

Private Bills

An hon. member has been asked to sponsor this bill as a private members' bill. Ironically sometimes when we say a bill is a private bill we mean it is a public bill, while at other times when we say a bill is a public bill we really mean it is designed for private purposes.

● (6:30 p.m.)

So that a member is being asked to sponsor this bill whether or not he is connected with the Evangelistic Tabernacle. Someone has to sponsor it, and we have to go through the preliminary rigamarole that is necessary, and the different procedures, without their really serving the purposes of the Evangelistic Tabernacle community or of members of parliament.

I can think of four or five recent bills which fall into this category. I should like to refer to them, not as being involved in this context but to illustrate my point. There was the bill with regard to the Boy Scouts of Canada. Another time it was the Girl Guides; then the organization which brought together all the doctors in Canada; and there was one in connection with the nursing profession. These were all private members bills and were subject to the same gobbledegook that these bills receive in the Senate because of the archaic procedure we follow.

I endorse the view expressed by the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) and the hon. member for Cariboo (Mr. Leboe) that we should do something about our procedures in connection with these bills. If it were possible under our rules, I would be prepared to refer this bill back to where it came from, and have some of these clauses removed. When people are asked to make application, the documents sent to them to file with the application are broad enough to cover almost anything from soup to nuts. In this case it may be more broad than that because it covers the spiritual field as well.

I think that to fit into this broad category all kinds of corporations for almost every organization that wishes to be national in scope is completely unreasonable and too expensive, and leads to great difficulty in justifying many of the powers they are given, which they do not want, do not need and will probably never be able to use.

Therefore I suggest there should be some way in which the sponsor could in committee ask for the removal of some of these clauses which will not be useful and in many cases under certain circumstances will turn out to

be a liability to the company. I know that my learned colleague from Danforth (Mr. Scott) will not, because he is a lawyer, agree that changes should be made. However, he must be aware of the fact that many people who operate solely in this legislative, linguistic, legalistic field find it very difficult to agree to very simple English being used that would be plainly understood in our modern society by those who come in contact with these bills, but are not of his training.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, in the legislative field when the Evangelistic Tabernacle Corporation has to come to Ottawa for national incorporation they should be able to do so in terms of their desire and their need, and when they make their presentation to members of parliament and ask for legislation allowing the incorporation of their company, they should do this only to the extent and degree that the members of their organization wish. For this reason I hope the sponsor of the bill will consider some of the suggestions made and that the house in general, those 30 members who are here at the present time, will take into consideration changing the format by which bills such as Bill No. S-7 are presented to the house.

If there was a way of opposing this bill without showing my disrespect for the intentions and aims of the Evangelistic Tabernacle Society, I should be pleased to do so. However, I hope we shall have an opportunity under other circumstances to repeat this point until the committee of the house sees fit to establish rules that allow a more reasonable interpretation of the wishes of organizations such as the Evangelistic Tabernacle Society.

Mr. Reid Scott (Danforth): Mr. Speaker, I have been moved to enter the discussion on this bill by the evangelical plea of the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) for some form of legalistic enlightenment as to the nature of the bill. The hon. member for Timiskaming is of course a highly respected member of the house, a member of long standing, a member of great tenacity and knowledge, and I am genuinely moved by his desire to have some sort of legal justification for what he calls the legal jargon contained in this bill.

I would not want the record to suggest for a moment that we were in any way opposed to the present bill which has been sent to us from the other place. We are in support of it and are quite happy to have it pass. I suspect