

people affected have the right to appear. I now make the point that the people of Canada can be adversely affected by what this company would be able to do, just as much as I could argue, and indeed just as much as we used to argue when we had American owned insurance companies coming here, that the people of Canada could be adversely affected by setting up those particular companies.

I say that because this Canada Development Corporation could carry on business in a way that would be inimical to the best interests of the people of Canada, and the people of Canada should have the right under our private bills orders to appear before a standing or special committee and state their objection to what is proposed in this bill. So I press the point, Mr. Speaker, and I press it upon the House, that although this may be another one of those dull procedural debates, something pretty important is involved here, and that we should not let this sort of thing get out of hand.

I am not suggesting that the government does not have the right to bring in this kind of bill. I am not suggesting that the Parliament of Canada does not have the right to deal with this kind of measure. It frequently deals with measures that I do not like, that I think are offensive to peace, order and good government, and so on, but at least if something like this is being done it should be done according to the well established rules.

Let me run the risk of repeating myself by saying if there are some of our rules that members think are a bit silly and unnecessarily complicated, I do not think that can be said about the special requirements of the rules that apply to private bills. When you have a private bill you are seeking a special or private interest. Therefore you have to do the two things I have identified—you have to hear from the promoter, and you have to give to the people the right to state their defence.

This bill aims to establish a private corporation. Others may develop this more fully, but I point out that in clause 6 of the bill it says that one of its purposes is the making of profit. If profit is to be made it will be at somebody else's expense. So, all told the bill has completely the characteristics of a private bill. As the hon. member for Peace River has pointed out it also has a couple of the characteristics of a public bill, mainly because it is being brought in by a public person, no less than the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) himself. But although he may have done enough to bring it under the wire as a public bill I submit that because its effect is so largely that which is achieved by a private bill, it should be given the private bill treatment which is supposed to be given to hybrid bills.

● (3:40 p.m.)

I said earlier that though we have lots of Standing Orders concerning public bills and 26 of them concerning private bills we do not have any governing hybrid bills. But we do have Beauchesne. In citation 376 of the fourth edition we find this:

Bills are of three kinds, public bills, private bills and bills of a mixed character styled hybrid bills which, though of a public character, affect private rights, and in their passage through Parliament these are subjected to a special procedure.

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That is what we are asking for. We are not saying the government cannot go ahead with this bill if it wants to do so but we are saying that because it is a hybrid bill it should be treated in accordance with a special procedure.

The citation continues:

If the House finds that private rights may be affected—

And they certainly would be by this bill.

—an order is made referring the bill to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills who may report that Standing Orders relating to private bills are applicable.

We believe this is what should be done. This bill should be referred to the examiners of petitions for private bills. Let them reach a decision whether the Standing Orders relating to private bills should apply in this case. Beauchesne continues:

The report should then be referred to the Standing Committee on Standing Orders—

Since this volume was produced we have altered our rules. We no longer have a committee which deals exclusively with Standing Orders. However, we have kept this function alive, and Standing Order 65 which deals with the setting up of the Standing Committees lists:

(o) miscellaneous Private Bills and Standing Orders

In other words we have kept the Standing Orders Committee alive. I go on:

The report should then be referred to the Standing Committee on Standing Orders which is empowered to report to the House whether such standing orders ought or ought not to be dispensed with. These two reports must be received before the second reading of the bill can be proceeded with.

So the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) was quite right to enter his caveat the other day and raise his point of order today before the motion for second reading was put. To continue the quotation:

Should the Examiners report that none of the Standing Orders relating to private bills are applicable, the bill proceeds on his course as an ordinary public bill. Should the Committee on Standing Orders report that Standing Orders relative to private bills are applicable, have not been complied with, and ought not to be dispensed with, the order of the day for the second reading is read and discharged, after which the bill may be withdrawn.

The proceedings in a committee on a hybrid bill are conducted in the same manner as in a committee on a private bill.

In other words, even though we do not have Standing Orders under a heading "Hybrid Bills" we do have a direction as to how to deal with hybrid bills, namely, they should be given private bill treatment.

It strikes me it is not for us to come to a conclusion about this question on the floor of the House. Indeed, it strikes me it is not even Your Honour's responsibility to make a decision as to whether or not this bill is a hybrid bill. But it does seem to me that in view of the serious doubt which exists as to whether it can be classed as a public bill Your Honour should rule that before it is proceeded with on second reading it should be referred to the examiners of petitions for private bills.

I say to you, Sir, that this is one course that could be followed. I believe Your Honour will agree with me that up to this point I have confined my comments to the pro-