

a part of negotiations. They were unanimous in pointing out that it was not greater access to American markets that we need, but fairer access to our own. That has been the message from cultural groups across the country to this Government.

● (1910)

I have been raising the issue in the House and it needs to be raised again. Canadians want access to Canadian markets. Canadians want to communicate with other Canadians. Access to American markets is the icing on the cake. It is desirable and certainly very possible in some industries, some being more appropriate than others. However, they do not want to sacrifice their ability to reflect Canadian problems, to be Canada's image, in order to gain more access to American markets. American films made in Canada with American stars, American signposts, American licence plates and American flags are not Canadian culture. The fact that they will sell well in the U.S. because they appear to be American films, even though they are produced here simply to take advantage of certain economies, may be well and good economically, but it is not Canadian culture and not what we want.

Canadian artists are worried about cultural sovereignty being bargained away. They are also worried about cut-backs and Canadian culture being cut away. Last year cuts to the CBC were in the order of \$85 million and more cuts are expected this year. There are rumours of substantial cuts for the National Film Board and the National Arts Centre. We are worried that promises made at a very general level are not implemented in practice. For example, the publishing policy announced by the Minister of Communications (Mr. Masse) last July. We have a very specific case involving Prentice-Hall which has not been resolved. We are worried when it comes down to cases the Government will capitulate to pressure from the Americans and the goal of repatriating our culture will not be met. Just today we had some excellent recommendations from the film industry task force concerning film distribution being Canadian-owned and controlled.

Will the Government act? It certainly has not shown it will act promptly in defending Quebec's film policy. There is a proposal that the National Arts Centre cease to function as a centre for Canadian culture and excellence and instead simply be a place for cheaper imported shows. In other industries that is called dumping, but in Canadian culture it is simply, according to the Americans, the opportunity to treat the Canadian market as an extension of their own. There are rumours of a freeze in Canada Council funding. That would be a real cut-back because expenses are going up and last year the Council suffered a real decline. There had also been a long-term erosion of Canada Council funding under Liberal Governments. We are really concerned about that.

The second very specific question I raised with the Minister concerned subsidies to our magazines. There was no answer at all from the Minister. We have a growing magazine industry. It is not flourishing yet. Only one-quarter of the magazines on our news-stands are Canadian with the balance overwhelming American. However, that is an improvement. We have seen

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a large number of magazines coming onto the market because of a policy introduced by the previous Government involving postal subsidies and the policy on advertising in Bill C-58 which freed up a lot of advertising money for Canadian periodicals. We now have a relatively strong, certainly a growing industry. Some 186 new periodicals appeared after 1977. We have now a total of 5,000 titles. The industry employs 25,000 people with a payroll of \$500 million. Subsidies are absolutely essential if this industry is going to continue, especially the smaller and newer Canadian magazines. They would fold if it were not for the subsidies. Of course, if the subsidies were removed it would be cheaper for magazines to distribute by a private, commercial delivery system in the city and our Post Office would be left with the expenses of rural deliveries. This is a very vital, growing part of our culture and we want it to get the attention it needs from the Government. We have had enough rhetoric. We need practical policies. They are going to cost money, but the cultural industries repay that money six-fold. We want to see action on this front.

● (1915)

Mr. Jim Edwards (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say how much I welcome this opportunity to speak on a question that we, as a Government, consider so fundamental. We all recognize that the Hon. Member for Broadview-Greenwood (Ms. McDonald) is very interested in our cultural sovereignty. I had the privilege of serving with her on the sub-committee on the revision of the copyright law. I remember in particular one day in Montreal when she stood down the Yankees, and she did it with fierce Highland pride. I congratulate her and assure her that this is also a central concern of the Government as we prepare to begin negotiations with the United States.

I hold the view that in the exchange between the Hon. Member and the Minister of Communications (Mr. Masse) on December 5 the Hon. Minister clearly and unequivocally defined the Government's position on cultural sovereignty. Furthermore, he reminded the Member that the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mulroney) had raised this same question in his speech in Chicago last Wednesday evening. The statements of the Minister and of the Prime Minister should, as far as I am concerned, dissipate any doubts in this regard. Nothing related to our cultural sovereignty will be part of these negotiations with the United States.

I will take the liberty, Mr. Speaker, of repeating the Prime Minister's statement. He told his audience on December 4 in Chicago that "when it comes to discussing better trade rules for cultural industries, you will have to understand that what we call our cultural sovereignty is as vital to our national life as political sovereignty". To me that is a formal engagement on the part of the Government to safeguard Canada's cultural sovereignty. That should make us all very pleased.

[*Translation*]

The Hon. Member for Broadview-Greenwood (Ms. McDonald) also referred more specifically to the Canadian magazine industry. Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure her that we look