

House of Commons—Amplifying System

orator's own voice, which would result in a "howl"; and secondly, there should be no need for other members with normal hearing, sitting in the immediate vicinity of the orator, to require any reinforcement since they would, under normal circumstances, hear him direct without difficulty.

It will be seen, therefore, by such switching, the sensitivity of the microphone in use can be increased to enable the orator's voice to be suitably amplified for the energizing of the remainder of the remote speakers.

When a member who has been speaking concludes his speech and sits down and another member in another part of the house gets up, the Tannoy operator follows the movement visually, and by an ingenious but complex switching arrangement, the operator merely depresses a small switch controlling the zone in which the new member is speaking, and this switch has the effect of unlatching all the previous connections electronically, and setting up a precisely similar set of operating conditions in the new zone.

It will be seen, therefore, that much depends not only on the desirability of a member to speak up and speak so far as possible towards his nearest microphone, but in order to enable the engineer/operator to switch in the appropriate microphone in the member's zone as quickly as possible, he should see him rise to his feet, preferably pausing for a moment before speaking. Such a procedure gives the engineer/operator more time (a) to identify the member and his zone, and (b) to do the necessary switching (which is almost instantaneous) which will ensure that the microphone in that particular member's zone is made live, and the necessary muting completed. It will be seen that if a member who intends to speak commences his statement whilst he is actually rising from his seat, it is quite conceivable that the operator will not have seen him start to rise, nor be aware of his intention, until the member may have actually spoken two or three words.

A plan of the house is being produced upon which will be delineated the areas and zones which have their individual microphones and control systems. This should enable members to determine for themselves, by simple observation, not only which is the nearest microphone in their zone and to which they should address their remarks as often as possible, but it will indicate whether or not the speakers provided on their desks are operating or whether they are muted when a given microphone is selected.

The engineers will be very happy indeed, at any time, not only to explain to the members or those interested how the system works, but to give advice which would enable both the intelligibility and efficiency of the system to be improved.

As soon as these charts are available, one of which I have before me, copies will be distributed to hon. members. It was discovered that facilities exist underneath the table for the installation of a roving microphone, such as the Tannoy company have installed in the House of Commons of the United Kingdom. When the president of the company informed me of that I suggested that, perhaps, if they had the equipment we might see what would happen if it were used in connection with speeches of hon. members seated in front rows on both sides of the house. The microphone which is now in front of the minister is merely, as I said, a duplication of the suspended microphone,

[Mr. Speaker.]

which is now dead. The minister will be speaking through the floor microphone in front of him, and we will see what happens.

Mr. T. H. Goode (Burnaby-Richmond): Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege. I was the one Your Honour named as having complained regarding the facilities. I was of the opinion that the system was not working as completely as it was thought it would when it was first installed, and that is why I raised my voice to make a complaint. However, I am sure Your Honour has the matter under consideration; and we will see what happens.

Mr. Winch: Speak up; that is all that is wrong.

Mr. Goode: No, it is not a matter of speaking up.

INQUIRY AS TO BROADCASTING OF DEBATES

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. H. Castleden (Yorkton): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration as the minister in charge of house procedure. Will the matter of having these house microphones connected to the C.B.C. be considered—

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Castleden:—so that such debates as we are going to hear today may be broadcast to all the people of Canada?

Some hon. Members: No.

Hon. W. E. Harris (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. friend's question was answered by the reaction of hon. members. In any event, the method of dealing with debates here comes peculiarly under the supervision of Mr. Speaker, in this particular instance aided by the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Winters).

COMMUNICATIONS

SALE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH SYSTEM—PROVISION FOR EMPLOYEES

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, yesterday when the discussion took place concerning the transfer of the government telephone and telegraph services in British Columbia to the British Columbia Telephone Company and the Canadian National Telegraphs I was able to deal with the effective date of the transfer, together with certain of the conditions under which employees of the government would be