

S.O. 30

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): The Hon. President of the Privy Council, on the same point of order.

Mr. Pinard: The Hon. Member for Yukon does not seem to have understood what I was saying and I am not going to repeat what I said. I have explained why we could not ignore the letter and the intent of standing order 30. However, since he is saying that with unanimous consent, just about anything can be done, I would like to suggest a more intelligent solution. I suggest that the House approve unanimously the words spoken by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) this evening in which he condemned, in no uncertain terms, the attitude taken by the Soviet Union regarding the occurrence we are discussing tonight.

Therefore, if the House is willing to state its unanimous support for the statement made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen), I think that would be the intelligent thing to do. It is nonsense, however, to ask the unanimous consent of the House for supporting an amendment to an adjournment motion. It does not make sense. I think it would make more sense for the House to say simply, in a unanimous vote, that it fully supports the comments made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in his speech this evening regarding the incident a few days ago in which an aircraft was shot down by the Soviets.

[*English*]

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I would suggest that there are two tasks before you. I have specifically asked that the Chair request unanimous consent to put that amendment. There is obviously support on this side to grant that consent so that our feelings are unmistakably conveyed to the Chairman of the Presidium of the U.S.S.R., the Supreme Soviets, but if that is not the wish of Government Members and they do not want to convey that sentiment in that way, then the Chair is faced with task number two, the need to make a decision as to whether or not the amendment is procedurally acceptable. I would hope that before coming to that conclusion, which the Chair can come to as we move along in the debate if unanimous consent is not forthcoming, that the Chair would want to hear submissions as to the acceptability of the amendment before making a ruling.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order. In the first instance the Hon. Member for Yukon was quite right in reminding the Chair that the Hon. Member for York-Peel had not presented a motion but an amendment to the main motion. That was my unfortunate choice of words.

The Chair has heard arguments from both sides of the House and I think it would be wise at this point in time to take the matter under advisement and the Chair will render a decision on the amendment before the House at the earliest possible opportunity. In the meantime I would suggest that we resume debate.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, that is most acceptable to us, of course, but I have asked the Chair to seek unanimous consent notwithstanding the procedural acceptability of the amendment. I have asked the Chair to seek unanimous consent now to put the amendment and to vote on it, and so I would ask the Chair to request that unanimous consent now with the knowledge that it will likely be refused by Government Members.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, I realize you already rendered a decision stating that you wanted to take the acceptability of the amendment under advisement, and that you would subsequently indicate what you intended to do. Perhaps meanwhile, my colleague, if he is in good faith, will agree to hold consultations with the representative of the New Democratic Party and myself, so that we can try to reach agreement on a mutually acceptable text, since it is clear that in this House, we all have the same views on the subject now being considered. I would prefer to avoid spending much more time debating procedural matters. Mr. Speaker, you have just rendered a decision in which you stated that you wanted to take the acceptability of an amendment under advisement, but we can still hold consultations during the next few minutes to find out whether we could not agree on a text that would have the unanimous consent of all three parties.

[*English*]

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged by the remarks of the Government House Leader that he wants to have discussions with respect to the phraseology of the amendment, and we accept that sincerely and immediately. However, that does not dispose of the right of Members to ask the Chair to request unanimous consent under these circumstances. That is quite apart from the procedural acceptability of the motion. But I accept in good faith the Government House Leader's suggestion. I would assume that the New Democratic Party would do likewise in order to see if we cannot arrive at a mutually acceptable phraseology for an amendment that could be put unanimously; but I reserve my privilege and my right to request the Chair to put the unanimous consent necessary. Any Member can request unanimous consent to put such an amendment.

● (2110)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, there are two points at issue here: first, the Hon. Member's right to ask for the unanimous consent of the House to put an amendment, whose acceptability you said you wished to take under advisement. I submit it is impossible to give unanimous consent to an amendment that is not on the table and that has not been judged acceptable by the Chair. We therefore respect that Chair's decision to take this matter under advisement and to see whether the amendment is acceptable or not. That being said, the second point is that we are willing to meet right away with the House leaders, to discuss a procedure that would be acceptable to all three