

Canada's record of participation, Mr. Speaker, in the Olympic games has been in the best tradition of the Olympic code. Our athletes have been amateurs in the true sense of the word, men and women who dedicated their own time and money to develop the skills which have allowed them to represent their country in international competition. Through the years, Canadian athletes have won Olympic medals in many events in both the summer and winter games. In addition to hockey championships, Canadian athletes have won Olympic gold medals in equestrian events, in boxing, rowing, shooting, skiing, canoeing, swimming, in track and field sprints and hurdle races, in walking, jumping, and the marathon race. Canadians have also won Olympic figure skating and bob-sledding championships and I might mention, Mr. Speaker, that some of the events that have been discontinued at the Olympics, such as golf, Lacrosse and dog sled racing, were also won by Canadians.

Beyond these achievements, of course, athletes from every part of Canada have served as good-will ambassadors for our nation. By their conduct in the Olympic Games, these men and women have demonstrated the finest qualities that have won for Canada and Canadians a place of respect and admiration throughout the world. These Olympic athletes, Mr. Speaker, have also brought back to this country a heightened awareness of the sense of community between nations; that is one of the greatest benefits of the Olympic movement.

[Translation]

Three short years from now the 1976 Summer Olympic Games will take place in this country. All hon. members must surely recognize that such an occasion should prompt us to double our efforts so as to train athletes who will be able to take part in those games with honour and pride. The difficulties and costs inherent in trips abroad have sometimes limited our participation in Olympic Games in the past, but I am convinced that all Canadian people will share the hope that every one of the young Canadians, boys or girls, who dream of representing this country in the great international sports arena will have the opportunity of training and of carving the way to becoming a member of the 1976 Canadian Olympic team.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is the first time in the history of the Olympic Games that the idea of their self-financing is seriously put to the test. COJO set itself the objective of holding simpler games, less costly and more in accordance with the Olympic ideals as regards participation and competition on an international scale.

COJO decided deliberately to put a stop to the astronomical increases in the cost of the Olympic Games since the Second World War.

The organizers of the 1976 Olympic Games have adopted the attitude that the most important contribution Canada can make to international sport is to prove conclusively that the Olympic Games can be held without any costly extravagances or any resulting decrease in honour or dignity, and that cost and income can be such as to enable the games to really finance themselves.

Similarly, hon. members know that the federal government has made its attitude known whereby it would not accept the responsibility for any deficit.

Olympic Bill

[English]

The government of Quebec, the city of Montreal and COJO have recognized our position in this regard and have given their assurances in writing that the federal government will not be asked to provide special funding for the Olympic Games, given that we provide the required legislation to permit operation of the revenue-generating schemes identified in this bill.

The legislation before the House seeks to assist COJO in making the 1976 summer Olympic games self-financing, and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I hope that hon. members on both sides will lend to the bill the support and encouragement that I know they will extend to those who are dedicated to the achievement of an Olympic celebration in which all Canadians will take pride.

Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley): Mr. Speaker, first, I should like to thank the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) for more or less outlining to us the bill in question which, of course, I think we have all read. It is always nice to have your memory refreshed, especially with regard to a celluloid bill like this one. I am also happy to note that the minister is continuing with the precedent that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and other ministers set in the past on this issue, namely, that of uncertainty and confusion, by not stating any firm government policy.

For the first time in our history, Mr. Speaker, Canada will play host to the Olympic games in 1976 and, as a party, we wish to ensure that these games are a success. Instead of reflecting on the brilliant achievement of one of our major cities in obtaining the Olympic games and instead of considering the fact that Canada was successful in being awarded the games against competition from countries such as the United States and Soviet Russia, we find ourselves bitterly locked in political gamesmanship. All too often one hears the statement that had the Olympic games been awarded to any other Canadian city, federal funding would have been assured. From the outset the Prime Minister has never made it clear to this House or to the Canadian people that he is either for or against the Olympics or the things for which they stand.

It is unfortunate that a shroud of government secrecy has surrounded the entire Olympic event from as far back as 1968 when the Prime Minister indicated in a letter that Canada would be pleased to host the 1976 Olympics. Since that time, an air of confusion has been conveyed, not only to members of this House but to all of the people of Canada. For example, on January 9, the hon. member for Fraser Valley West (Mr. Rose) asked the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde), whether the government had yet reached a decision in connection with federal financial participation in the Montreal Olympics in 1976. In his reply, the minister told the hon. member that the Montreal Olympics were not under his administrative jurisdiction. The hon. member then put the question to the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Basford), who replied that "... the federal position has not changed from that stated by the Prime Minister in the House some time ago."

On January 25, I asked the Minister of State for Urban Affairs whether the minister was prepared to approve the