

Routine Proceedings

I am pleased to say to the parliamentary secretary that I for one will definitely vote in favour of that motion when the time comes. I also want him to know that I agree with the decision of the management committee to review the experimental guidelines that will be in the report after a six-month trial period.

I had the opportunity in a previous incarnation, shall we say, to sit in the Ontario legislature where it was permitted—

Mr. Nunziata: An excellent member you were.

Mr. Boudria: I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the very distinguished and learned member for York South—Weston for his complimentary words.

In the days when I was in the Ontario legislature a form of televising of committees was permitted. However it was not a particularly good way of doing it. At that time camera crews were allowed to walk into the room physically, cameras on their shoulders and someone else carrying the extended boom microphone. They would walk around the table between members, cameras on their shoulders, sometimes taking pictures of documents which a member might have been looking at.

I was not too crazy about that system, Mr. Speaker, as you can pretty well understand. If you were reading correspondence from Mrs. Smith explaining a particular constituency problem, you literally had to hide your papers when a camera was carried into the room.

I understand that system has been done away with now. Of course we are not going to do anything like that here. We have to respect the privacy not of the member—that is secondary—but of the information that members might have with them. We do carry around constituency cases, issues that we refer to for the purposes of making speeches, addressing committees, and so on. Frankly I do not think it is proper that the briefing notes we might have, or even personal correspondence or issues involving an individual Canadian, could be viewed via a particular report.

• (1330)

In addition, the committee rooms in the legislature would allow sound recording equipment everywhere.

Some members might be tempted to say: "What is wrong with that?" Here is what is wrong with it.

A reporter would walk into the room with a little cassette recorder, plunk it down in front of you in the committee room or between two MPs, perhaps even two MPs who did not have the floor at that particular time. You could not even whisper to your colleague beside you to ask his or her advice on the situation that you might be discussing because there was a dumb tape recorder between the two of you. Obviously again, not appropriate.

I do not object to allowing reporters to plug their microphones into the broadcast system of the committee. I do not object to that. It does not make any difference. It is all on the record anyway. Nor do I object, on an experimental basis, at some point in the future designating an area in one of our committee rooms, perhaps by having a stand of sorts.

If a camera crew wants to come in, they can film to their heart's content, providing they are on that particular podium where they have to be in order to take camera shots of the room. They should not disrupt witnesses, walk between people in the room, take pictures of documents on a table and so on. You can see how ridiculous a situation can get, and it was pretty far out at that particular time in the Ontario legislature.

I understand they have cleaned up that particular act and you can understand why they would want to. Basically, what we are advocating here is, hopefully, going to pass in the fullness of time once all my colleagues have had an opportunity to speak on this particular issue. What is proposed is to have one room in which there would be the televising of committees.

Some members say that that will only permit one committee to be televised. Not so, because obviously the same committee does not meet 12 hours a day. Committee meetings usually last about an hour and a half, some sit for two hours. For instance, if the finance committee wants to meet in that particular room from 9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m., it might do so. From 11 a.m. until 1 p.m., a second committee might use it and, after Question Period, another committee might meet from 3.30 p.m. to