

Point of Order—Mr. Nielsen

Mr. Nielsen: We are governed by lights and dials and knobs in this place, and I could say a few words about knobs, too. I was saying that at page 14997, to refresh the memory of the Chair, Madam Speaker was dealing with this subject. I had reached this point, quoting her ruling:

Reference was made to page 2 of the Order Paper which is entitled "Projected Weekly Order of Business". Although it is not an official part of the Order Paper, it is inserted for the information and the convenience of hon. members.

That is where Bill C-155 appears today. That, Sir, is a new point which the Chair has not considered. Simply because Bill C-155 appears on the Projected Order of Daily Business does not fit within the Standing Order as being sufficient notice with respect to the change of the order of business—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Can the Chair put a question to the Hon. Member, with all due respect to him? He is quoting, I believe, from page 14997 of *Hansard*. Is that correct?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, you will recall—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: February 15, 1982, the Speaker?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, if you will tell those at the console to turn on my light I will be heard by you.

I said at the outset that in order to assist the Chair I wanted your officers to get you the precedents from which I cited when I was on my feet on this last occasion before being interrupted. I cited the page number of *Hansard* from which I was quoting—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Could I indicate to the Hon. Member that in the precedents quoted by Madam Speaker at that time both of those motions had been placed on the Table before six o'clock, within the required time.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, maybe I am having difficulty communicating. I am talking now about Bill C-155 and the idea that simply because it appears on the publication being dealt with by Madam Speaker at that time, the "Projected Weekly Order of Business"—did not constitute the kind of notice that Standing Orders refer to when the Government is given the authority to set the order of business of the House. Could we understand that point, Mr. Speaker? I am only one Member. There are 282 Members in this place who require notice. Last night there were 233, or whatever the number was.

Now as to what occurred. I was telephoned by an officer in the office of the Government House Leader. I managed to inform perhaps five or six Members of this Party that there had been a switch in the order of business today. None of the other Members had been communicated with so they are confronted today for the first time with something different to debate, and the Member in whose name the motion stands was not one of those I consulted after receiving the personal notice from the office of the Government House Leader.

Therefore, you have at least 93 or 94 Members of this Party who were unaware of any change in the order of business today. I dare say there would also be some Members in the

New Democratic Party who were unaware there was a change in the order of business today. That is wrong, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Orders do not give the Government House Leader the opportunity, as broadly as you want to stretch them, the authority or the opportunity to come in in the middle of an order of business and change without due notice the order of business. That is what happened here.

We were aware that today was to be an allotted day. That is the business on the official Notice Paper, not Bill C-155. On the occasion upon which Madam Speaker ruled, and in defence and support of her ruling against the arguments I was making at that time, she said that the Projected Order of Business is not an official publication of the House of Commons and, therefore, the Government House Leader could do what he did. If that is a precedent, if Madam Speaker's ruling means anything, surely it means that Members should not be caught unawares by a sudden change in Government business at 8.30 p.m. or 9.30 p.m., as was the case last night when I was so informed. There was no way at that time that I could have given notice to Members here, particularly the Member in whose name the motion stands for today, or could—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Could the Chair put a question to the Hon. Member? In the interests of clarifying the situation, is the Hon. Member contending that the Government House Leader did not have authority to call Bill C-155 as the business for today? Is that the Hon. Member's contention?

Mr. Nielsen: I certainly do contend that in support of the right of the Hon. Member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe to have his order proceeded with today, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Could the Chair ask the Hon. Member another question in the interests of resolving our difficulties? If that is the contention—

Mr. Nielsen: Why do you not let me complete a sentence before you stand up, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Courtesy is a normal procedure of the House.

Mr. Nielsen: Yes, it is.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair is attempting to observe it. If the Hon. Member's contention is that the Government House Leader does not have authority to call Bill C-155, what does the Hon. Member believe should be the order of business of the day and what is his contention?

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, if I were to be allowed to complete a sentence, with great respect to the Chair, before being interrupted, the Chair might understand what I am contending. But if I am continually interrupted in mid-sentence, then there is no way that I am ever going to get through to the Chair so that it will understand.

What I am contending is that some 95 Members, in particular the Hon. Member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe, came here, on notice given on the official records of the House,