

*Non-Canadian Publications*

disturb me, although his colleague, the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Basford), disturbed me even more when making his statement several months ago.

The chief spokesman for my party, the hon. member for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Fairweather), set the tone of this debate at a high level and rendered the proper discussion of this matter a great service. I also salute the valuable contribution made by the hon. member for Cochrane (Mr. Stewart). He and the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) merit the commendation of the House for speaking on this measure with such forthrightness and independence of thought. By saying that, I am not exuding the mean satisfaction of an opposition member because backbenchers on the government side or private members, to use the proper expression, have differed with the government. That they have differed I do not consider significant. I note that the newspapers paid them some attention, more for reasons of their deviation from the government line than for the forthrightness of their remarks and the value of their opinions.

All this underlines something serious. In this country, in this House, we are inclined to overvalue party solidarity and undervalue individual assessment, especially of measures such as the one now before the House. We must remember that neither the House of Commons nor the illustrious Senate run the country. The government runs the country. The members of the House of Commons must try to reflect the aspirations of the people they represent, and it is difficult to reflect those aspirations if on every issue they must indulge in partyism and uphold the party point of view. I have said many things for many years to which nobody listens.

**Some hon. Members:** No, no!

**Mr. Macquarrie:** We take too many votes in this House. Too many times do we stand up and vote, even though the results of the vote are a foregone conclusion. Far too often we consider an issue on party lines. I am convinced that if in a large room a lot of people are ostensibly thinking the same thing, you have a great many people who are not thinking at all. I suggest that we could improve our system if we looked on votes of confidence as rare occasions indeed and voted much less frequently than we now do.

A good many years ago—I do not want to sound like a patriarch—we could appeal the Speaker's rulings. I remember when the deputy chairman of the committee of the whole made a ruling. One of my colleagues from my class—he is not here now—thought Mr. Rea was right and, in the appeal, wanted to support him. He was soon told that that kind of nonsense had best be forgotten because the party was appealing Mr. Rea's ruling. In other words, a matter of procedure became a matter of party policy. No one can tell me that makes for good legislation, good representation or good parliamentary performance.

Partyism, surely, has no place in the consideration of this measure, although I recognize that partyism is an integral part of parliamentary democracy. In looking at this bill we should ask: Is this the best method or even a good method for improving the nationalistic content of our intellectual lives? Is this the best way of obtaining certain goals we have in mind? To be simplistic, is it likely to

[Mr. Macquarrie.]

advance a healthier Canadianism in the realm of publications? Or, as we must ask ourselves, is it likely to be an exercise in tokenism? Is this a measure which will make our nationalistic flags wave? Is it another exercise in Canadian nationalism, and is that of itself demonstrably a good thing? That gives rise to another question which one is reluctant to ask: Does it involve, perhaps ever so slightly, a slight case of anti-Americanism? One of the great luminaries of the University of Toronto, Professor Underhill—if as a McGill man I might mention that institution—used to say that Canadianism is often largely anti-Americanism. Perhaps we had best stop to think and reflect on that.

I said earlier that the part of the measure which troubles me most is that part to do with Canadian content. The minister told my colleague for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) that Canadian content has nothing to do with this bill. I see that he shakes his head affirmatively. I would love to be convinced by him but I am not, because I have treasured, cherished and held to my bosom the statements made by the Minister of National Revenue who talked about Canadian publications being 80 per cent different from the publications of United States parents. I foresee a difficult exercise in measurement. What kind of litmus paper will you use to measure that 80 per cent difference? Will the standard be eight maple leaves on every ten pages? I would be a bit leery about the imaginative conceptualism of our Canadian bureaucracy. I am told of one branch saying to a person 88½ years old that if he came back in 33½ years he could collect his old age pension. That was a bit ridiculous, but a bit less fatuous than measuring something as tenuous as an 80 per cent difference from a U.S. parent publication.

That little problem worries me. The present Minister of National Revenue may not be here forever, and when he is gone the difficulties might become even more horrendous—and they are pretty bad now. How do you measure Canadian content? How do you evaluate it? I have always been deeply troubled by the Canadian content provision. I do not know that Canada is made the stronger if someone rules that I ought to hear Gordon Sinclair on television instead of Alistair Cooke. I think we would do well to listen to Mr. Cooke. Since I am not a negative man, I will not dwell on the other aspect of the question. This is what the measure involves, although I know the bill does not say so. Remember, acts of parliament are passed to affect people.

I still think we must consider the question of freedom of choice. When I go to certain totalitarian countries, to their reading rooms or their railway stations or airports and read nothing but the party line, I long for the opportunity to go to a bookstore and pick up anything I like. I probably would glance through it and then put it down without buying it, being a Scot. However, I have noticed on my few occasions of travelling on aircraft that if you want to get *Time* magazine, you have to sit pretty close to where the stewardess starts delivering the magazines because that is the first one to go. This seems to indicate people like that magazine. I am going back to the days when Air Canada was very affluent and even gave you a magazine to read and newspapers to peruse.