

Private Bills

these reasons this bill warrants a great deal of consideration by the house.

The hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) and the hon. member for Cariboo (Mr. Leboe) are both experienced members of this house and have dealt with many bills of this kind, for the incorporation of religious bodies. I endorse the remarks of those two hon. gentlemen. It does not appear that we are incorporating a religious body by this bill but rather that we are giving authority to a group of individuals to go into the banking business. The bill would allow this group to purchase, take, have, hold, receive, possess, retain and enjoy properties real or personal. Everything is included in the bill except the interest rate to be allowed, and I suppose if somebody had thought of that it would be included also. The bill does not really say what this church group wishes to do. It seems to be filled with a lot of archaic gobbledegook designed to make lawyers rich rather than to serve the needs of these people.

I realize that the bill will go to the miscellaneous private bills committee. I have been a member of that committee on a number of occasions and I can assure you that the attendance at its meetings, including my own, has not been good. I do not believe we are interested in putting the people named in this bill through a third degree when they appear before us at that committee's meetings. I am sure they do not know what this bill means, or whether it covers their requirements.

The bill itself asks that we incorporate Mr. Bradley, a clergyman, Mr. Wiebe, an optician, Olga Bradley, a housewife, Harvey Schmidt, a clergyman and Mr. Bergen, a machinist, all of the city of Winnipeg, together with other persons and congregations under the name of Evangelistic Tabernacle Incorporated. I am sure these people are as confused about the contents of this bill as members of parliament are who are here in attendance rather than out having their dinner. I am sure I do not have the faintest idea what this bill is about. I have no knowledge of the people involved and can therefore have no opposition or support for them. I cannot help wondering, however, if they are being taken advantage of by others who might have a great interest in this corporation. There are two clergymen petitioning, and the language of this bill must have caused them a great deal of confusion. I am sure that because of its design this bill has cost these individuals four, five or even ten times as much as it should have to bring

[Mr. Peters.]

it before parliament. It has included everything but the kitchen sink.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): That is in clause 7.

Mr. Peters: I am sure that by the terms of this bill these people could set up a finance company, a railroad, or any other kind of operation. Surely the C.B.C was not set up with more safeguards than are provided by this bill for this religious group. The circumstances surrounding the bill should certainly be examined carefully by hon. members who are at all interested. Our parliamentary procedures do not allow us to send the bill back to the other place without destroying it, and I am not prepared to do that, but we could move some amendments necessitating a reconsideration.

Let me assure the sponsor of the bill that we are all in accord with the desires of persons who wish to incorporate bona fide religious organizations to carry out the many laudatory purposes set forth in this bill, such as the establishment and maintenance of missions, seminaries, schools, hospitals and so forth. I am sure we would all agree with the principles of this bill if they were in fact to allow these people to own church property and carry out certain religious activities. Surely if this were a bona fide organization it should be allowed to carry on these activities outside provincial boundaries.

There is another quaint expression contained in the bill to the effect that this corporation will support the doctrine of faith in the organization. I imagine that some of our financial institutions would like this type of clause in their letters of incorporation, and would be wholeheartedly in support of the suggestion that an organization should promote the general welfare of its members.

I am not in a position to read the sections of the bill in the debate on second reading, but I believe that if members take the time to consider it they will find that a great many things have been written in that are not necessary to the operation of such a corporation. In view of this fact we must consider the responsibilities of these individuals to this organization, and we must attempt to find some solutions to the dilemma in which they will find themselves as a result of the passage of the bill. We in this house must give consideration to this application for incorporation because it falls within the category of bills that fall into the category of private legislation, but are public in their application.