

Supply—Agriculture

renders to the Department of Agriculture and the only item of this type of which I am aware.

Mr. Hellyer: Mr. Chairman, I always thought that the federal government's share of the pari-mutuel take could be construed as a tax, such as a money transfer tax, and I am a little bit surprised to hear that we have to provide such an expensive service in the process of collecting this tax which the minister now describes as revenue. Is there some way that the federal government could charge the race track association for this service which is being provided so that it could be recovered?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): That is what is being done.

Mr. Hellyer: Is the minister now saying that this cost is recovered from pari-mutuel takes?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): This is a service that is rendered to the race tracks, and a charge is made to cover it. This is not a tax in the ordinary sense at all, but a charge for that service rendered. The service rendered here involves a statutory levy of one half of one per cent on all moneys wagered at tracks and involves R.C.M.P. supervision regarding photo finish camera finishes, and the taking of saliva and urine tests at the major race meetings.

Mr. Hellyer: The minister is now saying that the percentage taken on betting is fixed and is by way of remuneration to the federal government for services provided rather than a tax, is that the case?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): That is right.

Mr. Hellyer: I would commend the minister to consider an increase in the rate when he is considering these matters in the next few weeks.

Mr. Fisher: I would like to ask the minister if the purpose of this service is connected with the approving of the breed of race horses, or is it a form of protection to the bettor insuring that he has a fair deal?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): This is to assure that we have an effective operation at race tracks within the law.

Mr. Fisher: What is the reason for this charge appearing under the agriculture estimates when it involves primarily the service of Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers supervising urinalysis and that type of test?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): It is because the Department of Agriculture is responsible for the operation of all manner of racing at fairs and other meets of that kind which are

definitely agricultural in their nature. This item covering this service has been in the Department of Agriculture for as long as I can remember.

Mr. Fisher: I suggest that now is the time to raise this issue. This is obviously a very large commercial operation.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I would draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that this falls directly under the provisions of the Criminal Code, and the Criminal Code makes the Minister of Agriculture responsible for the supervision of pari-mutuel race track betting.

Mr. Fisher: I wonder whether the minister's attention was directed to the debate in the Ontario legislative assembly in relation to race track betting and gambling, and in particular in regard to the percentage going to the provincial and federal governments as compared with the amount which goes to the Ontario jockey club, for example. I wondered what part the federal government would play, or whether this item would have anything to do with the part it would play in the determination of how the cake or pie is sliced?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, I am not acquainted with the debate to which the hon. member refers. I must say that I am kept busy trying to keep up with the debates of this house without having to look into debates that occur in the different provincial legislatures. So far as taking into account the respective levies by the provincial and federal governments is concerned, all I can say is that this is provided to pay for the cost of these services, which an enactment of parliament has laid upon the Minister of Agriculture, in relation to pari-mutuel betting.

Mr. Benidickson: Mr. Chairman, under the procedure which we follow we do not receive information regarding the balancing of revenues unless we ask questions. The minister has indicated that related to this item of expenditure is an intake based on 1½ per cent, is it, on the mutuel betting?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): One half of one per cent.

Mr. Benidickson: We know from the main estimates that in 1960-61 it was indicated that we would have an expenditure of \$593,000. This is an additional \$35,000. If the minister has the information conveniently handy, would he indicate to us what revenue under this item is estimated for 1960-61? Has he a prospective figure for 1961-62, and has he the figure for 1959-60?