

An Historical Review of the Canadian Government's Involvement in Amateur Sport Since 1960

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During the years 1960 to 1968, the Canadian government's involvement in amateur sport was ill-defined, "groping and developmental." In the latter year a three-member task force studied prevailing concepts of amateurism and professionalism. They also gave careful attention to sport and the role of the federal government in national and international sport. The extent and quality of Canadian sport had become a national issue; twenty-two federal agencies now (1969) carry out programs or activities in the broad domain of physical recreation, fitness, and amateur sport. Prime minister Trudeau has been throughout a prime mover in this athletic thrust, resulting in federal involvement in overcoming public apathy, improving facilities, administration, coaching, financing of national teams, and continuing to clarify the words "athletic amateur" and "athletic professional."

The decade of the sixties has seen significant financial aid to amateur sport from the national government. The target has been a broader base of physical recreation support for the masses of Canadians as well as help for the gifted athlete at the university. The Canadian Task Force on Sports, sometimes directionless, has nevertheless been forceful, honest, and effective in acting as an instrument for national concern for fitness, recreation, and sport. Present-day concern and commitment center around the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, raising the level of fitness for Canadian citizens, therapeutic recreation, preventive medicine, summer student recreational opportunities, and ever-effective use of the multi-million dollar national budget in all these aforementioned areas.