

Negotiations for the formation of a unified Korean Team are continuing, but...

In our Bulletin No. 82 of last May we briefly related that contact had been made between the two Korean delegations in Lausanne on January 24th, 1963, at Mon Repos, the seat of the International Olympic Committee. It was a historic date in the history of Olympics. The very fact of being able to reunite around the same table, under the Olympic emblem which dominated this meeting, the delegates of these two regions, separated by a no-man's land, placed under an armistice commission and inspired by different ideologies, certainly constituted an achievement for the Olympic movement. It was an emotional occasion to see these delegates meeting one another — for the first time perhaps — cordially shaking hands, using this form of greeting which is so particularly oriental, while feeling a certain respect towards one another, they who were after all compatriots.

Another success achieved in the course of this first meeting was the adoption of a common national anthem for the two regions which would serve the united team which it was hoped to form. For this anthem, it was necessary to find an old popular song, as well-known in North as in South Korea.

This team must be formed, and it was felt that everyone was inspired by this same ardent desire that Korea should be represented at the Olympic Games of 1964.

At the request of the International Olympic Committee, the two delegations met again in Hong Kong on May 16th, 1963.

The negotiations, which were entering a crucial stage, lasted fifteen days. The pro-

blems to be resolved were numerous, as can be easily imagined, since they had to do with the creation of a new unified Korean team. Among the details to be decided upon was the choice of a uniform for the athletes and the officials without wounding the national pride of either one side or the other. The head of the mission had also to be chosen for the eliminating competition for the purpose of selecting teams and athletes. This last problem was certainly the most delicate, since it was impossible to choose a town in either North or in South Korea because no possibility exists for either side to enter the other's territory. It must not be forgotten that no contact whatsoever is possible between these two regions, neither by mail, telegram nor telephone. For this reason all contact between the Olympic leaders from North or South Korea must be made through the Chancellery of the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne, and this for the most part by telegram.

The question of the flag was finally settled in this way. The two delegations, who were far from being in agreement on this subject, were obliged to accept the solution imposed on them by the International Olympic Committee. They accepted it with goodwill. The flag will thus be white, with the Olympic rings in colour in the centre and underneath the word KOREA.

Allowing for certain differences of opinion on many problems, the delegations parted for the purpose of making contact with the leaders of their respective committees.

A third meeting was called by the International Olympic Committee for July 26th 1963. It was arranged that negotiations should be reopened in Hong Kong, which meeting place was chosen by the International Olympic Committee.

THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE BROKEN OFF

On July 26th and 27th two long telegrams arrived at the Chancellery of the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne indicating that the negotiations could not continue as no agreement was possible. Hardly had they begun when the discussions had to be interrupted as they had degenerated into ideological and political squabbles. We do not intend to comment further before being in possession of more detailed reports, in which no doubt one Korean delegation will place the responsibility for this setback on to the other. It is therefore for the International Olympic Committee to take the initiative in the course of the session which will be taking place in Baden-Baden at the time this edition appears in print.

The two delegations have been kind enough to give credit to the International Olympic Committee for all the assistance so generously given towards the creation of a unified Korean team. We thank them warmly and we cannot but regret this setback. The time and money spent are nothing compared with the failure of these discussions — and yet they began so favourably in Lausanne last January!

FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS IN LAUSANNE ONLY HALF SUCCESSFUL

Mr. Avery Brundage, however, would not admit defeat. From Moscow, where he was during the first half of August, he requested the Chancellor to convoke the two delegations from Korea for August 19th in Lausanne. A similar convocations was also sent to the two German Olympic Committees asking them to be present on the same occasion, as the President wished to meet them on August 20th. Mr. Brundage arrived in Lausanne on Sunday August 18th and the four delegations, German and Korean, arrived between August 16th and 20th.

Immediately following the arrival of Mr. Brundage, a meeting took place with the South Korean delegates, which was a preliminary affair. Having formally received orders from their Olympic Committee and possessing no mandate whatsoever, nor even any powers to take decisions, they declared that they were unable to meet for discussions with the North Korean delegates! The President of the International Olympic Committee fixed the final date of August 31st for them to confirm whether they were indeed anxious to collaborate in the formation of a unified team. The South Korean delegation left Lausanne the same evening and so did not attend the meeting on the following day, at which only the North Korean delegation was present. Total agreement was reached with the latter and the meeting was over in twenty-live minutes!