

Corporation has another function does not absolve him from having the responsibility for the other matter. Yet he will not tell this house, in spite of repeated questioning, that he intends to do something to make this project successful.

Senator Olson: Honourable senators, I understand the convolutions of these arguments, but if my friend insists on, or persists in, mixing apples and oranges, that is his responsibility; but it does not make any sense.

Hon. Jacques Flynn (Leader of the Opposition): You do that yourself, and very well.

● (1420)

Senator Roblin: I will ask my honourable friend about the oranges if he does not like the apples. What is he going to do about the Alsands situation in Canada today?

Senator Olson: The Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta, both of which are directly involved, are having further meetings with the partners of the consortium for the purpose of exploring where they can and ought to move in compliance with the agreement that was signed between the two governments. Although my friend can ask what has gone on at these meetings, quite obviously he is not going to get an answer from me, because I was not there. When an announcement is prepared—whether an agreement is reached or there is failure to reach an agreement—I will make sure that my honourable friend is one of the first to know.

Senator Roblin: Well, I submit that my honourable friend is preparing the ground for retreat. He has made it perfectly clear to us on previous occasions that he was standing by the agreement reached in January with respect to Alsands. Everybody knows that in present circumstances he will not be able to hold that ground if he intends to make any progress. Why doesn't he come clean?

Senator Olson: Honourable senators, now it is a matter of "coming clean." I will say, though my honourable friend seems to disregard this, that I respect the fact that if negotiations are to be genuine amongst all of the people who are directly involved—the ministers and the partners of the consortium I mentioned a few minutes ago—we really ought not to be discussing these details across the floor of this chamber or any other place. They should be discussed only in a meeting where the principals are in attendance. It seems to me that that is so obvious and simple that even my honourable friend should be able to understand it.

Senator Roblin: Of course your honourable friend understands it, and he does not disagree with it. I am not suggesting that the minister should negotiate with me or with anyone else across the floor of this chamber with respect to these matters.

Senator Olson: You are asking for details.

Senator Roblin: I am asking for a statement of policy, and that I have not got.

Hon. G. I. Smith: Neither have they!

Senator Olson: My friend obviously cannot read his mail very closely, because if he did he would know the terms and

conditions of the agreement signed between the governments of Canada and Alberta with respect to the negotiating position with consortia such as Alsands. My honourable friend knows very well that the two governments have agreed to move concurrently with respect to any changes that may, indeed, make the whole deal more attractive to the private sector investors that are involved.

Senator Roblin: I can extract one crumb of comfort from these convoluted and partial statements made by the minister. I take it from what he has said to me that he is prepared to alter the final deal that he has offered to Alsands, and that we may expect to see some changes with respect to that project.

Senator Olson: My honourable friend can take that crumb if he wants to.

Hon. R. James Balfour: That is all he can get from it.

Senator Olson: I think, however, that my honourable friend has to understand this issue on a higher level. If the two ministers have agreed to attend a meeting to discuss what can be done in order to get this important project under way, they are prepared to do exactly that, which involves discussing all of the factors that are involved, along with the concerns of the consortium which would be expected to finance, build and operate such a project. All of these things together constitute genuine negotiation, something that this government has done for a long time.

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): Hear, hear!

LEGISLATION

SUGGESTED INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS IN SENATE

Hon. Peter Bosa: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate.

Hon. C. William Doody: Sock it to him, Peter!

Senator Bosa: I am going to try. Since the other place appears to be paralyzed, I wonder whether the leader would consider discussing with his colleagues the possibility of introducing government legislation in this chamber so that the country can get on with its business.

Hon. Jacques Flynn (Leader of the Opposition): Mind your own business!

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Legislation is our business.

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the preparedness of the Senate to initiate certain bills has already been made known to my colleagues in the cabinet.

Senator Flynn: Instead of making pious utterances, bring some bills in.

Senator Perrault: Perhaps this is an opportunity for the Senate to do just that.

Senator Flynn: What are you prepared to do today?