

# Statement to the Press



*The Marquess of EXETER has sent us the following statement which he made recently to the Press and which concerns the National Olympic Committee of Rhodesia. It is our wish to publish this communication as it explains more precisely the relations which exist between the International Olympic Committee and the National Olympic Committees.*



"I have noted that a Committee of U.N.O. is asking the Secretary General to approach the International Olympic Committee to withdraw the invitation from the Rhodesian National Olympic Committee to the Olympic Games in Munich to which it is entitled under I.O.C. rules; not because of any sport shortcomings (including any discrimination in sport) but purely on political grounds. The President of the I.O.C., Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE, alone can speak on policy for that body, but as a member of the Committee in this country since 1933, I feel that I should fill in the background for those who follow the Olympic Movement and Olympic sport here.

"The International Olympic Committee has always kept as far as possible out of politics. It is for this reason that it

affiliates Olympic Committees, not only from countries but also from areas (usually where their status is in dispute). In the past years, a number of different Governments' actions have created vigorous adverse reactions in many other countries. Equally, the political status of Rhodesia is at present at issue. The International Olympic Committee has never considered it appropriate to express an opinion on the merits or demerits of such political matters, except on any points which directly affect the Olympic Games and amateur sport, which is the field where it carries world responsibility.

This great bond of international amateur sport in the Olympic Movement is surely one of the greatest hopes of bringing ever closer together the youth of the world and the tens of millions of the devotees of sport in the world into a fellowship which they all understand, appreciate and respect. It would indeed be a tragic reverse to a movement which can mean so much to mankind if Governments succeed in turning it into a political weapon to further political causes."

L.E.

