

Olympic Bill

Mention was made of the fact that the CBC, as host broadcaster, would provide television service at a cost of \$25 million.

● (1210)

On May 10, the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner) asked the Prime Minister when a decision would be made about financing the games. The Prime Minister replied that the legislation would be forthcoming and introduced before the end of May. It is now before us, and the question that has to be determined is this: Will there be, in addition to what has already been admitted in connection with CMHC and the other matters to which I have referred, a call on the rest of Canada to meet whatever is the deficit at the end? Therefore, it is necessary to examine somewhat carefully the plans for financing.

The first plan is through the medium of coin sales. The mayor went into great detail in that connection, and I am not going to enumerate the plans he had in mind, or the manner of financing in this regard. That will have to be announced by him, and I would not want to anticipate what he will say. Commissioner General Rousseau has advised that \$250 million will be secured from coin sales. I very much doubt that. Germany did finance the Munich games in part through this coin system, whereby the state produces the coins, charges the Olympics Committee the actual costs of minting, and the difference between that cost and the circulatory value, the seigniorage, is to be available for the Olympics. Coins up to a value of \$350 million will have to be sold if what the committee believes should be secured from the sale of coins is to be realized.

But just recall this fact, that on June 21 of this year the United States Senate unanimously passed a bill authorizing the minting and sale of 60 million gold coins and 60 million silver coins, to be issued during the years 1973-76 inclusive, to commemorate the bi-centennial anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Will it be possible at all for the Olympics Committee in Montreal to sell the anticipated number of coins which it today envisages? I would hope that it will succeed. I doubt very much whether there is any possibility of that taking place. As I said a moment ago, the Olympics Committee has made its estimate that \$250 million will be secured from coin sales. The figures I gave a moment ago were not quite correct. In order to secure that amount, there would have to be an over-all coin sale of \$417 million.

The Treasury Board investigation group came to the conclusion that at the end of the games there would be a deficit of \$172 million. Mr. Speaker, the people of Canada paid the bill for Expo. There is strong feeling everywhere across the country that under no circumstances should the government of Canada, or rather the taxpayers of Canada, pick up the bill should there be the loss anticipated, or indeed a lesser loss than that.

Mr. La Salle: Why?

Mr. Diefenbaker: If the hon. gentleman is unable to answer that, and hasn't it in his own mind, then all I will say is that he should study the matter—

Mr. La Salle: That is no answer.

Mr. Diefenbaker: —from an independent point of view.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Rousseau disputes the claims by the Treasury Board secretariat, and claims the federal study group based their findings on a market projection comparable with that of Germany where 90 per cent of the coins were sold within the country. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, it must be realized that Germany has a population of 60 million, compared with Canada's 20 million.

The mayor believes that these coins will be picked up and will not go into circulation, and that they will be marketed generally through the chartered banks in Canada. The arrangements in the United States will be dealt with in due course. Personally, I think that while hopes and expectations are all to the good, those hopes and expectations must have some regard to the realities within the country.

The next manner of financing is through stamps. The price of the stamps will be the regular rate of postage, plus an additional surcharge fixed by the Postmaster General (Mr. Ouellet). That particular phase is a most uncertain one.

The third method is by lotteries. Lotteries, since they have been legalized by parliament, have not been sources of very large returns for those who operate them.

Mr. Drury: Loto-Quebec?

Mr. Diefenbaker: It has been found that the attraction that lotteries had when we had only one source from which to derive the hope of being a winner, that is, when the Irish Sweepstakes alone were in existence, proved far more attractive as a gambling investment than when you had a choice in the purchase of lottery tickets. I think that the estimate as to the amount that will be secured by means of lotteries is over-exaggerated. Mr. Rousseau has advised that the commission, allocated to provinces participating in the lottery scheme, will be 5 per cent of the total sales within those provinces. Will there be provincial participation across the country? Manitoba has already refused. Ontario has expressed concern over the effect of the lottery. Other provinces, as I understand it, have not made any final or even qualified decision in this regard.

● (1220)

What can be done in order to protect and assure that the country as a whole and the taxpayer will not have to pick up the bill for this undertaking? Several things can be done. I read with great interest the speech given by the hon. member for High Park-Humber Valley (Mr. Jelinek). It was an exceptionally well constructed speech. Unfortunately, I was not present for it but he spoke with the authority of one of Canada's great athletes.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: In 1962, he and his sister won the world's championship in skating. He showed more than his understanding of the needs of athletic advancement which will result from the Olympics.

I am one of those who never could have been an athlete. After we went west, from 1903 to 1910 my days were spent 17 miles from the nearest village. Indeed, the only game