

an companies supplied textbooks to Canadian schools and provided only 40.3 per cent of the total factory shipments of textbooks to Canadian schools.

Since then W.J.A. Gage and Ryerson Press, two of the largest Canadian publishers of textbooks, have been sold to American interests, again in the case of Ryerson Press without a peep being uttered by the government. Thus, the percentage of the textbooks being supplied to Canadian schools by Canadian publishers must be substantially below the 40 per cent figure supplied to me in answer to my question. I suppose that figure now would be approximately 20 per cent, since Ryerson and Gage were two of the largest publishers of textbooks.

What has been the result of this situation? I can give one small example from my own experience. I have a seven-year old son who is attending a Canadian school. The teaching aids provided to his teachers for assisting him in the learning process are issued by U.S. publishing houses. The result is that he knows all about the American Pilgrim Fathers, even the obscure fact that a ship called *Speedwell* accompanied the *Mayflower* on the first portion of her voyage across the Atlantic. Had it not been for his mother and myself, he would know nothing about Cabot, Cartier, Champlain, LaVerendrye and the other Canadian explorers.

What I am saying is that because of our government's lack of interest in ensuring that Canadian literature, Canadian textbooks and Canadian magazines are given the same opportunities to be seen, purchased and read by the Canadian public as are their American equivalents, all that remains of a distinctive set of values, attitudes and outlooks—the underpinnings of a distinctive way of life in this country—is rapidly being engulfed and submerged by the wave of printed material from south of the border. No wonder we are confused when we attempt to define the Canadian identity.

I am also suggesting that it is essential that the government take immediate action to correct this situation, which perhaps constitutes an even more pressing danger to our existence as a nation than does the U.S. ownership of most of the other key areas of our economy—and that makes my hair stand on end. I suggest that the government must immediately give financial assistance to the Canadian book publishing industry if more Canadian publishers are not to go broke or be taken over, and if the nation is to avoid a cultural catastrophe. The Massey commission made us see the need in other areas of cultural endeavour and the Canada Council is one of the results. We need a similarly imaginative approach if we are to save what is left of our book publishing industry and to foster a native Canadian literary tradition.

I am not suggesting any sort of artificiality; I am suggesting that Canadians possess the talents and intellectual resources to produce in this area of endeavour if the opportunity were presented to them. It is not being presented to them largely because the economics of research and production militate against Canadian publishers being able to compete on any sort of equal footing with their U.S. counterparts, especially when the distribution and sale of general trade books and magazines in Canada is also in the hands of U.S. owned companies

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such as Benjamin News, American News and United Cigar Stores. To meet the need in Canada for a healthy publishing industry, a need which must be met if we are to remain a sovereign entity, this government must take action in a number of areas simultaneously.

First, it must create a Canadian book development corporation similar to the Canadian Film Corporation, which would share the cost of the printing of books likely to make a profit and which would also share the profits. Here it is necessary to caution that books could not be considered individually but, rather, each publisher would submit a group of books for consideration, hoping to achieve a profit with the whole group while perhaps sustaining a loss on one or two of the books within the group.

Second, the Industrial Development Bank or an extension of it would have to make long-term, low interest loans available to publishers so that they would not become totally dependent on the Canadian book development corporation for operating capital, since that organization might very well develop certain rigidities.

Third, regulations would have to be developed to ensure a market outlet for Canadian books, something which is not presently the case because, in part, the distribution system is largely controlled by American companies. This would enable greater quantities of Canadian books to be printed, thereby making them competitive in price with their American counterparts.

Fourth, more funds must be made available through the Canada Council and the Humanities Research Council for the production of scholarly and prestige publications, and both those organizations must be made more responsive to the needs of Canadian book publishers.

Fifth, a Canadian publishing house must be established in the United States, just as foreign publishers are now represented in Canada, in order to give Canadian books meaningful access to the vast American market with its potential to lower costs by permitting printing in greater quantities. I would like hon. members to note, Mr. Speaker, that each of these measures is positive in nature and in no way restrictive. They reflect my confidence that the Canadian literary and scholarly community can compete with any in the world, once placed on a roughly equal financial footing.

Mr. Barnett J. Danson (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am replying to the hon. member for Selkirk's question on behalf of the Minister without Portfolio responsible for Information Canada and Citizenship, who is unfortunately absent from the House this evening because of a previous departmental commitment. I listened to the hon. member's words with considerable interest and paid close attention to his concern which is shared by many.

The minister wishes me to inform the House that in the interest of both his major responsibilities for ensuring adequate access to information about federal government activities and for developing the proper resources for Canadian citizenship, he has been engaged along with other of his cabinet colleagues in discussions with periodical and book publishers in Canada. As this House