

*Revised Statutes of Canada*

ods. This decision required the development of a software system that would support an automated, bilingual page format. The Revised Statutes, 1970 as tabled, represent a "first" for Canada. To the best of our knowledge, no other country has produced statutory material in this manner in a two-language page format, lining up marginal notes and columns of type automatically. Because of the uniqueness of the revision in this respect, Canada has been asked to provide magnetic tape of its Criminal Code for a demonstration of legal information retrieval at the next combined World Peace Through Law Conference and World Assembly of Judges to be held later this year in Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

[English]

The decision to use computers has resulted in the production of a machine-readable database of about 40 million characters containing the current public general statutes of Canada. This database will support information retrieval programs and will be the base for the development, now under way, of computer assisted drafting, editing and publication of laws system, the acronym for which is CADEPOL. The machine-readable magnetic tape provides a flexible storage medium from which it will be possible to update and reproduce statutory text. Thus, subsequent revisions of the Canadian statutes can be prepared more rapidly in the future.

Heretofore, the only way to store statutory text in a flexible form was by the costly and cumbersome method of holding vast quantities of lead type, which was rarely undertaken by any jurisdiction. The long delays involved in typesetting in the conventional manner can now be avoided in the case of future consolidations of the federal statutes.

I should add that the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1970, represent the culmination of a challenging and imaginative program undertaken by the Statute Revision Commission, and I draw the attention of hon. members of the presence in the Speaker's gallery of the members of that commission, and to the presence in the ladies gallery of a few of the great number of people whose combined efforts, co-operation and dedication have made the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1970, the achievement that it is.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** The commissioners and staff of the Statute Revision Commission have received the full co-operation of the Canadian Government Printing Bureau. Many of the innovative techniques used in the production of the revision were developed by the printing bureau, and on behalf of the commission I extend sincere thanks for a job well done.

The Revised Statutes tabled today will not have the force of law until proclamation by Order in Council at a later date. Distribution of this revision will begin almost immediately, and members of the public will have an opportunity to inspect the revision before it comes into force.

[Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton).]

Finally, I wish to table a short history of the Statute Revision Commission which outlines in brief the work of the commission from its appointment in 1965, as well as a copy of the report of the commission to His Excellency, the Governor General of Canada.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Before the Chair recognizes the hon. member for Peace River I should indicate to the minister and to the House that I have serious reservations as to the authority which the minister has to table—as he says in his own words—"for the first time in the history of the Canadian parliament" a magnetic tape of deliberations. My recollection is that some years ago when a motion for the production of such documents was made by the then hon. member for Pontiac a ruling was sought from the Chair, and the ruling was that under our existing Standing Orders there is no authority for seeking from the government the tabling and the submission of such documents.

I again say that in this case this tape should be accepted only with reservations, and if it is done now hon. members on the treasury benches should not complain in future if a motion is made by other hon. members seeking permission or seeking authority for an order of the House for the tabling of documents other than what have been interpreted in the past as being documents that can be tabled under the terms of Standing Order 41(1).

All this having been said, it is obvious that the House is master of its own rules and can accept the tabling of any document, whether it is a magnetic tape or any other kind of tape. Subject to those reservations I would seek the authority of the House to accept for tabling the documents to which the minister has alluded, including the magnetic tape. Is this agreed?

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, after visibly having produced the tape—

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Has it a cable licence?

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** It is for public use only—I shall accept the reservations put to me by the Chair. We will keep the tape of the consolidation in the government printing bureau, but I hope the House will accept the tabling of the statutes.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it so agreed?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

• (2:50 p.m.)

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, we would have been quite prepared to accept the tape as an exhibit, without prejudice. However, the minister has probably handled the matter in the best way. We are going to review the rules in any event, and who knows what we may do with them or what the minister may be able to do later.

I join with the minister in welcoming the completion of this massive task. I also join with him in congratulating