

*The Address—Mr. Elzinga*

Finally, it is not sure that the executives and research workers who are working now in those businesses will agree to stay with the prospective buyers of those companies. Worse still, should they fall in the hands of multinationals, the first step which would be taken by those industrial giants would be to close the laboratories and rule out any expenditure for research and development in Canada. So, we would have turned the page on everything which could be a breakthrough in a promising sector for Canada, and for Quebec in particular.

Similarly, we do not understand why it is a shame for the federal government to have a presence in the industrial world through nationalized businesses. Are the provinces not doing the same thing, provinces under Conservative governments such as Alberta and Ontario? Is the present government afraid of its responsibilities? Is it afraid of being a real government?

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I realize that I am actually pleading a case today. In fact, the official opposition has a duty to bring to light the contradictory actions of this government. For example, the new government thinks that Canadians have no assets in this country. Nothing is farther from the truth. Crown corporations act in the interest of Canada and Canadians. The new government wants to be attentive to the needs of the people, yet it refuses to listen to the arguments of the opposition parties as well as to the critics of Progressive Conservative members showing that Canadians are opposed to some government policies. Finally, all the electoral gibberish about promises for a better future, words such as "potential", phrases such as "to have interest in Canada" are but empty clichés and slogans. This government, after coming before Parliament, seems to have prematurely aged. That is understandable since we all know the government wastes its strength and its energy in purposeless activities as it does not know where it is going. The lack of a sense of direction and stubbornness are the two pillars of this new government. In my view that is not a very good omen for the future of Canadians.

● (2120)

[English]

**Mr. Peter Elzinga (Pembina):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to extend the traditional congratulations to the hon. member for Erie (Mr. Fretz) and the hon. member for Cardigan (Mr. MacDonald) for their superb presentations in moving and seconding the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. Also I should like to congratulate Mr. Speaker on his appointment to that honoured position. I share with the House the outstanding contribution Your Honour made during the time I have been in the House of Commons since 1974, and the pleasure I have had working with you.

When one reviews the Speech from the Throne one finds that many positive areas have been advocated and proposed, many important areas. We have received a certain amount of criticism from the opposition in regard to the lack of statements respecting the economy, but in the Speech from the

Throne we find that the government is making a commitment to better control federal government expenditures. The Prime Minister (Mr. Clark) introduced a new expenditure management system so that strict limits will fall upon individual ministers rather than simply on the shoulders of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Stevens). Also we see that there will be parliamentary control in regard to the accountability of Crown corporations and that their spending habits will be scrutinized. We will have regular opportunities as parliamentarians to judge whether various government programs and agencies need to continue, or if they need to be altered at all by the implementation of sunset legislation.

It is a grand feat in itself when the federal government attempts to tackle the waste in government spending which has gone on for many years. In the area of parliamentary reform we see that the House of Commons will have its powers strengthened. Parliamentary committees will be much more effective. The average backbench member of parliament, if we can convince House leaders opposite, will have more of a role to play in discussing particular concerns of keen interest to constituents back home.

Also I wish to congratulate the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski). One cannot help but be impressed with the positive action he has taken in the short period of time he has been the federal Minister of Transport. In my opinion one of the better appointments is the one that the federal minister made regarding the grain co-ordinator, Dr. Horner from Barrhead, Alberta. Not only was he a well-respected politician in the House, but also he was the deputy premier of the province of Alberta. He is an individual who is greatly respected across the country and an individual who can grasp our transportation difficulties.

We have received commitments from three provinces to participate in hopper car purchases so that we can increase the capacity of grain movement. Also we have a commitment from the Minister of Transport that the facilities at the Prince Rupert terminal will be developed to a greater extent. One cannot help but admire the man for giving a commitment that within six years our grain transportation system will handle an additional 50 per cent of grain.

The national government has two basic responsibilities. We have an obligation to run the federal government competently, and to lead the nation to realistic goals. We have a national responsibility to do so honestly. If we as a national government could say to Canadians that we have dealt with the issues honestly, I think we could pride ourselves in that. That is a commitment of this government. We wish to restore faith and confidence in our institutions. The Prime Minister has taken action in this direction. One cannot help but admit that when one does not know the answers, one should be willing to admit that fact. We will make mistakes, but I am hopeful we on this side will be big enough to admit to those mistakes.

The Prime Minister has introduced conflict of interest guidelines for cabinet ministers. Already we have begun to live up to a number of campaign promises, the key one being mortgage deductibility. In the very near future we will see in

[Mr. Dionne (Chicoutimi).]