

Press Conference given on 23rd February 1970
by Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE
President of the International Olympic Committee

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

I think you all understand, Gentlemen, that at these meetings of the Executive Board no decisions are taken. Recommendations were adopted to be presented to the Session at Amsterdam since the Executive Board is not authorized to decide these questions. We discuss and make recommendations to the Session.

We discussed and arranged the agenda for the Session in Amsterdam that is being prepared and we have conducted a certain amount of routine business here in Lausanne. I think perhaps we had better proceed by entertaining your questions which I shall try to answer.

Question: Has a recommendation been established for Amsterdam on South Africa and Rhodesia?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

The only discussion on that point was that we have pointed out that these are two different things. We had not heard of any protest on Rhodesia until our meeting in Dubrovnik. That was the first time it had arisen. The South Africa question is the same as it was. The question of Rhodesia - there is no apartheid in Rhodesia it is purely a political question.

I thought we were going to discuss sport at this press conference. Fortunately we have disposed of the

German question and the Korean question and the only political question which remains is South Africa.

Question: Can you say what happened with the Canadian Ice Hockey Association delegation?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

This is a much broader question than the Canadian problem. This is a question which concerns the entire sport of Ice Hockey. The Canadian problem is only part of it.

Question: What is the IOC position regarding Ice Hockey matches between amateurs and professionals?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

The IOC has no rule forbidding such matches and probably never will have, the reason being that under certain conditions there is no objection to participation of amateurs and professionals. The question was that if the sport of Ice Hockey has opened its world championship to professionals it has to be taken into serious consideration by the IOC.

For example, at times there are competitions between amateurs and professionals for the benefit of Olympic funds or for charity and these are not objected to if the match is properly controlled. But when a world championship is opened to professionals it is a very serious change to which the IOC would have to give grave consideration.

Question: Will the Canadians risk their Olympic status? Have they asked for a written ruling on this question?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

This is what we told them. We told the Ice Hockey Federation that it was a new situation which will have to be studied by the IOC. In football, for example, where the world cup is open to professionals, none of the participants are eligible to the Olympic Games and I told them that the IOC would probably take the same stand in the case of hockey.

Question: Is that what you are going to recommend to the Session?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

Yes.

Question: In the agenda there was a point about Government interference in NOCs. Did you prepare a recommendation for the Amsterdam Session?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

There is no change in the attitude of the IOC on that question. This reference applies to a particular situation in one country. The position of the IOC is that Governments can be very beneficial to sport in their countries and they can also be very harmful for sports since it is essential that NOCs retain their autonomy and independence. But they can solicit Government support. There is no change in that.

Question: Mr. DAWSON, of the Ice Hockey Federation stated that the Board was sympathetic to the Canadian cause. Are you in fact recommending the same criteria to this problem as in the case of football or are you advocating another solution to this problem?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

I repeat that I think the IOC will certainly frown on having a sport on the Olympic programme which is thrown open to professionals. I told you that it has not been discussed by the IOC but I think that will be their view.

Question: You personally believe that professionals and amateurs should meet only in charity Games?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

I said that it was possible with individual matches between amateurs and professionals for laudible purposes and I did not think there could be any legitimate objection, but when you open the whole sport to professionals that is quite a different thing.

Question: After the meeting yesterday with Mr. DAWSON, he gave the impression that he was awaiting an opinion from you. Did you give him this opinion yesterday?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

We told him we would discuss the whole question of Ice Hockey at our coming Session in Amsterdam. I told him I personally had been following the sport of Ice Hockey for 40 years living quite close to Canada and I see their problem and have sympathy for them.

Question: Is what you told us exactly the answer you gave them yesterday?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

We told them just what I told you. That we were going to study the whole subject, that we had no rule prohibiting competitions between amateurs and professionals

but I repeat what I said that when a sport throws open its world championships it is different. If you go back into history 20 or 30 years you will find that the recognition of the International Ice Hockey Federation was withdrawn until it promised to follow Olympic regulations.

Question: The decision regarding yachting - did you do something about the "6 metres" question?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

We heard their report and found they had discussed this subject at great length at their meeting and that they had a logical reason for their decision and inasmuch as it is a technical matter we have to support them.

Question: Have you had a reply from the International Ski Federation concerning the sums of money received by competitors?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

We expected to have one but it did not appear.

Question: Has the F.I.S. sent in its new rules?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

No we have not received them.

Question: Did the Executive Board decide to wait a little longer to receive the candidature of Florence?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

We gave them until 1st April to get support from the Government.

Question: In the newspaper "La Nazione", Florence, on the subject of Mr. ONESTI you were quoted as saying that he was not a director of sport in an amateur sense but professional. Did you say that and is the IOC going to deal with this problem?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

The name of ONESTI was brought into the conversation by the journalist not by me and the journalist said that it was thought that Mr. ONESTI in his position as President of the Italian NOC was trying to sabotage their application, that was what was said. Then the journalist asked if the Olympic regulations permitted a man who's living came from sport to be a member of the IOC and I said that it did not.

Question: For the 1976 Olympics does the Executive Board recommend one town in particular?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

No, certainly not at this meeting. It was not discussed.

Question: Will you be recommending any new sports?

Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE

No.

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