

*Private Bills*

(Mr. Fleming) who is unavoidably absent. That hon. member, who was to have moved the bill, has a long history of association with the boy scout organization and was only recently awarded the medal of merit by that organization.

The Canadian general council of the boy scouts association was incorporated by chapter 130 of the statutes of 1914 which received the royal assent on June 12, of that year. Section 8 of that act authorized the association to receive, hold and dispose of real estate, but added a proviso that the amount should not exceed the value of \$50,000. On reading over the debates which took place in connection with that bill back in 1914 I find that some hon. members at that time wondered why the amount was so large. Looking at the matter in retrospect, taking into consideration the way in which the boy scout movement has grown and developed, we realize that this amount was totally inadequate and that at the present time it is quite unrealistic. In support of the need for this authority to hold additional real estate I should like to give the house a few facts with regard to the organization. Many of them are well known, but I think this would be an appropriate time and place to reflect on the advance made by this organization since 1914 and on the need for allowing them to hold increased capital.

It is 45 years since this association became an incorporated body. The dramatic growth of the movement to its present membership of nearly 256,000 has given ample proof of the effectiveness of the program which the association has undertaken. Unlike so many other organizations, the scouts do not confine their activities to urban districts and municipalities. They have reached out into remote hamlets in every part of this country. The association has extended its work until it has reached the Eskimos and the Indians in our northern territory. I myself became a boy scout through the medium of a little known portion of the movement called "The Lone Scouts" organized in areas where there were not enough boys or leaders available for a group to be formed. We formed small groups of three or four boys with a councillor or an assistant, and a great many boys became scouts by joining the lone scouts organization.

The movement is of particular value in a country of such racial and religious diversification as Canada. The ranks are open to boys of every faith and of every racial background. The emphasis is on duty to God and loyalty to country and this is of immense importance in a country where we are trying to weld together into a single Canadian

people citizens who come from every continent and who claim every country as a birthplace or country of origin. The appeal of the scout movement is not only to groups of differing religious or racial background. The movement also serves the blind, the deaf, the crippled, and the mentally retarded. It gives young lads in these unfortunate circumstances an interest in life—a feeling that they have something in common with other boys who have the normal advantages. A great work is done in such special troops.

The organization does not forget the military personnel. It has organized troops in Europe and in overseas bases to such effect that nearly 1,000 boys belong to the scout organization at army and air force bases in France and Germany. The boy scout program is offered to organizations interested in the development of good citizenship in this country, and it is interesting to note that 50 different organizations sponsor boy scouts groups—churches, service clubs, home and school organizations among them. In fact, almost every organization which is concerned with the welfare of youth and of Canada is either sponsoring a scout group or giving one active support.

Many of our leading citizens have been members of the scout organization, including, I am told the Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker) and several members of his cabinet, many hon. members of this house and a number of hon. senators from the other place. I have spoken to a number of hon. members of this chamber in connection with the scout movement while this bill was in preparation, and almost every one of those to whom I spoke said he had been a member of the scout organization in his youth. My neighbour, the hon. member for Waterloo South (Mr. Anderson) tells me he was the first wolf cub in Galt, and that was quite a few years ago. Leaders of religious, educational and many other groups in Canada have not only belonged to this organization but continue to support it. Today, more than a quarter of a million boys are receiving training under more than 25,000 dedicated leaders whose only reward is the knowledge that they are making good citizens for this country. Because of its system of sponsorship and its ability to take its program to the smallest communities in Canada, the boy scout association is serving more boys than all the other youth character training agencies combined.

Much is said today about juvenile delinquency. This is a phrase which I do not much like, but it has become part of the nomenclature of social welfare work in Canada and I suppose we must accept it.