

Private Members' Business

Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to support the passage of the bill that the hon. member for York—Simcoe has proposed to the House. I want to say first how thankful Canadians are for the excellent work carried on by the Salvation Army across our country.

Indeed, I am pleased to say that during the break that we had over Christmas when Parliament was not sitting I had the opportunity to tour some of the facilities of the Salvation Army in Kingston, including the Harbour Light facility in particular and the new citadel that had been built at the north end of the city, to see what excellent work is being conducted by the Salvation Army in my community. I know the work that that body does is multiplied across Canada in hundreds of Canadian centres where the excellent social work and work for assistance with people in need is carried out on a daily basis by the Salvation Army.

I am pleased that we in this House have an opportunity to record our appreciation and the appreciation indeed of millions of Canadians for the work that is carried out on an annual basis by this group and to pass a bill that deals with changes they desire in our corporate structure.

I have read the proceedings in the other place concerning this particular bill and have read the proceedings in the committee in the other place. I am satisfied with the opinions expressed there that the bill will accomplish the objective. I believe the objective is a sensible and worthy one and I believe that the bill therefore should enjoy the support of all members of the House. I am happy to rise to support it and make my speech very brief on that point, Sir.

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, I also rise to support the passage of this Private Member's Bill so that it can be referred to committee. I think the work of the Salvation Army in Canada as it is in most of the western world is well known. It certainly pioneered in the field of health care, social services, corrections and in child welfare. We wish to facilitate the continuation of the excellent standards and work that the Salvation Army has started.

The Salvation Army, however, is like many other organizations. It has grown dramatically in size. Its complexity has increased. It now has to deal with such

complex things as detailed programs, government funding, properties that are immense, mortgages, cash flow, and a whole series of business and organizational problems that it initially did not anticipate in 1909 and in 1916 when these bills were initially passed.

The reasons we would like this matter to go before a committee to examine the bill are several. First, the other place did pass the legislation. It did have a committee. But it made no attempt to find out what were the implications of those bills. In fact, the committee hearing was one page in which the committee basically complimented the Salvation Army on its good works with much justification, but did not look at the technical details of what was happening with this legislation.

Second, there is a letter from Consumer and Corporate Affairs that says one of the things which this bill is intended to do is to remove the \$350,000 limit on land value, a limit imposed in 1916. I read the 1916 legislation. There are two pieces of legislation in fact. But this section was repealed in 1957.

So we have Consumer and Corporate Affairs saying this is the intent of the legislation, and I read the legislation in 1957 that the parts referred to were repealed.

We have a letter from the minister raising an issue that the bill expresses no charitable intent for the Salvation Army. If you look at the 1916 legislation it is very clear that many of the activities that were contained in those pieces of legislation were of a charitable nature.

The legislation proposed that the Salvation Army, East be the continuing corporation and its by-laws be the ones that continue and the Salvation Army, West sort of fade out, which some people in western Canada would say is the intent of most easterners on all things.

When we read the two pieces of legislation and the 1916 piece of legislation, the Salvation Army, West is very detailed and sets out what the Salvation Army is going to be able to do. It can manage and operate hostels, places of rest, homes for women, and homes for children. When we look at the Salvation Army, East legislation, the by-laws make no mention of those things.

It also raises the whole issue of the transfer and handling of Salvation Army properties. I have sent a letter to the Salvation Army and I am going to refer to