

* "THE OLYMPIC WAR OF 1976 IN MONTREAL - A NEUTRAL CITY"
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. . . Let us talk about BRUNDAGE. Is he behind the times? Is he an idealist, an Utopian? Is he sincere? Is he a hypocrite? The critics are numerous; and he can indeed be criticised. However, to be able to criticise, you must know all about the subject and the situation. For example, it is not enough to say that BRUNDAGE is dishonest when he attacks alpine skiing, at a time when there are no amateurs in any sport. But alpine skiing goes far beyond individual professionalism, because it proposes the commercialisation of sport (trade-marks on skis, etc.). No other sport has done this, or at least if it has, in a less conspicuous fashion. Professionalism is therefore admissible. It is not business, because the International Olympic Committee itself wants to do business, to trade with the Olympiads. It is a mistake to say that BRUNDAGE is an Utopian, a dreamer. If BRUNDAGE was such, he could not remain where he is. He is exceedingly realistic: he knows that the Governments of the world, up to a point, find that it is more convenient to trust in him, to believe in him, and to let him have a free hand. BRUNDAGE is clever: only the Italians have succeeded in seriously opposing him. He is always on his guard: the gross blunder of attempting the admission of South Africa is, despite everything, an isolated incident.

Let us speak plainly. With a democratic International Olympic Committee, the Mexico Games would have been in chaos after the massacre and destruction of Tlatelolco. There are some governments who cannot afford to see the Games and its significance go up in smoke after having paid out such enormous sums of money. (You have only to look at the list of candidates, becoming fewer and fewer in recent years, to discover that not many countries are reclaiming the Games, but the few who do ask for them, do so in good faith).

Up to a point, BRUNDAGE and the aristocracy of the International Olympic Committee remain firm, because they are guarantors of stocks, which, although considerably reduced and more and more anachronic, are still secure. It is clear that one can take the risk and try another course of action. But it is clear too that all Governments seem to prefer the security of BRUNDAGE and his old friends as they themselves have little confidence in democracy (at least where sport is concerned).

Thus - a paradox - BRUNDAGE gets stronger and stronger whilst the Olympic idea gets weaker and weaker.

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