

We could, if we determined to do so, prevent the sale in Canada of -- say brand X of American manufacture. But we could not begin to prevent American television and radio transmissions from reaching the majority of the Canadian population. In other words while we had eliminated the product, we would still be exposed to the advertisement.

This is not a criticism of American culture which has made great contributions to the world. And I do not believe I am guilty of cultural chauvinism when I express these views. Our concern is not to insulate Canadian culture from contact with its neighbours. We would have no standards if our creativity were not tested internationally. No. My concern is that our sense of identity and separate traditions are not overwhelmed at the grassroots level by the dynamism of American culture.

Thus, if we attach value to distinctive Canadian qualities, we have to take steps to nourish and protect them. We have to ensure that where the standards of the product are equal the Canadian offering is not ruled out by terms of competition that are unequal.

This is the general philosophy which underlies the Canadian Government's approach to this question. Our purpose is not to block out American cultural influence, but to provide breathing space and encouragement for indigenous Canadian creativity. This policy has produced remarkable results. Reserving a ratio of television or radio time for Canadian content, providing more support for Canadian ballet, composers, orchestras and others, has stimulated a Canadian boom in the Arts. You can make your own evaluation of our standards. Canadian artists are beginning to appear regularly in this country. A concert was given recently in Chicago by our National Orchestra from Ottawa.

The third option addresses itself to the cultural question as much as to the economic one. It is not that we value distinctness over quality. It is because in the process of nation building, distinctness can be a substantial factor for cohesion.

Perhaps the following quotation has some relevance to my theme:

"The true sovereigns of a country are those who determine its mind, its mode of thinking, its tastes, its principles; and we cannot consent to lodge this sovereignty in the hands of strangers".

Was this a Canadian nationalist speaking in 1973? No, ladies and gentlemen, this is an excerpt from an address delivered at the University of Philadelphia in 1823. It was good advice for Americans 150 years ago. I suggest it is equally good advice for Canadians today.