

time to frustrate the efforts of the Northern to establish their franchise in the city of Toronto, a city that is more than willing and capable of supporting two major league football teams? This is obvious in view of the fact that the Argonauts have sold all their tickets for all post season and pre-season games, as well as league games, and that the Toronto Northmen have already to this date, without any advertising whatsoever, sold over 3,000 season tickets to their games.

Since when does any government or any agency in this country have the right to dictate to the people of Canada what they can or what they cannot see in professional sports? This is purely censorship of the highest order. What would be the reaction of the people if the government arbitrarily decided that, in the best interests of Canadians, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation would no longer be permitted to carry National Football League games from the United States which are in direct competition with the CFL schedule? What would be the reaction of Canadians if the United States did not allow our athletes, or for that matter writers, entertainers and other professionals into the United States?

An hon. Member: Oh, come on.

Mr. Jelinek: Mr. Speaker, I hear some of the smart-aleck Liberals over there jeering at this statement, but I know from experience in my younger days, before I became overweight and started showing bald spots, and before I got into business and politics, when my sister and I were world champions representing Canada. We were allowed to go into the United States, although the United States had many world champions of its own.

An hon. Member: You were much better on the ice.

Mr. Jelinek: I suggest that the real reason for this move by the minister is to establish a precedent in order to prevent the much talked about possibility of the National Football League expanding into the new olympic stadium in Montreal, which would in all likelihood seriously affect the financial stability of the Montreal Alouettes, and thus endanger the entire makeup of the Canadian Football League. The reasoning behind this statement, of course, is that unfortunately the Alouettes have not been getting the response from the public they deserve. I certainly share the minister's concern if this in fact is the case, or in fact if the World Football League itself posed such a threat.

The same holds true for the cities of the western conference. However, this is not the case in respect of the Toronto franchise. I would be the last person wishing to see the demise of the Canadian Football League in any way whatsoever. On the contrary, it would be my wish to see greater opportunity afforded to the youth of this country by encouraging greater Canadian participation in the CFL. In fact, if the Minister of National Health and Welfare were truly concerned about Canadianization of sport in this country, he would take the suggestion I have made in this House and substantially increase Canadian content, not only in the Canadian Football League but in professional sport in this country in general.

In any event, the terms of the offer submitted by the Toronto Northmen organization to both the Canadian Football League and the federal government make it obvi-

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ous that the CFL will not be endangered by the establishment of this one World Football League team, and I submit that the minister has obviously not even seriously considered the offer to safeguard the Canadian Football League.

Let us examine briefly the submission offered in writing to the minister by the Toronto Northmen Football Team Incorporated, which states in part:

The Minister of Health has stated that the Government of Canada is prepared to legislate so as to prevent the affiliation of any Canadian football team with any U.S. league and thereby frustrate the lawful action of Toronto Northmen Football Team Inc. in bringing a World Football League Franchise to Toronto for the following reasons:

1. The Toronto Argonauts would have competition in the Toronto market and the amount of revenue they receive might therefore be reduced. If this revenue is reduced then the amount the Argonauts pay to the Canadian Football League by way of "equalisation payments" would be reduced and the balance of the Canadian Football League would suffer.

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The minister has even gone so far as to suggest that the result would be the destruction of the Canadian football League.

This is the Northmen's reply in writing to both the Canadian Football League and the federal government:

We agree that the introduction of a new team in Toronto will provide competition for the Argonauts. We believe that competition is healthy, and that there is ample room in Toronto for two football teams operating in different professional football leagues. The brand of football each team has to offer would be different, and the style of football played would also not be the same. We would fully expect that the fans in Toronto would continue to support the Argonauts in the same excellent fashion as they have done in the past. The minister himself subsequently stated to us that the introduction of this one team would not destroy the CFL and Mr. Gaudaur has made a similar statement.

However, in the event that we are wrong in our assessment we are prepared to guarantee to the Canadian Football League that the Argonaut 'equalization payments' for the next ten years, will be no less than the payment made in the year 1973, a year when the Argonauts sold out their stadium for every pre-season and regular season game. We are prepared that this guarantee take whatever reasonable form the government and the Canadian Football League require. This guarantee, which we believe is unnecessary, should nonetheless quiet the government's fears that the 'equalization payments' be reduced.

Now, Mr. Speaker, does this jeopardize in any way the financial stability of the CFL? Certainly not. Every member of this House would agree with that because once these guarantees are implemented the Canadian Football League will not be hurt by the franchise proposed for Toronto.

Then, we have the minister's second objection:

The World Football League could come into Montreal and Vancouver and worsen the financial positions of the Montreal and Vancouver teams thus threatening the structure of the entire Canadian Football League.

This is the written reply of the Northmen to this objection:

The Northmen have all of the Dominion of Canada as part of their territory. The Northmen are prepared to assign these rights to the Canadian Football League, its individual teams or indeed to the Government of Canada. In this fashion the Canadian Football League and the Government of Canada can ensure that no other World Football League team would be established in Canada without the approval of the Canadian Football League.

Mr. Speaker, quite obviously the Northmen are giving assurance to the Canadian Football League and to the federal government that it will be at the option of the