

tured within each individual province, and incorporating the same into an acceptable national policy; second, taking inventory of all existing sports, recreational and fitness facilities and ensuring their maximum utilization under the proposals of this policy; third, encouraging national physical fitness through education, the media, industry and government, and promoting all available facilities and programs on a national basis; fourth, initiating the development of a truly comprehensive coaching program with accompanying accreditation leading to professional status and, fifth, creating new facilities dependent upon regional needs, and determined in addition by the scheduling of national and international sporting events.

While it is impossible for the government to promise support for those who have come to be known as elite athletes, I hope it will continue to offer financial support and assistance to those individuals demonstrating outstanding ability and achievement in sports. I cannot emphasize enough the need to encourage youngsters and adults at the grass roots level to participate in amateur sports and physical fitness programs. From this grass roots base we shall develop our top athletes. Only if our grass roots athletic program is sound will superior athletes emerge, athletes who can do better in international competitions.

The hon. member's motion provides for the establishment of a department of sports. My party made a similar proposal some time ago. But we must be realistic. In these times of economic hardship, of huge government bureaucracy, times when restraint in spending is called for, a department of sports will not be given high priority. The establishment of a ministry of sports might be considered some time in the future, but at the present the establishment of such a ministry will not take precedence over other urgent government business.

The Department of National Health and Welfare which labours under a fantastic workload probably cannot pay too much attention to sports. Unfortunately the minister seems to be more concerned about professional than about amateur sport. I am alluding to his interest in the World Football League, the Canadian Football League, and other professional sporting bodies.

In conclusion I am sure most hon. members and most Canadians will agree that the government will give low priority to the establishment of a ministry of sports, and will give much higher priority to many of the other things it must do in this day and age.

Mr. Gus MacFarlane (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I am disturbed because I want to speak for two hours, but can only speak for some minutes. I know other hon. members wish to make their comments. Allow me to congratulate the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) and the hon. member for Lafontaine (Mr. Lachance), the mover and seconder of the motion, for introducing this subject matter for debate. I do not necessarily support the establishment of a ministry of sport, but I am glad the hon. member for Vaudreuil brought before the House a matter of important national concern.

I remind the hon. member for High Park-Humber Valley (Mr. Jelinek) that this is a non-partisan issue. That is how

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I will treat it. For that reason I will ignore his personal remarks and proceed with my own speech.

I concede that the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) first showed his concern in this area when he brought forward a bill. Our Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), too, showed his concern by making his relatively well known statement concerning a task force. Let me point out that the minister from Hamilton East brought forward a sports policy, that the present minister from Outremont supported that policy and showed interest in what is happening at the grass roots. I am not embarrassed to speak as a Liberal.

I remind the hon. member for High Park-Humber Valley that he was using my notes when he spoke. He used my notes, but alleged they are a copy of a Conservative paper.

Mr. Jelinek: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. MacFarlane) suggested I used his notes when I spoke. Let me point out that he was not even in Ottawa when we established our sports policy. It was our sports policy, our notes, to which I was referring. I had just suggested that the paper he came up with, which was only released a few months ago, was nearly identical to ours.

● (1630)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): The hon. member knows that is not a valid point of order.

Mr. MacFarlane: I respect the hon. member. I am very pleased he used his own notes because his sound better coming out of his mouth than his do out of my mouth.

Since this matter is non-partisan I would also like to point out that the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) was one of the top players on the parliamentary team. He indeed shows an interest in sport. I would also like to point out another young man who is hitting the headlines. He is a member of the NDP. He does not represent a constituency, but he would surely like to do that. His name is Bruce Kidd.

We should be looking at sport as a vehicle for national unity. Regardless of whether my constituents decide that someone else should represent them, in the time that I am here we will continue looking at sport as part of the culture of Canadian people. I think it is also important to mention the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield). I was hoping he would have stayed. The Leader of the Opposition allowed his name to stand for the first Atlantic football bowl game in Halifax.

There are many important individuals in this parliament. In sports we do not refer to the players as engineers, doctors or lawyers. We do not even refer to them as nuns, priests or ministers. They are called members of the fraternity of athletes. Everyone becomes equal. That is why sport in itself is terribly important in this country.

A little boy from Trois-Rivières who is able to go to Penticton to play thinks it is a fantastic experience. He does not ask whether the people there speak French or English. He wants to go. These are the things we should be talking about here.

We should bring to the attention of this department, this minister, the Prime Minister, and this parliament that we