

## Task Before The Federation

WITH the consolidation of its authority as the supreme body of the Indian motion picture world and the sole voice of the Indian film industry, the Film Federation shoulders a vast and manifold responsibility for securing the unity of outlook, policy and action throughout the industry in every branch, department and association which is essential not only for progress but also for its very existence. The primary and paramount need is for the Federation to define its function and to issue a directive to the industry to enable it to work in unison with that function. This is fundamental since upon the degree of unanimity and unison achieved within the industry and expressed in and through the Federation will depend the strength of its authority and the power of its voice. Neither can be effective without the solid backing of the industry. While for the present, and for some time to come, the main function of the Federation must be to secure for the industry the place in the life and economy of the nation with the respect and attention from the Government which are its due, its ultimate position must be akin with that of the Motion Picture Association of America whose directives, disseminated through the guilds, societies, associations and unions, have welded it in a unanimity which commands the respect of the national administration to the extent of freeing it even from the bondage of censorship enforced in every other country of the world. Our own industry is just beginning to make a nodding acquaintance with the principle of organisation, inspired to it more by the need of and desire for protection against injustice from employers and inroads from an officialdom still imbued with the vestiges of a social outlook which looked down in contempt upon film workers and films, rather than from any feelings of professional pride and responsibility. The workers in their various grades from extras to technicians of the highest grade including skilled craftsmen such as cameramen, sound engineers, art directors and even sound directors combined to protect themselves by group action against employers who bilked them of their wages, a state of affairs which is still deplorably prevalent in the industry. Producers' associations like the Indian Motion Picture Producers' Association and its kindred regional bodies in Bengal and Madras first banded together to protect themselves and the industry in which they had staked their wealth against an administration which saw in them a lucrative field for taxation in an alluring variety of forms. There was little or no conscious thought in all this activity of association of effort or even of aspiration for actual improvement of industrial methods or techniques towards the creation of better films. Except for such mechanical

progress as was inseparable from the use of improved equipment designed by incessant research and discovery abroad and the broadening of knowledge by experience in the various skills and crafts of production, our pictures, in the bulk of the industry's massive output, remained the same if indeed they grew no worse during practically three decades of the industry's existence. From the workers on our studio floors to the producers themselves the individual note continued to prevail and the increasing activity of association was robbed of its best fruits. Nevertheless the seeds of the guild system were laid in all those collective bodies, and it was only a matter of time and stimulation by the inevitable growth of knowledge, understanding and pride of craftsmanship for it to bear fruit. With the advent of men like Mr. Vasani and his colleagues in the Film Federation executive and the formation of bodies like the Producers' Guild, the increasing interest shown by the Government and the powerful incentives created by the National Awards, there has been a swift ripening of that seed in the creation of a healthy professional pride in the industry as well as among its workers in every grade and branch throughout the country. It is this quickening which is evident in a new consciousness of worth and responsibility which is animating the industry today under the aegis of the Federation and the beneficent influence of the industry's various associations from the Guild downwards and finding expression in the general move for unity made manifest during recent weeks. The co-ordination of that move in all its various expressions and its direction into the right channels of inspiration, action and behaviour towards the supreme goal of an industry inspired by the highest ideals of decency and civilisation, working with perfectionist fervour for excellence in the motion picture arts and sciences and the creation of better and still better films to regale audiences at home and abroad and to keep them happy as well as informed, is the task before the Federation and a great and heavy task it is. The best way to tackle it is by encouraging and fostering the guild idea in every film body in the country. This will take care of progress in the various arts and sciences of production. It is for the Federation to nurse, with appropriate supervision, advice and protection where needed, the idea to full growth. It is for the Guild to provide the rules and the internal system of administration by which the guilds must be governed and regulated in their growth so that the great goal of the industry is not obscured or lost—the creation of an industry so imbued with the highest ideals and so conscious of its responsibility that it requires no guidance or control other than its own.

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