

*Routine Proceedings*

5 p.m. in that particular room. Then perhaps, there might be another committee in the evening.

The point I am making is just because there is one room, it does not mean that only one committee meeting per day can be televised. Indeed, it could very well be, if the demand is there, that four or five different committees per day could be broadcast on television.

This is certainly a good start. I totally agree with the member for York South—Weston because he very astutely—he is always very astute, of course—pointed out earlier today that we should be conscious of the cost of doing this. That is, indeed, quite appropriate to bring up at this time.

By having just one room and utilizing it with greater frequency, I think it is a good marriage of the principle that we want Canadians to see many parliamentary committees on television, if that is what they want or if the media wants to obtain footage and so on of the proceedings of those committees. At the same time, we have to have due regard for the taxpayers and not develop something which will be too costly and that we cannot afford.

I congratulate the member for York South—Weston who brought up that point a little earlier this day. Indeed, he was quite correct as he usually is.

[*Translation*]

We are discussing the 23rd report of this committee. It might be good to review together the various recommendations made by this committee.

So here they are. The first recommendation is to allow the recording of the audio feed provided by the House of Commons for public committee meetings. I was just talking about that. It allows a journalist to connect his tape recorder to the committee sound system. Frankly, this is not a major development and it is easy to do. I definitely have the impression that media people cheated a little from time to time, that is, that they taped committee meetings before, even if it was not officially permitted.

I sometimes found it interesting to hear on the radio testimony given to a parliamentary committee which had been recorded while the committee was in session. Obviously this reporter or whoever it was had taped it

without first getting permission. It must be said that the rule was perhaps a little out of date. So I see it as updating our rules.

Now I come to the second recommendation: that the audio feed of all public committee meetings be made available to members of Parliament, their staffs and the Parliamentary Press Gallery. I must say that this system exists or at least existed at Queen's Park as early as 1981; that is, you could tune in and find out what was going on in the various committee rooms. It involved a device, a loud speaker really, that was installed in the MPPs' offices. You just had to turn the dial and you could hear what was going on in committee rooms 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. When it was an important issue for the member in question, he could immediately go there and speak.

Some will say that this might lower attendance at committees, but I would say that the opposite will occur, because parliamentarians will be inclined to go to the committee room when important issues are being dealt with, which happens very often.

The committee also recommended that the House of Commons should initially equip one committee room for broadcasting. There is no need to repeat what I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, because I would not want to waste the House's time and bore you, so I will make my remarks very brief. I already gave my opinion on that.

Another point is that the recording of the committee proceedings will be undertaken by or on behalf of the House of Commons, and under the direct control and supervision of House personnel. I think that is also a good idea, but I would be inclined to go even further; that is, I would allow journalists to broadcast committee meetings in other rooms, provided that the cameras were set up in places prescribed in advance. I talked about that as well a little earlier. In any case, this is not dealt with in the report, but we might look into it in future.

The fifth recommendation is that the date of the committee meeting must appear on the screen at all times in legible print. The reason for that is important. Since the House of Commons channel will be used, it might be impossible to broadcast the committee live. So Canadians who are watching it on television will want to know whether it is a live broadcast or a tape from a day or two before. I think it is important to have that information on the screen.