

Documents

On a recent visit to the IOC headquarters, Mr Frantisek Kroutil brought us one of the last letters which Pierre de Coubertin wrote to the President of the Czechoslovakian Olympic Committee. We are reproducing it below.

D' Antonin Himl, President of the Czechoslovakian Olympic Committee, reminds us that the photograph in the reception room of the Château de Vidy was dedicated by Pierre de Coubertin to the Czechoslovakian National Olympic Committee. However, the Czechoslovakian Olympic Committee could never take possession of this photograph because the Renovator of the Olympic Games died before handing it over.

The Czechoslovakian Olympic Committee was kind enough to donate this souvenir to the IOC, for which we are very grateful.

Letter to D' Guth-Jarkovsky, President of the Czechoslovakian National Olympic Committee, Prague

Geneva, 20th February 1937
2nd year of the XIth Olympiad

Dear President,

I am deeply touched by the Czechoslovakian Olympic Committee's intention of associating my entry into my 75th year with the 40th anniversary of the Committee's creation, and I would like to express my sincere and affectionate gratitude.

I remember the evening of 4th June 1925 with emotion. After the dinner with which

I closed the series of Olympic festivals following the Congress and the meeting of the International Olympic Committee which I was presiding for the last time, Mr Rössler-Orovsky took the floor after other speakers, raised his right hand, and solemnly declared, as though it were a kind of sacred oath, "We will never forget you!" Through the initiative that the Czechoslovakian Olympic Committee has just taken, it seems to me that the present members wish to associate themselves with the words spoken by one of their predecessors almost twelve years ago.

The evolution of the world towards its new form is continuing at a rapid pace. It is valuable to me to notice that Olympism

Désirez-vous me conseiller ici mes vœux pour votre Patrie, pour les chefs, pour votre Comité, pour la Saïe des peuples, pour le progrès de la Saïe, pour le maintien de la vaillance romantique, pour la foi chaude des âmes jeunes en l'avenir...

Je suis avec vous de tout mon cœur. Bien.

Pierre de Coubertin

keeps its life-giving force throughout every kind of vicissitude, jolt and crisis, and that it forms a sort of rock on whose summit shines an everlasting hearth.

You were amongst the first to work to maintain this beneficial fire, and I thank you.

I shall be with you in spirit on 28th February, in the great room of the Prague Town Hall, where so many important events took place, the historic consequence and value of which I tried to explain to the public.

I send you my best wishes for your country, its leaders, your Committee, peace between nations, the progress of Thought, the maintenance of muscular bravery, and the strong faith of young souls in the future. . .

I am wholeheartedly with you. Thank you.

Pierre de Coubertin