

May I remind the hon. member that Western Canada, and especially Alberta, enjoys certain facilities for marketing its beef in Quebec which are also very attractive.

**An hon. member:** Eight hundred million.

**Mr. Bergeron:** Eight hundred million dollars worth of beef annually, I am told. That is quite a lot. I imagine Canada will not be so stupid as to jeopardize its markets in Quebec by trying to strong-arm a future sovereign Quebec. The president of the Mouvement Desjardins said that if Canada wanted to play hard ball with Quebec after sovereignty, the financial consequences would probably be the same for both parties.

Since Canada is a free trade country—at least I hope so—and since it is a capitalist country and wants to make a profit, it will not forego this attractive market in Quebec and thus will not close its own markets to Quebec products, which would make it vulnerable to the same treatment from Quebec.

That being said, my Reform Party colleague should also realize that in a North American free trade context, these so-called threats that Canada might close its doors to products from Quebec are an anachronism, and Quebecers realize this.

[English]

**Mr. Hermanson:** Mr. Speaker, it is interesting the hon. member would refer to the beef industry because it is one of the most freely traded commodities in Canada. If there is anything we have done in Canada in the way of regulation it is to help the beef industry in central Canada by shipping our feed grains to eastern Canada at subsidized rates under the Western Grain Transportation Act, which I said should be eliminated and administered in different ways.

I am not sure if there is a problem with the beef industry in Quebec, but I assure the hon. member that industry is not subsidized in western Canada. I am not sure if it is in his part of the country. The only area where there are significant subsidies is in the transportation of feed grains to his part of the country for the beef industry there.

It must be that the producers in western Canada are very efficient and are able to make a profit in the marketplace. I applaud that and say that if they lose the Quebec market I am sure they will be able to fill other markets without any difficulty.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to draw the attention of my colleagues to the specific impact on culture of the current trend towards globalization. We are now examining Bill C-57, an Act to implement the Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization. The purpose of this bill is to harmonize Canadian laws with the broad principles negotiated by GATT members.

### Government Orders

During the Uruguay Round, we maintained and we continue to maintain, that in these wide-ranging global trade talks, culture should enjoy special safeguards that respect the sovereignty of states and their desire to preserve their specific identity. We are of course referring to the demands made by the Americans to include culture in free trade.

The Americans have been trying to impose their cultural industry throughout the world for some time. The U.S. audio-visual industry is their second largest export sector. They have been able to develop a very powerful industry, since their domestic market is the biggest in the world.

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That is why according to them, culture should be considered as just another commodity, like a pair of shoes or a computer. In fact, the Americans totally dominate the industry.

As early as 1947, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade contained a major provision, article IV, which was intended to protect national cultures against the unbridled implementation of the principle of the free movement of goods. This article covered special provisions relating to cinematography. Member countries were allowed to set screening quotas, in other words, a minimum of domestic films to be screened in the country concerned.

In 1961, the Americans demanded national treatment as provided under article III and felt that the quantitative restrictions imposed by certain states, including Canada, with respect to U.S. television programs were discriminatory and violated article III. Canada argued that its right to impose such restrictions arose from article IV of the agreement, which provided that a country had the right to limit access to its film market. In fact, Canada extended to television its right to limit the screening of foreign films. Of course in 1947, when the GATT agreements were signed, television was a technology whose impact was hardly predictable.

Various attempts to reach an agreement were unsuccessful, so that as far as television programs are concerned, the intent of article IV is still not quite clear. However, the controversy clearly showed the lack of enthusiasm of the American government for trade restrictions on cultural grounds.

In the late 1970s, the Americans are at it again. The GATT secretariat is mandated by the contracting parties to compile a list of all non-tariff barriers. The US list mentions various foreign practices designed to limit the importation of American cultural products. Also and for the first time, the United States denounced the subsidization of national film producers and distributors practised in 21 member countries. Again, the principle of financial freedom advocated by American interests clashes with that of cultural development and national identity.