

Post Office Act

It is sometimes argued in this house and in other quarters that the reason for our having two houses in this parliament is so that the other place can take a sober, second look at legislation passed by the elected representatives. I suggest, since there will be no such opportunity for a sober second look at this legislation by Their Honours in the other place, who did not discuss at all what this bill really does, that the argument as to the utility of the Senate as a reviewing body should no longer be advanced. We are opposed to this bill.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, I do not think that the utterly misleading statements made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) can be allowed to pass unnoticed. The purpose of the bill, and the sole reason the government brought it in, was that American publications are allowed four places to post in Canada and Canadian publications are unfairly discriminated against by being limited to only one.

Hon. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I simply wish to place myself on record. I hope there will be nothing alarming to other hon. members about it, but it is extraordinary the number of occasions on which the Secretary of State (Mr. Pickersgill) and I are finding ourselves in agreement.

Mr. Pickersgill: My face is red.

Mr. Drew: I do not wish to let go unchallenged a statement which I believe completely misinterprets what is before us. I will not say "misrepresents" but I will say "misinterprets". I am sure that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) in putting forward the opinions that he has put forward is sincerely misled as to what the effect of the bill is because I have complete confidence not only in his industry but in his mental integrity as well as his personal integrity. I am certain that he misconceives the effect of this measure.

The bill before us is one which enables the Post Office Department to provide for Canadian publications the same facilities now available to publications from the United States. This is in no way confined to liquor advertising or any other type of advertising. I hold no particular view in regard to the content of one publication or another. My remarks apply with equal force to every Canadian publication. We hear a great deal about the advancement of Canadian culture. I believe that one of the great media in the

advancement of culture is the periodical publication. I think that the more we can do to facilitate the distribution of Canadian periodical publications in competition with publications from the United States the more we will do to develop a distinctly Canadian outlook and a distinctly Canadian culture.

To me, with the utmost friendship for the United States, it has been a matter of very great concern for a number of years that by the very weight of numbers of magazines published the publishers in the United States are able to come so close to saturating this market. I am not at all sure that we should not go a great deal further in encouraging Canadian publications in every part of Canada to carry to the people of Canada distinctly Canadian ideas. As an incident of whatever facilities there may be, let us recognize with complete frankness that, where the law permits liquor advertising as well as any other advertising, to the extent to which the number of Canadian magazines distributed is expanded to that extent will the advertising be expanded. That, however, is only an ordinary incident of the expanding publication of Canadian magazines, which all of us should welcome.

If there is to be further limitation with regard to this particular type of advertising, that is another subject. I am prepared to discuss it on its own merits at any time. That is not the issue before us. The only thing accomplished by this measure is to provide further facilities for distribution and that is contained in subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (d) of subsection 1 which permits the publisher to post in "some other postal area approved by the Postmaster General upon his being satisfied that the posting of the newspaper or periodical within such other postal area will promote greater convenience in the distribution thereof and that the application of this section to the newspaper or periodical when so posted will not adversely affect the postal revenues."

That, Mr. Speaker, is an administrative provision. On such occasions as I disagree with the course the government is following I shall most certainly express that disagreement. I have on many occasions and will continue to do so with the utmost sincerity and possibly with considerable vigour. On this particular occasion I believe we should look at the measure as it stands, realize that it is an administrative procedure and that the time for us to decide whether there has been any evasion or otherwise of this provision will be when we have seen it in operation, which operation will be under the Post Office