

No one in this House, and very few people in the country, will believe that Bill C-58 was designed to protect Canadian magazines from foreign competition. It has been established that competition from *Time* and *Reader's Digest* has had no effect at all on the other magazines. We know that those advertisers who will lose out on their *Time* magazine audience will certainly not go to *Saturday Night* or *Maclean's* magazine.

Although I cannot go along with Bill C-58 because it seeks to introduce government censorship of the media and government intervention in the area of editorial content, I have to go along with the amendment that seeks to lower the requirement for material to "not substantially the same". I know that this bill will pass even though there is a great deal of resentment in the government benches against it, so I have to be willing to take half a loaf. Even if we lowered the requirement to 50-50 it would still amount to substantial government interference and government censorship of the press, and I do not think many of us are interested in seeing that happen.

We know from experience with censorship in other countries that censorship does not promote a higher level of professionalism. Indeed, it has the opposite effect; it promotes mediocrity. Writers and editors who cannot find their niche in a free media market will favour censorship because that would be the level at which the media would be pitched. Every great writer who has emerged from the controlled press behind the iron curtain is not considered great on the basis of literary merit. Those who have become best sellers on this continent have become so because they have written so tellingly against the system in which they have had to work. The latest is Zakharof. I wonder if the Secretary of State is trying to establish an environment for writers along the lines of those in the Soviet Union and other iron curtain countries.

I have been checking press reports, as I know other hon. members have. The hon. member for Ontario (Mr. Cafik) said on CFCF radio on February 4:

I don't think it achieves the objective of assisting our publications and I am going to vote against the bill in any event. But, I am very concerned that at least we have accommodated one of my concerns in connection with republication operations.

The Secretary of State was interviewed by CBC radio the same day, and he said:

Well, because *Reader's Digest* took a decision yesterday, a very important decision to conform to the law. I have always said that that was an option of both *Time* and *Reader's Digest* and any other magazine affected that they could either conform to the law, in other words, operate under the '65 law as all Canadian magazines are obliged to do or send in their foreign edition. Now *Time* has not decided to do that and I understand *Time's* difficulties but *Reader's Digest* has. Now, we are not making any special consideration giving a special break to *Reader's Digest*. They decided to conform to the law.

The commentator questioned the minister further on the 75 per cent ownership question. I might say, Mr. Speaker, that we all agree 75 per cent ownership is in order and we are in favour of it. The minister made the following statement with regard to *Time*:

That is something that really is in the hands of Mr. Cullen. But, as I understand it, it would probably be interpreted like most tax laws are.

I was delighted to hear the minister state today that as long as a magazine conforms to the law any time up to December 31, 1976, it will be considered to have become

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Canadian. He cited the example that if you get married on December 29, you are considered to have been married for that entire calendar year for tax purposes. I should like to refer, also, to the comments of Gordon Sinclair who is, I believe, the son of that very eminent writer and news commentator on CFRB whom a great many people in Ontario listen to at every opportunity. On CFCF radio on February 4, Gordon Sinclair stated:

For months I have been saying and believing that the legislation being passed in Ottawa requiring that publications be 80 per cent Canadian content in order to be considered Canadian was discriminatory and immoral and was being rammed through parliament for one reason only, to get rid of the Canadian edition of *Time* magazine. By the way, if the rule was scrupulously enforced, they might get rid of most Canadian newspapers as well.

An hon. Member: Not a bad idea.

Mr. Darling: Mr. Speaker, I think many hon. members would agree that outside of the advertising, our daily papers do not carry Canadian news so much as news that is worldwide, particularly that concerned with our neighbour to the south, and this is probably as it should be. Gordon Sinclair continued:

● (1620)

The ruling stinks. It is trickery and the government should not play tricks.

Mike Donegan of CFCF-TV, said on February 4:

—suddenly *Reader's Digest* is off the hook. After months of teeth-gnashing, breast-pounding and nationalistic flagwaving, the Trudeau government has decided that Canadian citizenship after all can be conferred on to *Reader's Digest* because it is not a magazine at all, it's a digest. It is likely not wise for us now to go into all the tortured reasoning that has led to the latest of this pretzelled situation, but the upshot is that the Canadian edition of *Reader's Digest* is now in and the Canadian edition of *Time* magazine is now out, or is it? Although federal government officials are stressing the the *Reader's Digest* compromise cannot be extended to *Time* Canada, the *Time* Canada publisher Steven Leroux apparently feels that the rope around this neck is somewhat loosened. He is telling newsmen that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, although officially Ottawa is insisting that it is not. Ottawa should do us all a big favour by scrapping this nonsense entirely and let *Reader's Digest* and *Time* Canada go about their business.

Ian McKenty, of station CJAD; also said on February 4:

As you know, the Trudeau government has been trying to boot the Canadian editions of *Time* and *Reader's Digest* out of Canada, and now the government has backed down on *Reader's Digest*. That's good news for the hundreds of *Reader's Digest* employees in Montreal and is also good news for anybody who values the free press in this country. The government should now back down on the Canadian edition of *Time*. The government should withdraw Bill C-58 and its own interpretation of Canadian content. The real problem here is the Canadian content rule. It's called the 80 per cent rule—

The new rule, for the minister has assumed full responsibility, is known as the Cullen rule. Mr. McKenty went on to say:

—More than 80 per cent of the contents of the Canadian periodical must be material which has not appeared in . . . prior issues of foreign publications; and I should add here that "foreign publication" refers to one with which the Canadian periodical has a continuing arrangement. Now this so-called Cullen rule gets right down to the arrangement and size of photographs on a page. Suppose a photograph appears in the Japan publication, a similar view of the same photograph then appears in the Canadian magazine. It will not be considered Canadian content. But here is the rub—who decides what is Canadian content and what is not? I expect it's the boys in the Revenue Department in Ottawa. They are the same gang who decides for all of us what is a dirty—