

*Private Bills*

inform the house that the questions to be raised at the time of adjournment tonight are as follows: The hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge), Power—Columbia River—safety of High Arrow dam: the hon. member for Saguenay (Mr. Blouin), Winter Works—Rivière-au-Tonnerre—payment of unemployment insurance benefits.

It being six o'clock the house will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely private bills and public bills.

• (6:00 p.m.)

**PRIVATE BILLS****EVANGELISTIC TABERNACLE INCORPORATED**

The house in committee on Bill No. S-7, to incorporate Evangelistic Tabernacle Incorporated—Mr. Stefanson—Mr. Batten in the Chair.

On clause 1—*Incorporation*.

**Mr. Howard:** Before clause 1 carries, Mr. Chairman, perhaps the sponsor of the bill will recall that on second reading we expressed the thought, directed at this bill but also applicable to other bills of the same class, that there should be some other means of having groups and organizations such as this incorporated. They should not be subjected to the process of petitioning parliament and going through the mechanics of moving the bill through the Senate and House of Commons just as would be done in the case of an extensive public bill introduced by the government. I wonder whether this matter was raised in the committee and whether the sponsors of the bill, who undoubtedly knew of the debate we had on second reading, expressed any opinion one way or the other as to which would be the more desirable procedure? Were they satisfied with the manner in which this bill was dealt with?

I do not know what took place at the committee meeting. If we could have some indication of the attitude of the sponsors on this question it might help us look at the rest of the bill in a light other than that in which we may have to consider it if their attitude is not known. Does the hon. member who is sponsoring the bill know if any opinion was expressed on that particular aspect?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Mr. Chairman, when the bill was before the Miscellaneous Private Bills Committee there was a question directed

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

by the hon. member for Ottawa East as follows:

I wonder whether you could instruct us as to the reason why all these bills come before this committee? Is there no provision within the Committee's Act or Provincial Act to do the same—

The parliamentary agent for the group answered as follows:

There is provision in the Provincial Act, but there is no provision which could give religious powers under the Secretary of State, and the Canadian Corporation's Act. The main purpose is, as you will appreciate, Mr. Richard, the necessity as a limited company and the limited liabilities. The ability to hold land, without having, this is throughout the country, as opposed to having a provincial charter and having to get extra provincial licences to carry on a term of business, or a licence to hold land, which is expensive and would be ten times the expense for a group of this sort.

This was the explanation given to the committee by the parliamentary agent for the particular group.

**Mr. Howard:** If the situation is as related by the hon. member it seems somewhat regrettable that this state of affairs has to be allowed to continue. In the past the house has treated such matters rather casually and looked upon the duty which devolves upon us of dealing with private bills as being an inheritance of our British parliamentary system. I am sure that most members of the house, if they were asked to answer the question in a yes or no fashion, would say they do not believe it is the business of the House of Commons of Canada to spend its time dealing with the incorporation of organizations such as the Evangelistic Tabernacle. I am quite sure the great bulk of members would answer in the negative. They would say that in this day and age it should not be one of the functions of parliament but that parliament should be concerned with the public business in the broadest possible connotation of that term. Parliament should be enacting statute law relating to the general public and not enacting laws which relate to a group of private individuals.

I do not know anything about the Evangelistic Tabernacle which is being incorporated. I do not know anything about the sponsors of this bill or what the organization has been doing in the past. I really do not believe that should be my concern because I do not believe this bill should be here in the first instance. I am quite sure we could bring about a change in the general law, if parliament so desired, through a rather tortuous process. You may well remember, Mr.