

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh!

Senator Doyle: I think there is a sense of feeling that when you are changing something that senators are used to, when it is something of value, when it is something that affects the way we function, then it is not untoward to follow what Senator Molgat suggested some years ago. If we do not like Senator Molgat's ruling, we could appeal it to the Speaker.

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh!

Senator Di Nino: Obviously, Senator Doyle and I have had some discussions about this matter, and its interpretation will have to be left to the members of the Internal Economy Committee. I agree with the honourable senator when he says that we must do a better job. In fact, earlier someone showed me an article printed in one of today's papers where I said that very thing in public. We will undertake to do a better job.

I have a great deal of respect for my colleague Senator Doyle, and my next comment should be taken not on the substance of his presentation nor the style of the presentation itself: I believe the honourable senator said that there was something rotten in the structures that stand on the Hill. I think those were his words. Was the honourable senator referring to physical structures or human structures?

Senator Doyle: Honourable senators, you know that I would never comment on a colleague.

The Public Works Department has told us what is wrong with the East Block — it is falling down; it is being carted away by the termites; it is being taken away by the ant flies. It is really under constant seige and has been ever since it was last restored back in 1967.

I hope there will not be any last question. I do not think I am looking for anything other than that when the carpet is to be renewed, I will not find out about it by reading *The Ottawa Citizen* and then have to say, "Is that not an interesting turn of events?"

Most people here like to be informed. They may not want to jump up and down about it. They are not demanding longer reports from committee chairmen. However, they are asking to be plugged in.

I thank Senator Di Nino for his understanding and help in writing this little script.

Senator Di Nino: I am actually disappointed that I threw him a line like that as a straight man, and he did not take advantage of it.

Hon. John B. Stewart: Honourable senators, the matter Senator Doyle has raised is of considerable importance. I am not talking specifically about the buildings and the proposed modifications. I am asking about the powers of the Internal Economy Committee.

Does the honourable senator know if there is a code or list which sets forth the particular matters on which the Senate has authorized the Internal Economy Committee to make definitive decisions? Alternatively, does the committee play it by ear? In a case such as the carpet to which Senator Doyle has made reference, or the committee room question, does the committee decide, "Well, our colleagues are too busy to deal with lowly matters such as that." Is there some way in which a member of that committee can ascertain what the Senate has authorized the committee to decide definitively?

Senator Doyle: Honourable senators, the committee is authorized, — and I am paraphrasing here — subject to subsection 19.1(4) of the Parliament of Canada Act, to act on all financial and administrative matters respecting the Senate, its premises, its services, its staff and the members of the Senate. Those are very broad provisions.

Hon. Lowell Murray: Where are they to be found, senator?

Senator Doyle: I am quoting the authors of the delayed answer to my oral question as reported in the *Debates of the Senate* at page 973. That was part of the preamble. They are quoting subsection 19.1(4) of the Parliament of Canada Act.

Senator Murray: The Internal Economy Committee of the Senate dealt with it under the Parliament of Canada Act; is that what we are being told?

Senator Doyle: They also referred to the Financial Administration Act. I am quite willing to check that reference for honourable senators.

However, as broad and sweeping as that may seem, if I had been phrasing it I would have said that the committee is empowered to recommend in those areas. While the committee does not need to recommend that we purchase a pound of nails, it should explain when it intends to change practices which have been accepted in another form for some considerable time.

Senator Stewart: I thank Senator Doyle.

On motion of Senator Di Nino, debate adjourned.

The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, December 6, 1994, at 2 p.m.