

SPANISH LETTER

REVOLUTION

*(in the good sense of the term) within Spanish Sport
by André Merce Varela of Barcelona.*

December 20th, 1961, marked a great event in the history of sport in Spain. The Spanish Parliament voted a bill unanimously elaborated by the National Physical Education and Sports Association aiming at endowing Spain with a wide spread sport's policy.

The necessary funds required to operate such a drastic and wide reform are to be drawn from the football pronostics which are to be from now on exclusively devoted to sport and to this end only. Up to the present time, the sport Governing bodies were allotted only one third of the drawings, the other third went to the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the remaining third was allocated to the various departmental councils. From now on, the latter will spend these benefits exclusively on the installing of sport equipments. As for the share which used to be allocated to the Ministry of Home Affairs, it will be paid to the sport Governing bodies.

Herewith is the general outline of the reform preconized by a bill which counts no less than thirteen chapters and thirty-nine clauses:

— Physical Education and the practice of sport compulsory in all degrees of schools

from the elementary school to the University.

- Proeminent part played by sport in military formation.
- Creation of a National Physical Education Institute forming skeleton formations.
- Creation of a National Council where the representatives of the *Spanish Olympic Committee* will be represented as well as the sport federations, clubs representatives of the Army and personalities of the sporting world.
- The building of sport installations adequate with the number of inhabitants of the locality will incumb to the Municipal Authorities.
- Exemption of all entertainment taxes for all the manifestations of Amateur sports.
- The clubs'rooms and sport installations will benefit by a special juridic protection similar to the one granted to the tenants of dwelling hired houses.

Thus a whole cycle of habits is undergoing an upheaval. Up to now, sport in Spain could exist thanks to private enterprise

only. Official help coming forward only in a very spasmodic manner, based on the amount of interest evinced by the political leaders. All the big manifestations however spectacular did not give the chance to the majority of the youths in particular to go in for sport. The promoters of the bill made the most of the fact that Spain, in the past, achieved very poor results on basic sports such as athletics and swimming, this being the result of ill-directed efforts, and this for over a half century. The sport achievements realized by Spaniards in gymnastics with the regretted J. Blume as well as in the field of football thanks to the Real Madrid and to the Football Club of Barcelona, have been realized thanks to the efforts of private clubs, since

the number of licenses both for gymnastics and football is one of the lowest in Europe.

The new law concerns the promotion of the elite (it has been realized by passionate lovers of sport) as well as the training of every class of society.

The new bill was presented to Parliament by Mr. Elola-Olaso a brilliant barrister, who holds the functions of president of the Spanish Olympic Committee and whose pleading reached such a high intellectual level that it won the general approval of all the members of Parliament. The text of the bill had been prepared by Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, Vice-President of the Spanish Olympic Committee, and by Mr. Jaime Sanroman.