

Criminal Code

division of the Consumers' Association of Canada at the Grosvenor Hotel in Vancouver, British Columbia. We get so many of these that one does not know whether he should take the time to read them all, but one learns to leaf through them.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): You only read the ones you agree with, Stanley.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I had to go to the last few pages of this one to find what I wanted, and it came as a surprise to me as I did not expect it. I expected to throw this speech away. In any event, I got to the end of the speech and found that the minister discussed with the members of the British Columbia division of the Consumers' Association of Canada the folly of games of chance and prizes as conducted by the retail trade in the United States and Canada. He expressed a strong belief that this sort of thing should be curtailed.

The minister, in referring to these games and gimmicks in the United States, suggested that the chances of winning prizes vary from game to game but are found to be monetarily low regardless of the game. He said that, as a whole the programmed chances of winning a cash prize per store visit were about 3.4 to 1,000. He referred to a quotation from an article which appeared in the United States.

The minister went on to refer to the fact that once the odds of winning a major prize feel to zero, the advertising implications reached a peak. Once the one major prize was won in a particular area the advertisements began to emphasize this fact. The clear implication was that other prizes of the same size were available when in fact they were not. Consumers who believed they were available were being deceived. I could go on with these statements by the hon. minister's friend who stood up before the Consumers' Association of Canada and stated that one of the things we must get rid of was this practice of games, chances, prizes and gimmicks in which stores indulge in an attempt to entice people in simply because of their gambling instinct. Many of these people feel they are going to win, but the minister made it clear that they do not have a chance.

● (8:40 p.m.)

What kind of a situation is this? These ministers are sitting too far apart. We have one minister saying we must get rid of games of chance conducted by the retail trade in this country while another minister sitting at the

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

other end of the cabinet benches, is saying it is time to permit games of chance and lotteries conducted by the government itself. How ridiculous a situation can you get? These two ministers are good friends, and I hope they will get together. I hope the Minister of Justice will take the advice of his friend the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, to the effect that there is just no economic sense in trying to make money, trying to raise revenue from the people of this country by means of lotteries. If the people of Canada want to conduct lotteries in a private way, our law for a long time has said it is all right, and the law still says this. But let us not put the stamp of approval on state lotteries run by federal government or by the provinces. This is why I ask for support of this amendment.

I emphasize that this amendment is not a package involving several propositions. There is no confusion here. There is no question of having to vote one way or the other because of all the elements involved. There is one clear, simple issue in this amendment, and that is its opposition to state lotteries, federal or provincial. I hope the house will support me in that opposition.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I shall be very brief. In our approach to this matter we still retain the same freedom of action which was referred to by our leader at the time of second reading of the bill. I intend to support the principle put forward by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). I can say in very few words why I intend to do so. I accept many of the comments made by the hon. member. I would like to think that the people of Canada have had enough of gambling. They gambled last June 25.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Baldwin: Hoping for a royal flush, they got a busted straight, and lost.

An hon. Member: They lost badly.

Mr. Baldwin: I have very considerable reservations about the federal government and the provincial governments becoming involved in lotteries. Some years ago I sat on the estimates committee which looked into this issue. We examined the records and figures relating to the lotteries conducted by the Irish Republic. Although we never made a report or any recommendations which came into the house, at that time our conclusion