

Notes pour une allocution prononcée par l'honorable Sheila Copps, ministre du Patrimoine canadien, à l'occasion du Sommet international sur les arts et la culture, Ottawa (Ontario) Le 1^{er} décembre 2000

À VÉRIFIER AU MOMENT DE L'ALLOCUTION

Merci beaucoup, thank you Bill.

Amis des quatre coins du monde bienvenus, wilcomen, benvenuti, benvenidos, for the benefit of our Hungarian colleague who is here.

On behalf of the Prime Minister of Canada and all Canadians may I say how delighted we are to have you as our guests and I'm particularly delighted to be here with another person who did a lot to make this happen.

Bill spoke a little bit about my contribution but I can tell you that none of this would have happened without the support of my former parliamentary secretary Mauril Belanger who is here and has just received a well-deserved re-election.

Four days ago we had a national election in Canada and the voters gave our Prime Minister, whom you met this morning, and our Liberal team an overwhelming mandate. I say this not to involve our guests in Canadian political affairs but rather to point out that our party ran a campaign that incorporated cultural access and cultural diversity as key components in our platform.

Je suis fière de la tenue au Canada de ce premier sommet international sur les arts et la culture qui invite nos artistes et nos institutions qui les appuie à prendre part aux vastes dialogues sur la diversité culturelle.

Canada is a land of immigrants. Aboriginal peoples who came from Siberia across the Bering Strait 10,000 years ago flourished into First Nations of great cultural and linguistic diversity. There are 153 Aboriginal languages spoken in Canada today.

Then the French followed by the British settled this vast land followed by waves of immigrants from every corner of the globe.

Depuis la fin de seconde guerre mondiale les phénomènes comme les mouvements migratoires et l'accroissement du nombre de nouveaux arrivants ont diversifié davantage qui nous sommes comme société canadienne. Dans les années 50, près de 95 pourcent des nouveaux venus étaient de l'Europe et des États-Unis. Au milieu des années 90, 57 pourcent des immigrants provenaient de l'Asie, l'Amérique Latine et des Caraïbes. Alors vous êtes tous et toutes les bienvenus chez vous.

Les athlètes canadiens qui ont participé aux jeux olympiques de Sidney dernièrement sont nés dans 27 pays différents. Même si leurs origines sont diverses, ils sont fiers canadiens et canadiennes aujourd'hui.

Notre Chambre des Communes compte également des membres, des députés proviennent des 30 pays différents. Ce que l'on nomme aujourd'hui la culture canadienne c'est en fait un métissage de toutes les cultures qui nourrissent, qui se nourrissent les unes aux autres et qui enrichissent notre patrimoine collectif.

La diversité culturelle croissante du Canada et notre ouverture sur le monde transforme la vision que nous avons de nous-mêmes et les signes distinctifs qui font que nous nous reconnaissons comme appartenant à un groupe, à une communauté, à un pays.

The artists are the source of this culture. The artists are our raw material. Our artists are the source of culture; they renew it and regenerate it. They give us stories to tell, images to see, worlds to discover and an imaginary world to share. They multiply the voices, points of view, ideas, emotions and experience that make us understand, see, feel and think.

With the emergence of a knowledge-based economy, the ability of artists to make most of cultural diversity is what will make the wealth of humanity stronger than ever. Artists must be a driving force in social transformation.

Cultural industries are dynamic and exciting springboards to economic prosperity. We need the arts more than ever to enrich human experience in a world where the ability to innovate is what makes success possible and cultural development is the linchpin of human development.

Tous ces phénomènes appellent au changement. Le temps est venu de concevoir, de diffuser, d'administrer, d'appuyer les arts et la culture d'une façon novatrice et adopter une réalité actuelle.

Le Canada a entrepris un cadre de politique pour les arts qui vise à rapprocher des citoyennes et des citoyens des arts et à mettre en valeur le potentiel de leur pays. Ce cadre engage l'ensemble de la population en faveur des arts et de la culture.

Canada has established a springboard so that culture can reach every Canadian and every Canadian can shape culture. Early in September, 15 round tables were held across the country where artists, arts administrators, commentators, were able to get their voices heard. The issues raised are simple to state and complex in their possibilities. Diversity of voices is extremely important in a world where globalization should not become a monoculture. Dissemination, intellectual property, why is copyright any less important for an artist than intellectual property for an invention. Promoting the role of artists and diversifying sources of funding.

Quatre grandes orientations guident notre action. Premièrement, nous voulons exposer les canadiens et canadiennes aux arts et à la culture en favorisant une pluralité de choix et en créant des conditions favorables à l'expression artistique de toutes les communautés linguistiques et culturelles de notre pays notamment commençant par les autochtones.

I'm particularly proud of the fact that we're the first country in the world who has a national television network devoted to Aboriginal expression and it is supported specifically by investment by every single Canadian, APTN.

Art is at the core of who we are, the books we read, the music we listen to, the movies we watch and the plays and concerts we attend, if as many Canadians as possible can be reached, more opportunities for different modes of expression are required. We have to reach individual Canadians where they live and work and in a country that spans six time zones that's not always easy.

We must reach out into disadvantaged neighbourhoods, through community centres and schools and popular cultural expression and we particularly need to reach out to young people, kids, teenagers, young adults, using their voices, seeing their faces expressed in their media in ways that include them.

We need to promote travelling exhibitions so that paintings and symphonies can reach audiences in all regions of the country and that we can encourage dialogue

amongst artists from everywhere but especially with the public. There has to be that artistic connection with the public.

Deuxièmement, pour susciter une participation accrue de la population, il faut non seulement axer nos efforts sur le publique mais l'ensemble de nos partenaires qui appuie les activités artistiques.

Le gouvernement du Canada est devenu le premier gouvernement à relier toutes les écoles, les bibliothèques et les collectivités rurales à l'Internet. Également, en plus du travail avec acharnement pour créer le Musée virtuel du Canada nous avons augmenté le nombre de programmes qui visent à favoriser le contenu canadien dans les médias traditionaux et nouveaux. C'est pour ça que nous avons fait un investissement majeur dans le livre rouge et que nous avons décidé de faire de notre culture une de nos pierres angulaires propre à la campagne.

Le secteur privé a lui aussi une responsabilité envers les arts et la culture, une responsabilité qu'il assume de plus en plus et sur laquelle nous mettons davantage l'accent. Troisièmement, nous voulons renforcer le rôle multiple que joue l'artiste dans une société démocratique et axée sur l'avenir du savoir et l'innovation.

This includes building on the specific skills, which are in demand in our society, the capacity to question, to imagine, particularly in an area like multi-media, which offers incredible creative opportunities. Needless to say the basis of artistic creativity is built on the foundation of freedom of expression and artistic independence, two principles that must continue to be the corner stone of any government support of culture and the arts. The politicians should not decide who is to be a recipient of support.

Quatrièmement, nous voulons profiter de l'ouverture sur le monde pour consolider la réputation d'excellence de nos artistes sur la scène internationale et accroître des échanges et les possibilités de rencontres entre les milieux artistiques de différents pays. La création de votre réseau s'inscrit dans cette perspective.

Globalization presents many opportunities but it also exerts enormous pressure on cultural expression and it could accelerate the possibility of global monoculture. We feel this even more in Canada because we share the longest undefended border in the world with the United States, the global cultural giant.

90 pourcent des canadiennes et canadiens vivent à moins de 100 kilomètres de cette frontière. Les chiffres et les faits sont éloquentes. 90 pourcent de nos salles de cinéma sont des propriétés étrangères.

Il ne faut pas voir dans mes propos une déclaration contre la culture américaine, au contraire on a de l'espace chez nous pour toute expression.

Les canadiennes et les canadiens sont friands des produits culturels américains et étrangers. On veut avoir accès à tout ce qu'il y a de mieux dans le monde mais nous voulons aussi avoir accès à nos histoires de chez nous.

Countries around the globe are becoming increasingly aware of the pressures that globalization exerts on the expression of their culture identity. How can we promote diversity in a world that is becoming increasingly homogeneous? How can cultural policies promote many languages, many cultures and many points of view? How can culture be included in the sustainable and global development of civilization not just marketplaces?

À force de discuter de ces questions il m'est apparu évident que sans stratégie internationale pour faire face à ce grand défi la culture risque d'être reléguée aux

oubliettes, qu'il s'agisse de la culture de chez nous ou celle des autres pays dans le monde.

We're living in the first time in the history of the world where the number of languages spoken is diminishing not increasing. Almost a decade ago leaders of the world came together to speak out for the bio-diversity of the animal species. The time has come for the leadership of the world to speak out about the diversity of the human species,

Why is it, why is it that the survival of a frog should be any less, any more important than the survival of the human species and all their distinctive languages and it's not good enough to say that the arts community will deal with these issues and these problems. We need a global framework and we need an instrument, which makes it very clear that when it comes to setting down the rules for the world marketplace culture will not be on the table.

Culture must be treated distinctively and respected in a diversity that applies not only to support for the artists but also to the framework for national and international development.

We created the panel, the international network on culture in 1998 precisely because ministers around the world understood that we need to not only share best practices but develop international strategies to ensure that the culture diversity that has been the hallmark of our country will not be swallowed up in the world of globalization. Forty-five member countries have joined that network and for those who say that we're about building walls, I say on the contrary you will not find a country as open to influences of the cultures of the world as you find in Canada.

50% of the books that we read are from other countries, 60% of what we watch on television is from other countries. In the English language 98% of the films that we watch in the movie theatres are not our own.

We want some space to tell our own stories but we do not want to build walls around our country and I dare say that for any of you who have an opportunity to take a walk along the Rideau Canal and stop off at any tobacco shop, you'll find out that when it comes to Canadians' openness, the magazines, the books, the stories of the world, we are a very open people when it comes to ensuring that we have space for our own stories we cannot leave it to an accident in the marketplace.

We must be there not to choose the artist but to give them support.

You know 60 years ago a visionary came up with the idea of a Canadian public broadcasting network that would cover coast to coast. As a result of that initiative 60 years ago and as a result of Canadian content regulations, access to the public airways comes with responsibility and as a result of those visionaries we now have a country where our kids can see themselves reflected in such youth oriented outlets as Musique Plus and Much Music.

The young artists who are coming up and who want a place to be able to perform their songs, are not forced to do it within a transplanted outlet coming from another country, they have their own network and they're going to be able to see themselves reflected.

If, as a government we can reinforce the artistic expression that comes from the soul of the artist but then we can say to our grandchildren that were there not to speak just for Canada but to speak with the same passion about the bio-diversity of the human species that the world has spoken about the diversity of the animal species.

And the network that you plan to establish to provide arts councils in all of the countries with an opportunity to rally the efforts of the arts communities is a step in the direction of respect for diversity.

But that cannot be a diversity that is only driven by the artists; it must be supported, supported by governments that recognize that there is a role for the government to play in direct support of culture, in direct support of diversity of expression.

I don't think that there is a person in the world who would want to see a country with no place to write their books, with no place to sing their songs, with no place to see their kids inspired by their own role models and that's what we're seeking and to just put it in the global context I think you can look to a great man who gave us the message that I think is the message on cultural diversity that we need to explore not just with words but with real international commitment. The man was Mohandas Gandhi and what he said is as relevant today as it ever was.

“I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all the world to be blown about my house as freely as possible but I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.”

And that's the message of cultural diversity.

Pas seulement un investissement dans les artistes, ça c'est important mais aussi d'avoir une methode de diffuser nos histoires parce qu'on sait qu'on a du talent en masse donnant une possibilité d'expression.

Qui aurait pu savoir que Céline Dion conaitrait du succès grace à un règlement qui disait qu'en retour d'une license il faudrait que vous jouiez 75 pourcent des chansons en français chez vous.

I put together a little booklet here. It's called "Sharing Canadian Stories". It tells you a little bit about what we have tried to achieve as a government in setting those touch stones. I think they're important messages.

This is the battle of the 21st century and I am convinced that with the talent that is here in this room today and with the strength of people thirst for their own expression.

Ms. Bruntland when she spoke about the environment talked about thinking globally and acting locally. That's what we have to do for the diversity of the human species and I believe that when you look at what we've been able to accomplish in this great country in respect of the diversity of people, I think it is a goal that is worth reaching for.

Thank you.