

Private Bills

Canada-first route. Personally, I think they should be given every encouragement.

Section agreed to.

Sections 1 to 11 inclusive agreed to.

Preamble agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bills reported, read the third time and passed.

Mr. McLure: Mr. Speaker, I think the sponsors of those two bills which have just been passed owe the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra (Mr. Green) their fullest support in the future because these bills went through so rapidly.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Croll: You mean that he did not block them.

MOTION FOR SECOND READINGS—SENATE BILLS

Mr. H. W. Winkler (Lisgar) moved that the following bills be read the second time:

Bill No. 332, for the relief of Marion Agnes Kelsch Cleghorn.—Mr. Winkler.

Bill No. 343, for the relief of George Keith Henderson.—Mr. Winkler.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house that both these bills should receive second reading at the same time?

Mr. Knowles: No, Mr. Speaker; one at a time.

MARION AGNES KELSCH CLEGHORN

Mr. H. W. Winkler (Lisgar) moved the second reading of Bill No. 332, for the relief of Marion Agnes Kelsch Cleghorn.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, on two previous occasions when this bill was called, I asked that it stand because the evidence had not yet reached us. That evidence came to hand yesterday and such study as I have been able to give to the evidence convinces me, if I needed any convincing, that this is not the kind of business that this House of Commons should be dealing with at all.

The evidence in this case runs to 34 printed pages. I have read it carefully, but I confess that the more consideration one gives to this case, the more confusing it becomes. I discover that the case was contested before the Senate committee. I discover also that when the counsel for the respondent pointed out that the petition was in extremely general terms but that the case before the Senate was particularized as to the charge of adultery, on the basis of that statement a

[Mr. Green.]

considerable portion of the time given to this case by the Senate committee was devoted to the question of whether or not there should be an adjournment of the case. If one goes through the evidence he finds the hon. senators repeatedly expressing the view that it looks as though the case will have to be adjourned so that the respondent can have the opportunity to subpoena the co-respondent whose name was not given until the first day's hearing in the other place. Finally, the Senate committee agreed that an adjournment was in order, and the case was adjourned for one day.

As one reads the evidence, when he comes to that point it looks as though the argument is fairly heavy on the side of the respondent. Then the next day, when the respondent's lawyer appears at the adjourned meeting, he reports that although he has tried to get in touch with the co-respondent in order to subpoena her to appear before the committee he has been unable to do so. She appears to have moved from the address he had for her. One does not know how hard he tried, but certainly he makes the statement to the committee that this person had moved and that he was unable in so short a time to get in touch with the co-respondent. As one reads the case, one finds that it comes to a very sudden conclusion. All through the book it looked as though there was a good deal to be said on the respondent's behalf. Then all of a sudden the case is closed and the Senate committee recommended that the divorce be granted. To be objective, I must say that against the respondent there are one or two references in the evidence to a sum of money being transferred in return for the case not being contested. That fact is not proved, but the references are there. All told, it adds up to a story of considerable confusion. If one takes the statements made under oath before the Senate committee, the evidence is contradictory. Certain detectives bring in evidence of adultery on the part of the respondent with a certain person who is named. The respondent himself under oath denies that allegation. So there it is—a state of confusion right down the line.

It is an odd case in that it is the wife who is suing for the divorce and it is the husband who is contesting the divorce. I want to say quite frankly and quite openly, Mr. Speaker, that my study of the case and my discussion of it with some other members around the house to whom I have talked about it, leaves me quite undecided. I do not know what we should do about this particular divorce case. I think it underlines clearly the fact that we are not a competent court to be dealing with these matters. Because of that fact I felt