

LETTER FROM LONDON

by Stephen Challis

According to reports in the U.K. press, Greece's new film law, promulgated in May of this year, should contribute to the growth of its national cinema. The law was originally proposed in 1981 but it has taken five years of procedural haggling and political bargaining to receive parliamentary approval.

A copy of the law, in translation, examined at the Greek Embassy, London, confirms the assertions in the English press that Greece is now actively supporting its national cinema. In the preamble, the law states that: "Cinema is an art form for which it is the government's responsibility to ensure the continued survival and evolution." To this end, the government undertakes to "support the production and distribution of Greek films."

Much of the law refers to the new Greek Film Centre (GFC), an independent state-owned corporation responsible for the allocation of funds to the production sector. The Center is empowered to participate in co-productions with national or foreign filmmakers for the strengthening of Greek cinema. Funding for the Center and its co-productions will in part come from a state tax on cinema attendance of 30 percent of gross receipts.

The Film Centre has been operating in Greece since 1970 but the new law formalizes the arrangements, making it an independent body with a secure source of funding. Pavlos Zannos, head of the Center during the passage of the film law, is quoted in *Sight and Sound* on how it is expected to operate: "Melina (Mercuri, currently minister for culture and science) wants to encourage all kinds of cinema; and in fact our recent co-productions have been fiercely attacked by both the right and left in about equal numbers."

Ian Christie, author of the *Sight and Sound* article, qualifies the Zannos statement: "But even if there is no discernible party line among recent films, there is a distinct cultural climate that clearly owes much to PASKOK's (the socialist party) backing of popular culture, the new freedom it has granted to discuss the forbidden '40s and the fierce dialectic between left and right in Greek politics."

Other than the Film Centre, the Greek law creates Hellas-Film, the body responsible for the promotion of GFC co-productions nationally and internationally. It will represent the GFC at the various interna-

tional film festivals and may open offices in countries where interest in Greek cinema warrants a permanent presence.

Some of the other provisions of the law are: the establishment of the rules of copyright for directors and producers, the creation of a National Film Archive, and the upgrading of the Thessalonika Films Festival with increased financial support including the establishment of National Cinema Awards.

Copies of the law can be obtained from the Greek Ministry of Culture at: Aristidou 14, 10138, Athens, Greece.

The British Film and Television Producers Association (BFTPA) made an appeal to the U.S. government in mid-September for a system of tax allowances and fiscal incentives to encourage investment in U.K.-based film production. An appeal was made after the release of a report by the accounting firm Arthur Young International which compares tax allowances in the U.K. with those available in seven other film producing countries: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and the United States, all of which, according to the report, have incentives for investment more attractive than those in the U.K.

Currently, the U.K. has a capital allowance scheme which allows producers to write off 25 percent per annum of their expenditures as they are incurred. According to the Arthur Young report, this system of allowances can result in a production company paying tax on income when the full deduction for costs has not been allowed.

Arthur Young recommends the introduction of an agreed write-off period from the commencement of production to the second year of release, which would allow production costs to be claimed to a total of 100 percent at the end of the second year of release. They also propose a system of incentives for investment in film companies which would give a 25 percent deduction to private investors and 50 percent to corporations. The latter recommendation is based on a similar successful scheme in France.

Reports appearing in the U.K. press indicate that the BFTPA has submitted these recommendations to the U.K. government with the hope that they will be considered in time for inclusion in next year's spring budget.

Denys Arcand's most recent feature film *Le Déclin de l'empire américain* closed in London, November 13 after an eight-week run in two theatres, grossing over \$110,000. In Late November it

will open in regional theatres throughout the U.K., and it is expected to run till late February.

Women on Film: The Best of Studio D was the subject of the fall film series at Canada House, in London. The series



PARLIMAGE OEUVRE DEPUIS 8 ANS DANS QUATRE GRANDS SECTEURS D'ACTIVITÉS:

DISTRIBUTION: de plus de 150 films

ANIMATION: par le film

CONSULTATION: test en scénarisation,

en pré-montage et en distribution.

FORMATION:

- stages pour le grand public.
- stages de perfectionnement pour les gens oeuvrant dans l'industrie du cinéma et de la vidéo.

Ces stages sont rendus possibles grâce à la collaboration de Téléfilm Canada et de la Société générale du cinéma

- Direction de comédiens
- Direction de production
- Éclairage de cinéma
- Son en cinéma

- Scénarisation
- Post-synchro et doublage
- Production vidéo
- Montage vidéo

4398, BOUL. ST-LAURENT, SUITE 103, MONTRÉAL (QUÉ.) H2W 1Z5 (514) 288-1400

FILM EDITORS SOUND EDITORS ASSISTANT EDITORS

WE CARRY ALL YOUR EDITING SUPPLIES

16/35 SPLICING TAPE – PERFORATED 35 TAPE – WHITE LEADER – BLACK LEADER – SOUNDTRACK FILL – COTTON GLOVES – FREON – BLACK VELVETS – WEBRIL WIPES – SYNC BEEPS – READY EDDYS – CORES – MOVIOLA – FLATBED LAMPS – SHARPIES – GREASE PENCILS – TRIM I. D. CARDS – TRIM BOXES – PAPER TAPE – CAMERA TAPE – GAFFER TAPE – PACKING TAPE – SMILES AND GREAT SERVICE.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

NUMBERS

EDGE CODING AND EDITING SUPPLIES

(416) 598-0722

**409, KING STREET WEST
TORONTO (ONTARIO)
M5V 1K1**

CBC management/unions at odds

was curated by Irene Angelico of Montreal and featured a wide selection of films from women filmmakers at Studio D at the National Film Board.

Kathleen Shannon, Executive Director of Studio D attended the October 31 screening of *On, By And For Women: The Case For Women's Filmmaking* and participated in a panel discussion led by Annette Kuhn.

Jill McGreal, Film Officer at Canada House, said that the series was well attended throughout.

TORONTO — Despite a two-day walk-out by Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) members earlier this month, CBC management remains hopeful settlements can be reached with the group and other unions.

About 1,000 CUPE workers walked out to protest stalled contract talks Nov. 8 and Nov. 9, but have since returned to work. With announcers and production assistants off the job, management was forced to fill in over the weekend.

Following the release of separate conciliation reports in October, both the broadcast employees and technicians (NABET) are in a legal strike position. Management can lock out the workers.

But CBC spokesman Glenn Luff said the corporation is still hopeful a settlement can be reached with the two unions and that there has been no talk of locking out the workers.

Contract talks between the

CBC and the unions have been going on for about 20 months, Luff said. In both cases conciliation commissioners reviewed negotiations and released written recommendations, which are not binding, last month.

The major issues in the talks with the 2,300 member CUPE groups are wages, job security and arrangements for setting up co-productions between the CBC and other companies.

Commissioner Douglas Stanley recommends a four per-

cent increase in wages, retroactive to June 27, 1985 and an additional four percent increase on June 27, 1986 with the contract to expire June 26, 1987.

Stanley does not recommend that the union accept proposals to have some employees hired on a contract basis rather than as tenured employees.

"The employer's proposal is really a fundamental departure from any union's position on individual job security and status," he says in the written report.

"I am not persuaded that the job security of employees in the classifications proposed should be forfeited for the sake of greater management flexibility."

Luff said the two categories in question involve only announcers and advertising sales staff. He said the CBC's proposal would only effect new employees adding that to remain competitive in the area of advertising the corporation must take the position.

Spokesmen for NABET and CUPE had not returned calls at press time.

Stanley says the CBC wants co-production arrangements with other companies so that its overall television production can be increased. The CBC views co-productions as an alternative to buying programs, an arrangement that would bypass corporation employees altogether, he says.

On the other hand, the union views co-productions as a way for CBC to find an alternative to in-house production, Stanley says. The union views it as a way of contracting out, says Stanley, who nonetheless supports co-production arrangements.

"I am satisfied that the production potential for the CBC is enhanced by co-production and that the union stands to gain more in the long run through co-operating with management in such ventures."

Stanley recommends the concept of co-production be accepted with "reasonable limits" set out in the contract.

In the area of job security, the commissioner recommends CBC and CUPE compromise on a minimum length of service before job protection kicks in. He also says a geographical limit should be set on how far an employee



SONOLAB INC.
1500 PAPINEAU ST., MONTRÉAL, QUÉ., CANADA H2K 4L9
TEL.: (514) 527-8671 TELEX: 055-61722

**ONE
STOP
FOR
QUALITY**

**COMPLETE FILM & VIDEO
PRODUCTION & POST PRODUCTION
SERVICES.**

EXPERIENCE

416 366-6658

- MINIATURES
- MOTION CONTROL
- SPECIAL EFFECTS TITLES
- TITLES

**TRICKETT
PRODUCTIONS**

530 RICHMOND ST. W. (REAR BLDG.)
TORONTO • ONTARIO • M5V 1Y4