

*Non-Canadian Publications*

lation with which the majority of Canadians do not agree. Even those who do not express interest in the publications affected are not in favour of this type of restriction being placed on our economy as well as on freedom of opinion.

In view of these circumstances, we have to ask why the bill has been brought forward. The reason was certainly not because of pressure on the government by Canadians as a whole or we would not now be swamped with protests from across this country. In such a situation we can but look to some other source as being responsible for prodding the minister to formulate this bill, or question whether there is some benefit accruing to the minister or to the government. Either the minister or the government is suspect if this legislation is proceeded with now in its present form. I challenge the minister, or the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) to stand up and tell Canadians who is putting pressure on him or on the government to propose this distasteful measure.

Over the years the publishing firms affected have proven to be good corporate citizens; yet all of a sudden the government is telling them they are no longer wanted in Canada under existing regulations. England has been closely related to and good to Canada over the years, and will continue in the same way if we as Canadians treat her with courtesy. Are we to tell one of her citizens: "We do not like you any more; we do not want you here; please go home"? The same goes for the United States. I am as pro-Canadian as any member of parliament, but let me impress upon you Mr. Speaker that being pro-Canadian does not mean I am anti-British or anti-American; neither is it necessary for anyone else to be negative toward them.

We have heard the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) say time and time again in this House that we require foreign currency to keep our economy healthy. The minister has stated we will need between \$4 billion and \$5 billion this year to balance our payments deficit. Making loans of \$500 million to Russia is not going to solve that problem. If ever I saw a back-paddling government, we have it in this thirtieth parliament. Why cannot the government take a positive approach?

Situations such as we now face with *Reader's Digest*, *Time* and the *Red Deer Advocate* are government-created. I mention the *Advocate* because it is the only daily newspaper involved. It is a good publication run by Canadians for the benefit of Canadians. Two million dollars have been spent by this company in Canada, much of it in the Red Deer area. Its facilities have been made available to neighbouring newspapers. The same facilities are required in the Fraser Valley. Why in the world the government wants to treat a good corporate citizen in this manner, I have no way of knowing. Why not spend time in this House trying to resolve some of the existing difficulties instead of concocting new ones?

● (2100)

Certainly it would be to our benefit to continue to be associated with these publishers in the future, as we have for many years. If the government wants to change the rules of the game for new ventures, fine and dandy, but why change the rules now for those who have established themselves as good corporate citizens? It could be likened to the immigration department telling an individual from

[Mr. Towers.]

another country who had not become naturalized but had lived here for years to go through some unnatural exercise every day of the week, and twice on Sunday, or to pick up his marbles and go home. If such an incident did occur, large numbers of people would be crying "discrimination" with a loud voice, but is this happening in this case? Not on your life, Mr. Speaker.

If we tell these people to pack their bags and go home, we have no guarantee that a Canadian publication will replace them. Many of us remember when *Maclean's* magazine was of much greater significance on the Canadian scene than it is today. At one point its articles were used in social studies classes, but in latter years it has lost that significance and impact on Canadian society. Some people seem to be of the opinion that there are special tax privileges granted to *Reader's Digest* and *Time* which are not available to *Maclean's*; but everyone should realize that the same rules apply to all three. I have never been one who believes that you can build up the weak by tearing down the strong. Let us, therefore, not be torn apart because of that fallacy.

While recognizing there could be magazines other than *Maclean's* that might come to the front, I use *Maclean's* merely as an example. In my opinion, the downfall of that magazine can be attributed to two factors; first, accelerated distribution costs by the federal government some years ago; and second, managerial decisions made by that magazine not to print articles and stories of interest to the average Canadian. Fortunately, *Reader's Digest* and *Time* survived in spite of these hurdles, and that is why today so many Canadians appreciate them and want us to ensure they will continue to be available to them as presently published.

I understand that both of these magazines will be available to Canadians regardless of the outcome of this bill, but we have to ask ourselves in what form? First of all there will be a loss of hundreds of jobs to Canadians, a decrease in the amount of Canadian content, and a loss of millions of dollars of revenue to our postal system. I would think that the Postmaster General (Mr. Mackasey) would have something to say about that. In addition, subscription payments will go to the United States and remain there.

Another point we must not overlook is the fact that, due to sparsity of population in this country, there are facilities not yet available to us here, because of cost, which are available in the United States. I am referring to the quantity of printed material that comes to Sunday schools and churches in Canada. No doubt as Canada's population increases this will change and we will be able to supply our own requirements, but until then why cannot we enjoy the best of both worlds? Cannot the minister who is sponsoring this bill forsake his arrogant, uncompromising approach and at least lend an ear to the Canadian public? If he is not about to do that, I hope the members opposite rise up in rebellion and continue to debate this issue until, as the hon. member for Cochrane intimated, "The house leader will withdraw the bill and let it die on the order paper."

This issue is too important to be settled by partisan politics. The social wellbeing of Canadians is at stake here. Surely the minister is man enough to stand up in his