

Games will face. In saying that, I am not attempting in any way to reduce what I think is the obvious intensity of the desire of the Postmaster General to have the bill passed.

I want to range a little beyond the subject of the bill, but closely connected to it, following the hon. member opposite who just finished his speech. I want to say this before the bill completes third reading because this may be the last opportunity we will have for a while to express any views on the subject. From the outset, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the government have been irresponsible with regard to the Olympic Games.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

● (1430)

**Mr. Stanfield:** The Prime Minister issued an invitation to the International Olympic Committee on behalf of Canada without, apparently, examining the financial implications of such an invitation. Reference was made a few minutes ago to criticism of the city of Montreal. I have great admiration for the mayor of Montreal; he is a man of great energy and capacity. But I must say it is difficult for many people, journalists, even ordinary members of parliament, to regard all the forecasts made by the mayor as being very credible; for instance, when he said it would be just as likely for a man to bear a child as for the Olympics to experience a deficit. It was a comment difficult to take seriously at the time and it has become rather ludicrous since then. So if the administration of the city of Montreal lacks credibility in the country in general, it is because of statements of that sort.

But I am not here to criticize the administration of the city of Montreal or, indeed, the administration of the games. I say that it was irresponsible for the Prime Minister to extend the invitation without examining the financial implications and taking into account the probability of a deficit. I say that once the Prime Minister signed that invitation and once the mayor of Montreal was able to persuade the Olympics committee to grant the games to Montreal, the rest has unfolded as inevitably as a Greek drama.

I want to say to my friends in the government that as far as the Olympic Games are concerned, they wanted the glory associated with them, but whenever trouble developed somebody else was at fault. The Prime Minister and members of the government have persisted in saying that the federal treasury would make no contribution toward reducing any deficit. There might be some room for discussion as to how large the federal contribution should be and whether it remains strictly within the terms of reference laid down by the Prime Minister, but this is not a matter upon which I want to comment this afternoon. What disturbs me is that the Prime Minister, having issued the invitation, having set all this in motion, apparently believes he is discharging his responsibility by saying repeatedly that the government is not committed to any financial responsibility.

The Olympics are now faced with a massive deficit, a deficit which cannot be explained by the ravages of inflation alone, although no doubt inflation has added greatly to it. The people of Montreal and the people of Quebec

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generally realize they will have to meet the cost of any deficit. When they are in the course of paying the bill, they should understand that in addition to any responsibility Montreal and the province of Quebec may have to bear, the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada are also involved. They should understand that it was not just the mayor of Montreal or the Government of Quebec—it was the Prime Minister of the country who helped to get the taxpayers of Montreal and Quebec into this position.

The bill now before us reflects only one small aspect of the total story. When the first Olympics bill was brought forward relating to coins and stamps, the minister responsible, now the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Drury) but at that time president of the treasury board, told us the legislation brought forward on that occasion would fully discharge all the responsibilities of the federal government, that it would meet all federal commitments to COJO. We have since seen this bill brought forward to meet further responsibilities which apparently were not anticipated at that time.

I simply say that if this bill is passed, I hope it will be the end of special projects coming before parliament in connection with the financing of the Olympics. I am considering it as the final measure. Though it will do something to reduce the deficit, a massive deficit still faces the games; the overriding problem is still there. I simply wish to say, as I sit down, that the Government of Canada does not discharge its responsibility to the people of Montreal, to the people of Quebec or to the people of Canada simply by saying it has no financial responsibility. The people of Montreal and the people of Quebec will have to pick up the tab, and this whole problem flows inevitably from the Prime Minister being prepared to issue a letter of invitation in the first place without any real examination of what was involved.

● (1440)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Heward Grafftey (Brome-Missisquoi):** Madam Speaker, I will refer to the statement of the hon. leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield). Since it was obvious that Canada would host the 1976 Olympics, every opposition member has fully supported the Olympics in Canada. Of course, Madam Speaker—

**Mr. Prud'homme:** With slight differences, believe me.

**Mr. Grafftey:** Would the hon. member keep quiet? It is very annoying for opposition members. He speaks steadily without being asked to do so.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin):** Order. If the honourable member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) wishes to participate in the debate, he will have the opportunity to do so in a few minutes.

**Mr. Grafftey:** I will most certainly discuss his comments shortly.

Of course, Madam Speaker, as a Quebecer, like government members and the other opposition members, I am very proud of the fact that we will host the Olympics in Montreal, in the province of Quebec. That is obvious, but it