

Criminal Code

can be accomplished by opening up betting even wider than it is today. Show me how this can be done by discouraging people from attending the event itself. How can you encourage the development of a spectator sport if you encourage people not to go to it? Does that not strike the minister as being odd? It certainly strikes me as being odd. Therefore, I am unable to support the bill.

Mr. Cook: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Is there time for the hon. member to answer one question?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Collenette): The hon. member for North Vancouver-Burnaby wishes to ask a question. This requires unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Cook: The original part of the hon. member's speech dealt with the fact that people will stop going to race tracks since they would be able to make a bet by telephone. In the state of New York there are off-track betting shops on practically every street corner throughout the cities in that state, yet attendance at New York race tracks has dropped insignificantly as a result. How does the hon. member explain his position with those facts staring him in the face?

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am delighted to have given the hon. member the opportunity to ask a question. He has answered the question himself. It is true that if you provide alternative methods for betting then fewer people go to the track. The hon. member has said so himself. There are fewer people attending the tracks in the state of New York than there were prior to the introduction of off-track betting. Therefore, I can only assume that, having answered the question himself, the hon. member feels no necessity to have me answer it for him.

• (1450)

Mrs. Céline Hervieux-Payette (Montreal-Mercier): Mr. Speaker, I will start my remarks by saying, firstly, that I do not know anything about horse racing, and then I will speak for 25 minutes!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Hervieux-Payette: Why I am discussing this matter is because I was raised by a grandfather who owned racehorses, and for as long as I can remember I have heard about horse racing. My in-laws, too, have been great fans of the sport for many years, but as I am a mother and a Member of Parliament, I do not have much time for it. I must say that I have been in close contact with that industry for over 25 years.

I just want to answer a few questions in the mind of the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans). For instance, he is quite interested in knowing whether less people would go to the track and whether there would be a loss of jobs at the track. The hon. member might know that the jobs we are discussing are not only those located at the track. For every one job at the track, there are three or four jobs related to that

industry outside the track. Of course, I am referring to the farms and those who train horses and all the related industries which make the necessary equipment. For instance, in one evening there are usually ten races with ten horses in each race, which means 100 horses for one single track. Considering the number of tracks in Canada, this means that many horses must be trained, which necessitates much investment. For those who are involved it is an industry, and for those who are attending it is mostly a sport.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, my grandfather was involved in this sport for several years in Berthierville, where up to a few years ago they still had a racetrack that operated on a regular basis almost year-round. Unfortunately, because of the economic situation, and despite government assistance, the racetrack had to close down.

Mr. Speaker, in my riding there is a racetrack which is worth over \$10 million with the buildings and everything around it. The track has been closed for several years. We are talking about an industry that is losing money every year, not as far as the betting is concerned, but because racing is becoming more and more expensive. In fact, I think this bill will help the industry considerably, because at the present time, one of the problems is to have enough income to be able to afford good quality horses and trained staff to run the industry.

I do not think my colleague quite understands the fact that the bill will provide for inter-track betting. He seems to forget that first of all, we must have races, and with races, everything that is necessary to run them including equipment, horses, jockeys and trainers, and if all these elements are present, then the race will take place no matter where the bettor happens to be. More people will be involved in races, and I hope that thanks to modern telecommunications, some day races will also be shown on television. I do not see anything here that is against public morality, since this activity is very strictly regulated and controlled by the authorities of the various provincial and federal departments and agencies concerned.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I feel that we should realize there is all this "underground" money which never gets to the track, which is not converted into taxable wages, and in the final instance, we have millions of dollars circulating under the counter, which are not benefiting the Canadian economy but are benefiting an underground network, and are of no direct benefit to the industry. This money circulates in shady circles only and does not go directly to the owners and drivers and the entire racing industry. It is this money that we, as a government, want to bring back into legal channels. Will this create jobs? Yesterday, a number of mayors made statements on the subject, including the mayor of Quebec City, who said that probably more than 300 jobs in Quebec City would be saved thanks to this bill. If in Quebec City, which has 500,000 people and has had a racetrack for a number of years, municipal