

Lord Killanin in Moscow:

"Everything will be accomplished in time"

The international sports public has shown much interest in the visit made by Lord Killanin at the end of November 1976 to Moscow, the host city of the Games of the XXII Olympiad.

Many enthusiasts of Olympic sports share the view that Moscow, which is preparing to welcome the Olympic Games of 1980, will succeed in avoiding many of the difficulties which had been encountered by its predecessors. There are some people, however, who voice their doubt of the success of "Olympiad-80" and the sincerity of the assurances given by the Moscow organisers of the Olympic Games, that all the guarantees they assumed in observance of the Olympic rules will be provided for.

Has the visit of the President of the IOC clarified the issue? What are the results of his visit to Moscow?

The schedule of the IOC President's stay in Moscow was a very busy one. During their first talk with Mr. Ignaty T. Novikov, President of the "Olympiad-80" Organising Committee, who is also Vice-Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Lord Killanin and Mr. Banks, Technical Director of the IOC, accompanying him, were acquainted in detail with the structure of the Organising Committee, the directions in which it is working and with the plans for building Olympic facilities, hotels, press centres and the Olympic village for athletes. The visiting IOC officials were also acquainted with the plans for receiving and providing for nearly 12,000 competitors and officials of the Olympic Games, 6,000 representatives of the mass media, more than 600,000 Soviet and foreign tourists, and with the tentative apportionment of tickets for the sports competitions of the Olympic Games.

The same day, long talks were held with Mr. Sergeï P. Pavlov, Chairman of the USSR Olympic Committee and Chairman of the Committee for Physical Culture and Sports,



who is also one of the Vice-Presidents of the Organising Committee "Olympiad-80".

Concrete questions were discussed concerning the participation of Soviet sports organisations in the international Olympic movement and, in particular, the question of rendering aid to the movement as a whole, as well as within the framework of Olympic Solidarity by receiving coaches, various specialists and athletes in the USSR.

Mr. Vladimir F. Promyslov, the Mayor of Moscow, informed Lord Killanin about the work being carried on by municipal authorities in preparing to become hosts of the Olympics. Mr. Promyslov emphasised the fact that the construction of all new facilities in preparation for the Olympic Games had been included in the master plan for the development of the Soviet capital.

"One of the things which impresses me", said the President of the IOC to the press, "is that it would appear that there will be no construction here which will not be used under one hundred per cent after the Games are completed. This is one of the things which has always worried us, that there might be constructions which are wasted."

Lord Killanin and Mr. Banks inspected various building projects where Olympic compe-

titions will be held in 1980. Incidentally, the overall number of seats for spectators at these structures will exceed 420,000.

The highlight of the visit made by the IOC President to Moscow was his meeting with Mr. Nikolai V. Podgorny, President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

At a press conference attended by over 150 journalists, Lord Killanin spoke of the talk he had had with the Soviet President. When the bid was made by Moscow to become host of the Olympic Games, the Soviet Government made a commitment to admit representatives of all National Olympic Committees recognised by the IOC to the country. Lord Killanin went on to say that Mr. Podgorny had assured him that the Soviet Government would offer all possible aid and support necessary for holding the Games, and would live up to the obligations they had given and would not change their positions, to the

effect that all the National Olympic Committees recognised by the IOC, all athletes and journalists accredited at the Games will be granted the right to enter the Soviet Union.

"Having spoken to President Novikov in the Organising Committee and also with Soviet President Podgorny", said Lord Killanin, "I have no doubt at all that the Organising Committee will fulfil all the promises and undertakings given when they made the bid".

Some time ago reports appeared in west European newspapers concerning the question of tourist travel to see the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow. It is quite natural that the IOC President showed interest in the question and was given necessary explanations on the issue by the organisers of "Olympiad-80". In reply to questions posed by the press, Lord Killanin stated:

"I read in certain foreign papers, and I was not clear myself on it, regarding the length of time people might stay here. There appears nothing abnormal in regarding what will happen. There will be people who may come for the full period of the Games for all the sports. There may be some who will come only for a few days to see some particular event. And there may be others who come for some days to see certain events and then go on to tours to see other parts of the Soviet Union."

The IOC President stated that he agrees with the figure 300,000 in estimating the number of foreign tourists who will come to the 1980 Games, and noted that this is the average figure for all the Olympic Games, since the bulk of sports fans will be watching the Olympic events on their television screens. Incidentally, the number of people who can watch the Olympics by television will exceed two billion. Moreover, Lord Killanin noted that 300,000 foreign tourists was the figure



Inspecting the model of the Olympic installations (from left to right: Mr. Posokhin, chief architect of the city of Moscow, Lord Killanin, Mr. Banks and Mr. Koziulya, Vice-President of the Organising Committee.

Visit to the "Dynamo" sports complex. The President of the IOC (on the extreme right) notes that part of the Olympic installations are already at the disposal of young athletes. From the left we recognise Mr. Roditchenko, head of the Sports Department of the Organising Committee (OC), Mr. Koziulya, Mr. Vitalv Smirnov, Vice-President of the OC and member of the IOC Executive Board, and Mr. Bogdanov, Chairman of the Central Council of the "Dynamo" Sports Club.



given to the International Olympic Committee and approved by it.

As for the available seats at Olympic stadia and competition grounds, they will be apportioned according to the agreement that has been reached, in the following way: 50 per cent of the seats will be offered to Muscovites (the population of Moscow today is nearly eight million people), 25 per cent to foreign tourists and 25 per cent to Soviet tourists (also about 300,000 people).

In the opinion of the IOC President, seats to Olympic Games should be apportioned in accordance to the number of participants from the given country and in line with existing traditions. The distribution of tickets among National Olympic Committees is one of the functions of the Organising Committee, and it is only natural that some of them are very likely to be displeased.

"As far as the Organising Committee "Olympiad-80" is concerned", Lord Killanin stressed, "I see no reason that this should be any different to any other previous apportionment of tickets to National Olympic Committees."

Thus, what conclusions did the President of the International Olympic Committee come to during his stay in Moscow? The most important of them, as he sees it, is that the Soviet Government confirmed its guarantees of free entry to the country of the representatives of all National Olympic Committees recognised by the IOC. The President also made mention of the progress attained in the planning and construction of buildings necessary for the accommodation of athletes participating in the Olympic Games and

tourists, as well as of sports facilities: and finally, the work performed by the Organising Committee in regard to all the other questions of preparing for the Olympic Games in Moscow.

"I must admit that I leave Moscow without some of the qualms I had when I visited Montreal at exactly this time after the previous Games—a few months after the end of the last Games in the Olympic year. It also appears to me on the planning that everything can be accomplished in time", stated the President of the International Olympic Committee on the eve of his departure from Moscow.

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