

The subcommittee held meetings from time to time. The work did not go on by itself. The Honourable Senator Connolly (Ottawa West), who was in this city most of the time, kept his eye on the work from week to week, and we consulted with the Honourable Senator Dessureault. We were fortunate in having the assistance of Mr. MacNeill, the Clerk of this House, who was here almost every day, and when the work lagged he urged the representatives of the Department of Public Works who were responsible for the work to press on toward its completion. The result was that when Parliament reconvened on October 14 most of the work had been completed.

This work could perhaps be divided into three categories: in the first category I would put the cleaning of the walls and woodwork. As the honourable senator from De la Durantaye said last evening, prior to this session both walls and woodwork were very dark, and in some places black. One can readily see the improvement that has taken place.

I now come to the second category. Honourable senators will recall that the carpeting in the chamber had been in service for many years and had become badly worn. I am sure all honourable senators were pleased, as I was, with the appearance of the new carpet on the opening day of Parliament.

It will also be recalled that the windows in the upper part of the chamber were of a not too pleasing colour, and did not provide the proper amount of illumination. The windows have all been changed. Whether the change is satisfactory, honourable senators will have to decide. When the windows were first put in, your subcommittee felt that too much direct light was allowed to enter the chamber, and that it would be uncomfortable for honourable senators sitting on the east side of the house to have the sunlight shining down on them. Various proposals were made as to how to keep the direct rays of the sun out and yet allow more light in. Time will tell whether the change is satisfactory. I am sure the new Internal Economy Committee which has been set up will make observations and determine whether or not the windows can be further improved.

I come now to the question of ventilation of the chamber. Again, as the honourable gentleman said last evening, it was most uncomfortable to sit in this chamber on hot summer days; the air became so stuffy and stagnant when the chamber was occupied for any length of time that it prevented us from doing our work properly. A completely new system of ventilation has now been installed. During the last session some

honourable senators could not remain in the chamber because of the direct drafts on them. We hope that condition has been overcome. The present system has been so devised that there will be fresh air in the Senate at all times, warm air in the winter and cool air in the summer, but with no direct drafts being felt by honourable senators.

The subcommittee was requested to inquire into the possibility of installing what I call a voice amplification system in the chamber. The system that is in use today is the one which was approved by honourable senators at the last session, and the installation was supervised by your subcommittee. It will be recalled that we met in the chamber last spring and had a demonstration of the voice amplification system. We all agreed that the system tried out then appeared to be satisfactory and that it should be installed. The subcommittee carried out the wishes of the house in that respect. The system was tried out during an actual sitting for the first time last evening. A number of the senators who spoke to me about it were somewhat disappointed with its operation. Some senators sitting at the south end of the chamber complained that they could not hear the honourable senator from De la Durantaye speaking from his seat at the north end of the chamber. We have an operator on hand in the southeast corner of the south gallery and he is endeavouring to manipulate the mechanism so that speakers can be heard at any point in the chamber. So, before we criticize the system too severely, I think we should give the operator a chance to demonstrate the functioning of the equipment that has been installed.

While there have been, as I have said, complaints from honourable senators about the amplification system, I have heard no criticism of it by people sitting in the gallery. I recall that previous to this session when representatives of the press wanted to hear a senator who was speaking from the east side of the chamber they had to move to the east side of the gallery; and if a senator rose to speak on the west side of the chamber they had to rush back to that side. Also, at times when I have remarked to people who have been sitting in the gallery about the excellence of an address made in the house the previous day they have replied that they had not heard a word of it. Well, even if the system is not yet entirely satisfactory in the chamber—and this is the important place—it is quite satisfactory in the galleries.

Honourable senators, your subcommittee also took up the question of lighting in the chamber. This I put in the third category of our work. I do not think in this respect