

*Establishment of Little League Week*

degree of Canadian control of the program. I have referred to the discussions that took place regarding the lack of affiliation of Canadian-organized bodies. There is no question that the Little League is highly organized through the head office in Pennsylvania which continues to direct and control the program.

I listened to the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre and to the hon. member for Saint John-Lancaster (Mr. Bell). I was pleased that neither of them raised the question of Canadian control. It has been raised in other quarters. The question of the development of institutions and organizations which are controlled within our own society is one which leads to a discussion which cannot always be productive.

I have listened to those who support the Watkins point of view in regard to industry. The last speaker is a member of that group. I am not one of those who share that point of view. I do not share the concern that is often expressed in this regard. I do not think we can make lacrosse our national sport in the sense in which some hon. members have proposed it at different times. It is probably the only truly distinctive Canadian game with a wide following and participation. We have long given up trying to make cricket the national sport of this country because it has not "taken" here and does not receive the response of other games.

There is no doubt in my mind that the influence of T.V. has resulted in the promotion of sports such as hockey, football and baseball. I believe our neighbours to the south will have to accept Canadian hockey players and we will have to accept U.S. football players. I suspect that there will be an expansion of baseball in our country. It is the kind of sport that is adapted to television and to the kind of spectacle that our people love to see.

● (4:20 p.m.)

I am one of those who enjoy these sports as much as any member of the House, and I am not at any point going to say we should look down on the sports that are gaining a broad North American audience, and in any way deplore them. We have a broad range of athletic, social and cultural activities which are common to the North American continent, and baseball is one. The associations and organizations which have devoted themselves to the sponsoring of this kind of sport commend themselves for favourable considera-

[Mr. Francis.]

tion. I believe the Little League should receive all the encouragement that can be given it, because of the program it has demonstrated it is capable of generating. It is a very well organized group. There is a wide degree of participation by younger people, and by parents in a voluntary capacity.

I am told that there is a series of inter-leagues between Canadian and American cities at border points. When Canadian teams are not sufficiently numerous, they fill in and play back and forth with teams from the United States. I think this is a very helpful, healthy sign and is the type of activity that builds international good will from a very early age.

In reviewing this bill, Mr. Speaker, I have called to the attention of hon. members that there is still an unresolved problem in relation to some of the other groups that are receiving official recognition and support. I believe that hon. members should also consider the basic question of what form of encouragement and recognition we should give. We must decide how many weeks we can give to baseball, football, hockey, the Babe Ruths, the Peewees, the Juniors, the Little League, and the various age groups that are organized in this way. I think before we make the decision that this week will be Little League Week, we should consider a policy and be prepared to say to other groups, "This is the kind of encouragement and recognition we are prepared to extend to you, and we wish you all the best in developing your program."

**Mr. F. J. Bigg (Pembina):** Mr. Speaker, it is good that we have a private members' hour, because every once in a while we get a refreshing suggestion like this. I hasten to give my unqualified support to the idea that we give as much publicity, encouragement, financial and every other type of assistance as possible to the people who run Little League baseball.

As a member of the Mounted Police I was thrown into close contact with young people who got off on the wrong track, and from my experience and the experience of others with whom I have worked I find that when young people are involved in something like Little League baseball, the incidence of juvenile delinquency falls off dramatically.

I recall in a certain town the juvenile court had to hold special sessions every week. Then a young corporal in the Mounted Police set up a boxing class in the town. He had been running it only a few months when the juve-