

It should be possible for us to perform this legislative function while doing a still greater degree of effective committee work. This is exactly what is happening at the present time in this chamber. I honestly believe that the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media worked as effectively as any royal commission, and for far less money and in far less time.

It is worth noting in passing that of our carefully budgeted expenditure of \$600,000, approximately 50 per cent was used in printing and production. Royal commissions are not, of course, required to publish their evidence on a day-by-day basis. However, I hasten to add that special Senate committees are by no means perfect instruments. May I suggest, therefore, with great respect, one or two ways in which they might be improved.

First, why do we insist on structuring our committees to a comparable size of those in the other place? When our committee was formed the number of senators was less than 90, and yet we insisted upon a membership of 15 and a quorum of five. Surely a membership of seven and a quorum of three would have made far greater sense under the circumstances. So I for one would be in favour of smaller committees.

Most members of our committee, and most certainly its Chairman, continue even to this day to be inundated with letters, speaking engagements, academic interviews and articles to be written. Meanwhile an invaluable staff has disappeared, leaving the senator—and here I speak personally—unable to crawl out from under a mound of priorities. As I am sure honourable senators realize, I personally considered that taking the position of our committee before the people of Canada across the country was worthy of my priority and attention. I can only apologize for articles that I promised and which are past due, for unanswered mail, and for speaking engagements which still await fulfilment.

Secondly, I would make a plea for more help for the committee. Indeed, I would argue for more help for senators generally. Certainly I wish it had been possible for me to retain some of our staff for a longer period. In fairness, I should say that I did not ask that they be retained, but certainly I wish I had.

May I be allowed to say one word about Senate committees generally? I confess that this relates rather directly to the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media. I was very much in favour of the new agency known as Information Canada when it was first announced. I felt at the time that most Government information services could benefit from greater correlation, modernization, a general overhaul and an upgrading and improvement. I still believe this. I did not share, and still do not share, the view of some that Information Canada might become some super propaganda arm of the federal Government or, worse still, of the Liberal party. I can assure honourable senators that, based on recent experience, Information Canada poses no such threat. It is just not that well organized. When it came to the handling of the distribution of our report I must confess that the services of Information Canada were less than satisfactory. I believe that our report was one of the first to be distributed by Information Canada and I would be less than honest if I

did not inform the chamber that I was keenly disappointed.

One of two specific examples will make my point. The following letter to the editor appeared in a recent issue of the *Globe and Mail*. I do not recall the date, but it was within the last few weeks. The letter is signed by Michael J. Divers of London, Ontario, and reads as follows:

Following the publication of the Senate Committee's Report on the Mass Media, Senator Keith Davey urged the public, in numerous interviews, to purchase and read a copy of the report. On the day of publication, December 10, 1970, I sent off an order to the Queen's Printer for two copies of the report. On March 17, 1971, I finally received a reply stating that the report was unavailable and to inquire again in two months' time.

He wrote on December 10, and the first thing he heard was on March 17:

I finally received a reply stating that the report was unavailable and to inquire again in two months' time. From newspaper accounts of the Davey Report it would appear that all was not well with the industry of the mass media. I wonder if the terms of reference of the Davey Committee should not have included an investigation into the Government's own publishing procedures.

Let me give you another example. This is a letter from a lecturer at the University of British Columbia. A little later in my remarks I will quote the comments contained in this letter, but now let me put this before you:

The only negative note associated with your Committee's Report is the rather fantastic difficulty we've had procuring copies of it. On the day of its issue Queen's Printer-Information Canada here—

This is, of course, in Vancouver:

—had precisely twenty-four copies which were, of course, sold out immediately. A concerted phone campaign by me (three times a day for one week) resulted in about seventy coming out later; these quickly sold out and for quite some time copies of the Report simply haven't been available here.

I had the University Bookstore order eighty copies (of Volume One) and the Bookstore was told by Information Canada here that their three-volume sets could not be broken—besides, sufficient copies had not filtered out here from Ottawa to fulfill the order. Therefore we contacted Information Canada in Ottawa and my eighty copies were trucked out here—two weeks later the truck arrived and my students were able to purchase their copies—six weeks after the report was tabled! We're already sold out and I'm afraid my nervous system simply can't take another marathon procurement battle with Information Canada.

Some weeks ago an advertisement of Information Canada appeared in a number of newspapers. I saw it in all three Toronto newspapers, "The rest of the family is coming to Toronto", and the announcement of the open-