

statements and put them in context relative to the Crow, I am not sure what we can do about that. But there is much more to the position taken by the minister responsible for the Wheat Board than what the honourable senator might have heard on the radio last night.

Senator Roblin: Then I wish he would explain himself.

Senator Olson: That has been done.

Senator Roblin: Then it has not been explained well, because this morning the news report on the CBC—which is not myself quoting the minister but is the CBC summarizing his statement—was that Senator Hazen Argue, the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, had stated that he was opposed to any re-opening of the issue of the Crowsnest Pass rate. The CBC news goes out over the whole country, and people believe what they hear on the CBC.

Senator Olson: But that is not all.

Senator Roblin: If that is not correct, then I want my honourable friend to say what is correct. If that statement does not mean what it appears to mean on the face of it, then I want the minister of state who made the statement to tell us what it does mean.

Senator Olson: Honourable senators, I see no purpose in continuing this discussion or in engaging in these questions and answers with the honourable senator. The minister has been invited to make a full and complete statement, and I am sure he will be happy to take 40, 60 or 80 minutes, or whatever time it requires, to do that at the appropriate time.

Senator Perrault: What you have been hearing are just fragmentary news reports.

Senator Godfrey: The minister has just arrived.

Senator Roblin: No doubt the minister will answer my questions tomorrow, after he has read what has been said today.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

LETTER FROM MR. TOM SIDDON, M.P.

Hon. Peter Bosa: I should like to direct a question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. I recently received a letter from Mr. Tom Siddon, M.P., Richmond-South Delta, which states in part:

I think you would want to know that the Prime Minister, Mr. Trudeau is receiving thousands of letters similar in form to those attached. There is a genuine feeling, especially in Western Canada, that his unilateral approach to Constitutional Reform is in fact *unconstitutional*.

Can the leader tell us whether it is a correct interpretation to say that the Prime Minister's approach is unilateral when, in fact, the Prime Minister has the support of the federal New Democratic Party, which has two dozen members out west, has the support of the Premier of New Brunswick, who is of Conservative political persuasion, has the support of the

Premier of Ontario, the most populous province in Canada, and has, as well, the support of Mr. Bill Yurko, the Conservative Member of Parliament for Edmonton East, who, I am sure, has the support of tens of thousands of people out west? How could anyone describe that as a unilateral approach?

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, obviously the honourable senator has a firm grasp of the facts.

ENERGY

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL PRICING NEGOTIATIONS—
REPRESENTATIONS BY CANADIAN FEDERATION OF
INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

Hon. Richard A. Donahoe: Honourable senators, I should like to address a question to the Minister of State for Economic Development. I noted that earlier this week the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources blamed Alberta for the fact that high-level energy pricing negotiations had not yet begun. Can the minister indicate whether his government is prepared to be flexible on price, if the negotiations resume?

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of State for Economic Development): That has already been stated a number of times, honourable senators.

Senator Donahoe: According to my understanding of what the minister has just replied, his government has fixed a price which, by its nature, is flexible and may be increased. I believe that was implicit in his answer.

May I direct a supplementary question to the Minister of State for Economic Development? Subsequent to his meeting on Tuesday with John Bulloch of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is reported in the press as saying that it was "certainly an erroneous impression" if anyone thought he was going to offer Alberta higher prices.

When the government is, in advance in that way, closing the door on the prospect of fruitful negotiations in which, presumably, the federal government would have to demonstrate its willingness to compromise, is the minister responsible for economic development at all surprised that Alberta declines to participate?

Senator Olson: Honourable senators, we could go and dig out any number of quotations from *Hansard* of the other place, but my honourable friend can do that just as easily as I; he can do his own homework. If he wants to see what the minister has said about an attempt to re-open the negotiations with Alberta, it is all there, laid out quite clearly in black and white. As I have said, he can do his homework just as easily as I can do it for him.

REPRESENTATIONS OF CANADIAN FEDERATION OF
INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

Hon. Richard A. Donahoe: I have a further supplementary question for the Minister of State for Economic Development. Is the minister aware of the representations made to the