

# Speeches given at the 69th Session of the IOC by:

by Jonkheer H. A. van KARNEBEEK  
President of the Netherlands Olympic Committee

Your Majesty,

On behalf of the Netherlands Olympic Committee I have the great honour to extend to you a cordial welcome on this special occasion. Your presence here demonstrates renewed evidence of your support of the Olympic movement, for which we are most grateful. Your attendance at the Olympic games in the past is still fresh in our memories.

It is likewise an honour to welcome the Prince of The Netherlands, who in the past years has contributed to the Olympic Cause, particularly in his capacity of President of the Equestrian Federation, and who on this occasion too spontaneously consented to assume the Chairmanship of our Honorary Committee.

We also highly appreciate the presence of two of the Ministers of our Government and the Governor of North Holland, as well as of the Mayor of Amsterdam, to whom we are greatly indebted for the gracious cooperation which he has rendered us.

The International Olympic Committee is very pleased that the Heads of the Foreign Missions stationed in The Netherlands have accepted our invitation to attend this opening ceremony.

On behalf of the Netherlands Olympic Committee I am also pleased to extend a warm welcome to the International Olympic Committee, which at this moment consists of 73 members. Practically all of them are here today, many of them accompanied by their ladies. I feel that a word of praise and gratitude is due to these ladies, who by their

presence here have demonstrated their allegiance to the Olympic Cause. Also a number of honorary members have displayed their continued interest in the Olympic Movement by attending this I.O.C. Session.

In the same breath I wish to welcome the representatives of the International Sports Federations, all of whom are likewise present here. They constitute one of the main pillars on which the Olympic Movement is founded. We have already had some very useful discussions with these gentlemen in the past few days here in Amsterdam.

It is gratifying that this I.O.C. Session, which for various reasons is to be considered a very important one, is being held in the Netherlands, and quite a few of the people in this country hope that this may constitute the first step towards having an even great Olympic event take place in The Netherlands at some future date, namely the Games themselves.

In arranging this session in the month of May we were inspired by the hope that favourable weather conditions and the tulips in bloom would contribute towards creating a congenial atmosphere for the meetings and that they would consequently proceed in harmony.

It may be of interest to record that this is the second occasion on which an I.O.C. meeting is held in this country. The first one was organized on a very small scale by Baron de COUBERTIN in 1907 and attended by not more than ten persons. The convocation for that meeting consisted of a hand-written note, which I have here. In those days there was no extensive Olympic Committee Secretariat and no paraphernalia. There were just Baron de COUBERTIN and a few of his associates who were endeavouring to have the Olympic ideal find acceptance. Our archives show that even in those days, as well as in subsequent years, difficulties were encountered and controversies arose. The problems confronting us nowadays are naturally of a more complex nature and at times even appear to be insoluble. Nevertheless, the Olympic Movement continues to expand as evidenced by the fact that new National Olympic Committees are continually formed, while constant efforts are made to have additional branches of sport included in the program of the Olympic Games.

One of the reasons that makes this I.O.C. Session so very important is that the International Olympic Committee, after consultation with the International Sports Federations, will elect the cities which will host the 1976 Summer and Winter Games. As you may know, seven cities have filled applications to host those Games, and I am pleased to welcome here the representatives of the cities concerned. I have great admiration for the manner in which they have promoted their interests in the past months and more particularly in the past few days, and I am very curious as to the outcome of the voting late this afternoon.

We are also pleased to welcome in our midst the representatives of the cities of Munich and Sapporo, where the 1972 Games will take place. For the past four years these cities have been engaged in making the extensive preparations that are nowadays connected with the staging of Olympic Games. I wish to congratulate these organizers on their accomplishments to date and to wish them success in their efforts in the coming two and a half years.

Likewise significant of the importance of this session is the presence of such large numbers of representatives of the World Sport Press, and not only do I extend a hearty welcome to these gentlemen, but also I express the hope that in reporting the proceedings at this session, which are of such great importance to the world of sport in general they will contribute in a constructive manner towards the further growth of the Olympic Movement. Certain features of this I.O.C. gathering will be covered by film and television, and I am very pleased to welcome the representatives of these media here.

I also desire to address a few words of welcome to our other guests who have responded to our invitation to attend this opening session and to thank those among you who have rendered assistance in the preparations for this meeting. I likewise count on all of you to continue to promote in your own circles the interests of sport, guided in so doing by the Olympic spirit.

And now a very special word of welcome on behalf of the Netherlands Olympic Committee to our eminent President, Avery BRUNDAGE. Once again you will preside at an important session and imbue those present with your "élan". We know that we can rely upon you to champion with fervour the

principles advocated by Baron de COUBERTIN so many years ago.

According to historic legends Olympic Gods were not easy to deal with, which is readily understood in view of the many problems with which they were confronted. You have been our President of the past eighteen years and have almost become an Olympic myth yourself. It is a well-known fact that Avery BRUNDAGE is not daunted by criticism and that he will do everything within his power to resist any efforts to undermine the Olympic Movement. Debates under his leadership are mostly animated and exciting affairs, and so we are looking forward with interest to the discussions that will take place during the next three days.

In conclusion I have the privilege of announcing that after the orchestra has performed the Piet Hein Rhapsody, a work of one of our well-known composers, our Minister of Culture, Recreation and Social Affairs, Her Excellency Dr. KLOMPE, will address the audience. I wish to thank her for her gracious assistance and cooperation.

May I end by expressing the hope that this session of the International Olympic Committee will prove to be a constructive one. Thank you.