

Whereas the caucus chairmen were allowed ten minutes for their opening remarks and questions, each succeeding member of the committee was allowed but five minutes to examine a witness. I suggest that five minutes is an inadequate amount of time to do any thorough investigation of what the legislation is all about. It seems to me that if the government is serious about bringing forward good legislation, it ought to be interested enough in the process of the committee proceedings to make sure that legislation comes out of the committee in the very best form it could possibly take. If that is to be the case, there must be wholesome discussion and give-and-take in the committee. I also recall that the committee stage enjoyed obvious public and media interest. This was one of the few occasions in the history of the committees that there has been standing room only in a committee. Most of those who attended were members of the media and obviously they knew that their livelihoods were being threatened by this legislation.

I also recall that the members of the committee were honestly trying to grapple—I was going to say “wrestle” but I think that is an overused and misused word in this House—with the terms of the bill. We were having a difficult time because although the bill is a tax measure, the operative part of the bill, the critical feature of it—

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** I should like to ask the hon. member a question, but if not a question I should like to raise a point of order.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** A question is not a point of order, but since the hon. member has interrupted, would the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Friesen) give consent?

● (1550)

**Mr. Friesen:** I would gladly permit a question, but I would prefer it at the end of my speech, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. It is the prerogative of the hon. member who has the floor to decide whether or not he will entertain a question. The hon. member cannot ask his question unless he has that consent. So unless the hon. member has a real point of order—

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, I believe I do have a point of order. The fact is that the members of the committee could always request a witness to come back a second, or even a third time if necessary. Members did have such an opportunity. There were numerous members of the committee, and five minutes were allocated to each of them for questioning of the witnesses. The fact remains that they could have been asked to return on a subsequent or on a third occasion.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I think the hon. member is now getting into a matter of debate. After the hon. member who has the floor has completed his remarks, the hon. member can then stand and the Chair will recognize him if he wishes to make a speech.

#### *Non-Canadian Publications*

**Mr. Friesen:** Mr. Speaker, obviously the chief government whip is a little sensitive about how he conducted the affairs of that committee.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** You don't seem to know how it was conducted.

**Mr. Friesen:** The whip will know for certain, if he examines the records of that committee, that the only witness who was permitted to come back a second time was the Secretary of State (Mr. Faulkner). We would gladly have entertained the president of *Reader's Digest* on a return visit but, again, the government used its majority on that committee to forestall that kind of move. The government whip ought to know better than make the kind of suggestion he has just made in the House.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** It is a real and an honest one.

**An hon. Member:** That is a powerful word, Joe, so be careful.

**Mr. Friesen:** Before I was interrupted by that “Guay” statement we were discussing a theoretical tax measure, but the operative measures are outside the confines of the bill, and how does one deal with a bill when the most effective parts are not among its clauses? Nevertheless, that became the dominant area of discussion in the committee and in the House concerning the 80 per cent content rule brought down, not by the Secretary of State but by the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Cullen), and the implied, if not direct, censorship it invokes on the press. The Secretary of State, who appeared several times before the Committee, repeatedly took an adamant posture on the 80 per cent content rule. There was absolutely no conciliation on this point and his position remained totally firm. The 80 per cent different was the rule for all foreign-owned periodicals, including *Reader's Digest*.

It was suggested to the Secretary of State and others that *Reader's Digest*, because of the nature of that publication, could no longer function in Canada under that kind of rule. The Secretary of State seemed to think that was rubbish. We questioned him on that and we questioned representatives of Maclean-Hunter on the point. They testified that they had meetings with members of the staff of the Minister of National Revenue, at which time they said they would like to have a 100 per cent rule but could live with the 80 per cent rule. They stated they could not live with a less than 80 per cent content rule.

The 80 per cent rule referred to those articles issuing from a source of continuing relationship with another country and those articles would have to be re-edited within Canada. Those were the terms, and that is what the Secretary of State continuously reaffirmed before the committee and, again, repeatedly in the House. He made it very clear, as did members of the staff of the National Revenue Department, that re-editing was not simply changing prepositions, synonyms, but meant substantial re-editing of the material. Then departmental officials appeared before the committee and we wrestled with them as to how this particular rule was to be measured in respect of each of the articles.

The important fact that I want to bring before members of this House is that there was absolutely no turning from