

certainly be prepared to respect the respective privileges of the legislatures.

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[English]

THE CONSTITUTION

OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO JOINT COMMITTEE

Mr. Doug Neil (Moose Jaw): Madam Speaker, as one who was denied the right to speak in the debate on the constitution, I have been rather disturbed by some of the answers given this morning by the House leader. The Prime Minister gave an undertaking, not only to individual members but to the citizens of Canada, that their representatives would be entitled to speak in this debate. That has been denied us.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neil: My question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister and it is similar to the question put to the House leader. Will I, as an individual member, have the opportunity of making representations to the committee or will I have to be a member of that committee before I can do so? It is a very simple question and I would like an answer.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, the committee will be established. It is master of its own proceedings and it can decide—

An hon. Member: What nonsense!

Mr. MacEachen:—to bring in any member of Parliament. It has been obvious to me for quite some time that members of Parliament who are not members of the committee have been able to be present and have also been permitted to make their views known.

Mr. Neil: I have a short supplementary question. I wonder if the Deputy Prime Minister is prepared to examine the procedure and perhaps make some changes which will guarantee the members of the House of Commons the right to make amendments to the proposed resolution when it is returned to the House.

Mr. Clark: Amendments of substance.

Mr. MacEachen: No, Madam Speaker, I am not proposing to propose amendments to the Standing Orders of the House. The government House leader has already dealt with that question. When the report comes out of the committee, it will be possible for the House to determine what it wishes to do with it. But I am sure the hon. member is sincere in expressing a desire to have his views heard, either in committee or in the House of Commons, and personally I am quite sympathetic to that point of view.

Mr. Neil: Then demonstrate your sympathy.

Oral Questions

Mr. MacEachen: But I suggest to the hon. member that there should be a way to accommodate both the desire of the government to facilitate the passage of this resolution and the desire of hon. members to participate. If his party is prepared to negotiate in good faith in order to make appropriate arrangements in the way described by the House leader, then he will find that we will negotiate in good faith also.

Mr. Clark: That is trickery. Appropriate arrangements on his own terms. That is nonsense.

OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS TO DEBATE JOINT COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Joe Reid (St. Catharines): Madam Speaker, further to the questions asked this morning I should like to add another question and I direct it to the government House leader. From the time of the introduction of this constitutional resolution, we have heard a good deal of glowing comments with respect to fundamental rights and the necessity to entrench those rights against arrogant governments and politicians. We had a fine example of that just recently.

Following the committee's discussions, will I as a member of this House have an opportunity to participate in the debate after the committee has reported to the House, having been one of those who was denied the opportunity by the actions of that arrogant government to speak in this constitutional debate, one in which the Prime Minister invited all members of Parliament to participate?

[Translation]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, I repeat that we will show the same open-mindedness as at the first stage, when we asked the Progressive Conservative Party to negotiate a time schedule which would make it possible for a larger number of its members to deal with this issue. Once again, I reiterate this offer. We are willing to negotiate in good faith, as we have always done in the past, and we expect now the Progressive Conservative Party to co-operate even more to make it possible for its backbenchers—I strongly urge the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party to listen attentively to these representations—to express their views. I advise him that I will make offers to his House leader to increase the time allotted for discussion, even adding a few days, if necessary, so that a larger number of hon. members may be heard. I hope, therefore, that we will obtain more serious co-operation, and that good faith will prevail more than it has up to now.

[English]

Mr. Reid (St. Catharines): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the same minister. Since the reason for the introduction of closure was the economic measures that the government wanted to introduce, may I ask why the minister did not introduce those economic measures last week, this week or even today, and why is the Prime Minister not in his place today if these economic measures are so important?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, as the hon. member is well aware, we will have a budget speech Tuesday night. The offer we made the Conservatives and which they refused was to sit till midnight on Monday to debate the constitutional proposal. We made the offer but they refused. Given that refusal we had no other alternative but to take our responsibilities and respect the Canadian public and act as we did.

Madam Speaker, I draw the attention of hon. members across the aisle to the fact that we have had two elections in one year, that there are 30 bills on the order paper, that we must have nine opposition days before December 10, seven of which will be between November 14 and December 10, and six of those being Committees of the Whole House.

We must have six and one half days to debate the budget speech. Yet we must also continue to govern the country. We must also take our responsibilities. That is why, Madam Speaker, we acted as we did in order to give Parliament, through its committee, the opportunity to consider the constitutional proposal while, at the same time, assuming our responsibilities toward the Canadian public which expects a lot more from its elected representatives than purely delaying tactics such as the ones we have seen in the last few days.

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● (1200)

[English]

FISHERIES**CANADA-U.S. WEST COAST SALMON TREATY—OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS**

Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni): Madam Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. The minister will be painfully aware of the difficulty Canada is having in getting ratification of the east coast fisheries treaty. Also he will be aware of some of the sacrifices fishermen on the east coast have already been asked to make in getting any approval from the negotiating committees.

This week in Seattle, Washington, the negotiating committees for the United States and Canada met to discuss a treaty which will have a joint management of the west coast salmon industry. Does the minister feel that the treaty on the west coast is important enough to have a parliamentary debate before any Canadian government ratification occurs? Will he guarantee to give some assurance to the House that before any ratification is undertaken by the government we will have a chance to discuss the treaty which may be signed?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, certainly I recognize the sacrifices made by Canadian fishermen on the east coast. The Secretary of State for External Affairs has made that point very strongly and clearly. As for the possible west coast agreement, I have not

yet been debriefed on the results of the negotiations that took place this week.

An hon. Member: What do you mean by “debriefed”?

Mr. LeBlanc: I hope to do this over the weekend. I do not think the procedure in Canada is the same as that in the United States. For that reason I do not think I can answer in substance the hon. member's invitation to have a debate of the type which would lead to a vote on ratification or non-ratification. As the hon. member well knows, I favour full discussion of these questions in a parliamentary committee. I am sure we will find a way to air fully the views of members on all sides of the House.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF NEGOTIATION

Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni): Madam Speaker, perhaps the minister is aware that one of the difficulties in the Canadian public's mind is that they do not have enough information. They are not aware of the kinds of sacrifices Canadian fishermen have already undertaken.

I should like to direct my supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Recently at a conference on “Approaches to Foreign Policy—Differences and Similarities” the minister made the following statement:

In Canada, parliamentary approval is sought only for some of the very most important treaties, and treaty negotiation and ratification is a matter of executive authority as an element of the royal prerogative.

Also the minister indicated that they were looking at alternatives to the present method of negotiating treaties. Does he feel this treaty is important enough to be dealt with in Parliament? Has he decided on any mechanism by which we can delay our decision in the House or by his government until the United States Senate has given its approval?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, that is a question which has not yet been considered by the government nor in all its implications even by myself, because we are not far enough along the road yet for that decision to be warranted.

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OFFICIAL REPORT

DELAY IN TRANSLATION OF YESTERDAY'S ISSUE

Madam Speaker: With the permission of the House, I should like to make two brief statements. I want to inform the House that *Hansard* will be available later today; we have had problems with translations. It is not that the translators did not work very hard in order to allow us to have *Hansard* this morning, but because of the circumstances of which all members are aware, the staff was rather thin, some of them had worked for approximately 48 hours in a row, and people were very, very tired. Therefore, there will be a delay in the publication of *Hansard* today, but we hope things will be re-established very rapidly.