

Private Bills

On reading the report of the committee I find that the general purpose for which this measure is required, as set out by parliamentary counsel, is to ensure that a religious organization which is unincorporated at the present time may get together and have an incorporated body to carry on religious organization and to get affiliation and other religious provinces to associate with it. What parliamentary counsel appears to be saying is that these people have one branch of a small church in the city of Winnipeg. Since 1956 they have had affiliated with them other small groups in Saskatchewan, one in Vancouver, one in the Okanagan Valley and one in Kenora, Ontario.

It is true that this makes it an interprovincial matter. It was pointed out that in every case except one, that is, in the province of Saskatchewan, there were no buildings owned by the applicants. There was some land held in Saskatchewan and apparently they owned their hall there. It therefore seems to me that a religious organization of this kind should be able to apply for incorporation without assuming by reason of this action all the liabilities, responsibilities and obligations, financial and otherwise, which we are providing in the present measure. These things were not asked for and it seems to me they are unnecessary.

I am surprised that the members of the committee were apparently unconcerned about the type of format we are using in the present bill, one which contains 18 clauses including some very onerous and complicated ones. In many cases the sponsors of the bill have not indicated that these powers are necessary and their parliamentary counsel has not done so either. The point I am making is that this is not the type of format which should be provided. It is archaic—

The Chairman: Order. I am sure the hon. member realizes he is ranging beyond the terms of clause 1, the general clause of the bill. The question of the format of this particular type of bill or whether the bill has come before the house under the Companies Act is something which may have to be discussed when the house is engaged on some other business. At the moment this particular bill is before us and I think the hon. member should confine his remarks to a general discussion of the measure as is usually done. Remarks as to the method by which this bill comes into the chamber or by which the legislation is carried out are out of order at this stage.

[Mr. Peters.]

Mr. Peters: On the point of order, I would call attention to clause 1 of the bill where the following phrase appears—

—for the purposes set out in this Act and, in particular, for the purpose of administering the property, business and other temporal affairs of the Corporation.

This is why the present bill is before us. This is what is being sought. This is what we are discussing under clause 1. My contention is that what we are providing for these people is much more than they are actually seeking and much more than is necessary. I do not see why clause 1 needs to be worded in its present manner. It is clear from the report of the committee that when this question was discussed parliamentary counsel indicated that the Evangelistic Tabernacle was seeking an act which would allow particularly Raymond Lee Bradley, who is a clergyman and the main petitioner, to establish an alliance with several other churches of like denomination and with persons similarly inclined in the province of Manitoba and to allow them to incorporate this religious body in other provinces. I believe this is all that was asked for. Yet because we presumably do not have any other format we have this long and detailed document in terms sufficient, I suggest, to establish the Bank of Canada, finance companies or anything else one might think of.

For these reasons I am of the opinion that this measure should be returned to the committee. I believe the committee should hear this application again, discuss the matter, and refer it back to the Senate in order that a modernization of the format can be brought about and a change made. If it is in order to do so on clause 1, I would move reference back to the committee for such a study.

Mr. Nasserden: I have one question I should like to ask on the motion which has been made by the hon. member for Timiskaming. Does he not think there is a better opportunity to bring about changes in the rules of the house, or rather in its procedure in a matter of this kind, than by moving the particular motion he is now thinking of making? After all, he will have plenty of opportunities to try to bring about the changes in procedure that he wishes to introduce without inconveniencing the people involved in the bill before us at the present time.

● (6:40 p.m.)

Mr. Olson: Mr. Chairman, in considering whether or not this motion is in order may I suggest that what is before the committee at