

Private Members' Business

got a ticket"? No, no. There was going to be advertising, and there was. If you will recall, there was heavy advertising on television of Lotto Canada tickets at the time. There was no hint that we should not be doing it at the time. Now we have it under the jurisdiction of the provinces.

This is what bothers me most of all about his motion, that at one time it was in the federal domain and there was nothing in the legislation at that time to restrict advertising of the lottery system. Now that it is in the provincial domain, we are supposed to restrict advertising for lotteries. I grant him that particularly lifestyle advertising is injurious and leads people to believe in some fantasies that are unhealthy, and that is not good. He has just cited the reason for bringing in the legislation tabled, and it happens to be Ontario advertising, and it could have been any other province as well, but has he made any overtures to the Government of Ontario, who are his soul mates? Has he asked it about the advertising it is doing so that it does not propagate what could become a disease, a fixation in advertising?

Once one introduces a measure like lotteries—I would rather that it would not be here—and then tells the provinces: "Here is what you cannot do with it," there is an element of paternalism that enters into it. I cannot believe that the provinces are going to be happy with any kind of instruction from the federal government about what is or what is not acceptable about the way they promote what we have already given them the right to promote.

I cannot believe that the provinces think they are so immature in the whole area of ethics, morality and promotion of this that they need guidance from the federal government on how guidelines ought to be set up for the promotion of this industry.

The hon. member's other point is that low income people tend to use their disposable income, of which they have a restricted amount, to buy lottery tickets that they may not be able to afford. This hurts them. If that is the pattern, I agree that it does. Would he then also suggest that, for example, if there is a higher percentage of cigarette smoking among low income people that there ought to be a diminished amount of advertising toward them, or that we ought to take fewer tax dollars from them? Should we increase the taxes for them?

Once one gets into a kind of socioeconomic grouping, I think one runs into trouble. I wonder about penny stocks. If there is ever an arena for gambling, it is in the whole area of penny stocks. Maybe that should be included. I guess the biggest problem that I have is the serious degree to which legislation like this could antagonize the provincial governments. I do not think we need that kind of confrontation in federal-provincial relations.

Now that we have an industry that I do not support and that I do not think is good, but which is entirely within the domain of the provinces, we ought to let the provinces do it and not try to pass legislation that instructs them in a kind of paternalistic way on how to conduct their activities.

Mr. Doug Fee (Red Deer): Madam Speaker, none of us in this House or anywhere in this country would want to support a vice that contributes to poverty or addiction, not even an addiction to gambling.

As we all know, this can very well lead to personal and social problems. This bill is just a little extreme. By legislating against advertising for provincially operated lotteries, we do not address the real concerns that I am certain lie behind this bill. Canadians allow a rather ironic situation to exist in the legal status of gambling.

As the hon. member for York Centre pointed out earlier, most Canadians look at gambling as morally wrong. At the same time, they are willing to accept it if the proceeds are used for socially acceptable uses.

The general approach toward gambling in Canada has been to prohibit all forms of gambling under the Criminal Code, except those that are specifically permitted under that code. At the same time, there are several forms of permitted gambling in Canada. Almost all of us are familiar with the betting that is permitted on games of chance and wheels of fortune at fairs and exhibitions across the country.

In the next few months—I am assuming we will get a parliamentary break and if we do—most of us will be visiting those fairs and exhibitions. We will see the games of chance. We will have our own opinions and moral judgments on whether they should be there or not. The fact remains that they are accepted as part of most of our summer fairs across Canada.