

Mr. Jelinek:—was speaking about soccer. I am responding to the matters brought up by his back-bencher.

Mr. Gauthier: You will have a chance on third reading to speak to that.

Mr. Jelinek: We now come to the final point of misrepresentation and misleading information from the Hon. Member for York West. That concerns the World Cup Soccer Team from Canada. He thought there would be no response. He said that this Conservative Government is not funding the World Cup Soccer Team. Do you know why we are not in a position to do so? It was the Liberal Government which created the rules and regulations in the Ministry of Fitness and Amateur Sport which would not allow us to fund professional teams. However, I have news for the Hon. Member. I am going to change those antiquated rules and regulations. The Hon. Member can talk to officials in Sports Canada who will agree with me when I say it is the rules prescribed by the previous Liberal Government which will not allow me to fund the tremendous success of our World Cup Soccer Team. As a former Olympian and member of Canada's Sports Hall of Fame, which I hope some day the Hon. Member for York West will join me in, I understand what it means for a Canadian soccer team to make it to the World Cup for the first time in our history. I know the benefits which will come back to Canada as a result. There are 2 billion people around the world who watch the World Cup championships. When a Canadian team is there it will mean a lot for Canada by way of advertising, tourism and in many other ways. It is for that reason that I am in the process of changing the antiquated Liberal rules and regulations put in place many years ago. We will change them in such a way that we, along with the private sector, will be able to support the World Cup team as they head for Mexico next year.

I just wanted to make certain that the Hon. Member stayed in the House to hear me out. I wish he would not hide behind statements which no one can respond to. I wish he would not hide behind press releases which espouse misinformation beyond explanation. I wish he would from time to time stand up in the House and have the courage to ask me straightforward questions which I would be very happy to answer.

Mr. Gauthier: You are never here.

Mr. Jelinek: The only time he has done that is when I was not here, when I was speaking as the Minister responsible for Multiculturalism to an Italian community group. He picks that day to ask me a question. However, if you counted the number of days I am here in Question Period and compare them to the number of days he was here I will win 10 out of 10.

Mr. Marchi: Mr. Chairman, just in case there are any viewers who did not turn off their television sets when the Minister got up to speak, I want to say that I am shocked and amazed that this individual is a Minister of the Crown. Notwithstanding his background, he used language and style and class befitting a rock. I am surprised he would get up in

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his place and speak in the manner he did. He alleged that this particular individual is misleading the House and is afraid to stand up, that he runs away and hides behind press releases. I am surprised that this comes from a so-called veteran of the House. He does not impress anyone, let alone his own back-benchers.

If he wants to talk about misleading statements, he should look at what he just said and then take a good long look at himself in the mirror. If we look at the Official Opposition questions of the Minister of State for Multiculturalism and the Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport, we have asked—largely through my efforts and I am not boasting because I am the critic of the two portfolios—more questions and make more statements under Standing Order 22 than the Tories did in four years in Opposition. I challenge the Minister to get up on his feet once again, if he has the courage, and challenge those statistics. We have asked more questions, made more statements and debated the issues much longer than the Government Party did in the four years it was in Opposition.

He also talked about misleading information concerning the Canadian Soccer Team. The information I gave was not misleading. It was the reality. Then he has the audacity to say that somehow we cannot give money to this soccer team as professional players because the legislation or rules do not permit us to do that. Yet this Government is dismantling everything that is good on the basis of a whim. Therefore, I am quite surprised, shocked in fact, that he stands up and suggests the things he does in this manner. When I was speaking from my place I was speaking to the sports constituency and trying to tie that into this legislation. The Minister was trying to play lawyer, which he is not, and forgetting about the sports constituency he is responsible to. That is the issue. It is not a question of a Member being afraid to face the things he has just said because I will stay here all night.

● (1650)

It is not a question of running away and hiding behind press releases because had he been here last Friday I would have asked him the question that I asked his colleague, the Secretary of State, who then answered that there is no statement and no Minister. I would love to have an entire Question Period on multiculturalism and sports. I would like to extend the Question Period by an hour if the governing Party would agree. We are not scared to discuss the issues. We are not scared to show the Canadian people the reality of the Government, and in particular the reality of this Minister because there are deficiencies in both of his portfolios. If we are to do something as Parliamentarians, it is to better those two portfolios which the Minister represents. I, as only one Member of Parliament, am attempting to do my best, as is my Party, to do that very thing. For the Minister to suggest that a Party or a Member is running away, is scared, or is misrepresenting and misleading does him no justice. It does not do him justice as a Parliamentarian because what he says is wrong, and most importantly, it does not do him any justice as the Minister of State for Multiculturalism and the Minister of State for