

*Private Bills***PRIVATE BILLS****THE GOOD NEWS BROADCASTING ASSOCIATION
OF CANADA**

Mr. S. J. Enns (Portage-Neepawa): Mr. Speaker, this is the second time this bill has come before the house and the events leading up to second reading of the bill are somewhat unusual, to say the least. The house will recall that the bill was passed by the Senate at the session before this one and this was repeated in the spring session of the twenty sixth parliament. The bill was actually read a second time in the house in July of this year but because the preamble was not carried the bill was almost killed in the house.

I have a motion I will present at the end of my remarks seeking to have the bill referred again to the standing committee. Does the Speaker wish me to make my motion at this time or may I make a few additional comments?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think it would be in order for the hon. member to make his comments and then move his motion.

Mr. Enns: I think the reason that there remains an astounding and very unfortunate lack of understanding of the main purpose of the bill lies in the fact that not sufficient evidence was provided at the last hearing before the miscellaneous private bills committee, and the reason for this may be explained by the fact that there seemed to be no objection to the bill. Several questions were asked in a routine way and it seemed that the bill would be accepted. In fact, every item was discussed clause by clause and the bill was approved by the committee. I should add that certain amendments were accepted by the committee and these too were passed.

In view of this the sponsor did not feel that additional comments or explanations were necessary at the time, so that no further explanations were given prior to the question being put by the chairman. When the chairman did put the question the bill was defeated by a narrow margin.

I feel this was most unfortunate and arose because of the lack of understanding of the main aim of the bill which really is to promote the dissemination of spiritual values by means of radio broadcasting. The sponsors of the bill have in mind the various uses to which radio broadcasting is now put, for instance, to promote the use of soaps, detergents and deodorants, and they believe there is another purpose for which radio broadcasting can be used, the discussion and promotion of spiritual values in this and other countries.

[The Chairman.]

This is the essential purpose of the bill. The sponsors have asked for the incorporation of an association to be known as The Good News Broadcasting Association of Canada. I should point out that the parent body of this association is American and has been operating for some 24 years from Lincoln, Nebraska. Their programs seem to be well received by the people across the line. The association is supported by voluntary donations from people who derive spiritual benefit and wish the work of the association and the program to continue. In the United States the association buys radio time at commercial rates. This allows them to buy time of the optimum value and thus they are not restricted to that which stations might donate for charitable purposes.

The association is actually purchasing radio time at commercial rates and the funds collected by the association are used essentially for this purpose. There are various other explanations and additional information I should like the miscellaneous private bills committee to have. For the purpose of bringing in further witnesses to speak to the bill I respectfully move:

That Bill S-15 entitled "An act to incorporate The Good News Broadcasting Association of Canada" be recommitted to the standing committee on miscellaneous private bills for reconsideration.

This motion is seconded by the hon. member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Moore).

Mr. Grant Deachman (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear from my hon. friend opposite that additional witnesses are to be brought before the miscellaneous private bills committee when the bill to incorporate The Good News Broadcasting Association of Canada is discussed there. When the bill was brought before that committee prior to the recess some of its features were discussed, giving rise to considerable doubts in the minds of members of the committee whether or not the government of Canada should involve itself in the passing of a bill of this kind. It was for these reasons that it was returned to the house with the report that the preamble was not proven.

I do not propose to oppose the bill at this time but I wish to indicate that I am not in favour of the principle of the bill as it was brought before the private bills committee in the period before the recess. When additional witnesses do come before that committee I hope they will be able to provide further explanations to satisfy the committee that the passing of a bill of this nature is a legitimate function of the parliament of Canada and not properly a function of a provincial legislature or some licensing body within a province.