

Criminal Code

What we are talking about here today are jobs and a very fine industry. I know of what I speak, because from 1964 to 1971 I was a veterinarian at race tracks in Ontario. It is a very well run industry. It employs about 100,000 people who would have difficulty finding employment somewhere else. They have grown up in the racing industry. It is a family. I was very shocked to hear the Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) state that he wanted the provinces to have a say in this regard. The provinces have every say in it.

The amendments before the House recognize the responsibilities and the interest of the provinces. No theatre could operate without first being granted a licence by the province. I really do not see what the problem is. I commend the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) and the Hon. Member for Mackenzie (Mr. Althouse) for their insight in wanting to see this Bill go through all stages today. It is a very important Bill. It is connected very closely to agriculture.

Some great race horses have been produced in Canada, not the least of which was Northern Dancer in 1964, one of the finest race horses this world has ever known. It is nice to hear about the great racing families. There are great racing families all over the country, not only in Lambton—Middlesex. There are the Waples and Sandy Hawley who came out of Whitby and has gone on to be a riding champion in the United States.

We know that we have a small amount of illegal bookmaking on sporting events and race tracks. The police are doing everything they can to control it. There is only a small amount of bookmaking, but the Bill will assist in cutting down on the amount of bookmaking. It will make races available to people who do not have them.

I am thinking of Sudbury Downs. What is to stop having the races shown by satellite in a nice theatre not only in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario but in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. This money could go back to the horsemen, keep the industry alive and keep the purses up.

What has happened in the racing industry is that it costs \$50 a day to keep a horse at the race track and pay a trainer. It was once known as the sport of kings, and we all know that the Royal Family is still interested. However, today it is the sport of the common man. In my riding

we have fire-fighters who own race horses. Many people form syndicates; three or four people get together and buy a race horse. There is nothing more thrilling than to see your colours come across the finish line.

I would love to see this Bill go through all stages today. The province is protected in every way possible. The province will issue the licence. We know that there is competition for the betting dollar from bingos and from lotteries. Something like 38,000 stores are selling lottery tickets, pushing all kinds of lottery tickets. We are talking about the viability of an industry, an industry that has a good image and a lot of integrity.

Let us talk about the betting dollar for a moment. Canadians in 107 race tracks across Canada last year bet \$1.7 billion. The federal Government gets a bit of that, three-quarters of 1 per cent, which is just enough to support what it does for the racing industry. We control the pari-mutuel wagering. We control the photo finish cameras and the big contracts which go out to Mendelssohn Films and others. We also control the drug testing. It is very sophisticated drug testing. They can tell us within hours when a horse was given something. I have been in these testing labs at Can Test and Man Test. They can tell us what a horse is being fed. If a horse gets linseed oil to help his coat, they can tell us. They can tell us everything a horse has been given and when it was given.

The integrity of this sport is really great. All around the tracks they have patrol judges who watch the races. They make sure that there is no cheating of any kind. The racing industry is a sport with a lot of integrity and a lot of people really enjoy it.

I was interested in the comments of the Hon. Member for Mackenzie on the traditions. I am sure he and I remember in the winter-time when cars did not run on country roads. Everyone had a driver and farmers used to race to town to get their groceries.

The provincial Governments get approximately 10 per cent of every dollar that is bet, that is, a \$170 million are going into the tax coffers.

This is a very important Bill. It is a very tiny little Bill, some page and a quarter. It is an amendment to the Criminal Code.