

point of broadcasting, for example, the proceedings of this chamber, it will make a real difference in how we perform in this House of Commons. It will probably make a more significant and substantial difference than anything that has yet happened to this House of Commons. I have been here long enough to have seen two physical or mechanical innovations, both of which made a difference in the character of this House.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Three, if you include the government.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I do not regard this government as an innovation. I regard it as a throw-back.

**Mr. Baldwin:** I meant mechanical.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I started to speak on two mechanical innovations that have come into this chamber in my time here. The first of them was the introduction of the loud-speaker or amplifying system that we have in this House. I forget how many years ago it was installed, but when I came here and when the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) and the hon. member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. McIlraith) came here, we did not have the amplifying arrangements. We had to get by under our own steam and Mr. Speaker had to hear me even though I sat in the back row pretty near the end of the chamber.

The result of it, Mr. Speaker, was that in those days participation by members in all parts of the House was not as widespread or universal as it became once we got the amplifying system. Those in the back row that could not be heard were far more discouraged than the backbenchers think they are today. Those with weaker voices who could not be heard had to go back to their constituencies and say that they did their work in committees instead of on the floor of the House.

When we got the amplifying system it created a surge of equality. Some of us who could shout and be heard thought we were losing our advantage when the timid people could also be heard. The fact is it was good and produced a change in the House of Commons. It became not just a place where the few down front or the few with loud voices took part; it became a place where everyone could take part on an equal footing.

The second mechanical change was the introduction of our instantaneous translation system. This, too, produced a change in the House. I give credit to the right hon. member

*Broadcasting of House of Commons Debates*  
for Prince Albert who was Prime Minister at the time this system was introduced. It did far more toward making this chamber a bilingual place than anything else which has been done.

● (9:20 p.m.)

Back in the days before we had instantaneous translation it used to be, as old-timers will remember, that the English version of *Hansard* contained in an appendix at the end the English translation of what had been said in French that day. On many days there was no appendix; no French had been spoken. It was difficult for the French-speaking members to use the French language because they were not immediately understood, so they tended always to use English or not to speak at all. This chamber has been made more broadly representative; it has been made a place in which the two languages are equal because of the introduction of this mechanical arrangement for instantaneous translation.

The point I am making is that these two mechanical innovations have brought about changes in the actual character of the House of Commons. There is no doubt in my mind that if television is brought in it will have the same effect. It may do something for our attendance. I do not think we would be very excited about being on television tonight, with the number of members who are here at this moment—and this is a pretty good attendance for a Monday evening when the business of the day has not been particularly exciting.

**Mr. Nowlan:** They knew you were going to speak.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** The hon. member says they did not know I was going to speak.

**Mr. Nowlan:** They did know.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I stand corrected; I am now told they did know. But even this would not provide very good entertainment, the attempt the hon. member for Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan) and I are making to engage in some sort of banter.

I think it will have this effect: if we waste time, if we fool around, if we engage in trivia and nonsense the mail will be terrific; we shall be put in our places far more effectively than at the present time. I think it will be good for Parliament to be seen and to get the reaction of the public. I think it will bring