

Routine Proceedings

I think that my colleague from York South—Weston just asked on which channel. I think that it will be on the parliamentary channel. So everything will always be broadcast on the parliamentary channel. Of course journalists will be able to use it for their news reports.

The fifth recommendation is as follows: the date of the committee meeting must appear on the screen at all times in legible print.

Here is the sixth recommendation: the decision as to which committees shall meet in this room will be made by the House leaders, or, if they are unable to agree, by the Standing Committee on House Management.

We know that according to tradition, our House leaders meet regularly to discuss and that they often reach consensus. So the House leaders will make the decision. If there is no agreement, the Standing Committee on House Management will decide which committee can sit in the room equipped for broadcasting.

The seventh recommendation is: all committees of the House of Commons, including standing, legislative and special committees, would be entitled to meet in the specially equipped room to have their meetings broadcast, provided that priority shall be given to those committees that do not have a special order from the House permitting any meeting or series of meetings to be broadcast.

Next, the eighth recommendation is as follows: the committee recommends that the Standing Orders of the House of Commons be amended to provide as follows: "108.(3) The mandate of the Standing Committee on (a) House Management shall include, in addition to the duties set forth in Standing Order 104, and among other matters: (v) the review of and report on the radio and television broadcasting of the proceedings of the House and its committees".

I think that is very important, because it is something being added to the mandate of the standing committee of the House.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired.

Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague. I agree with everything that he said in terms of making sure our committees are reported on the same conditions as the House of Commons. What I do not understand is why they only want to have one committee room.

I share the view of the hon. member that probably the best work in this House of Commons is done in committee. One of the reasons why it is the best is that many expert witnesses from all over the country, sometimes from all over the world, appear before committees. Their testimony sometimes forms the basis of policy that is developed in this country.

If we only cover one committee, or have the capability of only covering one committee, I think we are going to end up creating two or three classes of legislative work. The camera equipment is obviously going to be a large capital cost in the beginning. Once we get over that hurdle it would not be that difficult to get another channel just to do committee work. Televising committee meetings is great training. It is great experience for people.

I ask my colleague who is an entrepreneur: why are we going at this thing in half measure? Why are we creating a situation where all of a sudden the only committee that is going to be televised is the finance committee because everyone wants to be on the finance committee? Then all of a sudden we have created two tiers of committees. When we were conducting the GST hearings in the finance committee there was a line-up. Everybody wanted to appear and everybody wanted to sit on the finance committee and they could not find anybody to do the other committees.

• (1320)

For example, yesterday we had a committee meeting on tourism and we could barely get a quorum. We had some of the best witnesses on tourism from all over the country; they were experts in their field. Even though tourism is an important issue we can bet our bottom dollar if in the next room over the finance committee was being televised that is where everyone would want to be.