

*Criminal Code*

I support the principle of the Bill. However, there are some areas of concern which I believe will be resolved when it is referred to committee. The first area of concern, and perhaps the most important, is one on which I will dwell for only a few moments. It is the indication that the Minister will decide the market area. I, for one, would like to have a very clear understanding of how this decision will be made and what will be taken into consideration as the basis for it. I refer here to the example in southwestern Ontario where we have race tracks at London, Hiawatha at Sarnia, Windsor and at Dresden mid-way between Sarnia and Windsor. Dresden Raceway runs about 24 race dates per year. It is not the typical city track that we see outside Toronto, or at Flamboro', Fort Erie or Woodbine. This track is in a rural area originally established to coincide with the fall fair.

It is the type of track that does not have a fancy dining lounge. However, there is a series of excellent restaurants in the community and surrounding communities. Its clientele is quite unusual and there is an atmosphere of neighbour meeting neighbour. It is an atmosphere of "We'll see you at the races". It is a picnic-type atmosphere which means so much to the area. It is noted for its good racing and its Sire Stakes.

As we put this Bill into legislation, it is important that we look to see the impact it may have on an operation such as this one, which is surrounded by three much larger cities. If the teletheatre is introduced we will see how it will impact on this track. Will there be opportunities there for the people who attend the races and for the horsemen who race there to have their share of the action so that they will not be elbowed out by larger places?

I have had very positive comments about the test markets at Hiawatha at Sarnia where last winter there was a test that was successful. However, it was not as successful as it could have been due to cut-backs in staffing at the Blue Water Bridge into Michigan. There were long line-ups in traffic. As a result, about 70 per cent of the clientele came from the Ontario side while only 30 per cent was from Michigan. It was really not an accurate test. Although it was not accurate, I believe it will become a positive feature of that track, in particular for the older people who want to attend a race and to see a horse running. In Toronto, people who may own or have an interest in a horse can simply go to the Hiawatha track, to London or Dresden and in the teletheatres

watch their horses race. I want to make sure that this is clearly spelled out either in the legislation or in the regulations. I would be most interested to see draft regulation as to how this area will be dealt with.

• (1620)

Another area I want to examine for a little while in committee also—and the Minister made mention of it in his address—is that this is not an off-track betting shop concept. I want to look at it to make sure that it will have a positive impact on the industry. In this context I would like to relate to the impact of such betting shops in the State of Massachusetts which destroyed the industry. We want to make sure that does not happen here in Canada.

I would suggest that we should look at what has happened to the race tracks of Foxboro and Yonkers in Massachusetts through the introduction of the betting shop concept. I do not want to spend much time on this, but I just want to reiterate that the Canadian racing industry is one of the best in the world.

I agree in principle with the intent of the Bill. I will want to examine further the proposed regulations and the areas to be regulated to ensure the continuing viability of this industry.

With those few brief remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will look forward to studying this matter in committee.

**Mr. Bob Horner (Mississauga West):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to rise today to make a few remarks in this debate on Bill C-7. I want to say at the outset that I am solidly in support of this piece of legislation.

My riding of Mississauga West will probably never have theatre betting because some 25 miles in one direction we have the Greenwood race track, some 15 miles in another direction we have Woodbine race track, some 30 miles in another direction we have Mohawk, and 80 miles in another direction we have Fort Erie race track. They are not going to set up a theatre betting shop in my riding and take patrons away from the race track who normally attend.

This Bill is designed to help tracks that are in trouble. I have spoken to tracks right across Canada. Tracks in Québec want this legislation. Sudbury Downs is closed today and cannot open until this legislation goes through. Manitoba wants it very badly. Assiniboia Downs in Manitoba is in a lot of trouble. Managers and owners of tracks in British Columbia have come to see me and have requested that we put through this Bill.