

Government Orders

I would like to know from the member exactly what the terrible threats are against our culture from outside the country other than from the Americans.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, I think that the greatest threat to any country comes from the United States of America. Immediately after the war, the Americans sought to impose their culture upon European countries, which were flat broke coming out from the war years.

The international response was: "No way. We will not let American films invade our market this easily". And the famous motion picture production agreement was signed.

When television broadcasting first started here, in Canada, the Americans attempted once more to invade our market, going as far as boycotting Canada for a while. But they eventually realized that we were not giving in and that we were protected against such an invasion by our regulations, so they accepted to sit down and talk. What the Americans are doing now is trying again, in a roundabout way, to impose their culture around the world, from coast to coast, without forgetting anybody, because they can afford to do this. And the day when only American films, soaps, news and variety programs can be seen around the world, this world of ours will no longer be a democratic world because democracy starts up here, in your head.

• (1230)

[*English*]

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I guess I am fairly shocked at that answer, that the terrible threat out there are the Americans.

I certainly cannot imagine why any part of Canada would want to separate. Obviously the rest of Canada is going to look less favourably on a province that would separate because it would destroy the country we believe in.

Then it will be forced to deal with the Americans and let them totally dominate its culture. The best way I see for Quebec to lose its culture is the threat of separation when it would be totally dependent on the United States.

I guess I just totally do not understand the answer that I just got to my question.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Tremblay: It is quite simple, Mr. Speaker. We are francophones, while the Americans are English-speaking. We do not tune in to American stations. We watch the French CBC network, TVA and TQS, mostly because programs produced in Quebec is of such superior quality, as compared to American and English Canadian productions, that we feel no need to check what is on in English to spend a lovely evening in front of the

TV. We watch our shows. In addition, we have concluded agreements with the international French-speaking community and gained access to TV5. We are happy with this. But English Canadians are asleep. They do not realize that the American cultural steam roller is at their door. Too bad for them if they would rather sleep and become Americans. As far as we are concerned, we plan to remain Quebecers and so we will, by leaving this sleeping country.

[*English*]

Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege and honour to be in the House today to address Bill C-57.

Just before I start my address I would like to make a couple of comments on the debate I have heard this morning. I have travelled quite a bit and I think culture is very important. I have never had the opportunity to meet a cow that speaks French or a chicken that speaks French or English. I have had different cultures fry bacon and eggs for me in the morning and I have always enjoyed them no matter with what type of vocabulary they were prepared.

I think this is something that sometimes overshadows the problems we really have. It is always important to me that we address the real issues and make sure those things that help us to survive or give us the opportunity to live in this country are not destroyed.

As we know, this bill implements Canada's full participation in the World Trade Organization. This is the result of our signing the Uruguay round agreement on the GATT in April this year.

The Uruguay round agreement was the largest and the most complex trade negotiation ever undertaken. The final package included more than 25 separate agreements. The nations that signed this agreement have made commitments to eliminate tariffs and other barriers to trade.

From Canada's standpoint this makes it necessary to amend at least 31 different statutes. Each country will have to amend its subsidy and support programs and its border control measures in order to harmonize them with an overall world standard.

Reductions will occur in the volume of subsidized exports.

• (1235)

These must be reduced by 21 per cent over a six-year period ending in the year 2001. Our country's expenditures on export subsidies must be reduced by 36 per cent over that same six-year period.

With a minimum reduction of 15 per cent for each commodity domestic support programs must also be reduced by 20 per cent over the six-year period. Regional development, research, environmental protection and farm income protection programs are exempt from this.