

to motivate, to teach and orient and inform—these were all new fields.

In the evolution which followed, the Center became the largest, most experienced organization in the world devoted exclusively to the production of such audio-visuals.

The Center, as a sub-command of the Army Materiel Command, is a veteran organization, having weathered the challenges of World War II, Korea and currently Vietnam. The same has changed but the mission remains the same—serving the audio-visual needs of the Army.

In the cluster of buildings that comprise the Center, the major structure occupies a full city block. Within its walls are sound stages, recording studios, carpenter shop, projection rooms, editing rooms, art department and personnel—including producers, writers, directors, editors, cameramen, soundmen, artists, animators and electricians—essential to any self-contained production unit.

Other buildings house the laboratory, which processes many millions of feet of film annually; the Distribution Branch, which feeds film subjects to Audio Visual Support Centers world wide; and the Army Motion Picture Depository, which catalogues and maintains a library of stock film footage utilized wherever possible to reduce production costs. Frequently, entire films are made of stock footage alone.

Each production office handles specific types of films for specific agencies. For example, a training film dealing with electronics would be assigned to one of the producers in Services Films. Arms Films producers handle, among other projects, films for the Infantry School at Fort Benning. Special Films output includes motion pictures for the WAC, and the Office of Civil Defense. AMC Films producers are responsible for film requirements of Army Materiel Command. Information Films producers are proud of "The Big Picture," the Command Information series that has had a 16 year continuous run on television, and is now done in full color.

The producer is the key man in any production. He stays with his assigned projects from start to finish, maintaining quality control and keeping budgets within bounds. Productions usually begin with a script, often requiring a research trip by the writer—a trip which may take him to Germany or Saigon. More typically, he will visit installations in the U.S.—it may be a training center or the Pentagon, Rock Island Arsenal or Aberdeen or Redstone. His objective always is to accumulate enough knowledge about the subject, about the audience for which the film is intended, and the job the requesting agency wants to do so that he can write a script that will be a suitable blueprint for a motion picture.

The script goes to the producer, who gives it eagle-eye appraisal. Does it do the job? Is it clear, concise, to the point? Can it be made within the budget? Can it be approved without increasing its cost, or, if not, would the improvement be worth the added expense?

Before it is stamped "Approved for Production," a script goes under still other magnifying glasses. The technical advisor, provided by the requesting agency, must approve it. An in-house Script Review Board subjects it to clinical analysis, criticism or suggestions. Production budget experts deliver a detailed estimate of just what it will cost to transmute the typed manuscript into a finished celluloid product, ready for screening.

When the finally approved script is put into production, it precipitates waves of action and activity. A director is assigned, and he is second in importance only to the producer until all photography has been completed. He schedules the shooting, supervises the production crew, directs the actors, tells the cameraman what he wants to see on the screen and how he wants it shown, and he dictates the pacing of the action within a given scene.

While the director does not assemble the hundreds of individual shots into the finished film—that's the job of the film editor—he is responsible for producing individual scenes that can be put together successfully by the editor, with a smooth visual continuity. The technical advisor is almost always present, riding herd on technical detail, making sure that doctrine is valid and accurate.

The director's crew may consist of one cameraman for simple exterior sequences, or a fairly large team of technicians, including a cameraman and his assistant, one or two grips, electricians, prop men, a sound crew and perhaps others for complex productions. To perform its job, the crew may be sent anywhere in the world.

Other support may be provided by the Prop Department, Art and Scenic when interior sets must be designed and constructed, Casting when professional actors are needed plus Wardrobe and Make-up.

Camera coverage of living people and actions is often supplemented with animation which is artwork in motion, illustrating the otherwise invisible. Special effects techniques are used to highlight maps, charts, and stock shots from the Film Library. Eventually, all the scenes are transformed into strips of film, each numbered in accord with the script's scene numbers.

This collection of individual shots or scenes will not be a finished motion picture until it has been assembled by the film editor into a smooth-running, comprehensive, effective whole. In the Center's Editorial Branch, technicians know how short to cut a sequence so that it has life and fluidity, how long to let it run so that a teaching point has time to register with the viewers.

When the editor has completed a first rough cut, he screens it for the Chief of the Production Division, the Executive for Operations, and at times, the Commanding Officer of the Center. After a final polishing to satisfy all three men, the film is scheduled for screening. These screenings keep them up-to-date on the Center's product, and on performance of their personnel. Perhaps more important, it subjects each production to intensive scrutiny so that any film not up