

*Private Bills*

Chairman, that this purpose was accomplished a few years ago with regard to other private bills which no longer come to this chamber. However, it was a very awkward way of doing things. I am quite sure the same sort of approach could be used, if we desired to do so, to accomplish the same purpose, namely, to get bills such as this out of our hair so that we could spend this hour dealing with public business, motions or public bills introduced by private members.

• (6:10 p.m.)

I am neither in favour of the bill nor opposed to it. Within the framework of the attitude I have that we should be spending our time on public business, it is immaterial to me whether or not this bill is passed. If there were some general authorization given within a public act which would permit groups such as this to become incorporated by somewhat the same mechanism as private companies become incorporated, namely, under the Companies Act, then no one in this house would be concerned one way or the other about whether or not this organization became incorporated because that would be the desire and the decision of a private group of people. Parliament does not care or concern itself with whether or not Company X becomes incorporated under the Companies Act so as to carry out certain objectives. Presumably companies are incorporated every day under the general law in order to conduct their business. We look upon that as private business, not public business, and I think we should look upon this bill in the same light.

We cannot be so callous, of course, as to say that we do not care whether or not this organization is incorporated, because the bill is before us. Even though we may not agree with the procedure through which the bill passes in coming here and with the procedure which forces the group of people named in clause 1 to come to parliament in this fashion, nevertheless the procedure exists and parliament has undertaken this responsibility.

Whether or not we care if the Evangelistic Tabernacle is incorporated, as individuals we still have to decide yes or no. That is one of the reasons I am now on my feet and why I was earlier on second reading. I want to put forward the general proposition that this bill should not come before the house. I want to put forward the prospect of a group of members of parliament at some future time, which may not be too far away if the general

law is not changed, saying to themselves that they should not have the responsibility of dealing with the private affairs of people in this particular fashion. I want to put forward the proposition that a group of members of parliament might in effect get their backs up and refuse to pass such bills. I would not want to see that happen but it could happen. A similar thing occurred before with another class of bill which does not now come before us.

I seriously urge upon the government and upon any member who sponsors a private bill the thought that parliament desires to pass a public law to permit private individuals, such as those named in clause 1 of this bill, to apply to some public body for incorporation under the general law of Canada instead of exposing their private dealings to view and subjecting themselves to harassment and appearance before committees in Ottawa. They should not be subjected to the whims of a committee or be subject to other overriding business of parliament. We should not have to put people such as those named in clause 1 to this rather costly process in order that they may carry on their private business.

The public law should be stringent enough that the public good is preserved, but I urge upon the government and upon any member sponsoring a private bill that they start serious discussions in government circles to see whether or not such a public law can be drafted. Otherwise we are likely to sit through private members' hours between six and seven, so long as they last, expressing the same sort of views and general objections about the passage of bills such as this when we know very well a much better method can be found at much less cost and harassment of the individuals concerned, a method which will give parliament that most needed extra time to deal with the public business of the country.

I do not care one way or the other whether this group is incorporated, but I do say they have the right to become incorporated under public law in a different manner. If that right exists for them, then subject to the bounds of whatever law exists for the public good, God bless them. Let them become incorporated in that manner. But there is no public law of parliament and has not been for some time which enables one to assess this particular bill from the point of view of the public good. Parliament is asked to be a watchdog not over this bill alone but over all bills of the