

without due remuneration. I have never noticed any difficulty in respect of these companies disposing of their stock when they make the decision to do so. If this company decides within a ten year period to be a wholly owned Canadian company with Canadian directors resident in Canada, I am sure this could be brought about without any additional cost to the company.

The sponsor of the bill, in passing, mentioned the board of directors of the company. It is interesting to note that there are Canadian directors of the company normally resident in Canada. Bruce Matthews is of Toronto, Henry Gooderham is also of Toronto. I presume Mr. Matthews is the well known lawyer and that Mr. Gooderham has liquor interests. A. E. Walford is of Montreal. Mr. Paul Matthews is of Toronto. Then it goes on and mentions John A. Hill of Hartford, Connecticut, Olcott D. Smith of Hartford, Connecticut and Fraser M. Fell of Toronto. They list five or six directors who are Canadians. It seems to me that Mr. Matthews would not have much time to devote to his duties as a director of this company. I am sure this is also true of Mr. Gooderham. Perhaps they are on the board, as is the situation in respect of some of the people in the other place, only to provide a Canadian content. In my opinion this is not good enough.

While listening to a couple of economists discuss our national economy I was surprised when they pointed out that the insurance companies of Canada spend more money in the United States than the United States supplies Canada with capital. The drain of money is not into Canada as would normally be expected; it is out of Canada. We have money in Canada which could be used for more development than is the case now if it remained at home rather than going across the border. I suggest this is probably the wish of our people. Therefore it is my opinion that it would be to our advantage that this company consider the suggestions we have made that it be returned to Canadian ownership with a full slate of Canadian directors so that the company will be directed toward Canadian development because of the large sum of money that these insurance companies control.

• (6:30 p.m.)

There was another problem that interested me immensely in respect of this matter.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's time has expired. Is it the pleasure of

Excelsior Life Insurance Co.

the house that the hon. member have leave to continue?

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I received on November 16 the following letter from Mr. Léon Verville who is the executive secretary for the Bois-Franc-Saint-François de Warwick region, and I quote:

Dear Sir,

Along with my colleagues of the Société des Artisans, I am counting on you to oppose as strongly as you can the bill proposing to levy taxes on insurance companies and which places on the same footing co-operatives and fraternal societies such as ours and other life insurance companies.

There is no doubt that the societies and companies hit the hardest are those controlled by French Canadians since they are the smallest. Such legislation will create considerable difficulties in their development and will undoubtedly contribute to maintain the economic inferiority of our people.

Kindly accept our anticipated thanks, etc.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are discussing today Bill No. S-13, which is intended to create an exceptional situation for one insurance company that, in a way, forms part of the American monopoly, since the field of insurance in Canada is largely influenced by that capital.

Several members will probably recall a supplement published by *Le Devoir*, on October 10, 1968, dealing with insurance problems. This supplement underlined the insurance problems in Canada by comparing French-Canadian companies with Anglo-Canadian and foreign companies. The example was given that in 1946, 23 French-Canadian establishments controlled 8 per cent of the market, while 92 per cent was in the hands of 66 Anglo-Canadian and foreign-owned concerns, and the situation has never changed for the better since. The bill before us would give the Excelsior company and its owner, the Aetna company from the United States, a privileged position and the right to compete with other companies.

Mr. Speaker, the paradox in this matter is that, on the one hand, the government members are ready to give some privileges to foreign companies and, on the other hand, in his mini-budget, the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) dealt a nearly mortal blow to our French-Canadian companies.

So that you can realize the full extent of the problem, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you that the Société des Artisans, about which Mr. Verville, to whom I referred earlier,