

# The Olympic Movement in mourning



**G. D. Sondhi** (Member of I.O.C. for India 1932-1966).

When the first telegram of condolence arrived at Mon-Repos from the Near East, we could hardly believe it. We hoped that it was a mistake. Then another telegram came, from Latin America this time. Could it be true then? Finally we received confirmation of the sad news from the Indian Olympic Committee.

Mr. Sondhi died on the night of November 19th to 20th, 1966. The doyen of the International Olympic Committee — so esteemed by one and all for his moderation, his wisdom and his great kindness — was no more.

A great sadness followed the stupefaction we felt at the sudden, brutal news. so unlike the

man himself, to whom we are paying homage today, a homage that will not be the last, so vivid will his memory remain in our minds.

There are societies that are no longer quite the same once one of their members passes away. This will be the case of the International Olympic Committee who by losing their doyen member have lost someone quite irreplaceable. For this idealist was at the same time a realist and while his ambitions were on the continental scale — *his* continent, Asia — they were inspired by man, for man. A man like you and me, a man that Guru Dutt Sondhi, the educator, knew well.

Having become a professor, then the principal, at the college he had attended as a pupil, he promoted sport which he had enjoyed and benefited from as a young man. India is deeply indebted to Mr. Sondhi for the active part he played on the National Olympic Committee, his untiring work for its hockey federation, his creation of the Indian Amateur Athletics Association, always with the success such incomparable devotion deserved. Asia owes him its Continental Games, which were widely reported in our last "Bulletin".

We do not know whether Mr. Sondhi saw our last "Bulletin". We would like to think he had for, prepared with his help, it was devoted to his work — the Asian Games. In that number he advocated a programme, based on a lucid and comprehensive statement that only the noblest of creators are capable of achieving. A programme that the death of its author converts into a heritage and whose realization is now doubly important — because it is needed and because it will be a living memorial to him.

Affection, respect and gratitude are all mingled in the imperishable memory we shall keep of G. D. Sondhi, and we wish to extend to his wife and two daughters our deepest sympathy.



**Benedikt G. Waage** (Member of I.O.C. for Iceland 1946-1966).

On November 6th, 1966, suddenly and unexpectedly we received the sad news of the death of Mr. Benedikt Waage, one of the most faithful members of the International Olympic Committee, to which he had been elected in 1946. In welcoming him among them, the International Olympic Committee recognized the merits of a sportsman who was in turn champion of Iceland for swimming in 1911, member of the winning team in the Icelandic Gymnastics Championship in 1926, member of the winning team in the Icelandic Football Championships in 1911 and 1919, and who was also a keen athlete, skier and climber.

The active part Benedikt Waage played in these various sports did not prevent him from also taking on important administrative posts in the world of sport.

In 1915 he was elected a member of the Federation of Icelandic Sports Associations, of which he became in succession treasurer, vice-president and finally president in 1926. In 1940 the government of his country invited him to join the State Committee for Sport. To this organization he brought his vast knowledge of Icelandic and international sports problems acquired during his travels abroad, in particular at the Olympic Games in Antwerp and Berlin, where he represented Iceland, and during the many years when he was chief editor of a sports magazine.

Once he was elected to the I.O.C., Benedikt Waage followed all Olympic sessions very closely. He was quiet, discrete, modest and always friendly. A man who did not feel the need to take the floor at every discussion, since he approved the olympic principles, by which all his decisions were guided.

His colleagues and his many friends will keep in their hearts the memory of a man who, like his island, often seemed rather solitary, but whose devotion was as unlimited as his attachment to the Olympic Movement.

Deeply moved by the death of Benedikt Waage, the International Olympic Committee offers its most sincere condolences to his family as well as the Icelandic Olympic Committee, whose grief it shares.



**Dr. Joseph Wolffe** (President of the Olympic Medical Archives).

Of our first meeting with Dr. Wolffe, who came to Mon-Repos to deposit the first Olympic Medical Archives, we always remember his unwavering enthusiasm — and a gardening parable. Speaking of the work undertaken — the collection of the physiological files of olympic athletes examined periodically throughout their lives — Dr. Wolffe said : " We shall not see the fruits of our labour, but what does it matter ! We are working for the future, like the gardener who sows a seed and waters it and watches over it without ever hoping to see the tree it will grow into one day. " And he added : " Have you ever thought of the extraordinary (in the strict sense of the Word) mine of information

that the research workers of the next century will have at their disposal when they start to examine, compare and base their conclusions on a wealth of material that no research laboratory will ever be able to supply : the scientific observation of three, four or five thousand top-flight athletes ! "

A scientist and a sensitive man, Dr. Wolffe succeeded in communicating his enthusiasm to the members of the International Federation of Sports Medicine, of which he was the vice-president, then to the World Health Organization and the International Olympic Committee, and finally to the national sports leaders and the athletes themselves — the volunteers for science, as he called them. Already over two thousand young men and women have signed on and two thousand files been opened in the first chapter of a long and fruitful undertaking. The promoter of the Olympic Medical Archives will never see the flowering of the seed he planted in 1964. He died suddenly, in the prime of life, at the gateway between East and West, in Istanbul, just another port of call among the many on his travels continually undertaken on behalf of sports medicine. But his work will continue, the F.I.M.S. have promised ; and it is Dr. Wolffe's son-in-law, Dr. Colcher, who will take over the job.

The International Olympic Committee pays grateful tribute to Dr. Joseph Wolffe, and extends to his family, his assistants and the International Federation of Sports Medicine its deepest sympathy on their great loss.