

Non-Canadian Publications

In addition, the company has actively supported the Canadian publishing industry through contributing to advertising research, graphic arts and bookbinding technology and by providing an expanding market for writers and illustrators through its magazine and book business. This is significant, especially in the absence of any positive policies by the minister to support the Canadian publishing industry. This company, since its inception in this country in 1943, has been employing Canadians full-time and today employs 470 full-time employees, 47 of whom have more than 20 years' service with the company. Since it has gone public, it has some 600 Canadian shareholders.

Impressive though all those arguments may be, I submit that there is another argument which should carry even greater weight and perhaps it will explain why there was such a great response from the publishers of *Reader's Digest* and from its readers across the country. I know that every member of parliament has received many letters. I received more than 100 from my constituents. I think the reason the response was so great was that in today's permissive society there are so few magazines which you can safely lay on your coffee-table. There are very few family magazines. The minister smiles. I do not know if he has examined the racks of magazine stores lately and has seen the kind of pornography and trash that passes for Canadian and American publications. This fact alone perhaps explains why there is so much interest in this bill. *Reader's Digest* is unique and has become a tradition in this country. Many of us grew up with this magazine as a family publication and part of our way of life, whether it be the French edition or the English edition. I think most hon. members will support that point of view.

● (1630)

This uniquely family magazine has striven to be a good corporate citizen of this country. It has almost reached its own objective of 30 per cent Canadian content. Whether this magazine reflects American points of view, British points of view or French points of view, the fact is it reflects substantially the points of view of the many Canadians who contribute to it whether in book or magazine form. I believe it is a good, clean, wholesome magazine and we as members of this House have an obligation to do whatever we can to ensure its continued publication in Canada so that it can be enjoyed by the people of this country.

I hope the minister will get the message. I am sure when the bill gets to committee we will hear these arguments again and the minister will be constrained to entertain amendments which will allow this commendable publication to continue to serve the people of Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Is the House ready for the question? The hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens).

Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, as has already been mentioned in this debate, when the minister made his initial statement concerning his intentions to introduce legislation with respect to the matter before us today, I replied on behalf of our party and indicated, as has been indicated today by the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) and other of my col-

leagues in this party, that the principle the minister referred to is acceptable. Where I personally have had great difficulty with the minister's proposals in Bill C-58 is the detail. When I commenced to read the portion of the Income Tax Act referred to in the bill, subsections 19(1), (2) and (4), and realized in what way the minister wishes to amend those subsections, I felt much had to be said before the bill is passed by this House.

While it may be very easy to accept something in principle, I would suggest that we in this House must be doubly certain at times that in attempting to achieve something that appears to be good we do not inadvertently limit freedom of the press or create hardship with respect to a publication in Canada that has been a good corporate citizen. Above all, I believe we have to satisfy ourselves that the measure proposed by the minister is going to be beneficial to Canadian publications in general.

In this respect, I was disappointed to read the address to this House by the Secretary of State (Mr. Faulkner) on May 8. He listed eight points that he regarded as "should not" or "have not" with respect to the concept that we have before us. He then raised four points of "shoulds" or desirable things that he hoped to achieve. In short, he touched on eight negative and four positive points in order to justify the bill. Subsequent to touching on those points, he mentioned various things that he felt the government was doing in order to encourage the Canadian magazine and periodical industry.

What has been even more of a disappointment to me since I spoke to the House on this matter on January 23 is the evidence that the government appears to be growing indifferent to the problems of the press. Many people were shocked when the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) withdrew departmental advertising from *Le Jour*, a Montreal newspaper. He stated that federal advertising should not be placed with a newspaper whose views were incompatible with those of the federal government and with the preservation of the nation. As we know, *Le Jour* is a separatist publication. Subsequently, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) backed up his minister and said the question—

—is to decide if the government should help commercial enterprise.

Madam Speaker, is that really the question when you are dealing with a matter as important as freedom of the press? One would have thought that the only reason for the government to give advertising to the media would have been to inform the public about matters of national concern such as government policy, new laws or regulations. To withdraw advertising on political grounds is to deny a certain segment of the population—in this case the readers of *Le Jour*—their right to such information. I would suggest it is a bad precedent, and once established it will be difficult for the government to draw a fair line between acceptable news media and those that are unacceptable.

Few would support separatism; certainly I presume virtually no one in this House would support that concept. Should the government be allowed to use their economic clout as a tactic to influence the free expression of opinion in any periodical or in any newspaper in Canada, however? I relate this to the bill before us, because while it is a simple matter to suggest that the government should