

Hansard 'Association' - First meeting proposal

Toronto, April 25, 1973

Although replies have not been received from all the provincial organizations, there has been a sufficiently favourable response to the suggestion of a Hansard organization for us to hold some preliminary discussion. Since my last communication with you on March 29th, I have received another enthusiastic reply -- from Richard Dring, Editor of the Official Report of the House of Commons, Westminster. He was doubtful whether Her Majesty's Government would provide funds for him to attend our meetings, but was most anxious to be kept informed of developments!

Two provincial Hansard groups have so far expressed interest in possible pooling of specs and orders for a cassette tape recording system, and estimates are being obtained through various sources. One supplier has already indicated a substantial reduction in unit price for an increase in quantity.

As regards the organization of a Hansard group, several members (if we may call them that already) suggested a preliminary meeting this summer. Benoit Massicotte, of Quebec, and Ralph Morton, of Nova Scotia, both of whom were among the founders of the idea of a Hansard organization, suggested meeting in Ottawa, Quebec City or Toronto. Since we have no commitment from the Ottawa Hansard people at this point, perhaps we should settle for Quebec City or Toronto.

I believe that arrangements could be made to hold informal meetings in one of the committee rooms here at Queen's Park, during the recess, and I have no doubt that Mr. Massicotte would be able to make similar arrangements at the Hôtel du

Gouvernement in Quebec City. Either venue would, I am sure, be acceptable to most people, although, due to my affection for Quebec City, I must admit a preference for that location.

As regards time, I believe July and August are the normally 'safe' months for such a meeting, but I understand members of the P.E.I. and Nova Scotia Hansards will be involved in the reporting of the 1973 Premiers' conference in Charlottetown from August 8 - 10, and so these dates should be avoided.

Several Hansard chiefs have stressed the part-time aspect of their operations and mentioned the lack of any kind of funds available to them for travel or accommodation. This point is appreciated and I believe we can function and provide a useful service to all Hansard people without becoming unduly travel or convention oriented. Obviously, this will be a matter for discussion, but I envisage those of us who can travel being able to get together occasionally and the meat of our discussion being communicated to others. At the same time, by means of bulletins or newsletters, it should be possible for all interested Hansard people to communicate their ideas, developments and problems, to the remainder of the group.

Ralph Morton, who told me in his letter that Nova Scotia has had a printed Hansard for many years (the oldest bound volume is dated 1855) and must be the Dean of the group, was kind enough to suggest that I should act as chairman pro tem and call the first meeting. This will be difficult without prior consultation with all of you but I will make some tentative alternate suggestions and await the reaction.

Two or three days will probably be more than sufficient (and in fact some of you may prefer one or two days) but I would suggest say a Thursday and Friday, so that people from out of town can remain or return over the weekend, as they wish.

With those thoughts, I will suggest several different dates, with location in Toronto or Quebec City, and ask each of you to indicate your order of preference. I will then attempt to serve as a clearing house to arrive at a generally acceptable venue.

I'm not much of a student of mail order procedures, but perhaps it would be best if the bottom of the following sheet could be torn off and returned reasonably soon. Please

indicate your order of preference 1, 2, 3, rather than just indicating your first preference.

Sincerely,

Peter Brannan,  
Chief of Hansard Reporting Service

---

<u>Location</u>	<u>Preference</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Preference</u>
Quebec City	_____	July 12/13	_____
Toronto	_____	July 19/20	_____
		July 26/27	_____