

### *Greyhound Races*

The greedy provincial governments should get their hands a little less in the pockets of the racetrack business and turn back a little more to the track so as to keep them healthy at a time of economic downturn. These 50,000 people who are supported by the industry need all the help they can get. I am talking about farmers who grow the hay and straw needed by the horses, about the farriers who shoe the horses and, I suppose, even the people who make the horseshoes. I am talking about the vets who look after these horses and who sustain their living that way and about the people who work in the restaurants and in the administration and operational facilities at the tracks. I am talking about such part-time workers as parking lot attendants. I suggest there are 50,000 jobs which will be seriously and adversely affected by the introduction of a new and a very much less productive form of racing.

I believe the House should pay due recognition to the contribution that the horseracing business provides to the country in the form of jobs and tax benefits to the governments. We should be sustaining and supporting that industry rather than introducing more lotteries, dog racing and other types of racing.

There is also the thought that using greyhounds in this way, having them run around the track frantically trying to grab an elusive fur-covered electrical rabbit, is not the proper way to treat animals. I do not think that I would want to run around and grab one of those in my mouth only to discover suddenly that it was not what I thought.

I believe this is an unwise move for the area in question. It is very unwise for the Blue Bonnets race track, for harness racing and for thoroughbred racing in Quebec, Ontario and throughout the country. If I can speak for myself and this Party, we oppose such legislation.

**Mr. Paul E. McRae (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** Mr. Speaker, I have the same views in mind as those of the last two speakers. However, I am concerned about some of the statements made by the Hon. Member for Scarborough East (Mr. Gilchrist).

I have two good reasons why I do not support this Bill. The first reason is that I believe we have reached the saturation point in gambling in this country. Perhaps it is time to step back, even from a moral point of view, since the state is encouraging too much gambling and causing abuse to some people in this country. We should not be a party to that kind of abuse. Personally, I do not believe that the state should prevent individuals from doing certain things, because they must decide for themselves what to do. But in this case, we have come to a point of saturation where perhaps we are causing some of this abuse. While it is a fine line to draw, I believe we have reached the saturation point in this particular area.

At this point I have some difficulty with the question of the sports lottery. In my opinion it was a relatively necessary way to raise money for sports in this country. I was in the House, as were a number of us here today, when the Government of

the former Leader of the Opposition made an arrangement with the provinces to transfer the Canadian lottery to them. We were told that transferring that particular property to the provinces would be for an amount of approximately \$75 million a year.

The former Minister of Sports is not present in the House to verify this, but it was assumed that the Tory Government of the time would try to collect approximately \$70 million a year for this purpose. I am told that when the conference of provincial Sports Ministers and the federal Minister of Sports was in session, an edict came from the Prime Minister at the time that \$25 million plus some indexing at that stage was adequate. Of course, we were quite shocked at this. It was another attempt by that Government to give more to the provinces and take more from the national scene. I think the federal Government has a responsibility to raise money, and I can justify raising it in national sports, which is what we are doing at this point in the sports lottery. However, I can see other evidence of a deteriorating situation having to do with lotteries of one kind. Bingo, which I think is a pastime for a lot of Canadians and has also been a way for churches and other charitable organizations to raise funds, is an activity that is being undermined. Small groups and churches are being affected by super bingo, and bingo is being commercialized to the point where there is a threat to many people and small groups who are, for charitable purposes, running bingo. I believe we have reached the saturation point. I would not want to see this extended any further.

● (1730)

The way I see it, this Bill is not acceptable for another reason. We have one industry that has developed a tradition over the years where many Canadians, I am told in the order of 40,000, are involved in horse racing and the businesses associated therewith. We have developed a lot of good Canadian breeding stock. There is a very solid and well-grounded fear that were we to introduce greyhound racing at this time, we would not do it as an extra industry but at the expense of an industry that is well established and part of our agricultural and national economy. As I said before, apparently some 40,000 jobs are at stake. I do not think this would happen if the state of that industry were satisfactory. But I am told the industry last year had a net decline in its revenues. For instance, the amount of betting went down, and so on. Therefore, one could assume that if one introduced another racing sport, such as greyhound racing, one could expect there to be a considerable decline in horseracing.

It seems to me this kind of development is fine when you have a very large market, as there is in the United States, where it would not make that much difference if greyhound racing were added to other industries, such as trotting and horseracing, etc. But in Canada, when you have an industry that is not in good shape, that is having difficulty—and I can show figures where this is the case—the effect would be to undermine an industry which is rather important to our economy.