

• (1750)

As a teenager I do not think that I saw a movie made in Canada. They were not being made in Canada, with the possible exception of short subjects before feature presentations fortunately made and kept alive by the National Film Board. I certainly was an adult—I believe I had finished university—before I saw my first Canadian-made feature film. There was one exception, the movie *The Little Kidnappers* made in Cape Breton in the late forties or early fifties shown when I was a child. However for the next 25 years there was nothing else.

Over the last 15 years we have seen a tremendous rebirth, a renaissance, or perhaps first birth, of Canadian culture in the making of films, the writing of plays, and the creation of literature. We have a literature in Canada that can stand on its own with any other. The fact that some of our greatest writers happen to be women is merely an added attraction of our cultural industry.

It says something to young Canadians, and to older Canadians as well, when they turn on their television set and see a program that is clearly set in a Canadian city or in a Canadian rural area. It gives them a sense of self within their national context. It gives them a sense that this is what their country is creating and that it relates to them. For the young Canadian in Birdall, Manitoba, seeing a movie set in Montreal gives him a sense of identity and connection with another part of the country. He says to himself: "That was made in my country, and that is important to me, and that adds to my sense of identity as a Canadian".

I happen to be spending more time talking about actors but I suppose it is because that is the cultural industry I have been fortunate enough to be somewhat close to. I think of an actor such as Kenneth Welch and remind everyone of his magnificent portrayal in the mini series based on the Thatcher murder case. Ratings on the network that showed this mini series in Britain a couple of months ago were the highest ever recorded in the British Isles. That is a Canadian-made series with Canadian actors based on a Canadian situation. We can compete, in both our official languages, with any other country in the world and do well, not only do well but excel.

### *Government Orders*

Everything must be done to support the position of those creators of this culture and to safeguard the position of those who mirror the values of our society, the political, social, ethical and economic values of this country. We must protect our ability to exercise our sovereign rights as a nation with respect to a strong cultural sector.

In May 1990 when the government tabled its response there was a tremendous response from the cultural communities themselves. Bill C-7 has two major domains. First, labour relations. The legislation provides self-employed artists the right to be allowed to collectively bargain through their organization. In order to receive recognition for the purposes of collective bargaining, organizations will seek certification from an independent commission to be known as the Canadian Artists and Producers Professional Relations Tribunal. We applaud this, but there are concerns relating to clause 22(2). This clause states: "No artists association may be certified if any of its bylaws has the effect of prohibiting its members from working with artists who are not members, are former members or have been suspended or expelled from the associations for reasons other than professional misconduct".

It is the understanding of ACTRA that Bill C-7 will thus prohibit closed shop in the cultural field.

The goal of such legislation should be not so much to prohibit the entry of performers, but to ensure that Canadian performers are assured of employment opportunities. There is no question that art should be international. There are great artists we would want to see perform in our country and there are certain circumstances where we would be mad not to permit this.

The situation that comes to my mind first and foremost is the one that surrounded the transfer of the musical *Miss Saigon* from London to New York. As most of you who are familiar with the cultural industries are aware, the American performers' unions made a concerted effort to say that there were American actors who could have played the role. That is the point. It is not to take anything away from the British actor who originated the part, but there were American actors who could play the role.