

INDEPENDENT VIEWS

* The following proposal, concerning the opening ceremony of the Games, was received from Mr. Chaim WEIN, Vice-President of the Israeli Olympic Committee, for publication-

I fully realise that these words will touch upon a very delicate and important matter concerning the Opening Ceremony at the Olympic Games.

For many years, I personally have been involved in the organisation of the Maccabiah Games, and have participated in many Olympic Games and other international events. A great deal of thought and effort is given by the Organising Committee to assure an impressive and well-organised Opening Ceremony, which is an integral part of the Olympic Games.

We must take into consideration the fact that among the thousands of spectators in the stadium, there are hundreds who are present for the first time at an Olympic Opening Ceremony and it might well be their last time. Among the athletes taking part in the march-in, there are also hundreds who are there for the first time. We all know that, to the athlete, the most important part of the Games is the competition and it so happens that, one day before the start of the competitions, the athlete is asked to participate in the march-in parade, usually taking from 5 to 6 hours, with standing, walking and standing again. All this calls for a great deal of goodwill and understanding between the organisers and the athletes so as not to put too much strain on the athletes and, on the other hand, not to spoil the show.

The march-in parade itself, held on the track, is usually in order but when the athletes arrive at their places on the field, especially those who stand at the back and cannot follow what is going on up at the front, some of them sit down, others move around and, worst of all, those who have cameras run around taking pictures.

As I have stated, in order to avoid this negative appearance, there must be full cooperation between the International Olympic Committee, the Organising Committee and the National Olympic Committee, asking them to find a proper way to explain to the athletes the importance of an impressive and

orderly Opening Ceremony. The organisers must do their utmost to shorten the duration of the Ceremony, taking into consideration the time at which the athletes leave their Village and return to it.

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