

FILM FORUM *Review*

DEVOTED TO THE USE
OF MOTION PICTURES
IN ADULT EDUCATION

WINTER 1947-48

Industrial, Agricultural
and Political Problems

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F I L M FORUM REVIEW

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Editorial

Report on Film Evaluation Project

A year ago *Film Forum Review* announced an enlarged program of film research being undertaken by the Institute of Adult Education, which included as primary activities the preparation of an evaluation form to determine the relative value of different films as discussion aids and the use of this form in evaluating the bulk of films available in this country. The results of this evaluation process were to be given to the readers of *Film Forum Review* in the four issues scheduled for publication during the past year.

The publication of this issue of *Film Forum Review* completes this phase of our work, and it seems fitting to pause briefly at this time to sum up what has been accomplished and some of the things we have learned in the process.

Evaluation Form Revised

The basic tool with which we worked—the evaluation form—was published in the winter 1946-47 issue of this *Review*. Although this form was the product of seven months of experimentation and had gone through numerous revisions, various flaws in its contents, arrangement and wording were uncovered during the past year by the staff of the Film Laboratory. As a result, a new edition of that form, revised to remedy its weaknesses, is being developed.

Four Special Issues

Almost a year and a half has passed since we began the systematic evaluation of films. During that time we

have screened over 500 films. Of this number 176 have been found acceptable or better for use in adult film forums. (An index of the titles of films reviewed, indicating the issue in which the reviews appeared, can be found on page 62 of this issue.)

This work was undertaken to assist adult groups wishing to use films as discussion aids, and by encouraging greater and more effective use of films to create conditions in which the value of films as aids to adult discussion could be thoroughly tested. The fact that we have been able to cover films on all subjects suitable for adult discussion, and to provide accurate descriptions, careful evaluations and discussion suggestions for the best of them has been a contribution to the accomplishment of these aims. For the first time adult educators have had the bulk of available 16mm films screened and evaluated with their special needs in mind.

Evaluations Are Relative

The films listed in the four issues of this *Review* for 1947 have been grouped, as far as possible, according to the areas of interest in which we judged them to be most useful as discussion aids. In addition, our judgment of the *relative* value of each film within a given subject area is indicated by the use of the terms "Acceptable", "Recommended" and "Highly Recommended." These designations were arrived at on the basis of the average numerical score achieved by each film in its evaluation by the staff of the Film Laboratory. Films averaging from 50 to 69 are

rated Acceptable; from 70 to 79, Recommended; from 80 to 100, Highly Recommended.

Value as Source of Reference

Taken as a whole, the past four issues of *Film Forum Review* constitute a catalog of films selected for adult discussion purposes. Some of the films are old, some are new; some were made in the United States, some in other countries; the common element here at this time, and that they have certain discussion values. The 1947 issues of *Film Forum Review*, then, have lasting value as a reference catalog for adult discussion leaders.

To keep this catalog practical and useful, *Film Forum Review* will continue reviewing films as they are released, (and it will catch up on some of the films which were screened too late for publication in the special issue, and on some films which were not available for screening at the proper time during the past year.) Each quarter, some thirty or forty films will be reviewed in *Film Forum Review*, as they have been in the past year. However, they will not be grouped into special issues. Each issue will have reviews on all the new films of that quarter. The reviews will refer back to films published in the special issues, and their relative merits and failures should be always weighed with respect to other films within the same general subject-matter framework.

Major Findings

Judging from catalog descriptions of the 500 films we screened, it could be expected that all of them would have been valuable as adult discussion aids. The number of films found acceptable or better—176—is astonishingly low. And of that number only

83 fell in the Recommended and Highly Recommended categories.

The trouble with most of the films was that they were not produced specifically for adult education. Consequently, our job was that of identifying those that could reasonably be adapted for adult discussion from among all the films currently distributed.

Out-of-dateness was a major factor in disqualifying or limiting the usefulness of a large proportion of the films we screened. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that many of the films still in circulation were made during wartime to meet problems which were based in specific wartime situations. Other defects in the films screened were immaturity and incompleteness in presenting the problems inherent in the subjects they were concerned with. Another large number of films were considerably weakened by their failing to make good use of the film medium as a means of communication.

Three major types of production sponsorship can be identified among the films we have reviewed. They are governmental, organizational, and theatrical sponsorship.

Governmental Sponsorship

Seventy-five of the films we have reviewed were produced under governmental sponsorship of one kind or another. Of these 30 came from Canada, 20 from Great Britain, 19 from the United States, and six from other countries. In view of the fact that Canada and Great Britain have extensive film-producing programs, it does not seem remarkable that so substantial a number of films should come from these sources. However, it should be remembered that in evaluating their films for use with American

audiences, we have had to eliminate many films which would undoubtedly be considered extremely useful in the country of the film's origin because the problems they presented do not sufficiently meet situations as they exist in the United States. Also it should be pointed out that most of the 50 films from Canada and Great Britain which were reviewed meet a need in this country which our own film producers have not yet met, either in content or in quality, and often in both. Subject areas such as child care, education, delinquency, housing, public health, and the like fall into this category.

U.S. government sponsorship mainly offers films on health and agriculture; wartime films encouraging international understanding; and pre-war films which had their origins in New Deal governmental agencies, (*The River*, 1937, *Power and the Land*, 1940, for example).

Organizational Sponsorship

Fifty-eight of the films reviewed were sponsored by miscellaneous organizations in the United States—labor unions, industry, independent film producers, religious organizations, educational and health groups, and the like. Films originating from these sources had the lowest average of usefulness, and of the 58 reviewed 35 were rated only as acceptable.

The outstanding deficiencies of many of these films revolve around the fact that they tend to have a point to "sell" to the audience. What we get from them are snatches of ideas, partial glimpses of situations, and often a very great amount of over-simplification. Another defect in these films, from the point of view of the adult educator, is that although the films may be concerned with problems

of outstanding importance—housing, control of atomic energy, labor-management relations, and the like—each sponsoring organization is so totally concerned with its specific subject that it treats that subject as if it were the most important, if not the only, topic of our times. In these films the problems are not related proportionately to other problems, as they are in real life, and they suffer from the distortion.

Although the bulk of poor films falls into this group of organizational sponsorship, it also has some outstandingly good films to its credit. *The Bridge*, *And So They Live*, *A Place to Live* and *Valley Town* indicate what can happen when the organization sponsoring the film employs experienced and capable educational and film talents to present its findings or its point of view. In instances such as these a good beginning has been made to meet the need for films which interest, inform and arouse the public.

Theatrical Sponsorship

The third major source of the films we have reviewed are 16mm versions of films originally made for theatrical distribution. Thirty-five such films have been reviewed in *Film Forum Review*, 23 of which are March of Time films, and the remainder are from RKO's "This is America" series or are shorts or excerpts distributed by Teaching Film Custodians. At their best these films possess certain technical skills matched by only a few non-theatrical films. Pictorially they are richer than most other available films. Sources of difficulty in using them for adult discussion arise from the fact that they often retain the theatrical elements of over-simplification, over-dramatization, and other frequently unnecessary and distract-

ing elements, under the guise of holding audience interest in the way which Hollywood has made traditional.

Subjects Covered

In addition to the findings noted above, we discovered in which of the subject-matter areas there is an abundance or deficiency of films. For example, there are many useful films on international relations, while conspicuously few are concerned with democracy, citizenship or government in general. This is due in part to the fact that audiences have always been interested in seeing what goes on in other countries; it is also due in part to the importance and urgency of international affairs today. But no less important and urgent are our own

internal affairs—our government, our economy, our social relations. In this area we cannot fall back on films from other countries, for their problems are not necessarily our own. The need for some kind of film-production program which would fill the gaps in areas which are the concern of American adults today is perhaps the most outstanding finding which the study can bring to light. By failing to fill that gap we may be losing an irretrievable opportunity to strengthen and perpetuate the democratic way of life upon which all our adult education programs are based.

Prepared for the Institute of Adult Education and the Editorial Board of *Film Forum Review* by CECILE STARR.

FILM FORUM REVIEW IN '48

At a meeting held at the offices of the American Association for Adult Education in New York on November 20th, the National Committee on Film Forums decided to continue its sponsorship of *Film Forum Review* during the coming year.

A revision of the Experimental Work Sheet for the Relative Evaluation of Discussion Films was discussed. The revised version of this form, which is used to evaluate the films annotated in this *Review*, will be published in our issue for spring, 1948.

NOTE!

"Forums for the People," by Gordon B. Halstead, originally scheduled for publication in this issue, will appear in our next issue (Spring, 1948).

Also appearing in our next issue: "What One Public Thinks of Film Forums" by Paul H. Sheats and Nora Parker Coy.

Films in Workers Education

BY ORLIE PELL

The author of this article has had broad experience in the workers education field. At present Education and Research Assistant of the American Labor Education Service and editor of its LABOR EDUCATION GUIDE, Dr. Pell has served on the staff of the Summer School for Office Workers, the Institute of Social Progress at Wellesley College, the National Board of the YWCA, the Education for Adult Leadership program of CCNY, and Hollins College, Va. Dr. Pell qualifies not only as a workers educator, but as a worker also, being secretary of the Workers Education Local of the American Federation of Teachers.

Direct experience is the first and most powerful road to learning. Workers education seeks to enable workers to analyze their present experience, to understand their day to day problems in the light of wider implications, and as a result to act more far-sightedly and effectively. Workers education is therefore functional and informal, relating closely to everyday life. In the case of union education this means that much of the educational program will grow out of, and stay close to the purposes and activities of the union members. In any workers education program the participants are likely to be men and women who in their jobs are accustomed to dealing with physical materials rather than with verbal symbols. To be effective, therefore, workers education must be real and concrete and three-dimensional; and it must utilize every opportunity to work through media that do not depend entirely on words and abstractions.

Value of Visual Materials

The modern sound film, with its

dramatic value and its combination of visual imagery, sound effects and language, offers an unusually effective instrument in this type of education. Leaders in the workers education movement have been aware for a long time of the value of visual techniques and have experimented in this field, just as earlier they pioneered in the use of informal creative dramatics. From small beginnings, such as the use of slides at the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Workers, and the creation by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union of their own filmstrips, interest in visual education on the part of labor groups grew until in the late 'thirties the Southern School for Workers met a real need through the publication of its "Annotated List of Motion Pictures for Workers' Groups," as did the ILGWU with its handbook, *The Eye Route: Visual Aids for Workers Education;* and the United Automobile Workers—CIO was developing its own Film Division to circulate and eventually to sponsor the production of its own films.

Handicaps to Visual Education

It is true, of course, that in spite of these hopeful beginnings progress has been slow and uneven. We are familiar with the factors that have helped to limit the use of films by labor groups. The expense and technical difficulties involved in acquiring equipment and films; the difficulty of competing with the slick professional products of Hollywood, and the long association in people's minds of moving pictures with pure entertainment (a "frill"); above all, the scarcity of films appropriate for labor groups to use in relation to their own concrete problems, and the great expense of producing one's own film. We know of course the "vicious circle": it is hard to get appropriate labor films produced until there is a "market"—a large labor audience—ready to give them support; and it is hard to build up such a "market" until there are appropriate films available for showing.

What Is Being Done

There is no one answer to this dilemma, but flank attacks are being made upon the problem from several directions. One is the continued efforts of labor education leaders to extend the use of films now available (relating them to workers' interests in all possible ways), and so to develop among workers familiarity and skill in the use of films as part of an education program. Another approach is the growing experimentation by labor in the production of its own films, and particularly of filmstrips, adapted to its own purposes. Several labor groups, including the UAW-CIO, the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers Union, and the Highlander Folk School, have sponsored the production of outstanding films—*The Brotherhood of Man*, *Deadline for Action* and

People of the Cumberland—and a number of other groups, such as the ILGWU, the CIO Department of Education and Research, the Textile Workers Union, the American Federation of Teachers, the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers, the Jewish Labor Committee, the University of Michigan Workers Educational Service, have produced films or filmstrips dealing with their own activities or with wider problems.

Constructive work is also being done in the field of distribution. The Film Division of the UAW-CIO now has a wide collection covering hundreds of films and filmstrips, as well as projectors, available for loan or rent at reasonable cost to UAW locals, to other labor groups, and to community organizations. Included are films of a wide variety, from those concerned with the specific activities of the UAW, through those dealing with the labor movement and with broad social and economic problems of concern to labor, to films purely for entertainment.

Because the Film Division of the CIO Department of Education and Research has felt that among visual aids the sound filmstrip is the most effective and practical educational device for general use by labor groups, it has entered upon a widespread program for stimulating and assisting in the use of filmstrips by CIO unions. It has made itself a clearing house in this field, building up a library of filmstrips appropriate for labor groups and making these easily available to its unions at reasonable cost in the form of a kit, complete with sound filmstrip projector, filmstrips and their records, and study guides for the use of discussion leaders. The director of this division has taken leadership in stimulating interest on the part of

labor groups in the use of films and filmstrips and in the analysis of methods of using them as part of an effective educational process.

So we find, in spite of difficulties, an increasing use of films and filmstrips in the educational programs carried on by labor groups. We find, too, variety in the ways in which they are used. The purpose may range from training in a specific technique to establishing a certain mood, or developing awareness of a general social or economic problem; from almost pure entertainment to the stimulation of intense discussion, further study, and collective action.

Stimulating Discussion and Action

Perhaps the most significant and fertile use of the film in workers education is the stimulation of discussion and action on the part of a small or specialized group. Union leadership groups (a union committee, an Executive Board, an Industrial Union Council, a Joint Board, for example) make use of films to help them in learning how to carry on their jobs more effectively. We may take as an example the Anti-Discrimination Committee of an Industrial Union Council in a large city, who realized the need for educating themselves in this complex field of intercultural relationships before they could be of real help to their local unions. Along with their reading in this field and their discussions carried on over a period of time, they invested in a projector so that they could see and discuss in their Committee meetings several of the good films dealing with this topic. In addition, to enable themselves to help their locals make similar use of these films, they brought in someone who was skilled in leading film discussions to work with them on this

technique. They found the combination of reading matter, films and discussion useful in clarifying and enriching their own thinking and in helping them to build new attitudes among their fellow union members.

Orientation of Union Members

Films and filmstrips are also used as part of the educational program in orienting new union members. The ILGWU for instance has recently been making extensive use of a cartoon filmstrip, *You and Your Union*, based upon the pamphlet, "Pictorial Union Dictionary," to help their new members understand the functioning of the union. The colorful filmstrip produced by the United Hatters, *Good Men and True*, brings to their new members the story of the growth of their union and its outlook today. The American Federation of Teachers, through their filmstrip, *Labor's Challenge*, produced some time ago and now brought up to date, show to those not already familiar with it, the development of the labor movement in this country since the 18th century. These examples illustrate at least three of the needs of new union members which films have helped to meet: the need to learn the "language" of organized labor—the terms and concepts involved in the structure and the program of a union; to become familiar with the history of the struggles and the aims of their own union; and to understand something of the part played by the labor movement in the past and present history of our country.

Training of Union Officials

In the specific job of training shop stewards and other union officers to carry out effectively their complex responsibilities, the value of the film

and the filmstrip has long been recognized. The UAW-CIO were the first to devise their own cartoon sound filmstrips to make clear to new shop stewards how the process of handling a complaint and utilizing the union grievance machinery should (and should not!) be carried on, and they are still producing and utilizing such filmstrips. Other labor education agencies, such as the Michigan Workers Educational Service have also produced such training films, and have found them widely used, in their own programs and in the programs of others, as the basis for discussion and clarification of the growing responsibilities of local union leaders.

Unions have found the filmstrip particularly useful as a stimulus to serious study and discussion. The Film Division of the CIO Department of Education and Research prepared the filmstrip which presents the Nathan Report in popular form, *Raise Wages not Prices*, especially for use by small groups grappling with the difficult topic. Interest is aroused through a story dramatized in terms of men and women with whom workers can easily identify; the more difficult economic facts are presented with the help of simple figures and charts, which, in the period of discussion following the presentation of the film, can easily be referred back to or kept in place a while, to meet the needs of the discussion.

Recreational Use of Film

Contrasting with this technique is the frequent and popular use of films by labor groups to provide a large audience with a certain amount of entertainment combined with stimulation of interest in some current social or economic problem. Films are increasingly used, for example, at gen-

eral union meetings. They are sometimes made available to workers between shifts. One UAW local, for instance, shows films in a building right across the road from the plant gate, where workers coming off a shift can drop in and relax, and at the same time pick up new ideas. In the South, the Textile Workers have held successful film showings outdoors at night at the time of changing shifts. In some factory set-ups the lunch hour provides opportunity for showing films, combined perhaps with a brief talk and with group singing. At social functions—parties, rallies, celebrations—unions find films particularly suited to combine meaningful content with easy-to-take presentation. Films shown at outdoor rallies open to the public serve the double purpose of stimulating union members and at the same time making the interests of union members known to members of the wider community. Films have been used effectively as part of an organizing campaign, to acquaint prospective union members and the general public with the aims and program of the union. Labor Institutes sponsored by the Workers Education Bureau and state Federations of Labor have sometimes used films as a part of their programs, which draw together participants from labor and the public.

For a film to have educational value it is of course important that it be geared into the total program of the union, and be recognized as related to other interests and activities of the union members. The temptation is great to use a film as a "come-on" or as sugar-coating to other, and unrelated, union business. But as more films appropriate to labor groups and addressed to their interests become available and as those responsible for

union programs become more adept in utilizing films as an educational instrument, the practice of using films as part of an integrated program may be expected to increase.

Dramatizing Union Activities

In many cases the films now used by unions are films dramatizing the union's own activities, such as the ILGWU's film, *Fortieth Anniversary Convention*, the UE's recent *Our Union*, the United Steelworkers' *The Campus Comes to the Steelworker*, the Brotherhood of Teamster's film on the organization of filling station workers, Textile's *Building a Union of Textile Workers*, and the UAW's stirring *United Action*. These films perform the important function of interpreting the activities and ideals of the union to its own membership, and in many cases making them aware at the same time of their place in the larger struggle of labor for human welfare and dignity.

Current problems of a more general nature but of deep concern to labor as well as to all citizens are dramatized in many of the films popular with labor groups. *Seeds of Destiny*, *The Pale Horseman*, *Teamwork*, and *The River*, to mention only a few of the many government films; British and Canadian documentaries such as *World of Plenty*, *Labour Looks Ahead*, and *Partners in Production*; *There Were Three Men* and *Here Is Tomorrow!* on consumer cooperatives; *Millions of Us*, and *Valleytown* on unemployment; *Round Trip* on world trade, *The Peace Builders*, *Towards Unity*, and *One World or None*; these are samples of films that labor has found thought-provoking and challenging. To these should be added innumerable films on such concrete problems as nutrition, safety and

health. Unions themselves have entered into the process of producing such films, witness the sponsoring by the UAW of the film, *Brotherhood of Man*, a film for general popular consumption on the essential unity of all nationalities, creeds and colors.

Union Film Showings

Sometimes unions utilize films as the basis for a special kind of educational program, the film showing. In this case a special meeting of an hour or more is devoted to the showing of films, sometimes with, but often without discussion. The ILGWU, for example, conducted over a period of time a series of film programs under the title, "Movies That Matter." For a group that has come together for the purpose of seeing films it is possible to use longer films, such as *Native Land*, or films and filmstrips with more meaty social content, such as might be used in small discussion groups. In the film showing where discussion is not used, and the films themselves are the content of the program, variety and balance is needed in the combination of films selected. Certain UAW locals, for example, have found that a satisfying program can be built with one light film—a comedy or perhaps a film for group singing—followed by a film with a serious purpose, and then by a film with no special social content but of excellent aesthetic or dramatic quality. In any event the film showing, if it is to have lasting value and be something more than a "show" must contain material that has relevance to the lives of the union members, and this material should be followed up and reinforced in other parts of the union's educational program.

Training in Visual Education

Union members and labor education leaders are continually seeking to familiarize themselves with films and with the techniques for utilizing them effectively. For many years, for example, the American Labor Education Service has included films as a part of their Workers Education Conferences, supplementing informal round tables and panel discussions. In a recent two-day Conference a special workshop in Visual Aids in Workers Education gave union education directors and union members an opportunity to see and discuss useful films and to analyze the use of films as a technique in educational programs. To take another example, a film workshop was carried on last summer at the six-week Workers Education Training Course conducted at the University of Wisconsin School for Workers, where, again, the showing and discussing of actual films was combined with consideration of the effective use of films in varying situations.

The UAW-CIO have given a great deal of attention to visual techniques, including films and their use, at their Educational Conferences called to meet the needs of local education directors and education committee members. The CIO Department of Education and Research, in addition to education conferences of a similar type, has called special conferences on Visual Education where the education directors and members of the education and other committees have the opportunity to see new films and discuss their most effective use.

Films in Labor Schools

Resident labor schools, where worker-students selected for seriousness of purpose and active participation in their organizations come together to

study for a period of time, provide a fruitful opportunity for integrating the use of films into the total educational program. A good example of this took place last summer at a labor school, the Summer School for Office Workers, attended by about forty white collar workers. A number of films, chosen carefully to meet the needs and interests of this group were shown over a period of several days. First, a film on the atomic bomb, a challenge to every human being; then several films on good human relations among cultural and racial groups; and finally, films on labor and its struggle for better living and for human dignity. At the end of each film the members of the group, under skilled leadership, were led to analyze the film and their own reactions to it, to carry out lines of thought and participate in cross-discussion. The members of the group and the leader referred continually to relevant sections of the film, to their own experience and to other sources of information and ideas for further study. The common background acquired in these film sessions formed an integral part of much of the other aspects of the study program, both in regard to content material and in regard to the consideration of films as an educational instrument.

Plans for the Future

While educational techniques in the use of films are little by little becoming more widely known and more skillfully used among labor groups, some good hard thinking is also going on in the search for ways out of the technical difficulties. Plans are in process, for example, for the establishment of a National Film Cooperative in which labor groups of many affiliations, and allied groups concerned with social and economic education, can

pool their resources and work jointly toward the wider distribution and utilization of available films among labor groups, and eventually towards the production of labor films. Plans also have been suggested for setting up a Labor Film Series, i.e., a carefully planned program under which over a period of several years films would be produced covering thirty or more topics of vital concern to labor and to the American public. Support for the undertaking would be sought from a variety of sources, and distribution would be channeled through all available outlets.

It is obvious that there remains a tremendous field to be developed. The labor movement provides an unparalleled audience—adult workers already

organized into groups, already carrying on through their organizations programs of economic and social change, already seeking through their educational programs new ways of learning to understand the world around them and to act effectively. The times we live in provide an added challenge to labor—to make known to the wider public its aims and ideals, to interpret to the whole community its programs and its activities. In all these fields the film is an educational instrument of potential power. And, fortunately, in its workers education movement, organized labor has a tradition of willingness to experiment in new techniques—a willingness that keeps education a live and growing process.

INTERGROUP RELATIONS PROGRAM

An attempt to use films to reduce racial discrimination between Americans of Mexican origin and their fellow citizens has been reported to us by Robert C. Wells, the Southwest Area Director of the Unitarian Service Committee. The program, directed by Stephen Shaw, consisted of three evening showings of educational films concerned with Mexican culture, immigration and intergroup relations. It was held at the McAllen Farm Labor Supply Center, McAllen, Texas, last August.

The showings were well attended, but it was not found feasible to follow the films with discussion, and results were difficult to evaluate. However, the experience was sufficiently promising to warrant the planning of

a six-month program. After the initial experiment, the director, Mr. Shaw, made the following recommendations designed to provide an atmosphere conducive to group discussion:

1. Films should be shown to the age group for whom they are intended, and other groups should be excluded from the program.

2. Racial groups should be shown films separately until a certain amount of understanding has been achieved.

3. Films should apply as directly as possible to the subject.

4. Conditions under which films are shown should have few distracting elements.

5. Duration of the series of programs should be as long as possible.

PUBLIC LIBRARY FILM SERVICE

The public library of Stamford, Connecticut, reports a system of film distribution which we feel will be of interest to many of our readers. Excerpts from the report follow: "In January 1946, the Ferguson Library organized an experimental film service with a small revolving collection of films from the government, the University of Connecticut, and from private agencies and corporations. It bought a projector which it lends free of charge to any civic group planning a program for which no admission is charged. During the first year 1,296 films were loaned, or shown within the library, to a total audience of 114,654 persons. . . .

"In January 1946 there were 12 projectors owned in the Stamford area; nearly a year later the known total stands at 105, purchased it is said, because of the library program. More than half of these are in private homes; all but two of the nineteen public schools now own projectors and the larger churches and social agencies are well equipped. . . .

"Library authorities feel that it is logical to offer this film service and economical for any City's appropriating board to place it in the public library. A library is open longer hours and the same films can be used both

in the day time and in the evening. Also, the library already has working programs with civic groups, and films can be utilized fully and intelligently.

"As for the general public, individuals in Stamford are borrowing films free of charge just as they have always borrowed books, phonograph records and other library materials. They drop in and pick up their 'hour and a half program', for themselves and for their neighbors. Many of the projector owners regularly entertain shut-ins and plan programs for the 'east-end kids' or at the fire house or for their church. The Ferguson Library finds that the majority of the people who have bought these 16mm sound projectors are non-readers, many in foreign sections of the city, people for whom educational films are opening up a whole new world of ideas and information.

"Already an unusually busy and active community center, the library feels this a natural extension of its services since it is only mass communication in another form than books. Survey shows that a large percentage of people in this country do not read books regularly, yet public libraries are tax supported and have an obligation to serve their entire community."

FILM FORUMS IN NEW YORK AND CLEVELAND

A series of five film forums has been announced by the Morrisania Branch of the New York Public Library. Miss Harriet Kemp, branch librarian, has arranged to have representatives of various neighborhood organizations cooperate with the planning of the forums and act as speakers or discussion leaders.

The film forums will be held every second Wednesday, beginning January 14th and ending March 11th. Titles of the programs and films to be used are as follows:

"Living Together"—*Whoever You Are and Brotherhood of Man*

"Decent Homes for All"—*The City*

"Parents and Children"—*A Crim-*

inal is Born and Children of Mars
"Recreation for Everyone"—*Playtown, U.S.A.*

"Schools and Libraries in the Community"—*A Better Tomorrow and Not by Books Alone*

The Cleveland Public Library and the Council on World Affairs recently completed a series of five bi-monthly film forums on international problems. Prominent Clevelanders acted as discussion leaders, and the series was publicized by window and table displays of books, pamphlets and maps, by bi-

monthly radio broadcasts, and bulletin board displays.

The program was as follows:

"Stricken Children"—*Seeds of Destiny*

"Between Two Worlds"—*Spotlight on the Balkans and Greece*

"Palestine: Problem and Promise"—*Palestine*

"India Today"—*India*

"China Looks Forward"—*China*

All of the films mentioned above have been reviewed in *Film Forum Review* during the past year.

SHORT TAKES

Penn State Project

A project designed to make possible the production of more effective educational films is being undertaken for the Navy Department at Pennsylvania State College.

Types and characteristics of instructional films which have already been produced will be analyzed and evaluated. Researchers also will investigate and analyze the appropriateness of various types and characteristics of sound films in relation to subject matters. Both perceptual and attentional processes involved in observing and learning from sound films also will be investigated.

Pertinent literature and information collected from individuals, organizations and agencies will be reviewed for recent psychological, educational and technical developments. A specialized and highly selected reference library will be established, as well as an information center for the use of the Navy and other government departments.

The project at Penn State will be conducted in close cooperation with work being done by the Human Engineering Section of the Special De-

vices Centre, Port Washington, L.I., and the Communications Laboratories of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Chairman of the advisory board for the project is Dr. M. R. Trabue, dean of the School of Education at Penn State. Dr. C. R. Carpenter, professor of psychology at Penn State, is secretary of the board and project director.

New Film Councils Formed

The Film Counselor, monthly mimeographed publication issued by the Film Council of America, announces the recent organization of local film councils in the following communities: Los Angeles; Denver; Gary, Indiana; Wichita, Kansas; Detroit and Petoskey, Michigan; Minneapolis; Kansas City, Missouri; Charlotte, North Carolina; Oklahoma City; Delaware County, and Allegheny County, Pennsylvania; Knoxville, Tennessee; Lompoc, California; Raleigh, N. C.; and the Greenwich Village area of New York City.

These new additions bring the total number of local films councils to 46, in 25 states.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Films in Public Libraries, by Hoyt R. Galvin. Supplement to *The Library Journal*, Vol. 72, No. 18, Oct. 15, 1947. 88 pp. \$1.00.

Mr. Galvin has, in this publication, brought together materials from many sources to form a handbook for librarians interested in adding the distribution of 16mm films, 35mm filmstrips and slides to their library's present services.

A number of libraries in the United States already have active and growing audio-visual services. Mr. Galvin has drawn upon the experience thus accumulated to outline successful practices in the administration of public library film services. A good deal of useful information is given regarding sources and procedures for the selection and purchase of films. Mr. Galvin is a bit more enthusiastic than this reviewer about the value of available Hollywood short subjects in adult education.

Important information is given about the community use of films and about the kinds of projection equipment that are available. In addition, the author has included a helpful list of the minimum amount of equipment and supplies necessary to begin a public library film service.

A list of films with which a library might begin its collection is appended. This list was compiled by Patricia Blair and Paul Gratke on the basis of

recommendations made by film librarians as to which films have proved most useful in their communities.

For the reader's convenience directories of film producers, projector and film equipment manufacturers and visual education dealers have been included. There is a short bibliography. — R. S.

Sources of Information on Teaching Aids, by John Pullman Kishler. Visual Education Consultants Inc., 245 West 55th Street, N. Y. 19. 1947. 11 pp. mimeo. 25¢.

A bibliography of some fifty basic reading references and a listing of audio-visual periodicals comprises the bulk of material in this publication. References to available 16mm motion picture lists and films and slides about visual aids are also included.

Grierson on Documentary, by John Grierson. Edited by Forsyth Hardy, with American notes by Richard Griffith and Mary Losey. Harcourt Brace, New York. 1947. 324 pp. \$3.75.

A selected compilation of the writings and speeches of John Grierson during the past fifteen years, reflecting much of the development of the documentary film movement in Britain, Canada and, to a lesser extent, in the United States. Recommended to all adult educators interested in non-theatrical films.

FILMS ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

A survey on the use of the motion picture as an instrument of American education on international affairs is being undertaken by Ruth A. Inglis for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Hoover War

Library at Stanford University. Dr. Inglis is the author of *Freedom of the Movies*, a report of the Commission on Freedom of the Press, published by the University of Chicago in 1947.

Films for Forums on Industrial, Agricultural and Political Problems

Annotations prepared by the following past and present members of the staff of the Film Laboratory, Institute of Adult Education, Teachers College, Columbia University: John Bass, John Friesen, J. Roby Kidd, Carl Pettersch, Melita Seipp, Gordon Smith, Cecile Starr, Mont-eagle Stearns and Miriam Zwerin. Edited by Robertson Sillars.

The following pages contain a classified and annotated selection of 16mm motion pictures adaptable for use as discussion aids by adult groups interested in American industrial, agricultural and political problems (exclusive of international relations, which were dealt with separately in our issue for spring, 1947). Because of limitations of space, several films in this area of interest are being held over for review in our next and subsequent issues.

BASIS OF SELECTION

It will be noted that each film has been assigned a Discussibility Index Number. This number represents the average percentage score achieved by the film when evaluated on the Institute of Adult Education's Experimental Work Sheet for Evaluation of Discussion Films. Only films judged capable of raising or suggesting issues for group discussion have been considered for acceptance. Films which achieved a Discussibility Index Number from 50 through 69 have been rated Acceptable; from 70 through 79, Recommended; 80 and above, Highly Recommended.

Our readers may recall the general criteria which guide our film selections: "A film is suitable for discussion if it (1) presents or suggests a human problem related to some important discussion topic; (2) holds your interest and is easy to understand; (3) is short enough for the group to have enough time left for discussion."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special acknowledgement is gratefully made of the cooperation of the many film producers and distributors who have made prints of their films available for preview without charge or other obligation.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON FILM RENTAL

Most of the films reviewed in this and previous issues of *Film Forum Review* are available on a rental basis from local film libraries throughout the country operating under public library, university and commercial auspices.

It is suggested that you check with two or three of the film rental sources nearest you when you have selected the films you want to use. Most of these organizations will be glad to send you a catalogue of their rental films for your convenience in future booking.

Distributors operating on a national or large regional basis are indicated for films reviewed in this issue. In some cases they will refer your inquiries to a film library in your vicinity.

All films listed are 16mm, sound, black and white, unless otherwise indicated.

DISTRIBUTORS OF FILMS LISTED IN THIS ISSUE

Award Films.....	115 West 44th Street, New York 18, N.Y.
Brandon Films.....	1600 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y.
British Information Services..	30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N.Y.
Cooperative League.....	167 West 12th Street, New York 11, N.Y.
Coronet Instructional Films....	65 East South Water St., Chicago 1, Illinois.
Emerson Yorke Studio.....	35 West 45th Street, New York 19, N.Y.
Encyclopaedia Britannica.....	20 North Wacker Drive, Chicago 6, Illinois.
Gateway Productions.....	40 Fremont Street, San Francisco, California.
General Motors Corporation..	1775 Broadway, New York, N.Y.
March of Time Forum Edition	369 Lexington Avenue, New York 17, N.Y.
National Film Board of Canada.....	620 Fifth Avenue, New York 20, N.Y.
N.Y. University Film Library	26 Washington Place, New York 3, N.Y.
Pennsylvania State College....	State College, Pa.
Research Institute of America	292 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y.
Teaching Film Custodians.....	25 West 43 Street, New York 18, N.Y.
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture.....	Motion Picture Service, Washington 25, D.C.

Films for Forums on Industrial, Agricultural and Political Problems

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I. INDUSTRY AND LABOR

A. GENERAL

Technological Unemployment (I)

VALLEY TOWN. Produced by the Educational Film Institute of New York University and distributed by the New York University Film Library. 1940. Running time: 27 minutes.

Film Summary: This serious study documents the situation that arises when labor-saving machinery replaces manpower without regard for the effects upon the lives of the men, women and children directly concerned. To this end the film presents an American steel-mill town and its people before, during and after a depression, and before and after new techniques and devices have lessened the need for human labor in the mills.

Introductory scenes establish the background: the dullness of a smoke covered mill town; men and women whose day to day existence is geared inescapably to machines, whose tempo of living is set by machines. These men and women live tolerably well when the mills are running at capacity, but are wholly lost when the plants shut down.

Good times are exemplified by Christmas shopping sequences. The commentator makes clear that these people who live by machines also buy machine-made goods, and that as local merchants prosper more job opportunities appear in local stores. Rolling lines of loaded freight cars signify the economic interrelations of the community with other parts of the United States, and suggest the expanding prosperity which in pre-depression days was expected to continue forever.

Then, reflecting the onslaught of economic panic, the film changes to show freight cars empty and idle on railroad sidings, factories out of production, bewildered workers whose faces reveal the strain of long weeks without employment. Even with the eventual coming of business recovery this bewilderment of the men is not erased, because for them there is no let-up in depression. The industry has adopted new processes of steel-making and the old-type mills remain closed. One man can now do the work that thirty were required to do before.

The film singles out a discouraged, un-needed steel-worker and his wife, their morale crumbling as they stand helpless before a misfortune they can neither comprehend nor fight against. Other jobless mill-workers, young as well as old, with hard-earned skills that have now become worthless, are pictured watching an old-style mill being dismantled. As the building comes down the last hopes of the men fall with it. The film asks whether or not it is unavoidable that these capable men be discarded and disregarded. An answer is indicated in the example of a railroad engineer whose job was lost through motorbus competition, but who is now working at turning out parts for diesel engines for the buses that replaced him!

The retraining of men was undertaken and accomplished for war industry, but the problem has not disappeared with the defeat of military enemies. The

film leaves the audience with the question: How can technologically displaced workers be retrained to provide the nation with the kind of skilled labor it needs?

Evaluative Comment: New productive processes, while helping men in general, frequently hurt man in particular by bringing with them the modern problem of technological unemployment. In *Valley Town* the issues which thus arise are dramatized with force, clarity, fairness and a high degree of photographic simplicity. In the treatment of its theme the entire film is straightforward and unpretentious, with the possible exception of the technique which superimposes a woman's voice in song to express the rebellious thoughts of the steel-worker's wife. For the most part, the musical score complements the film with unusual aptness.

This film is **Highly Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 82.

Suggestions for Discussion: Machinery lightens the demands made upon man's physical strength, but in so doing it also creates social maladjustments which seem frequently to cancel out any good accomplished by the advance of practical science.

Is there an adequate balance between the unemployment resulting from the introduction of newly invented mechanical devices and the new work opportunities provided by them?

How can we retrain or adapt those men who are thrown out of work through technological unemployment?

How can the advance of technology be controlled by society so as to provide its recognized advantages with a minimum of social dislocation?

Technological Unemployment (II)

MACHINE: MASTER OR SLAVE. Produced by the Educational Film Institute of New York University. 1941. Distributed by the New York University Film Library. Running time: 14 minutes.

Film Summary: The machine is a labor-saving device. So runs our economic text. As far as it goes this is a useful definition. *Machine: Master or Slave* is a film designed to show why it is a definition that does not go far enough. How, for example, does the machine affect the worker who wants not to save his labor but to sell it? How, by increasing production, does it affect commodity markets and prices? These are only two of the many questions posed by the intrusion of the machine upon our economic life, questions which *Machine: Master or Slave* puts squarely before its audience.

The film considers the problems of workers and management in a single plant. The introduction of new labor-saving machinery has deprived many of the company's veteran employees of their jobs. Yet the step was an inevitable one. The new machines reduced overhead and increased production. "Machines come in—men go out," says the commentator.

However, the machines raise troublesome problems for management as

well as for labor. The camera looks in on a management conference shortly after the plant lay-off. Matters have not been running smoothly. Production has increased beyond the company's sales capacity. The sales manager suggests that the market must be expanded. "We'll have to work the territory more intensively," he declares. "We'll have to advertise more."

Meanwhile the displaced workers are still unemployed. Few jobs are available in the locality. Many of the men will be forced to up-root their families and apply for positions elsewhere.

The scene shifts back to the offices of the plant management. Several weeks have elapsed and the sales manager's scheme to stretch the market has proved a failure. People can't *afford* to buy. Prices are too high.

At a board meeting various remedies are examined by company officers. "We'll have to lower our price," says one. "But," asks a second, "how can we afford to pay a fair dividend if we lower our price?" The sales manager interrupts: "Perhaps sales would increase to such an extent that total profit would not suffer." A fourth member of the board suggests that a wage boost would increase community buying-power. "In any case," he concludes, "we must get people to buy more!"

Here the camera abandons the community, its issues still unresolved. The situation is complicated and unsatisfactory, for behind the problems of the company which can not sell are the problems of the consumer who can not buy and the worker who can not work. And behind them all is the main problem: that of the machine . . . which can not think.

Evaluative Comment: The value of *Machine: Master or Slave* as a discussion tool will depend largely on its effective interpretation by group leaders. That is to say, the problems emphasized in the film, real though they may be, are not altogether the problems of the average adult. It is quite fair to ask, for instance, what the individual worker and consumer can do about matters which are essentially the concern of economic policy boards. Probably the film will have to be approached obliquely by most discussion groups. Inquiry will have to center around the character of employer responsibility rather than the ways in which that responsibility can be fulfilled. Worker and consumer will want to know how they can play a part in the determination of industrial policy, not how that policy will affect them when it is instituted. This is an issue intimate to the interests of the community-at-large. That it is rather remote from the content of the film must be taken as a qualification of the picture's usefulness for most groups of adults.

Technically the film is generally effective.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 69.

Suggestions for Discussion: *What are some of the obstacles which limit the use of technological advances for the good of all the people?*

What can the public do to make sure that technological advances result in greater general welfare rather than unemployment and "overproduction?"

Would industrial policy boards, representing management, labor, consumers and government, be a practical means of controlling industry in the public interest?

B. LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

Rich and Poor in Depression

MILLIONS OF US. Produced by Labor Films, 1936. Distributed by Brandon Films. Running time: 20 minutes.

Film Summary: All during the nineteen-thirties millions of people were asking themselves how the nation could defeat unemployment. The same question is being asked today with different emphasis: How can we maintain substantial full employment? *Millions of Us* is an attempt to answer this question. It asserts that only as all workers in the country are united in a militant organization to ensure fair wages and conditions can there be employment security for anyone.

The film describes the efforts of an unemployed journeyman machinist to find a new job. Cold and hungry he goes from agency to agency, gets the brush-off from a religious mission, and listens to a politician expounding on "America—the Land of Opportunity." Finally, in desperation, he tries to get a job as a strike-breaker. The union pickets at the plant prevent him from doing this, but he is fed by them and the union organizer points out to him how strike-breakers—scabs—destroy the chance of security for everyone. Only as all of us, millions of us, organize and work together is there salvation for any of us, the film contends.

Evaluative Comment: There is no attempt made in this film to treat the subject objectively or dispassionately. Every effort is made to convince the audience that militant action by labor organizations is the one and only way to job security for anyone. The theme is handled with considerable skill, the sound effects, the dramatic contrasts, the fine photography, and the moving, restrained performance of the principle actor make it an absorbing film.

While it should be used in an educational program only with some care, the very provocative, this-is-the-answer quality of the film makes it useful for discussion. It boldly presents an issue and a solution and challenges the audience to refute that solution or supply a better one. While the film deals with unemployment in the 'thirties the subject-matter is so close to the memories of most adults, and to their fears for the future, that it is still a topic of importance for general audiences.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 70.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Is labor organization an adequate means of bringing our economy under the control of society? What other types of organization and management may also be necessary?*

How important are fair wages and working conditions to the efficient operation of our economy? To what extent does demand regulate price? Is the destruction of raw materials to jack up prices a commentary on the efficiency of "economic law?"

How can labor most effectively advance its interests? Are these interests

compatible with the interests of the nation-at-large? Is the closed shop a "monopoly" of the labor market by unions?

Communism and American Labor

CROSSROADS FOR AMERICA. Produced and distributed by the Research Institute of America. 1947. Running time: 33 minutes.

Film Summary: The problems of worker-employer relations and how they may be used by the Communist for his own purposes constitute the *Crossroads for America*. As the war years came to a close, Dave Nelson, who with millions of other workers had turned out materials of victory, faced the reality of re-conversion and the possibility of the labor-management strife he had known in the pre-war years. Particularly distressing was the growing practice of calling a man a Communist simply because one disliked his ideas or the color of his skin. The film then asks, "Who is a Communist?" and introduces a member of the Communist Party.

As a disciple of Karl Marx, the Communist believes in a "class struggle" between the worker and his employer. He believes that the downfall of the capitalist system, principally through another great depression, is due and he is ready to lend a hand to hasten this downfall. On the American scene his principal means of hastening the collapse is to foment and prolong strikes, and thus widen the gap between worker and employer. He considers that the Russian revolution of 1917 saw "the birth of enlightened times," the film explains.

To get a closer picture of the Communist in America, the film reviews the history of the Communist Party from 1932 to the present. By use of material from the *Daily Worker*, the Party publication, it is recalled that these years were marked by sudden shifts in Communist policy, the "party line." This was particularly true in 1939 when Germany and Russia signed a non-aggression pact, in 1941 when Germany invaded Russia, and again in 1945 when Russia renewed its campaign of political expansion. It is indicated that the key to the understanding of these shifts is the changing needs of Russian foreign policy through this period.

To bring the labor activities of the Communist into closer focus, the film shows how the Communist works. He takes a job in an industrial plant where he soon sizes up the situation. He makes friends with a fellow worker who is a leader among the men. In this case, with Dave Nelson, He acts as a behind-the-scene manipulator. When the dispute does come, he insists on a strike. As the strike is prolonged, he continues his argument that labor can't give an inch, that it is fighting its mortal enemy, and that the sooner labor recognizes the capitalist system for what it is the better off labor will be. It is pointed out by the film that although few strikes are Communist-inspired, the tactic used by the Communist is to prolong a strike by increasing the bad feeling between labor and employer.

Against the background of these activities there is carried on a running argument between the preaching of the Communist and the film commentary. Through the use of animation and charts the film offers answers to such argu-

ments as: "Bankers in Wall Street run this country"; "Profits get fatter and fatter"; "A dollar in profit is a dollar out of the pockets of labor." In answer to the question "Who owns American industry?" the film presents statistics that show that one out of five Americans owns his own business; that there are 20 million investors in American industry; and that for every dollar of corporate profits 17 dollars go into wages.

The film ends with the declaration that history is at a turning point, and that the mission of America to pioneer the way to permanent peace will be carried out successfully only if workers and employers cooperate to make our economic system work through competition in goods and ideas.

Evaluative Comment: Technically the film is well presented. The combination of dialogue and commentary succeeds in maintaining continuity in the wide area covered. Animation is effective in illustrating ideas and statistics.

With regard to content, it is significant to note that this film was produced as an answer to the point of view developed in the film *Deadline for Action*. This latter film, which was reviewed in the Winter 1946-47 issue of *Film Forum Review*, was produced for the Political Action Committee, CIO, for use during the 1946 Congressional elections. It developed the theme that industry desired a postwar depression as a means of retaining control of prices and wages; it outlined the cartel structure of big business, specifically of the electrical industry, with emphasis on its relation to banks and holding companies; and made the point that political action by workers is necessary to prevent the domination of business interests in America. Although the central theme of *Crossroads for America* is the disruptive part that Communists play in worker-employer relations, much of the background material of the two films is identical. It is in the interpretation of background material, that the points of view of the two films are divergent and lend themselves to a charge of not presenting a rounded picture of the situation.

It is to be noted particularly that there are sharply varying interpretations of the statistics presented by the film on profits and wages. Likewise, there is considerable difference of opinion on what is a just labor grievance and how much labor should compromise on its demands in any given negotiation or strike. An effort will be required to bring out in a discussion the distinction between legitimate negotiation or strike tactics and those suggested by the Communist agitator as depicted in the film. Groups concerned with labor-management relations should find this film extremely provocative.

This film is **Highly Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 80.

Suggestions for Discussion: On the general theme of capitalism, democracy, and communism: *Are capitalism and democracy identical? Does the danger of Communism lie in its economic ideas or in its political methods?*

Are there maladjustments in our economy that call for radical treatment? Can we have a planned economy and not sacrifice the basic freedoms we enjoy in a democracy?

With regard to Communists in the labor movement? To what extent does

the Communist idea of "class struggle" affect worker-employer negotiations? What distinction might there be between legitimate strike tactics and those inspired by the Communist?

Should members of the Communist party be denied membership in unions, or be barred from holding responsible jobs in the union? Is this a problem for labor or for government to handle?

Industrial Democracy

PARTNERS IN PRODUCTION. Produced by the National Film Board of Canada. 1944. Distributed by Brandon Films. Running time: 21 minutes.

Film Summary: In England, as in America, the onset of World War II gave labor-management teamwork a new importance in the nation's industrial scheme. The film emphasizes at the start that there is a great difference between the labor-management committees of America and the British "joint production committees." Its purpose is to report on the performance of the British groups.

With the invasion of the Soviet Union by Germany and the consequent formation of a solid Allied front against the Axis, says the commentator, it became imperative to draw Britain's labor force more thoroughly into the war effort. . . . "to use the brains as well as the muscles of British working people." This meant extending labor-management cooperation in planning and carrying through new speed and production goals, cutting down absenteeism, strengthening safety measures, etc. Sir Stafford Cripps appears in the film to describe this as a step toward a new industrial democracy in the making.

This form of industrial democracy, however, had been operating in Britain long before the war, on a smaller scale. Joint production committees had always been warmly encouraged by the government, the commentator tells us, and by the time war came, joint consultation of labor and management had already proved to be an effective force in expediting industrial output. Two examples of such joint conferences are shown.

In one mine, for example, a pit is closed down for safety reasons, and ninety-eight men are slated to be shifted to another region. As an alternative to uprooting these miners' families, the entire crew could work more intensively in the remaining pits. Instead of digging on a six-foot "face," each miner would work on a narrower surface and dig deeper—a much more taxing job. The miners are urged by management and government representatives to accept these conditions temporarily, to avoid interrupting coal production for the year. During the committee meeting, one workers' representative challenges the good faith of management: "How do we know you'll keep your word and let us go back to the six-foot face, when the war is over?" The Regional Labor Director gives them government's promises that their traditional standards will be restored to them as soon as the emergency allows, and the labor representatives accept the new conditions on that basis.

Also we see representatives of labor, management and government sitting around a conference table in a war plant, examining a standard machine part. The dialogue brings out the fact that one plant making the parts had altered

the design without notifying anyone of the change; workers on the production line spotted the difference between that model and the standard part and reported it to their labor-management committee with the result that the government spokesman is able to head off further disruption in war production by warning the other factories using that part.

"Free people work best when they understand their job" says the commentator. "Work acquires a new purpose and interest." There are scenes of workers at shop meetings; conducting elections for their representatives; listening to the plant loudspeakers and reading wall newspapers to learn how they are fulfilling their production goals. "In getting the weapons of victory to the fighting front," the film concludes, "we are laying a sure foundation for social planning after the war."

Evaluative Comment: This film does more than simply report on the operation of British committees: by explaining at the outset that the characteristics of British labor management cooperation are not to be confused with those in America, it encourages an alert, critical attention to the fundamental distinctions between the two systems. The discussions between labor, management and government representatives indicate that British labor enjoys a much higher level of responsibility than American labor, especially in determining production policies; during the war, at any rate, they were "partners" in the fullest sense of the word. Although in a British setting, this is one of the clearest expositions of the possibilities of labor management cooperation that this panel has seen, and its implications for American labor offer challenging material for discussion. Additional documentation or a subject matter specialist would be required, however, to supply the American background and to account for any changes in Britain that might have followed the end of the war. Technically the film is very well done.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 79.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Are labor-management committees as essential in peace time as they were during the war? Do these committees suggest means of cooperation in industrial life which could end industrial strife and the exploitation of our resources and manpower for private ends?*

What initial difficulties not present in war time would have to be met in establishing peacetime cooperation?

Is the British joint-production plan feasible for the United States?

To what extent has union labor instituted democratic processes into labor-management relations?

Democracy at Work

DEMOCRACY AT WORK. Produced and distributed by the National Film Board of Canada. 1944. Running time: 20 minutes.

THE NEW PATTERN. Produced by the National Film Board of Canada. 1944. Distributed by Brandon Films. Running time: 14 minutes.

Democracy at Work and *The New Pattern* tell the story of labor-management committees in Britain and Canada respectively. They try to do the same type of job as *Partners in Production*, but they fall far short of it with respect to clarity and coherence. Either one of them could be used in place of *Partners in Production*, but they should be resorted to only if *Partners* is not available.

Both films are **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Numbers: *Democracy at Work*: 51. *The New Pattern*: 57.

The Cause of Labor

OUR UNION. Produced by United Electrical Workers. 1947. Distributed by Award Films. Running time: 20 minutes.

Film Summary: *Our Union* is the story of the United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America, and the case it presents might well illustrate the entire organized labor movement in the United States.

It begins with the depression of 1929, in which three hundred billion dollars were lost through production shut-downs, "the price we paid for big-business government."

Re-enactments and newsreel shots of early organization struggles reveal the work of company agents in suppressing union organization in the '30's. We are told that some of the most dignified companies in America used the dirtiest methods in fighting unions and organizers.

In March 1936 the UE had 1600 members, and in 1941 its contracts covered 316,000 men and women. The film emphasizes advantages gained by workers through the union: seniority rights; standardization of pay among workers regardless of race, nationality or sex; wage increases in keeping with the union's goal of a decent standard of living for all working people; holidays with pay; better working conditions; job security, and the like.

The film points out that a healthy union is a tremendous help to the welfare and prosperity of any community. Franklin Roosevelt is quoted as saying that "short-sighted men, not labor," are the threat to this country.

In conclusion, the Taft-Hartley bill is denounced, and the political defeat of the men who made it possible is urged. Labor has worked hard, the film states, to make the gains it has won for itself, and it is strong in its determination that the clock shall not be turned back.

Evaluative Comment: The film's major objective quite plainly is that of influencing members, potential members and the general public to rally to the labor cause in the present labor-management struggle. The film has yet to be made which will present the issues dividing labor and capital in such a way as to suggest a basis for constructive cooperation in their solution.

A discussion leader would have to be very skilled to raise a discussion based on this film from the emotional to the rational plane.

Sound and photography are of average, or less than average, quality. The timeliness of the film, and its value as a partial record of historical background to the labor-management scene, add to its usefulness as a discussion aid.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 59.

Suggestions for Discussion: *What good and bad effects do labor unions tend to have on the economy and welfare of your community as a whole? Would the community be better off without labor unions? Why or why not?*

Should organized labor take action with regard to matters of political concern? Should any organization—social or economic—take action with regard to matters of political concern?

Labor in the Post-war World (I)

MEN AGAINST MONEY. Produced by the United Electrical Workers. 1947. Distributed by Award Films. Running time: 20 minutes.

Film Summary: Labor unionization has a bitter, violent history. Whether it was a pitched battle in the streets or a political engagement in the chambers of Congress, workers have fought for their unions. Today, threatened by legislative restrictions, labor must fight again. *Men Against Money*, in taking this position, is confident that the grit and resourcefulness that won labor its unions will now preserve them.

When the war ended in 1945, thousands of American workers, accustomed to a high war-time wage scale, felt the sharp pinch of post-war adjustment. In a matter of months their take-home pay was cut by the discontinuance of overtime bonuses and their real income decreased by rapid price rises. Something had to be done.

Like his fellow workers, Bill Turner, a member of the United Electrical Workers Union, wondered what the answer was. His union and many others talked things over. They decided that wage increases were absolutely necessary. In consequence, U.E.W. requested a wage boost of two dollars a day. This request was refused. The issue that Bill Turner and his union faced was then clear: to resign the debate or to strike.

The workers' situation in 1945 was not without precedent. The film flashes back to the years after World War I. Business interests had at that time refused to deal with labor. The nation was backtracking to "normalcy." The result was something else—the depression of 1929.

Bill Turner knew that the nation could not afford another such depression. He was convinced that a business government would again precipitate economic chaos. Monopoly business, he felt, had proved its irresponsibility before. Hadn't his own company, General Electric, been indicted for monopolistic practices? The film outlines the network of control over domestic production exercised by several financial dynasties, Morgan, Du Pont, Mellon and Rockefeller. It points out that by means of interlocking directorates a relatively few men have virtual ownership of our strategic industries.

Bill Turner decides that a wage increase is only one of the things he must fight for. His vote to strike will be a vote for progressive government as well. The film emphasizes that Bill Turner and his fellow workers will continue voting and fighting for their rights, and that, in the end, they will not be denied.

Evaluative Comment: *Men Against Money* is an important discussion film. It presents labor's grievances against management in frank, decisive fashion. No attempt is made to give a rounded picture of our economic scene. The film does not disguise its bias. And it is this very quality that should provoke audiences to discussion. Clear arguments are offered with which they can grapple. The film *invites* debate.

Technically, *Men Against Money* is less interesting. It is a rather clumsy remake of an earlier labor film, *Deadline For Action*, and, probably in consequence, is not as smooth as it might be. Nevertheless there are some arresting photographic sequences of street fighting and, generally speaking, technical deficiencies do not seriously interfere with the clarity of the film's argument.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 71.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Do you believe that labor needs a special political party to advance its interests? To what extent is labor representative of the nation at large?*

What differences are apparent in the organization of national unions and of national industries?

Should union labor have a bigger role in the determination of industrial policy than it now plays? Do you believe that labor-management steering committees are feasible?

Are government controls necessary to check unions? Is the Taft-Hartley Act a solution to labor-management problems?

Labor in the Post-war World (II)

FOR THE RECORD. Produced by United Electrical Workers. 1946. Distributed by Brandon Films. Running time: 18 minutes.

Film Summary: The background and development of labor-employer relations immediately following World War II are here made available "for the record" from the point of view of organized labor. Although wages were controlled during the war years, the film indicates that workers were able to earn enough to meet rising costs by working overtime in the patriotic effort to equip and supply the Armed Forces. With the end of the war this opportunity for overtime work ceased. Yet prices continued to rise, and, with the removal of OPA ceilings, began to skyrocket. Labor was forced to ask for higher wages to assure sufficient take-home pay to meet the rising cost of living. Employers, however, in spite of "war swollen profits," refused to meet the request of workers, the film declares. So, it is argued, the unions had to strike.

The film surveys strike conditions throughout the nation in 1945 and 1946. Picket lines and the organizational work done in union headquarters are shown and described. The sympathy and response of other members of the community in providing food stuffs and clothing for needy strikers are depicted. Conflicts of the past and present between picket lines and strike-breakers and the police are recorded. The point is made that workers dislike

and fear strikes and shut-downs as much as the community at large. The film ends with a direct appeal to workers to join unions to safeguard their rights.

Evaluative Comment: As indicated in the summary, *For The Record* represents the union's point of view. However, that point of view is fully recorded. The discussion group will find here timely and interesting material on the organization and maintenance of strikes, both on the picket line and at union headquarters level. For use by groups interested in industrial relations, supplementary material from the point of view of both the public and of business would be required to develop a well-balanced presentation of the issues.

Technically the film is very good. As will be expected, however, the commentary is devised to carry emotional appeal and to underscore the recruiting purposes of the film.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 70.

Suggestions for Discussion: *What have labor unions in your community done to improve the wages and working conditions of their members?*

How have these better working conditions and wages affected the life of the community as a whole?

To what extent do you believe that the demand for higher wages is responsible for the present high prices?

Is a labor union justified in asking that no one be allowed to work unless he belongs to the union, as in closed shop agreements?

C. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

An Industrial Training Program

GENERAL MOTORS INSTITUTE. Produced and distributed by General Motors. 1945. Running time: 27 minutes.

Film Summary: This film, primarily designed for General Motors employees, describes the origin, growth, and operation of the General Motors Institute, a school operated by G.M. for the technical training of its employees. The film stresses that work at the Institute must be related to some specific job in the Division from which the trainee comes, and that there must also be a need at his plant for men trained in that job: The facts of application, admission, and course of study are conveyed by means of a story of a young high school graduate named Tom who is discontented with his prospects and inquires of his boss how to improve them. The boss tells him about the school, and presently Tom is shown being admitted. He goes through all four years, though the film makes clear that a course can be for only two years, or for as little as a few months. All of his school work is kept closely related to his work at the plant, and the manner in which this is done is fully explained. The film concludes with observations on the Institute's work during the war years.

Evaluative Comment: This film may be useful to groups interested in discussing the value of company-sponsored education for those people to whom

no other education is available. Production is uninspired, and the sound track is only about average in effectiveness.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 52.

Suggestions for Discussion: Since education is a public concern, how desirable or advisable is it that corporations should undertake to provide it?

Does this participation by business in education indicate some failure or shortcoming of our educational system? How is such failure to be overcome?

If technical training on the higher levels is to be instituted by the public school system, how is it to be coordinated with industrial needs?

In what other ways might an individual receive higher educational preparation? What can the community do to help?

Work of a Folk School

PEOPLE OF THE CUMBERLAND. Produced by Frontier Films in cooperation with the Highlander Folk School. 1937. Distributed by Brandon Films. Running time: 18 minutes.

Summary: *People of the Cumberland* undertakes to point out how sociologically backward areas of the nation can be advanced through adult education programs and labor union organization.

The film first exhibits run-down sections of the Cumberland Plateau in Tennessee. Years of exploitation followed by continued neglect of most farms and mines and the total abandonment of others are shown to have resulted in a ruined land and a beaten people. Evidences of lost morale are all too abundant in listless bodies, decrepit houses and, perhaps with equal significance, ill-kept graveyards. Fugitives from these conditions on the land fared no better as employees in the mill of the near-by mountain village. There, according to the commentator, an eleven-hour day and a six-dollar week prevailed.

To meet this situation and to bring help to these people the Highlander Folk School was formed. The film follows the pioneering work of the school in linking the mountaineers to the outside world and in giving them the practical skills in self-help whereby avenues to a better way of life might open up for them. Union organizers, too, came into the mountains at the same time, and school and union are shown working together to teach the people the oneness of their problems and the benefits of cohesiveness in a common cause. The strength of the forces resisting the new movement is dramatized in scenes showing a union organizer being done to death by hired killers in an alley of the village. Despite bitter opposition, however, the picture reveals the revitalized people winning through to goals of worker solidarity and union recognition.

Evaluative Comment: Emphasis in the film falls heavily upon the notion of "class struggle." The obviously slanted viewpoint and superficial coverage of the theme suggest that the film has definite limitations in use, although the issues it suggests are real enough even today. The strong element of conflict

introduced in the episodes dealing with opposition to unionization activities is effective in holding interest, but, at the same time, operates to detract from the fundamentally sounder approach to the needs of the mountaineers inherent in the educative efforts of the Highlander Folk School. On the technical side the film is more than adequate.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 60.

Suggestions for Discussion: People living under depressed conditions, whether in the remoteness of the Cumberland Mountains or just the other side of the tracks, must have help. There is little disagreement on that point, but the choice of method in getting assistance to them is often debated.

What can adult education do to raise the living standards of underprivileged people in your community? What can labor organizations do?

Is Federal aid needed to meet situations such as those shown existing in the Tennessee mountain regions? Is the nation as a whole affected by the helplessness of isolated communities such as the one shown in the film?

Workers Education

THE CAMPUS COMES TO THE STEELWORKER. Produced by Pennsylvania State College in cooperation with the United Steelworkers of America. 1946. Distributed by Pennsylvania State College. Running time: 18 minutes.

Film Summary: This is the story of a workers education project which was formed by coordinating the facilities of a land-grant State University and a labor union.

The United Steelworkers of America, CIO, recognizes the need to develop in its members a greater understanding of their responsibilities, as union members and as steelworkers—to help improve relations among the men, and between men and management. A short leadership training Institute is planned jointly by union representatives and the faculty of Pennsylvania State College, and is publicized throughout the Pennsylvania locals. "You're never too old to learn," rank and file members are told in the publicity campaign. The steelworkers respond by signing up for the courses in large numbers; then we see them converge on the campus and dig in for an intensive period of lectures, library research, and practical exercises in the skills of union participation and leadership.

The courses cover a wide range, from the international aspects of the steel industry to the mechanics of dues collection; the international sources of metals; history of the American labor movement; practical sessions in collective bargaining and the working of the grievance committee; human relations; how to arrive at a plant-wide job evaluation plan; how to determine a fair wage rate; parliamentary procedure. Throughout the course the point is stressed that leadership of the union is expected to come from the rank and file.

The sports and recreational facilities of the campus are also open to the

men and women. Between class sessions they play baseball, pitch horseshoes, and put on amateur variety shows.

When the Institute is over, the enthusiastic students wind it up with a mass celebration. In conclusion, Phillip Murray appears briefly on the screen to remind other CIO unions that they are responsible for the individual development of their members, and to urge them to organize similar training institutes in their own states.

Evaluative Comment: This picture gives good treatment of the philosophy of the union leadership which takes the initiative in offering the courses to its members, and the motivations of the men who go in for this form of adult education. Those portions of the film which show the steelworker-students going about the business of the Institute, give us a convincing and dignified impression of the way workers education takes shape. But it is primarily an intra-union promotional film, designed to encourage other CIO bodies to set up similar training courses, in the interests of the union membership as a whole. Its content and organization, therefore, limit its usefulness to groups considering workers education, rather than the diversified field of general adult education.

The film attempts to introduce a light touch by occasional attempts at comedy, mostly slapstick, and these come close to spoiling the picture. Nor is it a well organized film. After telling the story of the project quite adequately, it becomes repetitious and rambling. It should have been shorter and more compact.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 57.

Suggestions for Discussion: *What is the significance, for general public welfare, of increasingly better informed, more articulate workers as envisioned by Phillip Murray in this film?*

How can the services of the State Colleges be made available more extensively to workers as well as other non-academic groups?

Should all land-grant colleges undertake special programs for workers? Or should unions take the lead in doing this? Should these programs be concerned only with labor-management problems, or should cultural programs be introduced?

Can your local union members make use of the kind of education shown in the film?

II. AGRICULTURE AND THE LAND

A. GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FILMS

The Motion Picture Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which is one of the oldest film-producing units in this country, has some hundred or more 16mm films on various agricultural problems and techniques available for rental. These films may be secured through any of the 76 film libraries throughout the country cooperating with the Department of Agriculture. Prints may be purchased from Castle Films Division, United World Films, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20.

Rural audiences are probably already familiar with many of these DA films, for they are used widely by agricultural extension services throughout the country. The bulk of the films produced by the Department of Agriculture cover specific informational and instructional topics such as *How to Grow Hogs*, and *The Farm Garden*. However, many of the films would be useful for discussion purposes among people immediately concerned with specific problems in matters of that type.

Other films, such as *Realm of the Wild*, *Men Who Grow Cotton*, *Banking on the Land*, have even wider applicability for discussion purposes among groups especially concerned with their subject matters.

The Library of Congress "Guide to U.S. Government Motion Pictures" (June 1947) lists all of the Department of Agriculture films, and includes a listing of rental sources from which they may be obtained. Copies of the Guide are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., for 40 cents.

Farming as "Big Business"

NEW WAYS IN FARMING. Produced and distributed by the March of Time Forum Edition. 1945. Running time: 15 minutes.

Film Summary: The "bigness" which is so marked a characteristic of industry and commerce in the United States has a counterpart in agriculture. The American farm and the farmer upon it are increasingly not quite what they used to be, as this film tries to show.

The farm of tradition and literature is first held up to view with its backbreaking, antiquated farming methods partly compensated for by the enticing bounty of the farm kitchen. Then brief scenes of the headquarters of

the Department of Agriculture at Washington are inserted with comment upon the vastness of its operations and the great number of its employees.

Sketching the acceleration in farm production dating from the first World War, picture and commentary next relate the history of the boom years and what came after. Over-extension of wheat lands followed in turn by post-war floods and drought added up to 100 million eroded or damaged acres. Scenes of dust storms and the havoc they caused in human lives are documented by displaced farmers on the march in battered old automobiles. Rivaling the dust bowl in the impoverishment of its people are the one-crop agricultural areas of the South which are shown in a miserable state of depletion.

But *New Ways In Farming* is aimed at offering avenues of hope. For the benefit of the South it recounts the successful experiments of Callaway in Georgia with such new crops as lespedeza, blueberries and grapes and his demonstration that cattle-raising there can be profitable. Furthermore, scenes of wheat growing activities at the 50,000 acre Tulare Lake Ranch in California and of Seabrook's truck farm in New Jersey are given in evidence to prove that farming can be successfully carried on as big business. As portrayed, Seabrook farm is run in typical large-scale fashion. Vast numbers of employees, a fleet of planes to spread insecticides, a cannery system whereby vegetables pass from field to can in less than three hours, and what is said to be the largest quick-freeze plant in America all witness to the industrialization which has taken place there.

The point is brought up that mass farms such as these threaten the livelihood of the small-scale independent farmer. Indicated as counter trends are the growth in number of farm cooperatives and the rapid electrification of American agriculture. By means of government aid and cooperation among themselves many farmers have acquired electrical labor saving devices which have enabled them to broaden the scope of their efforts and to multiply the variety of their products. Yet the film ends by asserting that American farming remains and always will remain on the level of a "rule of thumb" craft.

Evaluative Comment: The inroads of mass production agriculture upon farming as a way of life is a subject the implications of which bear heavily upon all of us. The problem is not readily simplified, and for that reason an audience unacquainted with the pertinent statistical data and their social and economic implications would not be likely to develop a fruitful discussion. More critical viewers, on the other hand, should find this film providing the basis for a stimulating interchange of ideas.

The presentation bears the mark of March of Time's usual workmanlike treatment. As a caution, the discussion leader will want to be on guard against the undue emphasis upon the productive superiority and inevitability of "big business" farms. Carey McWilliams' study, "Small Farm and Big Farm" (Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 100), might prove helpful for background preparation.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 58.

Suggestions for Discussion: Which of the two new ways of farming shown

in the film—"big business" farming or cooperative farming—is more consistent with the democratic way of life?

What individual and group values are lost or gained when farming goes the way of large-scale industry?

The Economics of Farming

THE BUSINESS OF FARMING. Produced and distributed by the National Film Board of Canada. 1945. Running time: 19 minutes.

Film Summary: The chief merit of this film is that it explains, in easily understandable terms, the relationship between agriculture and the national economy. Through the story of one Canadian wheat farmer, Bob Elton, we learn the major economic problems of all farmers.

Like any other business man, the farmer must gain a living for himself and his family, and he must aim at a profit with which to maintain, replace and expand farm machinery and supplies, with a cash reserve for possible emergency use.

But unlike the business man, the farmer does not determine the price of the commodity he sells. In the case of Bob Elton, a typical farmer, research studies show that in the past twenty-five years more often than not he had to take substantial losses; that is, his costs were greater than his income. During depression years he had to borrow in order to keep farming at all.

During the war the farmer found that he could sell all he could produce, for both domestic and foreign markets reached an all-time high. Government price controls made it possible for his income to surpass his costs. He was able to pay off his old debts and put some money aside for future use.

How will he fare in the future? No one can safely predict. The major lesson that the farmer can learn, looking back over the past twenty-five years, is that his economic security is vitally tied up with the economic security of national industry and international trade.

Evaluative Comment: The *Business of Farming* was made during war-time. It is apparent that the version currently being distributed has been cut, which accounts somewhat for its abrupt and rather meaningless ending.

What the film does most successfully is to demonstrate the interdependence of the farmer with the rest of the world. One evaluator has commented that this topic might be discussed just as easily without using the film. That is a matter for the individual group or the discussion leader to decide.

However, since *The Business of Farming* is the only film available at this time which covers the subject of agricultural economic problems, it is considered **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 53.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Has the United States a realistic enough outlook on the international implications of its domestic agriculture and industry?*

To what extent is mechanization of means of production and communication responsible for the complexity of agricultural and industrial economy?

Are the complexity and interdependence of the economic problems likely to increase or decrease?

Is it necessary that measures be taken to help stabilize farm income? Should such measures be undertaken by local, state, national or international organizations?

One-Crop Farming

YOU CAN'T EAT TOBACCO. Produced by Mary L. de Give and Margaret T. Cussler. 1943. Distributed by Brandon Films. Running time: 15 minutes. Color.

Film Summary: The theme of *You Can't Eat Tobacco* is that one-crop farming, particularly when that crop is tobacco, results in health problems as well as economic problems. The camera takes us over the land-exhausted homesteads and communities of "tobacco land," showing the barely subsistence-level lives of farmers who depend upon one-crop harvesting and marketing. Homes and homestead buildings are mere hovels, while those who dwell in them are tired and undernourished. Roving grocery trucks, which make periodic visits, must be depended upon for such essential foodstuffs as milk and meat. It is also pointed out that the land owners for whom the tobacco farmers work are little better off.

The film then shows the difference in the health and prosperity of a community where farming is diversified to include dairy and garden produce, poultry and hogs, as well as two or more larger crops for marketing. Better health and well-being through diversified farming are brought about with the assistance of government agencies working with farmers and farm families. The schools likewise assist in raising the health and economic level of a community by providing medical examinations, supplying school lunches, and training young people in home economy and farm management.

Evaluative Comment: This film will find its best use as an aid to an introductory discussion of social and economic problems that face some of our communities. Farm groups or groups which have gone beyond an introductory discussion of social and economic problems will find the treatment of crop diversification and its effects on health and economic conditions of a community somewhat elementary and cursory. Groups interested primarily in health and nutrition problems of a community will find sufficient introductory material on the part played by local government agencies and the school in solving these problems.

The sound and color photography of the film are satisfactory. The time-liness of the film as well as the interest maintained will depend upon the discussion purpose for which the film is used.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 60.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Are the evils of one-crop farming, in terms of undernourishment and general economic ills, present in your community? Is the individual farmer in a position to do anything about it? What assistance*

is being offered by or can be secured from local government agencies? Should the local school help in the solution of health and economic problems?

What parts of our local population suffer from malnutrition? What are the reasons for this? What can be done to correct it?

Migration to the Cities

WORKERS ON THE LAND. Produced and distributed by the National Film Board of Canada. 1947. Running time: 17 minutes. Color.

Film Summary: *Workers on the Land* offers one solution to the recurring problem faced by farmers of how to keep their workers on the farms. From all sections of the country (Canada) the migration continues to the cities where jobs with regular hours and good pay and attractions unavailable on the farm are to be found. Through the story of how one farmer met the problem the film presents the issue and offers its solution.

The film points out that skilled workers are an asset to the farmer. Complex machinery and the necessity of keeping this machinery in good repair call for experienced workers. Moreover, the men who work on the farm love the land, and if their work offered them security, they would stay. They would like to be assured of the full use of their labor throughout the year. They would like houses and homes of their own on the farm. They would like a yearly bonus or a share of the crops. The farmer in the film faces the problem when the latest of several workers he has hired during the year tells him that he is planning to marry and to find a job and a place to live in the city.

As the farmer sees the problem, it means making the farm support two families. It means better management and planning. It means diversifying the activities of the farm to spread work over the year; balancing field crops with poultry and winter dairying; having two litters of hogs instead of one; providing for early lambs. It means using the winter days to construct labor-saving devices and making repairs on farm machinery and barn interiors. It means keeping one's eyes and ears open for new ideas and ways of doing things. And above all, it means close cooperation between the farmer and his worker—giving the worker a chance to find out for himself how things might be done better and a chance to use his own initiative.

Evaluative Comment: The film will be of particular interest to farm groups. Groups interested in the general social and economic problem of migration from the farms will find the film suitable as introductory material. Both groups will require additional material to fill out the whole farm migration picture, particularly how it might affect the social and economic well-being of the nation and to what extent government might be called upon to assist in halting this migration.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 71.

Suggestions for Discussion: *How can our farms be managed more efficiently to provide the means of making farm work more profitable and attractive for farm workers?*

What other than individual initiative as shown in the film would be ways in which more people could be encouraged to do agricultural work on a stable economic basis?

Might government subsidize some kind of back-to-the-farm movement?

B. THE FARMERS COOPERATE

Together or Alone?

BILL BAILEY AND THE FOUR PILLARS. Produced and distributed by the Emerson Yorke Studio. 1947. Running time: 18 minutes.

Film Summary: *Bill Bailey and the Four Pillars* tells how one community in America was pulled out of its financial slump and remade into a prosperous agricultural community, and indicates that this was achieved largely through the resourcefulness and imagination of one man and his organization, a bank.

The film unfolds scenes of rolling Tennessee country with acre upon acre of "dark-fired" tobacco, the principal source of income for the area's inhabitants. We learn of the difficulties experienced by the community of Clarksville, its land overcultivated, the world market for its tobacco unstable. Clarksville's responsible and industrious farmers found themselves increasingly in debt and living on credit. Each year the bank got more mortgages on farms.

At this worried Bill Bailey, president of Clarksville's First National Bank. The film reveals his decision that the bank must help these men regain their former status. Basing his campaign on the slogan "Four Pillars of Income" which was paraphrased from the statement "God Gave Us Four Seasons for Four Crops," Bill Bailey is shown urging the farmers to diversify their produce, and not to rely so completely upon tobacco.

Using as the "Four Pillars of Income" sheep, wheat, cattle and tobacco, Bill Bailey shows the farmers how much they will benefit from modern agricultural methods. At first, the film shows, he met with considerable opposition from the farmers who for generations past had grown only tobacco. However, after showing them what had been accomplished by diversifying crops in other counties, he gradually overcame this prejudice. The aid of state and federal agencies was enlisted to demonstrate to the farmer how, through a scientific crop program, his land could again be made productive.

Having overcome the farmer's opposition to this crop diversification, Bill Bailey finds himself in difficulties regarding transportation. The nearest stockyards are so far distant that the farmer's chances for profit are offset by the cost of transporting his cattle. To meet this problem, Bill Bailey enlists the support of the Chamber of Commerce in establishing stockyards right in Clarksville.

As the film closes, Clarksville is again a thriving and prosperous small Tennessee town; scenes of Main Street crowded with the farmers and their families on market day fade out as we are again reminded of the role of Bill Bailey and the Four Pillars.

Evaluative Comment: Designed primarily for rural audiences, *Bill Bailey and the Four Pillars* shows how one man can, with power and influence, work for

the betterment of his community. The fact that this is done largely through the efforts of one person rather than through cooperative enterprise within the community is indeed the main criticism of the film. One constantly has the feeling that this is being done *for* rather than *by* the people of Clarksville. There is no intimation of group initiative; rather, it is strongly suggested that the farmers are being "pressured" into action. Because of the film's emphasis on the non-cooperative aspects of such progress, it will be necessary to have a discerning discussion leader who is aware of the film's shortcomings. Little of value can be gained from this film by groups on lower levels of education. The production is good and interest is well-sustained throughout.

The film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 63.

Suggestions for Discussion: Are "Bill Baileys" an indispensable part of community self-improvement?

What kind of cooperative action are open to members of a community?

How can you, as an individual, work for the betterment of your community?

Rural Electrification (I)

POWER AND THE LAND. Produced and distributed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. 1940. Running time: 39 minutes.

Film Summary: Until the passage by Congress in 1935 of a bill establishing the Rural Electrification Agency, the vast majority of American farmers were unable to afford the benefits of electrical power. *Power and the Land* shows how this agency has served the farmer.

Scenes of rolling hills unfold on the screen as dawn breaks on the Parkinson dairy farm. Mr. Parkinson goes out to do his early-morning chores by kerosene lamp while his wife begins the tedious work of the day. She is shown doing the laundry, a task which involves the transportation of water from the well, and which will not end until the last iron has been heated on the old wood stove. Meanwhile, Mr. Parkinson has been putting milk in cans which will be picked up by a dairy truck. Due to lack of refrigeration, some of the previous night's milk has soured and will have to be given to the pigs. The film shows other jobs which must be performed: the cutting of the corn, the gathering in of the alfalfa, and finally, after dark, the whetting of knives on a foot-operated grindstone. Work never seems to end.

When electricity first came, the film reports, it cost the power companies too much to bring it to the farm, so that although the vast majority of urban areas received its benefits, 75 per cent of the farms in America, on whose produce cities depended, were still without its conveniences. With the inception of the REA in 1935, cooperatives were established, and each farmer-member was able to have electricity brought to his farm. Now the farmer could have electric milking machines, an electric grindstone, a brooder for his chicks, refrigeration for his milk, and electric light in the barn to work by. His wife too would benefit, with an electric stove, iron, washing-machine and many other appliances that served to lighten household chores.

Under the cooperative membership system, and with the aid of the REA, "electricity belongs to all the farmers—together."

Evaluative Comment: In addition to presenting a strong argument for the establishment of rural electrification cooperatives, *Power and the Land* gives a clear picture of American farm life. The photography, sound and music are all superb, and Stephen Vincent Benet has written a fine commentary to go with them. Although this film might be criticized because it fails to mention any electrification programs undertaken by private companies, a wealth of absorbing material conducive to discussion on cooperative planning is dramatically and interestingly presented. The issue of cooperatives is both a timely one and one which should have permanence of appeal.

This film is **Highly Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 89.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Is it advisable for the government to develop services for underprivileged areas? Is it consistent with our capitalist economy?*

Why has private enterprise sometimes failed to develop adequate electrical power in agricultural areas?

Should government sponsored cooperative planning be extended to other fields?

Rural Electrification (II)

BOB MARSHALL COMES HOME. Produced and distributed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. 1946. Running time: 22 minutes.

Film Summary: A logical sequel to *Power and the Land*, which shows us the farm conditions leading up to the organization of the Rural Electrification Administration cooperatives, this film deals with the problems of an REA co-op that is well under way. It revolves around an attempt to persuade the leadership of a co-op to continue giving service to farmers on the basis of need rather than on the basis of so-called "sound business practices."

When Bob Marshall, a young Navy veteran, returns to his farm, he is disillusioned at seeing it in the same backward, run-down condition in which he left it. As an electrician in the Navy, he had learned the magic of electricity; now it was like stepping back fifty years into the past to see his family still drawing water from a pump in the yard, grinding tools by hand and using kerosene lamps.

What had happened to the idea of rural electrification—why hadn't it reached his farm? Marshall wonders. He pays a visit to the REA co-op headquarters in town and learns that the areas all around him have been electrified. The farmers own the co-op and run it themselves, even reading their own meters. The co-op officer tells an inspiring story of success and prosperity enjoyed by the farmers already in the co-op, but he has bad news for Marshall: four farms, including his, have to be excluded from the scheme because they are too far from the main lines which serve the rest of the community. A special extension could be built, but the co-op leaders, intent on maintaining

their successful financial record, are unwilling to undertake such a construction job for only four customers.

This cautious policy is overturned by a more far-sighted member, however, when Marshall's application is taken up by the co-op's Board of Directors. "All this talk about a good financial record worries me," he says. "We've become a good business, but what has happened to our philosophy?" He recalls their original purpose when they founded the co-op—to bring electricity to all who needed it; and he reminds them that they, too, were not "good risks" when they first applied for cheap electricity for their small, run-down farms. He goes on to recount the changes electricity has made in their lives: with electrically driven machinery they have modernized their farms, made them more productive, and have expanded. Their increasing demands for machinery and consumer goods made new jobs in industry, resulting in greater demands for their produce, and gradually the whole region blossomed. They were prosperous today because their co-op had grown on the basis of area coverage rather than pure profit per farm covered. He urges them not to let their own success blind them to the needs of other farmers in the community. The Board is completely won over by his appeal, and Bob Marshall is voted in.

Evaluative Comment: This film is a more complete exposition of the farm electrification cooperative idea than is *Power and the Land*. Not only do we see the hang-overs of America's most primitive farming days, and the modern, cheerful plants and homes that our farmers have built by banding together in cooperatives, but we are given a fresh and candid insight into the human weaknesses that dog every pioneering venture: the narrow complacency that sets in when the memory of early hardships is obscured by recent prosperity. During the eloquent appeal to the Board of Directors, individual members of the Board are singled out and chided for forgetting the courageous social philosophy which had contributed to their own success. The speaker talks in a neighborly way about the rise in their families' fortunes, giving the film an intimate, genuine quality, and making it entertaining as well as informative. The content of the discussions, and the mature, responsible manner in which they are carried on, make this film interesting from an adult education standpoint, but because of the administrative matters with which it deals, its application as a discussion aid is limited to audiences who belong to co-ops.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 70.

Suggestions for Discussion: Is our REA cooperative fulfilling its purpose of extending electrification wherever it is needed? If not, what are the obstacles?

How can we best extend electrification to rural areas that do not have it?

Are there other community needs that might be handled through cooperative effort, such as a market or a transportation service?

Rural Electrification (III)

FARM ELECTRIFICATION. Produced and distributed by the National Film Board of Canada. 1946. Running time: 22 minutes. Color.

Film Summary: The people of a farming community in Manitoba, convinced that they need the benefits of electricity, undertake successfully to bring light and power to their homes and farms. The film shows how their project was promoted and carried to completion.

Early scenes cover a council meeting in a rural municipality. The members are engaged in passing a resolution calling for cooperation with a plan of the Manitoba Power Commission designed to make electricity widely available in the Province. They agree to call in a Power Commission representative for a public meeting.

The commentator explains that in Manitoba a program to electrify its farms was planned in such a way as to include all farmers in a given area, not just those nearest the power line. Then the film turns to the public meeting and we see a gathering of interested farmers in a straightforward discussion with the "hydro" expert who answers their questions on availability of power, its possible uses and costs.

As the farmers present realize that the possibility of power tools and modern conveniences has become more than a distant hope and instead is now a reality to be reached through cooperation on the local level, a number of them volunteer to solicit the support from the district needed to ensure the beginning of power line construction.

The film offers examples of the kinds of opposition these leaders in the movement experienced. Some of the farmers were suspicious of the whole thing; others were reluctant to undertake the expense of wiring and equipping their houses and barns; and still others were just plain stubborn. But by persuasion and steady persistence the opposition was gradually brought around and the needed degree of cooperation obtained.

The second part of the film relates the actual coming of light and power to the community; poles go up, crews work their way from farm to farm, electricity becomes a reality. Specific information on house wiring procedures and costs is furnished. Considerable footage is also given to portraying the many ways in which electricity proves its worth on the farm. In illustration, there are examples of hot water systems, milking machines and power tools ease the heavy labor of the farmer, and of how the farmwife's chores are speeded and lightened by electrified kitchen, cleaning and laundry equipment.

Evaluative Comment: Emphasis in this film is upon the values and methods of the cooperative approach, with governmental help, to rural electrification. The situation described has a Canadian location, but the problem of bringing light and power to the land is also timely in all too many sections of rural United States. For groups facing such an issue the film has value because it points out down-to-earth difficulties likely to be faced and the kind of social action needed to overcome them.

The relationship to Rural Electrification Administration activities in this country is obvious, but the further possibility of farmer cooperation with pub-

lic utilities under enlightened private management is not indicated. The commentary is well delivered, but the photography is marred by occasional poor lighting.

The film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 57.

Suggestions for Discussion: *What ways to farm electrification are open to the farmers who want it in your community?*

What can be said for and against the cooperative approach to this problem as exemplified in the Rural Electrification Administration program?

Plight of the Sharecropper

AMERICA'S DISINHERITED. Produced for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. 1936. Distributed by Brandon Films. Running time: 33 minutes.

Film Summary: More than three million Americans are still without any security, the "poor in a rich land," the southern sharecroppers. They work every day in the cotton fields, dressed in clothes made from flour sacks, and living in rickety, fly-infested shacks. In the land of the free school for all, America, their children get work, not education, as their lot for most of the year round. Half-starved in good times, they become desperate in the depression. Evicted from their miserable shanties, they wandered about, starved and homeless.

The film shows us attempts at organization beaten down by violence; but they persisted in spite of the floggings and murder and formed a tenant farmers' union in six southern states—a union for Negro, White, Mexican and Indian alike. Starting an educational program for child and adult both, the Union began an experiment in cooperative and scientific farming. A cooperative store and community house were soon developed near the farm. Here evicted sharecroppers, with nothing to invest but their willingness to work, began to regain self-respect and dignity.

Evaluative Comment: Technically speaking, this is a poor film. The commentary is too wordy and sometimes difficult to understand; the photography is often muddy. Nor is it a well-balanced portrayal of its subject. The film was produced by people who cared deeply about "man's inhumanity to man" as represented in the treatment of America's disinherited sharecroppers. This feeling is very deep and genuine—not so much a hatred of injustice, but a faith in man's dignity, granted a decent opportunity.

Something of this deep motion and this faith comes through the film in spite of its technical deficiencies. It bristles with questions for discussion even though these are not developed in any very explicit fashion. For these reasons, and because there are so few films which in any adequate way portray the lives and problems of this great minority in our South, *America's Disinherited* is suitable for discussion by those adult groups who will take the time to give serious thought to the problems raised.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 68.

Suggestions for Discussion: What is the role of cooperatives in bringing new life to the sharecroppers?

What system of land tenure could be introduced to replace tenantry?

Will diversified farming on a cooperative basis lead to economic improvement?

Work of National Farmers Union

SEED FOR TOMORROW. Produced by Public Affairs Films for the National Farmers Union. 1946. Distributed by Brandon Films. Running time: 20 minutes.

Film Summary: *Seed for Tomorrow* raises many economic and social problems which plague the small farmer, and offers as an alternative to his isolation, the cooperative program of the National Farmers Union.

The film is concerned with the "family-type" farms, which support one-quarter of the American population. These small farmers, the film tells us, are in constant danger of insolvency. Burdened with debts and mortgages and the high cost of needed materials, their profit drained off by the processors, truckers, packagers, etc., they have to work hard from early morning until night in order to survive, and still they get little return from their farms. Once they felt secure behind the fences which marked off their property, but now, squeezed by the pressure of powerful farm monopolies, they are learning that they are no longer safe in their isolation. "How can one man stand alone," asks the commentator, "in a world of inflation and scarcity, boom and bust?"

The film tries to answer this question by showing one farmer under pressure by an agent of big business to sell his small farm. His wife wants him to sell; she sees no escape from their daily grind of work and worry. Their home is dreary and primitive, with no electricity, and there is no adequate school for their son. But he can't bring himself to give up the farm, and with it, his independence.

Into this situation comes a National Farmers Union organizer, who tells the farmer how the program of the NFU can help him. The program is three-fold, based on cooperatives, legislation, and education. By organizing cooperative grain elevators, markets, trucking services and processing plants, 500,000 farmers in thousands of cooperatives have cut down exorbitant handling costs. In legislation, NFU lobbyists and delegations of farmers to Congress are shown, asking Senators for laws to meet their needs. And through education they lay the basis for understanding and growth of the cooperative idea. We see children involved in group work, learning by experience their responsibilities as farm citizens; and we see meetings in which farmers discuss their common problems and work out common solutions.

The film concludes: "The time he takes to think and plan with his farmer neighbors how to solve their mutual problems of higher production, a good return, and a better life, is the contribution the farmer makes to a more democratic and prosperous nation."

Evaluative Comment: Despite the fact that this film deals mainly with the program of the Farmers Union, it does give a very full treatment of some of the major issues affecting our farming population. In dramatizing the solutions offered by that organization, the film lays before the audience many possibilities for discussion.

The picture has also become more provocative by virtue of the introduction in November, 1947, of a federal bill to tax cooperatives; the bill has been criticized as a move by corporate interests to kill cooperatives by "taxing them to death." While the outcome of this controversy cannot be foreseen at this time, it does indicate that competition between business corporations on one hand, and cooperative enterprises on the other, is growing, and will soon confront the American people with the pressing need for a democratic solution. Discussion leaders using this or similar films on cooperatives should see to it that factual background is available on this very pertinent issue.

Seed for Tomorrow should interest groups concerned with agricultural and economic problems, cooperatives and unions. It should have particular interest for adult educators, since it shows many of the techniques of adult education at work in the rural community.

Production techniques are excellent. Unlike most films with a "message," this one manages to get it across without bogging down in long speeches, made in forced improbable situations. Under the skillful direction of Sam Wanamaker, the situations seem genuine; the acting is simple and natural. The effectiveness of the picture is further heightened by a background of American folk singing.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 76.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Can small farmers solve their problems of insecurity and exploitation by cooperation, political action and education? What problems do farmers in your community have that could be met by organization in these fields?*

What problems do city workers and farmers have in common which could be solved by organization of cooperatives?

What is the outlook for the middle man in American farming in terms of current trends toward cooperatives?

Can cooperatives live side by side with big business, or will one squeeze the other out of business?

Should cooperative dividends be taxed, the same as corporate dividends, as the National Tax Equality Association maintains? Are cooperative profits the same as business profits? What significance does this controversy have for the traditional American system of free enterprise?

Cooperation in Indiana

POWER OF NEIGHBORS. Produced for the Indiana Farm Bureau Cooperative by Tomlin Film Productions. 1946. Distributed by the Cooperative League. Running time: 30 minutes. Color.

Film Summary: The theme of this film is the why and how of the growth of consumer and producer cooperatives among the rural population of Indiana.

Against a background of scenes of cooperative enterprise in such commodities as oil, fertilizer, seeds and tools, the commentary develops an argument for the benefits of economic cooperation, using as illustration the development of the Indiana Farm Bureau Cooperatives.

These cooperatives, we are told, got their start in the cooperative buying of gasoline. The saving to the farmers of seven cents on the gallon provided capital which was used to develop other cooperative ventures. Moreover, the success achieved brought more farmers into the cooperative and forced commercial oil dealers to lower their prices.

The development of a cooperative oil blending plant enabled the farmers, in its first year of operation, to save four times as much as it cost. Such savings affect the whole community and enable it to afford more educational and social services for all the people.

Eventually the farmers built their own oil refinery and oil cracking plant. Then they bought tugs and barges and trucks to transport the oil to the farmer-consumers. Co-op service stations were developed, and finally oil wells were leased and operated in order to ensure a constant supply. Now, the commentator tells us, the cooperative owns and controls everything necessary to get the oil from the ground to the final user.

While these points are being made, the camera shows us the things the commentator is talking about.

Directly and by implication the film brings out the logic of the progressive extension of cooperative enterprise into more and more fields, so that not only the profits going to private distributors are saved by the consumer, but the profits going to producers as well. At the end the commentary suggests the extension of cooperative ownership to provide people with *all* the goods and services they need.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 66.

Evaluative Comment: This frankly promotional film has the quality of an illustrated lecture in that the photographic sequences illustrate the story being told by the commentator. Thus, full advantage is not taken of the film medium, which can develop a theme in visual terms. The story is told in an ingratiatingly folksy Hoosier accent, and the color photography is excellent.

Aside from its value as a means of arousing interest in cooperatives with rural groups, the film is useful because it presents its subject in such a way that an audience can readily grasp the reasons that lead cooperators to extend their activities into more and more spheres of economic activity. It is, thus, a source of information for those interested in the implications of economic cooperation for the future.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Would cooperative methods be useful in helping to solve any of the economic problems of your community?*

Are cooperatives a form of private enterprise?

If the principles of economic cooperation were applied throughout our economy, would conflicts arise between consumers and producers cooperatives?

III. COOPERATIVES (NON-AGRICULTURAL)

Consumers' Cooperative

CONSUMERS SERVE THEMSELVES. Produced for Eastern Cooperative League Council for Cooperative Development and Consumer Distribution Corp., by Tomlin Film Productions. 1940. Distributed by the Cooperative League. Running time: 15 minutes. Color.

Film Summary: *Consumers Serve Themselves* shows some of the behind-the-scene activities of a cooperative food store. We see food tests being made, in which quality must be determined before the goods can be offered for sale in the store. Grade labels A, B and C are a further help to the consumer in helping him determine which is the best buy for him.

Self-service makes possible further savings for the consumer. But the outstanding factor which distinguishes a cooperative from other kinds of grocery stores is that the consumers own and operate the store themselves. On them rests the responsibility of solving problems, making policy and executive decisions. To them, in proportion as they have patronized the store, go the profits. Democratically run, the cooperatives give each member one vote, and membership is open to everyone.

In this way, we are shown, the cooperative food store provides its members with food of a quality over and above certain minimum standards, and at a price which is based on cost without profits to any middle-man. For this quality and savings, the consumers in turn accept the responsibility of running the store on a basis equitable to all.

Evaluative Comment: The film does little more than state the fundamental characteristics of the consumer cooperative and demonstrates briefly how one store operates. It is interesting and brief enough to meet minimum requirements of a good discussion film. *Consumers Serve Themselves* would probably be used best with a group which is not at all familiar with cooperatives. The leader would then need additional facts and literature on the subject, to promote discussion among his group. Such material is also available from the organization which distributes the film.

No attempt is made in the film to compare the cooperative with other retail stores, nor to show any of the difficulties or handicaps of the cooperative. Such a comparison is, however, likely to arise from normal group discussion.

Technically the film is of average quality. Color adds somewhat to its appeal.

Consumers Serve Themselves has been evaluated as **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 63.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Are most people willing to accept responsibility and work in order to provide themselves with commodities of high quality*

and low cost, or are they more apt to be willing to pay more and get less if someone else does the work?

Is the consumer cooperative more consistent or less consistent than "private enterprise" with American democratic viewpoints?

What do you stand to gain from being a member of a consumer cooperative, for example, a grocery store? What possible weaknesses might such a store have?

Cooperative Idea Explained

THERE WERE THREE MEN. Produced for the Cooperative League by Tomlin Film Productions. 1947. Distributed by the Cooperative League. Running time: 10 minutes. Color animation.

Film Summary: Prices and profits are no longer straws in the wind of supply-and-demand. They are controlled factors subject to the regulation of a monopoly business. Because this regulation is arbitrary rather than natural, the farmer and the laborer are often discriminated against. To prevent such discrimination they must band together. They must form cooperatives. This is the message of *There Were Three Men*, which illustrates its theme by a simple cartoon-story of a farmer, a laborer and a monopolist.

Gimcracks, explains the film, are an essential commodity. Everyone needs them. Everyone is willing to pay for them. Just as long as several producers are competing for the gimcrack market a fair price and good quality are guaranteed. The public pays a price for its gimcracks which is roughly proportionate to its demand for them. That is, until Monopoly enters the picture. Monopoly chases his competitors out of the market. He corners it and becomes the gimcrack king. Now his price for gimcracks is the *only* price. The public can buy only from him. When Monopoly raises the price of gimcracks the public must pay it.

Price rises hit Ike, the farmer, and Mike, the laborer, pretty hard. Ike has had a bad year. Unfavorable weather conditions have practically ruined his harvest. Mike finds that high rents and low wages have cut into his standard of living. Neither can afford gimcracks at Monopoly's new price.

After talking it over, Ike and Mike decide to work together. Furthermore, they enlist the cooperation of their friends. Then, with a respectable percentage of the disgruntled public behind them, Ike and Mike go to see Monopoly. "We want to buy gimcracks to sell to ourselves," they declare. They know that by establishing their own retail outlets they will be able to reduce the price of gimcracks. Monopoly, realizing that he is outnumbered, agrees. But the gimcracks he sells to the new co-operative are of inferior quality. Ike and Mike decide to by-pass Monopoly completely. He cannot be trusted. Out of their co-operative stores they build co-operative factories to manufacture gimcracks at a fair price. The public will no longer buy at Monopoly's price. They patronize the co-operatives. Monopoly is defeated.

In conclusion the film summarizes the principles of the co-op system: "Anyone can buy . . . anyone can join . . . everyone has one vote . . . every year savings are divided according to purchases . . . limited interest is paid on shares." And, the film adds emphatically, "we learn to work together."

Evaluative Comment: *There Were Three Men* presents a lively argument for the formation of cooperatives. Although the material in the film is much simplified, even over-simplified, the approach is honest and seems to have a sound basis in economic fact. Whatever the individual's attitude on cooperatives, it is certain that he will find ample matter for discussion in this timely, expert little film. It is suggested, however, that a guest panel or speaker be used in conjunction with the film to supplement its necessarily brief coverage.

The interesting color animation is by Karel & Irena Dodal.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 74.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Are producers' and consumers' cooperatives a valid answer to business monopolies? Could a successful cooperative itself constitute a monopoly?*

Is there a need for a consumer's cooperative in our community?

Is the principle of cooperative production consistent with the principle of individual or free enterprise?

Could the cooperative system become international through the United Nations? Would this be desirable?

How a Credit Union Works

THE PEOPLE'S BANK. Produced and distributed by the National Film Board of Canada. 1943. Running time: 18 minutes.

Film Summary: That credit unions fill a uniquely beneficial role in community life is the point of this film which also includes factual information on their formation and organization.

A Canadian farmer and wife faced with the need for capital funds in the operation of their farm are pictured spending a discouraging evening over their account books. Apparently their money problems have them cornered. But the next day at the general store in town the farmer hears something that raises his hopes. A group of his neighbors with problems similar to his own are talking about ways and means of raising money. One of them mentions that a lecture on credit unions is to be given in a nearby city. The farmer and his wife decide to attend the meeting. What they hear convinces them and they return determined to promote the establishment of a credit union in their home community.

The film then describes how they accomplished their purpose. Explanatory comment accompanies illustrations of the technical steps in forming and setting up a credit union. Out of an informal study group called together by the farmer there develops a full-fledged credit union with a charter. Low interest rates and profit-sharing features provide encouragement for others to join and in short order this community-centered, cooperative credit venture is securely a part of the people's lives. The film concludes with scenes of the first annual meeting of the new group where business and pleasure appear

to be mixed in a nice balance of friendliness. The good things of life, says the commentator, come from working together.

Evaluative Comment: This film champions the cooperative approach to economic problems and manages to capture a fair amount of audience interest in the process. The cooperative way as a currently flourishing middle path between traditional laissez-faire individual enterprise and the various forms of state socialism numbers both successes and failures in its history. *The People's Bank* is, of course, frankly favorable in its attitude, but there is enough of controversy in the subject matter itself to suggest that a group seeing the film ought not to lack discussible issues afterwards. It is suitable for study clubs with only a general or academic interest in the cooperative movement, but its greatest value would likely be in offering educational material to people immediately concerned with the advisability of organizing a credit union in a rural community. Sound and photography are a little better than average.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 61.

Suggestions for Discussion: *What groups in our community would benefit from the organization of credit unions?*

Can our credit needs be met more effectively by commercial banks and loan companies than by cooperative credit unions?

Are the private and cooperative approaches to credit needs mutually exclusive in a given community, or can each thrive in a special area of service?

IV. MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

A. POLITICAL ACTION

Our Democratic Traditions

THE TOWN. Produced by United Films for OWI Overseas. 1945. Distributed by Brandon Films. Running time: 10 minutes.

Film Summary: The town of Madison, situated on the Ohio River in Indiana, is depicted as a typical and truly democratic American town. The film shows in great detail how various foreign elements have contributed to its composite present-day culture.

Scenes of rolling hills, sweeping fields and a winding river unfold on the screen as we approach the town. There we see buildings with architecture reminiscent of Gothic, English, Italian and early Roman traditions. All these are elements of a typical American town which has been settled by men from the four corners of the world. U.S. citizens descended from Greek, Irish, German and Italian immigrants compose the population and they follow the patterns of their ancestors. Saturday is market day, and the neighboring farmers bring in produce to the square before the court-house. Sunday is set aside as the day of worship, and all men and women are free to worship as they please.

The film shows that there is equal educational opportunity for all in Madison, and children are taught to value democracy and the cultural advantages afforded them by their European ancestors. The community youth orchestra is popular, and there are other recreational facilities suitable for every age. The public library is used by Negroes and whites, by adults and children. The daily newspaper in Madison expresses the free opinions of its editors and its readers.

The town government itself is run by the people. They elect, or, as the film states, "hire and fire" the mayor as well as the local judge and prosecutor. The jury is composed of 12 citizens. In Madison, there is equal vote for all people—and they are free to vote as they wish. For as in a true democracy, the only things secret in Madison is the ballot.

Evaluative Comment: *The Town* is an idyllic presentation of some of the best aspects of American life. As a documentary, the film is valuable. Although no issues are immediately raised, the film should be useful as part of a discussion series of present-day American culture and of the heritage we owe to our European forbears.

The main criticism of this film is that it describes too perfect a town—one we all want to be a part of, but one which is too infrequently found in the U. S. today. Interesting discussion of failures to achieve such perfection might arise if the film were used by groups on higher levels of educational preparation. *The Town* might well be used with the dance sequence of *Alice Adams* (see FFR, Fall 1947). In one we are shown an idealistic state of equality in all things; the second is a dramatization of social snobbery in a small town.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 61.

Suggestions for Discussion: *What are the values we regard as typically democratic and American? Do these values flourish best in a small, rather than a large community? If so, why?*

How does the varied heritage of the U. S. manifest itself in your community?

What elements in this idyllic town are lacking in your community? What improvements might your community make?

How We Make Up Our Minds (I)

DOES IT MATTER WHAT YOU THINK? Produced and distributed by the British Information Services. 1947. Running time: 15 minutes.

Film Summary: This film demonstrates the various ways in which public opinion is formed in war and peace, and stresses the need for the individual's awareness and action in shaping it.

At a Civic War Exhibition in England a guide arrests the attention of several visitors by referring to the power of propaganda. Among his exhibits are a metal "container of propaganda" and a tiny printing press, the latter influential enough to be confiscated by the police. How much more, he adds, can editors of widely circulated paper contribute in moulding public opinion!

The wide distribution of print is seen in the shots of news and magazine stands and bookstores. Readers in trams, homes, streets and factories are expressing widely differing individual opinions based on the views of editors and on news stories. The camera halts to witness an orator's speech in the square, and lingers at the statue of Voltaire, with its memorable inscription of the philosopher's tribute to freedom of speech. The media of screen and radio are shown as further examples of opinion-shaping organs.

The spokesman, at the War Exhibition, has by this time won the ready ear of the visitors. He takes them on another imaginary trip to show how reform, resulting from public opinion, has provided organized playgrounds for cruelly treated street waifs. Trade unions—the biggest group of organized opinion—are seen expressing their views before management. Wilberforce, Florence Nightingale, Shaftesbury—these are among the great ones in the fashioning of public opinion for the cause of the common welfare.

The narrator reminds John Citizen that, through the ballot he can do his part in the achievement of the universal four freedoms. "Form into groups," he concludes, "and see that your opinion is felt."

Evaluative Comment: This timely film leaves no doubt in the mind of the audience that it matters a great deal what we think. An appeal is made for transferring the proven effectiveness of wartime propaganda to the winning of the peace. The British commentary is not always clear, but the highly interesting shots of the various media employed in the creation of public opinion reveal imaginative and dramatic production.

Film forums will find little difficulty in discussing the film topic; the discussion leader, however, will need to guide his audience in dealing with several of the more important issues raised on the very general subject of public opinion.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 71.

Suggestions for Discussion: A true democracy recognizes that the state exists for the individual. *How can people effectively make their opinions felt (a) in the community? (b) in national affairs?*

Are improvements made in your community attributable largely to action growing out of public opinion?

To what extent does control of a mass medium effect the free expression of individual or group opinion?

How We Make Up Our Minds (II)

PUBLIC OPINION. Produced and distributed by Encyclopedia Britannica. 1946. Running time: 10 minutes.

Film Summary: "A people's government shall be wise only if public opinion is enlightened." In a democracy public opinion is a matter of great importance, the film points out.

In every public group the development of opinion goes on with certain

recognizable features or patterns. Out of the environmental experiences which condition the whole process, and out of the predispositions of the people involved arises a tension, a problem. Next comes the diagnosis of the problem and prescription of a remedy or action which only takes place after consideration and debate. This process is illustrated by the way in which the town of Centerville gets a new water supply. The old water system is seen to be inadequate and disease-bearing. People in Centerville meet to discuss the problem, experts are brought in to give special testimony, a by-law is thoroughly discussed before being voted upon at an election. Finally the people agree to tax themselves for a new system and it is installed.

The organs by which public opinion is formed are next treated, the newspaper, the radio, and important groups and societies. A plea is made for balanced presentation of all the facts as a condition of developing intelligent public opinion.

Evaluative Comment: This is an important topic for any adult group today. The argument of the film is presented diagrammatically and by example. The schematic treatment may be sound in theory but does not seem to be very close to reality and the animation techniques are primitive. The illustration of the security of a new water system does assist materially but the total effect is still very academic and bears little relation to what is found to happen in any community. The film fails to show the obstacles to the development of sound public opinion. Some groups may find its distinctions over-subtle. Nonetheless, this is a good film for helping groups who have a serious interest in democracy and citizenship, begin a discussion of the important role of pressure groups and media of communication in modern society.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 66.

Suggestions for Discussion: Does the film deal adequately with the ways in which public opinion is formed? How significant are press and radio? Of what importance are pressure groups?

What organizations in your community exercise the greatest influence on public opinion?

What is the role of advertising in public opinion formation?

What obstacles do we find in a community which prevent the growth of sound public opinion based upon information?

What can be done to eliminate these obstacles?

Community Political Action (I)

YOU THE PEOPLE. Produced by M.G.M. Distributed by Teaching Film Custodians. 1940. Running time: 21 minutes.

Film Summary: This "Crime Does Not Pay" short subject forcefully establishes the relation between general indifference to public affairs and governmental control by corrupt political machines.

A municipal political campaign is under way as the film opens. The

reform candidate for mayor is shown making a speech to a packed auditorium. Suddenly opposition hoodlums turn off the lights and a stampede results.

The scene shifts to the headquarters of the mayor. His aids are busy collecting funds for campaign expenses. All sources are being tapped. Protection money is solicited from gamblers and others operating outside the law; forced contributions are extorted from contractors on public works; licensed business men are reminded that they may expect difficulty in obtaining license renewals if they fail in support; and a day's pay is demanded from menial workers in the city's employ. The campaign manager tells his workers that a major tactic will be to discourage "good government" voters by talking up the line that a single vote does not count and that one candidate is just as bad as the other.

Reform reaction begins when a civil service employee balks at carrying out an order of a dishonest supervisor. He and a friend become active in the fight against the machine which is systematically utilizing every fraudulent election practice at its command. The civil servant is manhandled by hired thugs, but keeps on in his struggle against the machine, and finally he and his friend uncover a ballot-counterfeiting hideaway. Surprised while collecting evidence, they succeed in reaching their car and getting away, but the friend is killed by a parting shot.

The corrupt machine manages to win the election, but the mayor and his crooked campaign manager are exposed and arrested immediately afterward when a plot to burn the warehouse containing the faked ballots fails.

Interspersed throughout the film and pointing the moral are lunchroom sequences in which a customer disputes the counterman's argument on the futility of voting. The latter character becomes loud in his denunciation of the criminality of the exposed mayor, but hushes up when the customer forces him to admit that he had not voted.

Evaluative Comment: In most respects this film rates as a superior attempt to focus attention upon the evils of political corruption in a big city. It is highly interesting fiction well told in the Hollywood manner, and on a subject that needs always to be kept in the limelight.

The emphasis upon voting as the one solution to democracy's political problems is an oversimplification, but need not affect the usefulness of *You The People* as a discussion film. A leader will need considerable skill to relate the lessons of the film to the realities of most communities because corrupt political activities are, more often than not, staid and dreary affairs rather than dramatic and exciting.

This film is **Highly Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 83.

Suggestions for Discussion: Government is in the business of doing for us the things that, as individuals, we can not do for ourselves. *What services do we need our local government to provide for us that are not being provided well enough at present? How can we best organize ourselves to make sure that we get them?*

The film emphasizes voting as the most important way for the citizen to influence his government. *But can we really control our local government simply by voting as individuals?*

Most of us belong to one or more organizations formed for special purposes—business associations, trade unions, cooperatives, churches, clubs, and so on. Such social organizations can influence government from day to day, while the individual voter can make his weight felt only at election time. *Is it practical to try to control our government through the pressure of our social organizations as well as by political action?*

Community Political Action (II)

POLITICAL PARTIES. Produced and distributed by Coronet Films. 1947. Running time: 10 minutes. Black and white, or color.

Film Summary: The function of political parties in a democracy is discussed by this film as it shows how citizens of one small community formed an "honest machine" to elect officials who would serve their needs.

We are introduced to the chairwoman of the local political party which is running its candidates against the incumbent administration. She confesses that political organization is a new experience for her. Until a few months previous she was content to support candidates selected by established parties. A number of events had, however, convinced her of the need for active participation. Her home, the lady explains, is fifteen blocks from the district elementary school. Her child and the children of her neighbors must walk that distance every morning. One morning a small boy was struck by an automobile on his way to school. The lady went with her neighbors to demand that the mayor fulfill his campaign pledge to build a school close to their homes. They received no satisfaction.

It was then that she realized the importance of political action on the part of the individual voter. She and her friends went to the opposition candidate and offered their services. The candidate is shown lecturing the lady (and the film audience) on the necessity of efficient party organization. An honest machine, he states, must convince voters that its party wants to please them. The film reveals some of the ways by which the chairwoman and her associates lined up support: through publicity, meetings, and collection of campaign contributions. "We worked for our party," the lady declares, and her success is reflected in the film's closing sequence as the newly elected mayor lays the cornerstone of the new school.

Evaluative Comment: A rather naive and sketchy film, *Political Parties* nevertheless focuses its attention on an important aspect of community life. Cooperative action through existing political channels, the part of the individual in seeing to it that elected officials live up to their platform, the means for effective political action, these are subjects of real pertinence. The film should, however, be supplemented by a guest speaker who can round out the limited content. The discussion leader will probably have little or no difficulty in turning the film to local problems.

Technically, the production is mediocre.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 64.

Suggestions for Discussion: Are so-called "honest" machines necessary?

How can the average individual act on his political convictions?

What channels for political action exist in your community? Is a third party feasible in your community? Nationally?

What are the assets and liabilities of proportional representation? Of the two-party system and single-member-district representation?

Are party primaries an example of practical democracy?

What can be done to make elected officials stand by their campaign pledges?

Community Political Action (III)

PENNSYLVANIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ACTION. Produced and distributed by Pennsylvania State College. 1945. Running time: 22 minutes.

Film Summary: A survey of local governments in operation throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this film deals with every aspect of government at that level: traffic control, fire and police protection, public sanitation, school medical services, slum clearance, road building, maintenance, etc. While the state government encourages the widest autonomy in carrying out these community functions, its role is also to coordinate and standardize the practices of the local agencies, wherever that would increase efficiency. The local government agencies, in turn, are seen doing their utmost to invite the interest and participation of the townspeople. The film stresses the importance of everyday citizens sharing the responsibilities of local government:—running for office, or serving on civic committees; voting in local elections, and watching the performance of their elected officers. There are scenes of life in the slums of Pennsylvania, and of low-rent housing units which were erected as part of local efforts to erase these conditions. We also see scenes of council meetings, and animated charts showing the different forms of local government organization, their relation to the state, and their income and expenditures.

Evaluative Comment: This film raises issues only indirectly, if at all. Primarily it gives a good over-all picture of local government functioning in one state. In the general realm of American government, however, the problems of local government are an important field for discussion. In most local situations groups would be able to extract from the film whatever was uppermost in their minds. It is on this account rather than that the film raises issues, that it is recommended for discussion. Technically it is mediocre. Occasionally it is diffuse and rambling, but this does not interfere too seriously with understanding.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 53.

Suggestions for Discussion: What should be done to make the people in our community more aware of their rights and obligations as citizens?

To what extent does your community embody the principles of self-government? What changes should be made?

What is your community doing about such local problems as are shown in this film? Should it be doing more?

Is your state taking progressive steps in helping local government meet its duties?

What functions now carried out by local government might be better handled by the state or federal government?

Education for Democracy

JUNIOR CITIZEN. Produced by Contemporary Films. Distributed by Gateway Productions. Running time: 18 minutes.

Film Summary: *Junior Citizen* indicates what the elementary and secondary schools are doing, in some localities, to produce the good citizens of tomorrow. The film sets up four areas of school activity: Sharing Common Understanding, Fitting into Our Economic Life, Conserving Our National Resources, and Conserving Our Human Resources. Each area is covered in terms of specific activities promoted by the school on the elementary and secondary levels. Through the use of games and simulated adult activities such as home making, making use of markets, grocery stores, the post office and the library, children of the elementary school learn to cooperate with one another and to take part in community activities.

On the secondary level, these activities demanding cooperation and a knowledge of the life of the community take the form of school councils, debates, broadcasting, group recreation, and get-acquainted visits with municipal officials, lawyers, business men and religious leaders. The activities of the area designated as Fitting into Our Economic Life lay stress on the vocational counseling and preparation provided by the schools in rural, town, and urban communities. Conserving our Natural Resources covers such teaching methods and group activities as field trips to forest and soil conservation centers, a study of what causes soil erosion and how to prevent forest fires. Conserving Our Human Resources takes in health and safety instruction from How to Drive Safely to How to Take Care of a Baby.

Evaluative Comment: With our schools as overcrowded as they are and the difficulty that school boards and administrators are finding in getting funds to expand and operate the schools, this film would be useful for parent and community groups as an introduction to a general discussion on the place of the school in a community. It presents an over-all picture of what the school can do to train the future citizens of the community to take an informed responsible part in community life. The problem at times is treated somewhat optimistically, in that no attempt is made to determine whether or not these methods are the best methods; yet the film does indicate that the schools are doing something.

Its best use is probably as a yard stick to measure how well a local school is meeting the community needs and problems of junior citizens. The presence of a representative of the local school, preferably a teacher, would be desirable to supplement the film used as a discussion aid. At times the film may appear to be superficial and juvenile to those who are better informed or closer to the problems.

Its photography and sound are satisfactory.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 60.

Suggestions for Discussion: Do the practices shown in the film represent the best means of educating children?

If your local school does not measure up to the practices shown, what have been the obstacles?

To what extent should Federal Government funds be available to local schools in their job of creating "junior citizens"?

B. SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security in Britain

THE SECOND FREEDOM. Produced and distributed by the British Information Services. 1944. Running time: 17 minutes.

Film Summary: Social Security, one of the important concepts of the present century, is treated in this film. Instead of tackling welfare problems piecemeal, new theory about social security stresses the value of a network of social services to cover all the usual social needs for all the people. The famous "Beveridge Plan" was built around such a concept. *The Second Freedom* is a filmic review of those aspects of this plan which have already passed through the legislative hopper in Britain and are available to the people.

Dramatizing the story of Jack, a new-born baby, the film shows how prenatal care for the mother made it more likely that Jack would be born strong and healthy. With proper *post*-natal care also provided, with distribution of milk planned so that no children need go without, the child should reach school age with a good start in life. Medical and dental care will be available to him in school, and he will have the advantage of an education which will equip him for and guide him into a suitable vocation. During his adult life he will have the security of unemployment, sickness and health insurance programs. A system of publicly financed low-rent housing (for which special rents are available to families with young children) will help him settle down. Old age benefits and burial cost assistance make the future serene.

Evaluative Comment: This film is a comprehensive treatment of social security provisions as they have been worked out in Britain. As such, it will be of interest to all groups who are interested in similar problems in the United States and who may want to compare our own security program with the British plan. The photography and commentary are effective enough, but the film's score is often obtrusively loud, and production generally suffers from the labored, didactic tone with which the film lectures the audience. Nevertheless, *The Second Freedom* is recommended to audiences who have a special interest in its subject matter.

This film is **Acceptable** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 58.

Suggestions for Discussion: *In building up such a national system of social security measures is there any danger that individual growth and development will be blighted? Does the individual tend to lose or gain freedom by such a program? Can a society be over-protected in the same way a child can be?*

Can such a system of social security benefits be maintained without substantial full employment?

Social Security in Canada

A MAN AND HIS JOB. Produced by the National Film Board of Canada. 1943. Distributed by Brandon. Running time: 17 minutes.

Film Summary: *A Man and His Job* is a message prepared for the Canadian working man and designed to tell him that never again will he face the full blast of unemployment without some measure of protection.

The first part of the film reveals some of the bitterness, hardship and despair that are products of unemployment. Joe Martin loses his job and in his ensuing search for a new position—*any* position—he is deeply humiliated by refusals at every plant and agency. However, the film declares, Joe Martin need not face the same dilemma again. One of the safeguards developed and backed by every political party in Canada is an Unemployment Insurance Act and a national employment service.

The balance of the film deals with the function of these services. Even in the best times, the film contends, technological changes and seasonal demands will bring temporary unemployment to some men. But with a national audit of available jobs a man will not be dependent upon his local community alone. Some men without family ties can move to areas where there is a demand for their labor. Those who must wait between jobs are entitled to unemployment benefits—something that he receives as a matter of justice, not charity. The film shows the way in which this insurance fund is administered. Responsibility for financing is shared by government, industry and worker. Policy boards are composed of both labor and management representatives. Finally, the film turns back to Joe Martin, showing how, with the help of the new legislation, he can weather temporary unemployment without excessive hardship.

Evaluative Comment: Although *A Man and His Job* is concerned with the problem of social security in Canada it has definite application to conditions in our own country. With considerable effectiveness it exposes the painful attack that unemployment makes upon the well-being, upon the very *dignity* of a man. In addition it shows how a social insurance measure can help stave off unemployment and wherever it exists cushion its shocks.

This film is **Recommended** for adult group discussion.

Discussibility Index Number: 72.

Suggestions for Discussion: *Do you believe that the United States provides*

sufficient social insurance? What is a fair system for the determination of unemployment benefits: should checks be graded in proportion to previous salary or should the amount be constant? Should employment services be administered through state or federal governments? Do you think that unemployment premiums tend to foster unemployment by destroying the incentive to find work?

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