

The Address—Mr. Jelinek

two questions regarding the Unemployment Insurance Commission. They read as follows:

1. Do you believe that the Unemployment Insurance Commission is functioning satisfactorily?

2. Do you believe that there should be a full investigation of the Unemployment Insurance Commission operations?

The answer was an overwhelming 99 per cent against the Unemployment Insurance Commission functioning satisfactorily, and 99 per cent favouring a full investigation into other operations of the Unemployment Insurance Commission. I have received over 1,500 replies to date, Mr. Speaker—1,500 Canadians from every walk of life and every political party from my riding, alone. I am satisfied that this statistic speaks for itself.

Again, as our leader has already made public, an inquiry into this whole matter is needed, one which really gets to the grass-root problems. Like most Canadians, I am sick and tired of the fact that the government continues to allow individuals to take advantage of the plan at the expense of the workingman and that it is virtually handing out unemployment and welfare money on a silver platter. I am sick and tired of the fact that a \$500 million deficit or more is now estimated, up from \$174 million at the end of 1972. The need for improved legislation in this field is of prime concern to virtually every Canadian who is fed up with the free-loaders and welfare grafters who continue to sponge off the honest toils of honest men.

During the past year our party has continually attacked the government on this matter, hoping that promised legislation would finally be enacted. In fact, legislation dealing with this very matter was prepared, with the promise of a tighter and tougher Unemployment Insurance Act. However, at the request of the NDP and because of the Liberal need to bow to their every wish, those plans were withdrawn and shelved indefinitely. This was only because of the fear the government has of offending the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) and his pack of followers and losing their support.

These are but a few of the priorities facing us today, with inflation heading the list. I could touch on numerous other important matters that are of great concern to Canadians, such as the energy crisis, the abortion issue, drugs, alcohol, housing, and so on. However, as the spokesman for this party on matters relating to physical fitness and sport, I would be remiss in this obligation if I did not dwell on a matter of vital importance concerning the 1976 summer Olympics to be staged in the city of Montreal, specifically the obvious discrepancies surrounding the awarding of the American television rights by COJO.

Let me preface this statement by once again reiterating this party's support for the games. We believe now, as we did when the Olympic financing bill was finally passed, that there is a great opportunity for Canada and Canadians to benefit by hosting this prestigious international event. We must remember that the Olympics belong to Canada. They can reflect Canada to the world and they can bring to Canada a sense of pride and unity.

There can be no question that the initial stage of the lottery and coins sales are showing signs of success. I would like to take this opportunity to compliment those involved for their efforts and wish them continued success, in particular Mayor Drapeau without whose initia-

[Mr. Jelinek.]

tive the whole new Olympic concept could not have been initiated.

As I have pointed out on numerous occasions, it is not the intention of this party to wash its hands of financial responsibility and to sit idly by and permit federal funds to be in any way wasted or mishandled in the staging of this event. It is our firm and absolute intention to remain as watchdogs for the taxpayer. It was for this reason that on January 11 of this year I moved in the House a motion having to do with statements that the contract for television coverage involves an alleged gain by the Quebec Liberal Party.

● (1520)

On the same day I asked the Prime Minister to initiate an investigation into the many discrepancies and allegations surrounding the contract. The Prime Minister's reply was that it was not his government's responsibility. I hear members of the NDP yelling from my left that we voted in favour of the Olympics bill. Obviously they did not listen to that part of my speech in which I asserted earlier that this party supports the Olympic idea and believes in it, as it did when the financing bill was passed.

In fact, we support the Olympics taking place in Montreal. Personally, I believe Montreal to be the city best able to cope with the multitude of circumstances which arise during the staging of games. However, I want to remind the government and the NDP that more than a year ago I suggested decentralizing some of the events so that we could utilize existing centres, thus saving millions of the taxpayers' dollars while at the same time giving thousands more Canadians an opportunity to participate.

As I was saying, when I asked the Prime Minister to initiate an investigation he replied that it was not his government's responsibility. Mr. Speaker, it is inconceivable that the Prime Minister would even dare suggest that the federal government has no responsibility in this matter and that it falls under provincial jurisdiction.

Let us consider briefly the history of the awarding of the Olympics to Canada. As far back as May 21, 1969, the Prime Minister wrote a letter of acceptance to the International Olympic Committee welcoming the games on behalf of all Canadians. The position taken by the International Olympic Committee when in receipt of such a letter of government approval is that the signature implies previous knowledge of the financial planning of the games as well as of national financing plan where necessary. From that date until today, everyone connected with the Olympics, including Commission-General Rousseau, has stressed that the 1976 games do not belong solely to Montreal nor, indeed, to the province of Quebec, but that they belong to all Canadians and to all of Canada.

Is the Prime Minister now saying the federal government is absolving itself of all responsibility toward ensuring the success of the 1976 Olympics? What about the federal facilities COJO is utilizing in connection with the games, including the Post Office, the Mint, security personnel and immigration offices, not to mention the financing bill or the host broadcaster, the CBC, which alone has a budget of more than \$50 million? These are all federal agencies directly connected with the government and provided for the use of COJO and, therefore, for the Olym-