

with both of these in what I hope might be understandable ways, not only for members of this House—and I have found it helpful in achieving my own degree of clarity—but also for those who watch our proceedings from time to time through the medium of television. What I say may help them.

The principle on which this nation was founded, one which continues to this day, is that the voters are supreme. When we elect our school boards, municipal and county councils, our provincial legislatures, or this House of Commons, what we do is elect juries or peers to represent us in a decision-making process. In these forums the majority rules and we are governed. But critical to that is the notion that periodically, every three, four or five years, the voters of this country for each of those bodies have the power and the responsibility to decide whether or not the same people shall continue to govern in their areas of jurisdiction or a different group of people shall govern.

For instance, in the recent municipal elections in the city of Calgary, the latter course was chosen. The entire public school board was changed; half of the separate school board was changed, half of the city council was changed and a new mayor was elected because the voters of the city of Calgary had that democratic right and power to change the jury. I think for those who care about freedom there is nothing more important to protect than that power which lies in universal suffrage in the ballot which all of us enjoy.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hawkes:** The Liberal Party, aided and abetted by some members of the New Democratic Party, is attempting in secret to take that power away from the people and to give it to a jury of nine people, of which five of the nine shall rule. The government is not changing the process of the selection of the nine. That process today, and in the fine print of this resolution, which will be continued, is the selection of those nine people, largely in secret and chosen essentially by one person. That is the nature of the revolution.

There may be value, and I would assert there is value, in handing over to the courts some additional responsibility. But I think that should be matched by a great deal more care and attention. As we increase those responsibilities, then we need to deal with the mechanism of selection to ensure that we, as free people, retain control of that jury as well. Certainly when we attempt to take away from Canadian voters the power to choose who shall govern them, we should do it with a great deal more care, attention and time than we are devoting to the way we are doing it now.

Do I find this denial of the supremacy of voters to be discrepant through the last 12 or 13 years? I do not. There is a school of thought in philosophy and political science which must be described as an attitude portrayed by those who believe in oligarchies, those who believe that somehow there is an elite class of rulers who somehow have more wisdom and knowledge than others, and that this elite class shall rule. If we look back over the last 12 or 13 years, those years which bring us to this point in constitutional revision, we can see that mind

set in operation. The growth to 400 Crown corporations in its basic element represents the fact that we have turned over jurisdiction in 400 areas of our lives to small boards of directors who are not chosen after public examination but are simply appointed.

● (1730)

We get into great debates in this House about patronage appointments, but we cannot have access to information from Crown corporations. These are hot topics for a day or two and then forgotten, but the sum total of 12 or 13 years is the fact that just at the federal level alone we have over 400 of those kinds of groups. That is the consequence of a philosophy which believes in oligarchy.

One of the big issues faced in this House with great frequency in recent times is the energy issue. We argue occasionally about Petro-Canada, its growth, and its development. I ask members of this House how the directors of Petro-Canada were chosen. Do they know their names? What are their qualifications? Are they good at what they do? Hon. members choose to expand that organization and its influence over our lives without the kind of careful consideration that should go into the selection of those people.

How is it that a corporation that is worth \$3.5 billion only had a profit of \$13 million at a time when other oil companies are being accused of excess profits? Does it relate in any way, shape or form to the method we use in choosing who shall govern? Why do we so willingly give those few people such an expanded role? Have they earned it? Are they subject to recall?

I would like to read the first paragraph of Beauchesne's. Soon after I was elected to this House in May, 1979, I was given a copy of Beauchesne. For those of the general population who do not serve in this House and may not know Beauchesne, it is a book which attempts to tell members of Parliament, new or old, their rights and responsibilities. The first paragraph deals with the principles of parliamentary law and reads as follows:

The principles that lie at the basis of English parliamentary law, have always been kept steadily in view by the Canadian Parliament; these are: To protect a minority and restrain the improvidence or tyranny of a majority; to secure the transaction of public business in an orderly manner; to enable every member to express his opinions within limits necessary to preserve decorum and prevent an unnecessary waste of time; to give abundant opportunity for the consideration of every measure; and to prevent any legislative action being taken upon sudden impulse.

That is the responsibility of each and every member who serves in this House. We should put that in perspective and just deal with two of the key points, to "restrain the improvidence or tyranny of a majority" and "to give abundant opportunity for the consideration of every measure, and to prevent any legislative action being taken upon sudden impulse." If all members, regardless of party affiliation, who accept the responsibility of sitting in this House, were to take those responsibilities seriously, how would we feel about the process in which we are presently engaged? I suggest we should at least