

PCO file
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SECRET

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MEMORANDUM TO THE HON. JAKE EPP

From: Ray Protti, Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet (Social Development) (Orig. signed by R.P.)

P&P's Discussion of the Government's Response to the Recommendations in the "Equality for All" Report

We have drafted the attached notes for your use in briefing P&P on the results of CCSD's deliberations on the response proposed for the Government. We understand Mr. Crosbie will be asked to give his assessment of the overall response and of caucus views.

You may wish to note that, in the majority of cases, the responses have been updated to reflect CCSD's discussions. However, certain changes proposed by Mr. McLean (to recommendations 16 and 37) have not been incorporated, pending the development of suitable wording. In other instances, the Department of Justice or other departments have suggested additional wording, which was not considered by CCSD, and hence is not incorporated in the CR. To address these situations, the CR does allow Mr. Crosbie to make such adjustments, as necessary, in the final text in consultation with you and the Ministers concerned.

While it may be possible to determine the final responses this week, to allow further consideration and discussion of the means to communicate the response, P&P may wish to revisit this particular matter on February 11. If so, then in Mr. Crosbie's absence at a Federal-Provincial ministerial meeting, you may be called upon to report on any discussions which Mr. Crosbie and Mr. Beatty have had in this regard.

Cohen Sulzenko/scm

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Response to the Recommendations in the
"Equality for All" Report

Speaking Points

- CCSD met on three occasions (January 15, 27 and 29) and reviewed the individual texts of each proposed response to the report's 85 recommendations.
- The discussion was comprehensive. Ministers focussed on the implications of each individual response and of the overall response proposed.
- Caucus was consulted extensively as Mr. Crosbie will relate shortly.
- Ministers reached agreement on the responses with the exception of the response to recommendation 29 on women and the Armed Forces, where two alternative responses are proposed for P&P's consideration at Annex 2 to the CR, although agreement is close even in this case.
- There are a number of other areas where agreement was reached, but where strong views were expressed and which may merit further consideration, for example:
 - whether a number of issues can be deferred to the current review of the Canadian Human Rights Act (e.g., primacy, mandatory retirement, sexual orientation, political belief and criminal conviction) without weakening the Government's response significantly and placing a greater, albeit, future burden on the Government to act in these areas and whether the individual responses in these significant areas are acceptable;
 - whether a detailed response is to the best advantage of the Government or do certain meritorious initiatives risk being obscured by the higher profile issues contained in the recommendations. [You will recall CCSD Ministers strongly supported as comprehensive and substantial an overall Government

response as possible to ensure that the response demonstrates the Government's strong commitment to social justice.]

- CCSD decided to withhold consideration of the financial implications of and communications strategy for the Government's response until the overall package has been determined. [CCSD will consider approving the necessary funding, once the substantive responses have been finalized.]
- The response is a key initiative under the social justice priority theme. It affords the government an opportunity to demonstrate its concern and commitment to the furthering of social justice.