

*Canadian and British Insurance Act*

incorporated by procedures which take place outside the House. Liberal members will vote to support the bill, and thus support our former position. Is it not interesting to see how positions here change?

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** They could still come before the House.

**Mr. Peters:** The hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) indicates that these companies could still come before the House. It is my guess that nobody will bring such incorporations before this House when it is much easier to obtain letters patent and avoid public exposure.

I also think many hon. members are unaware of the responsibility they are placing on the shoulders of the Superintendent of Insurance. The Superintendent of Insurance will have to do a policing job, not only with respect to existing companies but companies which may be incorporated later. His responsibility to the minister will be to ensure that these are the kind of companies we wish to incorporate.

● (9:00 p.m.)

We are also asking the Superintendent of Insurance to provide some supervision in the field of provincial jurisdiction. Considerable responsibility is being placed on the office of the Superintendent of Insurance. I hope we will provide him with adequate assistance, because he has a grave responsibility. As one member mentioned a few minutes ago, the Canadian public demands almost an exactitude in the supervision of insurance. That is not possible in most countries of the world. Canadians can be very proud of the operation of our insurance companies under federal jurisdiction. There has been very little suggestion of impropriety in any of their operations.

My colleague referred to the Canada Pension Plan. I am sure hon. members who have anything to do with provincial welfare programs are aware that we have now arrived at the stage where Canadians are assisted by the Canada Assistance Plan; the Canada Pension Plan and the Old Age Security Plan. A widow with two children is not in too bad a position if her husband did not leave anything when he died. In some cases she can receive the widow's allowance, mother's allowance, disability pension, assistance from the Canada Assistance Plan through various pieces of provincial legislation plus, if she is the right age, a payment from the Old Age Security

Plan which is supplemented by a guaranteed annual increase. A man with no money who dies and leaves a widow 65 years of age, leaves her in not too serious a situation. If she is 60 years of age she will receive the widow's allowance.

I wish to deal with the situation of a man who saved at a time when a dollar was worth a dollar and bought an insurance policy with a benefit of \$2,000 or \$5,000. After this man dies, a month or so goes by before the insurance company gets around to paying the small insurance benefit to the widow. The widow knows how much it costs to operate her household, she knows what her expenses will be and she is terrified because she knows the money will not go very far. When she tries to get assistance through the Canada Assistance Plan, it is not available because it is operated through provincial plans which apply only when the widow has no money. She is forced to scrimp and save. This widow would find herself in very dire straits before spending the last of the insurance money and applying for assistance.

I have not heard of any insurance agent advising people not to buy insurance. They are selling endowment plans; they are selling insurance plans that really do not take into consideration the developments of the last few years. When my father was a young lad, he bought an insurance policy. I do not know the value of it—possibly \$2,000. He carried that insurance through the depression when money was very hard to come by. He denied himself many of the necessities of life in order to pay the premium every month. He made sacrifices for his family. When \$2,000 is received years later, it is worth only \$300 or \$400; that will be its purchasing power. In my opinion it was a bad investment. If it was a bad investment 30 years ago, it is a much more doubtful investment now.

I think there has to be insurance: I am not arguing that there should not be. But the whole role of insurance has changed. In the last 20 years it has certainly changed in relation to fire and automobile insurance. In some cases it is a necessity to carry basic term insurance, insurance that will provide the biggest return for the least expenditure over a long period of time. I believe the federal government will soon have to consider the expansion of insurance schemes in the public sector. This would mean the Superintendent of Insurance would be running a national