

The International Skating Union replies

(See our Bulletin No. 84 'Sport and Politics')

Resolution of the Council of the National Skating Association of Great Britain with reference to a guarantee of visas in connection with International Skating Union Championships.

Regarding this resolution passed by the Council of the National Skating Association on June 27th, 1963, and sent to the Council and the Member Association of the International Skating Union, and to the International Olympic Committee, we wish to make the following statements :

1. *Allotment of the 1953 World's Championships in Figure Skating.*

Two applications were received by the Council of the International Skating Union for the organizations and holding of the World's Championships in Figure Skating for 1953, namely from the Davos International Skating Club and the National Skating Association of Great Britain. As recorded in the Minutes for 1952, the Council of the International Skating Union allotted these World's Championships unanimously by 7 votes to 0 to the Davos International Skating Club. No application at all was received from the Czechoslovak Association, so that these Championships for 1953 could not be cancelled and transferred by the Council of the International Skating Union.

2. *Allotment of the 1961 World's Championships in Figure Skating.*

The World's Championships for 1961 were allotted to the Czechoslovak Association to be held at Prague. On that occasion the Council of the International Skating Union made the holding of these Championships in Czechoslovakia dependent on the condition that two Canadian competitors, who were Czechoslovak citizens by birth, should, in order to clear up the situation, be released from their Czechoslovak citizenship. This condition was agreed to by the Czechoslovak authorities. It is possible that the National Skating Association may be referring to this case. It has, however, nothing at all to do with a refusal of visas.

These 1961 World's Championships were finally cancelled following the aircraft disaster near Brussels, in which all the members of the USFSA team en route to Prague lost their lives. The World's Championships were held at Prague the next year.

3. *Attitude in principle of the International Skating Union Council with respect to visa questions.*

Up to now the Council of the International Skating Union has never cancelled International Skating Union Championships because of a refusal of the visas and has accordingly never accepted such a principle.

The Council deeply regrets the difficulties of some participants in International Skating Union Championships to obtain visas, but as a refusal of visas is a political act, the Council has no means to intervene in such cases.

4. *Decisions by the 1963 Congress of the International Skating Union at Helsinki.*

The 1963 Congress of the International Skating Union at Helsinki took the following decisions :

A Member Association that applies for the holding of an International Skating Union Championships is not bound to guarantee the granting of visas to all participants.

The Council of the International Skating Union is not bound to allot International Skating Union Championships only to such Member Associations as can guarantee the granting of visas to all participants.

5. *A Resolution without an object.*

The resolution passed by the Council of the National Skating Association is accordingly without an object. We regret that

the Council of the National Skating Association should have seen fit to pass this resolution, based on completely false information, and to circularize it to our Member Associations.

Basel and Davos, December 5th, 1963.

J. Koch, President
G. Häslar, Hon. Secretary.

The Editor : **From that official declaration (item 4, letter a and b) we understand that the International Skating Union accepts the discrimination in the problem of Visas. It is probably the only one in its kind amongst the International Federations. This is most regrettable.**