

STRESSES BILL WILL CLEAN UP SLOT MACHINES

Preceding second reading in the Legislature yesterday of his bill outlawing slot machines in Ontario, Attorney-General Leslie Blackwell told the House: "It's a clear question of whether the members wish this racket cleaned up. If it is to be done, the Attorney-General's Department can accomplish it with this bill. Without it we can't, no matter how much we try."

This was one of the rackets, he warned, which would relieve people not only of their current wages, but of war bonds and war savings certificates.

The act was aimed, he said, very definitely at slot machines and not at pinball machines, which, though sometimes used for gambling, were more generally used for amusement. He did not believe the Legislature should go to the length of outlawing something just because it was sometimes used for gambling. It was not a penal bill, but simply made it illegal to possess these gambling devices, and provided for their seizure. The owner was given opportunity to appear before a magistrate and show that seized machines were not used for gambling. Under present laws, procedure could be taken only against the person on whose premises they were operated, and not the owner of them or his agent.

Definite Type of Gambling.

The bill, Mr. Blackwell said, mentioned only "objectionable gambling," for many, even members of the Legislature, engaged in gambling and enjoyed it — where the "odds were even" and no big "cut" was taken.

As an instance of slot-machine operation, the Attorney-General said he knew of golf clubs which had operated the machines to pay off their debt, only to find that they couldn't collect their legitimate dues, and that they had had to abandon them.

F. W. Warren (C.C.F., Hamilton-Wentworth) said the machines should be called "one-armed bandits" and C. A. Strange (C.C.F., Brantford) pointed out that terms in the bill might also apply to pay telephones and asked clarification. Mr. Blackwell told them he would welcome any suggested amendments when the bill comes up in committee.

Drew Calls April Conference To Draft Plans for Tourists

To plan for postwar tourist travel in Ontario as well as to "hold the tourist industry together in the face of wartime restrictions," an Ontario tourist travel conference has been called by Premier George Drew to be held in Toronto April 14-15. Leaders of all groups in the Legislature have been invited, and Cabinet Ministers in charge of Highways, Game and Fisheries, Lands and Forests and Mines also will attend.

The two days' deliberations will be under the chairmanship of Hon. Leslie M. Frost, who will have Ministerial jurisdiction over the Ontario Travel and Publicity Bureau, beginning April 1. Premier Drew is to deliver the closing address of the conference.

Douglas R. Oliver, chief of the Travel and Publicity Bureau, is to

meet key people in the tourist industry and other conference delegates to discuss co-operation with district and civic tourist organizations in handling inquiries from the United States and other aspects of the promotion of the tourist industry.

Postwar tourist plans are expected to provide for the maximum employment of returned members of the armed services, men and women. Dominion Government representatives are to address the conference on gasoline and food rationing, Selective Service requirements, and other matters pertaining to the industry. Postwar transportation and Ontario's future in aviation also will be discussed as pertinent to an expanded tourist service in the Province.

L. G. Robinson (C.C.F., Waterloo South) and E. A. MacGillivray, (L., Glengarry) carried on the Budget debate in the closing part of the sitting. The former advocated an extension of public ownership to such commodities as fuel, bread and milk, and asserted that this would result in more efficient operation and lower costs to the consumer. Mr. Robinson stressed the need of a full-time department of planning and development and said research work should be carried on now regarding the best methods of meeting postwar problems.

Mr. MacGillivray described the budget as a "hitchhiker's budget," pointing out that it was built up by the sound methods of preceding Administrations. The member for Glengarry advocated a fixed term of office for every Government to prevent the calling of snap elections.

BEER AND WINE TAX PROPOSED

A 25-per-cent business assessment on premises used by clubs selling beer and wine is provided in similar bills introduced in the Legislature yesterday by Dana H. Porter (P.C., Toronto-St. George) and William Dennison (C.C.F., Toronto-St. David). The bills, amendments to the Assessment Act, received first reading. Mr. Porter's bill also included an increase from 10 to 25 per cent in the business assessment of car parking lots. It is a City of Toronto bill.

Mr. Porter also introduced a bill to fix nomination day as 14 days before an election instead of seven, nine or 11, and for appointment by a municipality of additional election clerks to relieve or assist deputy returning officers.

An amendment was moved by H. Connor (C.C.F., Hamilton East) to the Municipal Act to permit establishment of a coal yard without permission of the Ontario Municipal Board.

The City of Toronto, in an amendment to the Municipal Act, asked permission for paying rental arrears of indigents and for compulsory installation of safety devices for window cleaners.