

tourist trade and property and business taxes. Implementation of inter-track betting will not only help to preserve existing benefits to communities in which tracks are located but will also create substantial additional employment.

I feel very strongly that this legislation will go a long way toward giving tracks the boost they need in these difficult times.

As a veterinarian I would just like to spend a couple of minutes talking about horses because if these race tracks in Canada start to collapse and the business starts to go under, breeders will not be able to stay in business, and gradually we will lose the thoroughbred industry in the country. We will lose the thoroughbred horse. The thoroughbred horse is a very important part of the entire equine picture because he is an important part of breeding in many, many aspects of the equine scene. Our hacks and show horses, show jumpers, rodeo horses and chuckwagon horses are all important parts of the equine business. Without the thoroughbred behind all this, we will lose.

I feel very strongly that we should get this bill through the House and give the tracks the help they need. It will not do any harm. There might be a moral issue involved, but I cannot see that as a big thing in Canada nowadays. In view of the various lottery programs we have, I discount that.

Let us get this bill through the House and give the tracks the help they need.

• (1530)

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this bill not because I am an expert in horse breeding or racing but, first, because I am an enthusiastic fan; second, because I want to see an important Canadian industry survive and prosper; and third, because I want to do all I can to reduce the amount of criminal activity in this country.

For several sessions now I have had a private member's bill to legalize off-track betting, the present bill being Bill C-534. My interest in the subject goes back to the days when I was solicitor general and I was convinced by many police chiefs that off-track betting would be a responsible move if we were to transfer the illegal betting made through bookies to legitimate betting authorities. At the present time, because we do not have off-track betting, millions of dollars are going through the bookies into organized crime, which in turn helps finance the drug trade, prostitution, pornography and so on. Therefore, any measure put forward by this government which will help reduce the flow of funds into organized crime, through bookmaking or otherwise, I would support, and I think this measure does so. I mentioned that I am an enthusiastic fan, although I do not frequently attend. I have had the opportunity to go to the Preakness twice, the Queen's Plate several times, and because Saratoga is the closest thoroughbred track to Montreal I have been down there many times. It is a beautiful track with some of the best thoroughbreds in the world racing there. However, I want to say to those who

oppose on moral grounds off-track betting on horse races that there is a bit of hypocrisy in that position. Very often these same people will tolerate betting at the racetracks, but they will not accept it off the racetrack. They will accept bingo in churches or community halls but they will not accept betting on races.

Mr. Patterson: They are not all like that.

Mr. Allmand: I know, I am not singling anyone out. I am just saying there are some people in this country who are inconsistent in their moral principles.

I want to deal with some other points, Mr. Speaker, raised by the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans). He said he does not know how this bill will help employment in the horse racing industry. In fact, he thinks the bill will hurt horse racing. First of all, I want to point out that this industry directly employs approximately 40,000 people in Canada. That is more than the oil industry. These people are employed in breeding, training and racing horses, and in various jobs at the racetrack. There are in Canada about 7,000 horsebreeders, and in 1980 there were 116 racing associations carrying on pari-mutuel racing. In addition, federal and provincial government revenue from horseracing in 1980 was approximately \$126 million, money which did not go through the bookies into organized crime. In addition to the 40,000 direct jobs, there are very important economic spin-offs for feed suppliers, veterinarians, harness and equipment manufacturers, and the people who sell and service horse trucks and vans. Another very important economic spin-off is in the tourist business. In Ontario and Manitoba it is estimated that Americans crossing the border to visit our racetracks left behind about \$90 million in 1980.

While I would prefer a complete off-track betting system, Mr. Speaker, which is what my private bill would do, this bill goes part of the way, and consequently I support it. To those who oppose it on moral grounds I ask them to look at their moral principles, be consistent and avoid hypocrisy. For those like the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain who think this bill will hurt employment, I ask them to examine the figures I have put on record to see that in fact horseracing and horse breeding is a very important business in Canada and will do a lot to help our economy and employment in those areas where this is an important function.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Collenette): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Collenette): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Nielsen: On division.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Blaker in the chair.