

## “Message of Munich”<sup>1</sup>

*by Mr James Worrall, member of the IOC for Canada*

Anyone who watched the Olympic Games in Munich on television caught only a glimpse of the colour, excitement and atmosphere that surrounded the 1972 Summer Games.

Those who were fortunate enough to have been in Munich as spectators got a much greater picture of what the Olympics are all about, and the tremendous organization that was required, to stage such a magnificent event.

From an insider’s point of view, the operations at Munich were truly a superb example of imagination and idealism converted to reality by first rate administration.

To understand the Munich Olympics, as distinct from previous Summer Games in Mexico, or Rome or even Tokyo, it is necessary to recall the 1936 Games in Berlin—the so-called Nazi Olympics.

The Munich Organizing Committee had a double goal. First, they had the task of staging a sports festival that has grown steadily larger in numbers of countries participating and numbers of athletes competing. Secondly, the Committee set out to stage the Games as a showcase of the new Germany, as a contrast to the 1936 Games.

In a very real sense this second factor was a major political objective in international relations. It is interesting to note that the cost of staging the Olympics was only slightly larger than the cost of an aircraft

carrier and as a political instrument, therefore, staging the Munich Games was a bargain.

The friendliness of the host country, the beauty of the area, the charm of Munich were seen by hundreds of thousands of visitors and a further 900,000,000 people caught glimpses of the new Germany as they sat in front of television sets in every part of the world.

The happy, friendly atmosphere of the Munich Olympics, which prevailed throughout the early days, however, was marred by the intrusion of political terror. It is inevitable but nonetheless sad to find that almost the first questions I get about Munich are concerned with the terrorist attack on the Israeli athletes.

A small band of terrorists, with a political purpose far removed from the Olympic Games, were successful in casting a cloud of shock, dismay and deep mourning over a festival of friendship and international goodwill.

There has been considerable conjecture over security arrangements at Munich. There has been some criticism, particularly from uninformed quarters.

Security was a problem and will continue to be a problem. We in North America have been witness to examples of sick minds thwarting security arrangements surrounding US political leaders and here in Canada we have had our own examples of tragedy and terror.

Security from such intrusions as the terrorist attack in Munich cannot be left to police or military barriers around an event. It must start in the areas of their source, in

the problems of poverty and political extremism.

<sup>1</sup> Extracts of a lecture given by Mr Worrall in Canada.



*Mr James Worrall, IOC member for Canada.*

In a sense, perhaps, the decision to continue with the Games after the tragedy reflected the awareness that every step toward building a community of man and international goodwill was a step toward halting the growth of violence.

The Olympic Games are not a panacea. They cannot resolve the problems of international antagonisms—but they can help and at one time, in ancient Greece, they did serve to call a truce between warring city states for a brief period every time the Games were held.

From Munich there will be lessons for Montreal in the area of security arrangements, but realistically we must also expect that there will be other lessons from subsequent actions of terrorist groups because so far we have yet to see any significant decline in this area of political activity.

Hosting of the Summer Games in Montreal is still a matter of considerable controversy. Most of this surrounds estimates of costs, and most of it ignores a very important fact. Montreal is *not* facing a task of matching or surpassing Munich. The real challenge to the organizing committee lies in bringing the Olympic Games down in costs so that they can be staged, as originally intended, by many nations, and not just a few economically powerful countries.

The success of Montreal in staging the Games on a more modest scale of costs is important to Canada, but also could save the life of the Olympics.

We have a number of advantages to help us in the task.

First and foremost is the fact that Canada has no such urgent political objective as that faced by Germany or Japan.

Secondly, the costs of Munich included construction of services and facilities that already exist in Montreal.

Thirdly, everyone connected with the Olympic movement is conscious of the fact that the Games have become too big and the peripheral activities too extensive.

The flavour, the colour, the atmosphere and the quality of competition in the Games is not a product of scale. These are dependent upon the imagination and skill of the organizing committee with, of course, the help of the athletes.

The organizing committee will need the help, the support, the involvement of all Canadians if it is to succeed in its mission.

We can all sit back and say to the committee, "Okay, go ahead and con-

vince me” or we can go a little out of our way to hear the message of Montreal—and of the future of the Olympics.

Canada endorsed the Montreal bid for hosting the Summer Games just as Canada endorsed the Garibaldi bid to host the Winter Games and the Edmonton bid which recently was accepted for hosting the Commonwealth Games in 1978.

Now the time has come to back up our endorsement of the Montreal bid.

It is not a matter of supporting blindly a project of international prestige—an exercise in national extravagance. It is a matter of supporting a commitment of Canada and, more important, a matter of understanding the true dimensions of that commitment.

Montreal is not to be a competition with Munich, Tokyo or Mexico City. It is not to be a demonstration that we can do more than was done in those great spectacles. Montreal is to be the Games that alters the trend toward gigantism and a political showcase. Montreal is to be the Games that mark the return of the Olympics to human scale, to a sports festival which can take athletes of the world to many countries and every continent.

The 1976 organizing committee is seeking a distinctive approach, within a scale that could be duplicated by many less economically fortunate nations. If the committee succeeds, and I think it will, not only will Canada have a legacy of goodwill, improved or new facilities, experience and techniques, but the future of the Olympics will be secured as a legacy available to many countries.

J. W.