

*Non-Canadian Publications*

two majors general interest magazines and numerous trade magazines and a book publisher who I do not think cares for anyone outside of Toronto, certainly not outside the Ontario region. I have experienced this personally. I do not see why members opposite feel it is essential, in this important debate, to attack the Secretary of State personally or his party. This is not a question of personalities or of politics. It is a matter of general public interest, of public concern. The Secretary of State may have misinterpreted the powerful vocal minority out of Toronto as public opinion. That group controls the media and is mistakenly believed to be the voice of Canada. They have tried to dictate public interest to achieve action that will enhance their vested interests, at the cost of two strong and valuable publications. Members on this side, members opposite, and all Canadians in other words, have misinterpreted public opinion because of that vocal minority. Too many Canadians misinterpret this as the voice of Canada. Actually, it is the opinion of a few people who control publishing in this country.

Newspaper publishing in Canada is controlled by three major publishers—FP Publications, Southam, and Lord Thomson who has taken to himself a British title. The publishing of books in Canada seems to be controlled by one or two people who started the organization called Committee for an Independent Canada which has been distorted into an anti-American clarion in this country. It is an embarrassment to me because I do not hate my neighbour who was my friend.

I regret that the Secretary of State is carrying this bill through despite what is really public opinion, the opinion of the people. There are those who claim, in this House, that we who are opposed to Bill C-58 are reacting to "one of the most powerful lobbies" in Canadian parliamentary history. I maintain, conversely, that this bill is here because of a small elitist voice, albeit a very powerful group with great influence—talented—but who would dictate culture for all Canadians out of the east.

**An hon. Member:** The Secretary of State.

**Mrs. Holt:** It is not the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State was hearing a voice that is very loud in eastern Canada. We do not hear it as well in the west. In fact, we ignore it in the west because the only national news that many of us get is in *Time* magazine; in other words, objective reporting.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Holt:** Toronto in no way reflects the public interest, but the private vested interest of a small group. They are an impressive group that has done good things for Canada. Maclean-Hunter had the money some years ago to put out a news magazine. Why didn't they? I was very much involved in a magazine which started out of Montreal, called *Canada Month*. We worked very hard. We donated our material. I got writers from across Canada. I even found advertisers to try to keep the magazine alive. But it died. The massive advertising that *Maclean's*, *Chate-laine*, the newspaper could have shared did not go to *Canada Month*, a good young magazine, because the advertisers—in a free enterprise country—chose strong, established vehicles through which to sell their product.

[Mrs. Holt.]

There are two major newspapers in Vancouver. There were three, but the monopoly shared the pot and one was killed. We learned very early in Vancouver that in order to build a new newspaper—and I take it this applies to any city in Canada—you have to be prepared to spend \$25 million or more, without return, before becoming viable and getting fully supportive advertising revenue.

Of the vast amount of mail I received, only four letters out of approximately 800 to 1,000—I never counted them—were opposed to the bill. It is apparent that some people think this is a lobby being carried on by the magazines. It is a lobby by Canada's citizens. I must admit it was not until *Reader's Digest* and *Time* told what it meant in simple terms that the public was aware of the meaning of Bill C-58 and what could happen to two very popular publications. They responded. However, I was receiving letters before that.

I read the reports of the Gallup poll released in January. Less than 1 per cent of the Canadian public wants *Reader's Digest* to lose equality with other magazines in this country. *Reader's Digest* and *Time* have been landed immigrants in Canada for 31 years. It is rather strange that after that period the rules of the game are being changed. It is similar to the situation of an immigrant in this country who has developed some roots here, built a home and felt secure as a Canadian, suddenly being told he cannot live here under the same terms.

*Reader's Digest*, and *Time* to a lesser degree, are the only vehicles for Canadian subjects and Canadian writers to be aired internationally. This gives Canadian writers a chance of a job in an extremely small market. In other words, it is not as easy for Canadians in the publications and allied trades to find a job with *Newsweek*, *U.S. News*, *World Report* or other American magazines. If you are an established writer, you might very well find work. It has not been a problem for me in recent years. However, for young people just starting out, they get their first chance from magazines like *Reader's Digest*.

There are those who compare *Reader's Digest* with other American magazines like *Playboy*, which does not have any Canadian content—unless there was one Canadian girl who posed for the centrefold. Those who compare *Reader's Digest* with *Playboy*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News*, *World Report* and all the others sent here from outside forget that those publications did not offer to set up business in Canada, to provide jobs for Canadian writers, or to recognize Canadian subjects as significant enough for their attention. *Reader's Digest* and *Time* did come here; they did provide jobs, set up plants and send stories by Canadians, on Canadian subjects, around the world. Despite what anyone says, *Reader's Digest* does not have a tax privilege. It is on the same footing as other publications. In a free enterprise country, the advertiser should have the right of choice. I looked at one issue of *Maclean's* magazine. It had about 70 per cent advertising content, this means they are pretty fat and sassy; they do not need any more.

If anyone thinks that advertising lost to *Reader's Digest* and *Time* will go to start other magazines, they are wrong. It will go to these already overstuffed magazines and newspapers. While I was grateful that the newspapers were rich because they could pay me a good salary, they are not suffering. In addition to the newspapers, the ad-