

validity of the committee system we are trying to put into effect. I know that a friend of mine along the front row a bit objected the other day by saying the committee was a failure. I think in his view it was a failure because it did not do what he wanted it to do. Among other things, that committee made changes, some of which were opposed by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner), and that is good.

The Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, whatever one might say about the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, did a good job on this bill. Now that we are at this report stage, which I think is an innovation that is good but is being put to the test right now, it would be unfortunate if out of the 44 amendments put down by members not one of them was approved when it came to a vote. I hope this is one on which members will vote as they feel they ought to, without regard to what the government or the party may have said, with the result that we will take the position we do not want this regressive form of taxation or the injustice involved in state lotteries.

Having made these several references to taxation, may I go on and put it this way. What on earth is the point of having a Carter Royal Commission go into the whole question of taxation, and what is the point of having the government study that report and put all those people in the Department of Finance to the task of going into the ins and outs of it in order to bring down a white paper to develop a taxation system that is fair, if we then turn around and shoot the thing full of holes by bringing in state lotteries which have no relationship whatsoever to any kind of fair taxation system? That is why I take this stand. There are opinions on the moral and social nature of lotteries. It has been said under other headings that it is pretty hard to get a consensus on most social judgments and moral opinions. Surely, when it comes to cold, hard economics we can get a consensus. I hope there will be sufficient support for this amendment that when the time comes for the vote to be taken it will carry and we will delete paragraphs (a) and (b) from sub-section (1) of the new section 179A of clause 13 of the bill.

If this happens there are one or two consequential things that would have to be done, such as relettering some of the other clauses.

Criminal Code

I was advised before I put down my amendment that this would be within the prerogative of the law counsel, so we have no problem there. All we need to do is get this house to take the proper position on this issue.

I said earlier I recognized that what the Minister of Justice has in mind is that this is only permissive legislation. When the minister was speaking on second reading, I think he said that what this bill does in this respect is provide for a sort of local option, leaving it to the federal or provincial governments to have lotteries or leave them alone as they may wish. This provision will not work in that way. If you put the stamp of approval on state lotteries by this kind of legislation, it is only a matter of time until we have them.

As a matter of fact, I find it difficult to take that argument from the Minister of Justice, because if he is putting in this clause, and he remains the Minister of Justice, he would be the one to bring in an order for state lotteries. If he does not intend to do that, why is he putting this in the bill now?

It is not my desire or my intent to speak at length on this matter. I hope I have made my point. I do have one other point on this legislation I wish to draw to the attention of the minister. Before doing so may I emphasize that so far as I am concerned, I am not putting this matter on any narrow blue law basis. I am putting it on the basis of what is common sense and good economics. I have cited the position that the churches have taken because I think they are to be commended for the realism of their approach. As I say, the two paragraphs I read from the letter from the Charleswood Mennonite Church on the outskirts of Winnipeg I think represent the essence of the church's opinion and this House of Commons ought to pay attention to it.

I said I had one other piece of evidence. I think the Minister of Justice is acquainted with the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford). In fact, I believe they are good friends. A year ago during the leadership campaign I think they were on the same team. At any rate, I should like to introduce the Minister of Justice to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs who, like others in the government, runs around making speeches. He has some public relations people in his department who give us copies of these speeches.

The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs made a speech on Friday of last week at the annual meeting of the British Columbia