

PRESS COMMENTS

Seeking an International Status

*by Gaston Meyer, Chief-Editor
of L'ÉQUIPE of Paris.*

Whatever way we study the problem confronting us, we must admit sport suffered a serious defeat in the days which preceded the Skiing Championships at Chamonix.

But it is up to the sportsmen all over the world to benefit by this experience caused by

these incidents which have been *provoked by some people and exploited by others*. Therefore, a vast plan of campaign is sure to be organized at the next special congress of the International Ski Federation and at the next meeting of the Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee.

It is essential to avoid at all cost a mass reaction that would only succeed in dividing the sporting world in two camps. Now, in the most stormy gales of the cold war and at any rate since 1950, sport was left alone and did not suffer from political incidents except perhaps for one exception: when China of Peking withdrew from the International Olympic Committee who had opened very wide his door, hoping that Formosa as a territory might send its contingent of athletes at the Olympic Games.

People may recall the fact that, at the Olympics of Helsinki, ten years ago, the Sovietic side took no end of precautions to prevent all contact between their athletes and the Occidental competitors. To this end they housed them in private quarters exclusively reserved for their accommodation.

On the playing field, the situation changed and all precautions were flung aside. American and Sovietic athletes so inquisitive about each other, fraternized spontaneously and the international (political) journalists on the look-out for trouble, which they thought was inevitable, had to beat an hasty retreat and departed immediately.

Now we seek among the sport leading personalities some persons who, armed like crusaders with faith and courage, will launch a vast crusade with the object of obtaining for sport (represented by the International Olympic Committee) an international status similar to the one granted to the International Red Cross (which, as the International Olympic Committee, has its seat in a neutral country: Switzerland. *Ed.*) Utopia stands frequently for the truth of to-morrow.