

Criminal Code

restraints. The sporting community ought not to be treated in that fashion. If we are going to delegate away an element that generated funds for the sporting community, it has a right to know with what that element will be replaced. The Minister has an obligation to say that we are abandoning the sports pool and replacing it with another mechanism which it is felt will in fact address the needs of the sporting community. It was the same case in 1979 when the then Prime Minister made an agreement with the provinces to abandon the lotteries field and give a monopoly to the provinces. Was that a fair deal?

● (1540)

I am not suggesting that we should be at war with the provinces, but if we are looking at the sporting constituency, as the Minister obviously should, then we should be speaking for that constituency. In 1979 the federal Government gave away the lottery area which was generating moneys, some of which was to be used in the sporting community. The Government gave away a \$200 million plus industry in return for a simple \$35 million share. The loser in that deal is the sporting community.

The idea of a lottery or a sports pool is not foreign nor very difficult to understand within the sporting community. Quite often there are Members in the House of Commons who shun lotteries and question whether they are really a hidden tax on individuals who play lotteries the most. They say that some studies have shown that the people who use lotteries the most tend to be in a lower or moderate income bracket.

However, the Canadian Olympic Association has clearly been on the record as endorsing the former sports pool corporation and endorsing lotteries as a way of generating funds for the Canadian Olympic Association. It is also a concept that is not foreign to other countries when considering ways of generating funds for amateur and professional sporting activities. The sports pool or lottery at the federal level which helped to support federal sports initiatives was not totally unique in this country. Many countries in the world have mechanisms which may not be called lotteries or sports pools but which are similar to our lotteries and are used to generate funds for sporting activities.

The sports community in this country is suffering from a lack of financial resources. I cannot think of any better example of that severe financial handicap facing sports organizations than our national soccer team. Last September, the Canadian soccer team qualified for the World Cup soccer tournament for the very first time in Canadian history. They have been attempting to reach the international finals for 28 years and finally, last September, the Canadian soccer team was able to fulfil that very impressive and nationalistic goal.

There was great applause and much back-slapping and congratulations for the men and women who made that victory possible. However, let us look at the condition facing the national soccer team and its players now. I was shocked to read in the Toronto *Corriere Canadese* newspaper, the reality of the national soccer team and its players. It was pointed out in that article that the captain of the soccer team and his

family as well as seven other colleagues and families of the seventeen member team were living on unemployment insurance. They did not have a full-time job because they had to train and there were no training funds available, to date, for these players and coaches.

That condition is an embarrassment and should not exist. Yet they do not receive any money. I am told that the only money forthcoming will not be until January when the official training period begins for the national soccer team. The amount of money to be given to the 17 players and coaches is still to be determined. It will largely depend on the generosity of the private sector.

Moreover, it was also reported in that article that part of the team is training in Vancouver and the remaining portion is training in Toronto. Our national soccer team will be playing against the best teams that the world has to offer. It will be in Mexico being watched by the world. Yet part of the team is training in Vancouver while the remaining portion must train in Toronto. The reason for that is that we do not have the necessary funds to bring all the players and coaches together at the same time on the same field. The players are probably not questioning this publicly because they are likely playing from the heart right now. However, if they are honest with their feelings I am sure that they and other Canadians are asking how they can compete against the best teams in the world when their team cannot even be on the same field in order to train together.

I believe that is unfair. I suggest that other teams in the world that will convene in Mexico are receiving not only moral support but financial support from their Governments at all levels. They are receiving financial support both directly and indirectly.

Mr. Jelinek: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe that we are discussing Criminal Code amendments. I have listened with interest to the typical misinformation coming from the Hon. Member for York West (Mr. Marchi), but I am wondering whether it should be noted that we are discussing Criminal Code amendments as proposed in the Bill.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for York West (Mr. Marchi) has the floor.

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Speaker, that is not a point of order. During his speech the Minister stated that this Bill certainly had its roots in the previous sports lottery Bill. The purpose of the sports lottery was to aid sports and I am talking about sports. It is one thing for the Minister to be defensive but he should get up on a proper point of order.

I am not misinforming the House of Commons because the information which I shared with Members in the House is true. Perhaps he should check with the captain of the national soccer team. We will then see who is misinforming and misleading the House.

Mr. Mantha: What about the hockey team?