

said, now they are down to 47 per cent as compared with 51 per cent a little over a year ago.

Now we condemn. Who could have foreseen, and who did foresee? As I have said, I have talked to some of the wisest of our investors and some of the shrewdest of our people, and there are very few of those with whom I talked who have not found themselves in difficulties. Some of you, I doubt not, saw the directions given the other day in the will of one of the foremost men of the United States as to the investment of his fortune by his representatives. He indicated that a certain percentage should be invested in various forms of shares and stocks, preferred and common; in bonds, in railway securities, in the securities of various countries of the world, including Canada, and so on. All this indicates the desirability in the minds of many prominent men of the diversification of investments. That principle at least governed in the investments made by the enterprise to which we have referred, and I should like to feel that we would not consciously, in a period of world depression, do an injury to two great Canadian enterprises; I hope that we will not bring distrust and suspicion upon two great enterprises that hold in trust the collective savings of millions of people. For that reason—and I say it to this house with great diffidence—I trust that we will not engage in a discussion of the merits or demerits of the investment or other policies of these enterprises, when their investments have been made within the provisions of the law for which we, as members of parliament must accept the responsibility. I trust that we will dispose of this resolution quietly and expeditiously, and decline to refer it to any committee at this time so that no injury may be done either to the enterprises, to the policyholders—the men, women and children in every part of the world—or to the credit of our country.

Mr. M. F. HEPBURN (West Elgin): Mr. Speaker, I shall not take up very much of the time of the house to-night in discussing the resolution now before us, as I should like to see this matter settled in some way or other in order to end the uncertainty that seems to permeate the minds of the people throughout the province of Ontario and, I believe, throughout the dominion as a whole.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the very excellent presentation of the case by the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Luchkovich), and I listened with equal interest to the excellent discourse on insurance by the

[Mr. Bennett.]

right hon. Prime Minister. I want to assure him that he made a profound impression upon those of us who sit on this side of the house. We fully appreciate the tremendous responsibility that is his at this time in trying to maintain the financial stability of our great institutions. I agree in part with all that was said by the Prime Minister; and, I agree wholly with what he said with reference to the North American Life Assurance Company.

In dealing with this resolution I believe we should differentiate and draw a sharp line of demarcation between the two companies which have been charged. I believe the North American Life is solvent, but on the other hand I believe the Sun Life is insolvent. In order to bear out my statement that the North American Life is quite solvent I have only to refer to the balance sheet of the company itself, as presented to the policyholders on December 31, 1931. As the Prime Minister has said, only a very small amount of the investment of the company is in common stock; the depreciation which this company would take in liquidation would be very small indeed, so I do not think there should be any question at all as to the solvency of the North American Life Assurance Company. With reference to Mr. Bradshaw, the president of the concern, I believe he is an honourable, capable gentleman, and I think he showed his unselfish spirit when he mutualized the company for the benefit of the policyholders. Charges have been made that in that mutualization process some of the directors and other shareholders of the company benefited, and it is quite true that on the face of things only \$200,000 was paid into the treasury of the company while something like \$1,275,000 was taken out. But I might point out that this increased amount taken out was largely made up of profits from non-participating policies which, in effect, belonged to the shareholders of the company.

While I have the floor I wish to make another statement, and that is with regard to the charges which have been made against the premier of this province. I want entirely to dissociate myself from those charges. It has been said that Premier Henry paid in something like \$1,660 and drew out of the company something over \$10,000, making a profit for himself of about \$8,900. On the floor of the provincial house Mr. Henry has denied these charges, and as a parliamentarian I fully accept his denial. I believe he is an honest gentleman, and I think the charges against him were wholly unwarranted. The only criticism I might make, in all kindness, not only with regard to Premier Henry but with