

PRESS REVIEW

Soon the Coloureds will dominate the White Men

An extract from *Olympic second thoughts* by Willy Meisl in *World Sports*, London, official magazine of the British Olympic Association.

Until now, the white man has dominated the Olympics, but recently his majority in the arena has no longer been overwhelming, and numerous American negroes have pushed him off the medals' rostrum. The 1960 Games sounded, above all, the overture to successful African participation; 1964, I believe, will produce the opening act. And 1968? From then on the Games should display their fascinating, multi-coloured spectacle in its fullest possible splendour.

The coloured continents are going to dominate the Olympics. Even without the currently-abstaining Chinese People's Republic (650 million people, many of them well versed in sport), the coloured peoples are bound to become the majority both in the arena and on the medal-winners' rostrum. And not only Americans and Africans. Every second person on the globe is an Asiatic. Already competitors of such *new* lands are showing so much natural aptitude

that one must forecast for them a future of rapid progress.

(...) For the first time, we saw three negroes on the rostrum after the 110 m. hurdles. For the first time we have seen athletes from all five continents in a swimming final (400 m. free-style). And for the first time two Africans had been in the top two places in a marathon... with four Africans in the first eight.

*

In Rome, Avery Brundage delivered some of his best speeches: *Temple or circus* was the just choice he put before athletes in an address about amateurism. But the amateur statute, says Meisl, continues to be as unrealistic as ever: not only it has lost touch with the facts of modern life—socially, materially, spiritually — but it could never have been complied with, not even in the

'good old days' when sport was the preserve of the 'haves' and the 'haves-not' were excluded as non-amateurs.

(...) It is commercializing the Games, says Meisl, when one honours exclusively large capitals with populations of many millions. The Olympics have become involved in a vicious circle, for their programme has reached such a size that even with record gates (as in Italy) a deficit remains unavoidable and a small city might be neither willing nor able to stand it.

(Editor's note: *Yet some people argue that we must not limit the number of sports allowed in the Games. Let us be clear-sighted and recognize the fact that if it came to that, it would either kill the spirit of the Games, or we would see them organized in countries where the State could face and make up for any deficit.*)

THE GAMES PROGRAMME MUST BE CUT DOWN RADICALLY; so must expenses. Only in smaller communities may we get nearer *Olympia* spiritually, for the entire town or country would then identify themselves with the Games. In giant cities such as London, Rome or Tokyo, the celebration of an Olympiad cannot be more than a welcome though expensive decoration... propaganda for tourist traffic (and perhaps sport)... something temporarily grafted on to a city's life. For the Games to become a genuine Festival they must become part and parcel of a country's or a city's life; not an appendage confined to her sports centres.

(Editor: *It is exactly what the International Olympic Committee is after, unfortunately, it clashes with other influences which attribute to the Games an aim entirely different to that of an Ideal... Although we live in the twentieth century, we have already a foothold in the next century.*)