

Inaugural Address of the IXth Session of the
International Olympic Academy
by Mr. AGATHAYCELOS

Acting for the Minister to the Presidency
of the State Council

"I am particularly happy that fate has reserved for me the honour of inaugurating the work of the IXth Session of the International Olympic Academy.

Before getting down to work, I would like to welcome everyone to Greece.

I know the noble sentiments that have led you towards our country. You are in the service of immortal ideas: the idea of athletics and the Olympic spirit whose axis and final aim is man and whose birthplace is Greece.

Our ancestors were the first to conceive the value of noble emulation in the education of man. They realised the danger which could result from the growth of vanity and selfishness, of uncontrolled emulation and distinguished the "bad" struggle from the "good" ; the latter lifts man up as do his contacts with other men.

The "prizes" of victory were not a personal recompense for the competitor but glory for the people and the city.

The cultivation of a permanent idea of peace and noble emulation among the peoples of the earth and through it their fraternising was the evolution of the idea of athletics into an Olympic Spirit.

These ideas were inherited by the whole race of Hellenes, our ancestors.

Today the Greeks are conscious that this universal legacy is not simply a source of national pride but also the guarantee for a way of life for the present and orientation for the future. It is this road that Greece treads under the aegis of the National Government that I have the honour of representing. Progress by means of noble

emulation, the development of our humanitarian ideas, fraternising and peace among the peoples are our fundamental aims in life.

Lastly, I would like you to know that I am particularly happy to be able to assure you that in our country the order "offer hospitality to foreigners" still remains in force.

We welcome you most cordially and are sure that your stay will be agreeable and that your presence here will be profitable.

I wish you most heartily every success in your work, and in doing so proclaim the IXth Session of the International Olympic Academy open".