

Criminal Code

The purpose of this amendment, as I pointed out earlier, is to delete completely the new provisions concerning federal and provincial lotteries.

As I already explained, I am not against lotteries, but I believe those who wish to set up lotteries at the present time can do so. Certain municipalities, for instance, have done it. I already referred to the city of Montreal—I do not wish to stress the matter any further. We should leave it at that as far as the lotteries are concerned.

I note that certain charity organizations, social clubs, farm associations, agricultural fairs or local exhibitions may conduct bingos etc., in order to help certain sporting clubs. It is relatively easy at the present time, under the provisions of the Criminal Code, to resort to such means to help out organizations in need of additional funds to pursue their work during the year.

We know also that some catholic parishes have from time to time to conduct lotteries to pay the interest of their debts owing to the construction of churches, for instance. I do not know what goes on in protestant parishes, but as far as catholic parishes are concerned, to build a church, money must be borrowed and the church is thus paid for two or three times over. In order to pay the interest, during the year, raffles and parties must be organized to get some assistance and people may be entertained and practise charity at the same time.

Under the provisions of the Criminal Code those kinds of lotteries are legal. The amendment to the Criminal Code serves an altogether different purpose. It aims at enabling provinces, as well as the federal government, if needed, to conduct lotteries in order to finance Administration out of a concealed tax. The coffers must be filled, for not only are the funds inadequate, but the people are fed up; they pay enough taxes of all kinds, and they balk at each new tax which the government slaps on.

It seems as if, through that amendment, the governments of the different provinces as well as the federal government would be allowed to use an act to extend the tax system and turn lotteries into a hidden tax.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the government has some needs, that it has to meet heavy expenses, to finance public works, at the federal as well as provincial levels, but if the government wants it, it can use any means to reinforce its fiscal system.

[Mr. Laprise.]

I think the government should use, as some of my colleagues have suggested earlier today, a truly Canadian institution, namely the Bank of Canada, to finance public administration—I am not speaking of private business—at any level. Then the government would not have to pass regulations or measures such as we see here this evening to secure additional revenue to finance its administration.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to delete from bill C-150 clauses 12 and 13, which deal with lotteries.

Mr. Speaker, we should consider this amendment, as well as amendments 11 and 10. I think they are similar. As we study them, we come to the conclusion that they recommend the status quo with regard to lotteries.

● (8:10 p.m.)

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, towards the end of the afternoon I heard the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) accusing us of making the same speeches over and over again.

Mr. Speaker, I was a teacher for 13 years before becoming a member of this house and I learned that when one has to deal with thick-headed people, with blockheads, one has to keep trying relentlessly and repeat oneself several times in order to be well understood. This is why we want to make sure we are well understood and we are stressing our views on bill C-150 generally and particularly on the amendments now before us, aiming to delete clauses 12 and 13 from the bill.

The hon. member for Abitibi (Mr. Laprise), who moved this amendment, has just given us some reasons justifying the deletion of those two clauses.

I have given my views on the subject of lotteries this afternoon when I said that I am not in favour of the establishment of a national lottery, but that considering the present system, we find ourselves nevertheless compelled to accept lotteries in order to replenish the funds of some organizations, and, in particular, those of the provincial governments or municipalities, as it is now being done in Montreal.

Some religious, social and charitable non profit organizations, manage in this way to collect funds to alleviate poverty and misery.

We are still convinced that the principle of lotteries is somewhat immoral, since we are staking on the passion and the taste for