

Olympic 1976 Act

the natural justice that exists in this country, whereby when a choice is to be made between different proposals, the public should be given the opportunity of being heard on each one of them. Now, Madam Speaker, I was quite astonished to hear such statements since newspapers, in August of 1974, stated that COJO had to follow a very specific procedure in granting both contracts and commercial licences.

● (1410)

That procedure, Madam Speaker, is the following:

For a bill of \$500 or less, an assistant to a director general may sign the invoice himself. If the bill is between \$500 and \$5,000, the director general must also sign the invoice. If the bill is over \$5,000, at least two prices must be asked for, preferably by tenders. Well, up to date, COJO always abided very strictly by that rule of its constitution.

Reference was also made, Madam Speaker, to the COJO administration as such, COJO administrators. Members made reference to the personality of its president as well as that of various people who have very strict responsibilities in administering the amounts transferred to COJO by the federal government.

Well, Madam Speaker, there is no doubt that several ridings will be hosting the Olympic Games, for example the riding of the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Pelletier), and the riding of the hon. member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle). For example, COJO will invest over \$1 million in the riding of Joliette. For example, the hon. member for Joliette knows quite well the assistant to the vice-president of the COJO administration. He is a mayor who occupies the chair that he himself occupied previously in the municipality of Crabtree. Consequently, if there were such persistent doubts about the honesty of the COJO administration it would have been the duty of every member of the ridings where COJO is spending to question the integrity of the administration. Never did we hear about such doubts, never did members in this House rise on questions of privilege to inquire into the amounts COJO is spending in their ridings or to question people on the COJO board of directors, people whose political and administrative records they know quite well.

Indeed, Madam Speaker, I regret that these debates provided an opportunity to direct such attacks on the integrity of COJO members. The same goes for the city of Montreal, Madam Speaker. Reference was made during this debate to the personality of the mayor of Montreal and the fact that the city of Montreal could award contracts to itself without calling for tenders. It is true, Madam Speaker, but the city of Montreal does not do so without the knowledge of the people. You just have to read the Montreal city charter. Section 107 of the charter allows the executive committee of that city to award a contract of over \$10,000 without tenders when a report to that effect has been tabled at the city council, a report which has to be drawn up by the board concerned, approved by the majority of the executive and ratified by the city council as a whole.

Those particular statutory powers were granted by the Quebec National Assembly and can be found in the incorporating charter of Montreal. Of course it may seem

[Mr. Joyal.]

extravagant in 1975 to leave a city of the size of Montreal with such powers. As my hon. colleagues should know, on July 8, 1975, during the sessions of the parliamentary commission on municipal affairs in Quebec City, Quebec's municipal affairs minister made the following statement:

Quebec's parliamentary commission on municipal affairs will investigate the extravagant powers enjoyed by Montreal for awarding contracts without tender.

We in this country have legal authorities with a responsibility to monitor the management of cities, and those authorities are the provinces. The federal government has always prided itself on respecting municipalities, on respecting municipal autonomy. Although we may not agree on the way Montreal and other Canadian cities assume their constitutional responsibilities, the Canadian constitution has provided for organizations to check into that. Such organizations are the provinces, Quebec's municipal affairs commission and Quebec's municipal affairs minister.

Montreal will probably have to explain why in 1975 it should be granted such powers under its charter, but as long as those powers are provided for in the charter, Madam Speaker, on what basis could we challenge the honesty of Montreal in awarding contracts when it is just doing so in accordance with its charter? We have no justification, Madam Speaker. I find it all the more regrettable since the reputation of the city of Montreal has always done credit to Canada. Did any member of the House after the 1967 international exhibition question the way the city of Montreal carried out its responsibilities? Never, Madam Speaker! And yet on the matter of the Olympic Games, the city of Montreal has always shown the same enthusiasm, the same sense of duty towards Canada.

We must not forget that the first time the city of Montreal went before the International Olympic Committee to host the games, the committee rejected Montreal's application. What was the reaction of the press then? We must go back to 1969. Canadian newspapers were unanimous in supporting a new application by the city of Montreal following the rejection.

The mayor of Montreal refused to be mollified by his failure. He went back to his office and built a new file. He visited mayors of other Canadian cities who might have been interested and together they agreed that Canada should at that stage make only one application to host the games.

It will be recalled that after Montreal was granted the games, the countries which sponsored or wanted to have the games—the cities of Moscow and Los Angeles at the time—gave in and recognized that Montreal's case was one of the better prepared. Now, Madam Speaker, we had to endure over those last few months a general crisis of skepticism in the press. Not one month passed without someone questioning any other aspect of the Olympic Games.

When the open roof stadium project was unveiled there were people to question the technique. Once the technical problems were resolved, some questioned the ability and the power of the City of Montreal to carry out the construction alone. In every paper, and I am referring particularly to 1974 papers, one could read as alarming headlines