

*Adjournment Debate*

I mentioned the chairs of studies, there are now about six such chairs across the country, which have dealt with a specific multicultural group. The time may be coming when we should build upon that particular aspect of the chairs to broaden them into thematic chairs dealing with race relations or other components of multicultural policy. This is something I am now discussing with my officials. This may satisfy his initial request and we may be able to build on that in the future.

As to the specific question with respect to the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg, I checked with my officials and have yet to receive an official funding request from the University of Winnipeg, although we have from the University of Manitoba. I am examining that very closely and it hopefully can be adapted to the changing criteria which I think my colleagues may agree to.

## OLYMPIC GAMES—SELECTION OF ALPINE SPORTS TEAMS

**Mr. Robert Wenman (Fraser Valley West):** Mr. Speaker, I stand with great regret today because the former Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sports failed Canada's young Olympic athletes. I am pleased, however, that the new Minister is at least making an effort in the face of serious rebuffs.

I am upset because young Canadian olympic athletes met world standards, yet were rejected by the Canadian Olympic Association. I would like you to imagine for a minute, Mr. Speaker, that your child of the child of your friend across the street won the local city championships. You had watched this young person grow and develop, you saw that initial spark, that initial talent. You said, "That young guy looks pretty good; he is going somewhere". You watched him progress to the point that he won the provincial championships and set a new record for the province. He became a hero not only in his own community, but in the province. He then moved on and won the national championships. He set a national record. He had his eyes on the Olympic Gold. He worked under pressure hour after hour, seven days a week, every week of the year regardless of how he felt, fighting for that world Olympic standard. He met it. He made it and we all cheered for him. But what happened to him? His own country, the COA said, "no way, not for you. You cannot go. I might be ashamed of you because you might finish last or you might even finish seventeenth in the whole world. I could not stand that shame". That is what they are saying.

● (1810)

We are not ashamed of any Canadian who has become the best in our country in any field. I do not care whether it is politics, science or a professional field in one area or another. I am not ashamed of anybody who is the best in our country. I do not care how he stands in the world. If he is the best in our country I am not ashamed of him. I am ashamed of any Canadian who would be ashamed of another Canadian who has attained the level of Canadian record holder, Canadian champion, regardless of what the rest of the world thinks about him.

I am not ashamed of Abbey Hoffman or Dick Pound, or even Roger Jackson, on their selection to the Canadian team, even though they could not qualify among the top 16 in their events when they represented Canada. Later they went on to set new records and they gained inspiration from their Olympic experience. I am proud of them but I am ashamed of Roger Jackson and his COA committee. Maybe it is not totally the fault of Roger Jackson, but he is the President and the symbol and therefore has the responsibility to show leadership now. I want to see that leadership. What do we see? Who could express it better than John Robertson who said:

When I think that this man, who was allowed to go to the 1964 Olympics as excess baggage, and confounded the Olympic forecasters by winning a gold, would then turn around and have the unmitigated gall to author this unspeakably cruel and elitist rule, making sure no future longshot ever got a chance to duplicate his feat . . . I want to throw up.

Turn in your blazer, turkey.

The very thought of you wading through the spilled tears of all those fine young athletes you've so callously betrayed, as you strut to the plane bound for Sarajevo, is enough to make any Canadian with a shred of decency break out in a series of unprintable Olympic oaths.

In Munich athletes were senselessly and brutally murdered. In Moscow athletes were politically denied by Canada the right to compete and the fulfilment of their dreams and desires. How much more injustice do we expect them to take? The four year cycle to compete has become an eight year cycle. Many were denied the opportunity of competing in the Winter Olympics. What is going to happen in the Summer Olympics?

Many questions need to be answered. What happened to the tripartite agreement between the Government, Sports Canada and COA to use the top 16 standard as a guideline, with flexibility? How was that ignored? How can the representative factor or formula be adjusted to reflect the inherent will of the Canadian people, the athletes themselves, the sports bodies and the Olympic associations?

It is my understanding that in the summer Olympic games, for example in track and field events, each event allows the entry of three athletes, if they have met the world Olympic standard in the event. I think those people should go. It is my understanding that in an event in which no athlete qualified for the Olympic standard we are still allowed to enter one athlete. I think that one athlete should be entered and should be allowed to go. This comes down to a philosophy of excellence and the building excellence, of building young Canadians and young citizens of the world. I want an opportunity for as many young Canadians as possible to become Olympians.

● (1815)

I have a sense that this new Minister is willing to fight; I hope that he will begin to fight and never rest again from this day until every possible athlete who qualifies and is able to be supported by our great country of Canada to represent us at international events and Olympics is in fact sent to those events, with the understanding that we as Canadians, regardless of what the rest of the world thinks of the qualifications of our athletes, are proud of them, that we are standing behind them and assuring that their opportunity as Olympians will be