

• (2200)

Somewhere along the line I may have made a mistake as to which minister was involved, not because the subject is unimportant, not because either minister is unimportant but perhaps because I am advised that this change in responsibilities was made at the time of the cabinet shuffle. Mr. Speaker, that was one thing I did not think very important, because it is highly temporary. The most succinct and perceptive comment upon that particular event, I believe, was that of the *Ottawa Journal*, which compared the cabinet shuffle with the shifting of the deck chairs on the *Titanic*. I am also confused about how the transfer was made without a change in the Fitness and Amateur Sports Act, and perhaps tonight or at some later date we will hear more about the reasons for the move.

It is extremely important that somebody accept responsibility for the public interest in the Olympic Games because the Canadian people are very concerned about athletics. They are especially concerned about those international competitions which mean so much to our national morale. I understand that some very important people in the world of sport have communicated with the Minister of National Health and Welfare, and presumably their communications have been passed on to other ministers.

I was appalled to note that in the *Ottawa Citizen* of January 4 nearly half a page was devoted to anxious expressions about the way one aspect of the Olympic Games was handled, namely, the television rights. I quote from that newspaper as follows:

Roger Rousseau, commissioner-general of the summer Olympics . . . announced Wednesday an agreement awarding United States television rights to the American Broadcasting Co. for \$25 million . . .

Shortly after the announcement was made, a spokesman for the rival National Broadcasting Co. in New York criticized the ABC award.

"NBC continues to believe that the procedures used to award American television rights to the 1976 Olympic Games are contrary to the best interests of the people of Canada, the American TV audience and the Games themselves.

"The organizing committee's unwillingness to follow the procedure of open bidding raises serious questions which still are unanswered," the network executive charged.

That is a comment by a very prominent media man in the United States, but I was much more interested and much more disturbed by the statement of Alan Eagleson, whom no one could ignore as one of the leaders in the athletic field in this country, who brought sharply to the attention of the minister the way in which Bobby Orr Enterprises had not been given a chance to bid for the television rights. Mr. Eagleson said:

"We had offered to buy these rights through Bobby Orr Enterprises . . . The transaction with the American Broadcasting Company seems a little bit suspicious to me."

The newspaper report continued:

The games rights would have been sold without a promoter, said Eagleson, who is secretary of Bobby Orr Enterprises, executive director of the National Hockey League Players Association, a lawyer, and a representative of numerous NHL players.

He said that since Canadian taxpayers will have to bear the cost of staging the Olympics "I hate to see \$700,000 given away so easily and so needlessly to an American promoter."

Eagleson said everyone should have a chance to bid.

Adjournment Debate

I call upon the minister to investigate the matter thoroughly. I think it would be extremely serious if a matter so evocative of Canadian interest and pleasure as international competition should get under way under a cloud of misapprehension, and that it should be further clouded by a lack of willingness to communicate with the Canadian people as to what is going on in this particular aspect of the Olympic Games. I should be glad for such elucidation as the minister is able to give with his unlimited knowledge but his limited time tonight.

Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have listened with great interest to the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) and his enunciation of the problem he raised the other day during the question period. I want to confine my remarks not to what he said this evening but to the question he asked the other day, which related solely to the matter of television rights sold by the organizing committee for the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal.

Mr. Speaker, the organizing committee for the Olympics in Montreal in 1976 has, I am informed, entrusted its negotiations for these TV rights to a committee headed by Paul Desroches, who is otherwise a financial adviser to the premier of the province, which includes Gerry Snyder, the vice-president in charge of finances for the organizing committee, Louis Chantigny, the vice-president in charge of communications for the organization, and the commissioner-general, M. Roger Rousseau, who was mentioned by the hon. member for Hillsborough.

The matter of the sale of the United States television rights to the olympic games, which is the subject of his question, is internal to the organizing committee whose job it is to negotiate these rights. There is no federal agency involved in the sale of those rights and there is no federal agency involved in the negotiation of these rights.

The approval of the contract and the approval of the sale of these rights is subject to the approval of the international Olympic organization. If there are some problems or allegations on the question of the sale of these rights or the contract relating to them, I believe it is the responsibility of the organizing committee and of the international Olympic organization.

FISHERIES—EAST COAST SALMON FISHING BAN— PROVISION OF APPEAL PROCEDURE RESPECTING COMPENSATION TO FISHERMEN

Mr. Tom Bell (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, as reported at page 44 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Northumberland-Miramichi (Mr. Smith) asked the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Davis) about the appeal procedure that there might be for fishermen who were not satisfied with their compensation payments under the salmon ban. I asked a supplementary question, knowing that the minister had written me and assured me that there was an appeal procedure. I asked whether the minister would personally investigate the method that was used under this whole compensation matter.

I am thinking more in terms of Saint John harbour, the Saint John river and the Bay of Fundy, but the minister may wish to say something about the Miramichi and other