

*Olympic Bill*

But we have to be convinced, as the President of the Treasury Board said, that it is a national event. The athletes will not come only from the province of Quebec; of course, these events will take place in Montreal. If Vancouver had been chosen, I would say the same thing and I would be very happy to see Quebecers go and compete in Vancouver. But we have that advantage and as a "Joliettain" or a Quebecer, I am very happy that Montreal will stage those events, the Olympic Games, and I believe that because of the participation of Canadian athletes, the honour of Canada is at stake. None of the hon. members can say that I am wrong when I speak of a Canadian participation. An hon. member from the Progressive Conservative party would have liked that the games be decentralized and would have preferred that some of the events be carried out in various regions. It is an idea which is worthy of much attention and consideration. Now, of course, decisions have been taken and it would have been preferable that such a suggestion be considered. Of course, this suggestion demands consideration. And I repeat that surely the responsibility does not rest only with Montreal.

I deplore, for example, the attitude of the New Democratic Party on this question. It is of course easy to preach virtuousness, Mr. Speaker, it is easy for the New Democrats to say that they would be ready to approve a budget of \$500 million for the renovation of Montreal, but I have serious doubts about the virtuousness of the New Democratic Party since January 4, Mr. Speaker. I am sorry to say it, but I feel I have to.

Recently, I saw the New Democratic Party vote against an amendment which I had moved and under which old age pensions would have started at 60. This would have improved the lot of older persons. Yet, the New Democrats are very crafty in their defence of such principles.

Recently, I saw them vote against a motion moved by the Progressive Conservative Party to the effect that the government had not succeeded in slowing down the increase in the cost of living. I could not understand how hon. members from the New Democratic Party could vote against this, even though I knew very well the reasons for it.

Today, they are opposed to such celebrations because Montreal faces other problems. I have serious doubts about the virtuousness which the New Democratic Party is defending because, since January 4, Canadians know how they have betrayed their own commitments over a period of six months.

Therefore, in my opinion, the arguments put forward by the New Democratic Party with respect to the people of Montreal are not that convincing and one can hardly believe that members of this party could be sincere when they wish that these millions of dollars would serve other purposes.

I repeat, this problem is not the only one, but we need some motivation with respect to those Olympic Games; Montreal is no exception and also needs additional funds to solve some problems and avert some difficulties.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to come back to an issue which was previously raised. The President of the Treasury Board mentioned that athletes should undergo inten-

[Mr. La Salle.]

sive training and that funds would be granted for that purpose. Then, I say again that I regret we have waited so long and that this training did not start a few years sooner. Bearing in mind the minister's statement, this proves the importance of my earlier proposal that additional funds be granted to create basic tools for our youth to allow them to get ready for the games and other competitions. The minister also mentioned the necessity of international relationships and that through such international competitions our links with other nations will become closer. I think he is perfectly right and that relationships between nations are one thing. We also need good relationships between provinces and between members to get a better understanding of the importance of the Olympic Games and their national nature.

I will conclude by reminding the government of the importance of being more prepared to shoulder a larger share of any possible deficit than it has been so far. I do not think we have the right to limit ourselves to the deficit issue when we talk about a project which directly affects our Canadian youths who need motivation to grow, assert themselves and develop. I think that the money issue is no longer relevant, Mr. Speaker. Thus, the government has the responsibility to become involved. Its involvement so far has been limited and I hope, with the support of an hon. member, to propose in due course an amendment urging the government to commit itself for at least 50 per cent of the costs, just like the province of Quebec and the City of Montreal are doing. This suggestion would be readily accepted by both the Quebec and Montreal authorities, and, by so doing the federal government would prove how serious they are when they claim that they support the Olympic Games.

I dare hope, Mr. Speaker, that this bill will be supported by most hon. members and that the government will initiate a publicity campaign calling upon all Canadians to commit themselves. As I said earlier, the Olympic Games will be a success only if we, as hon. members do commit ourselves.

[*English*]

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps I might call it one o'clock.

**Mr. Howard:** I thought I might be given that opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member will appreciate that calling it one o'clock does not automatically give him priority to be recognized first at two o'clock. I am not sure whether there is agreement as between the parties with regard to which hon. member should have the floor. I might note, for the record, that the hon. member for Skeena was the only one who rose to call it one o'clock; this might give him some priority.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

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**AFTER RECESS**

The House resumed at 2 p.m.