

way in which lotteries have expanded in the country since the change to the Criminal Code in 1969 is something of which I disapprove, as all Members will realize by now. To think that as a consequence of that change we are now skilled in the production of various materials which can be exported seems to me to be a most objectionable argument for the legislation which is before us. In fact, it seems to me to contradict what the Hon. Member for Halton (Mr. Jelinek) said in 1983 in describing the ills of gambling activity when he referred to sleazy operations and so on. It seems to me to be quite contradictory for him to advocate in the House at this time that the results of this activity could be usefully sold to others. Surely we should not be involved in perpetrating upon others the material of this particular wrong which we are working upon ourselves.

Given the nature of my support for the Bill, a support which relates to the fact that it takes the federal Government out of gambling activity, I might say that the critical comments of the Hon. Member for York West (Mr. Marchi) with respect to the Government giving up this area are comments which I would entirely share if I regarded the activity under discussion here as a legitimate activity. As I said last fall, when one is giving away the store it should not be too difficult to arrive at an agreement with the recipients of it. If one surrenders a potential chunk of an operation to those who are already well established in the business, it should not really be difficult to arrive at an agreement. All of that is of course to say that this particular 1979 agreement involves a curious complex—at least when Conservatives are in opposition—of moral disapproval and desire for better relations with the provincial Governments. When the Conservatives formed the Government the moral disapproval was abandoned. They focused primarily on good, co-operative federalism and then on giving away the shop. As a result, they are left with a limited negotiating power when they turn to the provinces to obtain somewhat more. Of course, I am talking about something more of the filthy lucre which is involved in this. I shall abandon the particular point I have made here which the Hon. Member for York West has already expanded upon quite properly. I will leave that particular argument to him and take up what the Conservatives, now in government, have quite abandoned. I speak of the recognition of the social and moral consequences of gambling and the conviction that there should be an investigation of this whole matter.

This brings me to one of the other quotations which I incorporated in my comments of November 8, 1984 when I noted that the Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp), the present Minister of National Health and Welfare, speaking on November 18, 1982 made a statement which I fully endorse. Given the presence of a different Minister in the House today, I suppose I shall have to direct the statement to him. The Hon. Member for Provencher said:

I suggest to the Minister that he seriously consider setting up an all-party Committee to study the subject of lotteries and what they mean to the Canadian public, both in the immediate and long term, before this Bill is passed.

Criminal Code

The agreement among the House Leaders with respect to this particular Bill precludes me from actually insisting on anything such as that. However, it seems to me that Ministers of the Crown who have expressed themselves very strongly as Opposition Members in quite principled, moral terms with which I heartily concur might take that suggestion from November 18, 1982 to heart and set about striking such an all-Party committee and authorize that committee to call witnesses, invite briefs and seriously consider the effects of gambling on the country.

● (1630)

It is something over 15 years since the Criminal Code was amended in 1969 to allow gambling on the large scale it is now. Almost into the sixteenth year now, we might very usefully have such a consideration of the question by a committee to find out what Canadians think about the advisability of such an endeavour. If Hon. Members, now Ministers of the Crown, really believe the principles they espoused in 1982 and 1983, I have no doubt they will in fact give us such an opportunity to determine what the effect of gambling is.

I will not say anything about what they feel now because this is after all an open question to which they have the opportunity of responding and demonstrating their social good sense and moral principles. I earnestly call upon Hon. Members to take such a stand and give us the opportunity to determine whether we should in fact at some early point have a further revision of the Criminal Code to strike out the power which it has now. Clause 3 with respect to Section 190 of the Act states as follows:

Notwithstanding any of the provisions of this Part relating to gaming and betting, it is lawful (a) for the Government of a province, either alone or in conjunction with the Government of another province, to conduct and manage a lottery scheme in that province, or in that and the other province, in accordance with any law enacted by the legislature of that province—

We might very usefully have a special committee of the House of Commons to consider whether we should in fact repeal that clause as well and remove gambling from the national scene, as it were, where it has been allowed to grow and to proliferate. Let us remove it from that scene and get ourselves back to something of the moral sense which Canadians used to feel, which in fact has been the motive of members of my own caucus, past and present, and Members of the Conservative Party when it was in opposition.

I appreciate this opportunity to conclude the matter which I had the opportunity of beginning on November 8, 1984.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time and, by unanimous consent, the House went into Committee thereon, Mr. Danis in the chair.

The Chairman: Order. House in Committee of the Whole on Bill C-81, an Act to amend the Criminal Code (lotteries).