

Supply

to understand. I am sorry that what he said is the repetition of what I had heard as a student.

[*English*]

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, who answered these 50 members from Quebec who arrived here and started saying: "Cut the CBC"?

[*Translation*]

—they are socialists or leftists, as they were called when I was a student.

[*English*]

It was the late George Nowlan. If my memory serves me well, he was the then Minister of National Revenue. He was like the tutor of the CBC. He turned around to his own people and he said: "Don't ask me to be the censor of the CBC, do you hear?" He understood the concept. He understood what the words "arm's length" meant. They mean hands off. Is that clear? That was the spirit. I am talking about a great gentleman, the late George Nowlan. I hope the Conservatives will at least agree with that part of my speech. He was a gentleman. I was a friend of his. I used to spend a few evenings socializing with him. He was the father of our distinguished colleague, Mr. Pat Nowlan.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order, please. It is "the Hon. Member for Annapolis Valley-Hants".

Mr. Prud'homme: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; I should have said the father of the Hon. Member for Annapolis Valley-Hants. He understood the words "arm's length". He understood that we must not intervene. I will not deny the right of the Hon. Minister to know what they do with the money. Certainly, certainly, but he should not go as far as to say that he will appoint someone to tell them what to do. Jacques Lefebvre was appointed as the new vice-president of the Arts Council. Instead of defending the arts and defending the rights of these people, what did he do? I repeat again that these people do not cost much. They give me my pride in being Canadian. I say it in English, and I will repeat it in French.

[*Translation*]

It is thanks to these artists that I am proud to be a Canadian and to maintain my French identity in this country. Helping these people would cost almost nothing. There is a Mr. Jacques Lefebvre whom I do not have the pleasure of knowing. No sooner was he appointed to the Canada Council than he acted as a spokesman for the Minister of Finance and told us to lower our apprehensions. If cuts have to be made, they should be made at the right places, Mr. Speaker. The government should not claim that a 3 per cent cut across the board is fair, that it is not much, that every Canadian should do his or her part to help our economy recover. That seems logical.

[*English*]

It seems logical to say that it is only a little 3 per cent, that it is only a little amount. However, it is only a little for artists who cost so little and create so much. They create many jobs. I would like to have the time to read all the letters, pathetic

letters, which ask: "Do you understand what we are trying to do for the country?"

[*Translation*]

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I should like to emphasize two points which people do not seem to understand: at a time when the Right Hon. Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mulroney) is advocating closer economic ties with the United States to create more jobs—

[*English*]

Canadians have chosen a new Government. The new Government says that we will have a very close relationship with the United States, that that is the only way to recover and to have jobs, jobs, jobs. I respect the point of view—and Canadians have spoken loud and clear—that it will give us a chance to renew ourselves. However, they must understand that the closer we are economically to the United States, in the hope of possibly having jobs, the more careful we should be culturally. The closer we want to be on one hand, the more careful we have to be on the other hand.

[*Translation*]

The closer we get to the United States, and this is the choice made by this newly elected, strongly elected Prime Minister, and I respect that Canadian choice because I believe in democracy, but I urge the Minister to realize that he has a mission, which is in the first place to use his influence with his colleagues, with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) and with the Prime Minister, to be doubly cautious because our culture and identity are threatened.

Mr. Speaker, as I said in committee when the Minister appeared on May 3, I urge my colleagues to think twice. I have no inclination for partisan politics, but I want us to reflect together on this. The average Canadian watches television 23.4 hours every week, the average American 40.4 hours. The average Canadian spends more time before his TV set than in the movie theatre, attending sports activities and so on. Are we aware that a child between the ages of two and twelve over his lifetime will be watching TV for 12,000 hours? Of those 12,000 hours, 10,000 will be spent watching American programs. How do we expect to create a Canadian identity that will be different?

[*English*]

Children from two years of age to 12 years of age will watch 12,000 hours of television, 10,000 hours of which will be American programming. I have nothing against American programming. I watch it. It is well done. However, there is a danger of Americanizing our culture in Canada. For English children from two years of age to 11 years of age in Canada, 80 per cent of the drama they watch is American. French Canadians are privileged. I know the Minister is a great protector of the French culture. He will understand that we are more protected because we speak French. Only 50 per cent of French Canadian children from two years of age to 11 years of age will watch American programming.