

**Mr. Speaker:** I see that the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) wishes to take part in the discussion on the point of order. I am not sure whether he believes this to be necessary. The hon. member nods his head, so I shall allow him to make his contribution.

**Mr. Howard (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, I would not have spoken had it not been for what the minister said in response to the point raised by the hon. member for Oxford (Mr. Nesbitt) when he told us that the bill contained nothing new but simply reflected what the minister had said in previous speeches. This may well be the case, but I contend that the period which has elapsed between publication of the bill and the start of this debate is so short that it has not been possible for us to check this out and to determine what, in fact, the bill does contain.

**An hon. Member:** And to re-read his voluminous speeches.

**Mr. Howard (Skeena):** Yes. If we were to read all the speeches which pour out of the minister's office as though he were running a printing press, a month would be more like the time required.

**Mr. Chrétien:** Thank you for the compliment.

**Mr. Howard (Skeena):** We all know that most of the speeches written by the minister's public relations people never show up in legislation. The minister's argument in substantiation of his position really founders at this point.

**Mr. Speaker:** I assume the point raised by the hon. member for Oxford was intended as a caveat. The hon. member will recognize that the Chair is only required to determine whether the procedure laid down in the rules has been adhered to. This bill was introduced on Monday and ordered to be printed. It was printed overnight and made available yesterday. I appreciate that this is a somewhat rapid sequence of events.

The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) announced yesterday that it would be debated today. I recognize that this amounts to proceeding with some expedition in the consideration of the measure. At the same time, our Standing Orders recognize that the calling of business from day to day is the responsibility of the government. The Chair cannot substitute its judgment for that of the government in such matters, bearing in mind particularly that this responsibility is

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cast upon the government by the Standing Orders themselves.

**Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, the minister's statement that he has merely embodied in this legislation proposals which have been raised in his earlier speeches is inaccurate. That is the kindest way in which I can put it. I shall endeavour to substantiate this point as I proceed. Before doing so, however, I should like to deal with two other matters which may affect the propriety of our considering this bill today more seriously than the point of order which has just been raised by my hon. friend. Your Honour will note that on page 2 is set forth the recommendation which was made in bringing the bill before the House. On line 8 there is the following phrase: "and to increase the size of the respective councils and the number of members elected thereto." My interpretation of that phrase is that it is the intention to increase the size of both councils. If that were not so, the phraseology referring to the "size of the respective councils" would not have been used.

• (3:40 p.m.)

The amendments to the Northwest Territories Act do contemplate an increase in the size of the Northwest Territorial Council, but nowhere in the amendment to the Yukon Act is there any reference to an increase in the size of the Yukon Council. If the recommendation that is before Parliament is that the size of the respective councils is to be increased, the bill would appear to be deficient or the House is not being given the proper information. Before proceeding with the second point, I think in that regard there might be a reply to the point of order.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, under the new rules the recommendation replaces the earlier request for permission to introduce any bill affecting the balance of ways and means. It used to be that points of order were brought against a recommendation because it was too narrow. This point of order is brought against it because it is allegedly too wide.

**Mr. Nielsen:** No.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** The point of the recommendation is to replace the earlier authorization for ways and means. If the recommendation is too wide, or refers to two councils instead of one, surely that error would only go to a superabundance of caution and would not affect the legitimacy of the bill.