

## *Speech by the President of the International Olympic Committee Avery Brundage*

Following each set of Olympic Games there is much public agitation over the results. Thousands of articles are printed in newspapers and magazines and the subject is discussed widely and in some countries at least at the highest level of government. This of course is as it should be, for the Olympic Movement is a most important force in the world today with 105 National Olympic Committees, comprising practically all of the civilized world, recognized by the International Olympic Committee and following the Olympic code of fair play and good sportsmanship.

After the Games of the XVIIth Olympiad in Rome in 1960, the agitation and discussion were even greater than before. The Baron de Coubertin would have been delighted with all this public interest. This is what he hoped would happen. He wished to bring to the attention of all countries the fact that a national programme of physical training and competitive sport would build strong-

er and healthier boys and girls and make better citizens through exposure to high moral principles of the Olympic Movement and he thought the Olympic Games would do just that thing. He was indeed right.

Unfortunately however the results of this agitation are not always for the best. Regardless of the fact that Olympic rules represent the best ideas of the greatest sport leaders in the world over the last seventy-five years, we hear that the world has changed and that they are archaic and out of date. This, they say, also applies to the whole Olympic organization which should be completely remodeled, regardless of the fact that this organization has brought the Olympic Movement to its present high standing. Charges are made that ineligible individuals (of course from other countries) have been allowed to participate. In some countries official government commissions have been created to ascertain why their athletes have not

won more medals. It is considered a blow to national prestige. At all costs, more winners must be had and ignoring the fact that champions are made with hard work and not with subsidies, substantial appropriations (the first device of the politician) are made to remedy this situation.

Well, the world may have changed, but basic virtues have not. White is still white, black is still black, honesty is still honesty, and an amateur (as the word indicates) is still one who participates for the love of it and not for material gain of any kind. And let us not forget that the Olympic Games are and always must be confined to amateurs.

Much of the public agitation is caused by scoring tables which, despite the fact that they are misleading because they are not accurate and are without authority, continue to be published. The Games are contests between individuals and not between nations, but even if they were the rating of course, should be on a *per capita* basis. The important thing is a high level of physical fitness rather than a few medals and in that respect it is the smaller countries like Finland, Hungary and Australia that lead and not those larger countries which win the most medals.

Some countries are proceeding in an intelligent manner to raise their level of physical fitness. In my remarks last year, I spoke about the Mexican programme with its *Juegos Deportivos Juveniles* and its *Juegos Deportivos Infantiles* designed to embrace the entire youth of the country. A few weeks ago I was invited to witness the third Spartakiad of the Soviet Union, the theme of which was 'Sport for all'. It was said that in the preliminaries, the semi-finals and the finals of this one event there had been a total of 66,000,000 participants. At one point during the ceremonies, the announcer over the loudspeaker asked everyone to stand, he then led the 100,000 people in the stadium in a few moments of calisthenics. This is one way to get the spectators into the act.

Countries which are alarmed by their low Olympic standing should proceed in a legitimate manner to lay the proper foundation in their educational system and not confine their efforts to the champions. It is a national programme of physical training and competitive sport with proper stress on the ethical values that should be subsidized and not individual athletes. Too often it is only the sports elite that is considered in the hasty programmes that are thrown together primarily for national aggrandizement. The real objective is a strong and healthy youth and once that is acquired the champions will take care of themselves.

Modern educational systems usually concentrate on the intellectual ignoring physical and moral values. Physical training and competitive sport fill a wide and ominous gap. At certain periods of life physical education is just as important as mental education. Intelligence without character is dangerous. The moral and spiritual values of fair play and good sportsmanship based on honesty, justice, impartiality, integrity and human dignity are essential for a better world. If they are developed on the friendly fields of sport they will undoubtedly be adopted in other areas.

It is not only the question of national prestige that engages the attention of the political powers when they observe the strength and importance of the Olympic Movement. Failing to recognize that sport like music and the other fine arts transcends politics, they sometimes attempt to use it as a tool or weapon for political purposes. A classic example was the Games of the XIth Olympiad held in Berlin in 1936. These Games were awarded to Berlin several years before the change in Government in 1933. After this change in Government, there arose a worldwide discussion on the question whether the Games could take place correctly in Berlin under the different political circumstances. Those who were not friendly to Germany even attempted to organize an international boycott in an effort to ruin the Games, ignoring the fact that they were controlled, as always, exclusively by international organizations and that no party or Government had anything to do with them. The International Olympic Committee demanded and received from the Germans an assurance in writing that there would be no interference of any kind. The Germans kept to their agreement and complied with all the requests of the International Olympic Committee. The facilities were superb, the competition was keen and the Games were a huge success notwithstanding the vicious efforts made to destroy them.

Another example of an important victory for sport over politics has been the united German team that has now appeared on four different occasions at the Olympic Games in 1956 and in 1960 and which is being organized again for the Games next year at Innsbruck and at Tokyo. The spectacle of East and West German athletes in the same uniform marching behind the same leaders and the same flap is an inspiration under present political conditions and a great service to all the German people who wish for a united country.

The Olympic Movement is powerful and important only because it is based on high ideals. It is one of the few enterprises in all the world that keeps itself entirely free from political, racial or religious discrimination. It welcomes impartially all amateurs who follow its regulations, and it has the respect and the support of the world. 105 National Olympic Committees follow the Olympic code, not because they have to but because they want to, and this is its great strength. It will retain its enviable position only if it sticks to its own affairs, avoiding involvements of any kind, and keeps its own house in order. It must not intervene in other than Olympic matters. We cannot reform the world — without faith even atomic bombs do not convert. Our task is to set a good example and thus convince others of the soundness of our philosophy.

In its efforts to keep the Olympic Movement free from political intrigue and dollar signs, the International Olympic Committee faces powerful forces because we live in materialistic times. Our most important work today is to spread Olympic precepts so that all will learn and appreciate Olympic objectives and the reason for Olympic rules. No one who knows the principles of the Olympic Movement

can help but approve and lend support to it. We must convince the educators, who should be our strongest supporters but who have been antagonized by the misuse of sport in some educational institutions, that education without the benefits from physical training and competitive sport, is not complete. We must convince the skeptical journalists that we are fighting for an ideal. We must convince the cynical politicians that sport like the fine arts, transcends politics. It can be done — in fact it has been done. Right here in Baden-Baden everyone recognized by the International Olympic Committee is welcome and has been admitted by the West German Government without a visa. An invitation to this session serves the same purpose as a passport and no visa is required. For this enlightened policy we congratulate and compliment both, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the West German Olympic Committee whose suggestion was accepted and followed.

Amateur sport is a delicate and a fragile thing. Its values are intangible. They come from the delight of physical expression, the broadened outlook, the deepened experience, and the self-satisfaction and joy of accomplishment to the participant. It is an enlargement of life but it must be pure and honest or it is nothing at all.

The rules of Olympic eligibility have now been spelled out so there can be no misunderstanding. First of all, every participant must have a legitimate vocation. Most violations fall into three classifications :

1. So-called 'State Amateurs' — men who are taken from their usual vocation and either placed in camps for indefinite periods or given unusual opportunities to improve their performances.

2. Military personnel who are relieved of their normal duties for the same purpose.
3. Young men who, because of their athletic ability, are given scholarships and other benefits and advantages by educational institutions (the argument that these young men might never get a college education is a nonsequitur, and the fact that they keep up with their college work is not significant either. The gift of a scholarship worth several thousands of dollars is no different than a gift of several thousands of dollars in cash, and the truth is they are paid to participate).

None of these individuals are eligible for Olympic competition and we expect all National Olympic Committees and National Federations to enforce the rules and make certain that ineligible persons are not entered. Everyone wants to win and certainly that is not against the Olympic ideal, but no sportsman wants the dubious honour of winning by unfair means.

In the Olympic Games victory is based on merit. Everyone is entitled to equal rights and to equal opportunities. and if so, the race will be won by the fastest man regardless of color, creed or political affiliation. This is the kind of world we all seek.

We are grateful to our German colleagues, Dr. Karl Ritter von Halt and Willi Daume, and to the Nationales Olympisches Komitee for Deutschland for arranging our 60th Session here in Baden-Baden on such short notice. Baden-Baden has the distinction of being one of the few cities that has honored the founder of the modern Olympic Movement, the Baron de Coubertin: with a monument, which stands in the Park, and we are sure our work will be fruitful in this congenial atmosphere and that we shall leave with many happy memories of our sojourn here. Thank you all.