

McParadox

In Millau, a small town in France, some 15,000 protesters cheered yesterday when local farmer activist Jose Bové rode by in a hay wagon. This marked the beginning of Bove's trial on charges of destroying the local McDonald's last August.

Bové argued that the world's biggest restaurant chain is the unacceptable face of globalization, a supplier of 'garbage food', and an engine of cultural hegemony.

Protests against McDonald's are becoming increasingly familiar in France, England, Germany and Italy. You might think that Europeans hated McDonald's, except for one inescapable fact: they ate \$9.6 billion worth of burgers last year. There are now 4,943 McDonald's in Europe, and the company plans to raise the number to about 6,000 by 2002. McDonald's is not short of words when it comes to defending itself. First of all, they claim that few multinational companies are more locally owned in the countries where they are based. Secondly, they say they provide employment for 250,000 people (often derisively called 'Mcjobs'). And finally, in a part of the world where life is getting faster, McDonald's is offering service and convenience to help people cope with the pressures-while at the same time steering local diets away from tradition and toward processed food.

1. Answer the following questions using your words. (2 points: 1 point each)

- a) What are Bove's arguments against McDonald's?
- b) How does McDonald's justify itself?

2. Are the following statements true (T) or false (F)? (1 point: 0.5 each)

- a) 15,000 people protested by riding by in a hay wagon.
- b) By 2002, McDonald's intends to have around 6,000 restaurants in Europe.

3. Find a word or phrase in the text which, in context, is similar in meaning to: (1 point: 0.5 each)

- a) person or firm that provides you with something
- b) to increase

4. Choose a, b, or c, in each question below. Only one choice is correct (2 points: 0.5 each)

1. Bové was taken to court for ...

- a) *riding through a village in a hay cart.*
- b) *vandalizing a McDonald's restaurant.*
- c) *eating garbage food.*

2. Bové argued ...

- a) *that McDonald's is a cultural firm.*
- b) *that McDonald's represents globalization, which is negative.*
- c) *that McDonald's is the world's biggest restaurant chain.*

