

As a former athlete I support anything which can be done to help amateur athletes in this country. But certainly not by establishing the phoney, sleazy programs the Government is talking about which would be taking advantage primarily of the poor people of this nation, and then misleading them with false and misleading advertising.

That, too, is clearly expressed and admirable. I hold to every word of that. Surely the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport, in introducing the Bill this afternoon for debate on second reading, would agree that it is only acceptable as a half-way measure. We should be involved with getting the provincial Governments out of these activities and with ending the spreading of lottery mania across the country, particularly ending the advertising of lotteries on our television screens and on the billboards of the nation designed to arouse in Canadians hopes which are very rarely fulfilled for anyone.

I want to say something about the matter of lotteries and their continuance at the provincial level because of this half-way measure in amending the Criminal Code. We should in fact be getting out of the business altogether, at least at the provincial level as well as the federal level. The provincial Government of Ontario recently changed and, as a result, opened windows and doors and produced papers of various sorts. It has provided us with some studies on gambling which are of considerable interest.

Of course there has been discussion in recent years as to who are the participants in gambling. The Hon. Member for York West (Mr. Marchi) alluded to some by suggesting that it was Canadians of lower income, the poor, pure and simple, and middle-income Canadians who tended to be the buyers of lottery tickets. The extent to which some of these people purchased lottery tickets leaves one suspecting that the consequence is a reduction of standard of life for them, in the almost always vain hope that they can somehow get out of the circumstances in which they are caught and get on to the rich life which they seek. The reports which were done for the Lottery Corporation in the Province of Ontario certainly underscored that reality. In one case they indicated that in fact it was groups of Ontarians of the sort I have been describing who tended to be the larger purchasers of lottery tickets.

Another study suggested that lottery ticket buyers were more poorly regarded by the public than they should be, and that an advertising campaign was in order to improve the image of those who were gambling. I do not know whether in fact those studies were behind the advertising campaigns to which we have all been exposed and to which I alluded earlier.

I should like to refer to two of the advertising campaigns in this province. There was the "Home, James" series, if I can call it that, which pandered to all kinds of desires for luxurious acquisition by our fellow citizens. The other campaign focused on a druggist in a particularly homey store, an aunt and her niece and the young clerk who works in the drugstore. Those two campaigns were designed to improve the image of the lottery buyer.

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Enormous amounts of money have been spent on those advertising campaigns for television time and billboards. A

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great deal of money was spent on the series this summer that encouraged us all to continue buying lottery tickets while on vacation. All of these campaigns were designed to encourage our fellow citizens to gamble with the conviction that they are going to strike it rich and break out of their poverty and that they would finally enjoy all that their hearts had desired for years.

That kind of advertising is designed to drive people into a never-never land. The possibilities of winning a lottery are extraordinarily low in most cases. There is in fact much more chance of being struck by lightning, and in fact even being struck by lightning a couple of times, than there is of winning a lottery, according to statisticians. Given the small number of people who win, it arouses false hopes to appeal to people to buy tickets in the hope that they will be able to enjoy the kind of life that is held out to them in that series of advertisements.

The fact that advertisers believe that listeners are susceptible to these appeals says a great deal about the circumstances in which many of our fellow citizens are caught. I think we might as well recognize that for some years now, the lives of many Canadians have been lives of depression. During the high interest days of the early 1980s and even earlier, many Canadians were unemployed, caught on social assistance and found themselves without any significant meaningful place in society beyond what they were able to create in family and with friends and community. Given that sense of the hopelessness of breaking out and getting ahead, even for those who were employed in low-paying jobs with very little hope, it is understandable that an advertising appeal that suggests the possibility of prosperity, affluence and luxury would have some appeal to our fellow citizens.

There is something almost diabolical about the fact that the Government helped to create the depressing situation in which Canadians found themselves while at the same time pandering to them by advertising campaigns designed to suggest to them that there was a possibility of getting out of this depression by buying lottery tickets. A social illness is developing and Governments are playing a large part in supporting this. Unfortunately, this Bill which gives the provinces the monopoly on lotteries does nothing to end that.

At the time when Governments are very sensitive to the privacy of citizens, there has been very little protest about one of the most curious features of the lottery system, which is that winners effectively forfeit their privacy and anonymity. They stand revealed before the nation as suddenly wealthy people. There has been very little protest about the demand of the lottery associations that winners identify themselves and stand before television cameras revealed as the sudden possessors of half a million, a million, or in very few cases several million dollars. That particular violation of the privacy of people who have attempted by buying lottery tickets to break out of their straitened circumstances seems to me a curious contradiction on the part of Governments that are so concerned about the privacy of individual Canadians.

My comments on the effect gambling has had on our society and the social malaise to which it relates are, it seems to me, of