

negotiate an extension of the deadline, the hours of debate, even if it meant having to sit extra days. I reiterate the same offer.

[English]

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Madam Speaker, I think I should wrap this up by putting something on the record that the government House leader did not put there. As he is aware, I attended that House leaders' meeting when that offer was made. At that time I indicated that the proposal would likely not find favour in our caucus unless the days were extended, because we had 43 or more members who had yet to speak. Obviously the hours proposed were not going to accommodate 43 plus members who still had to speak and who had indicated their desire to speak on the measure. Additional days were therefore required. I thought that should be added to the explanation just given by the government House leader.

**Madam Speaker:** The hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro) on the same point.

**Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Madam Speaker, my comment in this connection is that when one is speaking of the right of members of Parliament to express the views of their constituents, there is no matter of negotiating. The words "rights" and "negotiations", as far as members of Parliament are concerned, should not be used in the same sentence.

As my colleague, the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), mentioned, there is the possibility of extending the number of days. Certainly, in a matter as important as the constitution of this country which will determine the shape, size, form, and manner of living in this country for the next century, and perhaps more, this is surely a matter where all members of this House should have an opportunity to speak in the normal hours of debate of this House.

I will not accept the word "negotiation" in terms of the exercise of my right to be heard in this House, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I understand the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River (Mr. Oberle) wants to look at *Hansard* to see whether the first answer which was given to him conforms with what he thought he heard. I do not know whether the explanation given now by the hon. President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) satisfies him as to what was said—I am not saying he is satisfied with the substance of it but as to what was said, and the further explanation given by the hon. member for the Yukon.

Am I to understand that the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River is giving me notice that he might bring up the question of privilege once he has seen the blues?

**Mr. Oberle:** Madam Speaker, if the Acting Prime Minister said that an offer was made to add days to the constitutional debate, I reserve the right to raise this question again.

*Petition—Mr. Siddon*

[Translation]

**Mr. Pinard:** Madam Speaker, in conclusion, since my learned colleague from Yukon has commented on the nature of the negotiations on the proposal, I may add, since this also concerns the point of order raised by the other hon. member, that when our proposal was rejected, he was not present at the one o'clock meeting Wednesday afternoon in my office, it was rather—

**Madam Speaker:** Order. I think that such information might extend the debate. The hon. member wishes to refer to the official report to see whether the answers really agree with what he thinks he has heard. I feel that the exchange has gone on long enough and I want to see what the hon. member will decide on Monday.

**Mr. Pinard:** Madam Speaker, I merely wish to point out that I asked for a counterproposal, but none was forthcoming. There was therefore no question of extending—

**Madam Speaker:** I think that was quite clear. Thank you.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### EXCISE TAX

PETITION RESPECTING NATURAL GAS AND HYDROELECTRIC POWER—MR. SIDDON

**Mr. Thomas Siddon (Richmond-South Delta):** Madam Speaker, during the past three and one half weeks, over 30,000 residents of British Columbia have signed a petition in which they expressed their absolute rejection of any attempts by the Government of Canada to impose a federal excise tax on the export of natural gas and hydroelectric power from British Columbia.

On behalf of my constituents, and many other British Columbians, I present to this House the signatures of 8,640 Canadians and residents of British Columbia who are absolutely opposed to any form of federal excise tax being imposed upon the natural gas and other natural resources of British Columbia.

I might add, Madam Speaker, it is through no help from the NDP that we obtained these signatures. I was presented with a grand total of 25 signatures by that party after they studiously avoided the question for several weeks.

Members of this House know that any such tax on the resources of British Columbia would violate a basic condition of my province's entry into confederation, that condition being that the resources of British Columbia shall belong in perpetuity to the province—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I believe I have a number of petitions today. I must remind hon. members that they are