

*Private Bills*

These societies or corporations are incorporated by the private bill process because of an inheritance from the British parliamentary system. In the early years almost everything which was done by way of legislation was done by means of private acts or bills. Gradually over the years public bills came to the fore until today they predominate among the items of legislation which parliament has to consider. Nevertheless we still have a few pieces of legislation which are dealt with as private bills, and we have an example before us now.

I am wondering whether we might not be able to work out a different procedure. Without intending any disrespect to the organization now seeking to be incorporated I seriously doubt whether, despite the historical background, it should properly be the business of the parliament of Canada to consume its time and energy considering bills of this kind, in the present instance the incorporation of Evangelistic Tabernacle Incorporated. I say this, as I have mentioned, with no disrespect to the organization itself but in a general way since this is one of a number of similar bills which undoubtedly we shall be considering in the future.

I note that other organizations and groups wishing to become incorporated for the purpose of advancing their philosophy, religion or ideology as well as for the purpose of dealing in real property and the like, as this body also seeks to do, can accomplish their purpose by incorporation under various provincial acts.

Some years ago the International Woodworkers of America, a union to which I belong, found that because it was not considered a legal entity as such it could not hold real property. We found we had to incorporate a holding society under the Societies Act of British Columbia in order to possess certain property, in that instance a boat which we owned. Other unions encountered the same difficulty in connection with halls, buildings and real estate generally. Perhaps we should be considering another method of incorporating groups and societies such as the one whose application is now before us. Eventually I should like to see the point reached when parliament would not have to consume its time dealing with private measures such as these. Certainly companies formed to conduct business operations of the greatest magnitude can be incorporated under the general law the Companies Act, or its

counterpart in the various provinces. Parliament concerns itself in this field only with the general applicability of the law, setting certain standards and general requirements which each company must meet before it can go into business. A similar procedure is followed with regard to special types of companies, for example, trust companies, mortgage and loan companies and the like.

I advance this as a general thought. I know it is not possible to do anything along these lines at the present moment. We have this bill before us and we have to take action with respect to it. I am sure the action the house will take will be precisely the same as was taken last session. The bill will be given second reading and go to the appropriate committee for examination in circumstances where its sponsors and others may appear as witnesses. Then the bill will be presented to us again in the normal course. However, if Your Honour is reconstituting the committee on procedure I suggest that this matter might be taken into consideration and that a study of the rules might be made with respect to private bills so as to permit such measures to be dealt with in another way.

Evangelistic Tabernacle Incorporated asserts that its objects are seven in number. The first is to promote and advance the Christian faith and doctrine and to extend the Christian faith in all lawful ways. It seeks to establish and conduct missions and to operate missions, seminaries, schools, colleges, hospitals, dispensaries and orphanages, together with homes for the aged and other institutions for religious and educational purposes. In short, it seeks to interest itself in the field of social welfare—I use the phrase loosely—because this is what we are concerned about when we talk in terms of homes for the aged, orphanages and the like. We are concerned with social justice and our responsibility for society.

The Evangelistic Tabernacle seeks to advance these ideals and aims. It also wishes to promote the erection and purchase of houses of worship and, naturally, to administer the property and business of the corporation. It seeks also to engage in the publishing business for the purpose of printing and distributing literature, gospel literature it is called, designed to promote and advance the ideology and doctrines of the corporation. Finally, it seeks to promote generally the spiritual welfare of all its members.