

*Non-Canadian Publications*

As I looked at the original intent of the bill, it seemed to be to eliminate special status. Who can argue with that principle and that philosophy? That philosophy of special status and privilege goes to the very root and foundation of the Liberal Party as I have studied it. The movement for equality is a small "I" liberal move away from class and this type of "ism". So I would expect, when a Liberal brings forth this policy of equality, he would attempt to justify it and produce legislation on that basis.

I hear some Liberals on the other side say they want that equality. Some of them have even been taken in and have called this a form of equality and a form of liberalism. They have been talked into accepting the minister's statement that this eliminates special status. But even they who are lulled into this false sense of complacency are now beginning to doubt. They are doubting the judgment of their minister and of their government, because it does not take an intellectual giant to eliminate the special status. This bill is supposed to accomplish that. All we hear is double-talk coming from the government benches, double-talk which tells us that they will eliminate the special status, and yet *Reader's Digest* will continue to publish as before. So where is there the elimination of the special status? I do not pose this question to the minister now; I address it to the backbenchers. I urge you all to go back to your basic philosophy and to the principles which brought you here to the House, to the things in which you believe. Every time that your minister says that, I ask you to challenge him and ask him how the special status is eliminated.

● (1720)

Let the hon. member who has just spoken stand up and make his speech, because I want to hear him. I want him to tell me about the special status of *Time* magazine, how it has been eliminated by this bill. In fact, this bill does not eliminate the special status of *Reader's Digest*. That argument will not wash in light of the announcement of the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Cullen).

So if this is not the principal purpose, what purposes are left? I think the purposes that are left are, first, vested interest. I suggest that everyone had better consider this. In the name of whose vested interests is this bill being passed? I suggest we look for the vested interest of the opposition members in the effects of this bill. Obviously, the opposition does not have a vested interest in destroying this bill because the opposition members, like myself, who speak on this bill, and like hon. members in the party opposite who dare speak against this bill, have no vested interest because we will be hurt by the Canadian news media who gain from this bill; we will be their victims of attack or we will be ignored, both of which possibilities have very severe consequences to a politician.

So the opposition does not have a vested interest in this. Obviously, the Liberal backbenchers do not have a vested interest in attacking this bill. Some of them have staked their political future on this bill. They are walking into the jaws of this machine and they will be chewed up. This is unfortunate because they are idealistic members, members who stand on principle. So I say there is certainly no vested interest among the Liberal backbenchers who are attacking this bill. They can only be interested in principle, and nothing else, when they attack the government.

[Mr. Wenman.]

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wenman: If you doubt your own backbenchers, then listen to the arguments of the press.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Wenman: Certainly, I also say, "Order." If we want order, the only order is from the other side.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Address the chair. You are saying "you" all the time. Address Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Wenman: Hon. members on the other side dare to speak. I encourage them. The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) has allowed her name to stand behind this amendment. I urge other members who have spoken up loudly in caucus to stand up. Let us hear their opinion as well. Let us hear them support the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway. They have much to lose from fighting members of their own party. I say to the minister, "Listen to the press which speaks and reports." In the last few days they have caught the nature of the argument and they are concerned about the content rule and about the clause "substantially different". The fact that the motion before us today would eliminate this clause is to the credit of the hon. member who proposed it.

It seems to me that the other object is the importance to our national and cultural life, and this should be considered as well. Unfortunately, we do not seem to want to allow freedom of choice to the majority of Canadians. I recognize that the communality of choice, even if it leads to mediocrity, the choice which people have and which may be mediocre is worth protecting more than any other principle we may be discussing here today. When the government tells us that their judgment on what is Canadian and what is not Canadian is better, I am in doubt. I know that this bill does not state clearly what Canadian content is. I know that this has been avoided so that we can be more comfortable and say that we are not legislating content. But, in effect, content is being legislated and the content which the minister intends to protect under this legislation is Canadian content. If we had his choice, that is what would be printed and distributed.

I suggest that Canadian content is being distributed and produced very widely through *Time* magazine and, as a matter of fact, through *Reader's Digest*. As I have said, even if that choice is mediocre, that is the choice of the people. There is a small group of elite writers who are certainly Canadians but who promote a minority point of view. They should have a way of being heard and of receiving subsidies from the Canadian government, perhaps through the CBC or through subsidies to books and other publications. This is being done to a large extent. At the same time, let us recognize the choice of Canadians in their reading, which is in itself an expression of what they feel is their own culture. I suggest, for example, that *Reader's Digest* or *Time* magazine express in 80 per cent of their content what Canada is and what Canadian culture is.

Perhaps I am saying that we Canadians are 80 per cent the same as people in the United States. I think it is also true that they are 80 per cent the same as people throughout the world. Our cultural differences are small and they