

*Hansard* is a substantially correct report of the proceedings of the House of Commons. It is edited, and perhaps it is over-edited at times. Very often members come to our office and say: "That is exactly what I wanted to say", but it is not quite what he did say. We endeavour to turn out something other than a stylized essay type of report. At the same time we eliminate repetitions, crudities, bad grammar and things of that sort, and turn out a substantially correct report, but certainly not a verbatim report. We do not intend to do that.

Mr. AIKEN: Mr. Buskard, may I interject here and ask you whether this same competent editing job could be done in respect of tape recordings?

Mr. BUSKARD: Yes, this could be done, but you lose the value of the human relationship to the spoken word. The individual on the floor of the House of Commons hears the inflections and understands what is taking place. In addition, the tape recorder is still a mechanical device and cannot think. If two or three people speak at the same time—and you know this happens frequently in the House of Commons—the tape recorder will record a blur of voices. A shorthand reporter will pick out one voice, follow it and produce a readable transcript.

I could quote from reports made of investigations carried on in respect of the tape recording system by competent bodies, judicial and otherwise, which all stress the fact that a tape recorder cannot replace a competent shorthand reporter.

Mr. AIKEN: You do believe in fact that the physical human presence of a reporter in the chamber, who is in the mood of the chamber, can follow the thread of the debate and perhaps pick out the speaker who is carrying the course of the debate at that time?

Mr. BUSKARD: That is right.

Mr. ERVIN: Mr. Chairman, may I shed some light on this particular point?

I agree completely with this point, and I think you must, if you are taping the proceedings, have someone on the floor. That is why in my report I suggest that the parliamentary transcriber, as I have chosen to call the person who will take the place of the parliamentary reporter and subsequently transcribe from the recorded version of what she heard, should sit in the House of Commons during the particular ten minutes for which she is responsible. During that time she will write down the names of the speakers and the opening remarks and then listen to the recording, at which time she will be hearing the debate for the second time. I think this is important.

Mr. AIKEN: I should like to ask a question while I have it in mind. Would the transcriber be able to take longer periods of time in the House of Commons, or would there be any saving of time at all in this way?

Mr. ERVIN: No. I suggest the present time schedule which has been worked out over the years is an excellent one. I cannot suggest an improvement to the idea of working ten minutes in the House of Commons and using the other 50 minutes to listen to the recording and transcribe what took place during that period.

Mr. AIKEN: Then, in fact we would not be reducing the number of employees but just reducing the quality?

Mr. ERVIN: No; that is not correct. At the present time they work in teams. There is a reporter and an amanuensis doing the job. I suggest the amanuensis should be the transcriber and do both jobs, sitting in the house, and then coming out and typing her own work. I suggest this in order to preserve the excellent quality of editing, and I would recommend that you consider the possibility of promoting the reporter. As one reporter retires another should