

April 5.

First Cocktail Delayed By Provisions of Bill

Liquor by the glass will not be available for many weeks in Ontario, including the cities of Toronto, London, Windsor, Hamilton and Ottawa, because of the licensing provisions of the new Liquor License Act, which awaits only Royal assent and proclamation to become law.

Given third reading yesterday by the Ontario Legislature, but only after a final fruitless opposition effort to insert an amendment which would remove the provisions for granting licenses without a vote in the five cities, the bill, by its own contents, thrusts well into the future the advent of lounges, dining lounges and beer and wine sale in restaurants.

An effort to pin down the Opposition on its over-all attitude toward the legislation was made by Premier Drew when Attorney-General Leslie Blackwell called for third reading of the bill late yesterday and Liberal Leader Farquhar Oliver moved an amendment. This amendment would have removed the clause which excepted five cities from the regulations that no extension of existing sales outlets could be inaugurated without a three-fifths local option vote approving such action.

"May I ask then if the bill is otherwise satisfactory?" demanded Premier Drew with a broad smile.

"A Field Day"

"Oh no, you don't," replied Mr. Oliver. "You're just having a field day with this, aren't you?"

"Why, I just thought for once that the honorable member might have made up his mind to declare his color," replied the Premier.

The vote then taken was on the amendment which lost 51 to 22. As Clerk of the House Alex Lewis said that on such a motion for amendment the same vote could be taken as approving the bill. Premier Drew said:

"Oh, no, I don't accept that. I'd like a vote on the motion to report this bill."

The Opposition chorused: "So would we. Where are the Toronto members?"

The second vote approved the bill by another recorded vote, 51 to 22.

All the Toronto members present voted with the Government, with the exception of Labor-Progressives A. A. MacLeod (Bellwoods) and Joseph Salsberg (St. Andrew); Development Minister Dana Porter, who tried to enter the House as the motion was being put but was ruled away by Speaker Stewart be-

cause he entered after the whips reported all present, and Goldwin C. Elgie (Woodbine), who was not present. Messrs. MacLeod and Salsberg voted both times against the bill.

Two Government members, Rev. A. W. Downer (Dufferin-Simcoe) and W. E. Hamilton (Wellington S.), who had opposed the bill on the grounds represented by Mr. Oliver's amendment during discussion the previous night, were not present and did not vote. Both, however, had upheld the general provisions of the bill otherwise in their addresses to the House, and voted for it during the earlier divisions.

The Picture

As the legislation stands, here is the picture for Ontario:

This bill is one that does not become law until it is proclaimed, though it may receive Royal assent immediately. Such practice is usually followed in legislation which, to become operative, requires preparations such as drawing up regulations, appointment of personnel, etc. Probability is that it will be proclaimed in the immediate future, but for the major purpose of permitting the Liquor License Board (which the old Liquor Authority Control Board now becomes) to begin reclassifying hotels throughout the Province.

This action, however, will not alter the number of existing outlets, either in or outside the five Ontario cities. It will merely determine what existing establishments shall continue to operate as "true" hotels, which have sufficient status to become taverns (under regulations still to be effected by Order-in-Council) and which will become public houses. Despite reclassification, these places can be permitted by the board to continue to sell beer and wine to an extent and under conditions that exist now.

Lounges, dining lounges, railways, steamships, clubs, etc., will not undertake liquor sale immediately. First, regulations must be proclaimed defining the services, conditions, equipment, etc., which must be provided to obtain such a license. Secondly, the act defines a clear pattern to be followed in obtaining a license for any purpose—liquor sale (which includes beer and wine), beer sale alone or beer and wine sale in a dining-room.

An application must be made on

a form yet to be provided under the regulations. Two advertisements must be published by the applicant in a newspaper in the municipality where the establishment is to operate. These must appear at least one week apart and the last must be not less than two weeks before hearing of the application by the board. And then the board may be busy reclassifying hotels in the other end of the Province and unable to review the application for many weeks.

Speculation in the Legislature yesterday held that five cities may start having lounges within six or eight weeks, largely because of the Government's declared opinion that tourists expect such accommodation. The tourist season is imminent; it is known that Travel and Publicity Minister Welsh, representing a normally "dry" riding, supported the bill largely for this reason.

Otherwise it is apparent the Government is in no haste to get the new bill into effect.