

pumping up to high pressure and tension which a desperate Mr. Eagleson and his colleagues had turned to in order to inculcate the determination to win. As one of the Team Canada doctors said to me the morning after the big win: "This is a powerful country with tough people and a harsh system. They'll respect what the Canadian players and fans have shown here in Moscow. We are not Nice Nellies. We are direct, crude and emotional, easily arrogant, even more easily bitchy and complaining, cherishing a sense of grievance. Before you and others crawl away and hide because of the embarrassment Eagleson and his antics have caused you, think it over: Is there any other way we could have done it and won?"

My answer is no, there was no other way, given the similarity in attitudes and values between Mr. Eagleson, Mr. Sinden and most of the players. Their world is a simplistic, emotional one; it is also a very fast-moving one.

Even the self-discovery out of this series that we are among the roughnecks of the world may be useful. There isn't a politician of my acquaintance in Canada who doesn't know that hockey is one of the deepest common denominators we have.

They know, even as the critics such as Dr. Wilder Penfield know, that in the recent series we shared an experience which has turned into a challenge of a long-held view of ourselves. I don't discount the eventual victory with public opinion for the critics of Alan Eagleson. Indeed, by his excesses he has made a future role for himself in international hockey doubtful. The NHL owners may never forgive him. Certainly, they'll never again approve an arrangement which will let him run the whole show. They have had the merit of their product jeopardized. They will resist future contributions to a Canadian "national team". They will go after encounters with the Russians and the other European countries on a basis of club teams against club teams. The Russians will not be anxious to deal with Mr. Eagleson again. Thus we are likely to be left with the memory of a one-shot, unique happening with most of it on our side under the aegis of Mr. Eagleson.

International sport, especially the Olympics, has always had a contradiction in it. The idealists theorize sweetly about the bridging and brotherhood accomplished by the contests and the association of athletes from different countries, unsullied by political motivation. All the while this "the game's the thing" is touted, the emphasis has kept building on winning, win-



Canadian Press photo

*Defenceman Bill White, laden with badges*

ning for national pride, medal totals and point scores. Now we Canadians have shared in this contradiction and found victory most important.

Meanwhile, Hockey Canada and the parts of it are reconsidering the future. What can we do with an even more germane contradiction? Our major sporting interest involves hundreds and thousands of households, it pervades almost every city, town and village in Canada. But where does the interest lead? Still... to the United States for rewards and glory.

How do we be our own in hockey when the apex of our huge base triangle in hockey is overwhelmingly American in ownership and finances? And much as we know the renewal of a series such as the last one with the Soviets would excite Canada again, they are almost certain to be rare so long as foreigners call the tune. And this brings us back to Alan Eagleson. Now and in potential, he is the only one with the leverage — because almost all the players are still Canadian — to force the re-creation of the Team Canada idea.

*International sport poses contradiction between brotherhood, 'game's the thing'*