

Non-Canadian Publications

Mr. Oberle: Let me read into the record what a writer in Prince George has written. He says in part:

The *Reader's Digest*, in my opinion, is one of the finest monthly publications on the newsstand today. Its Canadian content and educational material is accepted and read in our Christian home faithfully and any attempt to remove it from the bookshelf would be an insult to my family's intellectual capacity to freely absorb unbiased opinion of current world affairs.

Mr. Woolliams: Just look at the government members laughing.

Mr. Oberle: Obviously the government finds this funny. I do not think the people we represent in our constituency find this quite as humorous. I do not think the people in the constituencies of hon. members opposite find this funny. After all, I do not need to defend myself in their constituencies. They will have to defend themselves when their actions come back to haunt them in the not too distant future.

I will not bore my colleagues by articulating how we should encourage young people to enter the publishing field. If we want to create a viable cultural strategy in our country, we must ensure that all Canadians, whether they live in Prince George or downtown Toronto, in Lower Post, B.C., McBride or Tuktoyaktuk—

An hon. Member: Or Humboldt, Saskatchewan.

Mr. Oberle: Yes, or even Humboldt, Saskatchewan—we must ensure that all Canadians are included in our cultural community and are served by a medium of culture. As for Humboldt, there is a culturally starved community.

Mr. Lang: If you believe that, you believe anything.

Mr. Oberle: During the last election campaign I visited my friends in Humboldt. They were of my ethnic background, and they had an old-fashioned picnic with all kinds of razzmatazz and a brass band for those who turned up in great numbers. It was an expression of old-time culture in Humboldt. We did not perform the music of Mozart or Beethoven, but we did tell them a few facts. I was quite fair about the minister. I said he is a good representative of his party in the House of Commons but I had my doubts about whether he really represented the farm community in Saskatchewan. I am sure, when those people evaluate the minister's contribution to this debate, they will remember the fellow who came from British Columbia. They will remember what he said and wonder if he was not right when he suggested that their member of parliament does not really represent the views of his constituents in the House of Commons.

We must make sure that Canadians, wherever they live, have access to the electronic media. Not all Canadians have such access. The CRTC puts all sorts of stumbling blocks in the way of people who want to establish radio or television stations in out-of-the-way places where people are denied access to the electronic media. When I was first elected in 1972, part of my constituency on highway 16 consisted of 5,000 people who did not have access to television. They could listen to one radio program of questionable quality which originated in a far-off centre. I discussed this problem with the minister. Of course the CBC had decided that establishing television service in my area

[Mr. Woolliams.]

would not be lucrative, and therefore the people living in McBride and other isolated areas would have to do without television service. The corporation could not afford to install it. The minister told me if it cost 25 cents less to put the eleventh channel into downtown Toronto than to put the first channel into McBride, that channel would go to into Toronto—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. I wonder if the hon. member has not strayed from the bill. We are discussing, Bill C-58, which is to amend the Income Tax Act.

Mr. Oberle: Madam Speaker, I am talking about broadcasting. Surely the magazine industry broadcasts some form of news. I am talking about the special problems of those who are not served with television programs. Until I represented them, many of the people of my constituency were without such service. We also read *Time* and *Reader's Digest* and, before we had access to radio and television coverage those magazines, for our people, represented the most sensible reporting which could be found in Canada. If it were not for the fact they now have one television signal, they would probably come here with placards protesting against this bill. They would consider it a further infringement on their special rights and privileges.

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I am sorry to belabour this point, but I want to elicit the minister's support for a second television signal or cable system that would help the cultural evolution in those parts of Canada of which I speak. The minister said the CRTC must follow the regulations. He said the people in the city of Prince George cannot apply for a cablevision licence because they only have one of the existing TV signals, namely the CBC. In order for them to apply for cablevision, they must first have access to both television signals, the CBC and CTV, for one year. Only after that time can an application for cablevision be heard. Because you do not have access to both signals, you cannot have access to anything else.

If we really wanted to do something cultural in this country, we would ensure that every Canadian has access to all the media in this country, some of which are of excellent and enjoyable quality. We would give incentives to small entrepreneurs to provide those kinds of services. We would remove the stumbling blocks which I consider the CBC, CRTC and other regulatory bodies to be. However, that is not the intention of this bill.

The intention of this bill is to erect cultural barriers and to regulate and censor the media in this country. That should come as no surprise to anyone who has watched the performance of the government and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) since 1968. If I may refer to my country of origin, the first thing a gentleman there did when he got the power in 1933 was to censor the magazine and newspaper industry as well as the electronic industry. In fact he did not allow access from outside the country. That was the beginning of all evil in central Europe at that time. It should be no surprise to anyone to see this government embarking on that kind of course.

This is a strong, central government which is determined to remove the rights, privileges and law-making