

government retains the privilege of examining all projects of foreign takeovers. However, after assessment, the government retains the privilege of approving the request for purchase of a Canadian company by foreigners, or to reject it. And this looks like a good thing to me, because the Canadian government which must answer to the people has a responsibility to decide whether in its opinion the takeover of a Canadian company by foreigners might be beneficial or detrimental to the interests of Canadians.

As hon. members know, at the end of each year, the minister will be required to table before the House a comprehensive report of his department's activities in this field, which will provide the opposition with ample opportunity to comment on and even criticize the measures taken and decisions made by the government. I suggest that this provision is highly desirable.

Besides, I refuse to believe, as a certain party has been suggesting, that this measure is weak and will have no strength. The provisions contained in the last clauses of the bill are severe enough to potential offenders. In my opinion, this bill has teeth.

For instance, people who simply fail to give notice of their intention to sell their enterprise to foreign concerns will be liable to a \$5,000 fine. We must admit that the government does not joke when it introduces a measure of this type. This is likely to make people who might have avowed intentions to transgress the law think twice.

Moreover, the bill provides that people who refuse to comply with the law will be liable to a \$10,000 fine or six months in jail, or both. This shows that here again the penalties are very heavy, so we can hope that the law will be complied with; we can at least conclude that the government has made this legislation strict enough for it to be enforced.

Reading through the bill a moment ago, I even noticed that the mere fact of impeding a study or investigation being made of a foreign takeover makes the person guilty of this offence liable to a \$5,000 fine. I would say this legislation has teeth and will be complied with.

I think this bill will be welcomed by the Canadian public. Of course, I already know that it will not be welcomed by the radicals, by those who would have liked the government to do nothing to prevent the foreign takeover of Canadian industries. On the other hand, this bill will not please those radicals who would want the Canadian government to buy back dollar for dollar every foreign-owned Canadian enterprise.

But I think that most Canadians will agree with this measure, in view of the circumstances we are experiencing in Canada—and it must be said that this is only one step taken by the government in this direction.

Over the last few years, the Canadian government has introduced several measures to give Canadians firm control over their economy. I do not want to detail them since the hon. minister has done it already when he tabled the bill. However, I would like to add that this legislation is another stone in the setting up of a reasonable system of controls by Canadians on their economy. I suggest it would have been ridiculous, at this time, to hurry things up and take drastic measures that could have affected or

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substantially reduced the inflow of foreign investment in Canada. It is enough for us to realize that some 1,300,000 Canadian students are on the eve of entering the labour market. This considerable number of students will add to that, already known, of the unemployed which we are reminded of every day by the opposition during the oral question period.

It is obvious that the principal concern of the government, at this stage, is the now intolerable unemployment situation and the creation, as soon as possible and by all means possible, of the necessary job opportunities. This is certainly not the best time to propose measures that could prejudice the attainment of the major objective that the government, I repeat, has set for himself, that is to try and guarantee to each Canadian the availability of a job.

That was the dilemma facing the government: on the one hand, to fight unemployment and, on the other, to secure a reasonable independence for our economy.

I believe that the government has efficiently solved this dilemma in submitting Bill C-201 and this is why, Mr. Speaker, I will support this bill when it comes to a vote. I urge my hon. friends to do likewise.

[*English*]

• (1610)

**Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot):** Mr. Speaker, in considering foreign investment and Bill C-201, one has to determine what the government wants to do with this measure and in what direction they want Canada to go. In my estimation, the bill is perhaps more meaningful in its intent than in what it will actually accomplish. Most Canadians in every part of Canada want more control over the life around them and more involvement in their environment. In other words, they want more say in what affects their livelihood. This prompts one to say that we in Canada should control absolutely all the investment in industry and in business within Canada. Can we effectively bring this about and would it be beneficial to Canada if we did?

We just listened to the lengthy speech of the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) in which he gave potash mining as an example, and pointed out how employment in potash mines in Saskatchewan has been reduced to 50 per cent while in Mexico in the same industry, it had been reduced to 90 per cent. He said that if those were Canadian owned potash mines, that would not have happened. He fails to realize that Canada is a trading nation, that potash is used as a fertilizer in countries other than Canada and that what determines how much will be sold, in most cases, is the cost of the product. If they can mine it cheaper in Mexico, then a good international company, a good Canadian company, would do just that for its shareholders. The example he used was a poor one.

He went on at great length to point out the many problems relating to foreign investment in a country, but he gave the House the benefit of no solutions. He overlooked the fact that when the NDP government attempted to establish a steel mill in Regina they went south to the United States for foreign capital, and they went south for foreign know-how. They established their steel mill which is predominantly controlled by Americans, to use their words. They are searching persistently for a tractor