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## **The Predominant Role played in the World by the International Committee for Deaf and Dumb Sports**

*(Communication from M. Antoine Dresse, Secretary- General  
of the International Committee for Deaf and Dumb Sports, Liège, Belgium.)*

Who can doubt the great importance that sports and International Games are having among the young deaf and dumb people of the world ?

According to statistics collected by the International Committee for Deaf and Dumb Sports, there are forty thousand deaf and dumb people in the world who practise some form of sport, grouped in more than one thousand clubs which come under the 31 federations affiliated to this International Committee. A slight error appeared in the 54th Issue (May 1956) of the Bulletin of the International Olympic Committee. The International Committee for Deaf and Dumb sports does not possess a sports *section*, but is an independent governing body which controls and directs all the physical education

activities as well as deaf and dumb sports throughout the world. Its constitution and powers are recognized by the International Olympic Committee in pursuance of the decision adopted by the latter at its Session of June 5th, 1955.

The origin of the practice of sports by the young people disinherited by nature dates back to the year 1900. The first sports manifestations took place in the Scandinavian countries. Thereafter this movement spread to Central Europe, and then to the rest of the Continent, before reaching the American continent and Asia. This is what has been achieved by the Deaf and Dumb Sports Movement in a period of a little over fifty years. In this period of half a century a gigantic effort has been realized on behalf of the ideal

of Deaf and Dumb Sports, which is the visible result of the determination and driving powers of the pioneers of this movement.

The International Committee for Deaf and Dumb Sports was only founded in Paris, in August 1924, after the first International Games, held as the result of the initiative of a Frenchman, M. E. Rubens-Alcais. The Committee's XVth Congress is to be held at the end of January 1959 at Montana (Switzerland), when the XXXVth anniversary of its existence will be commemorated. Under the active influence of this Committee the International Games for the Deaf and Dumb have been held every four years. The statistics published below are eloquent proof of the development and growing influence of this movement.

The Winter Games were inaugurated in 1949 at Seefeld (Austria), (5 countries, 33 competitors), and they were followed by those held in Oslo in 1953, (6 countries, 53 competitors), and. at Oberammergau in 1955, (7 countries, 61 competitors). The IXth Winter Games are to be held in Montana-Vermala (Switzerland) from January 27th 1959.

It is already decided that the Xth International Summer Games for the Deaf and Dumb will be held in Finland, at Helsinki in 1961, where, according to the assurances given by the Organizing Committee, the number of entries both of countries and individual participants will break all former records.

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Place</i> | <i>Number of count. participating</i> | <i>Number of Participants.</i> |
|-------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1924        | Paris        | 9                                     | 145                            |
| 1928        | Amsterdam    | 10                                    | 210                            |
| 1931        | Nuremberg    | 14                                    | 316                            |
| 1935        | London       | 12                                    | 293                            |
| 1939        | Stockholm    | 13                                    | 264                            |
| 1949        | Copenhagen   | 14                                    | 405                            |
| 1953        | Brussels     | 16                                    | 524                            |
| 1957        | Milan        | 25                                    | 625                            |