

twenty-one years. They would suffer if summarily dismissed. We are well aware of the importance of avoiding wasteful expenses and to make reductions wherever necessary, but I must do so by degrees in order not to cause hardship to employees who have served faithfully.

Char Service

This staff consists of 86 women employed during the session and 50 during the recess with several spare employees during the holiday period of twelve weeks. The number employed may vary but all are needed to take care of the building. The women commence work at 6.30 a.m. and have to be out of all offices by 9 a.m. The work assigned to each varies according to the amount to be done in each room or suite of rooms.

There are 47 men employed during the session and 32 for the recess, with 5 spare for the holiday relief. This includes the chief, Mr. Cardinal, and his assistant, Mr. Alexander. The men commence to work during the session at 6.30 a.m. and continue until 1 p.m. or later when caucus and committee meetings have been held, in which case they are on duty until all committee rooms have been cleaned up and prepared for further use. During the recess, the men commence to work at 7 a.m. and continue until 4 p.m.

While the session is in progress, all cleaning is done as a daily routine by both the men and the women staff. When the house adjourns or prorogues, each room, including the Prime Minister's and officials' suites of rooms, committee and caucus rooms, working staff rooms, cloakrooms and lavatories, and all corridors, from the 6th floor down to the basement, are given a thorough cleaning as follows: (1) ceiling and walls vacuumed; (2) all pictures vacuumed and glass washed; (3) rugs taken out of rooms and vacuumed both sides; (4) all furniture given a thorough cleaning and polishing; (5) venetian blinds and curtains cleaned; (there are 216 venetian blinds and 260 pairs of curtains in the various rooms) (6) old floor wax removed with benzene and floors newly waxed; (7) all electric fixtures washed; (8) after rugs and furniture replaced, all rooms are given a thorough disinfecting; (9) all corridor walls (stone) vacuumed; all corridor walls (marble) washed; (10) all panel woodwork in the ministers', reading, government caucus rooms, and all the woodwork and furniture in the Commons chamber, including the galleries, is cleaned and given an oil preservation treatment; (11) all members' rooms have painted walls. Any rooms that are soiled are washed during the recess when the general cleaning is done. An

average of from 10 to 40 rooms are washed, depending on how long the recess period lasts. This is a big job.

On the list of details of duties for the women during the recess, the following rooms and suites of rooms are given a general cleaning, the same as when the house is in session: The Prime Minister's, the Leader of the Opposition, all ministers' rooms, government and opposition whips, leaders of the smaller groups, local members' rooms, all official suites, all staff chiefs rooms, all rooms of staff kept on during recess, library, reading room and committee rooms used for the various meetings held since the war began. (There have been many of these).

Outside of their regular duties, the recess man staff do all the moving of furniture and extra cleaning entailed through the meetings and use of House of Commons rooms for the various boards, et cetera, such as those listed herewith: the Dominion-Provincial conference; Wartime Requirements board; Voluntary Registration bureau; Canada-United States Joint Board of Defence; British, Australian and New Zealand mission; Civil Service commission—various branches—labour unions; and many others. These meetings make considerable extra work for the recess staff.

Changes in Offices and Rooms

An inspection of the building clearly showed me that the layout of some of the rooms had to be changed for the convenience and comfort of the members and staff of the House of Commons.

The man employed in repairing upholstered furniture did his work in a dark room in the basement, with no other light than one electric bulb. It was impossible to clean that place where dust had accumulated for years. The air in it was unbearable. The man died a couple of years ago and perhaps the conditions in which he worked considerably impaired his health. His successor was placed in a well-lighted room near the freight entrance on the north side of the building.

The page-boys, fifteen in number, were also installed in a dark store-room where two stalls had been set up for their chief and assistant chief. They had no light nor ventilation. When these boys had to put on their uniforms they went in a small dark room about 8 feet by 3 which was very unsanitary. A partition was pulled down so as to make a large room with two windows, running water and a screened space for dressing purposes.

Whilst these dark holes were used for persons in the service of the House of Commons, a comparatively large room with windows had been allotted as a cloak room for the