

*Supply—Legislation*

level of salaries which are paid, and difficulties in recruiting the staff. For that reason, the question of whether tape recording should replace the present system was referred to a committee.

Several other questions have been brought up today. There was the question of telecommunications raised by the hon. member for Lapointe. I understand that at the moment the internal economy commissioners have not reached any conclusion as to whether it would be a good or a bad thing to pay for the telegrams, long distance calls and all the rest of it. I am sure that hon. members will appreciate that they have not been too badly treated as of the moment.

In so far as the recognition problem is concerned, the hon. gentleman who raised it is not here so I am going to take advantage of the fact and not deal with the question.

Various other points were raised, not the least of which was the one raised by the hon. member for Port Arthur, joined by the hon. members for York-Humber, Medicine Hat, Skeena and one or two others. This question related to Raymond Rodgers and the press gallery. In view of the discussion here this afternoon, which I found very helpful and useful, I must say that I think hon. members know that I am not at all unsympathetic to the person concerned. I doubt if he has received as much attention from many other people as he has received from me during the last few months. The question is not an easy one to decide, and should not be decided on the basis of emotion or personality but on the basis of principle. For that reason I have told him, and told anyone who wanted to listen, that in due course when the principle has been established in the proper way and all factors have been considered, that will be the right time to render a judgment.

In so far as the press gallery is concerned, Mr. Rodgers is not alone in complaining. Many members of the press gallery are complaining constantly about the space problem. I am well aware of the conditions under which they work. I am well aware also of the fact that within the last few years the numbers in the press gallery have increased from 30 to about 110 or 120. This, in part, results from the development of communications by radio and television. The point is that the system under which we have been working up to the present time, vis-à-vis the press gallery, is very much out of date. Only yesterday I had the president, and perhaps the past president, of the press gallery in to discuss the constitution. I said that the constitution needs to be re-examined, reassessed and brought up to date. The same remarks apply to the bylaws under the constitution.

The question of space is a very pressing one. We thought at one time the taking over of the west block would be the answer to the problem. However, the problem seems to get worse every day. One idea that we have toyed with is that of dividing the membership of the gallery into two categories, those who are connected with daily papers and those who are connected with weekly papers or magazines. At the moment we have under reservation considerable space in the west block. We are trying to negotiate a solution between the press gallery and the Department of Public Works which will be of use to both sides.

There is also the question of visiting pressmen from other countries and other capitals. They arrive here and there is no place to entertain them. Perhaps the members of the press should construct their own building, as is done in Washington. Perhaps the owners of the large newspapers should, themselves, look into this problem and assist the rest of us.

In any event, it may be possible to work out a solution by which the members of the press gallery would get more space by splitting them into two parts, the daily and weekly or magazine sections, and thus make better facilities available. Amongst the better facilities, I include the need for a room in the basement or some other convenient place in this building to be used as a television and radio studio. I think all of us agree that it is ridiculous that the C.B.C. should go to the expense of hauling equipment up here every time they want to televise some proceedings, thus cluttering up the halls. It should be possible for members to go to a room downstairs for television or radio broadcasts. This is another thing we have in mind.

If I may summarize the whole question, I may say that the problem of the press gallery will be thoroughly considered by the new committee on parliamentary procedure and organization. I have already suggested that we set up immediately a small subcommittee, as was suggested by the hon. member for Peace River, to do the necessary research on this problem of space, constitution, bylaws, membership and all the rest of it. So far as I am concerned, until I receive a carefully thought out and well documented report which has been discussed with our advisers, I do not believe it would be right to jump in and give an emotional decision, no matter what I may think personally, nor is it the right time to give a decision on this Rodgers case. It may be decided later on. You cannot act as judge and jury at the same time.

I believe I have covered most of the points that were raised this afternoon in a very cursory way. There are a great many problems. One thing I should like to bring to the