

making. That the system is now bringing the law into disrepute and is producing other and widespread detrimental consequences was conceded by common consent.

64. Two initial alternatives present themselves for consideration. The first is that proposed by the associated Churches—namely, that all off-course betting should be rigidly suppressed. To achieve that end the associated Churches propose that the present repressive legislation be rigidly enforced, and that enforcement be supplemented by such further procedures as efficient enforcement may require.

65. The efficacy of such a policy is open to the gravest doubt. So long as off-course betting has, as it undoubtedly now has, the support of the public and is regarded not only as innocuous, but, despite its illegality, as justifiable, suppression is well-nigh impossible. Any attempt to achieve that end, if it is to be effective, might well require measures of repression that would be provocative of widespread and deep-seated hostility. Apart from that very grave consideration, experience everywhere that the practice has arisen has demonstrated the impossibility of complete repression. Queensland at one time claimed some considerable, although not an absolute, measure of success, but the evidence given before us suggests that repression, even there, has substantially failed. The difficulties of suppression without the provision of some substituted form of betting are so great that, in the view of all who understand the problem, suppression is commonly regarded as practically impossible. We are persuaded that to attempt to enforce any such policy here would be to disregard experience and the dictates of good sense and would be, in the highest degree, unwise.

66. From this arises the question as to whether the State should assume the responsibility of providing the means for off-course betting. For the State to do anything of the kind would we think, be a grave mistake. It is not any true function of the State to embark upon any such enterprise, and if it did it would imperil its impartiality in respect of its true function, which is to regulate and govern any such practice in the interests of the public good.

67. The second alternative offers two opposed methods. The first is to license the bookmakers, and the second to authorize the establishment of some system of off-course betting under the control of the two Conferences by which the money adventured will pass through the totalizator. We proceed to consider these alternative methods in the order named.

BOOKMAKING NOT FAVOURED

68. The interests of the bookmakers were represented by the Dominion Sportsmen's Association, which is frankly an association consisting of bookmakers and devoted to the promotion of their