Lomez in one of the film's lower moments? This scene, with its distinct lack of subtlety, pretends to terror, but ends by being merely an inferior substitute – gross excess.

Susannah York is largely wasted as a bank manager's mistress who is attracted to Miles as he becomes increasingly obsessed with outwitting the killer who torments him. The inadequacies of the script prevent York from being a fleshed-out character, as it does the other principal actors, and we are never sure what she wants from the relationship with Miles. The ending, where Miles has finally outwitted the robber and escaped from the bank, is unsatisfying because in this world devoid of ethics and morality, we doubt the bond that exists between the characters played by York and Gould. Are we witness to the triumph of love over adversity or the beginning of another con?

Minor characters such as those played by Gail Dahms and John Candy are wasted in superfluous roles because again the writer has not been inspired to create the density of background detail, though to say, "Look there's Canada in needs.

One other false note, or rather an observation, that is disturbing about the film (although **The Silent Partner** has had successful runs all across Canada) is that Canadian films are becoming distressingly militant in their Canadianism.

In **The Silent Partner**, we are told in no uncertain terms that we are watching a Canadian film (in fact, a Toronto film) by means of lingering pans over one downtown shopping mall recognizable to Torontonians as well as by the odd way in which the CN Tower appears in the background of so many shots as though to say "Look there's Canada in the background!" Such trifling with the audience's interest (the voyeuristic tendency to say, "Hey, I stood in that same spot where Elliott Gould is walking") has a way of backfiring because, while recognizing the Eaton Centre and the "First Bank of Toronto" may elicit a murmur of approval from Toronto audiences, it'll leave the boys and girls in Moose Jaw or Montreal pretty cold.

Most American films that rely on a sense of place have the grace to do a quick pan of (say) the New York skyline during the opening credits and then forget about the locale for the rest of the film unless it plays an important part in the development of the plot. **The Silent Partner** doesn't need the allusions to Toronto because Toronto is meaningless to the story. Thus to see Canada written in such a way all over the film strikes one as cheap and naive and ultimately pointless outside the immediate community.

The Silent Partner is a forgettable film that delivers much less than its potential given the people involved in its making. What is irritating is that somewhere along the line, too many wrong decisions were allowed to creep into a production that could have been a Grade A thriller in the Hitchcockian vein. This irrtates because one can see dimly that inside this turkey of a film, there are the bones of a damn good story.

Günter Ott

Talk about conspicuous consumption! A victim of the Bronswik TV

SHORT FILM REVIEWS

L'AFFAIRE BRONSWIK

d. Robert Awad, André Leduc, **sc.** Awad, Leduc, **animation** Awad, Leduc, and Jean-Michel Labrousse, **ph.** Richard Moras, Jacques Avoine, Raymond Dumas, Simon Leblanc, **electronic sd.** Alain Clavier, **ed.** Awad, mixing. Michel Descombes assisted by Adrian Croll, **sd. ed and music.** Gilles Quintal assisted by Rita N. Roy, **music advisor.** Karl du Plessis, Don Douglas, **narrator.** Michel Mongeau, **voices.** Jacques Beaulieu, Claire Bourbonnais, **p.** René Jodin, **p.c.** National Film Board of Canada, 1976, **col.** 16mm, **running time.** 23 min, 24 sec. **dist.** NFB.

Talk about subliminal seduction. It almost seems inevitable that when a man without a car buys dozens of tires, when a woman who detests dogs stocks up on cases of dog food, or when countless other such tales of excessive consumerism come to light –well, these days, sophisticated suspicion would probably lead us straight to out television sets. Alas, we were not so wise in 1964. Not, at least, according to writer/directors Robert Awad and André Leduc, whose delightfully tongue-in-cheek "docudrama" traces the development of the Bronswick Affair from its roots to its culmination, leaving no stone unturned and brilliantly parodying the documentary genre as it goes.

The premise that multinational corporations would conspire to short-circuit the consumer's ability to resist

televised sales pitches is far from outlandish. And it is certainly plausible that the inventor of a particular line of TVs could be bribed by those same corporations to include such a short-circuiting "device" in his design. It is on this credible foundation that **L'Affair Bronswick** builds its case, "documenting" the histories of unfortunate consumers whose psyches were invaded by waves from their Bronswick television sets. Indeed, the credibility factor accounts for much of the film's success and a good deal of its wit; what we are ultimately laughing at are the seductive powers of both the medium and the format. The topical nature of subliminal advertising has been beautifully exploited here, but so has the documentary genre. Interviews with victims of the conspiracy are shot and perfomed with absolute fidelity to the mimicked style, and the narrative track perfectly replicates the doomsday voice so essential to this type of "report." But the broadest swipe has been taken at those inimitable "reconstruction-of-event" sequences that are all too familiar; here, Monty Python-like animation has been substituted for live action, and with lovely results. Awad and Leduc, together with Jean-Michel Labrosse have created a moving collage of photographs that are as delightful as they are informative. Attention to detail is immaculate: arrows and instant replay help indicate precisely how several dozen bottles of salad oil tumbled from a victim's hands onto the floor one story below, to graphically illustrate the story or both the victim herself and the janitor, who narrowly missed decapitation by Mazola. An added assortment of official-looking charts and graphs give the animation a wonderfully silly legitimacy.

A return to "straight" satire is made near the end of the film, through a series of "public service commercials" supposedly aired by the government to assure a fearful public that the Bronswick Affair has been brought under control. Just how television stylistics have been beautifully captured is nowhere better illustrated than here: the ads feature (among others) a hockey player skating up to the camera to announce that "L'affaire Bronswick; c'est reglé!," and there's no better proof that these filmmakers know their target.

It is the accuracy of the send-up that accounts for its impact, because there is relatively little (outside of the animation) to separate it from "legitimate" documentary. It seems as though "look-like" parodies have come into new popularity now, what with television's "Saturday Night Live" specializing in takeoffs on TV advertisements and such. But these spoofs are a golden opportunity for the viewer to reflect upon what one sees and what one believes. The swaying power of format is extraordinary and is certainly borne out by the National Film Board's experience with **L'Affaire Bronswick**. It appears that more than a few people were scandalized that such a story had not surfaced before '78 and demanded to know why they had not previously heard of the "conspiracy."

L'Affaire Bronswick is first and foremost delightful entertainment, but another quality may be attributed to it. Its affectionate "nose-thumbing" of familiar forms may make us more sensitive to our gullibility and warier of our tendency to believe what we see because it "looks right." If lessons continue to come in such delicious packages, the learning process won't be hard at all.

Barbara Samuels

DUNMOVIN

d. James B. Kelly, C.S.C., **sc.** James B. Kelly, **ph.** Florence Van Voast, Shirley Van Voast, Alexander Kelly, James B. Kelly, **ed.** James B. Kelly, **sd. ed.** Len Abbott, **sd. rec.** James B. Kelly, **p.** James B. Kelly, **p.c.** Mountain, Giraffe Films in Motion, Ltd., Toronto, **col.** black & white 16mm, 1970, **running time** 58 min. **dist.** James B. Kelly, C.S.C., 1 Brule Terrace, Toronto, M6S 1M2.

45 X 15 = 675 X .02 = 13,50

"For some years now the activity of the artist in our society has been trending more toward the function of the ecologist: one who deals with environmental relationships. Ecology is defined as the totality or pattern of relations between organisms and their environment. Thus, the act of creation for the new artist is not so much the invention of new objects as the revelation of previously unrecognized relationships between existing phenomena, both physical and metaphysical."

— Gene Youngblood,
"Expanded Cinema"

Of the many functions of cinema, it is perhaps the "ecological" function as described by Youngblood which comes closest to characterizing **Dunmovin**, the very personal film recently completed by Jim Kelly. The work is an exploration of both linear and cyclical time, memory, and the recurring patterns within the fabric of life. It is also an examination of personal engagement with history, a revelation of the ways in which the lives of ordinary people are intricately connected with the larger workings of historical change. In the filmmaker's words, **Dunmovin** explores "the underside of history."

Appropriately, the film sustains several emotional levels during its hour's duration; at times it is splendidly quiet and low-key, then filled with exuberant energy. Its subjects are the filmmaker's grand-parents: their daily rituals, surroundings, their memories which span the century. Kelly wanted the film to "grow out of their rhythms" and at the same time preserve some sense of his relationship to them. Yet he was also concerned to challenge his own theoretical constructs about filmmaking. In this sense, the project breaks new ground for Kelly, who has been involved with nearly 200 films throughout his career, which includes his work as cinematographer in such recent feature-films as **Outrageous** and **Power Play**. Here, he purposely works against the grain of cinematic spectacle, as well as challenging the conventions of the traditional documentary. Fascinated by film's complex relationship to reality and time, Kelly explores these areas through a self-reflexive style appropriate to such a personal film. One of its most intriguing aspects is the use of inter-titles combined with simultaneous voice-over readings, a technique which paradoxical-