

Olympic Financing

Not even his chronology is right on that one. I would plead with the government to readjust its focus. The Olympics do not need all the trappings that the mayor of Montreal is designing for that project. There is no doubt that the kind of program that would enhance the physical fitness of Canadians is good for all of Canada, and there is no doubt that prestige is on the line, but I would remind the government that also the credibility of Canada is on the line, not so much with the display of the Olympics as with the way in which we handle the Olympics. I plead with the government that we get back to the basics of the Olympics and focus our attention on the welfare of the competitors, on the runners, the wrestlers, the swimmers, and all the other athletes. Let us give them some attention.

We do not need the extravagance that the mayor of Montreal wants for the benefit of Montreal. Let us give the people of Canada a break, let us give the athletes a break, and let us scale down this model and make sure that the focus is back on physical fitness and not so much on the material trappings of the games.

Mr. Jake Epp (Provencher): Madam Speaker, Bill C-63 and specifically clause 4 gives rise to certain questions which I believe members of the House on behalf of all Canadians must ask very seriously, and possibly these questions should be asked of COJO officials and of the mayor of Montreal every bit as much as of the Postmaster General (Mr. Mackasey) whose bill this is, and who wants it passed for obvious reasons.

The whole matter of the Olympics—the financing and the government's involvement—whether we like to admit it or not, is coming back to roost earlier than any of us had expected in 1973 when the original bill was before the House. I want to remind hon. members that in 1973 the situation was very different, and so was the attitude of the government. For those of us who sat on the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates at that time in 1973 when the bill was placed before us respecting the sale of stamps and the minting and sale of Olympic coins and the lottery, it seems that the government members had a very different attitude than the attitude we see today in 1975. I do not believe it is a changing of attitude in respect of financing or in respect of the juggling act which is taking place with regard to financing, but I do believe it has much more to do with the fact that hon. members opposite feel that if they wait it out it will be passed.

● (2150)

What happened in 1973? When the original bill was before the Miscellaneous Estimates Committee the government presented to the members of that committee a bill which would authorize the minting of coins, the issuing of stamps, and the national lottery. For a number of days members of the opposition on that committee kept stressing to government members that the bill had to be tightened up, that there was no reporting in the original bill, that there had to be a responsibility and that parliament had to be given facts and figures as to the number of coins minted, and also the ceiling as to the amounts circulated. The Master of the Mint came before us at that time, and he spelled out clearly what would happen.

The Master of the Mint at that point showed that the Mint had received instructions to go ahead with the mint-
[Mr. Friesen.]

ing even though the bill was still before us, and I remember one evening very clearly after hours and hours of debate in that committee the present Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet), then the postmaster general, whose bill it was at that time, was pleading with members of his own party to pass our amendments which tightened up the bill and which finally won approval from his party. He pleaded with them to accept those amendments; otherwise the bill would die and COJO could not get on with the job.

I remember that night very clearly, and I know that the members of the government at that time gave in to the pressure of their minister. Why? Because of the lack of their numerical strength in the committee. Today, before the Olympics have taken place, we are already faced with problems of financing COJO. At that time the statements we made we could not base on fact, but we are finding out month after month, as more reports are coming out, that even the members of COJO do not know what are their cost figures.

According to the daily papers COJO does not even know how many tickets it has. In one case they were counted, and in the next case they were not counted. This week, for example, it was learned that a contract has not been signed with the Montreal Forum. It was learned that more seats would have to be erected and that they did not have as many seats as they thought. It has been a case of poor planning.

Then the government for the second time comes before this House and asks us to pass this bill because it is urgent and because the government does not have time on its hands. We are asked not to ask questions, but told that we can ask questions after 1976. That is not good enough.

With regard to the financing of Bill C-63, in 1973 when the original bill was passed there was a ceiling of \$250 million placed on the amount of revenue which could accrue to COJO through the sale of coins. The total amount which had to be sold kept increasing due to the price of sterling rising. COJO has not met its objectives, and the projections are that it will not meet its objective of \$250 million from those coins.

In the meantime Canadians have been committed to the Olympics. Companies have committed themselves to the Olympics, and many companies have used Olympic symbols or variations thereof to start manufacturing. Many of the companies are already in fact conducting sales. When I got home last weekend I found waiting in the mail a sample of the Olympic crest with the stylized M and the five circles, and a manufacturer was asking me to consider using those for promotional material. I am sure most hon. members received that advertising brochure.

Once Bill C-63 is passed where does this manufacturer stand? He has made an investment. According to the bill before us, he was already doing something illegal back on June 13 of this year. It is a retroactive bill, and the manufacturer, at the time he started the manufacture of those symbols, lapel pins, tiepins or other souvenirs which might be associated with using Olympic symbols prior to June 13 was already doing something illegal, and I know the government, which is in a majority position, thinks it can sit back and it will get its bill through. That is very