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Article abstract

In this article, the author emphasizes that moving-pictures, formerly identified with entertainment and more recently as an aid to education, have been used by industry, but that there still remains much to do to cover the field of usefulness of the film itself. Movies had an active part during the war and should continue this function during peace. The Federal Department of Labour is attempting to promote a wider use of movies concerned with the field of labour and is doing this by means of a catalogue and films supplement, of filmstrips and of library. The author, moreover, suggests the different possible sources for obtaining available films.

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Films have been identified with entertainment for a long time and with education more recently, but they still have to find an all-out welcome in industry. Some progress has been made in applying films to the purpose of industry, but there is much more that could be done.

Wartime Films

In Canada, few industrial companies can complain that their neglect of films is due to unfamiliarity. During the last war films were a monthly event in most factories. Shown in the form of 30-minute programs on 16mm. equipment — as often as not on the production floor — the wartime films were sponsored by the wartime information services.

The idea behind the wartime film showings was to speed the war effort. Unfortunately, there was no backlog of pro-

HILL, ROWLAND, member of the National Film Board's editorial staff in Ottawa.

ductions on which to draw and, as a result, the demand for a 30-minute program once a month did at times exhaust the supply of potentially useful films. However, enough films that would apply to the purposes of industry were shown to convince many a factory management that films could have a continuing function during peace.

Federal Department of Labour and Films

Among the films that retain the interest of industry are those concerned with safety, training of supervisors, industrial relations and fire prevention.

a) Catalogue and Film Service

The Federal Department of Labour has led in encouraging the use and sponsorship of films in these particular fields. For the past three years the Department has distributed a catalogue and supplement of films and filmstrips relating to industry. These were prepared by the National Film Board. Called "Films and Filmstrips for Canadian Industry", the catalogue lists more than 250 subjects concerned with a variety of industrial techniques and operations and the more general subjects of health, welfare and safety of industrial workers. As new films are acquired through loan or purchase by the Department they are circulated in blocks of four or five films throughout the country so that interested people might examine them. The purpose of this film preview service is to encourage groups of industries or libraries to establish local collections of industrial type films. The catalogue, and other information about industrial film library, may be obtained from the Information Division of the Department of Labour, Ottawa. The films are available on loan from the Canadian Film Institute in Ottawa.

b) Film Library

The industrial film library, sponsored by the Federal Department of Labour, contains films drawn from many sources at home and abroad but in addition to providing these films, the Department has also sponsored film production. Films produced for the Department by the National Film Board of Canada are concerned chiefly with factory safety and labour-management relations. The most recent is *Safety Supervisor*, No. 6 in the *Accidents Don't Happen* series of films. The preceding titles in this service were *Safe Clothing*, *Falls*, *Handling Machines*, and *Organization*.

A Few Samples

The series has been useful for safety training in factories in Canada, the United States, Great Britain and France. Sometimes the films shown abroad have drawn inquiries concerning the safety devices shown incidentally. One inquiry came from the Imperial Chemical Industries' Safety Branch in Great Britain. It asked for the name and address of the manufacturer of the saw guard shown in the film *Machines. Safe Clothing*, No. 5 in the series won the Annual Award of the National Committee on films for safety at Chicago in March 1950.

Films contributing to the cause of better relations between management and labour provided by the Federal Department of Labour included *Take It Up With the LMPC* and *Teamwork, Past and Present*. The first film shows the working of labour management co-operation committees in several factories. It demonstrates the principles that guide the work. The second film was produced by animation techniques and shows how co-operation between employer and employee has benefitted both sides from the earliest times. This film is in colour, and is remarkable for the humour and clarity of its illustration. Other films produced by the National Film Board for the Federal Department of Labour are *Date Of Birth*, a film encouraging employment of the older worker, and *I.L.O.*, the story of the work of this organisation on behalf of better standards of social welfare in industry, throughout the world.

National Film Board of Canada and the Industry

The National Film Board of Canada has also made several films of direct interest and use for labour or management. *Local 100*, a 32-minute black-and-white film, shows the history and functions of a typical Canadian trade union. Industry is of course the theme of many of the Film Board's productions as, for instance, the recent film *It's The Fashion* — the story of Canadian textiles from mill to mannequin.

Necessity of Film Councils and Committees

The proximity of films has a good deal to do with their being shown. Certainly many more films would be used by management if they were better known. Catalogues do help to inform potential film users of the material available; but the decision to use the films often depends on how easily they may be obtained. As more films of interest to industry are added to the local film collections throughout Canada, more use will be made of them. Sarnia, Ontario, for instance, made

good use of industrial films after an industrial films committee was formed as part of the local film council. The film council is a group of delegates from various local organizations formed to sponsor a local film library and to provide the equipment and training required for showing films. Film councils have sprung up throughout Canada but more industrial film committees are needed. Where a film library can be persuaded to add films for industrial purposes to its shelves, they can be used time and time again. This persuasion is best appreciated when it takes the form of an outright donation of the films from the interested industrial groups.

Sources of Films

Films for industry are of course available from the national industrial film library of the Canadian Film Institute, as we noted earlier. It is to be hoped that as these films become better known, and used more often, that copies will be purchased and placed in provincial or local film libraries. In this way the time required for shipping would be reduced to a minimum. Perhaps too, as industry becomes more familiar with the variety of films available, more will be added to the national industrial film library. There are literally many hundreds of films of potential value to some industries. Many of these are not yet available in Canada since they are of more restricted interest: present collections of industrial films are for the most part films of more general application. A good listing of industrial films of all kinds is the *Index of Training Films* available from the Canadian Kodak Company, Toronto.

In some centres, industrial film councils have attempted to provide film services for member industries. Such councils were formed in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and other places but their progress has been slow. Industry is so various that it is hard to co-ordinate its many interests and to provide films and services acceptable to all. However, the attempt has been made in the past and there is no doubt that it will be made again whenever the demand is sufficiently apparent. For the time being industry must learn more about the advantages and limitations of the film medium both as a device for training and a vehicle for information.

Several of the uses found for films, largely as a result of wartime experience, have been continued. Staff training is one of these. Supervisory staffs, either at the will of management or of their own volition, have studied such films as *Introducing The New Worker To His*

Job, and Human Relations In Supervision. Foremen's groups in several cities have used such films to good effect at their regular meetings and have followed them by discussions. Safety films are also shown by management to selected groups of employees. The *Accidents Don't Happen* series mentioned above have been popular for this purpose.

Conclusion

It is safe to say that Canadian industry has experimented with films and that constructive uses have been found for them. The time must come when the functions of films in industry will be more widely known and practical measures taken to integrate films with the general purposes of industry.
