

"Bauer concept". Any understanding of how the 1972 series with the U.S.S.R. came about depends on an appreciation of this noble failure.

Father David Bauer is a member of the noted hockey-playing family from Kitchener. He had been an outstanding coach at St. Michael's College in Toronto. In the early Sixties he had become disturbed by the growing domination of Soviet teams in international hockey and he challenged the values reigning in junior hockey with its emphasis on honing only the very best for a pro career.

Father Bauer believed there should be another avenue open to boys who played hockey, particularly one which gave primacy to education and to nationalism. Rather than challenging or outflanking rules which forbade Canadian national teams to use professionals, Father Bauer planned a national "team-in-being", at a fixed place, with a permanent coach and an association with a university. He won backing for his idea from the federal Health and Welfare Department's Fitness and Sports Directorate, the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association, and from many prominent men, especially in Western Canada.

The CAHA is a federation, the parent body for all amateur hockey in Canada. It held, and holds, the right of representation in the IIHF. The IIHF has been master-minded since the 1930s by its permanent secretary and treasurer and oftentimes president, Bunny Ahearne, a London travel agent.

The "Bauer concept" almost worked. The Canadian national team came close to beating the Russians and the other two European hockey powers, Sweden and Czechoslovakia, both at the annual world tournament and at the Winter Olympics. Father Bauer, working with the CAHA, had to scramble for players. A deepening antagonism toward this initiative came from the NHL, growing out of what that league considered interference with its control of players. Burgeoning costs made it more difficult for the CAHA and private friends of the national team to carry on. One of the underwriters, the Federal Government, kept hearing complaints that Canada was never going to win this way, that our national honour as hockey's creators and best practitioners was being forfeited in the name of an idealistic but unsuccessful project.

#### Task Force proposal

The Task Force on Sport recommended that the Federal Government sponsor the creation of a new body, Hockey Canada.

This non-profit corporation, with representation from all the major hockey interests in Canada, was to have a dual purpose: first, to manage Canadian representation in international tournaments; secondly, to take steps to improve the standards and skills of domestic hockey.



*Canada's Phil Esposito - PM for a series*

Health and Welfare Minister John Munro accepted this recommendation, guaranteed it federal financial backing until it could raise funds privately and encouraged the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association to devolve its responsibilities and debts regarding the national team on Hockey Canada. The "Bauer concept" was not dead. Rather it had been put in a larger frame, the hope being that greater co-operation from the NHL representation in Hockey Canada would open up a better player supply for the national team.

By early summer of 1969, Hockey Canada was under way, describing itself as an "umbrella organization for Canadian hockey". On its directorate were nominees from the CAHA, the Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Association, the NHL Players Association (i.e. Alan Eagleson), the three Canadian teams in the NHL and men from sport and business with a deep interest in the game, including federal nominees.

The CAHA signed a contract with Hockey Canada. The latter took over the national team, including its debts. While the CAHA did not give up its representation in the International Ice Hockey Federation — it's doubtful if it could have transferred this to Hockey Canada — it agreed to work in concert with Hockey Canada and federal authorities.

The first aim was to get approval from the IIHF for the use of pro players in the world tournament. These, everyone

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