many of these activities would be Toronto independent producer/exhibitor/distributor N.A. Taylor.

To illustrate the increasingly diversified nature of his operation, Taylor in the fall of 1959 unveiled his new banner—eight companies under Taylor Associates—in a 12-page gold-covered booklet distributed at the 20th Century Theatres annual convention in Toronto. (With about 60 theatres, 20th Century was the leading independent Canadian exhibitor circuit, owned and operated by Taylor's Twinex Century Theatres.) Addressing an estimated 100 theatre managers and executives, "President Taylor" explained that "In order to survive and make progress in the electronic age we must determine to be in the mass entertainment business. Our personnel is trained to cater to masses and their whims and desires in spectator entertainment" (CFW 24:38, Oct. 7, 1959).

Taylor would dub his approach a "global concept" based "on the inter-relationship of entertainment media today and the broader concept required of those in the motion picture industry" (see CFW 24:38, *ibid.*, "Taylor's Showbiz 'Global Concept,'"1,6). A Taylor company, Beaver Film Productions, had recently made commitments for "many foreign feature motion pictures to be made in New York, London, Paris and Rome." These commitments—which, on closer inspection, seem to have in fact consisted of buying Canadian and other foreign distribution rights to an upcoming Italian spectacular, David and Goliath, a 'coup' which followed closely upon the apparently profitable release of a recent Italian spectacular, Hercules [1957], by Taylor company International Film Distributors—had placed "Canada on the international entertainment map for the

first time in its motion picture history" (ibid.) Beaver, Taylor stated, "was drawing profits to Canada from many parts of the world and developing global business associations that can provide outlets for the films it and others plan to make in this country for theatrical distribution."

Because, Taylor told his audience, "production is coming to Canada in a big way,...we think we ought to get in on the ground floor." Production plans included doubling the number of sound stages at Taylor-owned Toronto International Film Studios (from two to four) likely to soon get increased use: film rights to two recent Canadian novels were being negotiated by Meridian Films (coproducers of The Bloody Brood [1959] with Canadian distribution by Taylor Associates company, Allied Artists of Canada; as well, Meridian was headed by Ralph Foster, chair of the AMPPLC's Industrial Development Committee). "We will enter any segment of mass entertainment that is potentially profitable," Taylor told convention delegates (ibid.).

Within nine months with the BBG second-station decisions imminent and as talk of a private network was taking more concrete form, additional Taylor companies emerged<sup>9</sup>. In summer 1960, Taylor-Roffman Productions Ltd. would be formed in Toronto along with other new firms indicating "a renewal of activity in the field of TV production" (CFW 25:22, June 1, 1960, 1, 19, "Taylor-Roffman, Others in Prod'n"). The new companies, located at rival studio Canadian Film Industries, included Caravan Television Productions Ltd., managed by radio

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<sup>9</sup> And companies long part of the Toronto production scene such as Shelly Films, one of the nine companies on the Industrial Development Committee, folded. Having expanded into film laboratory and production equipment and unable to attract new financing, Shelly was unable to meet its payroll and in summer 1960 saw its lab and equipment purchased in a bailiff's sale by Pathé Laboratories of New York. Founded by Leon Shelly in Vancouver, Shelly Films moved to Toronto in 1946. See CFW:25:29, 1,3.

personality Rick Campbell; Affiliated Television Productions, headed by George Richfield of New York; Dominion Motion Pictures Ltd., which had made features in the 1930s under Arthur Gottlieb who established CFI in 1958, and was now exploring series production if talks with U.S. principals proved successful; Gottlieb himself was planning three series (CFW: *ibid.*). As well, Taylor's Toronto International Studios and Meridian Productions, "two of Canada's top production houses", announced plans for a \$2 million videotape center for television shows and commercials "to stem the flow of Canadian business to USA centres and to attract USA and other producers to Canada" (CFW 25:22, June 1, 1960, "Toronto International and Meridian join forces"). Taylor announced an intensive campaign to promote Canada in the U.S. and Britain as an ideal center for film and television production due to quota advantages: "We have a selling job to do, but we have something to sell now—talent, facilities, on-location scenery, the extra markets available through the Commonwealth quota system, lower production costs—all in one spot." With all this "and the big demand for entertainment and commercial material from the new Canadian television stations, Toronto must inevitably become one of the busiest production centers in the world" (*ibid.*).

The BBG's awarding of the Ottawa second station licence to the E.L. Bushnell Television Co.<sup>10</sup> brought in a new Taylor Associates company, NTA

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<sup>10</sup> "Emie Bushnell ranked among 'the old song-and-dance men' in the [Canadian Broadcasting] Corporation....Bushnell began his career during the 1920s in private radio in Toronto. He joined public broadcasting almost by default, since...it seemed there might be no other game in town. Bushnell worked in the program department where he earned a reputation as a showman - a person who believed that radio must entertain its listeners whatever else it did. That made him something of an outsider among the cadre of top administrators, and may well have limited his influence on CBC's policy. But, when [Alphonse] Ouimet was promoted, Bushnell became his assistant, as well as the new coordinator of television....his instincts drew him toward the philosophy of mass entertainment that guided the makers

Telefilm (Canada) Ltd. which distributed television programming, along with Britain's Granada TV, and Spencer Caldwell, a former CBC manager who, although unsuccessful in his application for the Toronto license, would become one of the architects of the CTV network. The current and earlier BBG second-station decisions had in the view of the Canadian Film Weekly "favoured" motion picture industry people, with Montreal feature film producer Paul l'Anglais and film distributor J.A. DeSève awarded the second-station French-language licence (CFTM, Télémétropole); Toronto film distributor Paul Nathanson a shareholder in the Toronto licence; Vancouver film producer Arthur Jones of Artray Film Productions (also on the AMPPLC's IDC) awarded the Vancouver licence; and as well (Paramount-owned) exhibition chain Famous Players's television interests—CKCO-TV, Kitchener—recently allowed a power boost by the BBG (see CFW 25:29, "Film Trade TV Holdings Growing In Number", July 20, 1960, 1,3).

The increasing interlocks between television and film and with them the increasing presence of non-Canadian interests (e.g., Granada in Bushnell; Associated Television (UK) in CJCH-TV, Halifax) that would come to a crisis in 1961 over the proposed ABC-Paramount buy-in of CFTO-TV, Toronto (see Rutherford 1990:114), would spark renewed discussion of quotas but also further contributed to muddying the discussion.

In the fall of 1959, the BBG had proposed that 55 per cent "Canadian content" levels be phased in over a number of years—in other words, a quota, although not on the importation or screening of non-Canadian programming but,

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of American television" (Rutherford 1990:44). The applicants for second station licences generally dangled before the BBG "the promise of . made-in-Canada PopCult" (Rutherford 1990:109), with the Bushnell application promising over two-thirds Canadian content during the evening hours of 7-11 pm. Spencer Caldwell, one of nine applicants for the last VHF channel in Toronto, promised 58.2 per cent Canadian content by 1962. See CFW 25:12, March 22, 1960, "Caldwell's Powerful TV Pitch", 1).

in a curious reversal of worldwide practice, on Canadian-made content. It was nevertheless a screen quota, though it does not appear to have been acknowledged as such in so many words<sup>11</sup>. Canadian Film Weekly, for instance, would draw attention to the fact by quoting a London Times article's observation that this was "the first time that Canada has imposed quotas in the visual field" (see CFW, "Canada's first visual quotas," Jan. 12, 1960, 5). The Times article went on to draw out the implications of this precedent: "Having decided to try quotas for television in order to prevent being overwhelmed with material from the United States, the Government may listen to the producers (sic) pleas to establish quotas for feature films" (ibid.)

However, reaction of the film producers to the television quota was contradictory. On the one hand, the proposal was welcomed to the degree it would "stimulate motion picture production in this country." As Canadian Film Weekly reported, "Even the CBC will be affected for the \$42,491,864 it spent on

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<sup>11</sup> As of April 1, 1961, all television stations in Canada would be expected to provide a minimum of Canadian content in their programming, increasing to 55 percent as of April 1962 but dropped back to 45 percent through summers 1962-4. Canadian content was given a wide interpretation by the BBO and included special events taking place outside of Canada but of general interest to Canadians (e.g., the World's Series); credit was given for a portion of Commonwealth programming as well as non-Canadian-produced French-language production. Canadian content programming fell into four general categories: Information and Orientation; Light Entertainment; Arts, Letters and Sciences, Sports and Outdoors. See Weir 1965:372-375. None of these categories could be said to be aimed specifically at the development of a Canadian film industry, except indirectly. This is in sharp contrast to the Australian context at approximately the same time in which the Senate Select Committee, chaired by V S Vincent, appointed in late 1962, would "quickly conclude...that an increase in the Australian content of television transmission was intimately related to a corresponding expansion of the indigenous film industry" (Bertrand & Collins 1981:124 ff). While the percentage of Australian content (40 percent) would be lower than the Canadian (45-55 percent), this included at least one hour per week in peak viewing times and, as of January 1961, the provision that all televised advertisements should be of Australian origin. The absence of two such crucial stipulations in the Canadian context would mean for instance in the case of the latter (TV commercials) that, according to 1971 CRTC estimates, the Canadian broadcasting system was losing revenue from \$36-45 million annually as a result of the spillover of US-produced commercials and Canadian-bought commercial time on US television stations (Babe 1972 309-310).

programs in 1958-9 produced only 51 percent Canadian content and the additional four percent will require additional expenditure" (CFW 24:31, "BBG's 55% Big Boost For Canadian Prod'n", Aug. 19, 1959, 1,9). For Canadian sales managers of U.S. television product companies, the quota meant emphasising "that their USA principals give consideration to the production of at least one series in Canada....'It isn't as bad as it seems,' said one [sales manager]" (ibid.). Objection to the TV quota came from Canadian 'independent' producers with an eye on entering television. Spencer Caldwell sums up the contradiction:

'As president of the Association of Motion Picture Producers and Laboratories of Canada, I'm delighted.' But as a prospective TV station operator...Caldwell thought that the quality of programming would suffer if the 55 percent regulation becomes law. The result might be to drive viewers to USA channels (ibid.).

N.A. Taylor's position would be spelled out in a series of columns in Canadian Film Weekly in spring 1961. As the anticipated television bonanzas first of runaway U.S. production and then of the new private Canadian stations and network failed to materialize—CTV's eight affiliates were reporting losses of over \$5 million in 1961 (Rutherford 1990:113)—more radical proposals began circulating among the technicians, actors and cinematographers of the production industry in Toronto. While IATSE Local 873, Motion Picture Studio Production Technicians, under the signature of its business agent William F. White, submitted a one-page letter to federal members of Parliament asking for their collaboration and action in implementing a quota system on foreign films, representatives of "production, talent and the cinematographers" gathered to organize a general committee and discuss plans (see CFW 26:16, April 19, 1961, "MP's Given Quota Pitch By IA Union"; for a copy of the White letter, dated

Feb. 23, 1961, see NFBCA 5A B77, AMPPLC vol.II, Jan. 1959-Dec. 1960).

The IA local's letter remarked that "For the past two years film production in Canada has been almost nil and up to this time the small amount involved makes Canada's effort look rather insignificant. Canada is a rapidly growing country but as far as the film industry is concerned, we are being left behind."

The letter went on to argue the correlation between high levels of film production and "a quota system whereby a percentage of the gross box office receipts must be ploughed back to film production while others [screen quotas] stipulate that for a certain number of foreign films shown in theatres and on TV networks, a percentage must be home-produced." The letter offered a number of countries as examples, noting for instance that Finland with a population of four million had produced 12 features in 1960 whereas Canada's present production was nil and this despite a considerably larger population base. "[W]ith every facility available for the manufacture of motion pictures," the government of Canada was doing nothing to help production; meanwhile "over \$100,000,000 from film rentals" were leaving the country<sup>12</sup>.

Beginning April 26, Taylor would over the next four weeks discuss the IA local's proposal in his Canadian Film Weekly "Our Business" column. Taylor would polarize the issue by arguing that it involved a choice between quotas or subsidy. Acknowledging that the technicians, like the producers, were "anxious" to see film production flourish in Canada and "such an industry fully activated", that concern was not shared by the Government "blissfully unaware" that film

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<sup>12</sup> The figure would be contested in the CFW article reporting on the IA letter: "The \$100,000,000 for film and TV remittances is wrong. The most recent figure issued by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics is for 1959, when rentals from all sources (theatres, halls, TV) came to \$33,406,495. Perhaps \$20,000,000 is remitted to countries in which the films originated" (CFW 26:16, April 19, 1961)

was one of the principal tools in the promotion of international trade and that film represented “a new industry which can quickly grow to employ thousands in various crafts and skills as well as earning millions in foreign currency,” an industry whose growth should be encouraged and helped in every way.

But a quota was not “the tool” to bring this about. While some countries did have quotas to foster local production and restrictions on the importation of foreign films to save foreign currency, others to encourage films produced in the native language, and in others still “nationalistic sentiments are so high that film production must be encouraged at any cost”, none of these conditions applied to Canada.

For Taylor, what characterised the Canadian market for film was the smallness, the non-mass character, of its numerical returns both in dollars and in audiences: 1) “potential grosses on an average film represent only about three percent of world total”<sup>13</sup>, and 2) “our people have shown that they would shy away from—rather than flock to—Canadian produced films.” In this light, “the cure” lay in subsidy, not quota; and through subsidy “not only technicians but producers and the country at large can gain” (CFW 26:17, April 26, 1961).

Taylor’s second column on the topic of quota or subsidy began with the observation that “In the realm of ‘the arts’, there has always been a feeling of inferiority in the Canadian mind.” While few Canadian writers, artists, poets, musicians or actors gained recognition in Canada, some did receive great acclaim in other countries. A “fine motion picture which achieves universal acclaim”

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<sup>13</sup> This was disingenuous, since he was talking about non-Canadian film. If total US earnings in the world market by 1960 were estimated at \$225 million (estimate given in CFW 26:21, May 24, 1961), 3 percent of that gives the average (non-Canadian) film a Canadian gross potential of nearly \$7 million; 3 percent of the world total would be even greater.



could do likewise and would “do more for Canada than all its Trade Commissioners or Ambassadors.”

For Taylor, quotas simply equalled mediocrity: “If, as a nation, we seek to build a film production industry, it must be on the basis that what is made must have ticket-selling potential.” Because Canada possessed a large reservoir of acting talent, many proficient studio technicians and good studio facilities, the solution lay in “export[ing] the fruits of Canadian talent rather than the talent itself”. But in order to do so, “[w]e lack only the priming of the pump” (CFW 26:18, May 3, 1961).

As a small market and a small industry, the assumptions governing building of a Canadian feature film production industry must be 1) that only films of unusual merit or special box-office values can hope to sell tickets anywhere, 2) success can only be founded on the premise that attractions will be created for all English-speaking areas 3) Canadians, still a long way from the realization of a permanent and continuing production industry, needed coaching, if not training, by producers as well as artists and craftsmen from other countries who are knowledgeable and experienced, and could be attracted to Canada with a subsidy, and 4) since films from every country in the world are permitted unimpeded entry into Canada, Canadian-produced feature films in return should have access everywhere (CFW 26:19, May 10, 1961).

The final column in the series discussed the interchangeability of film and television production in Canada as a condition of a stable production industry. While celebrating the BBG’s wisdom in imposing a high Canadian-content quota on all broadcasters, Taylor attributed the eight new stations’ difficulties in meeting the quota to the fact that “our market cannot possibly yield enough

dollars to equate with cost” and to the fact that the new stations were competing with CBC “operating with Government subsidy” and American network shows that had home market potentialities for recouping costs.

If a plan were to be set up whereby feature films in this country would receive a bonus for monies brought in from sales to other countries, it might very well be applied also to TV shows produced in Canada. This would permit budgeting on a higher plateau and a chance to compete more effectively both in our Canadian and world markets. Here again, potential inflow of foreign currency would be a valuable factor.

Taylor concluded the series with a vision of the benefits to be derived from the subsidized export of the fruits of our talents: “Imagine a production industry triggered by...subsidy! It would rapidly employ thousands of many crafts and skills and quickly become of multi-million dollar magnitude...” (CFW 26:20, May 17, 1961).

The IA letter was forwarded to Prime Minister Diefenbaker’s office. Diefenbaker reportedly promised “fullest discussion of the matter” pending further information gathering (see CFW 26:21, May 24, 1961, “What’s The Best Way to Help?” for a summary of the quota or subsidy debate). There would be no follow-up; the general committee of industry workers would not meet again. Nor, most importantly, would there be any further talk of quotas in the Canadian film industry for several years. The matter was simply absorbed within the workings of the state, to which we now return.

## 2. The NFB and government film policy: Response to the Brief, 1959-1961

The Board’s response to the AMMPLC Brief possessed a quality of panic and discursive overkill. A network of Canadian diplomatic missions and NFB’s own overseas offices were mobilized to gather information on production conditions in

a number of countries<sup>14</sup>. The information would become the basis for almost line-by-line refutations of the Brief, filling two black briefing books that would be forwarded to the Minister in early 1960 (see Board minutes, 44th meeting, Jan. 26, 1960; also NFBCA, 5A AMPPLC volumes 1 & 2, May 1957-Dec. 1960, B77, Commissioner's Office, Materials re NFB Study of Brief).

While we won't be extensively concerned with the minutiae of the Board's rebuttal of the Brief as its general response will be discussed below, two points in particular merit discussion, the one quantitative, the other 'historical'.

First, the exercise pushed the Board further along the path of statisticalization of its activities, only for it to come to the conclusion that its own policy could not be justified "wholly" on the grounds of economy. For instance, in attempting to calculate expenditures it had incurred in TV series production for CBC between 1953-1959, it would conclude that it had spent \$1.52 million and earned \$599,000 paid by CBC (for details see NFBCA, AMPPLC black books, refutation point 7. A statement in the Brief to be refuted would be numbered and the Board's response given under the appropriate number), although since 1957-58 upgraded rental rates per show meant that the Board now earned back about half its production costs. As the refutation commentary puts it,

The Board can justify sale of its television films to CBC at less than production cost because the Board's purpose is not to make films at a profit...or even just to make films; its purpose is to reflect the life

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<sup>14</sup> Published sources would be consulted for data with respect to India, the Philippines and some aspects of the British Eady Plan. The Canadian Embassy in Stockholm would provide an "interim and very sketchy report" on the Swedish film industry. The NFB office in London would also survey information on Sweden as well as implications of the British quota and British government film production. The New York office would provide information on US government film production. Film Commissioner Guy Roberge in April 1959 would travel to Munich, Cannes and London, and also wanted to go to Sweden for fact-finding purposes. See NFBCA, 5A B77, file no. 1-3-23, 1959-1960.

of Canada today and to provide useful information to Canadians. The showing of the Board's films on television, which reaches more Canadians than any other single medium is, in itself, important in accomplishing the Board's objectives...(Black book, 13-2,9).

Economy did enter into the equation in terms of the size of the Board's appropriation. But given its current size (the Board's Parliamentary vote for 1958-59 was \$4,258,918: Minutes, 35th meeting), the Board could not absorb the cost of any substantially increased production for television above its present 20 documentary hours per year in a CBC schedule telecasting about 4500 hours per year in each language (Black book 13-2). In this sense, "half price competition" from NFB series was hardly menacing to "the best selling efforts of the private industry" either in the 650 hours per year in both languages still available in the Talks and Public Affairs category or in the larger CBC schedule. Through calculation—and sarcasm—the Board refuted the Brief's charges that it represented unfair competition and an extravagant outlay of public funds that could more efficiently be put to use by private industry:

...if the Film Board's entire production expenditure for 1958-59 (\$3,259,796—we could scarcely contract out the hidden subsidy or half the cost of Administration) were distributed equally among the 53 producers listed by DBS, it would yield each of them orders totalling \$61,500—the price of 4 of the Board's half hour television films.

If the \$1,106,178 received by the Film Board in 1958-59 for all production work for other government departments were similarly distributed, it would yield \$20,800 to each producer (Black book,13-3)

At times, however, the Board's contempt for the private industry and its claims could no longer be contained by sarcasm. One such outburst is worth

citing at length:

The blunt facts are that the Board's experience with private producers in the production of anything but the simplest original films has not been encouraging. There are a few reliable firms but in most cases, the Board has finally had to accept a creative and technical standard of production considerably below its own standard and even that has often been achieved only with an amount of detailed guidance and instruction by the Film Board producers which almost becomes production by the Film Board itself. There have been cases of conference after conference on a script until the Film Board, in desperation, assigned the script to one of its own writers. The Film Board's producer in charge of an assigned production almost invariably spends days showing the [private] producer's editors how to lay out a sound track and then supplying half the sound effects from the Film Board library. Final mix recordings may be done two and three times until finally the whole film is brought into the Film Board's own sound department for final mix. The commentary is often re-edited and re-written by the National Film Board. The opticals have to be made by the National Film Board. Indeed, almost always, the first request we get from the successful tenderer on a contract is for use of Film Board facilities; for our lab, frequently for our sound department, for our music and effects library, optical effects department and even editing personnel as well. In several cases we have had to accept the best that a private producer can provide, pay him off and then re-record or even re-edit the film ourselves. Satisfactory and even excellent films have been made by Canadian private producers, but they are rare (Black book, reputation point 11, 6).

It was "partly at least, because of the inability of private producers from 1939 until well after the end of the war, to provide the quantity and quality of films required for the government information program" (Black book point 11,3) that the Board had developed its own economies of continuity and volume, and the government had invested in the building and the facilities of the Board, an investment from which the Board extracted "maximum capacity" through

production of a steady volume of films made to high professional standard keyed to the wide variety of needs of “the state owned system, both in Canada and abroad” (Black book, point 11, 1-2). It was because it was part of the state apparatus that the Board could offer services to government departments that could not be obtained by tendering individual films to individual sponsors. This was most obvious in the case of “technical and secret training films for the Department of National Defence” (ibid.:2) but, beyond the security aspects, Film Board producers working on a continuing and exclusive basis with other government departments had over the years learned to meet the department’s needs and “devis[ed] methods and approaches for resolving its particular training and communications problems by the use of film....Such a service could obviously not be provided if the department had to start fresh with a new producer for every film” (ibid.). Furthermore, “It is evident that most departments share this view since few departments ask the Board to tender their films to commercial producers”; as well, it was “interesting to note the number of departments which, having once had a film made by a private producer, prefer thereafter to have its films made by the Film Board” (ibid.).

As the Board grappled with refuting the charges made against it by the Brief, it was increasingly clear that the Board operated according to a different order of rationality that was not, as it would put it, “‘economy’ in the narrow sense” (ibid.). Rather, the rationality that governed operation of the Board was the form of governmental rationality that in Ch. III we termed governmentalization—an unquantifiable principle of self-extension. What justified the Board to itself was that it constituted a principle of comprehensiveness, a voluminousness, a totality: “[the Board] enjoys a volume and continuity of production which makes possible

the employment of specialists, the development of improved techniques and the efficient use of facilities and man power" (Black book, point 11, 2); "The entire program of the National Film Board is correlated and interrelated in a variety of ways which are possible only in a comprehensive organization like the Film Board" (ibid.:1). In such a perspective, "it is impossible to prove conclusively whether the National Film Board is or is not an economical way for the government to obtain and distribute its films, or whether it is more or less economical than any or all private producers....It is therefore not wholly on the grounds of 'economy' in the narrow sense, that the Board justifies its policy" (ibid.:3,2, emphasis added).

However, in an increasingly quantified universe of discourse, the fact that the Board could not wholly justify its operations in numerical terms—and, indeed, would make such admissions as the following: "It is certainly true that the government could purchase an equal number of films of equal length to the present production of the Film Board for a much less cost" (ibid.:3)—would become increasingly problematic as the Board found itself excluded from the emergent statisticalized universe. For, within that universe, the Board's own computations showed constant growth by the private industry and correlatively diminution of the Board's share of the emergent numerical universe that only confirmed the private industry's claims for greater recognition. Thus, a chart entitled "Comparison of Relative Growth in Activities of National Film Board and Private Film Producers: 1952-1961", initially drawn up for the black books<sup>15</sup>, largely confirms the private industry's two major claims with respect to 1) its own

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<sup>15</sup> The copy I found in the NFB Archives was included among the black books but is dated revised Jan. 28, 1963, thus includes presumably DBS data (no source is given) for 1961

statistical growth as a percentage of gross revenues and 2) the fact that the percentage of work contracted by NFB to private industry had declined<sup>16</sup>.

The Board was caught in a bind between, on the one hand, its discourse, and on the other, its (or DBS) numbers, as a result of which its interests and those of the private producers were increasingly divergent, in contradiction, a contradiction which the (capitalist) state, having to effectuate a delimitation between the two, would resolve in favour of the private sector. The irony here would concern the role played by the Board in orienting such a choice, to which we shall turn shortly. One illustration of the increasingly evident divergence between private sector producer interests and those of the Board<sup>17</sup> is provided by the latter's response to the Brief's 'historical' reference to the Canadian Cooperation Project (see this chapter above, section 1) .

#### The Canadian Cooperation Project (1948-1958)

The Brief had noted that a precedent of sorts had been set in the late 1940s

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<sup>16</sup> The chart adds together gross revenues of private producers, including laboratories (A), and gross NFB production work, minus contracts to private producers (B) between 1952-1961. Thus A (1961 compared with 1952) had increased 311 percent and B increased 117 percent in the same period. By adding A and B (which does not include work by CBC, provincial governments or foreign producers), private industry's percentage of the total (A+B) had increased from 60 percent to 74 percent or showed a 14 percent increase comparing 1961 to 1952, in aggregate terms, the NFB's share had decreased by 14 percent, from 40 percent in 1952 to 26 percent in 1961. Although NFB sponsored production (for government departments) had increased 34 percent as a percentage of gross NFB production work comparing 1961 with 1952, work contracted by NFB to private industry as a percentage of the gross revenues of private producers had decreased 23 percentage comparing 1961 with 1952.

<sup>17</sup> Not only were the Board's interests divergent from those of private producers, they diverged as well from those of private Canadian distributors. In fall 1966, Astral Films of Montreal would approach the Board asking to distribute NFB films theatrically in Canada. While the Board was conscious of its "duty to encourage Canadian companies in the distribution field," such a move would have entailed terminating "our long-standing arrangement with our exclusive distributor" Columbia Pictures. Because Astral did not have Columbia's "international connections" to ensure distribution of NFB films abroad, the Board of Governors rejected Astral's proposal on the grounds it could not provide "service of equal quality to that...provided by the present distributor" (NFB Minutes, 79th meeting, Aug 15, 1966 8-9)



when the Canadian government had supposedly contemplated blocking, among other things, the outflow of theatrical box-office remittances payable to U.S. producers. As of 1948 this had resulted in "the Canadian Co-Operation Project, an activity of the Motion Picture Association of America, Inc."

According to historian J. L. Granatstein, Canada as a result of its historical commitment to the maintenance of Anglo-Canadian trade found itself just after the Second World War in financial disaster in its trade relations with the United States—and this to the extent of envisaging a customs union with the latter in order to extricate itself. With its reserves of U.S. dollars having dwindled to under half-a-billion by October 1947, a Canadian delegation led by deputy minister of finance Clifford Clark went to Washington to present two plans for consideration.

Plan A hinged around brutal import restrictions and the banning of virtually every identifiable consumer item imported from the United States; Plan B also involved quotas but foresaw Canadian participation in the Marshall Plan and the placing of some procurement for the European recovery program in Canada. The Americans, anxious to avoid the shattering effects...certain to be produced by Plan A, promised...flexibility....As a result of this quasi-promise and of discussions that followed...Finance Minister Douglas Abbott announced the more moderate restrictions of Plan B on 17 November [1947] (Granatstein 1989:50-51).

Imported motion picture equipment such as projectors was among the goods affected by the Emergency Foreign Exchange Conservation Act (1947). That month, but after passage of the act, representatives of the 30 member companies of the Film Producers Association of Canada met with Abbott to ask for government assistance in strengthening the Canadian private film industry and to urge Canadian government pressure on Britain to reduce its recent 75 percent ad valorem tax on motion picture earnings exports. The idea that Canada might, like

Britain, impose such a surtax or block the outflow of motion picture remittances to the U.S. agitated not only Canadian private producers, but Canadian exhibitors as well; Ross McLean, Grierson's successor as Government Film Commissioner; and finally the Motion Picture Association of American in New York, all of which lobbied for different plans. These varied from encouraging more Hollywood shoots in Canada (Lawson, Canadian head of the Odeon-Rank circuit); reinvestment of \$4-5 million from Canadian earnings and U.S. distribution of 40-50 shorts made by the Canadian private sector for the Film Board (Ross McLean); voluntary (i.e., non-legislated) reinvestment of part of U.S. earnings in Canada (the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association); and, as of January 1948, the Canadian Cooperation Project itself (proposed by the MPAA) (see Véroneau 1979a:141-150 for the best account in Canadian scholarship of the Cooperation Project). As Véronneau has remarked, the Cooperation Project "s'avéra une des grandes mystifications de l'histoire cinématographique au Canada" (ibid.:150), not only because of the public relations spin successfully given it at the time, but particularly because of the mythological status it holds in nationalist film historiography as exemplified notoriously in Berton 1975, Collins 1979 and Spencer 1986 within the polemic for a feature film production industry.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> What the Canadian film industry was seeking, then as later, was governmentalization, a protected, institutionalized status as a subsidized 'national' industry that would at the same time leave it free to develop commercially. In a context of normalized dependency and export-led staples development, demonopolization of the Film Board or CBC, i.e., capital-transfer from the public sector, always appeared to be the more reasonable and less risky solution to establishment of a domestic market on which to base the private sector's growth and expansion into foreign markets with the assistance and as part of the foreign-owned distribution networks rather than quotas which potentially conflicted with the latter and with respect to which the private sector was deeply ambivalent; for an illustration of this ambivalence at the time of the Cooperation Project, see the exchange between Guy Roberge as counsel for the Massey Commission and members of the AMPPLC reproduced in Véronneau 1979b:27-32.

The Board's backgrounder on the Canadian Cooperation Project, produced as part of the materials generated to refute the Brief (see NFBCA, Materials.....,5A B77, "Canadian Cooperation Project", hereafter "CCP") is fascinating in several respects. Firstly, because of the uncertainty it reflects over the extent of remittances taken out of Canada annually by American distributors, supposedly the issue at the heart of the Cooperation Project debate. The Board's paper gives four estimates of what this amount might have entailed in the late 1940s: 1) an estimate "by one of the representatives of the U.S. motion picture industry in Canada" of \$12,000,000; 2) an estimate by unidentified "other sources" of \$17,000,000; 3) an estimate by J.J. Fitzgibbons, president of U.S.-owned exhibition chain Famous Players Canadian Corp.: "about \$12 million a year"; and 4) a subsequent calculation by "government economists": "between \$5 and \$8 million" ("CCP",n.p.).

Whatever the amount, "the Motion Picture Association of America was extremely disturbed at the possibility of government interference with its distribution in Canada" (ibid., emphasis added). Remarkably, the Board paper states that:

...the logic of the [MPAA] move was quite clear. They decided that if they could help the government to get at least as much if not more dollars brought into the country, the Canadian government would not undertake any restrictions (ibid.).

As outlined by Eric Johnston, MPAA president, the Cooperation project proposed "to help present Canada's current problems to the people of the United

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Because of this ambivalence, the interventionist presupposition underlying the morally outraged nationalist perspective on the Cooperation Project as proof that the Canadian state 'sold out' the plucky Canadian film industry suggests considerable misunderstanding of both state and industry

States and to speed up the flow of United States dollars to Canada" by 1. producing a film on Canada's trade-dollar problems; 2. more complete newsreel coverage of Canada; 3. short films about Canada to be both produced and distributed; 4. consideration of NFB releases for theatrical distribution in the U.S.; 5. use of Canadian sequences in feature pictures; 6. radio recordings presenting Canada's problems by Hollywood stars; and 7. more careful selection of films shown in Canada (*ibid.*).

The Board paper notes the Canadian government accepted the MPAA offer (which included also appointing a Canadian to Hollywood to work with the major studios and hiring Maclaren Advertising, Toronto, with offices across Canada to assist American producers) "and offered considerable assistance through other government departments, such as the NFB, Travel Bureau, National Revenue (Customs), etc." (*ibid.*). It noted as well that Johnston had pointed out in his original proposal that "if the Canadian Cooperation Project could help Canada increase her tourist trade by as little as 5%, the increase in U.S. dollars from this source would more than offset what the American distributors were taking out of the country" (for a fuller historical account, see esp. Véronneau 1979a).

Assessing the results of the Project through 1954, the Board paper produced a table showing at best uneven results, only to conclude that "it is apparent that 'Canada's current problems' have been presented to the people of the United States," that "Our own DBS figures establish that the increase in tourist income of American dollars more than offset the amount of money taken out by the distributors" and that "the MPAA certainly did what it said it would and the results obtained were the objectives set out" (*ibid.*).

Interestingly, while the Board paper, as we have just seen, was convinced on

one level that the objectives of the Project had been met, on the other it admitted that it "is hard to establish" how much of the collateral results were actually achieved by the Project itself: "Whether the increase in Canadian sequences in newsreels<sup>19</sup> was a result of better shooting, better stories happening, or promotion by the MPAA cannot be established" (ibid., emphasis added).

The paper's satisfaction with the Project, although never directly stated, stemmed more from the role it afforded the Board as one of the Canadian government agencies cooperating with the MPAA on the project; from the fact that it was former NFBer Stuart Legg who produced for Paramount the first film (Neighbour To The North) on Canada's trade-dollar problem to be made under the aegis of the Project; from the fact in the context of the Project "Canadian government offices in the United States held frequent screenings of films produced under this Project and also NFB films" ("CCP", n.p., emphasis added); and finally that responsibility for the Project was as of 1949 transferred to the Board (NFB, Minutes, March 22, 1949, cited in Jones 1981:51).

As the paper stated in its conclusion, attitudes towards the Project were a matter of "points of view." From the perspective of the MPAA, the Canadian state and its agencies such as the NFB implicated since the war in, as Peter Morris puts it, "the illusion" of widespread distribution of NFB films in U.S. theatres (see Morris 1986: esp.28-30), the Project, in the years of its activity<sup>20</sup>, allowed

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<sup>19</sup> According to the table, Canadian items in US newsreels tabulated as follows. 61 (1947), 111 (1948), 125 (1949); 159 (1950); N/A (1951); 128 (1952); N/A (1953); 69 (1954, last half)

<sup>20</sup> According to the NFB paper, the project by late 1950 was transferred to the administrative responsibility of the Interdepartmental Committee for Canadian Information Abroad where it showed signs of activity until late 1954 but by 1959 was "not subject to continuous or even intermittent review" ("CCP", n.p.)

“more information about Canada [to] reach...the screens of the United States and Canada’s tourist trade showed a substantial increase.” On the other hand, if as a number of Canadian private film producers believed (notably Paul l’Anglais of the AMPPLC in an April 1950 letter to the MPAA representative in Canada), the Project “was instituted mainly to encourage film production in Canada by American producers in cooperation with Canadian studios, labs and producers” (cited in “CCP”, n.p.), then it was “a dismal failure.” “From the point of view of the Canadian film production industry, the Project was of little or no help in resolving their financial and distribution problems” (ibid.).

#### Shifting policy field, 1960-1962

If the Board’s detailed, point-by-point response to the Brief was energetic, its general response was, surprisingly perhaps, somewhat more sympathetic. By January 1960, the Board had summarized the contents of the Brief in the form of six propositions, on the basis of which it would envisage making recommendations to the minister. The six propositions summarizing the Brief were: 1. that CBC tender all major film productions to Canadian film companies—a proposition rejected by CBC<sup>21</sup>; 2. that NFB assign production of more government sponsored films to Canadian film companies—the proposition was rejected by NFB on the grounds that the private film industry, largely a byproduct of television, did not need the Board’s business; given the imminence of new private television stations and Canadian-content requirements, private industry faced an expanding television market in which the Board would not be a

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<sup>21</sup> For a draft of CBC comments on the Brief, in which the Corporation “regrets the approach taken” by the AMPPLC, see NFBCA, “Association of Motion Picture Producers and Laboratories of Canada,” 5A B77, Materials re NFB Study of Brief, 1959-60.

significant factor; 3 that the government increase tariffs to encourage the production of Canadian commercials in Canada—the Board “recommend[ed] that sympathetic study be given this proposition”; 4. “That a reasonable proportion of theatre screen time be reserved for the showing of Canadian-produced feature films”—“The Film Board does not recommend the establishment of a quota in Canadian theatres for Canadian produced feature films at the present time, because the Canadian feature film industry is not sufficiently established as yet to provide feature films in adequate volume and quality to meet a quota”; 5. that the government provide a method of financial assistance to Canadian-owned companies producing entertainment films for theatres and television—the Board recommended establishment of an interdepartmental committee “to examine the advisability and possible methods” of providing financial assistance “towards the production in Canada of feature films and possibly films for television”; and 6. that tariffs be increased and government film agencies instructed to encourage the growth of Canadian motion picture laboratories—the Board “is of the opinion that present tariffs...provide adequate protection” (NFBCA, “Summary of Comments,” January 1960, Minutes, 44th meeting, app. 2, 1-5).

In outline, the Board’s recommendations present all the structures, but one, of the policy field in which Canadian feature film development would be framed. These are worth insisting upon at this point if only to underscore both the narrowness of the policy field of Canadian feature development and the earliness of its definition. Thus, the field of feature film development policy would be circumscribed by: 1) its increasing separation from television, a separation that would be intensified by the failure of the BBG’s “grand design for private TV” (Rutherford 1990:113) and relatedly of Canadian content regulation, the non-

development of made-in-Canada advertising policy, and the development within CBC of a film production capability of its own; 2) in light of 1), reinforcement of the dependent character of film industry development: no quota meant that the direction and dynamic of development would be externally oriented and subsidy driven; and 3) in light of 2), reinforcement of the discursive character of a 'film industry' designed by an interdepartmental committee mandated to study a "possible" course of development that would be more discursive than 'real'. Implicit in the Board's recommendations, then, was precisely such a course of development: isolated, dependent, and discursive.

The Board's recommendations would be revised, largely unmodified, in October 1960 in preparation for the November 2 meeting between the Hon. Ellen L. Fairclough, minister of Citizenship and Immigration in the Diefenbaker cabinet and as such responsible for the Board, and representatives of the AMPPLC to discuss the contents of the Brief. At the meeting, Fairclough stated in seemingly unequivocal terms that feature film development, unlike broadcasting, was not a matter that at present came under federal authority:

Please, do not misunderstand me. My Government is conscious of the desirability of having more Canadian material on television, newsstands and in the cinemas. The recent appointment of a Royal Commission on Publications—presided by Mr Grattan O'Leary—indicates that we are conscious of the problem (NFBCA, AMPPLC, vol. II, "Notes prepared by the Board for Minister's use....")

"At the present time," she continued, "I do not see the Federal Government setting up a financial assistance scheme to producers of feature entertainment films" (ibid.). In part, the government's position of non-involvement was constitutional: "I wonder if the Federal Government has authority to decide what



shall or shall not be shown in the cinemas...in terms of...foreign content in cinema programs. Insofar as I may be aware, matters relating to what is shown in the cinemas in Canada have, to this day, been handled by the provinces" (ibid.). Fairclough repeatedly suggested that the producers turn to the provincial levels of government as "the possible avenue of assistance" for feature film development. He followed, therefore, that the Brief's suggestion in particular of a quota system to secure distribution for Canadian films was premature: "Have we as yet in Canada," the minister wondered, "feature films in adequate number and quality to meet a quota? It seems to me that part of the solution of your problems, at present, could be found in private arrangements between producers and distributors, both here and abroad" (ibid.).

What is particularly striking about the tenor of this meeting is that it is anomalous within a policy context shifting towards exactly the opposite of what Fairclough had said to AMPPLC representatives: namely, greater federal involvement in the development of a feature film industry. Within less than two months, the Conservative government would abruptly triple the five percent withholding tax it levied upon theatrical remittances flowing out of Canada, the first such increase "in years" as Canadian Film Weekly pointed out, noting that "It would appear that the USA...is the major victim of Ottawa's step" (CFW 26:1, Jan. 4, 1961, "Withholding tax from 5 to 15%").

At the center of the policy shift was the Film Board, in the person of its chairman, Guy Roberge. Since the AMPPLC Brief had first been presented to Fairclough a year before, NFB chairman Guy Roberge had been suggesting establishment of a working committee of senior departmental representatives to study the Brief (NFBCA, Minutes, 43rd meeting). He would return to the idea of

such an interdepartmental planning group repeatedly (see Minutes, 46th meeting, 53rd meeting). The Board's Board of Governors had met informally with N.A. Taylor late in 1959 and a member of the Board of Governors had suggested further such informal meetings (Minutes, 43rd meeting). As we have seen, for Taylor government subsidy was the preferred mechanism for development of a feature film industry in Canada, not quota. As long as the AMPPLC Brief recommended quota, such a demand apparently precluded further government involvement in industry development. It is likely that Fairclough's November meeting with AMPPLC representatives was meant to convey that message to the producers' association, though admittedly the evidence for this is not conclusive except that shortly afterward Roberge informed members of the Board that "consideration of the Association's Brief as far as the Board is concerned" was terminated (Minutes, 49th meeting). Secondly, in a memo to Fairclough concerning IATSE Local 873's February 1961 circular letter calling for quota, Roberge referred her "to your correspondence with the Hon. the Minister of Finance at the time you examined the AMPPLC brief":

Mr [Donald] Fleming was then reluctant to single out the film industry for a special treatment which would have involved both the setting up of a loan or subsidy system to film producers and the adoption of specific restrictive or protective measures such as an import quota system to hold back some of the monies earned in Canada by foreign films (Roberge, memo to Minister, March 13, 1961, AMPPLC vol. III, Nov. 1960-1968, emphasis added)

As Taylor had argued in the quota or subsidy debate, these were either/or options, but as we shall see shortly still the object of bureaucratic contemplation.

By early 1962, following a trip to London and Paris and talks with government film officials in both countries, Roberge concluded that he had found

the mechanism by which to develop a feature film industry in Canada.<sup>22</sup> In a handwritten, restricted memo to Fairclough, dated Feb. 14, 1962, Roberge put the case for the Government of Canada's consideration of "the advisability of making inter-governmental agreements which would facilitate the association of Canadian and British and Canadian and French productions" (Minutes, 55th meeting; text of the memo in appendix 9).

Roberge's memo began by reviewing recent discursive developments: the AMPPLC Brief; Department of Trade & Commerce interest in study of the film industry in Canada; the role of the press, both French and English, in "drawing increasing attention to the lack of entertainment or feature film production in Canada"; the recent formation of "a joint council of producers, film craft unions and allied groups in Toronto"<sup>23</sup>; and finally, Roberge's recent meetings with John

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<sup>22</sup> Both Roberge and Juneau claim 'paternity' for the use of coproduction as the developmental mechanism for a Canadian film industry (Roberge interview, 14 May 1990, Juneau interviews, 4 & 18 April 1990)

<sup>23</sup> In mid-October 1961 the Motion Picture Production Council of Canada was formed around an interim steering committee comprising Don Wilder, president of the newly-established Canadian Society of Cinematographers; Arthur Chetwynd, AMPPLC; George Mulholland, IAISE 837, and Roy Kost representing Canadian directors. Also present were N.A. Taylor, AMPPLC; William White, IAISE; Dennis Sweeting for the Canadian Council of Authors and Artists; as well as observers from the Canadian League of Composers, NABET, and Union des artistes. As *CFW* noted, "the common ground on which diverse elements have gathered to further the interests of all indicates an awareness of the importance of motion picture production of an entertainment nature to our country — one of the world's most progressive countries in many ways [but] far behind in theatrical film making" (*CFW* 26 41, October 25, 1961, "Form Canada Production Council"). Among the Council's objectives was drafting a brief reflecting the interests of all parties for submission to the Canadian government. A brief, dated Feb 8, 1962, was drafted for presentation to Trade & Commerce that pointed out emphatically it was "NOT a request for federal subsidy, tariff legislation, or any form of free hand-out" but a request for 1) a loan fund administered by a board of government and motion picture industry personnel, 2) coproductions between Canadian and foreign producers, and 3) tax incentive measures that would collectively create a "self-supporting new Canadian export industry of major proportions, and provide employment for thousands of Canadians." The brief would not be submitted and the Production Council itself seems to have consisted of too many divergent interests to be anything but short-lived. A copy of the draft brief is in the National Film Sound & Television Archives, Ottawa.

Terry of the British National Film Finance Corporation and the director-general of the French Centre national de la cinématographie.

My conversations in London and Paris have made it quite clear...it could very well be in the national interest for Canada to seek some kind of agreement...which would facilitate the production of theatrical feature films and entertainment films in Canada as well as their distribution in these foreign countries (ibid.)

After explaining the mechanism of coproduction, Roberge reiterated that "An association with Great Britain or France could very well provide an impetus to the entertainment or feature film industry here, an industry which otherwise could continue to find it very difficult, if not impossible, to develop" (ibid., emphasis added).

The present proposal, he noted, was "not tied to establishment of a federal financial assistance scheme nor to the imposition of a special levy at the box-office level, proceeds of which would be divided between Canadian films and films co-produced under an international agreement" (ibid.), both options apparently still being envisioned somewhere within the state bureaucracy, although both the Board and the 'industry' were by this point unmistakably more in favour of subsidy. Roberge noted as well that, as a result of a recent amendment to its enabling Act, the Industrial Development Bank—"if it so desired"—could make loans to the production of films. He noted as well that despite the statistical growth of the gross income of the Canadian film industry (\$9,872, 151 in 1960), "not more than 2 or 3 feature films were produced in this country." "Even a modest sized investment in the feature film industry [by the state]," he concluded, "would represent at least an additional five to seven million dollars per year."

The minister's initial response to the memo was to take it under advisement (Minutes, 55th meeting). At the 56th meeting of the Board of Governors of the National Film Board, held in Montreal, May 19, 1962, NFB chairman Roberge reported that the minister, after consultation with External Affairs and Trade & Commerce, had forwarded a recommendation to Cabinet for the formation of an interdepartmental subcommittee

that, on behalf of the Government of Canada, the National Film Board in committee and association with the Department of Trade and Commerce and the Department of External Affairs, be authorized to approach formally and through official channels the British Government and the Government of France in order to explore the possibility of inter-governmental agreements being reached (Minutes, 56th meeting, 5-7).

With cabinet's approval of the minister's recommendation on May 28, the shift in government policy was formalized. With this decision, the Government of Canada had taken the first step towards entering the economy of private-sector feature film development. The latter would now become a field of state policy (and to which it has maintained a commitment ever since), and the object of deliberation of a discursive formation within the state. We examine this discursive formation in the next chapter.

## Chapter Five

### Institutionalization of the Canadian Feature Film, 1962-1967:

#### The State Discursive Formation

By advantageous treaties of commerce, particular privileges were procured in some foreign state for the goods and merchants of the country, beyond what were granted to those of other countries.—  
Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, Bk. IV

In the Foucauldian model of discursive economy (see Ch. III, sect. 2), instances of delimitation as they become distinguished from surfaces of emergence by the formation of discursive fields come to comprise institutional ensembles<sup>1</sup> in which the emergent discourse achieves differentiation as sets of relationships that permit the further formation of discursive objects. A discursive formation may be said to result from the stabilization of such sets of relationships among instances of differentiation. In the preceeding chapter, we saw how the discourse of an emergent private sector in film production took form against the horizon of a changing discursive field of governmentalization, as a result of which the concerns of the private film producers could rapidly become the object of a new field of government policy. This is not to say that the state simply took on as its own the interests of the private producers. Rather, in response to the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Foucault. "The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security" (1979.20)

emergent discursive formation of the private producers, a separate state discursive formation would develop within the discursive economy of the Canadian feature. However, what distinguished the state discursive formation from that of the producers was that the former would be part of the state apparatus' power to create institutions and so would constitute what Franklin terms a "discourse of power" (Franklin 1975).

Consistent with the Foucauldian theory of governmentality (see Ch. III, sect. 1), the extension of governmental rationality that delimited this new policy field (and discursive formation) derived its developmental justification from the international environment: as Roberge had remarked, without the state's intervention to develop closer association with the film industries of Britain and France, the Canadian film industry would "continue to find it very difficult, if not impossible to develop" (NFBCA, Minutes, 55th meeting, Roberge memo, app. 9). But, in a particularization of Foucault's theory of governmentality, Canadian governmentality stemmed from a perception of the international environment as one in which competition between states (and/or film industries) was so limited in fact as to be its opposite: not competition but collaboration in which the stronger film industries of Europe or the United States would directly assist in the establishment of the Canadian industry. In this perspective, the principal function of the Canadian state (as elaborated in feature film policy) would be to further such collaboration and, indeed, to institutionalize it in the policies of the Canadian Film Development Corporation (est. 1968).

But governmentalization, it will be recalled, is at the same time limitation as well as extension of governmental rationality. Because, in the Canadian context, the external extension of governmental rationality that would constitute the

framework for development of state policy with respect to the feature film was conceived of as limited, its internal delimitation would be more extensive. This internal delimitation entailed, notably, detachment of the emergent policy field of the Canadian feature from the aegis of the National Film Board by the reinforcement of the status of the policy object, the feature film 'industry', as a would-be economic entity. This paradoxical task of extension and delimitation would be the responsibility of the state discursive formation whose institutionalization of the feature film within the discursive economy we trace in the current chapter up to the establishment of the CFDC.

#### 1. Delimitation of the NFB, 1962-1963

With the challenge posed by the AMPPLC Brief to its hegemonic position within Canadian filmmaking apparently averted, deflected outwards into the international sphere of coproduction treaty negotiation<sup>2</sup>, the National Film Board appeared, by the early years of the decade, advantageously positioned in its ability to decisively influence the development of the new policy field it had been instrumental in establishing. And this to such an extent that the Film Board seemed to have become the driving force behind what might prove to be a 'distinctively Canadian' approach to the feature film. At least, that was how it seemed to a number of contemporary journalists by fall 1963.

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<sup>2</sup> Although the Canadian delegation that concluded negotiation of the Canada-France accord by March 1963 did not include film industry representatives outside the NFB, the delegation to England to explore the possibility of a coproduction agreement with the UK included representatives of the NFB and "the Canadian Film Industry," notably F.R. Crawley, president, Crawley Films Ltd., and Julian Roffman, vice-president, Taylor-Roffman Productions Ltd. No agreement with the UK would result from these exploratory meetings, according to the Canadian memorandum on the talks, largely for technical reasons governing the Eady levy which prevented Commonwealth films from being considered but also in light of the reluctance of UK unions to work with Canadian technicians (NFB/CA, 1050, A-183, "Report: Canada-United Kingdom Feature Film Co-Production," March 26, 1963).



In the first of a four-part series on the "full blown" emergence of a revitalized NFB, tellingly entitled "Our faceless giant stirs restlessly", Toronto Telegram entertainment journalist Sid Adilman rhetorically constructed a sharp contrast between the 'old' and the 'new' NFB. From the "dully functional" buildings of the Board's Montreal headquarters, "largely ignored" by its neighbours, a response "deadly typical" of that occasioned by a Canadian cinema of short films and documentaries which even NFB senior executives and top producers admittedly privately were "stodgy, stagey, flat, toothless and sometimes vacuous", "the heart of Canada's puny film industry" had undergone a dramatic change in recent months: "Quietly and painfully, maturity came. Now the NFB is emerging full blown" (NFBCA, 4101, P-153, Dir. Prod. Fr., 62/72, Adilman 1963).

For Adilman, the transformation of the NFB was the result of: 1) its having "launched the first English-speaking full-length feature film The Drylanders [1963] playing to jam-packed movie crowds throughout western Canada" and release of "its first full-length [French-language] feature film, Pour la suite du monde [1963] on French-Canadian TV,"<sup>3</sup> 2) the coproduction "pact" with France

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<sup>3</sup> Drylanders was originally planned as three half-hours for television, but in a context of steadily worsening NFB-CBC relations as a result of which by 1962 CBC would reject the Board's entire television program for the forthcoming season, the Board opted for a theatrical release (on CBC-NFB relations, see NFBCA, "Report of the CBC Representatives (NFB-CBC Working Committee)", May 11, 1962). Though largely shot in summer 1961 in Saskatchewan, Drylanders release would be postponed until fall 1963, when it premiered Sept 25 in Swift Current, and in 29 theatres in western Canada in the week of Sept 25 - Oct 17 (NFBCA, Minutes, 63rd meeting). Distributed by Columbia, the Board's theatrical distributor of choice since the Second World War, Drylanders by late November, 1963, had received, according to Roberge, 115 theatrical bookings in 100 cities (sic) in Canada, and was playing to full houses in western Canada (NFBCA, Minutes, 64th meeting, Nov.29, 1963, 5). Drylanders received its Toronto premiere in mid-January, 1964; and while most newspaper critics found the film a simple, honest and moving story, the Toronto Star's David Cobb asserted "It isn't a feature at all, but a documentary masquerading as a feature for 70 minutes" (Morris 1974 16-17). Shooting for Pour la suite du monde began during winter 1961, but given that Perrault's association with Radio-Canada was closer

(officially signed at Montreal, 11 October, 1963), 3) experimentation with lightweight cameras and cableless sound equipment "which will revolutionize the documentary industry", and 4) a 12 percent increase over 1961 in bookings of NFB films in "Canadian movie houses." As a result of these developments, "the NFB stands on the threshold of its 25th birthday [1964] happily stunned by the successes of the past months" (Adilman, *ibid.*).

Two other contemporary journalistic accounts confirm Adilman's perception of a changed NFB. An unsigned *Variety* article, dated Aug. 21, 1963, announcing plans for the first film to be produced in Canada under the France-Canada coproduction treaty<sup>4</sup>, noted that "Canada's film production industry which until now seemed to be in a state of perpetual infancy...has entered an historic phase...." (NFBCA, 4101, P-153, 62/72). The "historic phase" comprised two aspects: 1) the coproduction treaty with France which, in the writer's view, was "unique" because it permitted "joint venture participation with producers—using private capital—from countries other than the two signatories" and 2) the decision

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than with the Board (Juneau interview, Apr. 4, 1990), it was aired on Radio-Canada in fall 1963 and according to Roberge "very well received" (NFBCA, Minutes, 63rd meeting). More important, from the perspective of an emergent film criticism, and Perrault's subsequent consecration by Parisian critics as "un cinéaste-institution de l'ONF" (Houle & Julien 1978 254), was the film's première, Aug. 4, 1963, along with the première of Jutra's independently produced first feature, *A Tout prendre*, in the context of the first competitive Canadian Film Festival within the Fourth Montreal International Film Festival; see also Ch. VI below.

<sup>4</sup> *Le Coup de grâce* (1964) had been shot entirely in France. The *Variety* article referred to a four-way coproduction between Canada, France, Italy and Japan entitled *La Fleur de l'âge. Les adolescentes*, each country producing a short. Shot during 1964, the film would première out of competition at the Venice festival that year, and be released commercially in New York in 1967. The Canadian component, *Geneviève*, would be directed by Michel Brault first in 16mm as *Le temps perdu* "un film qui s'inscrit tout naturellement dans la continuité des ses recherches sur le direct," and then again in 35mm as the former "ne correspondant pas aux exigences que s'était fixé l'ONF pour cette co-production. On invita donc Brault à recommencer, en 35mm cette fois, avec un scénario et des dialogues écrits, des comédiens professionnels et un environnement physique (la vieille ville de Québec) plus 'typiquement' canadien. Cela donna *Geneviève* un exercice de direction d'acteurs..." (Houle & Julien 1978:29-30).

by the Board “to expand its operations into the field of feature films.” According to Variety, Roberge had announced “Revolutionary changes in Canada’s film-making policies” at the first competitive Canadian Film Festival held in the context of the Fourth Montreal International Film Festival in August.

What it all appears to add up to is a realization on the part of Canadian film officials that if feature production is to get anywhere in this country, the government will have to play the big part in offering encouragement with technical assistance (by the National Film Board) and a ready-made distribution formula as provided by the new treaty....Now, according to Roberge, there is the possibility of Canada being able to get going in full-length commercial theatre films, to provide a product that will have a fighting chance on the world markets (ibid.).

Whereas the Variety article envisioned the NFB in a supporting role as part of a changing governmental framework that would provide greater encouragement and “a ready-made distribution formula” through coproduction or joint-venture for the private production of features in Canada, a third contemporary account would attribute to the Board a more central position. Reporting on press conferences held by Roberge in Vancouver and Swift Current as part of the release of The Drylanders, Vancouver Sun movie columnist Les Wedman announced the birth of a taxpayer-supported film industry led by the NFB:

Forget the pipedreams of promoters and the piddling efforts of penny-pinching producers in the past to start a movie industry in Canada. There’s a Canadian movie industry getting underway, all right, but it’s you, the taxpayer, who’s helping launch it, because at long last the National Film Board has decided to do what should have been done ages ago. And that’s make feature films about Canada and in Canada (NFSTA, Wedman 1963).

Wedman paraphrased Roberge as stating “that these two films [Drylanders

and Pour la suite du monde] could be the start of full-length feature filmmaking in Canada”:

The NFB, he said, has been standing by waiting for private companies and individuals to make a solid go of a Canadian movie industry. They haven't done it. The board, reluctant to move into features for fear of criticism that it was interfering in free enterprise, has proceeded quietly to make two features without raising a cry of “wasting the taxpayers' money.” Hollywood no longer dominates the Canadian market. There is a growing demand for “Canadian identity” and a shortage of films for theatres. So the NFB is entering to fill the gap. Roberge made it clear that “we are not in the entertainment business....we are not thinking of making musicals and comedies. We don't intend to displace Hollywood. This is foolish. We want only time on our own screens to show Canadian films” (NFTSA, Wedman 1963).

What these accounts underline is the degree to which the emergent policy field of the Canadian feature remained to be delimited. Each respectively identified an element of ambiguity within the emergent field. Adilman, for instance, in entitling the second part of his series, “Will BB [Brigitte Bardot] join the NFB?”, raised the question of how an emergent feature capability at the Board would fit into the international industry. For Wedman, this was no problem—the American companies would distribute Canadian-made features: “the future for Canadian feature films—especially since Columbia Pictures has agreed to distribute the NFB movies—looks rosy.” The Variety article indirectly pointed to an ambiguity in the Canada-France coproduction treaty: other than technical assistance by the Board, Canada did not offer access to a pool of capital as an inducement to outside producers; opening the treaty to joint venture access by outside (presumably U.S.) producers who could contribute capitalization might be a way around this limitation. While all tended enthusiastically to welcome, and

exaggerate, the potential industrial implications of the Board's shift to feature production, only the Wedman piece, and this en passant, made any reference to the actuality of the productions, as opposed to their potentiality: "The work of finishing The Drylanders was spread over three years so that the \$200,000 it cost could be taken from NFB annual allocations and profits without inflating the budget in any one year" (NFTSA, Wedman 1963). In the light of such a detail, the Board's initial involvement in features appeared a somewhat less than revolutionary development, and more an indication of tolerance of some experimentation with a film form to which its commitment would be at best occasional. As Roberge reported to the board of governors of the Board in what would, in effect, become Board policy towards features, "since feature film production was expensive it was unlikely that with its present day budget the Board could become heavily involved..." (NFBCA, Minutes, 65th meeting, Jan. 27, 1964, 4).

In fact, the Board was increasingly entangled in the contradiction stemming from its dualistic position as, on the one hand, the government film production agency and, on the other, the principal advisor to the government in matters of film policy. In a context where the gap between the two positions was widening, as the latter in particular shifted in response to increasing preoccupation with commercial feature film production, maintaining these divergent orientations within the responsibility of the one institution would become untenable.

While the newspaper accounts represented him in the guise of champion of an NFB-centred approach to feature production, Roberge by fall 1963, and with the approval of his board, was eliciting from the newly elected Liberal government (April 1963) in Ottawa a commitment similar to that given by the preceeding

government (see Ch. IV), but with a difference of emphasis. Although couched in largely similar language as his February 1962 memo to Fairclough, Roberge's Sept. 11, 1963, memorandum to the Secretary of State (a newly created ministerial position held by J. W. Pickersgill until his appointment to the Transport portfolio in spring 1964 when Maurice Lamontagne became Secretary of State) was more emphatic about the domestic role of the state in film industry development:

...I have reached the conclusion that...without government financial assistance a feature film industry is not possible. I therefore submit that the government should now consider whether it is prepared to support the development of this industry (NFBCA, Minutes, 63rd meeting, app. 9, 2).

Several aspects of Roberge's memo are worth commenting upon to the extent that they are enunciatory of the general characteristics of an emergent feature film industry in Canada whose growth "Because of a variety of factors...has been exceedingly slow" (ibid.,1).

Thus, a first distinguishing enunciatory characteristic of such a would-be industry was the consistently determining priority given to external factors in its development, beginning with the outflow of "approximately \$27 million" in remittances abroad from film rentals "paid by Canadians [in 1961] for films largely produced outside this country" (ibid.,1). From this fact, it followed that 1) "Greater feature film production in Canada could reduce the amount of rentals paid abroad and in turn could earn foreign exchange since Canadian feature films will be shown in other countries", and 2) that "a Canadian feature film industry must be based on an exported product since the Canadian market alone cannot provide adequate returns. This is true for all countries, even the United States film

industry..." (ibid., 2, emphasis added). Furthermore, "The fact that Canada has recently been able, through the National Film Board, to negotiate a co-production agreement with France underlines the conviction of the French film industry that Canadian producers can work effectively with it" (ibid.). Finally, the role of government itself in supporting feature film industries followed from the observation that, "with the sole exception of the United States," this is what other governments did: "The Governments of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands, Sweden, Argentina, Brazil, Spain, Greece and Switzerland for instance have all provided assistance in one form or another to their film industries" (ibid.).

The external orientation of such observations, although warranted in the memo by the Board's "studies of the various film industries in other countries" (see Ch. III), stemmed from a second enunciatory aspect, the estimative character of knowledge and assumptions about the development of film production in Canada. Basing himself on the "estim[ati]on" that even a modest-sized entertainment film production industry in Canada could represent an additional \$5 million a year," Roberge "consider[ed] that a revolving development fund of \$3 million set up for a three to four year period would provide adequate assistance to launch a feature film industry in Canada" (ibid.,3). With "decisive" government action, he predicted that "by the Centennial year [1967] Canada would be occupying her proper place in the world of international cinema" (ibid.).

In such a development, the strategic role of the Board was ambiguous, and in the light of the memo's principal recommendation, likely perhaps to become even more so. As defined by the memo (and Section 9 of the National Film Act, 1950), the Board, beyond producing and distributing films in the national interest, could

engage in research in film activity—very broadly defined as “any activity in relation to the production, distribution, projection or exhibition of film”—so long as it made the results available to film producers (section 9c), and it advised the Governor-in-Council in matters of film policy (9d). But if these two functions—doing R&D for the industry and advising on government policy—could be kept separate as articles of law, in practice they tended to become conflated, particularly as the object of government policy would increasingly be the de facto development of a commercial feature film industry. On the one hand, initiatives such as the coproduction agreement with France might be considered ‘research in film activity’ whose results had been made available to film producers, since “the leaders of the Canadian film industry...have expressed themselves as well satisfied with the initiative the Board has taken” (Roberge memo,3). On the other hand, in urging the minister that “if we do not take action now, the opportunity to get a feature film industry in Canada may well be missed for another generation,” it could be argued that Roberge was advising the government in matters of film policy on behalf of the creative community of “talented individuals”, the “writers, artists and film-makers across the country...and members of the film industry” who were all manifesting “a very great interest at the moment in feature films”, but who, “as in many other fields”, might decide “to realize their hopes outside the country” if decisive government action on their behalf were not forthcoming (ibid.,4).

The memo recommended two policy measures: 1) establishment of a film industry development revolving fund and 2) adoption by the Industrial Development Bank of a special set of regulations “on the basis of which bona fide Canadian film producers would obtain loans under conditions specially applicable



to the motion picture business" (ibid.,3). This was necessitated, in Roberge's view, by the "very specialised" nature of motion picture financing and the fact that "Canadian banks have no tradition in this kind of lending," in which the financial institution lent up to 65 percent of a film's budget against advance distribution guarantees.

For its part, the revolving fund would, in return for an equity in the produced film, also lend the producer an amount at interest (not to exceed, for example, \$50,000 per film) on the understanding that the producer would already have obtained other financing. Also, once a film had been completed and distributed in Canada and abroad, the fund would provide a premium "probably related to the box office" and on the producer's undertaking to re-invest the amount in another Canadian film production. The fund would be "entrusted for administrative purposes to the National Film Board" advised by a committee "mainly drawn from the production and distribution sectors of the Canadian film industry and possibly...others...knowledge[able] in the field of motion pictures" (ibid., 2). On the advice of this committee, "the Board would then provide financial assistance to...Canadian film producers with the main purpose of assuring that Canadian feature films of good quality...be produced and distributed here and in world markets" (ibid.).

Would implementation of such a recommendation have made the Board the central institutional structure of a developing feature film industry in Canada? Both Roberge and Juneau in interviews emphatically deny that the Board had anything more than a formal interest in the structuring of such an industry. Beyond this, the Board could not afford greater investment in feature production ideologically in the sense of conceiving of features as only a limited aspect of a

more general conception of the range of filmmaking activities for government, and economically since without substantial budgetary increments the Board, given the prevailing conception of its role in filmmaking, did not have the resources to undertake more than the occasional feature. In their view, if the Board had a role to play as part of the institutional framework within which a Canadian feature film industry might develop, that framework was envisioned as neutral in its effects upon the kinds of films that would emerge. In their view, the content of Canadian features was the entirely separate matter of the interaction of filmmakers and publics (Roberge interview, May 14, 1990; Juneau interviews, Apr. 4 & 18, 1990).

However, for Jacques Bobet, one of the NFB producers under whose immediate responsibility a number of the Board's first French-language features would be produced as of 1963-64 (e.g., Le Chat dans le sac, 1964; La Vie heureuse de Léopold Z., 1965, though some shooting had begun as of late 1963), the form and content of an emergent Canadian feature cinema were indissolubly linked, and the role of the NFB was central to both. In an open letter addressed to Roberge as Government Film Commissioner (and published just prior to Roberge's resignation in spring 1966), Bobet linked the institutional future of the NFB itself to the extent of its commitment to what for Bobet by then had unmistakably become "le courant principal du cinéma canadien...le long métrage" (Bobet 1966a:104). As he pointed out, this was not the coproduction of feature films by a number of international partners including Canadian producers, but more specifically of the emergence of what was

bel et bien le long métrage canadien, c'est-à-dire, simplement, la naissance et la croissance d'un cinéma NATIONAL. Tout indique que le cinéma canadien va passer par une phase d'identification

national d'abord, et c'est à celle-ci...que l'Office doit collaborer de toute sa force (ibid.).

Such a commitment did not mean the occasional production of one or two features; on the contrary, it meant that

...s'il se produit, au Canada français seulement, dix films d'une dignité culturelle susceptible de représenter vraiment un peuple à ses propres yeux et aux yeux de l'étranger, il faudra que l'ONF en produise six et en commandite deux autres en sous-main (ibid.:108).

For, Bobet predicted, if the Board placed itself outside the emergent feature film current, if it did not forcefully and with continuity participate in the development of a "grand cinéma canadien," the Board stood to lose everything, including its "traditional mission" of government film production: "L'ONF—c'est tout de même très clair et très simple—ne sera plus qu'un entrepôt vaguement désaffecté. On n'en parlera plus..." (ibid.:109).

For Bobet, the choice facing the Board was clear and from the vantage of 1966 had been so since at least 1963-64<sup>5</sup>, if not implicitly since the postwar 'loss' of the medium of television to the CBC:

L'Office du Film qui, à une époque, a déjà bêtement raté de devenir la Télévision d'Etat peut très bien rater maintenant de devenir le Cinéma d'Etat (ibid.:111, emphasis added).

Both Roberge's September 1963 memo to Pickersgill and Bobet's 1966 open letter to Roberge suggest a continuum in the attempt to delimit the domestic role

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<sup>5</sup> "1963-64, donc. Il faut y revenir. Durant ces deux années la conscience cinématographique culmine. Non seulement c'est l'aboutissement des années les plus prestigieuses du court métrage canadien, non seulement ce sont les années où revient de l'étranger un murmure flatteur et mérité, mais ce sont des années toutes tournées vers l'avenir" (Bobet 1966.3)

of the state and the NFB in the development of a Canadian film industry, with the latter's open letter as one extreme of an internal extension of government rationality (into the feature form of an NFB-developed state cinema), and the former's memo as a median point (a commitment "in principle" of state support in the form of an NFB-administred loan fund). The response to Roberge's memo would indicate a third possibility which, instead of being an extension of government rationality (as the development of a state cinema), would attempt to delimit that extension to a very precisely circumscribed domain: to discursive production by a governmental committee, on which the Board would be represented, of possible development scenarios for a film industry in Canada. In other words, delimitation within the state of a discursive space in which to circumscribe both the role of the Board and the orientation of feature film development. This discursive space would thus be both extensive and delimitative and entailed splitting the policy field into three parts: 1) the role of the administrative state, 2) the role of the NFB and 3) film industry development. The precise problem to be dealt with was how through the increased role of the administrative state in film industry development to reduce the role of the NFB. The leverage for this would be provided by Lamontagne's notion of cultural development (see sect. 5 below).

In effect, Pickersgill's and the Liberal cabinet's response to Roberge's memo would replicate the Diefenbaker cabinet's response to Roberge's February 1962 memo to Fairclough. But this time, instead of an interdepartmental committee to explore the state-to-state possibility of coproduction agreements, the same mechanism would be turned inwards, within the policy state. In a memorandum to cabinet dated December 9, 1963 (and approved by cabinet December 12),

Pickersgill recommended "That an interdepartmental committee be set up to consider the possible development of feature film production in Canada" and specifically "to explore ways and means of assisting financially and otherwise such development"; "to examine proposals which may be put forward"; and to make appropriate recommendations to cabinet. Furthermore, the proposed committee should consist of one representative from each of the following government departments: Finance, External Affairs, Industry, Trade and Commerce; one representative from the Bank of Canada; one representative from the National Film Board; and the committee should be chaired by the Government Film Commissioner (Pickersgill, Memorandum, Dec. 9, 1963; Privy Council Office, Record of Cabinet Decision, Dec. 12, 1963, NAC, RG6, v.848, 5020-1).

## 2. The Interdepartmental Committee on the Possible Development of Feature Film Production in Canada, 1964-1965

The work of the Interdepartmental Committee on the Possible Development of Feature Film Production in Canada provides a microcosm of the discursive economy of the Canadian feature. In the course of its eventual twenty-five meetings between January 1964 and December 1965, the committee would hear verbal testimony from the principal figures in the Canadian film industry; receive briefs and submissions from the craft and professional associations active in Canadian filmmaking (see Ch. VI); commission four studies of aspects of the Canadian film industry and international film legislation, including a major study of the problem of feature film distribution in Canada; engage two European consultants; and submit several reports to the Pearson cabinet. In the course of its deliberations, delimitation of the Canadian feature as an object of policy would assume its fully elaborated discursive form, the policy course of Canadian film

industry development would be set both discursively and institutionally, and the Film Board, increasingly marginalized by its accelerating loss of influence over film policy, would be plunged into a crisis of orientation from which it has never recovered.<sup>6</sup>

The work of the committee<sup>7</sup> fell into two periods, an initial four months (January-April 1964) at the end of which a first report to cabinet would be submitted; and following a cabinet request for further studies, a second round of meetings (October 1964-July 1965) would close with a second and final report to cabinet, though the committee would continue to meet, usually once a week on Tuesday afternoons, in Ottawa until December 21, 1965.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> At its 69th meeting (Oct. 30, 1964), the NFB's Board of Governors resolved to "reconfirm" a) that the Board is part of the public service of Canada, b) that the Board is an agency at the service of Canada and its people in the fields of information and culture and c) that these characteristics should inspire the Board's own production and distribution activities. In this light would be developed a distinction between the feature-length entertainment film and the document-film in which the former deals with "a general human problem at a universal level" while the latter "rests on a more direct contact with real life." Recent NFB features such as *Pour la suite du monde*, *Nobody Waved Goodbye* (1964) and *Le chat dans le sac* were document-films. The Board resolved to "produce a limited number of feature [document] films in the future when the subject matter as well as the distribution warrant the feature length format, taking into account the overall balance of its production program and resources" (NFB/CA, Minutes 69th meeting, also app. 8). For the Board's increasingly frustrated subsequent attempts to develop an "integrated" or "global" approach to Canadian government film policy, see NFB/CA, 262, Film Policy black books.

<sup>7</sup> Chaired by Roberge, the committee was initially composed of deputy-ministers from each of the departments enumerated by the Dec. 12, 1963 cabinet decision, to which would be added a representative of the Secretary of State (Under-Secretary of State G.G.E. Steele). The committee secretary was Gordon Sheppard of the office of the Secretary of State who as special assistant to Lamontagne authored in 1965-66 a four-volume "Special Report on the Cultural Policy and Activities of the Government of Canada" that would conclude inter alia that "The Government must decide whether it wants Canada to have a strong public film industry or a strong private industry film industry. We can't have both" (see NAC, RG41, v.337, file 14-4-4); Michael D. Spencer, who would become the CFDC's first executive director, was the NFB representative on the committee; and the committee representative from the Department of Industry and subsequently the Department of Finance was Simon S. Reisman, subsequently chief Canadian negotiator of the 1988 Canada-US Free Trade Agreement. For Spencer's 'hard fellow well met' account of the workings of the Interdepartmental Committee, see Spencer 1986.

<sup>8</sup> Spencer 1986 refers to a final report submitted by the committee early in 1966. I have not found any

At the committee's first meeting (Jan. 13, 1964), Roberge opened with a brief account of the background that had led to the committee's establishment. Three significant moments were singled out: 1) the 1959 AMPPLC brief (see Ch. IV), 2) the 1963 coproduction treaty with France, and 3) Roberge's September 1963 memo to Pickersgill. However, the chief item of business of this first meeting would be devoted to deciding when the committee should sit (NFBCA, Interdepartmental Committee, Minutes, A-460, 4365, also NAC, RG6, vol. 824).

It was at the second meeting (Jan. 21) that the committee got down to business. Should the effect of the proposed film industry primarily be economic (e.g., help balance of payments, stimulate employment) or cultural (e.g., enhance Canada's prestige abroad, assist biculturalism domestically)? "The consensus was that the film industry should be primarily economic with ancillary cultural effects," though the committee noted that the cultural effects "might be quite important." (ibid.:3-4, emphasis added). Such a conclusion might well be expected of a committee largely made up of representatives of economic ministries. But because the economic orientation was so pronounced, something far more fundamental was at issue. Most significantly, in terms of the discursive forms within which the Canadian feature would be institutionalized as an object of policy, the question of the economic status of the film industry, decided at the committee's first working session, enunciated the discursive order within which the feature film would constitute the symbolic concretion of a number of realities worth enumerating. As Franklin puts it, the discursive order of a discourse of power is an order of valuation in which six levels of equivalency intersect:

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evidence of such a report existing. According to Maurice Lamontagne, the minister responsible, the committee's second report, July 1965, was the final one (see NFBCA, A-183, 3005, *Allocutions-Hon. Maurice Lamontagne*, 1964/65).

la forme de la valeur elle-même, sa rationalité, son expression dans l'argent, son pouvoir et la domination de l'économie, l'ordre social qui est son ordre, l'être social constitué par la classe de ses gestionnaires (Franklin 1975:129).

Accordingly, though the committee would on occasion pay lip-service to cultural aspects of the development of Canadian feature filmmaking, that concern was by far secondary to the order of valuations subsumed within the economic.

The committee identified five questions it deemed central to its deliberations: 1) was it possible for a feature film industry to start up without government help?, 2) should the role of government be that of "pump primer" to an industry that could become a potential source of income, or should its role be one of temporary aid?, 3) was it worthwhile to start such an industry?, 4) what evidence was there such an industry would be viable?, and 5) "what is a Canadian film?" (Minutes, *ibid.*:4).

The committee defined its principal task as determining "how the Canadian film industry could mesh with international trends while retaining a national identity" (*ibid.*:5), though how to ensure the latter was neither clear nor primordial. One possibility discussed involved "Canadian rules governing the financing of coproduction ventures" (*ibid.*).

At the fourth meeting (Feb. 11), Roberge was asked how Canadian feature films would get distribution in Canada and abroad:

The chairman replied that he was confident distributors in Canada would want to cooperate. Moreover, many of the big international distributors in New York, with offices in Canada, would likely understand the importance of assisting Canadian features to get distribution abroad. He cited the case of Jutra's A Tout prendre [1963] which Columbia had agreed to distribute internationally in both English and French (*ibid.*).



At its sixth meeting (Mar. 4), the committee would interview Canadian producers, beginning with the ubiquitous Toronto exhibitor-distributor-producer N.A. Taylor, followed by Ottawa producer 'Budge' Crawley, and at subsequent meetings film director Don Haldane (The Drylanders) appearing as president of the Screen Actors' Guild of Canada, and filmmakers Claude Jutra and Guy L. Côté, respectively president and secretary of the Association professionnelle des cinéastes (see Ch. VI). No minutes of these in-camera meetings were kept

By late February, the committee<sup>9</sup> had produced a draft of its initial report to cabinet that, along with an addendum, would be accepted by the committee at its tenth meeting (Apr. 27) for submission to cabinet.

The committee's initial report to cabinet is significant in several respects. Not only is it qua text the most sustained piece of writing about Canadian feature production since the AMPPLC brief (see Ch. IV), but it provides an overview of the transition of Canadian feature development as a problem of knowledge within an emerging policy field increasingly organizable instrumentally by economic categories. Firstly, the status of the policy-object was becoming clearer: enhancement of the output and employment capacity of an industrial or economic entity, though development of Canadian features and/or a Canadian feature film industry were still discussed interchangeably. But because the policy-object was clearer, it was increasingly clearly the embodiment of an instrumental ratio that was not only, from the perspective of the state, economic, i.e., knowable in economic categories, it was also historical, i.e., knowable-in-time. Thus,

It is not altogether unreasonable to suppose that a fairly effective

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<sup>9</sup> Actually, Michael Spencer, since 1960 the Board's director of planning, and Roberge's right-hand as the NFB rep on the committee, drafted the committee's reports to cabinet

film industry could have been established in Canada before the coming of the sound film in the late nineteen-twenties (Cinémathèque québécoise [hereafter CQ], Report of the Subcommittee of the Interdepartmental Committee on the Possible Development of a Canadian Feature Film Industry, Feb. 24, 1964:1, emphasis added).

Within such an economic historicization of the policy object, there were, to be sure, enormous gaps in knowledge. The report does not—or cannot—account for why such a potential industry proved unable to negotiate the changeover to sound technology, nor why since the Second World War “no more than two or three feature films have been produced per year,” nor why “their success, both financial and artistic, has been limited.” The report only notes that the “private film industry...largely turned its attention to industrial[s.]...documentary films and, since 1952,...commercial advertising shorts for television” (ibid.).

A dialectic of (partial) knowledge/non-knowledge results. On the one hand, for the first time within the discursive economy of the Canadian feature, it becomes possible to derive a statement about the economic basis of the ‘industry’: “Almost all the films produced by the Canadian private film industry today are...industrial, training and public relations short films and television commercials” and this because “TV commercials and industrial films involve the producer in no risk...since the sponsor has paid the film’s cost before any screenings take place” (ibid.:2, emphasis added).

On the other hand, how such a risk-averse ‘industry’ of short film producers had shifted to risk-intensive feature-length production, the report does not explain. Because it does not, it can only reiterate pseudo-economic ‘facts’, such as the familiar DBS statistical aggregates of gross income growth and fluctuating estimates of remittances paid out to foreign distributors, here given as \$20m

(some \$7m lower than Roberge's estimate in his September 1963 memo). Such an absence of knowledge, however, makes possible sudden speculative leaps. If, in recent years, private producers had approached government seeking information on assistance to film production, it was only "in the last six months" that the government itself "has been made aware of film projects to the value of \$3-4 million in advanced planning stages which will be undertaken if additional financing can be obtained":

These film projects involve individual budgets ranging from \$75,000 to \$900,000, and are supported by Canadian film producers....If a substantial number of these projects could be brought to a successful completion and receive widespread distribution in Canada and abroad, the feature film business could be given a good start. The result would be that the gross revenue of the industry would be quite substantially increased and there would be more employment of Canadian technicians and film makers, as well as actors, writers and musicians. Furthermore some part of the money which is now expended abroad in rentals of foreign films would be saved...and paid instead to Canadian producers.. In addition, it is expected that successful Canadian films would earn money abroad (ibid.:2-3).

But since other than such discursive chimera, there is, in fact, no evident objective basis for assessing the validity of establishing a feature film industry in Canada, the report derives such a basis from recent changes in the international industry. It is thus a change in the international division of film labour that justifies development of a film industry in Canada. "Hollywood once the source of the majority of successful films in all countries is now no longer the film capital of the world" (ibid.:3), as, in the last decade, feature film production had become "an international industry." Not only were more American producers working abroad, but film producers outside the U.S. were finding markets on the

North American continent. As fewer films were being produced in the U.S. as a result of the audience recession caused by television, distributors and exhibitors had turned to foreign productions. "The conclusion may be drawn therefore that the diversification of the feature film industry into new types of production, the wide screen spectacular, the foreign film and the film designed for the more discriminating audience" now afforded possibilities for two types of Canadian-made production: 1) "the kind of film which receives good distribution in the Art houses in Europe and the U.S.," as well as 2) "fairly low budget [second features in a double bill programme] which could be made here as well" (ibid.:4).

An alternation of fragments of knowledge with non sequiturs is characteristic of the report as a whole. For instance, of exhibition structures in Canada, the report noted that

Many of the big cinemas in the large towns and cities across the country belong to centrally organized chains of which the two largest are Famous Players with approximately 150 theatres and Odeon with 100. Both are controlled from abroad, from the U.S. and the UK respectively, and both are also in the film production business. They might be inclined to give priority to their own productions (ibid.:6, emphasis added).

Asserting accordingly—and in contradiction with the observation just enunciated—that "Any future Canadian feature film industry should be well supported by the cinemas in its own country," such an assertion is promptly made meaningless—since whether that support was there or not was immaterial, as it could never be a sufficient condition for the economic viability of the industry:

The challenge for the Canadian producer is that, since his home market is not large enough to provide him with adequate finance for his film (in contrast to countries like France and the UK...) he must produce the kind of picture which will do well everywhere,

including Canada (ibid.:6).

The report's discussion of the role of government in assisting film industries would centre narrowly upon examining funding and assistance schemes in France (e.g., Fonds de développement de l'industrie cinématographique), in England (e.g., the Eady assistance scheme and the National Film Finance Corporation), and in Sweden. Although the report did observe that the use of quota restrictions for the dual purposes of cultivating local industry and preventing American domination of a "significant mass medium of communication" was "not unrelated" to the thinking which had caused Canada to establish the CBC in the 1930s (ibid.:7), other than making the observation, nothing is inferred from this.

In light of the above, the report concluded that if the Canadian feature film industry is to be established on a regular and developing basis, it would have to meet two requirements: 1) to be aimed at developing Canadian talents and providing employment for scriptwriters, directors, actors, cameramen, etc. and use of facilities; and 2) "it must develop along lines which would be in accordance with international trends." The example cited is Crawley Films' production of The Luck of Ginger Coffey (1964), written by an Irishman, directed by an American, produced by a Canadian, with British leads and a British d.o.p., "but all other services provided in Canada" (ibid.:10).

In the view of the report, extant technical and creative facilities in Canada were currently sufficient for more such production: "there are film directors who have graduated from private industry or the National Film Board and now have feature film experience, including Pierre Patry, Irene (sic) Bonnière, Claude

Jutra, Michel Brault, Julian Roffman"<sup>10</sup>; "at least two" d.o.p's who's work was feature standard; "some" editors and designers and "many fine actors and actresses" (ibid.:10).

An economically viable industry could make use of these talents and skills....There could be productions made in Canada but financed abroad which would provide work...There could be productions made and financed in Canada which could not only provide employment but assist the balance of payments situation and there could be many combinations of these two main types (ibid.)

What, then, were the obstacles in the way of a Canadian feature film industry? In the view of the report, the two main problems interlocked: distribution and finance. "To get a film financed one must have a distribution contract, to get a distribution contract one presumably should have some experience in feature film production" (ibid.:10). Compounding the problem was that Canada was "a free market for films" with no controls on the importation or exhibition of films (though the report did not explicitly advocate any); that Canadian banks did not specialize in lending on film production; that although a coproduction agreement existed between France and Canada, "French producers...have expressed the view that there should be some public assistance for Canada to counterbalance their own state aid" (ibid.:11). Of all these

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<sup>10</sup> In 1963, Patry left the Board and founded the cooperative production house Coopératio that would produce the first of a number of features, beginning with *Trouble-fête* (1964), only to fail as the CFDC Act was before Parliament; René Bonnière, working at Crawley Films between 1955-65, would direct for the Ottawa-based company his first and only feature, *Amanita Pestilens* (1963); Jutra's first feature *À Tout prendre* was independently produced between 1961-63, Brault had codirected *Pour la suite du monde* (1963), and Roffman had directed the low-budget thriller *The Bloody Brood* (1959) and the 3-D horror pic, *The Mask* (1961). Except for Bonnière who had worked for Radio-Canada and Roffman who had left the Board just after the Second World War, the others were recent NFB 'graduates' to private industry.

difficulties, however, the most pressing was that of finance.

If "the present policy of non-intervention" by government continued, the industry which had, according to 1961 DBS data, shown a decrease in production, would continue to decline as it was doubtful "a genuine film industry can continue to be supported by television commercials and industrial films;" secondly, additional coproduction opportunities, "an essential ingredient of a viable industry," would be few; and finally, the sporadic attempts so far to produce single feature films using private funds would fail because of ineffective distribution arrangements; financing Canadian features would become "an even riskier venture than it is now" (ibid.:12).

The report did not in any detail delimit mechanisms for supporting a Canadian feature film industry, other than noting three broad strategies. Firstly, that

the definition of a Canadian film must be sufficiently flexible to take advantage of foreign experts and stars and to be in tune with the international trend of the cinema today (ibid.:12).

On the other hand, foreign producers coming to Canada solely to take advantage of government assistance "without contributing anything to this country...in terms of talent or finance must be discouraged." Secondly, loans and premiums provided by governments in most other countries "seem to be an integral part" of assistance programs. One difficulty in the Canadian context was that if premiums came from box-office levies, "such matters are under the jurisdiction of the provinces" (ibid.:13). Thirdly, "Tariffs, import quotas and exhibition quotas are used in other countries to protect the domestic industry" (ibid.).

The report closed with platitudes about Canada's "unique problem in maintaining a national identity," noting that feature films "have a role to play in drawing together the people of Canada..." (ibid.). These feature films, with their vital role in national and international communications and as one of the arts, would not, however, be produced by the National Film Board which,

on the basis of its foreseeable budget...will only be able to produce a limited number of feature films in the coming years. It is therefore from the Canadian private film industry that the feature films for Canadian cinemas and for abroad should come (ibid.).

Significantly, it was governmentalization that provided the report's penultimate justification for a Canadian film industry, and from the perspective of governmental rationality, the relation of state to industry was tellingly one of ownership: "Canada appears to be the only country of its size in the western world which does not possess a feature film industry. As a point of national prestige, it possibly should have one" (ibid.:14).

A five-page addendum to the report would deal more specifically with the ways and means of government action to overcome the main obstacles "to the development of a full fledged feature film industry in Canada" (NFBCA, Addendum to the Report..., March 13, 1964, A-460, 4365). Two main forms of "possible financial assistance" were discussed: establishment of a revolving fund to make loans to feature film producers, and government grants or subsidies.

It was suggested that a fund in the order of \$3-5m be established for an initial three or four years. This would make possible loans to between 30-50 feature films over the period. To qualify as a Canadian feature under the fund, a film would need to have majority Canadian ownership and control and its production should be undertaken by a majority-Canadian controlled and owned enterprise. A



producer should employ "a fair degree" of Canadian talents, skills and facilities. Permissible degrees of foreign participation in terms of creative personnel, performers and services would be determined by the fund on an initially unrestrictive basis. The addendum also dealt with financial requirements for accessing the fund, size of loans, terms of repayment and interest charges.

Legislatively, two options were discussed: 1) modifying the National Film Act (1950) to create a National Film Finance Fund that "would...be in no way part of the Board's appropriation or under its control" (ibid.:3), or 2) a separate act setting up the fund.

Of greater difficulty was the question of providing grants or subsidies for development of the feature film industry: "While there appeared to be valid reasons for considering assistance in the form of loans, there was difficulty in finding justification on economic grounds for subsidies..." (ibid.:4, emphasis added). One reason for the difficulty was that

special financial assistance for the development of a feature film industry might well be regarded as...indication of the...means by which the Government intends to promote general industrial expansion...(ibid.).

One way around this dilemma which the committee discussed might be that the federal government should provide the loans, and it would be up to "some of the provinces" to establish subsidy schemes for producers drawn from receipts from entertainment taxes levied on cinema tickets.

Even more problematic, "particularly in the developmental stages of the industry" (ibid.:4), was the fact "that through various arrangements, the majority of important Canadian distribution and exhibition channels are controlled from abroad" which "compound[ed] the difficulty for Canadian producers."

Significantly, the committee dealt with the problem as follows, making transparent the relationship between discursive form and economic domination:

The Committee felt...that in the first instance it would appear advisable to rely on moral suasion to obtain good distribution and exhibition of Canadian feature films in Canada (ibid.:5).

Cabinet's response to the committee report would not be made known until Aug. 4—the day before Secretary of State Lamontagne, at the official celebrations of the NFB's 25th anniversary, would make the first public announcement of the government's intention to seek authority from Parliament to establish a feature film loan fund (see section 5 below). Cabinet approved “in principle” the recommendations of the Secretary of State that 1) a loan fund be established as outlined by the Committee, 2) the Committee prepare specific recommendations as to the fund's administration and terms of the loans, 3) the Committee investigate “the distribution problems faced by Canadian films both in Canada and abroad” and make recommendations “to improve the present situation”, and 4) the Committee be authorized to hire two special consultants to make “preliminary studies on the various factors affecting the production and distribution of Canadian feature films” (NAC, RG6, v.848, file 5020-1, Privy Council Office, Record of Cabinet Decision, Meeting of August 4th, 1964).

### 3. The Committee's studies of Canadian feature film production and distribution, 1965

The Interdepartmental Committee resumed sitting on Oct. 8. As the minutes of the 11th meeting put it, “The Government has decided there should be a Canadian feature film industry.” The committee returned to work with a discussion of the economic benefits to Canada of a feature film industry. Such

benefits were simply assumed to be four-fold in their positive effects on employment, both in the film industry itself and in ancillary industries; balance-of-payments; tourism; and foreign trade. The committee agreed that while the impact of a film industry on the last two categories of economic activity were "more difficult to measure," these were, in fact, the most important of the four categories, particularly tourism (Minutes, 11th meeting, op. cit.).

At the committee's 12th meeting (Nov. 5), a discussion arose as to "whether the committee shall produce a non-economic appraisal of the value of the feature film industry" (ibid.). The committee concluded this was unnecessary "because the government had already affirmed the desirability of this industry for non-economic reasons." Such a conclusion was based on Lamontagne's NFB 25th anniversary speech (discussed below) and cabinet's Aug. 4 direction to the committee. The latter authorized it to examine other practical measures that would help Canadian film production "not only from an economic point of view but in the light of the Canadian public interest in general" (NAC, RG6, v.848, 5020-1). In other words, while it could have undertaken non-economic appraisals, the committee opted not to because, as far as it was concerned, the matter was closed. From the perspective of a self-evident logic of governmental rationality, its task was to delimit the economic characteristics of the new industry pronounced into being by the state. In such a perspective, as Franklin remarks, "*le discours...se développe comme langage de l'économique*" (Franklin 1975:128). Such a discourse would be further developed in the studies undertaken by the committee.

### 3.1. The production studies: Spencer (1965) & Cadieux (1965)

In January 1965, the committee engaged two production consultants “to provide as far as possible a realistic assessment of the country’s potential in the feature film production field” (NFBCA, terms of reference, Jan. 19, 1965, A-416, 4159). Roberge’s director of planning and the NFB’s representative to the committee, Michael Spencer, would prepare the report on “Canadian Feature Film Production in the English language” (April 6, 1965), and Fernand Cadieux, a close collaborator of Pierre Juneau, the report on “French-speaking Canada” (n.d.).

Drawing its information from three sources, confidential questionnaires submitted to producers and would-be producers, briefs submitted by craft groups and unions, and confidential information provided by Canadian banks, insurance companies and other financing sources, Spencer’s report covered a range of topics, beginning with producers. The 16 producers who provided information for the study ranged “from individuals with few assets except their personal enthusiasm to companies with considerable creative, technical and financial resources” (Spencer 1965:1). All were located in Toronto, except for two, one in Ottawa (Crawley Films Ltd.), the other in Vancouver (Lew Parry Film Productions); and all were in agreement with “the [study’s] basic premise that Canada has the technical resources and talent for a feature film industry and that government has a part to play in bringing it into being” (ibid.:2).

For Spencer, the producers divided readily into two categories: established

companies and independent producers<sup>11</sup>. "[W]ith sufficient resources to maintain a significant flow of either television commercials, or industrial and documentary films" (ibid.:3), five of the seven established companies currently had plans for 12 feature films in the half-million-dollar budget range. However, all "expect" to make distribution deals in advance; given distribution guarantees, they could raise the production money from chartered banks; and they intended to aim their films at the international market, as a result of which "non-Canadian content" in such films would be high (ibid.:4,17).

The remaining production companies surveyed<sup>12</sup> consisted of "independent producers with limited resources" (ibid.:4). These companies, usually of recent incorporation, had little or no organizational profile, and their production experience was synonymous with the individual work of their principal(s). Their production plans included 14 features for an average budget of \$225,000, "a little low," Spencer noted, "for film of international stature", but "these producers are more concerned with achieving some success in the Canadian market first"

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<sup>11</sup> Established companies included Enterprise Films Ltd., a private company with all Canadian shareholders established eight months earlier by an ex-Hollywood director and a former Paramount producer; it would move to the UK in 1968; ASP Productions Ltd., established three years earlier, had produced the 104 half-hour television series, Forest Rangers (CBC, 1964-66); Lew Parry Film Productions Ltd. established 20 years earlier and had produced 264 documentaries and coproduced 61 half-hour episodes of the Littlest Hobo series (CTV, 1963- ); Crawley Films Ltd. which after 26 years in business had produced three features, 26 shorts, 722 documentaries, three TV series and 171 classroom films, Robert Lawrence Productions (Canada) Ltd. established 10 years earlier had produced 2000 TV commercials and 330 half-hours of TV series production; Chetwynd Films Ltd. established 15 years earlier based the bulk of its production in documentary and industrial short films; and Peterson Productions Ltd. whose production experience was based in over 2000 TV commercials (Spencer 1965: appendix, no p.)

<sup>12</sup> These included writer/director Phillip Hersch who would write the CBC series Wojcek (1966-68), Canadian Film Associates, est. two years earlier, Gemini Films, est. March 1965; Amalga Films whose plans included two features directed by Paul Almond; Allan King Associates, est. four years earlier, had produced 15 TV specials for CBC; and Harvey Hart Productions, est. 1960, whose principal had directed television shows for CBC and was currently working at Universal (Spencer 1965: appendix).

(ibid.). These producers had received "completely negative reactions from distributors and from bankers," though their faith in Canadian content, talent and resources, shared by the unions and associations, was greater than among the larger producers: "low budget producers had more confidence in Canadian creative resources" (ibid.:4,12).

It is from this group or from other producers like them who will get into feature film production as the market and opportunities improve, that many of the feature film-makers will develop for the Canadian industry of the future (Spencer 1965:5).

However, although repeatedly reporting that large and small producers differed in their assessments in every respect (primary markets, existing technical or creative facilities), the Spencer study would minimize these differences by attempting to elaborate a consensus in which the perspective of the large producers was dominant. Observing, for example, that low-budget producers felt confident Toronto and to a slightly lesser extent Vancouver offered all necessary facilities for (low-budget) "black and white, 35mm feature production," the study would conclude that "It is likely therefore that, except for highly sophisticated special effects, large studio interiors and 35mm colour processing, all the necessary facilities exist even for high-budget productions" (ibid.: 7). High-budget, professional quality, international standards—these were the norms that informed the Spencer study, and to which the Canadian industry needed to be conformed.

From this, certain adjustments followed, "essential for a successful industry" (ibid.:11), in order to begin to bring the Canadian industry up to international standards. If, in terms of technical personnel, "there seemed to be a concensus (sic) that there is one crew in Toronto, at present capable of working on features

of professional quality and the potential for another exists in all but the most senior positions” (ibid.:8-9), more senior technical and creative personnel would have to be imported “at the outset than should be the case after the industry has been established for several years” (ibid.:11,12). In this, the cooperation of the unions could be obtained by “establishing the definition of a Canadian film which...gives them [the unions] a reasonable expectation of being able eventually to provide all the technicians for Canadian features” (ibid.:10); IATSE 873, for instance, had indicated it would work with senior technicians from outside Canada, “particularly if the film is produced under an international co-production agreement” (ibid.: 9).

Accordingly, Spencer turned to the various economic and financial mechanisms available (from coproduction to completion guarantees), to conclude with a discussion of the proposed loan fund. If “all but two of the producers” consulted were favourable to the proposed fund, “most had reached the conclusion some time ago that they would only be able to get into the feature field with government assistance” (ibid.:27). This applied most obviously to the small producers, but the large producers as well were “by no means disinterested in the possibility of government assistance to the industry.”

The committee discussed Spencer’s production report at its 18th meeting, April 27, at which it was reported that the feature film fund legislation was “listed as 18th in the ‘C’ category of the legislative priority list” (Minutes, 18th meeting). Because of the low priority, the committee felt it “need not rush its report” to cabinet (that would be submitted in July).

Discussion of Spencer by the committee reveals that government actions—in the form of discourse about possible action—had already become a significant

factor in the governmentalization of the Canadian feature film. For one, the group "A" (or big budget) producers, whose views as expressed to Spencer had been that, as they had no difficulty raising production money, they were neither primarily interested in the Canadian market nor impressed with the quality of Canadian technical facilities or creative talents, in the committee's view, nevertheless fell within the policy field since their "main production difficulty was not money but distribution" (Minutes, 18th meeting). For another, the "B" group of producers, who would get into production only with government financial help, had "paused in their feature film production plans to await the government scheme" (ibid.)<sup>13</sup>. For the committee, the entire field of Canadian feature film production was indiscriminately under the coordinative responsibility of government policy.

Cadieux's production study, despite its different emphasis both on a more sociological approach to the emergence of feature filmmaking in Quebec and a more pronouncedly experimental role for the state in feature film development, also illustrates the extent to which the committee was committed to an economic discourse of development for the Canadian feature. For Cadieux, Canada and its "French-speaking segment" in particular was in the throes of a cultural crisis that had far less to do with economy than with "a rising generation which hopes to find a means of expression" first and only secondarily "employment and a source of revenue in feature films" (NFBCA, The Feature-length film production industry in French-speaking Canada, n.d., A-416, 4159:1).

The "tremendous enthusiasm with which so many new talents [are] enter[ing]

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<sup>13</sup> For Coopératio's desperate appeals from August 1965 through May 1966 for a \$75,000 grant to cover full-time salaries of its staff allowing it to remain in business, see NAC, RG6, v.851, file 5040-195/C2



the motion picture field despite repeated economic disappointments” was “psycho-social rather than economic” (ibid.:3/2). For Cadieux, the repeated requests for the establishment of a motion picture industry stemmed from sociopsychological motivations—and in Quebec particularly from an “expanding ‘class’ of artists, comedians and film-makers who want to express themselves in feature films”, undergoing a process of professionalization that was “less concerned about market outlets than about expressing itself” (ibid: 3/2,7).

Such a conclusion emerged from Cadieux’s interviews “with all the known production companies, all individuals reputed to be producers and the official agencies representing film makers” (ibid.:14). Like Spencer, Cadieux grouped his respondents into old (est. over three years) and new (since 1962) companies, but unlike Spencer he included two more categories, individual filmmakers and associations. The old companies (e.g., Omega, Onyx and Van der Water Films, in business from three-15 years), with production based in documentaries, commercials and TV serials and so “with the greatest financial resources[,] had not made any feature length films” (ibid.:28). Rather, it was the eight new companies<sup>14</sup>, established from as recently as two months (Orbafilm) up to a maximum of three years earlier (Jutra’s Cassiopée), that

with more limited resources have produced 9 [feature] films over a period of three years, have seven films under production, and plans for 19 others....(ibid.:28)

But this proliferation of feature activity and plans had taken place under the most unfavorable economic conditions:

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<sup>14</sup> E.g., Les Films Claude Fournier, Coopératio, Cassiopée, Films du Nouveau Québec, Société générale de cinéma, Rieneck, Orbafilm, Soquéma.

The new companies, particularly those using the co-operative system [e.g., Coopératio], are sufficiently eager to produce feature length films...under highly unfavourable conditions, i.e., insufficient capital and equipment, lack of adequate administrative organization, no distribution contracts, and inadequate permanent staff....

This concerted effort can be taken as the basic investment through which the embryo of a feature-length film industry was created in Quebec. Despite the desire and willingness of the participants...this effort cannot be maintained on a continuing basis and the industry is doomed to remain at the stage of a craft, unless there is a substantial investment in order to establish a strong industrial basis (ibid.:28).

Cadieux went on to evaluate the factors of production in his view required for a feature film industry. Of eight factors evaluated, only two were deemed by the respondents to be adequate: interest in feature filmmaking was "considerable" and there were a sufficient number of technicians "for 10-15 productions a year"<sup>15</sup> (ibid:29, table 4); all else (administration, creative talents, equipment, laboratories, capital and investment, supply of ideas and subjects) was "lacking", "inadequate", "insufficient," "too limited", or in need of reorganization. Of these factors of production, the most important was capital: "With adequate capital and financing the other existing factors can be corrected....Capital would first be used to stabilize the administrators and then to purchase scenarios and ideas, followed by equipment" (ibid.:30).

As an industrial sector, the film 'industry' was "still a craft" undergoing "a period of apprenticeship during which many people are trying to find a new social role." In such a context, in which social roles were multiplying, improvisation and

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<sup>15</sup> Though Cadieux would inform the Interdepartmental Committee that "in the Montreal area the existing equipment base is not broad enough to support all the feature film plans he had heard about, but that probably two features could be supported there at any one time" (Minutes, 18th meeting).

conflict were “inevitable,” but specialization had not yet been established. Feature filmmaking remained an “adventure” and as such a disinclination to entry by the older companies who would engage in features “only...when economic advantages are assured” (ibid.:39).

For Cadieux, the role of the state in such a context would have to be “on an experimental basis,” to be reassessed after a three-year period. During this period, the state should grant fellowships to filmmakers from a fund “not designed to finance industrial production indirectly but to assist [individual] talents to develop suitable techniques”; establish a development fund “to channel the capital the sector requires to become a permanent industry”—such a fund would support a production’s initial development 100 percent for the first two years and exhibit it under minimum distribution conditions (at least one public screening in Canada and abroad) and develop a script bank for motion picture ideas. Following reassessment of the experimental period at the end of which Cadieux felt the basis for an industry would have been established, loans could then be extended to approximately 50 films with budgets in the \$1m range over the succeeding four years (ibid.:42-48).

Cadieux met with the committee April 28 to discuss his report. While the discussion largely focussed on details about feature filmmaking in the Montreal area and Cadieux’s justification of an 100 percent state-supported experimental film fund, the first question he was asked is revealing. As the minutes of the eighteenth meeting put it:

Mr. Cadieux was asked whether Canada was really too late in trying to enter the feature film production field. Mr. Cadieux replied that it is difficult for a country or a society to escape from the complexity of the modern world and one of the aspects of that complexity today

is feature film making both as a cultural expression and as a means of employment for young creative people. In one way, government financial help to a nascent film industry might be considered as risk capital invested in the youth of the country (Minutes, op. cit.).

### 3.2 Firestone's distribution study (1965)

The capstone of the work of the committee would be the voluminous, two-part study, Film Distribution, Practices, Problems and Prospects, undertaken from late 1964 through October 1965 by University of Ottawa economist Otto John Firestone<sup>16</sup>. The study would represent the most comprehensive attempt undertaken to that point to 'crunch' the facets of the Canadian private film industry in exhibition-distribution-production into greater rational form as an economic object. The enterprise would be hazardous, not only because "It is difficult to find in Canada a more complex field to build a new industry than the film business" (NFBCA, A-460, 4125, Firestone I:R-S-35) but also because key data, such as the yearly outflow of remittances stemming from U.S. control of Canadian film distribution, were, as Firestone would inform the committee, "a most elusive set of figures" (Minutes, 19th meeting, May 25, 1965). Accordingly, Firestone would recommend that the introduction of a government aid program include a "statistical reporting system so as to obtain a more comprehensive

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<sup>16</sup> Of German background, Firestone would be interned in Canada during the Second World War. He would become economic advisor to Central Mortgage and Housing, heading their economic department, rising to the attention of postwar Liberal "Minister of Everything" C.D. Howe and subsequently head of the Economics Department at the University of Ottawa and assistant dean of social sciences. Politically well connected, he would be described by a CBC memo following publication of his 1966 study, Broadcast Advertising in Canada: Past and Future Growth, Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, as "definitely anti-CBC" and "obviously parroting the private industry line," see, O J W. Shragg, CBC director of Sales Policy and Planning, memo to CBC President, NAC, RG41, v.337, file 14-4-3. None of Firestone's film distribution study, although referred to as "legendary" in the literature on Canadian film policy (Spencer 1986), has ever been published in English. The chapter dealing with Quebec film distribution was translated into French and published in Sociologie et sociétés, VIII 1, avril 1976, 43-70.

overall view of the film production and distribution business in Canada and the place which an expanding Canadian film industry will play in this sector of economic activity" (ibid.:2-25).<sup>17</sup>

The study dealt with the problem of insufficient data by establishing as broad a consensus of opinion as possible and, where necessary, indicating discrepancies in the information gathered (for instance Firestone I, Ch.7:16 ff). In preparing the study, Firestone would consult with independent French-language distributors in Montreal as well as with professional associations of filmmakers such as the APC; the cross-section of the Canadian film industry represented by the Motion Picture Council of Canada; the Directors' Guild of Canada; Canadian representatives of the U.S. Majors represented by the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association, as well as representatives of their head-offices and the Motion Picture Association of America in New York City. Firestone would be advised on business aspects of Canadian independent distribution and exhibition by N.A. Taylor and his partner David Griesdorf, while Guy Côté of the APC would advise on technical aspects, and Michael Spencer of the committee acted as liaison officer, making available to Firestone copies of the briefs received by the committee whose proposals in their distribution aspects would be reported in Ch. 10 of the study. The Firestone study is thus widely reflective of the 'common sense' of the industry, particularly distributors.

The premise of the study and the policy options it would explore was that

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<sup>17</sup> An undated, unsigned NFB document, possibly written by Spencer, updating Firestone in 1968 from the perspective of the newly created CFDC would note that Firestone's "suggestion for long-term planning involving market analyses and statistical data on the industry was not included in the Objects and Powers of the Can Film Dev Corp [Act]. It is to be hoped that the industry itself, once it has got on a reasonably stable footing, would take an interest in...this kind of thing..." (NFBCA, A-460, 4365, "Introduction to Film Distribution Practices, Problems and Prospects," n.d., n.p )

...the key approach in any Government program to establish a viable film industry in Canada must be based on the premise that this country is creating an export industry like nickel which in the case of medium budget films must export something like 90 percent of its output if it is to prosper (Firestone I,1-23-24).

However, developing an export industry involved more than creating a favourable climate for individual initiative at home and financial assistance to help an infant industry on its feet. What was needed was a legal framework of broad international arrangements to facilitate successful marketing of the films Canadians would produce, either on their own or in conjunction with other foreign producers and distributors in coproduction or other partnership arrangements. It was thus necessary to take "a much broader approach," namely, to confront "the question of industry integration on a North American scale" paralleling recent continental policies between Canada and the U.S. with respect to oil and motor cars (ibid.:1-24). A similar export-oriented approach was also recommended for developing French-language film production in Canada through "the establishment of [greater] links between Canadian producers and European producer-distributors" (ibid.:1-25; also ch.8, Firestone 1976).

However, unlike its proven oil resources and growing markets or well-established automobile industry, Canada had little to offer world markets in the case of a film industry. In fact, Canadian exhibition had been declining up to 1963; production was "almost non-existent...except for a few heroic efforts on the part of individual producers plus a small number of feature films produced more recently by the National Film Board" (1-24); "about 80 percent of the total film distribution business done in Canada" was by U.S.-controlled companies (S-24); and "there does not appear at this time to be an international demand for

Canadian feature films" (10-12).

On the other hand, Canada did remit in excess of \$20m annually to U.S. film producers and distributors; it was said to be the fifth largest foreign market for U.S. film products—Firestone would tell the committee that in his view Canada was in fact probably the second or third largest U.S. market for feature film (Minutes, 19th meeting); Canadian and U.S. film producers and distributors had close business and organizational tie-ins; and in addition "the U.S. is also taking out large sums out (sic) of Canada in the form of rentals for films shown on television...[and] participation in [ownership] of Canadian [commercial] television stations" (1-25). From these interconnections, it followed not only that "U.S. distributors must play their proper part in the distribution of Canadian produced feature films" (R-S-25), but also that the successful marketing of Canadian-produced feature films required "direct assistance from the American film industry" (R-5-40, emphasis in original).

However, the key question for "a Government wishing to aid in the development of a feature industry" was "deciding which avenue to follow in pursuing the objective of maximizing returns from a Canadian produced film" (R-5-29a-30). The distribution options were two: television or theatres. It was possible, in the view of the study, "for the Canadian feature film-maker to bypass Canadian theatrical outlets [and so the problem of U.S. control of distribution] and exhibit their products primarily on Canadian television" (R-5-29a), with production costs underwritten by CBC and the private TV "networks" (sic). "Thus, TV networks could take the place of film showings in first-run locations, with theatre showing possibly relegated to re-run presentation...if shown at all" (ibid.). But, if the distribution route to be taken was theatrical, the policy

implications of U.S. control of theatres and film distribution in Canada had to be confronted. This the study undertook, particularly in Ch. 10, "Government Measures".

Among the broad range of measures discussed in the chapter (loans, subsidies, production advances, income tax remission, accelerated capital cost allowance, grants and awards, Canadian film registry office, public inquiry into restrictive trade practices in film distribution, quota as a means of last resort, a film development corporation, and film industry development committee), one in particular will be discussed here because it would (re)define the place of the U.S. film industry in the policy development of the Canadian one.

In effect, Firestone proposed that Canadian feature film development be formally structured by an agreement between Canada and the United States for a common market in feature film production (and also between Canada and Western Europe).

In the case of the United States, arrangements might be worked out for major American companies to participate in Canadian film productions and to handle international distribution of such films to the extent of 10 percent of U.S. film earnings in Canada over a five-year period. The framework would be a Canada-U.S. Film Agreement, another sequel to the "continental approach" (motor car agreement and oil policy) (R-S-33).

Such a plan, it should be pointed out, was only one among other policy measures and was as well not far removed from, if broader than, the principle of international coproduction. Secondly, such a plan had the tacit support of Canadian producers and distributors for whom

no adequate arrangements can be worked out for distributing Canadian produced films on a commercial basis unless such films



are exhibited not only successfully at home but also have full access to world markets including the U.S. with such access being made available through international film distributing facilities, especially those at the disposal of American major companies in the case of English language films, and possibly well established European firms in the case of French language films (7-38/R-7-39).

The representatives of the Canadian film industry consulted by Firestone were prepared in such a form and with the committee's support to negotiate continued access to the Canadian domestic market—a market, in the received wisdom of the industry, in any event too small to guarantee the commercial success of Canadian-produced films, though in Firestone's view “considering the size of Canada in terms of population and gross national product this country represents one of the major markets of the world in terms of film distribution” (7-3, emphasis added)<sup>18</sup>—in exchange for guaranteed access to U.S. and world markets through the U.S. majors. Accordingly Firestone, with the approval of the Interdepartmental Committee, broached the question of a Canada-U.S. Film Agreement with the U.S. major companies at a 1965 meeting in New York arranged by N.A. Taylor (Spencer 1986:13).

The problem was that, unlike the Canadians, the Americans were not interested in formal rationalization of a “continental approach” to feature film production. As Firestone reported to the committee at its nineteenth meeting (May 25), he

had discovered that American distributors were not interested in cooperating with each other, even on such an obviously useful thing.... Mr [Griffith] Johnson [president] of the MPAA had said

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<sup>18</sup> For Firestone, the Canadian market “is too small, even with comprehensive Government assistance, to produce sufficient numbers of feature films to meet all of Canada's entertainment requirements” (Firestone II, S-18, emphasis added), a significantly different emphasis.

that it was very difficult to get the ten majors together to do anything cooperatively. This is an industry of individualists (Minutes, op. cit).

As one U.S. film industry executive would comment on the proposed Canada-U.S. Film Agreement: "So far as I know, Canadian oil is just as good as American oil and Canadian cars are just as good as American cars but if Canadian films are going to be handled on the same basis as oil and cars, it scares the hell out of me" (Firestone II, S-22)<sup>19</sup>.

As Firestone would report in Part II of his study (submitted in October 1965, months after the Interdepartmental Committee had made its final report to cabinet), the American film companies preferred "voluntary arrangements" between themselves and Canadian producers rather than the legal framework of the Film Agreement with its entrenchment of what were viewed as "compulsory features" (II, S-19)<sup>20</sup>. Indeed, they proposed a counter-model of the kind of voluntary arrangement that could be concluded between private American film companies and the Canadian Government—the 1948 Canadian Cooperation Project (II: 5-23-25; also Ch. IV above).

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<sup>19</sup> In Spencer's memoir of the period, the Americans "really couldn't understand our enthusiasm for Canadian production. One of them remarked that the prospect scared the hell out of him" (see Spencer 1986:13).

<sup>20</sup> The Film Agreement proposal would be rejected on the following grounds. "(a) discrimination against American film producers; (b) forcing the production of non-economic films; (c) affecting adversely the creativeness and quality of films; (d) requiring large government subsidies and loans, the latter likely involving substantial losses; (e) inadequate public appeal of Canadian stars, producers and directors as compared with their American counterparts; (f) lack of adequate studios, including essential service facilities; (g) special characteristics of the film industry which makes invalid the drawing of any parallel with the Canada-US Motor Car Agreement and the Canada-US Oil Policy, (h) involving considerable administrative problems; (i) establishing Canadian Government interference with US private enterprise interests which have hitherto operated without such interference in Canada, with such action possibly bringing retaliatory measures from the US Government affecting Canadian business in the United States" (Firestone II, S-19/S-20).

In Firestone's view, while the Cooperation Project was "a useful example" of voluntary arrangements, it was a limited one to the extent that it had only used Canadian scenery as a backdrop for film shooting instead of using Canadian personnel and capital facilities:

A Canadian film industry cannot be built up by using Canadian scenery (sic). It must involve the employment of artists, authors, musicians, producers, directors and technical personnel. It is people and their ideas that create new and lasting values, and not reproductions of nature on a screen (II: 5-25).

Accordingly, while such voluntary arrangements were useful, "any direct arrangements between the Canadian Government and individual film companies" would have to "make quite clear...what would be expected from American film producers and distributors in participating in the development of a film industry in Canada" (ibid.). Firestone referred again to the range of measures proposed in the first part of the study.

Comprehensive government assistance, by transferring "part of the risk...from the private sector to the public sector" (10-12) could absorb some of the costs of film production, but could not significantly reduce the overall costs. The question was "not whether such assistance should be forthcoming but in what form, under what conditions and to what extent" (10-13). Given that nationalizing U.S.-controlled distribution firms was not only "contrary to established Canadian policies and traditions" (7-24/25) but impractical since "American motion pictures are likely to remain the main source of film showing in Canada...[and] this is what the Canadian public wants" (ibid.); given as well the "fairly general agreement, among producers and distributors alike, in Canada that a voluntary system of encouragement in the distribution area is preferable and that an import

quota system, if it is to be considered at all, should be...a means of last resort" (7-32),

a more rational alternative...would [be to] accept the assurance given by American controlled film distributors operating in Canada that Canadian made films would be given every opportunity for adequate distribution and exhibition in Canada (7-25).

Furthermore, given that "most experienced producers and distributors canvassed expressed the view that little harm and possibly greater benefits may accrue from allowing foreign investors [up to 50 percent]...participation in Canadian film ventures...during the infant industry phase, which may last between 5 and 10 years" (10-6, note 1), future Canadian feature film production in that period stood the best chance if it consisted of "internationally oriented films" (9-S-31). Of the four categories of possible genres examined by Firestone (the others were "quickies": good for experience but unpromising for international distribution; "low-budget": too much competition from American and European producers; and "spectaculars": too high risk and would require substantial government support, but could be undertaken for reasons of national interest), the internationally oriented film, costed at between \$350,000-750,000 "appears to be the most promising type of film that Canadian film producers could undertake in terms of distribution prospects in Canada and abroad" (ibid.). Finally, given the general agreement among producers and distributors "that 'national' film production limits the scope and the opportunities for commercial success" (3-25),

Canadian feature films are most likely to succeed as commercial ventures if they combine proven success formulae with a freshness of approach relying on top stars and first-class producers with world-wide reputations, assisted by and associated with Canadian

artists, professional and technical personnel. This would contribute importantly to such Canadian film-makers to grow (sic) in stature and experience over time. A variety (sic) of arrangements, including co-production, partnership, joint distribution and financing arrangements, etc., would serve such objectives (9-14).

This, of course, did not rule out “the need for experimentation including the use of Canadian artists in major roles,” though in the view of distributors such use would “greatly reduce” a “substantial” pre-sale and would require greater government support “or the film will never be made” (ibid.).

Spencer (1986) relates that Firestone’s “massive two-volume report” (i.e., the two volumes that comprise part I) would be attached to the Interdepartmental Committee’s final report to Cabinet. The size of the Firestone study

caused some concern at the Privy Council Office. “You can’t expect ministers to read all that stuff,” one officer remarked. In fact, the final memo was not too different from the first one I had drafted three years before (Spencer 1986:13).

#### 4. Recommendations of the Interdepartmental Committee

As though having taken completely literally Firestone’s observation that the question was not whether government assistance should be forthcoming, “but in what form, under what conditions and to what extent”, the main outlines of the committee’s recommendations were drawn by May-June 1965. Though the committee had commissioned a fourth report that raised some interesting questions with respect to national film policies—Guy Côté’s “A Survey of film legislation in several European countries with particular reference to National Feature Film Production and including statistical data for 1963” submitted April

6<sup>21</sup>—as far as the committee was concerned the rationale for government assistance was settled. Only the form, conditions and extent remained. In early June it would hold meetings with its two overseas consultants, Jean-Claude Batz of the Université Libre de Bruxelles and John Terry, managing director of the British National Film Finance Corporation<sup>22</sup>, largely concentrating on pragmatic details: how much money should be involved in the fund? how long should it be established for? how many films might it fund?

After fluctuating wildly—in its first memorandum to cabinet (April 28, 1964), the committee had estimated 30-50 features over three-four years based on a fund in the \$3-5m range; by May 1965, based on Cadieux, Spencer and Firestone estimates (though Cadieux had told the committee he thought the figures he had been given were exaggerated) it “assumed...that over a five-year period as many as a hundred films could be produced” (Minutes, 20th meeting)—the latter question would simply be dropped.

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<sup>21</sup> This intelligent study, researched with the assistance of Jean-Claude Batz, a Belgian professor instrumental in drafting that country's film legislation, and one of the two overseas consultants with whom the committee would meet in early summer 1965, and international film industry scholar Thomas Guback, would examine, among other things, some of the difficulties deriving from the concept of nationality in film, the role and variety of the domestic market as a factor in film production and its relationship to export strategies, and the efficiency of coproductions. The report's general conclusion would be that “The most recent thinking in Europe respecting aid mechanisms tends to favour giving considerable cash subsidies to private producers undertaking the making of entertainment films, provided these are produced by a predominantly national creative team and tend to be an expression of that country's culture, ideals and specific point of view” (NFBCA, A-460, 4365, A Survey 148)

<sup>22</sup> Perhaps because Spencer was English, the committee's relations with the overseas consultants appear to have been more favourably inclined towards the pragmatic Terry than the more abstract Batz. Language may also have been a factor as the committee's work, the briefs it received and the reports it commissioned, including both Cadieux and Côté, were all in English. Batz's subtle arguments concerning the role of the state in the feature film economy in a paper written in French for the committee do not appear to have had the least impact, least of all his warning against substituting “la raison d'Etat aux motivations lucratives” (NFBCA, A-460, 4365, Note au sujet de la production cinématographique de long métrage au Canada, Montréal, le 6 juin 1965)

The committee's second—and final—report to cabinet (July 28, 1965) would consist largely of reiteration of its earlier views, but now “confirmed” by the reports and studies undertaken for the committee whose findings the committee summarized in six paragraphs. Thus, from Firestone would be drawn some data on distribution in Canada, the emphasis on the high risk nature of film production, and that building a Canadian film industry would require substantial help from foreign producers through co- and joint-production; from Cadieux that cinema was an industry in which a nation's artists expressed themselves; from Côté that the purpose of state support of feature film industries was to maintain national production, with the resulting equation of Canadian private with national production (NFBCA, A-416, 4159, Second Report....:3,5,7,6,8).

The committee recommended establishment of “a Canadian film development corporation” subject to review after five years “to promote the overall development of the feature film industry in Canada” by providing financial assistance, fostering creative, technical and managerial skills, and advising and assisting those engaged in feature film production. The corporation would be empowered to invest in individual Canadian films; it should enjoy wide discretion in choice of projects but its decisions should be based on “the commercial potential and...intrinsic merit” of the films, assessed on the basis of scripts and distribution guarantees. The corporation should have some flexibility with respect to Canadian ownership and content. Headed by a board of 5-7 members appointed by the government, one member being the Government Film Commissioner, the corporate structure should be as simple as possible: an executive director, secretary, treasurer, comptroller, legal advisers and film production and budget specialists. A broadly representative film industry advisory group should be

appointed on the corporation's recommendation. For investment purposes, a revolving fund of \$8.5m should be established from consolidated revenue and an additional \$1.5m be appropriated for the initial five years for making awards and grants. Lastly, the "co-operation of major distribution companies is a necessity for the development of the industry and Canadian feature films must be given fair and equitable treatment in distribution and exhibition, particularly in Canada" (Second Report...:9-13):

It is, however, difficult to prejudge the attitude which the major distributors will take toward Canadian productions. This can only be determined after Canadian producers have made a number of films and have established a proven record. Little or no evidence exists at the moment to show that there would be a negative attitude on the part of foreign-controlled distribution companies (Second Report...:12-13)

#### 5. Lamontagne's policy framework for feature development, 1964-1965

The emergence of an industrial discourse for feature film development would be paralleled in the speeches of Secretary of State Maurice Lamontagne. Two speeches in particular, one at the time of the establishment of the Interdepartmental Committee, the other subsequent to its recommendations, evidence the displacement of what was initially a discourse about cultural development by one of industrial development. As well, such a displacement paralleled the transition of institutionalization underway, from the old institution embodied in the NFB, to the new one that would be established with the Canadian Film Development Corporation.

At the official celebration of the NFB's 25th anniversary, August 5, 1964, Lamontagne had repeated much of the substance of the 1956 speech he had written for then Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent (see Ch. III). This, it will be



recalled, was a rationale for the policy state's intervention in the domain of cultural production to redress the disequilibrium between Canada's economic growth and the poverty and isolation of Canadian cultural life. The NFB anniversary speech was an occasion for bringing the same framework to bear upon the problem of feature film production.

For Lamontagne in 1964, "it is essential...that a country with a high standard of living like ours should try to create an atmosphere in which motion pictures, radio, television, the theatre and music will provide means of expression for creative Canadians, and sources of intellectual enrichment for the public at large." Particularly "...in cultural matters, a country cannot live continually by borrowing its material from others. It must set up itself the institutions it needs" (NFBCA, A-183, 3005, Secretary to the Board, Allocutions-Hon. Maurice Lamontagne 1964/65). The NFB was the institution through which "we now have a place in the [international] film world....[I]n one field of the arts at least, we have succeeded in doing something good...".

But while the Board's shorts were by no means a minor cinematic genre, another film form, the feature-length film, had since emerged which, as a form of artistic creation, "est un mode d'expression fort séduisant et...très efficace":

C'est au cinéma aujourd'hui que...nous retrouvons toutes les grandes interrogations, toutes les angoisses, tous les problèmes, mais aussi toutes les réussites de l'homme. Un pays qui n'a pas de cinéma de long métrage se prive d'un des plus importants moyen de s'exprimer (ibid., Allocution...5 août:3).

Not only did a national film industry produce a communicative product qui "permet à un peuple...de dire ce qu'il a à dire dans la forme la plus accessible de notre époque...", but feature film is "de nos jours, le produit culturel le plus

facilement et le plus massivement exportable" (ibid.). For these reasons, if the government did decide to undertake a major offensive to counter Canadian cultural poverty, a feature film industry would rank among the objectives of such an offensive. In this, "le concours de l'Etat est aujourd'hui indispensable...". Therefore, in the domain of cinema, while the state would continue to support the Board, it also "parallèlement...doit apporter un appui nécessaire à la réalisation de longs métrages par des producteurs indépendants." In other words, state objectives in cinema were now dual and of equal importance.

The problem was that "we cannot be equally happy about the present state of the Canadian film industry":

Unlike most other countries with similar problems and similar professional talents, we seem to have been unable to bring forth a film industry in Canada which could find its inspiration in a Canadian setting and produce and distribute a Canadian-made product to place alongside the production of the National Film Board (ibid.:3-4).

Accordingly, the function of the state would be to bring forth such a film industry and the National Film Board would henceforth be subordinated to that development, particularly to the extent that "one of the functions of the Board would be to assist...in the development of a Canadian film industry" and to continue to do so. While Lamontagne went on to announce the government's intention to ask Parliament for authority to establish a loan fund for production of high quality Canadian feature films, it was the tripartite nature of the involvement of government, Film Board and industry in that development that he would emphasize in concluding: "Je souhaite vivement que, par les efforts combinés de l'Office, des producteurs et du gouvernement, l'homme canadien soit, et cela

dans un avenir prochain, de plus en plus présent sur les écrans de son propre pays et sur ceux de nombreux pays étrangers" (ibid:4-5).

Just over a year later, in an October 13, 1965 speech to the Canadian Conference of the Arts, Lamontagne would give an account of the work and recommendations of the Interdepartmental Committee in "a broad outline of the film policy which the federal government intends to implement...to help this vital new industry" (NFBCA, A-183, 3005, Excerpt...Oct. 13, 1965:3). While he occasionally referred to the cultural aspects of feature film development, the emphasis was now clearly economic in the wake of the committee's work:

We have observed another important gap in our national life: our private feature film industry is weak....This is not good for the Canadian identity; this is not good for our cultural life; this is not even good economics, because good commercial films can make a positive contribution to employment and income to our balance of payments and stimulate our tourist industry (ibid:1).

He was also quite candid in the policy conclusions which had by that point been reached. Both the proposed Canadian Film Development Corporation "and the producers which it will assist will be expected to work with and through established distributors to arrange for the widest possible distribution of the films in Canada and abroad" (ibid.:2). While some countries imposed import controls to protect their domestic industry, the Canadian state preferred "a reasonable share of the domestic and foreign markets through measures of encouragement and international co-operation":

We can now hope to have the co-operation of American film companies in our effort to build a film industry in Canada. There are great advantages indeed in developing an industry which will cater to the North American market. We have developed...recently successful techniques in sharing our markets in other areas for the

greater good of Canadians and Americans alike. In the field of feature films, we have now a kind of common market which goes only one way. We must try to make it two ways.

As a result of this co-operation and these joint ventures which, we hope, will develop not only with American but also with French, British and other producers, we expect that Canadian films will have free access to foreign markets just as foreign films now have free access to the Canadian market (ibid.:3).

In this way, "We believe that a dynamic Canadian film industry can make a great contribution to our national economy and our cultural life." The discursive shift from cultural poverty to the new subject of policy—"this vital new industry"—was just about complete.

#### 6. The Transformation of Cinderella

Based on the committee's final report, Lamontagne on August 12, 1965, recommended to cabinet establishment of a Canadian film development corporation. At the cabinet committee meeting which considered film policy, "some suspicion" would be expressed as to "how the National Film Board will be involved." As Interdepartmental Committee member Under-Secretary of State Ernie Steele memoed Lamontagne about the cabinet committee meeting, "it is important from the point of view of policy to create a clear distinction in the public mind" between the new Film Development Corporation and the NFB (NAC, RG6, v.848, 5020-1, memo Steele to SoS, Sept. 2, 1965). The Minister, Steele advised, "might wish to [re]consider whether the lead [on CFDC legislation] should be given by Guy Roberge" who had written to the Department of Justice about drafting the legislation that would become the Canadian Film Development Corporation Act and be formally introduced to the House of

Commons, June 20, 1966<sup>23</sup>. By then Roberge too had resigned as Government Film Commissioner, accepting a posting in London with the Quebec government.

With the Act finally passed in February 1967, Michael Spencer, who became the CFDC's first executive director when the CFDC was organizationally set up in February 1968, sent a memo to Steele:

You know the Canadian Private Film Industry has always been a bit of a Cinderella—left at home to brush dusty Television Commercials and Industrial Films into the corner—while its glamorous sister the National Film Board goes to the ball and brings back all the international prizes....

Passage of the CFDC Act meant that future Canadian feature film development was now framed by “a law to assist a Canadian film industry [into which] we tried to build...the best we could find in other countries.” Spencer hoped that “with our ten million dollars...our...Cinderella will expand in a \$50,000,000 lusty starlet and start making her mark on Canadian screens.” But the credit for Cinderella's transformation, Spencer remarked, rested with the NFB and Roberge in particular:

on the whole...the private producers owe much to the efforts which the Board has made over the years on their behalf. It was this agency, after all, which suggested first that something should be done to build a feature industry in the private sector. It was under the chairmanship of Guy Roberge, the former Film Commissioner, that all the home-work was done which led to the creation of the Film Development Corporation (NAC, RG6, v.848, file 5020-1, Spencer to Steele, draft memorandum to Minister, Feb. 20, 1967).

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<sup>23</sup> By Judy LaMarsh who became Secretary of State after Lamontagne was forced to resign in the wake of a scandal involving “the small-time ugliness of cut-rate furniture trading with questionable characters on the fringe of the Quebec underworld” (see Newman 1968:285ff).

With the establishment of the CFDC, the task of delimitation that would be the state discursive formation's contribution to the discursive economy of the Canadian feature film was accomplished.

## Chapter Six

### Other Discourses in the Canadian Film Industry, 1963-1967:

#### Filmmakers, Criticism, and the Problem of Voice

Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer. The maxim is so perfectly self-evident, that it would be absurd to attempt to prove it. But in the mercantile system, the interest of the consumer is almost constantly sacrificed to that of the producer; and it seems to consider production, and not consumption, as the ultimate end and object of all industry.... —Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, Bk. IV

...nous étions des infirmes. — filmmaker Gilles Groulx (1964)

Chaque cinéaste, seul, misérable, sans structure de pensée...se débat avec ses petites angoisses et il parle de son long métrage où il va enfin tout dire à la face du monde. — filmmaker Denys Arcand (1964)

To recur to the terms of Dermody & Jacka's model (see Ch. 1), the dominant discursive form within which Canadian feature film policy would be articulated was an "Industry-2" discourse—that of a commercial film industry. We have just seen, in the previous chapter, that such a development of feature film policy, in particular in the frame given it by the state discursive formation (a continental or transnational context), was broadly consensual—a consensus, however, especially attentive to the viewpoints of the established producers and distributors. We saw as well, in the case of the two studies by francophones commissioned by the

Interdepartmental Committee (Côté and Cadieux) that, while different conceptions of the role of the state were possible, they did not noticeably impact either upon the committee's deliberations nor its recommendations. One reason they did not is that these would have necessitated a more extensive role for the state which went against the logic of governmentality as delimitation, particularly as concerned an expanded role for state agencies such as the NFB. A related reason might be that alternative emphases stemmed from a different order of valuation in which the feature film derived its value more from "cultural" than "economic" characteristics. In this chapter, we examine this "difference" of emphasis in approaching feature film, particularly how it would be given discursive form in the Quebec context, and whether the value ascribed to the feature-style elaborated by the direct filmmakers at the Board might have formed the basis for alternative policies in feature film development. In short, we examine the question of alternative formations within the film industry to the commercial discourse institutionalized in the discursive economy of the Canadian feature. Here, 'film industry' will be understood in a broader sense to include other sites developing within the discursive economy such as film festivals and film criticism.

### 1. The Association professionnelle des cinéastes, 1963-1964

Cadieux had reported to the Interdepartmental Committee that the film 'industry' in Quebec was still at the stage of an unstable craft industry in which specialization of functions had not yet developed. While that may have been so of the division of labour generally, certain functions within this, however, had early on developed specific organizational characteristics reflecting a process of professionalization. This would notably be the case of the Association



professionnelle des cinéastes, the professional association established in spring 1963 as a result of the work of a provisional committee created in fall 1962 by seven francophone Film Board filmmakers. Not only would the APC be the first "réellement cinématographique" association in the Quebec context, it would define its specificity as an association of French-speaking professionals within a branch of production defined by the association's statutes as "la création artistique de films" (Véronneau 1987; 1984:21). Although increasingly conscious of itself as a corporate entity, the APC's would not be a defensive corporatism. On the contrary, as Véronneau puts it,

Ceux qui y travaillent ont des idées larges, globales, généreuses, utopiques. Ils ont une vision de leur métier, de leur place professionnelle, de l'importance de leur art et, au-delà de leurs objectifs corporatistes, visent un ensemble plus large, l'établissement d'une cinématographie nationale qui se conçoit...à cette époque...à l'intérieur et bénéficiant du concours de l'Etat canadien (Véronneau 1984:22).

APC membership rapidly grew by 1964 to just over 100 persons which represented, as the APC's briefs noted, "almost all the French-speaking film makers in Canada" (APC, March 1964). Half of these worked at the Board; a majority of members worked in the short film form (Véronneau: *ibid.*). The bulk of the APC's efforts, especially in that year, would consist in lobbying the state for the establishment of a feature film industry. This would take the form of the discursive production of four principal briefs addressed alternatively, and often in identical language, to the Canadian or Quebec governments<sup>1</sup>. To the APC, it

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<sup>1</sup> The APC's 1964 briefs comprised as well English versions of the following: "Mémoire présenté au Secrétaire d'Etat du Canada; vingt-deux raisons pour lesquelles le Gouvernement du Canada doit favoriser la création d'une industrie de cinéma de long métrage au Canada et s'inquiéter des conséquences économiques et culturelles de l'état actuel de la distribution et de l'exploitation des films"

mattered less which, as long as the state acted. As the APC's March 1964 brief to the Quebec government put it,

It is up to the state to plan the cinema industry in such a way that the film-maker can have freedom to create and to show his works to the public, otherwise all the speeches on the virtues of freedom will be only words thrown to the wind (CQ, APC, General Measures..., March 1964:5-6).

In certain respects, the APC briefs differed from the discursive formulations we have encountered so far. For one, the APC briefs gave greater emphasis to "the monopolistic structure of distribution and exhibition of [feature] films in Canada" (APC, Twenty-two reasons..., February 1964, point 20, n.p.). As a U.S.-controlled monopolistic structure, "the prime motive in determining Canadian film programming is not necessarily to obtain a maximum profit for theatres in Canada...it is to attain maximum profits for the American producers and distributors" (ibid: point 19). From this, it followed not only that "this system is not interested in creating a Canadian competition" (ibid: point 20)—not surprisingly, "We do not know of a single instance where the profits or credits amassed by the American distribution companies have been used to finance a Canadian film" (ibid)—but also that "the highly integrated character of the American film distribution [system] in Canada" produces "tragic cultural consequences. Economic dependence in this field leads inevitably to cultural

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(février 1964); "Mesures que l'APC recommande au gouvernement du Canada pour favoriser le développement d'une industrie du cinéma de long métrage conformément aux intérêts économiques et culturelles du pays" (mars 1964); "Mémoire présenté au premier ministre du Québec; mesures d'ensemble que l'APC recommande au gouvernement du Québec pour favoriser le développement d'une industrie du cinéma de long métrage conformément aux intérêts économiques et culturels de la population" (mars 1964); and "Mémoire présenté par l'APC au Comité de la radiodiffusion" (octobre 1964). As well, the APC's position, summarizing the briefs, would be restated in speeches by APC president Guy Côté: e.g., the speech given to the AGM of the Canadian Society of Cinematographers, May 9, 1964 (based on Véronneau 1984:22; Côté's speech, NFB/CA, 4297, P-170)

colonialism" felt particularly acutely by "Toronto producers" (ibid:21, 17). As a result, increasing foreign ownership and control of the Canadian economy represented "[t]he most perplexing dilemma (sic) with which Canada is faced" (APC, Measures...March 1964:3).

Unlike, say, Spencer or Firestone for whom internationalization of feature film production provided both a rationale for the establishment of a Canadian feature film industry and the genres its films should emulate, the APC viewed the internationalization of film production rather more negatively. Internationalization of U.S. capital, as it was currently affecting European film production, only further compounded the dilemma. The APC March 1964 brief, "Measures recommended by l'Association professionnelle des cinéastes to the Government of Canada to encourage the development of a feature film industry compatible with the country's economic and cultural aspirations," outlined the "vast international co-production system" that would likely be one of the "unfortunate results" of the current American "commercial offensive in the very heart of the European market":

It will almost be necessary for "international" films to please the whole world. There will have to be a little of everything put in them. Subjects will have to be absolutely safe. Moral or political attitudes will have to be avoided. Stars from the four corners of the world will be used and they will often be unable even to understand one another. Voices will have to be dubbed in a multiplicity of foreign languages. The result will be hybrid works that no culture will be able to identify (Measures..., March 1964:6).

Likewise, establishment of Canadian feature-length cinematic production with American capital "would...bring with it Hollywood methods, a top-heavy super-structure patterned on the U.S. corporation, officialdom among technicians,

the star system, high-pressure publicity, and the need to subject all films to the requirements of the American public" (ibid.:7).

For the APC, what distinguished the specificity of the Canadian—"or at least its filmmakers"—aspiration to feature filmmaking was that it went against "the winds of internationalization...sweeping...the western world" (Measures...,ibid:6). And such a contrary aspiration had paradoxically arisen in a country that did not have "its own national film industry," whose population "falls short of 19 million," and, furthermore, was "divided between two cultures and languages" and "thinly scattered along the frontier which separates Canada from the colossus of our time" (ibid.). In such a context, only the intervention of the state could provide the necessary measures required: "The State must intervene..." (ibid.:3).

For the APC, intervention by the state in the field of the feature film could take two possible forms. One possibility was that "government should just take over, 'en bloc,' the fledgling Canadian cinema in order to put it on its feet" (Measures...,:7). But this would be tantamount to "dabbling in totalitarianism," since "the actions that government takes are not intended to replace those of private investment but rather to open new fields of action and to increase its efficiency" (ibid.:3). For the APC, the outstanding characteristic of the cinema, "its main medium of stimulation," was competition and it was this and freedom of enterprise that guaranteed the "maximum vitality" of "the film industry"—that it "must hold its own in the constant requirement to pull in the greatest possible number of spectators" (ibid.:7).

However, in Canada, "the cinema provides a particularly cogent example of a sector in which private industry has been unable to exist because of economic obstacles that it could not, by itself, overcome" (ibid.:3). These obstacles

comprised: too small an internal market; exhibition controlled by foreign capital; lack of Canadian risk capital; absence of language barriers against competition by films from the United States, France and Britain; and competition from television (*ibid.*). In this context, the role of the state would be to effectuate "a new understanding between the public and private sectors of the economy" (*ibid.*)—in particular, to limit further extension of film production by the NFB and the CBC and redirect it towards the development of a competitive private industry. Such an industry, with the backing of economic measures undertaken by the state on its behalf, would then be better positioned to competitively overcome whatever obstacles remained.

Yet, despite greater emphasis upon cinema's cultural characteristics<sup>2</sup>, and the feature film in particular as a dialogical communicative form (see e.g., Twenty-two reasons...), the discourse of the APC in 1964 was substantially identical to that of its counterpart emergent private sector in film production in Toronto (see Ch. III & IV). And with the one notable difference that the APC would

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<sup>2</sup> By 1965-66, this emphasis in APC briefs was becoming stronger as culture would be increasingly defined linguistically. In this light, cinema with its reputed power to create fantasms, images and profound identifications, came second after language as a tool for the cultural differentiation of collectivities. The absence of an indigenous cinema thus deprived "le peuple" of a major sense organ, that of vision. Given this, the APC's tone in the face of government institutional torpor became increasingly despairing. This is evident in an untitled brief in NFBCA, 3082, P-13, in which the 1965-66 executive states that "L'APC a entrepris tout ce qui était humainement possible de faire dans la profession en vue de préparer la naissance de l'industrie. Mais l'APC n'est pas le gouvernement" (*ibid.*:5). On the APC's exhaustion by 65-66 and the association's subsequent crises, see Véronneau 1984:24-25. In effect, torn apart by the contradiction between the need to survive by any means, the slowness of the federal state in establishing the CFDC, and the Quebec state's steadfast non-involvement, the APC (and beyond it the private film 'industry' in Quebec) shattered into eight antagonistic interest groups that, paradoxically, attested to the development of a more clearly delineated division of labour. As had occurred in Toronto, these groups would make repeated, unsuccessful efforts to refederate into larger industry organizations. Thus, for example, the 1970 Fédération québécoise de l'industrie du cinéma in its supplications to the Quebec state for economic assistance bears an extraordinary resemblance to the abortive Motion Picture Council of Canada's pleas for federal economic support.

recommend a legislated minimum 75 percent ownership by Canadian capital of motion picture theatres in Canada, its policy recommendations would be similar as well (Measures...,ibid:17-18).<sup>3</sup> To the extent that the APC claimed to represent "close to the totality of French-speaking film-makers in Canada" (Twenty-two reasons...op. cit.: preamble), it is difficult to see its contribution to the discursive economy of the Canadian feature in any other perspective than as part of a discursive alliance between Toronto producers and film professionals and an as yet undifferentiated 'totality' of Quebec filmmakers in substantial agreement as to the delimitative role of the state in the development of a Canadian, privately-owned, commercially-driven, feature film industry. The APC's discursive productions of 1964 were themselves an integral part of the emergent private-sector discourse to which the state would respond and, after its fashion, give institutional form. Such as it existed within the discursive economy, resistance would be to the (APC) discourse on the feature film—not the other way around. It is to such resistance within the Canadian film industry that we now turn.

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<sup>3</sup> Since the APC brief Measures... in particular would command the attention of the Interdepartmental Committee more than any other, its recommendations may be worth listing in summary form. 1) economic development measures by public authorities will make a feature film industry a reality; 2) justification for such measures is both economic and cultural; 3) greater association with Britain and Common Market countries to counterbalance US control of the Canadian film business, 4) feature film production must be recognized as a wholly competitive enterprise; 5) and 6) greater coordination of federal and provincial film policies, but the inaction of one does not excuse the inaction of the other; 7) government loans to private producers along lines of Britain's NFFC; 8) a Film Production Fund to grant premiums to private feature producers, pro-rated to box-office receipts; 9) import taxes only on advertising clips; 10) no import quota on foreign films; 11) maintenance of Canadian content TV screen quota, complemented by further economic measures to promote production of quality Canadian telecasts by private sector; 12) legislated 75 percent Canadian-ownership of theatres; 13) further coproduction agreements (e.g., UK and Italy); 13) NFB to produce features only to further the prestige of Canada; 14) all revenues from NFB features to be turned over to Receiver-general; 15) if CBC to augment present film production, all technical services to be rented from private industry and feature film producers in particular; 17) establishment of an administrative board clearly distinguished from NFB by federal government to administer all aspects of the film industry (Measures ...,17-19)

## 2. Resistance to the feature within the film industry, 1964

Given their cohabitation, English-speaking filmmakers at the National Film Board could not but be affected by the ferment among their colleagues in French Production<sup>4</sup>. Like them, they would form in December 1963 their own professional association of "film craftsmen and artists," the Society of Film Makers, equivalent to the APC, "that very dynamic and militant sister organization," "to bring some weight to bear on the development of the Canadian industry from the creative individual's point of view..." (NFBCA, Aims and Achievements of the Society of Film Makers, Oct. 5, 1967, 5S, B77). With 87 members by 1984, the great majority of whom worked at the Board, the SFM would also submit a brief to the Interdepartmental Committee<sup>5</sup> and would later claim to have been "instrumental in aiding" both the drafting and the legislative

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<sup>4</sup> As a background paper prepared for the Board of Governors' 69th meeting (October 1964) would put it. "French Canada is in a ferment; it is searching for its identity. English Canada's uneasiness is just as real and deep, even if less conspicuous and less vocal. English Canada is going through a crisis parallel to that of French Canada because it also wishes to find ways and means whereby it could identify itself deeply with this country. Canadians as a group are revising the values which are the very fabric of their country" (Minutes, 69th meeting, appendix 8).

<sup>5</sup> The SFM brief, mainly an enumeration of film-making and film-writing talent, was "strongly support[ive]" of the concept of federal government assistance to feature film production, from the perspective of "the development of a truly national cinema." Unlike the APC, the SFM believed "the National Film Board has a significant role to play in developing Canadian feature films, a role that will complement and assist the work of private industry, rather than conflict with it" (NFBCA, 5S, B77, SFM, Submission to the Secretary of State on Feature Film Production Possibilities in Canada, n.d.: 2,4-5). The third professional association to submit briefs to the Interdepartmental Committee was the Directors' Guild of Canada which submitted two briefs. The DGC favoured the encouragement of a simpler, "lower budget" approach to feature production. It would be the only association to recommend that "The CBC should be considered as a means of exhibiting Canadian-produced feature films" (see summary in Firestone I-10-3/10-4).

passage of the CFDC Act (ibid.). The SFM, by its emphasis on an auteurist cultural politics of creative individuality especially manifested in the feature form, can be taken as the English-language equivalent to the discourse of the APC (Davies 1966).

The resistance such a discourse aroused within English Production at the Board is thus worth noting. That of management was perhaps predictably to be expected, though not sufficiently so as to be dismissed outright. Grant McLean, then Director of English Production, in a June 1964 memo to Film Commissioner Guy Roberge, would attribute the Board filmmakers' increasing preoccupation with the development of a Canadian feature film industry to a generation gap on the one hand but also, as part of it, to a changing aesthetic that the Board could only oppose. Increasingly in recent years, the Board had found itself "obliged to justify th[e] limitations [of filmmaking in the public service]...particularly to the younger generation of film-makers":

That generation is inclined to the view, shared by the younger practitioners in all the arts, that the only restraints that are creatively relevant are those self-imposed by the artist himself and that all others are intolerable and destructive (NFBCA, 1122, P-51, McLean to Roberge, June 4, 1964:3).

While McLean felt the Board had to live with these views, it also had to "firmly" maintain against them its own institutional aesthetic—"namely that the discipline of public service is consonant with authentic film-making and...can compare favourably with any other film-making experience, if not on economic grounds, then...on creative and moral grounds" (ibid.:3-4, emphasis in original). If this was unacceptable to filmmakers "intent on making a name in the entertainment field, [they] should leave the Board rather than blithely attempting



to ignore the fact that at the Board they are dealing with public funds" (ibid.:4). It followed from this, McLean continued, "that the Board does not have a major role to play in feature films" (ibid.:7). And if the Board "continue[d] to think in much larger terms regarding feature films (and I think this is the case with at least part of our French language production)", this could only end by weakening—if not destroying—the Board's principal, documentary programme. "I believe also that the private sector will attack the Board's extensive development in this field and will succeed in getting us out of features—perhaps completely. But by that time we will have lost more than the right to make even the occasional feature" (ibid.:7,8).

McLean's position would be shared and further extended in a lengthy statement three "co-signers, who have nothing in common but membership in the NFB and represent no function other than that membership" would send Roberge late in 1964. Entitled "NFB 1964...Some Observations," it was co-signed by three documentarians, Nick Balla, Ron Dick and Dan Fraser, who acknowledged that while "they seek to represent only themselves [consider]...they form a broad cross-section [of opinion] within the institution" (NFBCA, 1070, A-392, n.d., and accompanying letter).

What concerned the three above all was that

The NFB...has increasingly come to be influenced by the reflections of a narrow circle of critics, ciné-club enthusiasts, festival committees and brother film-makers — rather than by...the average viewer... (ibid.: accompanying letter:3).

There was "a distinct danger of the NFB becoming oriented predominantly to the will and caprice of some of its film-makers, rather than to the needs of its audiences" (ibid.:2). Not only was this growing tendency reflected in NFB films

whose subject-matter was “increasingly dictated by the priorities of the film-maker’s private aesthetic adventure,” but the organizational life of the institution itself was fragmenting “into internal pressure groups, factional in character” and “pretend[ing] to...‘consensus omnium.’” By the advocacy of policies “presented under the attractive and, in part, legitimate slogans of aesthetic and national[ist] idealism,” the factions were attempting “to create an environment of total license for the film-maker” which, not only distorted the past role of the NFB in Canadian society, but risked for the future “to reduce the NFB...to...an art-factory...in a narrowly parochial film-world” (ibid.:1-4).

“NFB 1964...” addresses “The recent ferment within the NFB, the endless discussions and arguments, the spate of briefs and reports” and largely consists of summary and refutation of two briefs in particular “claiming to represent the considered views of a consensus of NFB English-language film-makers” which, “if they come to dominate the minds of our film-makers, are full of serious implications for the future of the NFB” (NFB 1964....:3).

The first brief—referred to only as “document No. 1”—claimed to embody the “general opinion of the English-language staff” that both staff and institution “are sick unto death” from lack of purpose and lack of artistic freedom. Discontent was so “massive” within the institution that “only a ‘dictatorship of creative artists’ would save the NFB from a dusty death” (ibid.:4, emphasis in original).

“Document No. 2” receives greater attention. This is a call for the radical conversion of the NFB into a germinal centre of “pure applied research” and

experimentation to be put to the disposal of the Canadian film industry<sup>6</sup>. The NFB should become a Crown Corporation; its educational and sponsored film programmes should go to private industry, leaving the Board free to experiment with quality theatrical shorts, a few large TV items, and particular concentration upon, as "NFB 1964..." puts it sarcastically, "the experimental, the unconventional and the undistributable" (ibid.:5-7).

We should not go hog-wild about features, the document cautions, restricting ourselves to next to nothing, a mere four or so a year. But these should be ingeniously designed so that they neither compete with, nor hinder, private film producers. And, preferably, they should lose money either by leading taste in commercial cinemas, or following it in art houses. Despite the large expenditure for these fewer items and smaller audiences, it will be worth it in 'prestige,' for the small audiences will be pure gold, being full of people who count, and who influence taste (ibid.:7-8).

Two aspects of both documents were particularly alarming to the three authors of "NFB 1964...". Firstly, that the discourse of professional creativity went side-by-side with "a touching solicitude for Private Industry":

It is constantly emphasized that nothing that is contemplated will hurt or harm them and almost everything is intended to help them. They are to be stimulated and strengthened. In fact, there should also be a high degree of fluidity between the NFB staff and private industry (ibid.:8).

Secondly—and it was this point that the three found especially disturbing—that the insistence upon the creativity of the filmmaker was at the expense of a notion of audience; indeed, that the very concept of audience was to be sacrificed

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<sup>6</sup> A similar—and still controversial—recommendation would be made by the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee Report in 1982.

upon the altar of the boundless narcissism of the filmmaker:

In these documents the word "film-maker" appears some 50 times. The word "audience" appears only four times. The normal relationship of one to the other is dramatically and significantly out of balance. Audiences are not to be studied, served, worked with - they are to be led, and if they prove to be intractable, they are to be replaced by specialized groups who are in on the game (ibid:11).

Every page of these documents bristles with references to the film-maker. The word audience hardly ever appears. Yet a film, if anything, is a link, a transmission belt of communication between a film-maker and an audience. The documents talk endlessly of one end of this process and never mention the other. Perhaps they presume that film-maker and audience are part of the same group. Film-maker to film-lover (ibid.:16, emphasis added).

For the authors of "NFB 1964..." what, above everything, had characterized the NFB from its inception was "a remarkable and close relationship with audiences." This relationship was "the foundation of our program, the source of our inspiration, the basis of our 'raison d'être',...our justification, our guide, our mentor" (ibid.). That is what the discourse of creativity threatened to sever—by substituting "manner" for "matter," by inverting the relationship between subject and expression to concentrate solely upon self-expression, "genuine communication is lost, [and]...coteries are exchanged for real audiences" (ibid.:19).

The English-Canadian debate over the discourse of creativity and its expressive form, the feature, would not only take place within the Board in 1964; it would also surface—briefly—that year within the film —industry' in Toronto. In the March-April issue of Canadian Cinematography, the monthly (in good years) magazine put out by the Canadian Society of Cinematographers since

November 1961,<sup>7</sup> published an unsigned article entitled "Do We Expect Too Much Too Soon From the Film Industry" (Canadian Cinematography, v.3, n.3, March-April 1964:8).

In effect, for the anonymous author of the article, the outstanding characteristic of the Canadian feature film was its discursive circulation within an economy of signification whose workings he outlined as follows:

If one believed everything one read in Canadian newspapers, the Canadian film industry "should have exploded sometime during the past two or three years." Prominently-displayed newspaper features had time and again predicted this explosion, and to illustrate it, had pointed to the evidence of "a low budget 'feature' that a small group of film enthusiasts have produced with good intent." The 'feature' would then be hailed as another sign of the "exciting, smoldering vitality that exists among Canadian film-makers." Yet, within the same newspaper, but on an inside page, the film critic, "who has reviewed 8 1/2 [1963] the week before, gently pans the film and excuses its 'amateurism' on the grounds that any effort is better than none at all." After playing in a few local halls, the

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<sup>7</sup> The ('SC' was established with Film Board assistance as a professional association in October 1957 at the Meridian Studios in Toronto, with 27 members. It became a chartered association in 1960 to promote and foster cinematography in Canada; to develop and promote the interests of cinematographers; to provide members with technical and other information; and to function free from political, partisan, and labor-management issues. By late 1961, it had a membership of 61 cinematographers from coast to coast, and was headquartered in Toronto with a branch office in Montreal. In November 1961, it began publishing Canadian Cinematography which would change its name in fall 1967 to Cinema Canada, publishing regularly until 1969 and intermittently thereafter. In March 1972, Cinema Canada would begin the first issue of its second edition with funding from the CSC, only to break from it as of the second issue (May/June 1972). An editorial in that second issue expressed the hope that "Considering the high death rate among Canadian magazines, we would not like to become a statistic on the debit side of the business." No longer the house organ of a technically-oriented professional association, Cinema Canada became—as it had hoped to—the forum of the industry it was trying to serve by recording its history. Cinema Canada would publish uninterruptedly until its demise, after 169 issues, in December 1989. The author of this dissertation was privileged to have been associate editor of Cinema Canada from 1980-1985.

film has had its moment of glory—and “another attempt at a ‘Canadian feature’ dies a natural, understandable death.” Conversely, from time to time, “the worst type of ‘B’ movies...emerge periodically from various studios in Canada....” They play a downtown Toronto theatre for a week or two and “disappear, fortunately never to be heard of again.” But the producers of these films are hailed as the “saviours of the industry of tomorrow.” Unfailingly, “every six months or so, we read about producers and directors who have great plans to start shooting a feature—and after a while nothing more is heard of these plans.” All of this serves no purpose except to create “another national complex” in which the “all-Canadian feature” is placed in the same category as the “all-American novel.” The result is that “‘the industry’ is being forced into a position (without even being consulted) where it is expected, eventually, to produce feature films...as the ultimate form of film-making in Canada.” Perhaps the time had come, instead, for the ‘industry’ to examine itself.

For the unknown writer, what reputation Canada possessed in filmmaking had been established by the NFB in the documentary and experimental fields. Outside the Board, one or two directors had won recognition at international festivals, but this work could not be adequately judged until (according to “Truffault” [sic]) their third film. Beyond this, “The national scene is made up primarily of television films and it is in this field [that] we stand or fall as an industry” (emphasis added). It was television production and the “Madison Avenue oriented TV commercial” in particular which constituted “the foundation that makes up the industry”:

Is this level...high enough from which to expect miracles? Are we expecting too much, too soon, in dreaming of a feature industry? With the length and scope of some television films now being

made, are we down grading them unjustly as films, just because they don't have theatrical release? Perhaps all this talk...is just wishful thinking? (emphasis in original)

For the unknown writer, Canada certainly did not rank, either by critical or competitive standards, as a "world film power." This was not necessarily a bad thing, for there was plenty to do on the national scene to improve the industry before the prophesied feature film explosion occurred. One could begin by improving critical standards. If producers and directors wished to presume that, in the case of the first, their grade B movies and, in the case of the second, their "low budget amateur films," were features, that was their concern. But "it insults the intelligence of the public to expect them to flock to see such films" and it was wrong to play on "our already exhausted...nationalism" to expect support for them "because it's Canadian." The article ended with a reminder that "We must strive to keep our film industry in perspective and we must hope that the people who deign to speak for it, do likewise!"

In response, Canadian Cinematography would publish over the next two issues the text of the speech given by the APC's 1964 president Guy L. Côté at the May 9 Annual General Meeting of the CSC in Toronto. The title the magazine gave to the untitled speech was "Selling Job Must Be Done on Feature Films" (Canadian Cinematography v.3, n.4 & 5, May-June/July-August 1964; text of Côté speech as released by the APC, May 9, 1964, in NFBCA, 4297, P-170).

Côté's half-hour speech reviewed recent developments particularly as seen from Montreal to inform the CSC membership "of certain ideas that have been evolving and taking root" (Côté 1964:2). If the notion of "the feature film industry" evoked "big finance,...huge investments...staggering sums of money," in Canada "we have never had a film industry" (ibid.:3, emphasis in original).

The history of the Canadian feature “is one of many hopes and as many failures” and Côté summarily reviewed a ‘history’ that consisted of 1) exporting to Hollywood “some of its most famous film people”—the litany of names from Marie Dressler to Jack Warner; 2) the Canadian Co-operation Project which “sold the potential Canadian post-war film industry down the river” (ibid.:4); 3) French-Canada’s postwar “Hollywood in Canada” features (eg., Séraphin, 1949; La Petite Aurore..., 1951); 4) sporadic attempts to make features in Toronto between 1954-1960; and 5) the shift back to Montreal with production by the Students’ Association of the University of Montreal of Seul ou avec d’autres (1961) that marked “the beginnings of a new era in the French-Canadian feature-length cinema” (ibid.:6). The importance of this film for Côté was entirely symbolic: it had been made by committed “young people”, not professionals; it had been made in “a new, free style of film-making” using inexpensive equipment; and it had been produced not to make money for investors “but out of a strong, inner compulsion to create a feature length motion picture” (ibid.:6). The same compulsion, he continued, that had led to Jutra’s making A Tout prendre (1963) and Patry’s Trouble-fête (1964)—“the dogged determination of the film-makers themselves, who accepted considerable risk and personal sacrifice to complete their respective movies” (ibid.:7).

However, the production by the Board of Drylanders and Pour la suite du monde “marked a turning point in Film Board policy, and indeed in the history of Canadian cinema” (ibid.:8), just as Crawley’s production of Amenita Pestilensis (sic) was “a symbol of the risks which Canadian entrepreneurs must run in order to make films under present conditions” (ibid.). This new stage of Canadian film history could be termed ‘professionalization’ since Côté included the creation of



the APC. The work of the APC had taken its characteristic orientation as a result of circumstances in which two members "had the opportunity of studying...the structure of the film industry":<sup>8</sup>

What we discovered literally horrified us. The facts, accessible to all, may be old hat to some of you. But these facts grieved and angered us, for we could not understand how any country aspiring to...cultural integrity, could tolerate...the situations we came across (ibid.:9).

Indignation, then, would form the basis for the briefs the APC would produce in 1964 "to bring our case before the public...". The APC's findings were two-fold: 1) that Canada was one of the few modern countries in the world with no film legislation to support a national feature film industry and 2) that film distribution and exploitation in Canada was controlled by foreign interests and constituted a structure with all the characteristics of a monopoly (ibid.:9-10).

But the broader conclusion the APC came to was "that public taste is something which can be formed, or deformed, according to circumstances" (ibid.:13). And in Canada, public taste had clearly been deformed by the American monopoly on feature distribution and exhibition: "We have called the result cultural colonialism....hard words, I know, and they will not please those who, in this country, earn their living in the film business. But, possibly, they too are victims of the same economic stranglehold" (ibid.:14), and its tragic cultural consequences:

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<sup>8</sup> A reference to the five-volume study Arthur Lamothe and Côté carried out in 1963 for the Conseil d'orientation économique du Québec. The fifth volume, *Esquisse d'un plan pour la création d'une industrie de long métrage au Québec*, 23 novembre, 1963, n.p., is based on the hypothesis of an annual production output of 10 features with average budgets of \$150,000. Production funds would derive from a "fonds de soutien" raised by increasing the amusement tax included in the price of admission to movie theatres

Nations have died...from the moment that they began to dream the dreams of others, from the moment that they have proved themselves unable to create their own mythology....We, in Canada, have often been ashamed of our own mythology, of our own domestic heroes, and we have been quick to mimic the fads of other lands. And so, with the cinema, we have lived by proxy, for the last sixty years (ibid.:16).

The APC hopes that Canada will have its own film industry, for "it believes that the Canadian film artist has a right to express his own mythology, a right that takes nothing away from the rights of other film artists around the world to have their works seen here" (ibid.:17). Furthermore, by creating new jobs, altering balance of payments and increasing exports, a Canadian film industry could "modify the economic attitudes of the population by helping to suppress the feeling of cultural frustration" (ibid.). At "this very moment" six feature films were readying completion in Montreal and Ottawa; the students of the University of Montreal had made another feature; Don Owen had completed a feature at the NFB; Fernand Dansereau and Gilles Groulx were finishing shooting full-length dramatic films; in Cannes, three Canadian films were on sale; Jutra's A Tout prendre was about to open at the St. Denis theatre in Montreal.

How...can I end this survey, if not on a note of optimism? If, through the art of the cinema, reality is transformed into dreams, and the dreams become real, can this not also be true for the film industry? We at the APC believe that, at lang (sic) last, the dream is coming to life (ibid.:20).

This sort of eloquence was a tough act to follow, but Canadian Cinematography would contribute one more piece to the debate. This would be the inevitable call for industry—and national—unity with, at its centre, the figure of the state.

In "Quibbling Only Hampers Industry" (Canadian Cinematography, v.3, n.5, July-August 1964:4), contributor Robert Barclay responded vigorously to the author of "Too much, too soon": "It is precisely this kind of narrow, timid, self-conscious, unrealistic and insidious quibbling that has held the aspirations of this country in check for almost 100 years. Of course, we should have a feature film industry in Canada!"

While the reasons were "legion" as to why, Barclay focussed upon one in particular. According to a recent APC survey, "Canadians go to the theatres less than any other people...in the world. Conversely, these same people watch television more than any other group in the world." This for Barclay was "the direct result of the fact that we are represented on our TV screens, but have been excluded from our cinemas by three (sic) powerful, foreign-owned theatre chains" enjoying a monopoly in Canada that was illegal in the United States. For Canada not to have a film industry was "to continue to ignore that we exist," it was inviting "other people to speak for us," it was "to shuck off our responsibility as citizens of Canada." "Without a film industry, we continue to have absolutely no status as film people."

We can learn a lesson from our fellow craftsmen in (APC) Quebec. I suggest that we stop indulging in...our respective adolescent debating societies and speak up loud and clear. A feature film industry is well within our grasp. We are finally reaching the ear of the government in Ottawa who are showing a sharp interest in the steps which must be taken to create such an industry....NOW is the time to speak up.... [N]ever have the opportunities been greater to be heard by the government of the day....It is no longer a question of whether we want a feature film industry...it is NOW a question of 'do we want a feature film industry in which Canadians will be able to participate?'

These two instances of resistance to the feature film discourse illustrate both the force and the limitations of the emerging discursive economy. From within the Board, the feature film discourse—perceived as the spectre of an increasingly vocal and vindictive private industry—was felt to threaten the very foundations of the institution. The self-protective retreat of the Board from the feature field, except on an occasional basis, thus entailed abandonment of further definition of the Canadian feature film to an 'industry' discourse in which the feature film and the film industry itself were inseparably confused and intertwined, and this to such an extent that, to even question the reality of either the Canadian feature or its 'industry' was sufficient to unleash a torrent of abuse that underscored not just the fragility of the discourse itself, but its source in a murky dream of overcoming cultural frustration and wounded nationalist self-esteem (see Dorland 1988). However problematic, this discourse was increasingly and exclusively the preserve of a private 'industry' constituted as an alliance between small groups of film professionals in Montreal and Toronto, bridged by the APC discourse on the feature film. Such a discursive alliance was forged by: 1) its common hostility to the NFB; 2) its dependence upon the state for the measures that would permit the 'industry' to develop; and 3) the external differentiation of its singularity. This last point particularly requires some elaboration.

For, if it could not derive its singularity from within the coherence of its own discourse about itself, that singularity had to come from without. And, in the Montreal-Toronto discursive alliance, what precisely made each other's discourse possible was that each constituted the other's Other. This allowed the APC—or more precisely Montreal francophone filmmakers already implicated in the beginnings of a complex, separatist process of differentiation in which, as

Boissoneault would put it (but not before the early 1970s), “on n’est plus seulement cinéaste, mais cinéaste du Québec” (Boissoneault 1973:16)—to construct Toronto as the site of the nightmare of cultural annihilation that gave its own discursive efforts their meaning as a dream to be realized. Conversely, for the Toronto ‘industry,’ this meant that Quebec was the model of cultural authenticity it required as the ‘real’ of its own obscure dream of participation in the institutions of an imaginary national culture. The limited tolerance of discursive alternatives to these two positions—and thus the singular importance of the anonymous “Too much too soon” article—stems from the fact that the two positions together formed one—within a bicephalous, nationalist private ‘industry’ in search of institutionalization. If, as we have seen, the singularity of the English-Canadian ‘industry’ would be institutionalization in the form of an English-language ‘economistic’ discourse of export-led development, its exactly symmetrical French-language equivalent would be the institutionalization of a ‘cultural’ discourse that differentiated Québécois from Canadian cinema within a discursive economy of the Canadian feature as the ‘difference’ of the same. It is this ‘cultural’ discourse and its institutional sites that we examine next.

### 3. Cultural ‘difference’: Institutions of display and canon formation, 1960-1966

The critical acclaim earned by the Board’s French-speaking direct short filmmakers outside Canada—e.g., Brault and Jutra’s presentation of Les Raquetteurs (1958, d. Brault & Gilles Groulx) at the Flaherty Seminar at UCLA that summer—led to two crucial discoveries. Firstly, that life for a francophone filmmaker was possible outside the NFB. As Claude Fournier, one of the first to make the jump to private industry, leaving the Board in 1961 to join Drew

Associates in New York and returning to Montreal in 1963 to found his own production company, this was nothing short of a “revelation”:

Pour la première fois, on était plongé dans un monde du cinéma qui n'était pas celui de l'Office du Film. On a rencontré...des Américains, des Français, des Indiens qui étaient pris avec des problèmes d'industrie privée. Ils ne vivaient pas dans un utérus comme on vivait...Tout ce monde là...c'était...des gars qui étaient obligés de se débrouiller, qui n'étaient pas allaités au sein d'un gouvernement. Ça a été très révélateur pour nous (Lafrance & Marsolais 1973:85).

From this it was but a step to the conclusion that to accept to remain at the Board was to be neither fully a filmmaker nor fully a man because one was choosing to remain unfree—most notably, this would be explicitated in the film criticism of Jean Pierre Lefebvre (see esp. Objectif 28, août-septembre 1964:3-17). More importantly, for our purposes, was the second revelation to be derived from increasing contact with one's international professional peers—namely, that their opinions mattered more than that of the illiterates at home. Again, as Claude Fournier states it:

...se situer par rapport aux indigènes, ce n'est pas très précieux Se situer pas rapport à des gens du même milieu, mais qui le font un peu partout dans le monde, ça nous place nous-même dans une perspective plus juste....On ne se trouve pas forcément les plus cons du monde, mais pas non plus les meilleurs (Lafrance & Marsolais 1973:118, emphasis added).

That such positive critical feedback fed the creative ferment of the young direct cinéastes is undeniable. As Jacques Bobet recalls:

...they were in seventh heaven. I can still see Michel Brault coming out of an editing room, dancing—he must have been then 26 or 27— another masterpiece! Every film we did made us feel that it

was a masterpiece. And I remember that Pierre Juneau organized the first international meeting of filmmakers here [at the Board]: there was Truffaut, Kobayashi, many people, the whole French New Wave was there. And in the middle of it someone said, Let's go see Gilles Groulx's film, the test print was ready of Golden Gloves [1961]. Everyone rushed off, Truffaut, Polanski, the whole gang. And it was just impossible, it was too beautiful—at one stroke Canadian film had come to life. From one day to the next. André Bazin of the Cahiers du cinéma sent me a little note through somebody, saying: That's it! You've got it! You've done it! Six months before, while he was passing through, Bazin had asked me, "Are you [i.e., the Film Board] still doing the same insignificant shit?" (Dorland 1984:11)

But, as the three signatories of "NFB 1964...." had feared, the growing influence of the "narrow circle of critics, ciné-club enthusiasts, festival committees and brother film-makers" entailed not only an inordinate say in the critical direction of this emergent short cinema's inflation to feature-length productions.<sup>9</sup> More importantly, it risked substituting coteries of selected admirers for the possibility of engaging with audiences. Again, this was one thing when limited to the confines of the Board; it became another, as of 1960, with the institution of the Montreal International Film Festival.

Initially non-competitive, the Festival, whose organizers included Pierre Juneau, Fernand Cadieux and Guy L. Côté, hoped to influence local distributor and exhibitor programming taste toward a more internationally-oriented cinema. Building upon the proliferation of ciné-clubs that numbered some 345 between 1960-1965 (Lever 1988:194), the Montreal Festival, according to Yves Lever,

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<sup>9</sup> For instance, long-time NFB editor Werner Nold, who edited Pour la suite du monde and La Vie heureuse de Léopold Z., among hundreds of films, recalls the efforts made to stretch Léopold Z. to 90 minutes so it could qualify as a feature for entry in the Montreal Festival's Festival du cinéma canadien (interview, March 8, 1990).

"sera l'agent le plus officiel et le plus efficace de l'internationalisation de notre exploitation, commerciale tout autant que parallèle." Passing through Montreal on his way to New York, the French critic Louis Marcorelles who would soon champion the Quebec direct feature, notably Perrault, in the pages of Le Monde, would write of his "Surprise...to find European films projected [at the Montreal Festival]...in a gigantic, very American cinema....More surprise on hearing everybody speaking an often incomprehensible French" ("American Diary," Sight and Sound, winter 1962-63:5). For Marcorelles, late in 1962, "Nobody in Canada is seriously thinking about features yet, except Jutra..." (ibid.).

By screening the films just awarded prizes at the principal European festivals, the Montreal Festival, writes Lever,

...misera avant tout sur les grandes vedettes de l'heure (Godard, Antonioni, Satyajit Ray, Truffaut, Kaneto Shindo...), mais aussi...sur le jeune cinéma. Par son orientation vers le cinéma le plus dynamique (la nouvelle vague française, les jeunes cinémas nationaux d'Europe de l'Est...). il favorisera l'émergence d'une production locale pareillement orientée (surtout après 1963)....(Lever 1988:198).

As of fall 1963, a competitive Festival du cinéma canadien was established within the structures of the larger Festival.<sup>10</sup> And it would become the principal site for public exhibition of the feature-length productions of the Quebec direct filmmakers, the grand prize going, as of 1963, to Jutra's A Tout prendre and a special jury prize to the other entry in the feature category that year, Brault and Perrault's Pour la suite du monde. In 1964, it would be Groulx's Le Chat dans le

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<sup>10</sup> The Festival du cinéma canadien became the French-language counterpart to the annual Canadian Film Awards established in 1947 under the auspices of the Canadian Association for Adult Education and later the Canadian Film Institute.



sac and a mention to Patry's Trouble-fête; in 1965, Carle's La vie heureuse de Léopold Z (1965) and a mention to Larry Kent's Sweet Substitute (1964) for "translating the documentary form to fiction." The Festival du film canadien, as a member of the Society of Film Makers recalls, wistfully wishing he could say that English Montrealers displayed the same enthusiasm,

is patronised mainly by French Canadians, usually young, and they turn out to applaud their folk heroes. In fact the Festival now has its claque which is at its most vociferous and uncritical during the showing of Canadian films. Was the audience at "La Neige a fondu etc." showing...critical acumen...when they cheered the film at last year's Festival? Or were they applauding it because it presented the voices and faces of..."their" film, something to be proud of because it had been made "chez nous"? Imagine the scene, on that closing night of the 1964 Festival, had the jury chosen "Nobody Waved Goodbye" as Best Film, instead of "Le Chat dans le sac". Interesting speculation....(Davies 1966:72).

Yet such prize-givings, Lever writes, masked an illusion. While "très satisfaisant pour l'égo des cinéastes qui peuvent s'enorgueillir de l'estime de leurs pairs,...ils cacheront toujours leur divorce d'avec le public général et une partie de la critique locale":

Présentés dans un cadre 'cinéphilique,' soumis aux seuls jugements des connaisseurs et esthètes...les films furent classés...comme produits culturels spéciaux, à part, dans une catégorie différente des films habituels de divertissement. Les cinéastes eux-mêmes invitaient le public à adopter un regard différent. Sans trop s'en apercevoir...c'est pour ce public choisi, valorisant, compréhensif et prenant son plaisir à comparer Le Chat dans le sac avec les films de Godard ou d'Antonioni, que les réalisateurs travaillent....Cette appréciation des collègues, des intellectuels, des cinéastes et critiques étrangers fut merveilleuse, mais elle a aussi orienté presque tout le cinéma québécois de fiction de cette décennie dans une voie qu'il faut bien qualifier d'élitiste et de marginale....A la suite de ces louanges dithyrambiques reçues de la critique

européenne (surtout de gauche...), plusieurs y ont cru et se sont pris pour Godard et Fellini (Lever 1988:199-200).

The elitism and marginality<sup>11</sup> of an emergent French Canadian feature cinema would be stated in unmistakable terms by film critic Patrick Straram when, in 1964, the Festival opted to attract more ordinary movie-going audiences in response to Canadian newspaper criticism of its elitism<sup>12</sup>. Writing in Cahiers du cinéma after the 5th Montreal Festival (August 1964), Straram would situate the importance of the festival—particularly its taking place in the context of “une société féodale attardée,<sup>13</sup> devant...être entièrement repensé par le gouvernement du Québec” (“Festival ou Foire?”, Cahiers... no.163, février 1965:71-73, emphasis added)—precisely in its elitist character. By its avant-garde function within a culturally backward society, the Festival at least made it possible that “à

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<sup>11</sup> Lever argues that the features of the period, whether produced at the Board or outside it, are distinguished by “une relative unité de ton, d'esthétique et de thématique,” specifically, the summary form of the scripts, the urban context of the storyline, the youth (early 20s) of the characters in a psychological climate of pre-adult, interior “errance” that is more melodramatic and absurdist than romantic: “...ce n'est pas drôle d'être cinéaste au Québec en 1965 quand le public dédaigne son oeuvre. Il y a toujours un côté mélodramatique dans les problèmes de couple, de communication, de crises de conscience, de frustrations dans le travail, de méadaptation sociale, d'échecs artistiques, de chômage intellectuel, d'incompréhension de la part du milieu. Paradoxalement, c'est ce cinéma de fiction des années 60 qui évoquerait plus une période de 'grande noirceur,' non celui de l'ère duplessiste.” (Lever 1988:179-183).

<sup>12</sup> For instance, in “A Festival only for insiders?,” (Daily Star, Toronto, Aug. 22, 1964) Cliff Solway would complain that “Stripped of its pretensions, the Festival is a showcase for the work of the National Film Board.” The problem with that was that Film Board “films have always been about things, not people. . . Most of Canada has no part other than geological. . .The NFB displayed [at the 1964 Festival] over a dozen films [i]n most of [which] the Canadian landscape was abstract, nearly the point of departure for a technical exercise.”

<sup>13</sup> In which, the effect of the terrorist bombs of the Front de libération du Québec that had begun to detonate as of spring 1963 had, according to Straram, had “le mérite d'alerter l'opinion publique sur la colonisation, enfin sérieusement pensée....” but also had provoked “une réaction extrêmement violente. . .avec ratissages et encadrements policiers [by the] haute finance et 'conseillers juridiques' des trusts et du pouvoir [who] s'organisent pour faire avorter 'par tous les moyens' un mouvement national qui les priverait de leurs privilèges” (ibid..72, emphases in original).

Montréal...on put voir des films de qualité et d'actualité" (ibid.:71). The very creation of the Festival in 1960 had resulted from the fact that "L'élite alerta l'opinion publique, [and] fit pression auprès du gouvernement et des monopoles qui dénaturent le cinéma ici depuis cinquante ans" (ibid.). The Festival "concernait une 'élite' aimant le cinéma et sachant se prononcer..." its considerable audience was made up of "l'élite fidèle et le proclamant, les snobs faisaient 'le nombre'" (ibid.). But by modifying its raison d'être "sous le prétexte fallacieux de satisfaire une plus large audience, le Festival a considérablement déçu le millier de professionnels et de cinéphiles sans lesquels il n'aurait jamais existé et n'existera plus" as it had now turned into "une foire...déprimante" (ibid.:72,73).

On the other hand, this was the same elitism that, as of 1964, made possible the beginnings of the canonization of Canadian cinema as a filmmakers' medium. That year, an organizing committee under the patronage of the four filmmakers' associations—the APC, the SFM, the DGC, and the CSC—began working upon what would materialize as the first retrospective both in and of Canadian cinema as a whole. Held initially from September 1966 to April 1967 at the National Film Board but under the auspices of the Cinémathèque canadienne<sup>14</sup>, and with the institutional support of the NFB, the Centennial Commission, the Canada

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<sup>14</sup> Founded in April 1963 as *Connaissance du cinéma*, a non-profit cultural organization dedicated to the conservation of films and the diffusion of knowledge about the cinema, it would be headed until 1968 by Guy Côté, then a filmmaker at the NFB, whose personal collection of films and texts formed the basis of the organization's collection. In 1964, *Connaissance du cinéma* became the *Cinémathèque canadienne*. As Véronneau remarks, "Elle est dirigée par des bénévoles, les pouvoirs publics l'appuyant à peine et elle doit avoir recours à différents projets spécifiques pour obtenir des subventions. C'est ainsi qu'elle monte, en 1967, dans le cadre de l'exposition universelle, une rétrospective du cinéma canadien..." (in Coulombe & Jean 1988 103). Subsequently funded by the Canada Council and the Quebec Ministère des affaires culturelles, the *Cinémathèque canadienne* became the *Cinémathèque québécoise* in 1971.

Council, the Greater Montreal Arts Council, and CBC, the "Canadian Film—Past and Present" retrospective would consist of sixty programs of public screenings of some 250 Canadian films.

Beyond the public propaganda purpose, in the context of the 1967 Centennial celebrations, of exposing Canadian films to larger (non-paying) audiences, the retrospective, particularly in the quantities of accompanying printed materials it would generate (see NFBCA 3435, A-414), provides a unique insight into the discourse of professional creativity's attempt to 'essentialize' Canadian cinema. Essentialism, in the view of the retrospective organizing committee in a booklet published subsequently, was necessitated by the need for "a necessary first step to any knowledge of a creative milieu" (How To Make Or Not To Make A Canadian Film, André Paquet ed. 1968, n.p.). To "look at our production as a whole rather than as a collection of side issues" entailed taking "a census of our film-making" (ibid.). Specifically, this meant approaching the history of film in Canada in the form of a chronology—i.e., as discrete and disconnected events marked in a continuum of time as a futable past culminating in an unknowable present (cf. Cohen 1986)—that ostensibly 'began' in 1898 when Massey-Harris "introduces the world's first sponsored film, shot on an Ontario farm by the Edison Studios" (ibid.). There were alternative approaches; films could have been classified "according to schools of thought or artistic styles," but these were rejected by the committee wanting to foreground the continuum of creativity. Thus, the companion to a chronological approach emphasizing the continuity of a futable past would be drawing up a list of "one hundred essential films of Canadian

cinema" (ibid.)<sup>15</sup>. Determination of the list was by the unanimous vote of an unspecified number of "experts-conseil" the committee drew upon in order to establish a consensual, evaluative basis. As a letter the committee sent out to its experts put it, "il nous importe que le choix que vous ferez soit purement personnel" (NFBCA 3435, A-414, 29 juillet 1966). The purely personal basis of such a choice was to protect against the possibility of films making the list not because they were the best, but only because they were already known. For the point of the list was to reveal "the true vitality of canadian (sic) cinema" (Paquet 1968, ibid.), though this vitality was accessible only by viewing the films listed. Finally, and consistent with the discourse of creativity, instead of "learned essays by critics, social scientists, or even politicians," the committee included in the retrospective booklet 19 articles by filmmakers, to which we shall return shortly.

The emphasis upon the continuity of a production milieu characterized by a continuum of creativity made the retrospective into a chaotic celebration that, if it attested to the existence of Canadian filmmaking since the mid-1920s (Gordon Sparling's 1926 short, Queen's University, was the oldest film of the retrospective), did little else. Programming was organized (though not always) by categories (e.g., "Candid Eye", "NFB-The War Years", "Television Film-Makers", "The Sponsored Film"). If the grouping of work by some Quebec filmmakers indicated a hesitant nominization—for instance, "Gilles Carle", "Léonard Forest - ONF", others (e.g., Perrault, Lefebvre) were simply screened without categorization. While the program notes printed to accompany screenings

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<sup>15</sup> A count of these by production institution gives NFB 38, ONF 17, Radio-Canada 1, CBC 9, independently produced features 4, NFB-ONF features 3, and independently produced films 13, for a total of 85. Given that Crawley Films' Au pays de neuve France (1959-1960) consisted of 13 films, this produces a total of 98 titles—not quite 100 but close.

often contained fascinating information on production conditions—for instance, Hugh Moreland and Frank Latchford would go into business as Moreland-Latchford Productions in April 1959 with “a beat-up desk in a Toronto apartment....an equally battered typewriter; 1000 sheets of letterhead; \$300 capital; and Latchford’s unemployment insurance of \$23 a week” which had run out when their first contract of \$5,400 for two 10-minute films for CBC came through (NFBCA, Retrospective program notes, Jan. 18, 1967, 3435, A-414)—this (and equivalent triumphs over adversity by Pierre Patry or Allan King) only fueled the discourse of creativity. That there were tensions and contradictions within the discourse would be evident in, for instance, Claude Fournier’s observation that “La plupart des cinéastes canadiens...divorcés des systèmes économiques conventionnels et des impératifs réels de production, ont presque toujours recherché l’institutionnalisation de leur métier” (ibid.: Feb. 22 screening). For Fournier, cinéastes had to develop the technical efficiencies of producing profitable works within the emergent structures that would allow them to “prendre la place qui leur écherra (sic) dans la nouvelle technocratie” (ibid.). Or Budge Crawley’s view that the future of the Canadian film industry was “le même [que] pour tous les petits pays de langue anglaise comme de langue française....L’important est de faire des films suffisamment universels [qui] vise[nt] une exploitation internationale” (ibid.: Dec. 12 screening, from an interview by Claude Jutra).

Most striking perhaps was the diversity of views of the filmmakers themselves, particularly as regards feature production. For Patrick Watson, in the first of the 19 articles by filmmakers published in the retrospective booklet, How To Make Or Not Make a Canadian Film, “the difficult part has been done and the

remaining components of the solution are simple" (ibid.: emphasis in original): injection of a little money, more resolute production-distribution collusion between CBC and NFB, and "a firm governmental stand" with commercial distributors. On the other hand, for Jacques Godbout, "The establishment of a feature film industry is a mirage in our desert..." and it was a mirage in large part because of the discursive contradiction of "film-makers demanding a film industry while repudiating one of its essential elements, the script":

...for the last five years they have all been clamouring and working for a traditional feature film industry, in which they will never participate themselves and against which, in fact, they have made their films. It is an avant-garde determined to create its own rear-garde—which is a very ironic situation indeed ("A Trap: The Script", in Paquet 1968, emphasis added).

Irony, not surprisingly, would be the predominant tone taken by the filmmakers. The articles ranged from clever codifications of the practices of the generation of young (25-30) direct feature filmmakers by Guy Glover ("How To Make A Canadian Film": "there are no bad films; only bad audiences") and Claude Jutra ("How Not To Make A Canadian Film": "Choose an uncommercial subject so intimate as to be indecent, uninteresting, futile...."); George Roberston's wistful account of scripting Waiting For Caroline (1967), a particularly disastrous attempt by CBC-NFB to coproduce a feature; a hard-nosed piece on the economics of low budget feature production by cinematographer Reginald Morris; as well as a poetic statement by Pierre Perrault, and a denunciation of filmmaking technique by Jean Pierre Lefebvre.

But one article in particular shall be mentioned here. The fourth entry, "Speaking of Canadian Cinema," by Denys Arcand, consisted of three brief

paragraphs that, like "Too Much Too Soon" (see above, sect. 2), addressed the discursivity of Canadian cinema<sup>16</sup>:

...too much is written about our cinema. Basically, we don't have cinema, we have film literature....[I]f you were to collect all the articles, dossiers, briefs, etc. that have already been written on our films, it would take longer to read than to look at the films themselves....[T]here is something unwholesome about it all...

To be sure, Arcand was specifically referring to the immediate, festering context of Quebec culture: "let us admit, so as not to be too hard on the filmmakers, that wholesomeness is rare in Quebec." But within that context, he was also commenting about the discourse of creativity:

Nowadays, we can scarcely read a newspaper or magazine without having some fashionable film-maker in an endless interview deliver himself of the creative tortures he goes through,...his reproaching us for having misunderstood his film,...his going on about his being a victim,...his announcing to us his magnificent projects, all the while insisting...on our unquestioning love...[and] boundless admiration.

Arcand, in other words, was addressing the institution of film criticism, and in particular its dissemination of what Steve Neale has termed an art cinema discourse. Such a discourse possesses a politically conservative discursive function as "a mechanism of discrimination...producing and sustaining a division within the field of cinema overall." Such a discourse does not challenge the economic, ideological or aesthetic bases of the cinematic institution; on the contrary, it functions "so as to carve out a space, a sector within it, one which can be inhabited, so to speak, by national industries and national film-makers whose existence would otherwise be threatened by the domination of Hollywood" (Neale

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<sup>16</sup> See also his article "Des évidences," in *Parti pris* 1:7, avril 1964.



1981:37, emphasis in original).

#### 4. Canadian Film Criticism and the Problem of Voice in the 1950s-1960s

The irony in the Canadian context is that such an art cinema discourse would have to be elaborated by the filmmakers themselves—outside the institutions of criticism. As historian Peter Morris has pointed out, what characterized (English) Canadian film criticism in mainstream newspapers and magazines in the postwar years is the negative role it played, specifically, “why most English-Canadian critics should have been so negative towards Canadian films in the ‘60s” (Morris 1989:8). For Morris, what is of interest to the historian is why film critics and filmmakers expressed such opposite sensibilities at an identical point in time:

Indeed, one could argue that critics and filmmakers stood at radically opposite poles not only of what made cinema ‘art,’ but also on what kind of cinema Canadian cinema should be. Out of that opposition, it was, arguably, the critics’ views that prevailed and encouraged government policies and filmmaking itself towards the industrialized model of production that dominated Canadian film...(ibid.).

For Morris, the polarity between filmmakers and film critics meant that “English-Canadian critics...found it impossible to discuss a Canadian film in the same terms as a French, Italian or Czechoslovakian film” (ibid.). The divergence stemmed from five divergent critical assumptions as to what constituted the ‘art’ of cinema, two of which in particular we will return to momentarily. But more importantly, for now, what for Morris makes such a polarity distinctive of English Canadian criticism is his own assumption that, in their inability to discuss Canadian films on the same terms as other ‘national cinemas’, “they stood in clear contrast to their colleagues in Quebec” (ibid.).

This assumption especially needs to be revised. We noted above (sect.3) that

the 'critical' discovery of the direct feature filmmakers by a largely European film criticism in the context of the Montreal Festival masked the filmmakers' "divorce d'avec le public général et une partie de la critique locale" (Lever 1988:199, emphasis added). Yet if one examines the two Quebec film publications of the 1960s, Objectif (1960-1967) and the Catholic Séquences, which began publishing in 1955, a content analysis of Objectif reveals that with respect to Canadian cinema (recalling that, according to Lever 1988:199, it is not until 1968 that to speak of "cinéma québécois" becomes generalized practice)

non seulement lui accorde-t-on moins d'importance qu'au cinéma étranger, mais on le met généralement dans une catégorie à part en en traitant surtout sous forme de dossiers ou de numéros spéciaux. Paradoxalement, c'est lorsque la revue s'y consacre qu'elle devient moins critique et plus anecdotique. Comme si on ne prenait pas très au sérieux ce qui cherche à s'y exprimer (Lever 1987:77, emphasis in original).

And of Catholic film criticism in Quebec, it will have to suffice to recall its predominant tendency "d'utiliser le long métrage pour faire de l'apologétique," as a 1962 ciné-club committee would put it in a brief to the Parent commission on education (cited in Véronneau 1991).

There were, to be sure, exceptions. The film criticism of Jean Pierre Lefebvre in Objectif remains outstanding both for its candour and the sharpness of its assessments. For instance, on Seul ou avec d'autres: "une blague d'étudiants qui fit tomber Michel Brault et Gilles Groulx dans le pire amateurisme"; on Gilles Carle: "un authentique metteur en scène, le premier de l'équipe française"; on A tout prendre: "ce qui aurait pu être un film extraordinaire demeure une oeuvre bâclée, paresseuse, molle et d'une prétention"; on Arthur Lamothe whose films "sont des pamphlets à la fois pour et contre l'homme américain"; on Patry's

“enfantillages spirituels et techniques” in Trouble-fête; on Gilles Groulx’s “indécision”, already noticeable in the lack of progression from Raquetteurs (1958) to Voir Miami (1962), etc. (all from “Petit éloge des grandeurs et des misères de la colonie française de l’Office National du Film,” Objectif 28, août-septembre 1964:3-17). But, as Lever remarks, “comment Pierre Perrault peut-il continuer à lire Alain Pontaut du Devoir qui n’apprécie pas trop ses paroles filmées quand Louis Marcorelles du Monde y voit le summum de l’art cinématographique? Comment Gilles Groulx peut-il tenir compte des réticences de Séquences quand Cannes lui fait un ‘triomphe’?” (Lever 1988:200).

The predominant negativity, then, of film criticism vis-à-vis an emergent Canadian cinema was less, as Morris argues, distinctive of English Canadian criticism, than of the institution of criticism in Canada, especially newspapers, in the general assumption whereby “the critics wanted Canadian films to be better than Hollywood films yet also wanted them produced according to the industrialised model of Hollywood and to be as popular as a Hollywood box-office hit” (Morris 1989:13, emphasis in original). This, in turn, as Morris argues, rested on five specific assumptions about cinema: 1) that it could be ‘art’ only if characterized by 2) an organic unity and a coherent narrative, 3) realism as a moral as opposed to an aesthetic imperative, 4) predominance of subject matter over voice, and 5) the internationalism of film ‘language’ (ibid.:10-12). “The filmmakers...and the younger critics did not share these...assumptions. Their nationalism was more assertive....Film for them demanded more than the recycling of plots and characters and themes....Nor...was film primarily an industrialized mass medium. Such rules as there were might be broken” (ibid.:13).

But Morris is overstating the coherence of the filmmaker position. As he points out, "Canadian filmmakers of the '60s, both in Quebec and English Canada, embraced wholeheartedly the notion of 'voice'" (ibid.:11, emphasis added). As Morris remarks, one of the assumptions which crystalized around "la politique des auteurs" debate, especially around Cahiers du cinéma, was the belief that "to understand a film one had to understand the 'voice' of its author, not the ostensible subject matter" (ibid.:11), and its extension, especially as of the 1960s, in the idea of cinemas of collective authorship based on national, cultural and other differences—"a cinema, one might say, based on 'voice'" (ibid.:12).

In the Canadian context, however, not only did the notion of a cinema based on voice challenge the long-standing assumption—and one shared not just by film critics but, as we have seen, by the state—that film is an international 'language', but the question of voice becomes enormously problematic within a Canadian cinema profoundly marked by discursive strategies of the self-protective renunciation of language and this, as Feldman has suggestively argued (Feldman 1984), in various (dis)guises since the 1920s. It may here be worth emphasizing that the collapse of an indigenous Canadian film 'industry' and its subsequent displacement from feature filmmaking is related to its inability, in part for lack of capital, to negotiate the transition to the technologization of voice. And the voice that would be institutionalized as of 1939 within the National Film Board was the (English speaking) voice of the state as a discourse of power in a cinema which, as Lefebvre puts it emphatically, was "la propriété des gouvernements, leur outil politique, social et culturel pour agir sur les Canadiens et les Québécois" (Lefebvre 1987:88, emphasis in original) and which, furthermore, maintained institutional control over its filmmakers, among other means, through scripts.

The institutional rupture which the direct represented, it should also be remembered, was as well a rejection of voice—not only of the institutional voice-over—but also, with far more ominous consequences, of voice as a technique of written expression, filmic or otherwise. As Jacques Bobet puts it as delicately as possible:

...there was something else that was fundamental. Many of the filmmakers then and I've got to say it in quotes so as not to insult anybody—were culturally 'illiterate.' If there was one thing they had in common, except for people like [essayist and novelist] Jacques Godbout, it was that they loathed writing. They hated writing and most of them couldn't write. A guy like Gilles Carle always had a good pen, Claude Fournier too, Godbout obviously; but for the others to have to take a pen and write half-a-page, they'd first get down on their knees: "Listen, you write it, I'll sign it." They hated the idea (Dorland 1984:10).

This could be—and was, for a while—turned to advantage. For instance, in making Le Chat dans le sac and Léopold Z., for which

A lot of footage was shot, and with very little attempt at scripting, the absolute minimum scribbled on a desk corner, just enough to get the approval of an English production head [Grant McLean] who himself couldn't read French. So it wasn't really as stupid as it may seem....The fact remains that the first two feature films we made in French...were decided upon on the basis of a page-and-a-half synopsis (ibid.)

On the other hand, this abhorrence of writing would all too readily become a crippling limitation. The question became particularly poignant as the Quebec direct (first shorts, then features) would be discovered by film critics in France. For what struck them as significant about this new cinema was precisely the paradox of its renunciation of voice, its inability to speak, that betrayed a

desperate hunger for the Word. As Dominique Noguez would put it, Quebec cinema was “un cinéma d'autodidactes”, “une boulimie de l'oeil [qui] compensera, traduira, provisoirement la faim de parole du Québec nouveau” (Noguez 1970:19, emphasis in original). This is the very opposite of a cinema based on voice; rather, it is a cinema aspiring to voice via a ‘language’ of the eyes—an inarticulate visual ‘language’ whose subtleties of meaning require decoding by the specialized techniques of the hermeneut or the semiologist. For, as Cohen remarks, “the visual channel is independent of language unless reduced by the latter through intellectual/cognitive operations to verbal signals...; the most ‘showable’ telling is also the most silent about how it shows” (Cohen 1986:80, emphasis added). In Noguez’s own subtle and highly eloquent interpretation:

J’y verrais volontiers une inclination fondamentale et comme existentielle: c’est comme si, dans un pays où la possibilité de parler leur langue et surtout de vivre en accord avec elle était dans les faits disputée chaque jour, dans un pays tout bruisant d’une autre langue, envahissante et tapageuse, dans un pays parasité, c’est comme si, dis-je, ces hommes à la parole empêchée avaient décidé de parler quand même, mais en se taisant, de commencer à agir par l’image pour conquérir le droit de crier des mots, leurs mots. Les raquetteurs (1958), de Brault et Groulx précisément, premier film important des Québécois, est un film quasiment muet, mais c’est un film qui dit beaucoup dans son mutisme même: c’est...une façon de hurler sans desserrer les lèvres (Noguez: 1970:19, emphasis in original).

It is hardly surprising, then, that for Cahiers du cinéma, for instance, what was seductive about such a cinema was its extreme alterity as the cinematic equivalent to the status of the proletariat in marxian metaphysics. Within the material cornucopia of an undifferentiated North America had suddenly emerged “un cinéma de la dépossession,” of almost unspeakable alienation. Like Brazil’s

Cinema Novo, which the journal discovered at the same time, and with which Quebec's emergent cinema of dispossession shared "outre leur 'nouveau', de s'être bâtis chacun sur un désert, d'être sortis de rien," upon it would be conferred the ontological distinction "de se trouver maintenant chacun à la pointe d'un combat qui n'est pas seulement d'ordre artistique, mais qui concerne une société, une morale, une civilisation: des cinémas de révolution" (Jean-Louis Comolli, "Situation du nouveau cinéma: Brésil, Canada", *Cahiers...* no. 176. mars 1966:5,57-70; also Comolli, *Cahiers...*, no.194, octobre 1967:56-58 for the ontology of the distinction between Anglo-Canadian and Québécois cinema, the first as "ressemblance," the second as "différence").

It might be objected that Pierre Perrault's work, by its discursivity, contradicts the fundamental mutism of this emergent cinema's inarticulate desire for speech (cf. Laroche 1968, Brulé 1974, Ohlin 1991). But Perrault is not the exception to the discourse of creativity; on the contrary, he is, in many respects, the outstanding manipulator of its limitations. For, as David Clandfield intelligently points out, Perrault works by

...creation of a hierarchy of discourse [which] has passed from the autochthonous control of the local communities or individuals into the hands of the privileged individual or elite of individuals who have access to the technology of print and film.....[N]otwithstanding the bonds of solidarity that Perrault may have forged in the acquisition of the ethnographic data which informs his writings and films, the continuity of cultural transmission is radically ruptured by the recourse to modern communications technology. And yet it was the negation of codes of expression controlled by distant elites which constituted the argument for the primacy of popular nonliterate or oral cultures in the first place (Clandfield 1984:146).

A cinema based on voice? Rather, a cinema based on voice's disarticulation

within a discourse of power. This is instead, as Franklin puts it,

une forme atrophée du discours, d'un pré-discours où celui-ci se trouve réduit à la plus élémentaire expression. Elle correspond surtout à des conditions où le pouvoir écrase mais ne se justifie pas, s'imposant comme déjà légitimé par...l'intimité qu'il entretient avec les puissances célestes dont il représente terrestrement la volonté et l'arbitraire absolu. C'est le moment de l'oppression sans phrase où la sacralité qui enveloppe le pouvoir lui est une parole suffisante; son éloquence est aussi bien son silence....La concision, l'allusif résument le style; le laconisme est le garant du mystère que le pouvoir doit alimenter—c'est aussi son ironie....Nous sommes dans le semi-silence de la toute-puissance se signifiant (1975:150-151).

It was, as Jacques Godbout had observed, a most ironic situation indeed. And particularly so by 1967, centenary of Canada's troubled existence as a communicative community. That year, in which the Canadian Film Development Corporation Act passed into law, would be especially ironic for the feature filmmakers who had emerged from within institutions that had no place for them, along with an aesthetic of uncoded, refractory experience which, outside the films, also had no place, but because they could not put it into words, would be handed over to the controlling gaze of the more experienced outside observer. Yet all the while, the filmmakers had clamoured for the establishment of a traditional film industry that would only reinstitute the tyranny of the script from which, a decade earlier, they had just broken free. They were caught—and well caught—within the paradoxes and contradictions not only of their own discourse, such as it was, but moreover within a discursive economy, in whose articulation they had played, without even realizing how much, a major part, but which by 1967 had achieved its full extension. All the conflictual, consensual and paradoxical terms within which the Canadian feature film would be discussed for the next twenty



years were set—and would only thereafter repeat themselves endlessly.

## Chapter Seven

### Conclusion—The Policy State and the Imaginary Industry:

#### Discursive Economy as Mode of Production

It cannot be very difficult to determine who have been the contrivers of this whole mercantile system; not the consumers, we may believe, whose interest has been entirely neglected; but the producers, whose interest has been so carefully attended to....; the interest, not so much of the consumers, as that of some other sets of producers, has been sacrificed to it. —Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, Bk. IV

Fortune has decreed that, as I do not know how to reason, either about the art of silk, or about the art of wool, either about profits or about losses, it befits me to reason about the State. —Machiavelli

The preceeding chapters have described in some detail the formation of the discursive economy within which the Canadian feature film emerged as of the late 1950s and early 1960s as an object of discourse. In, as Dermody & Jacka put it, “the verbal force-field in which the industry has been conceived, argued and legislated for, and put into public circulation” (1987:197), the ‘Canadian feature film’ was the discursive encryption of three intertwining processes of emergence: 1) a Canadian film industry, 2) within it, the feature film, and, within this, 3) Quebec cinema, beginning a separate but intimately related dé-doublement into its own forms of 1) and 2). However, rather than each process of emergence being the differentiation of a respective object—say, the feature as an aesthetic object and the industry as an economic object in both Canadian and Québécois

variants—we find, instead, the emergence of a still largely undifferentiated discursive field across which are dispersed confluences of ideological polemics within a bi-nationalism conceived in greater part industrially yet also part cultural in its general articulation, but whose individual components within the discursive field are not themselves sufficiently articulate to be articulated into discrete objects. In the period examined, the discursive economy in its emergence remained disarticulated, with the qualified exception of what we have called the state discursive formation (see Ch. V). Contrary to Dermody & Jacka's model of the Australian feature film emergence (see Ch. 1), the discursive economy of the Canadian feature in the period examined is not yet, but only implicitly, a dualistic model in the sense of a discourse of a commercial industry ("Industry-2") alternating with a 'national cinema' discourse ("Industry-1"). In the Canadian context, formation of the discursive economy established a "verbal force-field" in which, in the period examined, the dominant discourse is an "Industry-2" discourse. If it undoubtedly contained embryonic elements of an "Industry-1" discourse, these would affirm themselves in more vocal form subsequently but not until the early 1970s, and then largely in reaction against the predominance of the "Industry-2" discourse within the discursive economy and its economic non-performativity in particular.<sup>1</sup> In the period examined, if the discursive economy

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<sup>1</sup> From the 1960s on, developments can readily be periodized by decade: the 1960s witness the emergence of the discursive economy in which an Industry-2 discourse is predominant; in the first half of the 1970s, an Industry-1 discourse develops but, among other reasons, internally divided by the increasingly vocal claim to difference of Quebec filmmakers, it will remain marginal to the Industry-2 discourse that, as of mid-decade, is reinforced by 1) the governmentalization of Quebec cinema that follows with the entry of the Quebec state in 1975 as coordinator of the replica discursive economy, and 2) as of the same year, the 'industrialization' of feature film capitalization that results from modifications to tax legislation. The 1980s, following the largely self-inflicted collapse of the capital market, see the incorporation of the broadcasting system into the discursive economy. Throughout, it should be emphasized, the dominant discourse remains an Industry-2 discourse, constant in its demands

itself is dualistic in the sense of being both discourse and economy, its emergence only meant the possibility of more speech about an object-field; it did not guarantee the coherence of that speech.

Such coherence as there would be was the work of the policy state, in the sense that will be developed in this concluding chapter.

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for the creation of a private industry oriented towards world-markets as the dominant force in Canadian audiovisual production. These developments will be examined in greater detail in future studies

1. "Why does the Minister want a film industry in Canada?"

Formation of the discursive economy, then, meant 1) that a discursive space had been established for discourse about 'the Canadian feature' and 2) that at least the principal terms for talk about 'the Canadian feature' had been elaborated. As filmmaker Jacques Godbout would put it of the establishment of the CFDC, "If it works out, thank God, and if it doesn't at least we will know who to blame. Now there's someone we can present our case to" (cited in Michener 1968a). Thus, as of early 1968 when the board of directors would be appointed and the administrative structures of the CFDC were finally set up, there would henceforth be an institutionalized space—within the state—for the production of discourse about 'the Canadian feature.' If, in the CFDC's first three years, production of Canadian-made feature-length films increased by 300 percent (*Cinéma Québec* 1:7, 1972:15), the basis of production in private 'industry' remained anarchic, as companies "se font, se défont, se fusionnent, disparaissent, renaissent de leurs cendres au gré des films...et des contrats" in an incessant movement in which "personne n'arrive plus vraiment à s'y retrouver" (ibid.:30). Outside this space and the discursive organs of the 'industry' immediately concerned—what Patrick Watson termed "the demi-monde of filmmaking in Canada" (1968:n.p.)—the extent of the discursive economy of the Canadian feature was marginal relative to the availability of public space for the circulation of discourse. Within the public space of discursive circulation, the mainstream press, as we have seen (Ch. VI), remained skeptical with regard to Canadian film production's ability to overcome its internal divisions and external obstacles (e.g., Michener 1968a, 1968b; Kastner 1968; Knelman 1972). In English-Canada particularly, the CBC would blithely continue to be a negligible factor in the circulation of Canadian film

production—for instance, of the 2000 feature films CBLT (CBC Toronto) aired between 1967/8-1974, two would be Canadian-made (CRTC 1974:64). And, in the dramatically expanding system of higher education, extending as of the mid-1960s into new disciplines such as media studies, “the people responsible for setting up film programs in Canadian universities failed....not just in relationship to Canadian film but also in relationship to the particularities of the Canadian situation...[in not] work[ing] in co-operation with the secondary schools...” (Harcourt 1988:23,22).

Within the federal state, however, and in Trudeau’s Ottawa as of late 1968 in particular, “the future would be seen to work.” As Richard Gwyn puts it in a caricatural account that is all the more telling precisely in its caricaturality:

People took government seriously in those days. The city crackled with energy. Soon it bristled with policy analysts and program analysts; sociologists, ecologists, economists, and socio-economists; experts on communications....They manned task forces, worked as consultants, peopled the shiny new departments—Urban Affairs, Environment, Communications[,]...the Secretary of State, and the Policy Planning Branches that every department sprouted. They churned out earnest reports, attended endless seminars....Ottawa...became a paper world. Out poured an interminable number of studies, White, Orange, and Green Papers, interim reports and ‘conceptual evaluations’ evaluating everything anything....Each study treated its subject as if nothing had ever been said about it, or done about it, before. All studies reached the same conclusion:...study...it more (Gwyn 1980:97-98).

In regard to film, this would take the form of attempting to elaborate what would be termed a “global film policy”, restructuring the entire public sector involvement in the ‘industry’ to make it possible for the private sector “to take the place of government agencies as the dominant force in Canadian film production”

(NFBCA, Film Policy 262, 1967-1977. In what follows, I am relying particularly on Secretary of State director of policy W. Langford's draft, "Background paper", Apr. 22, 1977, and two secret memoranda to cabinet by then Secretary of State John Roberts, "Further Development of the Canadian Film Industry," Aug. 20, 1976, and "Measures to Assist the Film Industry in Canada," Sept. 7, 1976). But, other than various "interim measures," the "global film policy" would still not be worked out by fall 1976. And, as then Secretary of State John Roberts memoed cabinet, he did not expect it would be sorted out before the end of the decade, and not be implemented before the early 1980s (NFBCA, Film Policy 262, [Roberts], secret memorandum to cabinet, "Measures to assist the film industry in Canada," Sept. 7, 1976).<sup>2</sup>

The attempt to develop film policy that would provide a developmental telos by which to coordinate public sector cultural production agencies (e.g., NFB, CBC, Canada Council, and, as of 1968, CFDC) had begun in the department of the Secretary of State (SoS) under Lamontagne. In 1965 special assistant Gordon Sheppard, formerly a CBC producer and Toronto independent filmmaker who had become secretary of the Interdepartmental Committee on the Possible Development of a Canadian Feature Film Industry (see Ch. V), was assigned to write a report on cultural policy. Sheppard's report, the four-volume Special Report on Cultural Policy and Activities of the Government of Canada 1965-66,

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<sup>2</sup> Roberts' timing estimate would be fairly accurate, though the "global film policy" would never see the light of day. Instead, Francis Fox, federal minister of Communications, released in May 1984 an insubstantial booklet sonorously entitled "The National Film and Video Policy" that described itself as an overall, fully co-ordinated, and synchronized policy response to the new technologies of the emerging information society. Proclaiming "a cultural crisis of undetermined proportions," which was also "an economic challenge of unmeasured magnitude," it could be offset, among other measures, by a "financially confident and economically viable Canadian film and video industry, with reasonable access to markets and revenues" (Canada 1984 3, 19).

had concluded that "The Government must decide whether it wants Canada to have a strong public film industry or a strong private film industry. We can't have both" (see NAC, RG 41, v.337, 14-4-4, pts. 1-4, v.1:9; also NFBCA, 2-S, A279). Sheppard's report would be shelved in the ministerial transition from Lamontagne to LaMarsh (see Fisher & Crowe 1967). Between 1967-1971, SoS would commission four further studies specifically of the Canadian film industry (NAC, RG6, v. 848, 5020-5 pt. 1, W. Porteous to A. Fortier, memo, Dec. 31, 1971). These studies, however, were not producing the expected findings, although it is not clear what those findings were expected either to be or to show. As Wendy Porteous, director of the Arts and Culture branch of SoS, would memo the assistant under-secretary of State exasperatedly seeking ministerial direction over the most recent study ("study P0901"):

...is the report to reflect merely the status of the industry as it presently is? Or should it reflect an industry which is desirable for Canada? What is the nature of the industry which the Minister would like to see develop in Canada? Is it big-time commercial motion picture making? Is it film making for culture's sake? Is it film making for the sake of social animation between ethnic and other Canadian cultural groups? In other words, why does the Minister want a film-making industry in Canada! To what end? To involve whom? To go where? (NAC, RG 6, 5030-10-2, memo Porteous to Fortier, May 18, 1971).

The economic situation of the film 'industry' would be reviewed in 1971 and again in 1972; subsequently, additional "committees were established to study and report upon various aspects of the film industry. [Between 1974-1977] Numerous briefs and proposals...by the private film sector...advocated that the government take steps to strengthen the private film industry" (Langford draft, op. cit.:1). For our purposes here, the review process culminated in the April 1976



report of the Bureau of Management Consulting, SoS's research division, which had signaled at the outset of its consultations in July 1975 that "government is entertaining a possible change of direction on film matters." While the specific purpose of the report was to analyze the composition of the labor force within the film industry, its principal recommendation would be that the private sector replace government agencies as the "dominant force" in Canadian feature production (Langford:2; also see excerpt in Cinema Canada 31:9-12). The recommendation was all the more remarkable given its discussion of the "amorphous" composition of an 'industry' whose outstanding industrial trait was that it was "unique...in its dependence on government intervention" (ibid.).

The difficulty was that, until establishment of the CFDC in 1968, "a feature film industry did not exist" (Langford draft, op. cit.:2, emphasis added). And after eight years of feature film production and investments of \$21 million by the Corporation representing continual annual losses averaging 86 percent over the period, "it remains questionable whether we have yet achieved what can properly be termed a feature film industry" (Langford:2).

Warren Langford, director of policy at SoS, was not the only "altruistic technocrat," as Gwyn termed the Ottawa men of the 1970s (1980:95), to come to the conclusion that there was something amiss about the Canadian film 'industry'. At the National Film Board, Film Commissioner André Lamy, summarizing the Board's own decade-long contribution to "global film policy," would conclude nothing less than that the entire enterprise was itself founded upon a catastrophic illusion:

Le problème de l'industrie du film au Canada (sauf les systèmes économiques gouvernementaux...), c'est que précisément ce n'est pas une industrie au sens classique du mot. Toute solution

préconisée à partir de cette perception que l'industrie existe donnera des résultats catastrophiques, voire aucun résultat économinique [sic] ou culturel (NFBCA, Film Policy 262, Lamy to Litwack, 13 Apr., 1977, emphasis added).

## 2. The Paper World

By the mid-1970s, the policy state thus faced four options in terms of its continued involvement in attempting to materialize the imaginary film industry into being: 1) status quo, 2) dissolution, 3) retreat (by transferring 'industry' responsibility either to Industry, Trade or Commerce, or to NFB), 4) or expansion of its role. This is how the four options would be discussed as specifically concerned the continuation of the CFDC.

1) Status quo meant to continue to fund feature films on a film-by-film basis, the basis on which Corporation funding had been established in the belief this would provide close to full return on investment. Only losses had resulted. However, greater flexibility in the range of Corporation investment (e.g., no longer just features but now also television films) would permit decreasing average losses over the next five years to under 50 percent.

2) Dissolution was "seriously considered and rejected" (Langford:7). Two versions of the rationale for rejecting dissolution are available. The first is from Langford's draft memorandum which rejects the option on the basis of the logic of governmentality (whose withdrawal would foreclose on the hope that the 'industry' would someday be an industry):

While it would offer the benefit of reducing expenditures by the federal government, it would invite the conclusion that the government is no longer concerned about seeing a viable film industry established and is prepared to accept as irreversible the influence of a growing volume of foreign film products on our cultural environment. It would disregard what progress has been

made and leave without assistance those Canadian film workers who have dedicated their creative efforts to developing a private film industry (ibid.:7).

The version of the memorandum which went to the cabinet is significantly briefer, and rejects the option on the basis of governmentality as well—no longer now in relation to the fiction of future industry, but stripped of everything except for the ‘industry’s’ naked dependence upon State paternalism:

The dissolution of the CFDC would have the advantage of reducing the financial burden on the federal government (some \$6 million a year....) but it will disregard the progress made and will leave without help thousands of Canadian cultural workers which [sic] have given their life to the development of a Canadian private film industry (NFBCA, Film Policy 262, secret memorandum, Aug. 20, 1976)

3) Integration: The CFDC could not be transferred to Industry, Trade and Commerce, because “while industrially oriented” it had “at bottom cultural objectives.” On the other hand, it could not be transferred to the Film Board since that “would be seen by the private industry as...against its best interests” (Langford:7-8).

4) In the light of the above, the “only valid” option was to further expand the role of the CFDC.

It is the discussion of the dissolution option that most clearly establishes the polarities of the governmentality within which the discursive economy of Canadian feature production ‘worked,’ and would continue to do so. On the one hand, around the pole of the governmental fiction of a futable industry (probably best stated a decade later by then Communications Minister Flora MacDonald [1986]: “Although our ultimate goal is the development of a

Canadian film culture, it is obvious this goal will be best assured if the industry has a sound industrial base"), discourse could form that was ostensibly economic and in which the 'economic' problems of the 'industry' could be identified in reasonably coherent terms. Thus Langford, for instance, would identify these as follows:

...the Canadian film industry is relatively young; it is seriously under-financed; it is regarded as high risk by investors and by banks and other lending institutions; it is trying to cope with foreign domination of the distribution system; it has to compete with a heavy volume of imported products laid down in Canada at prices which the Canadian filmmaker [sic] has difficulty in matching; it is lacking in business acumen and management expertise compared with its foreign competition; it has difficulty producing scripts that give reasonable assurance of box-office success; it has the task of trying to instil a Canadian spirit or character into its films without, at the same time, risking their universal appeal and acceptance in markets outside Canada; and it is trying to counterbalance deeply ingrained preferences of Canadians for American or other foreign films (op. cit.:1).

This 'economic' discourse, preoccupied with establishing the film 'industry' on more solid footing within the capitalist economy, would generate countless studies from within the planning instances of the state apparatus, federal as well as provincial. On the other hand, and as one proceeded from the planning to the executive instances of the state, the polarities within governmentality reversed, as (interior) governmentalization flips into (exterior) raison d'état, shifting from an economistic discourse to a discourse of dependency, that reaffirmed the contiguity of the interior dependency of the film 'industry' upon the state with the exterior dependency of the Canadian state vis-à-vis the United States in particular. And this discourse of dependency would take the form of the discursive policy of

“moral suasion,” the long-standing conviction of the Canadian state, since at least the mid-1940s (see Morris 1986), that a rational, negotiated agreement between it and the American film industry could be arrived at with respect to Canadian film’s production and distribution problems. As an instrument of governance, the use of suasion, as Stanbury & Fulton remark (1984:282-324), has been “largely overlooked” by policy analysis, precisely because

...suasion offers enormous opportunities for deception, reversibility, redirection and selective use of information. These characteristics make suasion...an attractive governing instrument from the point of view of politicians (ibid.:283).

From the point of view of the discursive economy of the Canadian feature, structured around the dualities within governmentality, the result would be intensification of the unreality of its discursive circulation within a paper world.

In this paper world, the only reality-principle was that the discursive economy itself continue to grow—and as discourse more than economy. As Langford, who was only the latest voice in a chorus going back to Firestone, would put it: “The dearth of reliable facts and figures has been one of the main obstacles in the way of formulating...policy on film” (op. cit.:6). In the paper world, the numbers could be changed at the stroke of a key—they did not mean anything much anyway. Thus, Roberts’ Aug. 20 memo to cabinet announces that “some \$60 million, by way of rental of films, is siphoned out of the country” (op. cit.:2). Two weeks later, in his Sept. 7 memo, the figure had mysteriously shrunk by half: “\$30 million or more is siphoned out of the country through rentals” (op. cit.:7). And this insouciance in regard to the most elementary facts about the putative industry on whose behalf policy was being formulated would be chronic. By the late 1980s, although claiming in the Commons that the government in which she was

minister of Communications at the time was finally "doing what no [Canadian] government has done in the last 50 years: setting the stage for a viable, dynamic, profitable Canadian film industry," Flora MacDonald did not even know the correct number of U.S.-owned theatre chains dominating theatrical exhibition in Canada (MacDonald 1988:2).

### 3. Policy-ing a Displaced National Cinema

Yet, in the fixity of the elementary economic notions that animated the discourse (notably, the systematic degradation of the domestic basis for the production of 'wealth' that a Canadian film industry could only derive from what it could contribute to the balance of payments), the Canadian discursive economy resembled nothing as much as an earlier episode in the intellectual history of capitalist development, namely, mercantilism. Here, mercantilism will be considered, following Heckscher, as an ambiguous conceptualization of "the relationship between state and nation before the advent of romanticism [i.e., pre-nationalism]. It was the state and not the nation which absorbed its attention."

The collective entity to them was not a nation...: the only decisive factor...was the state. In most cases the state concerned included...varied national elements, and it was considered possible to deal tolerantly with these national and linguistic dissimilarities as long as they did not conflict with the interests of the state (Heckscher 1935, II:14-15; see also Anderson 1974:35-36 on mercantilism's indistinction of polity and economy.)

While the mercantilist literature embodied a considerable variety of possible arguments for increasing industry (e.g., state-building, infant industry, employment arguments, multiplier effects, etc.; see Minchinton 1969), Schumpeter notes that

the bulk of the literature is still essentially preanalytic; and not only

that, it is crude—the work of unprofessional or even uneducated minds that frequently lacked the rudiments of the art of exposition (1954:348).

While Schumpeter comments sympathetically upon mercantilism's use of the concept of balance of trade as an analytical tool that required an effort to visualize and be able to perceive its relation to other economic phenomena that was an achievement, in the context of economic thought, comparable to a revolution in theoretical physics, the concept of balance of trade alone was still not a sufficient one from which to make inferences: "[B]roadly speaking, reasoning as well as action that turns on nothing or next to nothing but the balance of trade cannot be correct except by accident" (ibid.:353). Yet, crude though it may have been, mercantilism was at the same time, in Schumpeter's view, an emergent form of nationalist planning, "planning precisely in order to avoid what they conceived to be the antinationalist effects of unregulated enterprise" (ibid.:360). In this, the mercantilist writers displayed a notion of national economic advantage that "was not [narrowly] identified with the profit interest" and "not only admitted the possibility of clashes [between individual or corporate action on the profit motive and]...the public interest, they even considered clashes to be normal and concordance to be exceptional" (ibid.).

To recur to the Canadian context, particularly in the form of the diluted neo-mercantilist planning displayed in Spencer and Firestone notably (see Ch. V), one cannot but be struck by the contrast between, on the one hand, the extent of its fixation upon balance of trade and, on the other, the narrowness of its notion of national advantage. Now it was not incorrect, in and of itself, to envisage development of Canadian film production as an export-industry. Given the still early phases of what would be known as the cultural industries, this might even

have evidenced a prescient sense of national advantage—except for the fact that the latter could only be conceived as integration within a continental economy. Given this contradiction, the pursuit of a favorable balance of trade is absurd. And all the more so not only because such a course went against the historical export-reluctance of Canadian enterprise generally (see esp. Williams 1986), but available data on the features that had been produced at the Board by the mid-1960s showed that export sales were, at best, only a factor—and not necessarily the most significant one at that. Even with American distribution in Canada, the economic performance of these films was distinguished more by the fact that they did not come close to recovering their costs in any market—and where they did, domestic theatrical and domestic television would be as important if not more than export sales (see NFBCA, 4159, D-203, Dir. of dist., features and one-hour films, 1967-1971). Thus, Pour la suite du monde (1963), by Mar. 31, 1967, had earned back \$39,711.39 against total costs of \$109,158.00. Theatrical revenue (distributed by Columbia Pictures Canada) was next to nil: \$378.05; foreign sales to television in eight countries and cinemas in Benelux totaled \$7,682.19; but its premiere showing on Radio-Canada had earned \$30,000. Drylanders (1963) earned just over \$51,000 against costs of \$227,958. Its earnings were split between Canadian theatrical distribution (Columbia) which earned \$28,496.77 and foreign sales to six countries that had earned just over \$22,000, most of which came from a theatrical sale to the USSR. Nobody Waved Goodbye (1964) cost slightly over \$84,000 and earned back just over half (\$43,607.54), \$16,145 from Canadian theatres (Columbia distributing) and foreign sales to 12 countries netting just over \$27,000, \$15,000 of that amount from a sale to an independent American exchange. Le Chat dans le sac (1964) cost over \$53,000, earning back



just under half that amount, mostly from Radio-Canada (\$20,000), and next to nothing from Canadian theatres or foreign sales. La Vie heureuse de Léopold Z. (1965) cost almost \$130,000; all its revenues (\$12,801.97) were Canadian theatrical. While it is tempting to conclude that the outward orientation for Canadian film industry development derived from the pre-analytic crudeness of a form of neo-mercantilist planning fixated solely on balance of trade, there is more to it than this.

Kari Levitt (1970), recalling that Canada had been discovered, explored and developed as part of the French and later British mercantile system, would go on to argue that “its regression to a state of economic and political dependence” was to be found in the dynamics of the “New Mercantilism of the American international corporation” particularly in its creation of “a monopoly-type venture profit by expertise in product-innovation and want-creation” (1970:25,24). While noting “the swiftness, silence and hospitality” of Canada’s surrender of “the policy levers of its fiscal and monetary controls” over “the commanding heights of its economy” (ibid.:56), Levitt does not, however, consider the role of the dependent state within such a neo-mercantilism in any other position but passive, because of her equation (as does dependency theory generally) of dependency with a weak state.

For a conceptualization that grants the state a more activist role, we briefly recur to Henri Lefebvre’s notion of the state mode of production (1977, 1978) which although indebted to Levitt’s neo-mercantilist framework takes it further. In Lefebvre’s perspective of the state mode of production as the globalization of the modern state, the national state is reduced to “la police d’un espace national” (ibid :82, emphasis added)—in other words, the Foucauldian policy state in its

mercantilist origins (see Ch. III). Furthermore, for Lefebvre, the state mode of production, in its policy-ing of a national territory, is distinguished by a specific articulation of the production of knowledge:

Le savoir étatique—au service du pouvoir, mêlé à l'exercice du pouvoir politique—ne consiste pas en une connaissance des contradictions au sein de l'économie et du social par une 'instance' ou niveau supérieur à ces contradictions et conflits. Il ne les connaît pas: il les nie....Le savoir étatique procède par réduction, à la limite par destruction (1978:51)

Innis—who would develop an approach to Canadian economic history derived from a radicalized application of the theory of staple production, itself a discovery of mercantilist thought (Schumpeter 1954:340)—was particularly insistent upon the political significance of the mercantilist origins of the governance of Canada and most notably for its direct, unbroken continuum in a bureaucratic tradition with roots in Colbertian New France. It was this continuum, Innis argued, “which enabled Canadians through governmental activity to develop their natural resources by construction of canals, railways, hydro-electric power facilities and other undertakings” (1956:384)—that is, to develop a communication system whose impressive achievements would lie, in Frye's brilliant insight, “in the inarticulate part of communication” (Frye 1971:222).

The complex transition from inarticulate communication to the articulate communicative formulae represented by the feature film (even in its most traditional and narrative form) —one aspect of which communicative transition has been examined in these pages as the emergence of the discursive economy—entailed the passage from an archaic economy to the barest beginnings of a capitalist economy in Canadian feature film production—or, in Derridean terms,

from the restricted to the general economy (Derrida 1978:251ff). In this passage which is as much cultural as economic as it entails “a metaphysics of the economy” (Baudrillard 1991), the role of the state would be dual, since it would be both the central organ of power in such a passage but also the central organ of its display. In this passage, however, as Raymond Williams remarks (as we have already seen), “there is one aspect of the state in relation to culture which is almost always forgotten because we absorb it so very early that we can hardly recognize it...at all,” and it is that the cultural policies of the state “turn...out not to be a policy for the arts but a policy for embellishing, representing, making more effective a particular social order or certain preferred features in it” (1984:3). To put that more explicitly, the transition from a political economy to what Bourdieu, from within a metaphysics of the economic, terms “l'économie de l'intérêt sans masque,” is blocked by the politics (and policies) of governmentality characteristic not only of certain forms of contemporary cultural nationalism, but especially of what he terms the “archaic economy.” By the systematic accentuation of the symbolic aspects of action and relations of production, the archaic economy both facilitates—to the extent that these remain symbolic—but then blocks the emergence of cultural representations of economic activity:

le propre de l'économie archaïque résid[er]ait dans le fait que l'action économique ne peut reconnaître explicitement les fins économiques par rapport auxquelles elle est objectivement orientée: 'l'idolatrie de la nature' qui interdit la constitution de la nature comme matière première et de même la constitution de l'action humaine...comme lutte agressive de l'homme contre la nature extérieure, et l'accentuation systématique de l'aspect symbolique des actes et des rapports de production tendent à empêcher la constitution de l'économie en tant que telle (Bourdieu 1972:228).

In other words, the specificity of the archaic economy resides precisely in a socially maintained split between the objective truth of economic activity as both known and not-yet-known and social reproduction of production and exchange. Accordingly, the lexicon of an archaic economy is made up of designations of dualistic social and/or linguistic relations (e.g., Canada/U.S., Canada/Quebec, French/English, public-sector/private sector) that represent unstable structures, condemned to split apart as soon as there is the slightest weakening of the social mechanisms that maintain them. These unstable dualities, however, can be artificially sustained by an "économie de la bonne foi" that is maintained with the complicity of the bad faith of the collectivity or social milieu (*ibid.*:229-230).

Thus, the discursive economy of the Canadian feature would be an archaic economy of good faith in its two most important dimensions. Externally, to the extent that its dominant discursive formation (the state) would opt for a discourse of "moral suasion" as the principal means of persuading the American film industry to make de jure what it controlled de facto, and so guarantee access to world markets for Canadian production. The belief in the good faith of the American film industry in developing a Canadian one condemned the economy of the Canadian feature to be, more than anything else, discursive. And internally, to the extent that the filmmakers' discourse (or, for that matter, any subsequent form of petition to the state) rested also upon the implicit assumption that the state acts in good faith, the discursive economy would remain—and maintain itself, largely unchanged—within the stasis of the formulations of its emergence in the 1960s, in the circularity of the discursive productions of an imaginary industry and an

imaginary state.<sup>3</sup>

Bourdieu's summary of the historical redundancy of archaic economies thus aptly encapsulates the governmentalization of the discursive economy of Canada's displaced national cinema:

Les situations historiques dans lesquelles s'opère la dissociation conduisant des structures instables, artificiellement maintenues, de l'économie de la bonne foi aux structures claires et économiques (par opposition à dispendieuses) de l'économie de l'intérêt sans masque font voir qu'il en coûte de faire fonctionner une économie qui, en refusant de se reconnaître et de s'avouer comme telle, se condamne à dépenser à peu près autant d'ingéniosité et d'énergie pour dissimuler la vérité des actes économiques que pour les accomplir...(Bourdieu 1972:229).

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<sup>3</sup> As Marx puts it in the *Kritik der Hegelschen Staatsphilosophie*. "La bureaucratie est l'Etat imaginaire à côté de l'Etat réel, elle est le spiritualisme de l'Etat. Chaque chose a donc deux significations, l'une réelle, l'autre bureaucratique, de même que le savoir est double, l'un réel, l'autre bureaucratique....L'esprit général de la bureaucratie est le secret, le mystère, gardé à l'intérieur de la bureaucratie par la hiérarchie, et à l'extérieur de la bureaucratie par son caractère de corporation fermée. La bureaucratie se considère elle-même comme le but ultime de l'Etat. Comme elle fait de ses buts 'formels' son contenu, elle entre partout en conflit avec les buts 'réels.' Elle est condamnée à donner le formel pour le contenu et le contenu pour le formel. Les buts de l'Etat se transforment en buts de la bureaucratie. ." (Marx 1976: § 297).

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