

Lettre de R. McLean à F. Harmon 31 mai 1948

“I have been studying the results of the project as closely as possible over the last period and my own feeling is that while there is a good deal of good will evident, this good will has not so far been translated into concrete results or plans. It is true that a number of short pictures are projected and a number of these will no doubt be made. Some plans, too, appear to be developing for the production of feature films in Canada or on Canadian themes.

Unfortunately, in my view, too many of the producers who think in terms of Canadian stories think first of crime pictures or other forms of ‘cops and robbers’ motif. I am sure there are innumerable other kinds of stories which when filmed would do a better job, not only for this country but for the people of the United States and the rest of the world. I do not mean to say that a limited number of pictures on the work and traditions of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police would not be useful and interesting but surely there are to be found by digging, a great many other stories springing from the development of Canada’s national life during the last three centuries. This aspect I feel the producers have not studied adequately.

There is another aspect of the co-operation project about which I am very concerned myself. That is the distribution in the United States of pictures produced by Canadian companies in this country. The results so far achieved through the co-operation projects, during the last three months, have been anything but encouraging. I myself find it difficult to believe that subjects which are of great interest to people of this country would not be found to be also of considerable interest to people of the United States if they were given the opportunity to see them. Certainly if we are to assume that the people of the United States are interested only in themselves and cannot be brought to consider the attitudes and interests of neighbouring peoples when presented on the screen, it does not promise particularly well for the future development of a co-operation project. I do not, of course, subscribe to this view, but I know of no other way of allowing the people of the United States to show their reciprocal interest except by giving them an opportunity to see pictures from elsewhere. This the film industry of the United States is alone equipped to do.

I do not want to minimize all that has been done or what is expected may be done, but in the light of the opportunity which presents itself as between our two countries I cannot think that developments so far offer anything like what we might hope for”.