

*Government Organization Act, 1970*

**Mr. Nielsen:** As to the point just raised by the President of the Treasury Board, I believe the ruling is clear. As the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre has pointed out, in the absence of unanimous consent the committee cannot go on with any business—

**An hon. Member:** No.

**Mr. Nielsen:** I heard the word "No". I do not know where it came from.

**An hon. Member:** I do.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Unanimous consent was not forthcoming.

**Mr. Jerome:** What rule is that?

**Mr. Nielsen:** I have just shut the book and I have forgotten the number. I did quote it in my previous remarks. I do not think the committee can proceed with any business until the question has been dealt with.

**Mr. Paproski:** I do not wish it to be thought that it was I who said no to the question asked by Your Honour in the last few minutes. I heard one of the members opposite mention my name, but I cannot recall saying "No" at that time. I would just like to have that on the record.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Chairman, since Your Honour is still in the chair and talk is still going on, I wonder if I may say a word. I trust hon. members realize that if we follow the rule, if we do not give unanimous consent to vary the practice, then Your Honour, you, the same person, will take the chair. At that point we shall have the same debate over again and Your Honour will be called upon to rule again. It will be a ruling on your own decision, and from that ruling there would be no appeal.

It would seem to me that if I were appealing this ruling—and I did not do so—I would prefer to have someone else pass judgment on it than to ask you, Mr. Chairman, to pass judgment on a ruling you, yourself had made. I would think, therefore, that those who want an appeal would be serving their best interests if they were to give unanimous consent for the House to carry on with Part III or Part IV of the bill, then come back to this question when Mr. Speaker himself is back in the chamber to hear fresh argument as to whether Your Honour, as chairman of the committee of the whole, made the correct ruling. I have some thoughts about that ruling but I shall not express them now. I just hope we can carry on.

**Mr. McGrath:** Mr. Chairman, I did not refuse unanimous consent and I want the record to show that.

**An hon. Member:** Oh, yes.

**Mr. McGrath:** I am trying to facilitate the procedure of the committee and help Your Honour. There has been some difficulty in understanding the procedure. However, it has been well outlined by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. I feel that what he has said is very relevant and it is my impression that if the Chair were again to ask for unanimous consent it would be forthcoming.

[Mr. Drury.]

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chairman:** Well, I will do that, but it will be on behalf of the committee. I have indicated my position. I think it is a correct one in accordance with our Standing Orders and practice. However, if the committee wishes me to do so, I will again ask if there is unanimous consent. In order that we may be clear on the point, I understand that if there is no dissent the committee will proceed to consideration of clause 12.

Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

On clause 12—*National Research Council.*

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** I rise only to ask whether the President of the Treasury Board, who has this institution under his jurisdiction, intends to make a statement as to the general work he proposes doing as a result of this alteration or extension of his powers. It seems to me the committee would be glad to hear him now if he has a general statement to make.

**Mr. Drury:** Since our examination of the bill has now been going on for some 12 days, I would hesitate to lengthen the proceedings by repeating what I had to say at the outset of the debate in relation to this particular function. I am sorry the hon. gentlemen was not here then.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** I was.

**Mr. Drury:** In that case, the hon. gentleman will be able to recollect what I said and perhaps there is not much point in my further burdening the committee today.

Clause agreed to.

**The Chairman:** Is it agreed that the committee should now proceed to consider Part IV of the bill?

On Clause 14—*Establishment of Ministries of State*

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Part IV deals with ministries and ministers of state, and it seems to me we ought to follow the practice we have followed up to now. When we dealt with Part I, the minister-designate for the department of the environment was present. I understand that when we deal with part II the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources will be in attendance. Since Part IV deals with ministries and ministers of state, I think the Prime Minister should be here because it comes directly under his jurisdiction. He is the one who is to select these ministers of state. He is the person who will allocate various responsibilities to them from time to time. This is an entirely new procedure, establishing ministers of state, and it seems to me that only the Prime Minister is in a position to tell the committee why he is introducing this innovation, what are the reasons behind appointing ministers of state, why the number is to be five, and so on. There are a great many questions here which, it seems to me, with all deference to the President of the Treasury Board, do not come within his discretionary power. The Prime Minister ought to be