

THE GREAT TRADE DEBATE
February 4, 1987

Mr. Garth Drabinsky
Chairman, President and C.E.O., Cineplex Odeon

: I have been asked to participate in this panel discussion on Free Trade in order to put forth the Canadian view because it is, of course, recognized that while our two countries are in many respects, the world's best neighbours, we are bound to have our separate ways of looking at this vitally important matter.

For the past two years, not by choice but because my business life so dictates, I have been travelling almost constantly throughout Canada and the United States. I have spent literally hundreds of hours, most often all by myself, in a small jet, flying to and from obscure communities the scheduled airlines have never heard of -- from Kingston, Ontario, to Kingsville, Texas, from Prince George, British Columbia, to Petersburg, Virginia, from Ocala Springs, Florida, to Ogden, Utah. I have found these long periods of enforced isolation conducive to thinking, and I have found myself comparing these two countries. Of course, every Canadian worth his salt devotes time and energy to trying to understand their similarities and their differences -- it's the great Canadian indoor sport -- but the subject fascinates me even more than most because my company operates theatres and distributes pictures in both countries and so relies heavily on the inhabitants of both to support its continued growth and vitality. It is for these reasons that I presume to give you a