

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Milliken: I believe the sound will go through TV but some kind of adapter has to be purchased which will sit on top of the television to make it possible for the member to move from one channel to another to pick up the sound from the different rooms.

That piece of equipment has to be purchased for all the offices on the Hill. It is a one-time cost once purchased and installed and it is all available. It is relatively inexpensive equipment but there are so many to purchase.

As I recall the cost of that is around \$100,000, but my head for figures is not a good one. I urge the hon. member to check the committee proceedings if he has doubts about it.

The cost of setting up the room is another matter. The cameras have to be purchased for that room. There will have to be some structural adjustments made to the room so that we benefit from the fact that it is being televised. The current layout of committee seating in a square will probably have to be changed somewhat to make it easier to do television work in the room. It is thought that the cameras should be in fixed positions.

• (1420)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member has another questioner.

Mr. Milliken: There are so many questioners left. I will do my best to answer them. I think I have the time. I will try to get to the hon. member in a minute.

An hon. member: There may not be time.

Mr. Milliken: Maybe not, but I am doing my best.

The third was the question of the press gallery and its views on this.

Mr. Nunziata: Did it appear before the committee?

Mr. Milliken: Yes, I can say to the hon. member for York South—Weston that the press gallery did appear before the committee. It did make submissions. It pressed for televising committees in an open way, as appeared to have been recommended and required by the Standing Order change forced through the House last May or June. It expected to have television access to committees. This does not meet the requests of that group. It does allow for televising of some committees. I

am sure that will please the members who came, but it does not go as far as anticipated.

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I was attempting to put a question forward to my colleague from Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Milliken: Maybe we could have unanimous consent instead of debate.

Mr. Mills: I put the question to my colleague from Montreal earlier. It concerns that portion of this recommendation that would suggest that we only televise some of these committee meetings. That continues the process which goes on around here under which there is almost a two-tier system. If you are part of the tactical operations team that prepares for Question Period every day then obviously you tend to get a regular slot on Question Period. If you are not part of that tactical team then—

Mr. Nunziata: The élite.

Mr. Mills: My colleague from York South—Weston calls it the élite.

Mr. Nunziata: The different ones.

Mr. Mills: Some people say “the ins and the outs”. At any rate, you can go for as long as a year. I have had a grand total of two questions in Question Period during the last year in the House. As a result I receive many phone calls from my constituents asking: “Why do you never get to ask questions? You are never there. Do you not do any work in Ottawa? Where are you coming from?” I have to try to explain.

I do not explain that there are the “ins and the outs” because they would never believe that. I do explain that there are other things going on here in Ottawa, such as committee work and other exercises, just as important to advancing the debate in general. Of course, there are these debates in the afternoons and evenings. In other words, there are a lot of activities going on in this parliamentary system that have nothing to do with Question Period.

My friend from Ottawa South and I were on Doug Fisher’s Sunday afternoon show about two months ago and he asked us what things we would change. If there is one thing I could change around here I would eliminate the televising of Question Period. I think that Question Period gives the people of Canada the wrong impression about the kind of work that goes on in this Parliament of Canada.