

Criminal Code

member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) finds the praise for the minister a little too eloquent, I ask the minister to give second thought to the legislation he is bringing forth and to give close attention and co-operation to the amendment of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

• (9:20 p.m.)

This amendment makes sense. It means the provincial and federal governments will not be promoting the gambling instinct among Canadians. It is not worthy of any government to promote this type of instinct. I need not underline the fact that the operation of any lottery adds little to employment opportunities. The few people required to operate a lottery will not solve any of the employment problems which we face today. That cannot be used as an argument.

I fear the minister may have to bring forth a song with regard to lotteries. We all know the song, "Don't play bingo tonight mother, stay home with daddy and me". A new national song may have to be brought forth with regard to the operation of lotteries to replace this song. I say, Mr. Speaker, the government should not make itself responsible for gambling facilities. It should not promote the gambling instinct because that is unproductive and unworthy of the government of Canada.

Mr. Baldwin: May I ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. Gilbert: Certainly.

Mr. Baldwin: Would the hon. member be prepared to ask unanimous consent of the house to review the remarks he made in his first speech?

Mr. Gilbert: I have full confidence in the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner). He believes in the trustworthy process of democracy. After hearing the eloquent pleas of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre and the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin), even discounting the remarks which I make, I am sure the minister will be persuaded like Paul on the road to Damascus, to see the light and bring forth the proper legislation.

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak briefly on this particular amendment. I have not spoken on some of the other amendments because, on second reading, I had an opportunity to state in a general way my position on the most

[Mr. Gilbert.]

contentious issues encompassed in the amendments to the Criminal Code. I agree with other hon. members that the particular amendments included in the bill represent an attempt by the minister and members of the house to up-date and bring into conformity the laws of the land as we currently know them. Someone might immediately suggest this is what we are also doing with regard to gambling. A good deal of gambling is carried on in this country under one guise or another. If looked at squarely, much of it is carried on illegally, but government and police officials tend to look the other way when gambling of one kind or another takes place in this country.

Quite frankly, I do not feel the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has gone far enough in this amendment. I did not have the opportunity to hear his remarks. I do not know why he would distinguish between lotteries operated by provincial or federal authorities as opposed to those operated by religious or charitable institutions or agricultural affairs. Gambling is gambling, no matter where it takes place. The issue is surely the same. I believe gambling does little or nothing to encourage people in the correct ethics that motivate and guide the structures of our society and economy. We cannot have a two-sided view, people doing right in one situation and wrong in another.

There have been many experiences with various forms of lotteries. The hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert) mentioned the song, "Don't Play Bingo Tonight Mother". During my time as an active minister and pastor I had to deal with a number of individuals who became victims of an addiction to gambling. It is not the purpose of the minister's amendments to encompass all the various problems of morality in our society.

Our lawmakers have a responsibility to lay down at least general guide lines, but when dealing with the matter of lotteries we have gone far astray. The idea of giving permission to institutions, provinces and governments to conduct lotteries is in direct contradiction to everything the government does in the exercise of its authority. I know of no government department or agency that essentially says, you can expect to receive something for nothing. Therefore, I find it extremely surprising and illiberal, if I may describe it that way. It will do no good.

While the government may find people in certain areas strongly in support of lotteries, they will in truth weaken the moral fibre of