

These precedents go as far back as 1886. In 1886, the first one had to do with sanitary conditions of the chamber. On motion, the study was entrusted to a special committee. The report was adopted and the Leader of the Government endeavoured to speak to the Minister of Public Works for remedial measures. I presume that remedial measures were taken. There is no record of any subsequent action after it was recorded in the *Journals* of the Senate that the report of the special committee was adopted.

Senator Beaubien: How long ago was that?

Mr. Fortier: 1886.

The Chairman: What was the complaint.

Mr. Fortier: The complaint had to do with sanitary conditions with respect to sewerage and ventilation of the building.

The Chairman: It would appear that most of those problems have not been eliminated.

Mr. Fortier: I would hope so.

The second precedent, which was in 1910, concerned hygienic conditions of the Senate chamber, rooms and corridors. A special motion was made to have a special committee look into these problems, but the motion was defeated.

In 1928 the enlargement of the public galleries was a concern of the Senate. A special committee was appointed to look into the matter. The committee reported, but the report was defeated in the house, the main argument being that the high expenses involved in enlarging the galleries were unjustified since the galleries were little used by the public.

In 1948 the Senate referred to the then Standing Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds the matter of the improvement of the atmospheric conditions of the chamber. The committee never reported.

We then come, in 1956 and 1957, to the most interesting precedent, because it has to do with the windows of the Senate. The Committee on Internal Economy and Contingent Accounts, as it was then called, undertook a study of the question. As you know, this committee had—as has its successor, the Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration—general authority whereby it has the power, without special reference by the Senate, to consider any matter affecting the internal economy of the Senate, and such committee shall report the results to the Senate for action. Under that general authority the Internal Economy Committee studied the question of the windows in the Senate chamber and appointed a subcommittee to consider the whole matter. The Department of Public Works was asked to look into the matter of more appropriate windows for the chamber. In accordance with their submission a certain type of glass was installed in one of the windows, but it was found unacceptable because sunlight came through too strongly. The glass was removed, and, eventually, the glass which is now in the windows was installed. That is the history of the present windows.

Most of you will recall that in 1960 a matter arose concerning the installation of a system of simultaneous interpretation in the Senate chamber. The matter was considered by the Standing Senate Committee on Internal Economy and Contingent Accounts, which then referred it to a special committee. The special committee recommended the installation of the system. The main committee

presented its report to the Senate and the report recommended that the Department of Public Works be requested to make the installation. The report was adopted and the system as we now have it was installed.

The Chairman: Perhaps we should try to clarify our views for the committee about what conclusions should be drawn from that, Mr. Fortier. I gather that general authority is vested in the Senate, at least in the house, to exercise certain authority over conditions and over the precincts of the house. Certainly, in consideration of what happened in 1956 and 1957, and then again in 1960, it would seem that the Senate, having at least indicated an interest in making certain changes in the precincts of the chamber, has met with no disputation to its right to do so.

Mr. Fortier: Exactly.

The Chairman: In other words, the Senate is not in the hands of any department of government or any other higher parliamentary authority.

Mr. Fortier: Certainly not so far as approving a project is concerned. The Senate is master of its own precincts. The Senate did not have to consult with or obtain approval from, for example, Treasury Board. Each time something was done in the precincts of the chamber, the requisite funds were included in the Estimates of the Department of Public Works. It was never necessary to make the money available in the Senate budget.

The Chairman: But the Senate's right to assert its position is clear through the years.

Mr. Fortier: It appears to be clear to me.

The Chairman: Whether or not it carries out the projects is another matter.

Mr. Fortier: It appears clear that up to now the Senate has not had to obtain higher approval or authority. Should a change be made in the manner of paying for such work—for instance should Treasury Board or the government decide that all departments, including the Senate, should now be charged with these, of course, before going ahead, the Senate, I assume, would have to obtain money through the estimates. However, up to now we have been able to forget that aspect of it, because it has not so far become necessary.

The Chairman: So far as specific changes are concerned, the Internal Economy Committee of the Senate certainly has authority, as laid out in its terms of reference, to make changes in the precincts of the chamber.

Mr. Fortier: The present general authority given to the Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration, to consider without special reference by the Senate any matter affecting the internal economy of the Senate, is sufficient, and such committee reports the results of its study to the Senate for action. I take it from that, as it affects the general economy of the Senate, that expenditures for the general administration of the Senate are limited by the budget voted in the Estimates.

The Chairman: Administrative matters generally?

Mr. Fortier: Yes, administration.

The Chairman: I see a former chairman of that committee here, and perhaps he would have something to say when Mr. Fortier is finished.