

Relations between Sport and Politics

Bearing on this subject, we quote the following extract from the newspaper

L'ÉQUIPE:

'Because the Allied Commission (United States, France and Great Britain) refused to grant travelling passes to the East German skiers, (visas which ought to be superfluous in the XIXth century), the World Skiing Championships did not, in a certain way, take place in 1962, at least not under that same title.

'This action, justified or unjustified, constitutes a serious setback to the general principles established in 1894 by the only recognized governing council which has controlled sport ever since.

'Is it necessary to recall the victorious battles fought and won by the International Olympic Committee, inspired by a Frenchman, Pierre de Coubertin? Calling these facts to mind may be of interest to the readers.

1912. 'The International Olympic Committee recognized the Olympic Committee of Bohemia (now forming part of Czechoslovakia) and of Hungary which populations suffered the ascendancy of Austria-Hungary. It also recognized the Committee of Finland, Great-Duchy which became annexed to the Russian Empire.

'After much contested diplomatic battles, de Coubertin succeeded in obtaining the distinct participation of Bohemia, Hungary and Finland.

1916. 'Coubertin put up a vigorous resistance against the pressure who asked to exclude the German and Austrian members from the International Olympic Committee and were asking to have the Berlin Games scheduled for 1916 transferred to an American city. He made admit principle that the

non-celebration of an Olympiad is possible but that its number must remain according to ancient tradition.

1933. 'The advent of national-socialism in Germany led to a virulent press campaign advocating the transfer of the 1936 Games attributed to Berlin. The International Olympic Committee is firmly opposed to this transfer but compel the Germans to apply implicitly the Fundamental Principles of the Olympic Charter. This promise is kept in the case of a woman fencing competitor of Jewish extraction who was chosen to compete in the German contingent. The black American super-champion of these Games: Jesse Owens is acclaimed by the Berlin crowds.

1956. 'The International Olympic Committee, pending the reunion of the two sections of Germany, caused the two National Olympic Committees to combine and send only one combined German team under the Olympic flag. It also recognized Continental China (Peking), reproved the countries which tried to justify their abstention to the Melbourne Games on political ground, these countries were: Spain, Holland and Switzerland (owing to the incidents which took place in Budapest) and Egypt and Irak (Suez) and Lebanon.

'In 1956 still, the International Olympic Committee rescued the Hungarian contingent from the island of St.-Margaret on the Danube, where the team was detained and, through Swiss diplomatic channel, made it possible for the Hungarian athletes to compete in the Games of Melbourne.'

All comments are superfluous.