

Non-Canadian Publications

● (1610)

I cite these assertions from the newspaper accounts because I think there is some danger of misleading the management of the magazines as to the true situation. So far, *Time* and *Reader's Digest* have been unprepared to come forward to suggest how they might meet these legislative proposals. There has been no sign that they are prepared to meet the objectives which the Secretary of State has described. They appear to have an obdurate belief that this legislation will not be passed and that they will not be obliged to change their ways. It would be a great mistake if they were encouraged by the remarks of the hon. member for Cochrane to persist in the belief that they need not make any attempt to meet the criteria set out in this bill. It would be a tragic mistake for them if they believed they could simply wait for the withdrawal of this measure.

There is substantial resolution on this side of the House to push this matter to final settlement. That is what we shall be doing in the committee. Representatives of the magazines will be before us and I hope they will make a sincere effort, as I believe they can, to meet the objectives which the Secretary of State has set out. This, I am sure, is the mood on our side of the House, and I believe the magazines concerned will ignore that mood at their peril.

Mr. Andy Hogan (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Madam Speaker, I rise on this occasion to reiterate our party's policy on this question as enunciated in the House on May 8 by the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Symes). There is no need to spend a lot of time rehashing what has gone on in the past with regard to treatment of foreign publications vis-à-vis our Canadian culture, or explaining in detail—because it has been gone over and over—why these two magazines were given special treatment. We need only go back to the Senate committee in 1969. The government has been reluctant to accept fully the implications of what that Senate committee said, but in the bill now before us there is a much better recognition. The committee stated:

It seems plain to us that if *Time* and *Digest* are allowed to maintain their present competitive advantage, it will become increasingly difficult for existing magazines to survive, and for new ones to be launched. But we are satisfied that the long-term prospects for the Canadian periodical industry—and probably the short-term as well—would be enhanced by removal of subsidized foreign competition.

We do not want to appear, on this side of the House, as being too nationalistic regarding the cultural infiltration which has occurred from the United States at all levels because of our geographical propinquity. That is part and parcel of our geography and history. But, surely, thinking members on both sides of the House are now prepared to say there are certain limits and that we do need certain controls which can be exercised through our economic policy to try and prevent them from completely swamping us. Some can argue there is not much we can do because U.S. influence is worldwide and affects countries besides Canada.

Surely, though, we are Canadian enough to recognize that the time has come, after over 100 years of existing as a nation, when we should at least be able to say to the owners of *Time* magazine and *Reader's Digest*, "The time

[Mr. Roberts.]

has come for you to lose your special status within Canadian law." Whatever reason there may have been in the past for giving them special status—and I do not recognize there was any reason—if there was any reason then, the time is surely past.

It is not a question, as some have suggested privately, of whether you like *Maclean's* magazine or not. Personally, I do not like it. What I would like to see is the opportunity given to Canadian publishers to be able to get in on some of the advertising, so that the day may rapidly come when we shall not only have one national magazine but competitive periodicals at the national level which will regularly interpret Canada and the world through Canadian eyes. As I see it, Madam Speaker, neither *Time* nor *Reader's Digest* can claim that they are Canadian magazines with regard to ownership. Some people may say it is not important, but it is surely important when it comes to the question of editorial content where the principle of fairness and equity dictates that they be treated under the law as foreign publications—which they are; and nobody in the House can deny that.

As a person coming out of the academic community and as part of a relatively small group in Canada, I would much prefer, personally, *Atlantic* or *Harper's* or such types of magazine that have some depth in their writing and are not constantly repeating what the line is out of Washington, whether it is the foreign affairs department of the United States or the defence department, and so on. By and large, it is safe to say I think these two magazines, although there has recently been a change in the attitude of *Time* in this regard, have been largely spokesmen for American foreign policy and for the American way of life.

There is no reason why these two magazines should any longer be given special status by Canadian legislators with regard to their position in Canadian culture. *Time* for example has a mere five pages, on average, of Canadian news. This represents about 10 per cent of its content. Its editorial content, Madam Speaker, as is well known, resides in the United States in its parent company. *Time* Canada is wholly owned by *Time* Inc., of the United States and was one of the principal mouthpieces of the Republican party until the death of Mr. Luce. We have been absorbing much of that cultural flak into this country. No one would want to put a fence around them, but why give them special tax rates in order to do this just because they are *Time* and *Reader's Digest*?

I think *Reader's Digest* has been making a pitch, as we are all aware here, getting constituents to write letters on their behalf. I do not know for absolute certainty if they have been doing this, but my constituents have been writing to me and have been given the impression that they will no longer be able to buy *Reader's Digest* in Canada unless this legislation is defeated or withdrawn. It is absolutely false, and we all recognize this. As far as content is concerned, we all know that *Reader's Digest* has only 20 per cent to 25 per cent Canadian content in its English edition, and less than 15 per cent in its French edition.

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Here, too, editorial control resides in the United States. Every article published in *Reader's Digest*—I defy anybody to contradict this—has to meet the approval of the editori-