

Criminal Code

ask that it be changed to twelve rather than ten, which is not a multiple of three. As I say, this bill was requested by the standard bred breeders, and also by the Canadian Trotting Association.

Mr. Ferguson: We cannot control the liquor situation properly without the aid of the government, and we cannot control betting on horse racing in Canada without the aid of the government. In my opinion the bill has been introduced to give the same form of control as is provided for the authorities who control liquor, which cannot be controlled otherwise. We have tried it. It is within the power of the government to control horse racing properly. It has nothing to do with paper mills, millionaires, the mill rate in municipal taxes, or any kind of mill at all. In my opinion it is simply proper and sane legislation.

Mr. Lesage: I agree completely with what the hon. member for Pontiac-Timiskaming has said. In my part of the country we have sulky races, and usually there are four races with three heats each. I wonder if the Minister of Agriculture could not find it possible to change the figure from ten, as set forth in the bill, to twelve. That is the only complaint I have, and it would not make much difference.

Mr. Gardiner: A number of members, who are much more familiar with the conduct of horse racing in different parts of the country than I am, have made similar representations since the bill appeared on the order paper. I feel that it would not be possible for me to agree to increasing the figure from ten to twelve without first discussing it fully, not only with the officials but also with my colleagues. The reason is that we have given a general undertaking to the house, and the undertaking was given in another place, that the bill does not provide for any further opportunities in connection with betting than existed before; in other words, that there are the same opportunities for betting on trotters and pacers as there are for betting on runners.

I realize of course that trotting races are run in three heats, and the general impression I had was that if you said what is being suggested should be said, you might confine it to nine heats. I am told, however, that the way in which racing is carried on in certain sections of the country, particularly in the Ottawa valley and outside the Ottawa valley in Ontario, is that the race is actually put up for bids, and the final racing is carried on at some other fair which bid for it. That type of race could not be conducted except with the possibility of ten heats.

[Mr. Proudfoot.]

The reason why it is ten instead of nine is that that kind of racing is established. They race their three year olds at a certain fair, and then the race is finally run off somewhere else. The fairs bid for the right to have the race run there, and the fair that bids the highest has that race. They do the same thing with two year olds. The race is run off, and in order to run it off at the final fair they must provide for ten heats. If both two year olds and three year olds happen to be running off at the same fair, they would require ten heats. The bill makes provision for that, and the suggestion is now made that it should be twelve heats.

I am in the hands of the committee. This is your bill now; it is not mine. It has been our opinion that ten heats provide as much in the way of opportunity to bet as is provided now for the runners in eight races, and that there would be an argument on that count against having it more than ten. At the same time, however, there are a great many racing events from one end of Canada to the other where they have four races of three heats each, and that is twelve heats, not ten. I am quite prepared to allow the subsection to stand and bring it back later. I am prepared to have the committee rise and report progress, or if the committee thinks it should go through as it is, I am quite prepared to accept that.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Fulton: Let it go through and change it next year.

Mr. Knowles: May I ask the minister whether the purpose of the limitation in the bill as it now stands is to prevent additional betting, or is it to protect the horses?

Mr. Gardiner: As has been said by the hon. member for Pontiac-Timiskaming, the object is to protect people who buy tickets at races where pari-mutuel betting is carried on. The practice is for a person to go up to the wicket and buy a ticket. The other type of betting is bookmaking. The individual goes up and makes his bet, and he knows when he makes it what he is going to get out of it if he wins. That is all put down in black and white. He can do that kind of betting, and it does not come under this at all. We do not supervise that kind of betting, because it is an agreement between the individual and the bookmaker at the fair where betting is being legally carried on. However, in order to make it easier to handle it on a much larger scale, they have started pari-mutuel betting. You go up to the wicket and buy a ticket, and then your money goes into a pool, together with the money of all the others who bet.