

# PROMISES FACTS ON RACE TRACKS

## Treasurer McGarry Yields to Liberals' Demand

### LEGISLATURE CLOSING

**Liberal Speakers Point to Abuses —  
Mr. McGarry Undertakes to Meet  
Call for Information During the  
Year—A Spirited Debate.**

"I have made provision and I have the power now to get the information my honorable friend speaks of, and I hope to get it."

This was the declaration of the Hon. T. W. McGarry, Provincial Treasurer, in referring to the remarks of Mr. Sam. Carter last night in the Legislature when Mr. Proudfoot's race-track resolution was being discussed. The member for South Wellington had been alluding to the refusal in the Public Accounts Committee to disclose information as to the revenues of various racing clubs, when the Provincial Treasurer rose to explain that in the fall of 1915, when the Government contemplated an increase in the taxation of race-tracks, there was no legislation on the statute book that enabled him to force the race-tracks to give a statement.

#### Statements Confidential.

Representatives of racing associations came to him and said they were willing to submit statements of their accounts to him provided he would treat them as confidential. He would have been willing to produce the information in the Public Accounts Committee if the Ontario Jockey Club had released him from his promise to keep it confidential. "I am prepared to give the House and my honorable friend all the information I have if I am released from my promise. The House is not above my given word, and I would leave the House rather than break the promise I gave."

#### Amendment Adopted.

An amendment to Mr. Proudfoot's resolution, seconded by Mr. McCrea of Sudbury, was carried on division. It approved of the declaration of the Government that it will do everything it properly and justly can to prevent illegal race-track gambling within the Province.

Mr. Carter maintained the responsibility was up to the Government to make provision so as the Government could get information from these associations, and it was at this point that the Provincial Treasurer said he had made provision and he hoped to get the information.

#### Evil Class Distinctions.

Mr. Carter, in the course of his speech, said he was irreconcilably against the policy of allowing Ontario under any circumstances one class of citizens who are wealthy to make money by vice when other men were put in jail. The people of the Province of Ontario would never listen to any excuses. If there was racing after this it would be up to the Government. And if there is a cleavage between this Government this night and the Dominion of Canada, and if the Federal Government come to an election in a few months without acceding to the requests of this Legislature, we will attend to them.

He hoped with the addition of the women on the voting list that things would be cleaned up. He was opposed to this business, which was allowing the rich to make millions and the poor to go to jail. These race tracks were bringing over the scum from the States.

#### Hurtful to the Province.

In moving his resolution demanding that the Government take prompt and vigorous action to suppress the grave public menace of organized corporate race-track gambling, carried on for a percentage of the profits, Mr. Proudfoot (Centre Huron) said some things were being carried on in the Province which he believed were not in the interest and well-being of the people of the Province. Within the last few years the Government had granted charters to nine different concerns. In 1916 licenses were issued for running rights at quite a number of places and the revenue apparently received by the Province was something like \$125,000. He found from one statement that on August 26, 1916, some \$378,000 passed through the Hendrie betting machine at Windsor, and on the new Devonshire track on one day \$228,000.

#### Should Stop Gambling.

Mr. Proudfoot declared that though the charter of the Gore Bay Riding & Driving Association had apparently lapsed, a license was granted for running rights on two occasions last year, giving these people an opportunity to do business. He thought the Government should take steps to prevent gambling. It could very easily have been stopped if the department had seen fit to do so. Many people came over from the State of Michigan and made use of this Province in a manner which, he said, was a disgrace to Ontario.

#### Treasurer's Confessions.

"I am not a race-track gambler. I do usually go down to the Woodbine, and if it is my fortune I will go down there this year and next year," said Mr. McGarry. Some years ago a prominent Liberal, Sir Allen Aylesworth, argued that betting on a horse race was no more of a gamble and just as legal as insurance on a man's life. "Poppycock!" exclaimed Mr. McDonald (North Bruce).

Mr. McGarry said two eminent Toronto lawyers, W. N. Tilley and L. F. Hellmuth, had told him he could not prevent the Devonsaire race-track people from holding race meetings in Ontario when they had a Dominion charter and paid the taxes and license fees. He had nothing to retract with reference to his conduct in that matter, he said.

The legal power of the Province with reference to issuing licenses to race associations was now being investigated.

#### Would Minimize Evils.

"The Government intends to do everything it can properly and justly do to minimize the evils in connection with race-track gambling," said Mr. McGarry. "but I am going to act within the law of the Dominion of Canada. I am not going to be rushed or driven by the outcry of any newspaper. So long as I am backed by eminent counsel, so long as I know I am advancing according to the laws of the country, so long ought the Government to have the backing of the people. We are not trying to hide anybody in this. We as a Government must proceed legally and orderly. We must go ahead with the laws as we have them on the statute book today."

#### May Increase Taxes.

"During the next few months I hope to be able to get information upon which legislation may be based to meet the case, if legislation is needed, and I will increase the taxes on race tracks if I find that the receipts of the racing associations justify an increase in taxation. We have the right to send investigators to the various race meetings, and I am hopeful that this Government will