



Speech delivered by

S. Wayne Clarkson
Executive Director

During a conference luncheon organized by
THE ACADEMY OF CANADIAN CINEMA AND
TELEVISION

Montreal, October 14, 2005

MERCI GUY,

GOOD AFTERNOON, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

THE LAST SPEECH I GAVE WAS AT THE APFTQ CONGRESS IN APRIL.

MY FIRST SPEECH IN FRENCH AND I WILL ADMIT I WAS QUITE NERVOUS – ESPECIALLY OF MY ACCENT.

TODAY AFTER NUMEROUS FRENCH CLASSES AND TWO WEEKS OF IMMERSION IN JONQUIÈRE I AM STILL SOMEWHAT NERVOUS BUT MY ACCENT IS MORE QUEBECOIS – CÂLINE DE BINE.

I THOUGHT OF CALLING TODAY'S SPEECH "LA LUNE DE MIEL EST TERMINÉ." BUT IT SOUNDED TOO ROMANTIC AND I AM TOO OLD.

I'VE WORKED IN THE INDUSTRY FOR 35 YEARS AND BEEN MARRIED FOR 37 YEARS. I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT A HONEYMOON SHOULD BE.

SO LET'S JUST SAY: OVER THE PAST NINE MONTHS I'VE GOTTEN TO KNOW THE INDUSTRY BETTER FROM COAST TO COAST, AND IT'S NOW TIME TO GET ON WITH THE JOB OF PROVIDING CLEAR LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION.

TO STRENGTHEN TRADITIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND TO BUILD NEW ONES.

IN ENGLISH CANADA IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT WAYNE CLARKSON IS A "PRACTICAL IDEALIST."

I LIKE THAT. CAN YOU SAY "IDÉALISTE PRATIQUE" IN FRENCH?

IDEALISTS BELIEVE IN A BETTER WORLD. PRACTICAL PEOPLE DELIVER THE GOODS.

IF TELEFILM CANADA – SOON TO CELEBRATE ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2007 – IS TO REMAIN ESSENTIAL, VITAL, RELEVANT AND FERTILE, IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN JUST VIAGRA.

IT WILL TAKE A NEW CORPORATE CULTURE. ONE THAT IS OPEN TO NEW IDEAS AND NEW RELATIONSHIPS.

A MODERN PUBLIC AGENCY THAT EMBRACES CHANGE AND RISK – THAT IS **PROACTIVE, FOCUSED AND EFFECTIVE.**

I HAVE STATED BEFORE, I BELIEVE THE PARTICIPATION OF GOVERNMENT IN OUR CULTURAL INDUSTRIES IS GOOD.

NO – THAT’S NOT ACCURRATE.

MORE THAN GOOD – IT’S ESSENTIAL.

FOR WELL OVER 75 YEARS, CANADA’S GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTING AND STRENGTHENING CANADIAN CULTURE BECAUSE WE ARE A VERY SMALL POPULATION IN A VERY LARGE SPACE.

SO CREATING THE MYTHS THAT SHAPE AND DISTINGUISH US FROM THE WORLD’S OTHER TRIBES AND COMMUNITIES, AS WELL AS THE STORIES THAT DEFINE OUR IDENTITY, ISN’T AN EASY TASK.

AS THE NEW GOVERNOR GENERAL, MICHAËLLE JEAN, STATED IN HER RECENT INSTALLATION SPEECH: “CANADA CAN RELY ON TWO PRICELESS RESOURCES – OUR LAND AND OUR PEOPLE. EVERY ONE OF US REKINDLES IN HIS OWN WAY THE SENSE OF BELONGING TO THIS SPACE THAT WE ALL SHARE – A SPACE THAT CONTAINS THE WORLD.”

THE ACCLAIMED CANADIAN NOVELIST MARGARET LAURENCE MADE A SIMILAR ELOQUENT STATEMENT: “ONE CAN WRITE OF EVENTS IN A SMALL PRAIRIE TOWN, AND EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS THERE IN SOME WAYS HAPPENS EVERYWHERE.”

SINCE COMING TO TELEFILM IN JANUARY, I HAVE CRISCROSSED THE COUNTRY SEVERAL TIMES. I HAVE SPOKEN WITH CREATORS, PRODUCERS, HEADS OF CULTURAL AGENCIES, REPORTERS AND MINISTERS.

I LISTENED, I LEARNED– AND I TOOK ACTION.

IN THE PAST, BOTH THE CANADIAN TELEVISION FUND'S AND TELEFILM'S BOARDS OFTEN FOUND THEMSELVES HEADING IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. THIS MADE LIFE DIFFICULT FOR PRODUCERS, BROADCASTERS AND CREATORS.

IT HAD TO BE IMPROVED.

AS MINISTER FRULLA STATED IN HER SPEECH LAST JUNE AT BANFF: "CLARITY, EFFICIENCY AND SIMPLICITY WILL BE SERVED IF THERE IS ONE BOARD - THE CTF; AND ONE ADMINISTRATION - TELEFILM."

FOLLOWING THAT ANNOUNCEMENT, THE CTF AND TELEFILM HAVE WORKED HARD TO FINALIZE A NEW PARTNERSHIP THAT IS NOW CLOSE TO COMPLETION.

THE TRANSITION IS GOING WELL. WE ARE ON SCHEDULE, AND WE WILL BE READY FOR THE NEW FISCAL COMMENCING APRIL 1, 2006.

THE NEW RELATIONSHIP WILL CREATE SIMPLICITY AND COST EFFICIENCIES THAT WILL BENEFIT THE INDUSTRY. THE ADMINISTRATIVE SAVINGS OF MORE THAN \$3 MILLION WILL BE REINVESTED IN PRODUCTION.

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT THIS STRUCTURE IS THAT IT ENCOURAGES THE INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EXPERTISE.

I HAVE ATTENDED A NUMBER OF CTF BOARD MEETINGS AND EACH TIME I AM IMPRESSED BY THE QUALITY AND PASSION OF THE DEBATES.

THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE REPRESENTATIVES AROUND THE TABLE ARE KNOWLEDGEABLE, INFORMED AND COMMITTED.

AS CLAIRE SAMSON KNOWS THERE IS NEVER ANY LACK OF IDEAS AND OPINIONS.

THE DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKING COMMUNITY ACROSS CANADA LOBBIED HARD AND PRESENTED A STRONG CASE FOR THE CREATION OF A LONG-FORM THEATRICAL DOCUMENTARY FUND.

TELEFILM ACTED, AND IN JUNE, ANNOUNCED A NEW PILOT PROJECT FOR THEATRICAL DOCUMENTARIES.

EQUALLY IMPORTANT, WE WORKED WITH PARTNERS IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS TO RAISE ADDITIONAL DOLLARS – \$1 MILLION FROM THE CBC PLUS \$250,000 FROM ROGERS COMMUNICATIONS.

I AM OPTIMISTIC THAT THE SUCCESS OF THIS PILOT PROGRAM WILL RESULT IN NEW MONEY BEING MADE AVAILABLE ON A LONG-TERM BASIS FOR THEATRICAL DOCUMENTARIES. AND THAT TELEFILM CANADA WILL ADMINISTER THE NEW FUND.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PROVINCIAL AGENCIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE JUST AS VALUABLE. ONE NEED ONLY OBSERVE THE IMPORTANT ROLE THE SODEC PLAYS IN THE HEALTH AND SUCCESS OF QUEBEC'S CULTURAL INDUSTRIES.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE ONTARIO MEDIA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION RECENTLY ANNOUNCED A \$1.5-MILLION PROGRAM IN SUPPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION OF FEATURE FILMS.

AGAIN, I AM HOPEFUL THAT THIS MODEST INITIATIVE WILL BE INCREASED AND MADE A PERMANENT PART OF THE OMDC'S FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ONTARIO'S FILM INDUSTRY.

WHILE ATTENDING THE VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL I HAD THE PLEASURE OF MEETING WITH THE NEW MINISTER OF TOURISM, SPORTS AND THE ARTS AND I URGED FOR THE INCREASED SUPPORT TO THE B.C. FILM AND TELEVISION INDUSTRIES.

IF ALL PROVINCES INVESTED AS MUCH AS SODEC, WE'D BE IN BUSINESS.

THE CANADA FEATURE FILM FUND IS HERE TO STAY.

WE ALL AGREE I AM SURE THAT MORE FUNDING IS NEEDED FOR PRODUCTION, DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING.

BUT SUPPOSE THE GOVERNMENT RENEWS THE FUND WITHOUT NEW DOLLARS. WHAT THEN?

WE MUST CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO FIND ALTERNATIVE NEW SOURCES OF FINANCING.

WITH ITS LIMITED RESOURCES AND RISING PRODUCTION COSTS, TELEFILM CAN NO LONGER FUND AS MANY FILMS AS IT USED TO.

WHEN TELEFILM SAYS NO TO A PROJECT, IT GENERALLY FALLS THROUGH. AND WE HAVE TO SAY NO TO A LOT OF EXCELLENT PROJECTS.

WE MUST TAKE ACTION AND EXPAND THE OPTIONS – THE FINANCIAL TOOL KIT.

FOR EXAMPLE, THE RECENT CHANGES TO THE TELEFILM CANADA ACT HAVE GIVEN US THE LEGAL RIGHTS OF A PHYSICAL PERSON.

WHAT'S THAT ? I AM A PHYSICAL PERSON. A MALE ONE, I THINK.

BUT SERIOUSLY, THIS ALLOWS US TODAY TO BE MORE PROACTIVE.

TELEFILM IS STUDYING THE POSSIBILITY OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE INDUSTRY. OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO MAXIMIZE THE LEVERAGE OF OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES.

ACTUALLY, TELEFILM AND THE FONDS D'INVESTISSEMENT DES ENTREPRISES CULTURELLES (FIDEC) ARE DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITY OF A PARTNERSHIP THAT WILL ALLOW THEM TO EXPAND THEIR MARKET OUTSIDE OF QUEBEC.

THIS PARTNERSHIP COULD RESULT IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS BEING MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PRODUCTION COMMUNITY.

AND THERE ARE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, I WANT TO MEET WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FTQ'S FONDS DE SOLIDARITÉ TO SEE IF WE CAN STRIKE A PARTNERSHIP DEAL WITH THEM TOO.

WHAT ABOUT OTHER FUNDS – PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS WITH BELL OR TELUS, ADMINISTERED BY TELEFILM, ACROSS CANADA TO SERVE THE FILM, TELEVISION AND NEW MEDIA INDUSTRIES?

ANOTHER AREA OF IMPORTANCE IS THE COPRODUCTION POLICY THAT CANADIAN HERITAGE IS PREPARING.

THE FUTURE SUCCESS OF OUR INDUSTRY DEPENDS ON HOW WELL WE DESIGN AND EXECUTE AN EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY.

CANADA'S ECONOMY IS BASED ON EXPORTS – WE ARE A WORLD LEADER.

CANADA'S FILM AND TELEVISION INDUSTRIES MUST EXPAND THEIR COPRODUCTION ACTIVITIES, AND MARKET MORE AGGRESSIVELY THEIR PRODUCTS AROUND THE WORLD.

AS A COPRODUCING NATION WE ARE AT A TURNING POINT; PROJECTS WITH OUR LEADING PARTNERS – FRANCE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM – ARE DECLINING.

EUROPEAN NATIONS ARE LOOKING WITHIN THE E.U. FOR COPRODUCTION PARTNERS AND PROVIDING INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE THEIR MEMBERS TO COPRODUCE WITH EACH OTHER.

CANADIAN BROADCASTERS AND PRODUCERS WILL HAVE TO LOOK MORE AND MORE TO COPRODUCING PARTNERS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES TO MEET THEIR INCREASING NEED FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCING.

FOR EXAMPLE, ONE SUCCESS STORY IS THE NUMBER OF INCREASING COPRODUCTIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA, INCLUDING YVES SIMONEAU'S **ROMÉO DALLAIRE**.

I READ WITH INTEREST PRIME MINISTER MARTIN'S RECENT SPEECH ON ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AND GLOBAL TRADE. HE TALKS ABOUT CHINA AND INDIA AS DYNAMIC GLOBAL ECONOMIC POWERS CHANGING THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE.

AS YOU KNOW, TELEFILM ADMINISTERS CANADA'S COPRODUCTION AGREEMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

TRADING CORRIDORS ARE CHANGING AND REALIGNING, AND WE MUST BE PREPARED FOR - AND PARTICIPATE IN - THOSE CHANGES.

QUEBEC CINEMA IS EXPERIENCING A RENAISSANCE - A SUCCESS THAT FEW NATIONAL CINEMAS ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD EXPERIENCE.

TODAY, QUEBEC FILMS HAVE ACHIEVED MORE THAN 26% OF OUR FRANCOPHONE MARKET. THE RESULT OF RECENT FILMS SUCH AS *AURORE*, *HORLOGE BIOLOGIQUE* AND THE ACCLAIMED *C.R.A.Z.Y.*, WHICH WON THE BEST CANADIAN FILM AT THE TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL AND HAS BEEN SELECTED TO REPRESENT US AT THE OSCARS.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DIRECTOR JEAN-MARC VALLÉE, HIS ENTIRE TEAM AND THE FOLKS AT CIRRUS - INCLUDING PIERRE EVEN WHO USED TO WORK AT TELEFILM.

QUEBEC'S RENAISSANCE ALSO INCLUDES STARTLING FILMS SUCH AS *LA NEUVAINÉ*, WHICH WON THREE AWARDS AT THIS YEAR'S LOCARNO FILM FESTIVAL.

AND *FAMILIA* BY LOUISE ARCHAMBAULT, WHO WON THE AWARD AT TORONTO FOR BEST FIRST FEATURE.

THE COMMERCIAL SUCCESSES AND ACCOLADES WILL CONTINUE – THAT I’M SURE OF. AND THERE IS STILL MORE TO COME WITH *MAURICE RICHARD* AND *KIGALI*.

A DIVERSITY OF GENRES, BUDGETS AND CREATORS AS WELL AS A WIDE BREADTH OF SELECTIVE- AND PERFORMANCE-BASED AUTEUR AND POPULAR COMMERCIAL FILMS.

IT’S AMAZING AND YOU SHOULD BE VERY PROUD – WE SHOULD BE VERY PROUD.

THE CANADA FEATURE FILM FUND IS WORKING – IT’S EFFECTIVE.

AND THERE IS GROWING OPTIMISM IN ENGLISH CANADA.

DEEPA MEHTA’S STUNNING FILM *WATER*, WHICH OPENED THE TORONTO AND VANCOUVER FILM FESTIVALS, WAS PICKED UP BY FOX SEARCHLIGHT FOR RELEASE IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE LIFE AND HARD TIMES OF GUY TERRIFICO BY MICHAEL MABBOTT WAS THE CO-WINNER WITH *FAMILIA* FOR BEST FIRST FILM AT TORONTO.

AND THE LINE-UP OF NEW PRODUCTIONS INCLUDE *BON COP/BAD COP* AND THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED *TRAILER PARK BOYS* MOVIE.

TODAY, THANKS TO THE SUCCESS OF QUEBEC FILMS WE HAVE ACHIEVED A NATIONAL BOX OFFICE OF 5.1%.

WITH MORE EXCITING ENGLISH- AND FRENCH-LANGUAGE FILMS SET TO BE LAUNCHED SOON THAT PERCENTAGE IS SURE TO GROW.

IS 10% A DREAM OR CAN WE MAKE IT A REALITY?

I THINK IT WAS JEAN COCTEAU WHO SAID THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE REALLY BIG DREAMS, BIG ENOUGH THAT YOU DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF THEM.

TO HAVE A GRAND DREAM IS TO ENVISAGE THE POTENTIAL FOR NEW MEDIA AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES.

I HAD THE PLEASURE OF ATTENDING THE OPENING SESSION OF DIGIMART – THE NEW DIGITAL MARKET HELD ALONGSIDE THE NEW MONTREAL FILMFEST.

THE GUEST SPEAKER WAS THE INSPIRING AMERICAN BILLIONAIRE MARK CUBAN (I THINK IT'S EASIER TO BE INSPIRING WHEN YOU'RE A BILLIONAIRE).

CUBAN SPECIALIZES IN SYSTEM INTEGRATION. HE PREDICTS THE NUMBER OF FILMS AND PROGRAMS MADE IN THE U.S. WILL INCREASE DRAMATICALLY OVER THE NEXT DECADE BECAUSE OF LOW DIGITAL PRODUCTION COSTS AND THE EXPONENTIAL PROLIFERATION OF DISTRIBUTION PLATFORMS.

WHAT I WAS PLEASED TO HEAR WAS HIS EMPHASIS ON QUALITY – ON TALENT. WITHOUT HIGH-QUALITY, CREATIVE AND ENTERTAINING CONTENT YOU CAN'T GET AHEAD – YOU'RE OUT OF BUSINESS.

A FEW WEEKS LATER, I ATTENDED A MEETING WITH NEW MEDIA B.C. DURING THE VANCOUVER FILM FESTIVAL.

THIS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION IS OPTIMISTIC AND ENTHUSIASTIC; IT IS LOOKING TO THE WORLD AS THEIR MARKET, AS THEIR CHALLENGE.

THERE ARE 3,000 NEW MEDIA COMPANIES IN CANADA. THREE PRIMARY NEEDS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED: TRAINING, PROTOTYPE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION.

ONE OF MY GOALS FOR THE COMING YEARS IS TO FOCUS ON SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASING FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR NEW MEDIA CONTENT.

ANOTHER OF MY GOALS IS TO ENHANCE THE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO TALENTED CANADIANS – ESPECIALLY THOSE FROM OUR CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES AND FIRST NATIONS.

IF WE ARE A “COMMUNITY OF COMMUNITIES,” AND IF IDENTITY IS LOCAL AND REGIONAL ROOTED IN THE IMAGINATION AND WORKS OF CULTURE TO QUOTE NORTHROP FRYE, THEN CANADA HAS AN ENORMOUS OPPORTUNITY AND A GREAT ADVANTAGE OVER OTHER COUNTRIES.

AND IT’S NOT ABOUT POLITICAL CORRECTNESS; IT’S ABOUT CREATIVE SMARTS AND GOOD BUSINESS.

AMERICAN ACADEMIC RICHARD FLORIDA MADE THE LINK BETWEEN THE CULTURAL CREATIVITY AND THE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS OF A CITY OR REGION.

FOR FLORIDA THERE ARE THREE “T’S” TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: TECHNOLOGY, TALENT AND TOLERANCE.

IT’S NO COINCIDENCE THAT TORONTO, MONTREAL AND VANCOUVER ARE THREE OF THE MOST CREATIVE AND TOLERANT CITIES ON THE CONTINENT, AND ALL ARE RICH IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY.

CANADA’S NATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOLS – INIS IN MONTREAL; THE CANADIAN FILM CENTRE IN TORONTO AND THE NATIONAL SCREEN INSTITUTE IN WINNIPEG – WILL PLAY AN INCREASING ROLE IN ACHIEVING OUR SHARED OBJECTIVES.

AND I AM HOPEFUL THAT ADDITIONAL DOLLARS CAN BE SECURED NEXT YEAR FOR THE NATIONAL TRAINING FUND, IN ORDER TO ENABLE THE THREE INSTITUTIONS TO BETTER SERVE THE CREATIVE TALENT IN CANADA’S ABORIGINAL AND MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES.

AS THE NEW GOVERNOR GENERAL STATED: “WE MUST DESIGN MEASURES TO FOSTER NEW TALENT WHO SEND OUT THEIR VOICES TO THE WORLD.”

I WOULD DISAPPOINT MANY OF YOU, I'M SURE, IF I DIDN'T ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF THE STATE OF FILM FESTIVALS IN MONTREAL.

FIRST, I WANT TO BEGIN BY EXTENDING PERSONALLY, AND ON BEHALF OF TELEFILM CANADA, OUR BEST WISHES AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FESTIVAL DU NOUVEAU CINEMA - SPECIFICALLY TO ARNIE GELBART, CHAIR OF THE BOARD; BRUNO JOBIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; AND CLAUDE CHAMBERLAN, PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR - ON CELEBRATING 34 YEARS. THEY HAVE MUCH TO BE PROUD OF.

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN OVER THE PAST MANY MONTHS OF THE CONFUSION CAUSED BY THREE FESTIVALS HELD WITHIN A FEW MONTHS IN MONTREAL.

ALSO, CRITICISM HAS BEEN DIRECTED AT TELEFILM GENERALLY, AND MYSELF AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FOR NOT TAKING A MORE PROACTIVE ROLE IN FIXING THE PROBLEMS.

FOR THE RECORD, I EXCLUDED MYSELF FROM ANY DIRECT INVOLVEMENT FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS.

FIRST, THIS ISSUE HAD BEGUN LONG BEFORE I ARRIVED AND WAS BEING WELL MANAGED UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF CHARLES BÉLANGER, CHAIR OF TELEFILM'S BOARD.

SECOND, I HAD IMMEDIATE CHALLENGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO TAKE ON: A VERY DEMANDING NEW JOB AND NEGOTIATING A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CTF.

THIRD, I HAD SERVED AS DIRECTOR OF THE TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL FOR EIGHT YEARS (1978-1985), DURING WHICH I HAD NUMEROUS CONFRONTATIONS WITH THE MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL. AND I CONTINUED TO SERVE ON TORONTO'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS UP UNTIL THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF MY APPOINTMENT AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TELEFILM IN NOVEMBER 2004, AT WHICH TIME I RESIGNED FROM THE BOARD.

AFTER NINE MONTHS ON THE JOB, AND GIVEN THE SOON-TO-BE CONCLUDED FESTIVAL SEASON (MONTREAL, TORONTO, HALIFAX, VANCOUVER PLUS A FEW SMALLER FESTIVALS FROM SUDBURY TO CALGARY), IT'S TIME TO STEP UP.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT THE PROCESS AND DECISION TAKEN BY TELEFILM AND SODEC TO WITHDRAW FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL.

THERE WAS LEGITIMATE CONCERN SURROUNDING THE GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE WFF.

THERE WAS ALSO CONCERN EXPRESSED BY PROFESSIONALS FROM THE QUEBEC FILM INDUSTRY AND MEDIA REGARDING THE DROP IN THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STATURE OF THIS FESTIVAL.

TELEFILM, AS AN ADMINISTRATOR OF PUBLIC FUNDS AND A PARTNER IN THE FILM INDUSTRY, HAD AN OBLIGATION TO ACT. WE COULDN'T STAND BY AND DO NOTHING KNOWING THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEMS.

TELEFILM AND SODEC THEREFORE COMMISSIONED AN INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF CANADA'S FOUR MAJOR INTERNATIONAL FESTIVALS (THE TORONTO FILM FESTIVAL, THE VANCOUVER FILM FESTIVAL, THE ATLANTIC FILM FESTIVAL AND THE WORLD FILM FESTIVAL).

THE WFF CHOSE NOT TO COOPERATE.

THE INDEPENDENT SECOR STUDY REVEALED THAT THE WFF NO LONGER MET THE CONDITIONS FOR A MODERN, TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE FESTIVAL.

TELEFILM AND SODEC THEN CALLED FOR PROPOSALS FROM INTERESTED PROFESSIONALS TO UNDERTAKE THE CHALLENGE OF ORGANISING A NEW INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL IN MONTREAL.

THE WFF WAS NOT EXCLUDED FROM THIS PROCESS, BUT **AGAIN**, CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE.

THE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE, COMPOSED OF TELEFILM AND SODEC, FOUND THE MOST PROMISE IN THE PROPOSAL FROM THE REGROUPEMENT POUR UN FESTIVAL DE CINÉMA À MONTRÉAL BACKED BY ALAIN SIMARD, OF ÉQUIPE SPECTRA, AND DANIEL LANGLOIS.

THIS INITIAL PLAN, IT MUST BE REMEMBERED, INCLUDED COOPERATION BETWEEN THE NEW EVENT AND THE FESTIVAL DU NOUVEAU CINÉMA. REGRETTABLY, AS OF TODAY, THIS PARTNERSHIP HAS NOT MATERIALIZED.

BUT THIS IN NO WAY ALTERS THE REASONING BEHIND THE DECISION TO WITHDRAW FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE WFF.

AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, I SERVED AS DIRECTOR OF THE TORONTO FESTIVAL IN ITS EARLY FORMATIVE YEARS, AND I KNOW VERY WELL THE DIFFICULTIES AND CHALLENGES THAT ARE FACED IN ACQUIRING GOOD FILMS AND ATTRACTING AUDIENCES FOR A FIRST-TIME FESTIVAL.

I REMEMBER THE VERY DISAPPOINTING AUDIENCES IN THE FIRST FEW YEARS OF TORONTO – IN SOME CASES A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE IN A 600-SEAT CINEMA – WITH THE FILMMAKER PRESENT AND VERY UPSET.

THE CRITICISM THE TORONTO FESTIVAL RECEIVED IN THE MEDIA WAS RELENTLESS IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD.

I KNOW VERY WELL THE PAIN AND FRUSTRATION THAT THE ORGANISERS OF THE NEW MONTREAL FILMFEST WERE ENDURING IN THEIR FIRST YEAR.

BUT I WAS IMPRESSED BY WHAT THEY WERE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH IN SUCH A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME.

HOWEVER, THE FESTIVAL WAS NOT WITHOUT ITS FAILINGS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS. NONE OF WHICH WERE A SURPRISE TO ME GIVEN IT WAS THEIR FIRST YEAR.

THE SELECTION OF FILMS NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED – A MIX OF WORLD PREMIERES AND THE BEST FILMS OF OTHER MAJOR FILM FESTIVALS.

CREDIBILITY WITH FILMMAKERS AND DISTRIBUTORS IS NOT ACHIEVED IN ONE YEAR, IT IS EARNED OVER TIME.

THIS IS ALSO TRUE IN BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FILM-GOING PUBLIC. YOU MUST EARN THEIR CONFIDENCE.

IN THE COMING MONTHS I AM CONFIDENT POSITIVE CHANGES WILL OCCUR – AS THERE MUST BE – AND TELEFILM WILL PLAY ITS CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE – AS NEEDED.

MONTREAL WILL HAVE THE FESTIVAL IT WANTS AND MERITS.

AND THAT'S ABOUT IT FOR FESTIVALS.

PIERRE CURZI, PRESIDENT OF THE UNION DES ARTISTES, ONCE SAID THAT "CULTURE IS A 'TREASURE' AND A CONDITION OF LIFE. ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK SHAPE CIVILIZATIONS."

PIERRE IS A WISE MAN.

WHAT DO I HOPE FOR? WHAT DO I WANT TO HAVE AS A LEGACY WHEN MY TERM AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TELEFILM ENDS IN 2010... IF I CAN LAST THAT LONG.

- INCREASED PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FUNDING IN SUPPORT OF CANADA'S FILM TELEVISION AND NEW MEDIA INDUSTRIES.
- AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CTF AND CANADA'S BROADCAST INDUSTRY.
- NEW AND DIVERSE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES THAT SERVE OUR CULTURAL INDUSTRIES.
- GREATER OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS FOR EMERGING TALENT THAT EMBRACES CULTURAL DIVERSITY.

- INCREASED AUDIENCES IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD FOR CANADIAN TALENT AND PRODUCTIONS.
- A DYNAMIC, TRANSPARENT, PROACTIVE, FOCUSED AND EFFECTIVE AGENCY THAT EMBRACES CHANGE AND CHALLENGE.
- AND TO BE BILINGUAL – BY THE STANDARDS OF JONQUIÈRE – CÂLINE DE BINE.