



Address by P. C. Hale

Solemn Opening Ceremony 56th Session of the International Olympic Committee, *San Francisco*

Governor Brown,
Mr. Brundage,
Members of the International Olympic Committee,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Organizing Committee and the United States Olympic Committee, I extend a warm welcome to you who have come to California for the 56th session of the International Olympic Committee and the VIIIth Olympic Winter Games, and to express our appreciation for your willingness to travel the long distances that separate us. Although your business sessions will be held elsewhere in San Francisco, we felt it fitting to hold the Opening Session in the War Memorial Opera House where the United Nations Charter was written 15 years ago.

The men, who filled this hall at that time, had an ideal to which they were dedicated. They acted upon that ideal and the results of their action will always be a tribute to them.

The same can certainly be said for Baron de Coubertin and his fellow sportsmen who joined together, in 1894, for the rebirth of the Olympic Movement. Nothing will ever detract from what they did 66 years ago.

It has been my pleasure to work with you of the International Olympic Committee and your esteemed President and Chancellor during the past four years, and to see your devotion to these same ideals — to see your continuing efforts to govern the Games and further international amateur sports competition on a fair, practical but non-political basis.

We realize how difficult it is to carry on any international project — particularly one of the size and importance of the Olympic Movement — without becoming enmeshed in political considerations. In fact it is perhaps impossible for the

actions of the International Olympic Committee not to be given political connotations by others. From my experience with you I know that, despite this and other pressures, your decisions have been based solely on the interests of the amateur athletes of the world and the merits of each situation as it arose.

It has been said that San Francisco has the lusty flavor of a seaport and the sophistication of one of the world's ancient capitals, any port is a sort of bouillabaisse. But where did the sophistication come from?

The earliest settlers in California, and following them the 49ers, were never content just to sit and enjoy their peace and prosperity. They sent their offspring 3,000 miles away to the seats of learning in New England or to Washington, C.D. to learn about government. They brought actors and opera singers from New York even though there were only tents and lean-tos in which performances could be held.

San Franciscans, who were tramps as Robert Louis Stevenson would know the word, went abroad to the Orient and to India, to South America and to Europe. They brought back paintings and sculpture and collections of jade. Governor Pacheco, the first Governor of California, had his wife's clothes sent around the Horn from Paris so she would be well dressed for the opera performances.

San Franciscans went abroad and foreigners came to San Francisco. The Spaniards recognized the same rugged coastline they had left on their own Costa Brava. The Italians saw a replica of Naples in our Bay. The practical Chinese saw great opportunity. They set up bazaars at the edge of the plaza, now Portsmouth Square, to tempt the gold miners to convert their gold dust and spend it. The attraction for the Scandinavians is more mysterious — but in any case, we now have many Norwegians, Swedes, Finns and Danes.

During the next two weeks, we shall do our utmost to live up to our reputation. We will show you the museums and spectacular views from the ends of our streets. We will take you to the valleys and woods across the Bay. We plan to go as far as Santa Barbara to lunch with your Honored

President, Mr. Avery Brundage. Then we will go to Squaw Valley for the Winter Games and afterwards to Los Angeles for a programme that has been arranged there.

I wish you the greatest pleasure on your visit here and a most successful business session.
