

I would conclude by telling the hon. member that I said to the members of that executive committee who, by the way, agreed—

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Axworthy:** If hon. members want answers, I am trying to give them. I stated to the members of the executive committee that it did not matter one way or the other, but that it might be preferable to hold the meetings on a regional basis so that a broader range of women could be consulted.

**Miss MacDonald:** It is a shocking indictment of the minister's behaviour, particularly with regard to the fact that he is responsible for the status of women, that he charges the chairperson of the advisory council with having made statements that are inaccurate—in other words, with fabricating the document which was released earlier today. Is the minister now stating that Mrs. Anderson's comment "that the executive interpreted the suggestion from the Hon. Lloyd Axworthy that our conference might be slightly embarrassing to the government" is inaccurate? I would like to ask him if her statement that the government has attempted to influence the council's plans directly is also inaccurate. Are those the accusations he is now making?

**Mr. Axworthy:** As I pointed out, Madam Speaker, it is the executive committee of that council which makes the decision about whether to hold a conference. It was their decision to make not mine. They requested a meeting with me to get my advice. I gave them my advice. It was the executive committee which made that decision. It is Mrs. Anderson who is going against the decision of that executive committee.

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## THE CONSTITUTION

### AMENDMENTS TO PROPOSED RESOLUTION

**Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher):** Madam Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. Later today he will be tabling the amendments to the proposed resolution on the constitution before the joint committee. Will that be the totality of the government's amendments or will the government bring in additional amendments as the committee sits for three weeks on clause by clause study?

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Social Development):** Madam Speaker, I will be appearing before the committee, at which time I will be delighted to reply to that question. We have followed very closely the work of that committee and have listened to the many representations we have received. We intend to make a lot of modifications to the resolution, and these will be known this evening. The committee will be working over the next three weeks. We will listen to the arguments and discussions that will be brought forward. Of course, after many weeks of work the government has a clear indication of what it should do at this time.

## Oral Questions

These amendments will be tabled, reflecting the many representations which have been made and the views of members from all sides of the House. If other arguments come up in the next three weeks, I will consider them, and I am known to be very flexible. This is a rather complex piece of legislation. After having these amendments before the committee for three weeks, when we come back to the House in February we will have a good package which will give Canadians a new constitution.

**Mr. Epp:** I am pleased that the minister has listened to the Canadian people. I now understand he will not take unilateral action because the people are opposed to it. The minister says he will present a package and that he will be flexible. In addition to his package, will he accept additional amendments reflecting what we have heard from the witnesses and what Canadians have been saying through the opposition parties?

[Translation]

**Mr. Chrétien:** Madam Speaker, we intend to appear before the committee this evening, and in the next three weeks we shall see what suggestions are made in addition to those received up to now. However, as I said in reply to the first question, time is running out and a bill of rights as effective as possible and likely to meet the needs of Canadians must be drawn up. We are considering further amendments, but I think that the hon. member will probably be quite pleased with the improvements we will propose this evening.

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[English]

## MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

### REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF CUTBACK OF COMMUNITY SERVICES CONTRIBUTION PROGRAM

**Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg-St. James):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Since his fiscal policies led directly to the cut in the community services contribution program and this in turn led not only to a loss of services across this country but a loss of jobs and economic activity, will he now reconsider his fiscal policies and any cuts to that program?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, as I indicated in the budget statement, it is my intention to follow a certain expenditure path over the next several years whereby government expenditures will not rise above an appropriate portion of the national income. It is within that context that decisions are taken to expand or contract more programs. I have no intention at the present time of recommending to my colleagues a different fiscal framework or expenditure plan from the one I announced in the budget.

● (1500)

**Mr. Keeper:** Madam Speaker, it is sad that the minister will not reconsider his fiscal policies, particularly since they direct-