

Report given by H.H. Prince Pierre de Monaco

at the Paris Session of the I.O.C. regarding the new Version of the Olympic Hymn.

Mr. President, Gentlemen,

Straight after your voting in Athens when you entrusted me with the mission of organizing and presiding over an international competition for a new and official Olympic Anthem, we started abundant correspondence, effort and labours about which no doubt the moment has come to report.

While organizing the Jury, we had in mind getting representatives of all musical tendencies of the moment and, since our anthem hopes to be universal, representatives of all continents.

The recruiting was not an easy affair. Mr. Furtwangler died a few days after he

promised his participation. Master Toscanini excused himself shortly after having accepted. We regretted the absence of a Russian musician, Mr. Chostakovitch, after having expected for more than 5 months an answer to our invitation. Also Latin America has not been represented, Mr. Chavez, at the last moment having been unable to leave Mexico and Mr. Domingo Santa Cruz his native Chili.

All our other guests came to Monaco from the 18th to the 25th of April and our I.O.C. was eminently represented by various members of the Executive Board, Mr. Massard, His Excellency Taher Pacha, Count Thaon de Revel, as well as Messrs. Albert and Otto Mayer.

The idea of our competition had apparently appealed to the Musical Youth of this time. We received in Lausanne 397 contributions from 43 various countries.

Confronted with such abundant material we had to plan and organize in Lausanne last February a small reunion so as to classify documents. Our judges and guests were Mademoiselle Nadia Boulanger, Mr. Malipiero and Mr. Necil Akses.

As soon as this examination was done, copies were sent to Monaco.

Then at last, in Monaco, a Jury, composed as mentioned, got together from the 18th to the 25th of April. On the evening of the 21st, they let us know their choice. The Olympic anthem they considered best was written by Mr. Michal Spisak, a Polish musician, of real ability who has been working in Paris for 10 years. We photographed the manuscript, copied the parts and organized a few rehearsals in three days time. On the 25th of April, some of our colleagues, members of the Executive Board, heard it, as much as we had been able in so short a while to prepare. A record, most imperfect indeed, of this hearing has been taken and you could hear it here if you wish to do so. But it seems to me that you have had yesterday at the Opening Ceremonies of the 50th Session at the Sorbonne a better hearing than the one embodied in this record. The musical text has since Monaco received a few additions and improvements.

Such as it is it seems to me that it really answers your wish and the expectations of the Youth for whom it is intended and which it hopes to inspire. The first part appears as a virile, noble and somewhat touching prayer, worthy of the solemn moments during which the Olympic colours are raised, at the opening of the Games. After this comes a sort of finale very rhythmic until the noble ending.

Perhaps the anthem sounds modern, but I really believe that we could not offer to the youth of these times familiarized owing to the radio, as we know, with sounds that may surprise our ears, an anthem that could have seemed to be of yesterday. I must

say that all the young listeners to whom I gave the opportunity of hearing the record seemed to respond to its moving qualities. If you will kindly imagine it, given in the open air, at the opening ceremonies of the games, with a mass of singers three or four times larger, as it was the case in Helsinki, it seems to me you will have the same impression as our young athletes.

The accompanying text extracted from the Odes of Pindare, not without liberties by rather eminent Greek scholars and writers, was only imposed by the necessities of the musical score. It has been commented upon and discussed at length. May I remind you that it is open to anyone of us to have a better one produced, so far as it may be safely adapted to the music that has been presented to you.

We have been rather quick at our work. It was only a year ago in Athens. may I say so again, that I have received your mandate which I have carried out to the best of my ability. During that short while, I have taken all possible care to fulfil it.

I have found at our Chancellery in Lausanne a most efficient, indefatigable and intelligent help and I would not fail to thank all concerned on behalf of all of us.

As it is, I really think that the anthem written by Mr. Spisak answers the demand and what is expected by the I.O.C., and whatever may happen I sincerely consider it as an important work capable of imposing itself on the memory of the crowds and should gain great popularity. It is also quite easy to perform.

Anthems as all human symbols depend essentially upon the action of time, which is apt to polish and adapt them, filling them with reminiscences so as to give them full capacity to move. That which I have the honour to recommend to you, Mr. President and Gentlemen, seems to have great qualities and great chances for its future and this is anyway what an eminent Jury has thought of it.

I am sure it is and will be able to serve the Olympic ideal so dear to all of us.