

out for what we thought were good reasons. At times, cash flow considerations prevailed; at other times, the elimination of Canadian competitors was the intent. For these reasons, we therefore put in place the Foreign Investment Review Agency whose mandate was to ensure that foreign investment would be of significant benefit to Canada as well as to the company. Of the 1,637 cases so far decided by FIRA involving United States' firms, 91 per cent have been approved in the six years since the agency's establishment. Moreover, the system is open. Investors in Canada do not have to cope with administrative guidance as is the case in Europe and elsewhere. Overall, we believe that the Canadian approach has been even-handed and fair. We expect our vigilance in this area will continue, and perhaps as Americans' own worries over foreign ownership take shape, the Canadian policy will become more understandable.

In terms of the predominance of the United States, cultural expression is another area of particular concern to Canadians. The United States has an enormous cultural influence, driven by the world's most powerful media. Faced with this situation, successive Canadian governments have seen a need to ensure that Canadians could develop their own culture in a difficult commercial environment. The intent has never been to wall off Canada, but simply to provide an opportunity for national self-expression. This broad policy determination has led to a number of specific government actions, some of which, like the Canadian content regulations on radio and television, may be known to you. One main concern has been to safeguard the economic viability of the Canadian broadcasting system. As a result, legislation was passed in 1976, aimed at curtailing the flow of advertising revenues to United States' stations broadcasting into Canada from just across the border. This step has been met with considerable opposition by some broadcasters in this country, but should be viewed in the context of Canada's overall communications and cultural needs.

A second set of Canada-United States' communications issues only now beginning to take shape concerns transborder data flow. This field is extremely complex and involves a number of related considerations, including national sovereignty, the free flow of information, commercial exchanges and privacy matters. In this, as in other areas, Canada's position of sharing a border with a country ten times its size in terms of population and economy means that we cannot afford the luxury of "letting problems take care of themselves". I can assure you, however, that Canadians will remain wedded to the notion that ideas know no national boundaries, and that information is, in the most real sense "the common heritage of mankind".

Perhaps in no field are the costs and benefits of having the United States for a neighbour more manifest than with