

* In the interests of Impartiality, the "Olympic Review" is always pleased to publish, in its "Independent Views" section, articles of merit. We should like to remind readers, however, that the views expressed in these articles do not necessarily reflect current IOC policy



1928 The Olympic Games in Amsterdam

The Olympic Games now *

by Jan Cottaar



*Former director
of the Netherlands
Olympic Committee,
journalist and writer*

Following his exemplary career as a journalist, Jan Cottaar took up the duties of director of the Netherlands Olympic Committee and thus became extensively involved with the various problems facing the Olympic movement. Author of "De Olympische Spelen" (1976), a fundamental work on the Olympic Games in the Dutch language, he has recently turned his attention to conducting research aimed at drawing up a report on the present problems of Organising the Olympic Games. The following essay is dedicated "to all athletes who have ever committed themselves to the Olympic Games, to strive, with the implementation of their every ability and in the true spirit of chivalry, for the highest goals attainable".

Recommendations

1. Given that the IOC is determined to make the Olympic Games practicable in this day and age, then it must not only be involved in considerations in respect to the allocation of this practicality, that is the package offered for technical facilities and financial guarantees, but also the IOC must bear in mind the social and humanitarian relationships among the countries which compete for the Games.

2. The concerns of the IOC may indeed be notably alleviated if in the future the possibilities are incorporated which till this point in time have not been taken advantage of. However, these possibilities are still with us to confine in a considerable measure, and even to eliminate, the undesirable influences of political and nationalistic tendencies.
3. Furthermore, very important material advantages may be associated with the fact that in principle it is preferable not to hold the Olympic Games every four years or so in succession, in the same city, region or land.
4. For the organisation of the Olympic Games, the IOC must both pursue and stimulate a resolute and consistent policy of austerity. Moreover, the IOC must employ all measures available to relieve as much as possible the Organising committees from their financial worries.
5. It is a service of the IOC to ensure that the continually rising costs (involving every National Olympic Committee sending a team to the Games) be limited to a minimum. Otherwise the feasible boundaries of controlling the costs become extended.
6. The IOC must vigorously attend to the supervision of the crusade against the so-called "giganticism" in the Games, to which is directed the programme and its total organisation, and to the provision that the duration of the Games remains a period of approximately sixteen days. The limitation of the number of competitions and participants to a reasonable figure must be accomplished, to be sure, with wisdom, without panic measures and with the utilisation of all real potentialities. Moreover, the IOC must be able to absorb further developments in international competitive sport.
7. The admission to the Games of participants, either too young or too old, cannot be in harmony with the spirit of the Olympic call.
- a. Excesses during the Olympic competitions, such as rough unsporting behaviour, deception, the use of forbidden stimulants or misdemeanours of any other nature, must, more than ever before, be answered by an escalation of measures. The sports image of the Games is thereby protected inasmuch as it is possible. Not only are the offending participants and, potentially, their teams or national sports unions affected and indeed National Olympic Committees too, but also the International Sports Federations. These latter are also affected whenever situations repeatedly occur in the sports they supervise and intervention becomes warranted.
9. It is impossible and shall surely always remain so, for outstanding sportsmen and women from all the countries represented at the Games to enjoy identical preparation facilities. It is, however, acceptable to permit a higher minimum to material and social facilities. Though such total equality can never be achieved, indeed a reasonable measure of equivalence may still be promoted.
10. It should denote a contribution to the simplification of the Games, and pre-eminently the possibility to exclude mere spectacular demonstrations of whatever sort if in the future the opening ceremonies would once again be confined to their formal divisions. It is not to be supposed that these ceremonies should thereby depreciate to a colourless formality of little attraction to the spectators. It is also very important that these opening ceremonies should signify a lighter burden on the participants around whom, in the long run, it all takes place, those who are to give their top performances in short to decidedly brief periods of time.
11. The text of the Olympic oath made by the participants calls for a new wording, comprehensible and acceptable to everyone, with greater content than the one presently being used.

(Continued on page 27)

(Continued from page 22)

12. If the IOC should activate, by whatever way or means, the administration of rejuvenating injections into the Olympic Games (something which is, not only in my eyes, absolutely necessary), this would only have true significance when the IOC gives its essential reasons a conspicuous, worldwide publicity, and elucidates these points in explicit language.

Those who would involve themselves in further effort in this essay, by reading with considerable attention the explanation on the preceding formulated recommendations, will notice that, occasionally, some overlap. This is a matter of course because these points, within the frame of reference of the Olympic Games and their achievements, are connected to one another in a logical manner. Whenever necessary, I shall also refer to this in my explanations.

It is of course possible to enlarge upon these preceding recommendations with yet others, or even to approach this Olympic "cause célèbre" in an entirely different manner. Everyone has his own means of expression. I have chosen this particular way, for I earnestly thought that these recommendations should be appealing not only to the inner circle but to the outsiders as well. This I deem to be of great significance. I have formulated these very recommendations as platform points because I intended thereby to have laid bare a number of important and at the same time well-ordered questions. This has been my purpose...

J. C.

