

power. Statements about the power of the Prime Minister have been made in recent days by hon. members sitting to the right of the Chair and, indeed, by one or two who have been pretty close to the citadels of power and who were aware of what they were saying.

Before this amendment was proposed, this bill gave the Prime Minister complete power to set up ministries of state with ministers presiding over them, in other words new departments of government, without any reference to Parliament whatsoever. Under this amendment that situation has now been changed. Any new departments, which is after all what there would be if we set up ministries of state with ministers presiding over them, can be established only after there has been the explicit approval of Parliament after debate on the floor of the House of Commons.

I am glad that the amendment refers not only to proclamations under clause 14 but also to proclamations under clause 16. Clause 14 is the one under which a new minister and ministry of state can be established. Clause 16 is the clause under which the name of a minister or ministry of state can be varied. It would have been unfortunate if clause 16 had not been included. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, there is no need to spin out this debate. We support the amendment.

● (3:20 p.m.)

We on this side are being very modest. This could be a time when we could jump around and say how we have won the battle which the opposition has waged. The fact is we are pleased. I think there will go down in history the words that the President of the Privy Council used when he referred the other day to the retreat that had been made on his side. He said it was a retreat that he enjoyed. We are all happy. We have reached agreement. That is fine. Let us support the amendment and get on to the other clauses of the bill.

There was one statement by the hon. member for Peace River that I would like to amend slightly. He spoke of this amendment giving to those in opposition the right to have the last word as to whether the government sets up a new ministry of state. May I just say that this amendment places that right where it ought to be, not just in the hands of the opposition, but in the hands of Parliament. We are pleased to note the growing uneasiness among members who sit to Your Honour's right over the power of the government. I think members on that side are as happy as we are that the battle was sustained and that the House leaders got together and reached an accord so that we now have a provision under which this attempt by the Prime Minister to add to his enormous powers has been clipped. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, we welcome the amendment. It will have our support.

Mr. Baldwin: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I inadvertently referred to the hon. member for York Centre. I want to give credit to all members by correctly stating their constituencies. It was the hon. member for York West I had in mind when I referred to members who should put their votes where their mouths are.

Government Organization Act, 1970

The Chairman: Is the committee ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Chairman: The question is on the amendment. Amendment agreed to.
Clauses 17 and 18, as amended, agreed to.

The Chairman: Shall the committee revert to clause 14 under this Part?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chairman: The committee now has for consideration clause 14.

Clause agreed to.
Clauses 15 and 16 agreed to.
Clauses 19 to 22 inclusive agreed to.

On clause 23—*Other Ministers of State*

Mr. McCutcheon: I wish to direct one or two questions to the minister in connection with clause 23. In all of this discussion, there has been no mention of the tremendous increase in cost for these extra ministers. I would like to throw out one or two thoughts that I have on this subject. Possibly the minister can comment on these.

At this moment there is a proposition before the House with regard to increased salaries of Members of Parliament. Why is so much weight given to the suggestion that another minister is going to be appointed? Why is this necessary as far as the salary range is concerned? If the increase in the salaries of Members of Parliament is approved, this should be adequate. The government might take a lead from industry in this regard and give these individuals the title and authority without the additional salary. These ministries could be used as a training ground. If the individuals can cut the mustard, they could be advanced to full status. Here is an opportunity for the government to save a little money and at the same time recognize budding talent, but that budding talent should prove itself in the same way as is done in business. I just throw out this suggestion for the minister's comments. Why would something of that order not be favoured by the government? Why should a person be more important just because he is drawing an extra salary?

Mr. Drury: In answer to the last question, which I understand to be why should a man have greater importance just because he is drawing extra salary, I think it is generally acknowledged in both the private and public sectors that remuneration should be provided adequate to the responsibilities which a man is being asked to discharge. In our kind of social economic environment, we normally measure by differential in salary, the difference in responsibilities and the onerousness of the duties the man is going to have to carry out.

I do not think the hon. member will argue that the responsibilities which the nominated ministers of state