



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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CANADA INVESTS IN PHYSICAL FITNESS

Partial text of an address by Mr. J. Waldo Monteith, Minister of National Health and Welfare, on March 16, 1963, to the National Intercollegiate Hockey Playoffs Dinner, Kingston, Ontario.

...My presence here is a tribute to the Federal Fitness and Amateur Sport Programme, which I have had the very great satisfaction of introducing in Parliament and of administering since its inception. I would like to speak to you about this Programme tonight.

Perhaps I might first stress the title of the legislation, "An Act to Encourage Fitness and Amateur Sport". You will note the word "Encourage". Our purpose is simply to assist setting up the shots so that the people of Canada themselves may score the goals.

The second thing I would like to note is the position of the word "Fitness". It is not by accident that it comes first in the title of the Act; it has been first in our thinking. Unfortunately, in most of the publicity given the Programme, the order seems to have been reversed.

Assistance to sport, and especially to national and international competition, receives the publicity. Let none of us ever forget that the peaks cannot be reached without a broad base provided by participation right across the country.

We do not have the broad population base of the U.S. and Russia and some other nations, but we can produce our share of potential champions if our activities are wide enough to find and encourage them....

But at the same time we must remember that a national or international championship is not the only goal. Our Programme must encourage healthy, happy active living in all age groups of the population. Somehow we must break through the barriers presented by the increasingly easy way of western life, and what Kingsley Amis so aptly referred to in his novel Lucky Jim as our "prefabricated amusements".

Programme Balance

I will spare you a sermon on this subject. But you will understand why, with these problems in mind, we have aimed for balance in our Programme. We give games their due, but what might be called the non-competitive sports are also receiving a fair share of our attention.

Canoeing, camping, hiking, sailing, hostelling and the like are all a part of our way of life. We must learn to use and to conserve our heritage of forest, lake and mountain and to use it well, within the uses that nature intended, as well as mastering man-made games.

Our Fitness and Amateur Sport Act came into effect as recently as January 1962. In co-operation with the provinces, we are still working our way toward full use of the maximum annual allocation of \$5 million provided under the Act, with \$2 million earmarked for the coming fiscal year.

Through the National Advisory Council appointed under the Act, I receive the best possible advice on all the aspects of the many fields covered by the Programme. Included among these ladies and gentlemen are directors of schools of physical education, officials of national and international sports bodies, sportswriters, and persons who have been active in various community projects.

The Council's discussions can be heated on occasion, as you might imagine, but its recommendations have been sound and well considered. Its work is supported by committees involving the provinces, dealing with such matters as research development and scholarships and bursaries.

Within this framework, we have developed three main channels in our Programme -- grants directly from Ottawa, grants to the provinces, and services provided directly by my Department.

Direct Grants

Under the first heading, we have already helped many national organizations to strengthen and extend their services. Grants to the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association and the Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union come within this category. We have also helped to make possible such projects as the Canadian National Exhibition's Fitness Festival last September, and others that brought the cause of fitness to the fore.

Grants are made to the Canadian Olympic Association to assist Canadian participation in the Olympic, British Empire and Commonwealth, and Pan-American Games. Also, national organizations such as the Canadian Amateur Ski Association, the Canadian Figure Skating Association, the Canadian Wheelmen and many other groups have received assistance to send athletes abroad and organize competitions at home.

The Federal Government is increasing the emphasis on research. Grants for this purpose, to universities and professional organizations, are designed to increase our knowledge of what constitutes fitness for many

different activities, and how it can be attained most effectively. The work supported in this field will be of great interest to those of you who are studying the sciences, embracing as it does a wide variety of work in the biological and physical sciences. I was myself extremely surprised to find that one of our closest advisers on research is also employed on space research and considers his work on both programmes to be closely related.

Grants to Provinces

One half of all funds provided under the Act are made available to the provinces, on a project and matching basis, for the development of fitness and amateur sport activities at the provincial and local levels. Projects here have covered a wide range, indicating the very real need that is felt to assist expansion of opportunities for all sectors of the population to indulge in active recreational pursuits.

Such pursuits are by no means as easy for most people to follow as they were before the tremendous growth of our cities, and this fact presents challenges also to the town planner if our potentialities for recreation are to be fully realized. I am optimistic about the job we can do, as I think a real fear has developed across the country of the dangers inherent in a way of life completely lacking in real physical activity.

Direct Services

I come now to the third major sector of the Programme, the direct services provided through the Department of National Health and Welfare. These are very considerable indeed. As well as providing guidance in less direct forms, my Department takes an active role in the preparation of informational material such as films, manuals of instruction and other instructional aids of a technical nature.

In addition to the preparation of films on figure-skating and other subjects, we have been involved in such projects as preparation of a manual on how to construct swimming pools and a track-and-field reference manual. We also hope to develop even closer contacts with the construction of recreational and sports facilities through the Municipal Winter Works Programme. Federal assistance of \$5.5 million was given to this type of construction through the Department of Labour last year.

There are other projects of importance which I will only touch on here. In co-operation with a number of other Federal Departments, we are assisting the Calgary Olympic Development Association in its plans to obtain the 1968 Winter Olympic Games for Banff. We are also helping the City of Winnipeg in its application for the 1967 Pan-American Games.

Effect of Programme

I do not think it is too much to say that the Fitness and Amateur Sport Programme has had a large part to play in bringing Canada the kind of international sports recognition that makes the holding of such Games a possibility. If we are successful in obtaining the 1968 Winter Olympics and

and the 1967 Pan-American Games, it will be a very great achievement indeed, and these two events together with the Montreal World Fair will be effective ornaments of Canada's centennial celebration in 1967.

These are some of the many different aspects of the Programme I should like to describe to you in detail if time permitted. However, I shall content myself by concluding with a word on our work in two areas in which you have a special interest, aid to universities and to university training, and aid to hockey. As many of you know, the Federal Government made an \$18,000 grant early this year to the Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union, to assist in meeting the costs of developing and promoting international sport at the national level. This grant was designed in part to encourage such heartening activities as have taken place here today....

Without forgetting other sectors of the community...we must devote specialized attention, through the universities, towards assisting in the training of the men and women studying or employed in physical education and recreational activities, who must provide the technical leadership for an expanding Programme.

Federal aid is being given through post-graduate scholarships and bursaries to increase the numbers of professionally trained people in Canada. These awards, which can be used in or outside Canada, assist the whole range of post-graduate study, from work at the master's level up to post-doctoral research.

Kinds of Award

Three types of award are available under the Act. These include post-graduate scholarships designed to assist persons already holding a bachelor's degree in physical education to proceed to the master's or doctoral level. Senior research fellowships are designed to help senior professional workers increase their qualifications....

Help for Hockey

This great sport has naturally occupied a prominent place in our thinking.... One of our principal problems is how we can give the most effective aid to a sport which, financially, is in a relatively good position, but which nevertheless deserves, all the support it can be given for development.

A Committee of the National Advisory Council has been working with the Executive of the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association to devise ways in which federal help can be used most effectively. One of the first results of this collaboration is the \$50,000 grant made to the Association to assist in establishing national hockey leadership courses at five universities, selected to cover all regions of Canada, with a view to improving hockey coaching and management. This is, we hope, the beginning of a long and useful collaboration that will be of continuing help to hockey....

S/A