

Criminal Code

Calgary South, Mr. Arthur Smith, a Conservative, the Liberal member, Mr. Merv. Hardie, and the member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. J. F. Browne), introduced bills of their own. I mention their names as a token of esteem for the work they did in that field and also to remind the house that members from all parts of Canada appealed in favour of lotteries.

Which goes to prove that the majority is in favour of lotteries. Not only members of parliament but public bodies are interested. For instance, the 800 chambers of commerce of Canada are in favour of the project. At a recent congress of mayors and municipalities held in Ontario, the federal government was asked to set up a lottery. Recently, we had the opportunity of seeing how interested the public is. I should like here to express in particular, the admiration I have for Mrs. English, of Calgary, who has set upon herself to get one million signatures in Canada in favour of sweepstakes. She worked a great deal for that cause travelling all over the country. I wish to pay a special tribute to her. There is also the survey conducted a few years ago by the paper *La Presse* which revealed unequivocally that 89 per cent of the people in the province of Quebec were in favour of a lottery.

I do not understand why the government should ask some members to extend the debate until six o'clock so as to kill the bill, when it should recognize that this bill is logical and acceptable. In fact, it merely suggests an amendment to the Criminal Code in order to enable the provinces wishing to do so to pass legislation allowing them to establish a lottery.

We respect the convictions and conscientious objections of certain persons from different areas of this country.

The statutes of the province of Quebec contain since 1935 an act concerning the establishment of a provincial lottery. In 1949, Mr. Duplessis called for the establishment of a provincial lottery at a convention held in Chicoutimi. At that time, Mr. Jean Lesage, the present premier of the province of Quebec, was a member of the federal cabinet and he had declined to proceed with the request made to him by Mr. Duplessis.

Well, today, the situation has changed. It is now Mr. Lesage who is asking the ministers in Ottawa to establish a provincial lottery. Recently, some federal ministers and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chevrier) in particular stated that one must be Liberal in Quebec as well as in Ottawa. If that is true, I wonder why the Liberals of Ottawa turn down the request of the Quebec Liberals.

I hope that the hon. member for Dollard (Mr. Rouleau) who will speak later will tell

us whether he intends to act upon Mr. Lesage's request to amend the Criminal Code.

Mr. Boulanger: Would the hon. member allow me a question?

Mr. Valade: Certainly.

Mr. Boulanger: You said that Mr. Lesage has submitted an official request. Could you be more explicit?

Mr. Valade: It is a fact that Mr. Lesage made a request a few years ago. He wrote, I believe, to the Minister of Justice to that effect asking him to consider a bill authorizing a provincial lottery. At that time, a federal-provincial conference was to be held and during that conference, the project was to be discussed. There was no federal conference and when Mr. Lesage came to Ottawa in September last, he did not mention it, but all the same he had advocated such a bill at political meetings even if he did not mention it on that occasion as he had promised.

I understand that Mr. Lesage is playing politics with this matter while we, Conservatives, would like to pass legislation. We are certainly not playing politics since we are advocating this legislation.

Mr. Prosper Boulanger (Mercier): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I asked a question and the hon. member did his best to answer, but he is far from being clear and precise. He has just admitted there was no official demand made to the government.

Mr. Valade: It is not a reason to rise on a point of order. Should the hon. member wish to ask me a question, I shall answer him by recalling the promise that his colleague, the hon. member for Dollard, made during the last electoral campaign, on the occasion of a political rally in northern Quebec.

Mr. Boulanger: This is not an answer.

Mr. Valade: The hon. member for Dollard said that should the Liberal party be elected, we would have provincial lotteries.

I am very happy to see the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Deschatelets) applaud, for he himself, when he was occupying the opposition benches, demanded lotteries. I am anxious to see whether he shall induce his friends not to kill the bill. We shall then know whether the minister applauds simply to make noise or if he really desires a lottery such as we request.

Hon. J. P. Deschatelets (Minister of Public Works): May I ask a question?

Would the hon. member for St. Mary be able to explain why, from 1957 to 1963,