

Fort Chipewan and, according to Peter, might be termed pop-anthropology. The crew undertook the shooting during the Christmas holidays in Alberta and certainly shows the ultimate in dedication. The Alberta Department of Education sponsored. Director was Tom Radford of Edmonton; Cameraman — Tony Westman; Sound — Rick Patton; Assistant Camera — Fred Easton; Sheila Reljic edited and is joining the NFB Regional Production Centre as a producer, following her successful documentary which she directed on Soccer.

## Notes

The Harold Greenberg entry into the province with his long expected series of features is still apparently an 'iffy' proposition.

Mooted as the most costly Canadian feature (\$2,000,000) *Double Negative* which was to be partially lensed in Victoria, B.C., has also vanished from the production scene. Screen rights were alleged to be purchased for \$50,000, based on a book, *The Three Roads* by Ross McDonald of California. Archie MacDonnell & Associates were the promoters.

Bob Elliott is very quiet, and it is hoped he has not given up the idea of more serious production following the failure of his first feature attempt, *The Inbreaker*. Elliott is an ambitious, capable and highly personable young Canadian, and should in the future promote something really worthwhile in the Canadian feature film area.

Somebody has to wake up somewhere. We can't continue to depend entirely upon the American and British.

—Jack Ammon

# HOLLYWOOD

## Sydney Newman, The Czar of Canada's Film Industry?

—Leila Sorell

In a few answers to the opening questions I posed to Sydney Newman during the press conference held by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association on March 22, 1975 in Hollywood, one could detect his incredible knowledge of the film and television productions which made him a powerhouse whose weight will be felt in the Canadian film industry for many years.

Being the government film commissioner as well as chairman of the National Film Board (whose function



Sydney Newman and Leila Sorell reading 1973 copy of *Cinema Canada*

he explained in great detail), one wonders if this enormous concentrate of power given to him will not lead him one day to absolute power. Parliament allotted 20 million dollars to his disposal in 1974, however, being appointed by Parliament with a fixed salary leaves one satisfied that Newman is looking out with profound sincerity for the best interests of promoting the Canadian film industry. Even the aim of his recent trip to Hollywood testified to his desire to elevate Canadian films in the U.S.A. to their proper place.

In Newman's words the government agency's aim is to interpret Canada to Canadians and to the rest of the world.

He attended Filmex, which is the largest international non-competitive film festival in the world held annually in Hollywood. Filmex paid tribute exclusively to Canadian product in a program consisting of 27 shorts, educational and documentary films on March 20, 1975. The screening took place in an auditorium holding approximately 800 seats which were occupied by a capacity paying audience. The program lasted two and one-half hours and, quoting Marykay Powell, Filmex public relations executive, it was one of the most enthusiastically received programs of the entire exposition.

Beaming with pride, Sydney Newman felt that, judging from the applause, the results of this screening were gratifying.

Among many enlightening deeds of the Canadian Film Board is the fact, besides allowing tax incentives, that it aids financially with \$50,000 to \$300,000 to independent filmmakers. Such an aid is unknown and way overdue in the U.S.A. In spite of these grants, the Federal government does not impose any political restrictions or other censorship.

"With such a favourable climate, why did so many great talents of Canada defect to U.S.A.?"

"Yes. We are trying to do our utmost to bring them back. In fact," he added joyously, "We succeeded in getting Ted Kotcheff back with us to direct *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*."

"The best talent left Canada in the 1950s. There were few filmmakers in 1939 and the Film Board was created after the war. Canada is a small country and there is simply not enough work."

But Newman's role presently is primarily oriented towards television productions which will cater to mass audiences. There will also be changes in filmmaking. So far Canadians have been satisfied with U.S. films, but of late they want to be more and more identified with themselves.

Most astonishing to the press members was perhaps Newman's progressive concept of the "Challenge For Change" program, which the Film Commissioner called "one of Canada's greatest achievements." It gives a voice to the people and the power to criticize its government. Is it akin to our radio talk shows in the U.S.A. where people anonymously call in and criticize every governmental issue or personality?

Newman agreed, except that it is a visual concept "with greater impact on man's quest for a better democratic society."

"What countries are the best markets for Canadian films?" I asked.

"U.S.A. is first, followed by the United Kingdom, France and the iron curtain countries," he replied. "In fact, Czechoslovakia paid tribute to us with a special film festival honoring Canadian films."

"Any plans for co-productions and with what countries?" one member asked.

"Presently there are co-productions with France and Italy. But Canada's forte lies in educational and short subject films. The Film Board sponsors only three feature films per year."

Mr. Newman left no doubt in the minds of the press that he will continue to lead Canada in the right direction to earn its place among the major film-making countries.

While in Hollywood the Canadian Consul General hosted a party in honour of Mr. Newman. The gala occasion was attended by all the emigres from the North now living and working in Hollywood. □