

Copies of Notices of Ways and Means Motions to amend the *Income Tax Act* and to amend the Income Tax Application Rules, 1971, issued by the Department of Finance.

QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE CONSTITUTION

SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE—GOVERNMENT AMENDMENTS TO PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR JOINT ADDRESS

Hon. Jacques Flynn (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, before I put my question to the Leader of the Government—I keep him waiting because I know he must be nervous—may I say that I was pleased to be away from this place for four weeks? I would have been happy to stay away even a little longer, but if we have to be here we are prepared to work and to offer the government our co-operation, at the same time hoping that it will recognize the rights of the opposition to express its views in all circumstances, especially when the report of the Special Joint Committee on the Constitution comes before us.

• (2010)

My question to the Leader of the Government is in connection with the amendments proposed by the Minister of Justice.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, I have here the French version of the news release on the statement of the Minister of Justice concerning the amendments to the resolution on the Constitution:

I made a careful study of both written documents and testimonies—meaning the evidence and the documents tabled before the committee—and, of course, I took into account the opinions expressed by the members of the committee.

So stated the minister.

The government has indeed been listening to the views of all Canadians.

Yet, it seems to me that nothing in the government proposals reflects the objections of the provincial premiers or the attorneys general. Am I then to understand that neither the premiers nor the attorneys general of the provinces are Canadians?

[English]

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I think it should be made clear at the outset that the proposed amendments presented last evening by the Honourable Jean Chrétien do not necessarily constitute the final number of amendments which the government may be prepared to support.

The special joint committee is now in the process of considering the proposed bill clause by clause. Indeed, some mem-

[Senator Perrault.]

bers of this place are active and outstanding participants in this vital process of analyzing in detail the proposed constitutional measures. During that process, there may well be additional amendments brought forward by the government which may alleviate some of the concerns expressed by the Leader of the Opposition.

REFERENCES TO APPEAL COURTS BY PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

Hon. Duff Roblin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I should like to return to a point that I raised on a couple of occasions when I addressed questions to the Leader of the Government with respect to the policy of the government in the matter of appeals to Canadian courts on the constitutionality of the government's proposal. I have asked the leader on previous occasions to tell us whether it would be the policy of the government to press ahead with the proposed Joint Address and send it to London, if nothing else stands in the way, before the Canadian courts have ruled on the propriety of the enterprise.

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I will take the question as notice, but the last information I had on the subject indicated that the government would proceed on its announced schedule regardless of appeals to the courts. However, further information will be sought on the point.

Senator Roblin: I thank my honourable friend for this interim reply, and I hope that he will be able to give me a firm statement on the matter soon, because if he is telling the house that the government deems it appropriate to proceed with its proposal when the constitutional propriety is under question before the Canadian courts, I think he is opening up a large area of debate in which I am sure there will be considerable public interest.

THE ECONOMY

INCREASE IN YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Hon. C. William Doody: Honourable senators, I wish to put a question to the Minister of State for Economic Development.

On looking at the latest Canadian labour force figures, I noted that youth unemployment increased a full percentage point in December and that there are now almost 100,000 Canadians between the ages of 20 and 24 out of work. That is a terrifying number. Could the minister tell us what new policies or programs the Government of Canada has in mind to try to correct this rather tragic situation?

• (2015)

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of State for Economic Development): Honourable senators, the government has certain plans, some of which have already been announced, with respect to the particular sector of the labour force to which the honourable senator has referred. The details of those plans and policies will, of course, be made known from time to time directly by the minister responsible.