

Criminal Code

countries, but the principle of my bill is to amend the Criminal Code to allow the provinces to pass their own legislation. I should like the hon. member to speak on the merits of my bill and not fly away from it into the words of pious Biblical personalities. I should like him to comment on the principle of my bill.

Mr. Cowan: As I stated when I began to speak, I am 100 per cent in favour of the subject matter of this bill and I certainly hope it will pass with an overwhelming majority. However, having referred to the action of the British government in introducing premium bonds I again want to refer to those moralists who are opposing lotteries in this country and to point out that the Right Hon. Harold Macmillan in the course of the discussion there stated that the purchase of these bonds appealed to those members of the community who are not attracted by the reward of interest but who do respond to the incentive of fortune.

I believe that this opportunity also should be given to the Canadian people as well as that of buying lottery tickets which would be legalized by the bill of the hon. member for St. Mary (Mr. Valade).

I should like to make one further quotation and there will still be time to have a vote. Dr. Morton, a professor at Osgoode hall, Toronto, investigated in 1957 the question of gambling in Canada and reported that he was puzzled by the approving attitude of many people, some of them clergymen, who violently opposed public lotteries but favoured "Ernie", the monthly premium bond draw in Great Britain, a nation that has the safest gambling in the world. "Ernie" is the short form for electronic random number indicating equipment which is used to make the draw on all one pound premium bonds in circulation, but only 4½ per cent interest on all the bonds in the draw is involved, not the bonds themselves. I say to hon. members that I am in favour of this and in order that there may be time for a vote I shall cease my remarks at this moment.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, the members of the New Democratic party who are in attendance in the house this evening are unanimous in their contention that this subject matter should come to a vote with the least possible delay. Taking a bi-partisan approach I would therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Fane) that the question be now put.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten): Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the said motion?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Pierre Côté (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, I only wish to make a few remarks.

The matter under consideration has been submitted to the house for several years. In fact, during each session various bills are introduced in order to amend the Criminal Code and thus enable the federal and provincial governments to organize state and provincial lotteries.

[*Text*]

Mr. Clancy: May I ask the hon. member a question? Is it fair of the hon. member to deny the right of a vote on this matter?

Mr. Valade: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I think that the motion has to be put without debate. I believe the rules of the house are that the motion has to be put without debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten): The motion that the question be now put is a debatable motion.

Mr. Valade: But the hon. member was not talking on the motion. He was talking about lotteries.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Côté (Longueuil): Mr. Speaker, I was coming to the motion. And since they ask that the question be put, surely we must be entitled to make some remarks in this regard.

In my opinion the successive governments never paid that question all the attention it deserves. From year to year, from session to session, promises were made to the effect that in the near future the government in office would give that controversial question serious consideration. But there is still no sign of action along this line.

It seems that strong pressures are being exerted on the federal government to preserve the status quo. I am absolutely opposed to the establishment of a lottery at the national level, but as far as provincial lotteries are concerned, I am 200 per cent in favour.

The one thing which seems to delay the amendment of the Criminal Code to authorize lotteries is the pressure exerted by certain groups which are against any kind of lottery. Now, if the federal parliament were to amend the Criminal Code so as to leave the provinces free to set up lotteries, those pressures would be brought to bear upon the provincial governments which, I am sure, are fully capable of taking their own decisions in that respect. Mr. Speaker, if there have been pressures against the amendment of the Criminal Code, there have also been pressures in