

Broadcasting of House Proceedings

The Sergeant-at-Arms, Colonel Currie, really did yeoman service in that regard.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Just a brief word about the concept that is involved. As members know, the concept under which we were operating, the mandate that we were given, was a specific one, and that was to proceed on the basis of an electronic *Hansard*. Therefore, the equipment which is in place is here, not out of an introduction of news coverage but out of the introduction of an addition to our *Hansard* reporting, the printed *Hansard* which has been here since the beginning of the sittings of this House. We are adding radio and television *Hansard*.

That concept is one by which we have been guided constantly and one which we feel sets up a fundamental relationship with the networks that may distribute this product. In other words, it has been our task to bring it into being here as a reporting device of the proceedings of the House and to make it available. This we have done, and we leave it to the networks and the publicity and media people to choose or leave alone what they wish, as has been the case in print media up to now. That seems to be a very satisfactory concept for this coverage.

There are, however, a number of questions that remain unresolved. We have temporary equipment in place now. The cameras which are to the left and right of the Chair are manually operated, as members can see. We have attempted to place them in such a way as to be as inobtrusive as possible to the proceedings of the House. Members know that in about six months' time, when the equipment is available, these cameras will be mounted underneath the galleries and operated remotely, so that there will not be even this much interference with the proceedings of the House.

During that time we will need to experiment with our capacity to use this very powerful medium to record our proceedings, for indeed there are many questions about the manner in which these cameras ought to be directed and controlled. The only way we can resolve these questions is to experiment with them, which, of course, was another very essential part of our mandate when this task was begun.

The lighting is a little higher than it absolutely needs to be, and we are hoping that it will be toned down both in temperature and intensity.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The task generally has been a very great challenge. As I say, many questions remain unresolved, and therefore your committee will seek a mandate in the new session to be reconstituted in order to continue the assessment of this ongoing experience. We do have many questions. Many representations are being made to us about distribution and assistance by the House in distributing the film that we take. We have a number of questions about rights and immunities. In terms of hon. members, we did address ourselves to the question of the rights and immunities of members. Basically, since we are simply going on with the reporting of our own

[Mr. Speaker.]

proceedings, it was not felt that there was any fundamental change in the rights and immunities already enjoyed by members.

There is, however, a question or two about the position of broadcasters, and about the position of our interpreters, which we want to see resolved. The committee will be hearing further representations on that, and perhaps will even be considering the possibility or the advisability of attempting to draft some legislation—even though the opinion may be that legislation is not absolutely necessary—on the feeling that the House and the country would benefit from removing any uncertainties that might exist.

Again I say to all of those who have worked so tirelessly during this short recess, who have performed this work on behalf of the House, in keeping with the dignity of the chamber, the very important work here and this concept of recording our own proceedings with an increased awareness and service to the Canadian public, that I think the House owes them a great debt of gratitude, and I think we are fortunate that this work has been completed in time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, you have, very properly, expressed the appreciation of the members of the House to everyone involved in the preparation of the transformation of this chamber, with one singular exception. That exception, sir, is yourself, who chaired the committee.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: We all appreciate that that was very arduous and demanding work which has only just begun. I am sure I speak on behalf of all your colleagues in the House of Commons in expressing our very real appreciation to Your Honour for the work you did through the summer.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: Order! I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received on October 4, 1977 which is as follows:

Government House
Ottawa

October 4, 1977

Sir:

I have the honour to inform you that the Right Honourable Bora Laskin, P.C., Chief Justice of Canada, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, will proceed to the Senate Chamber at 3.15 p.m. approximately on Monday, October 17th, for the purpose of proroguing the Second Session of the Thirtieth Parliament of Canada.