

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This report contains the findings and recommendations of a survey undertaken at the request of the Clerk of the House of Commons with the authority of the speaker. The terms of reference were:

To survey the organization, methods and procedures of the English debates reporting Branch with a view to making recommendations for their improvement.

2. The fact finding phase of the survey was conducted in two parts:

- (a) A review of reporters' working hours, workload, production speeds and the average work-year over the past five years. This phase also included a ten day detailed survey of the expenditure of time in relation to workload by reporters and a series of interviews with members of the reporting staff and representatives of a number of local courts where reporters are employed.
- (b) A study of the systems available to record House debates and the experiences of other similar jurisdictions in the development of such systems. During this phase two tests were conducted in the House of Commons at which time speeches were recorded on Dicta-phone equipment and transcribed by typists under controlled conditions.

3. Full details of these activities may be found under "findings and observations."

4. Recommendations, which are based on the introduction of magnetic tape recording apparatus, include the introduction of a new classification "parliamentary transcriber", two additional assistant Editors and a gradual inclusion of parliamentary transcribers in the establishment as parliamentary reporter positions become vacant.

5. In addition to providing many facilities not now available, the proposed system would eliminate most of the difficulties and hazards of the present system which is wholly dependent upon a continuing supply of highly skilled staff. Salary costs would be reduced by an estimated \$30,000 annually.

6. This opportunity is taken to acknowledge the assistance and co-operation of the House of Commons, the Hansard staff and the typists and console operators who assisted during the recording experiments.

REASONS FOR SURVEY

7. During the initial interview the Clerk of the House of Commons specifically requested that the survey provide information and recommendations regarding:

- (a) the workload and working conditions of the reporting staff and the difficulties being experienced in recruiting replacements, and
- (b) the possibility of introducing recording apparatus which could be connected to the existing sound amplification system and used to provide insurance against a shortage of skilled reporters and to assist the existing staff during heavy workload periods.

8. In support of this request, the Clerk made reference to a series of recent submissions from the reporting staff for an increase in salary of from \$1,000 to