

Hospital Sweepstakes

Mr. SPEAKMAN: He would share the responsibility?

Mr. MANION: Quite right.

Section stands.

Progress reported.

HOSPITAL SWEEPSTAKES

Mr. C. G. POWER (Quebec South) moved the second reading of Bill No. 67, with respect to hospital sweepstakes.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in moving the second reading perhaps I had better explain to the house how it came about that, perhaps unconsciously, I assumed paternity of this bill. I assure hon. members that when the bill was called yesterday I had no intention of intervening in any way, but it appeared that there was no sponsor for it in this house. Knowing the high esteem in which the sponsor of the bill in another house was held when he was a member of the House of Commons, and the deep feeling of gratitude which should animate many hon. members opposite toward him, I thought perhaps they would be grateful to some hon. member on this side of the house who would give them an opportunity to express their views on this bill respecting hospital sweepstakes. Moreover, I felt that a matter of this kind which had been so much debated in the public press and by the public generally throughout Canada should come before the House of Commons in order that the principle underlying it might be either accepted or rejected by hon. members.

The measure passed the other chamber with a reasonably good sized majority. I assume hon. members of that chamber believe that the time has come for people in Canada to do away with a certain amount of the hypocrisy to which for many years we have been the slaves. Most of those men have reached mature age, they are men who are not influenced by public outcries, men who have lived perhaps longer than most of us in this House of Commons, and have had the experiences of life. If the measure commends itself to them—

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): The hon. member's sense of humour still prevails.

Mr. POWER: I can assure my hon. friend that in moving the second reading of the bill I had no intention of being humorous, but I might derive a certain amount of amusement from watching the vote of a number of hon. members in this chamber. Many of whom, I have no doubt, if left to their own devices and given the assurance that their actions

[Mr. Manion.]

would not be reported in the local press or to the local church, would be very happy to buy a ticket on, let us say, the sweepstakes in the native land of the hon. member who has just spoken.

In passing this legislation I believe the Senate took into account the ordinary feelings which animate nearly every citizen of Canada. We are a new country; our citizens are accustomed to taking chances. My western friends take chances on the harvests and on the climate, and the statement has been made by one hon. member that in order to eke out their existence they even take chances on the wheat pit.

Mr. McINTOSH: And on the government, too.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Yes, a long chance.

Mr. POWER: It has even been said that the government itself takes chances on the wheat pit. I have heard it said outside of the house that not since the time of Joseph has there been such a strenuous attempt made to corner the wheat market as has been made by the government. If any hon. member opposite gets the impression that I was in any way offensive or blasphemous may I tell him that I referred to Joseph Leiter of Chicago, who along with Arthur Cutten and other operators, is well-known to those who have been interested in wheat.

There is no doubt that throughout the length and breadth of this land there are thousands of people who are willing to take chances on the races, on the stock markets or in the businesses in which they are engaged, and who would be only too glad to be given the opportunity of risking a very small sum of money in the hope of acquiring great wealth. Many of us hold tickets on these sweepstakes. I make no bones about it when I say that there has not been a sweepstake in the last ten years to which I have not subscribed willingly. We have dreamed sweet and pleasant dreams, and built ourselves castles in the air on the more or less problematical winnings we expect to make. Why not permit our people to continue to have these dreams—to continue to build these castles? The days of depression are hard enough and long enough, Lord knows. Why not give them at least a few minutes of joy and pleasure in anticipation of what might be or what might happen?

I commend this bill to hon. gentlemen opposite having regard to the responsibility of another house, to those of my friends who