

the House freedom of information legislation whereby the average Canadian citizen will have an opportunity to have a broader insight into the happenings of the federal government. There is a large task ahead of us to restore faith and trust in our federal institutions. The true test of any government is not how popular it is with the powerful, but how honestly it deals with the many individuals who depend upon it.

● (2130)

In the tradition I have established since becoming a member, I shall be very brief. With the tabling of the task force report on Petro-Canada, I think it is important to make a few comments. There is no doubt on either side of the House as to the need for a national oil company owned by Canadians. The dispute comes in as to whether it should have government ownership or whether it should have citizen participation. I campaigned on citizen participation in the petroleum company of Canada, and I wish to share with the House a portion of the release I issued during the election campaign. It reads as follows:

It is important that Canadians have an opportunity to participate directly in the development of our national resources and, because of this, we have advocated that individual Canadians have an opportunity for direct ownership in the Petroleum Co. of Canada. This would be accomplished by offering only to Canadian citizens shares in the Petroleum Co. of Canada. It is advisable also that limits be placed on the number that one can own so that a large block is not purchased by a large multinational company, and that individual Canadians themselves are able to purchase them.

I was delighted to see that the task force report set limits on the amount of ownership that one could have. I believe for individuals they placed it at 1 per cent, and for companies at 2 per cent.

Mr. Fraleigh: Three per cent.

Mr. Elzinga: Three per cent. I believe that many Canadians welcome the opportunity to participate directly. As the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone) pointed out to me in a conversation several days ago, "How much pride do we as individual Canadians feel for Air Canada?" If we had an opportunity to participate directly in a corporation we would feel a certain amount of pride, and we would participate in the development of that organization.

The hon. member for Lethbridge-Foothills (Mr. Thacker) pointed out in his presentation the vast differences which exist between the members opposite and the members on this side of the House. It is great to see that we have broken now in so far as our philosophical beliefs are concerned and that the NDP party and the Liberal party are on the side on which they belong, and that we and the Social Credit party are on the other. They on that side believe that they know what is best for every Canadian, and they like to dictate what should be done for the average Canadian. We on this side believe in individual initiative, and we wish that individual initiative to foster in Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Address—Mr. Elzinga

Mr. Elzinga: If it were allowed, Mr. Speaker, I would share with hon. members present the contempt I feel for the individuals opposite for misleading the Canadian public on the position my government is taking on Petro-Canada. I have a magazine here which states, "Write to your member of parliament to save Petro-Canada. The Tories want to sell off this oil company to other major oil companies." What a bunch of propaganda. We wish to have citizen participation, but they are putting in the minds of people the idea that we wish to get rid of it, to disband Petro-Canada, or sell it to other oil companies.

It is obvious that the government must keep control in certain sectors, as the task force has pointed out, particularly with regard to the negotiation of any necessary state-to-state oil supply contracts, the promotion or increase of frontier exploration, and the promotion of oil sands and heavy oil research and development.

I have one reservation with regard to the task force report, and that is the giving away of shares. Too often individuals when they receive something for nothing do not place the value on that something which it merits. I have no objection to a select number of shares being given away, but I believe the majority of these shares should be offered for sale on a limited basis to the Canadian public.

An hon. Member: No free lunch.

Mr. Elzinga: Right. As a member of parliament from Alberta, I feel I would be letting down my constituents if I did not make a few comments on the energy situation as it exists in Canada. I do so with a certain amount of reservation, but it is my conviction that we Albertans do believe very strongly in doing what is best for the national interest. It is obvious that Premier William Davis of Ontario is, frankly, opposed to the basic interests of Alberta. There is no doubt that a fundamental conflict exists between Alberta and Ontario on the distribution of power in Canada. There is no pleasure in recording that, but it is a bald reality.

Premier Davis would like to see the increasing value of Alberta oil come to Ottawa and to Ontario. He feels that Alberta is wealthy enough, that the shift of money to the west has gone far enough, and he wishes it stopped. However, when we review the record of what Alberta has contributed to the national welfare of this country, we find, because of the prices which we have taken for oil products in the last number of years, that we have contributed approximately \$15 billion to the welfare of the nation as a whole. That is a very significant contribution.

One must face the fact that if the prices on oil products do not rise, the supply will run out. Our premier has stated this on many occasions. In other words, if we wish to have a long-term supply, we must pay the price, but if we do not wish any guarantees we can continue with a low price policy.

It is the position of the Alberta government that Ontario's position is a clear attempt to change the basic concepts and arrangements of confederation which left the ownership of natural resources to the provinces. What is even more objec-