



**H.E. Mr. JUAN ANTONIO SAMARANCH
DOCTOR OF LAW HONORIS CAUSA OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALGARY**

At an imposing ceremony which took place at 20.00 on the 26th February 1985 in the main lecture theatre of the University of Calgary, H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch was made an Honorary Doctor of Law by the University of the host city for the XVth Olympic Winter Games.

Following the parade of deans, professors and honorary doctors, dressed in the traditional gown bearing the emblem of the University and led by a bagpiper, the Chancellor of the University, Mr. Brian Norford, conferred on the President of the IOC the title of Doctor honoris causa. The President and Vice-Chancellor of the University, Mr. Norman Wagner, gave the speech of welcome. This speech and that of President Samaranch, which followed, are reproduced below.

It was Mr. Roger C. Jackson who described the personality of H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch. It was he, in his capacity as Dean of the Physical

Education faculty and President of the Canadian NOC, who put forward the idea of nominating the IOC President for the honorary doctorate ; it is to him we owe this sumptuous evening. In his speech, Mr. Jackson did not omit to mention the President's diplomatic talents : *"The fact that more teams than ever before participated in the Games in Los Angeles is a testimony to his ability to solve problems both quick/y and effectively... It is indeed a great honour for the University of Calgary, he concluded, to be able to confer the title of Doctor of law honoris causa on the holder of the highest office in international sport today"*.

Dr. NORMAN WAGNER:

PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

This evening, two ancient institutions, namely, the Olympic Movement and the university, come together to honour one another. It is our great pleasure, eminent Chancellor, to invite you tonight to bestow on the distinguished President of the International Olympic Committee the highest honour which a university can give. In so doing, this University brings honour to itself. We are a very young university and it gives us a great deal of pleasure to add to our list of very distinguished alumni, an individual of the stature and reputation of His Excellency, Juan Antonio Samaranch.

Later in this ceremony reference will be made to the activities and accomplishments of our distinguished guest. It is my duty to reflect briefly on how and why universities and the Olympics should come together at all. Do we share common goals? Do we have common aspirations, or are we merely finding a convenient reason for a celebration here tonight? I am convinced that there is a great deal of common ground in all that we undertake.

Both institutions go back to antiquity. Universities are one of the more stable institutions to have endured for the past thousand years. But, the Olympic Movement goes back even further. Like the Olympic Movement, universities too have periods of renewal and we too refer to what might be called a modern era.

We both look in two directions. We reflect upon the distant past with our drama, our ritual, our symbols, our legends, and our myths, all of which develop and become a tremendously vital part of our stability. We look to the future. Both of us are vitally concerned with the youth of the world for we know that therein lies our only future. Tonight we witness in very small measure, a part of the ritual of the University as we meet in convocation and award what is in fact our gold medal.

I am sure that there are many critics around the world who feel that both institutions spend far too much money and far too much effort on things which matter so very little. The university has poets and artists who produce items which may not create many jobs or add much to the economy of Canada. Many of our professors orate and profess and are listened to by some, but how many people

in the world care or know? Similarly, athletes run or skate in circles. In fact, they finish where they began. An achievement not understood by all. So you see, both institutions often labour in those areas which few people understand and few appreciate.

Achievement does matter. The first person to complete that circle is the winner and is justly awarded the fame and glory. But, even more importantly, a standard of excellence has been set. The champion has given us all the excitement and thrill of human achievement.

In a like manner, the university scholar makes an exciting research discovery or publishes an outstanding book and is judged by the worldwide academic community as the "champion". Again, a new standard of excellence has been set and we are all able to rejoice in the amazing ability of the human mind. For all mankind there is a measure of success.

In both the Olympic Movement and the university there is always the quest for even greater achievement. Neither the athlete nor the scholar is ever content to rest on past laurels.

Not all of us have the ability or drive to become "champions". Many may claim that such a designation could be theirs but how many are actually willing to make the extreme sacrifices required in any area of endeavour.

Only a few will be called champions, but we all have the opportunity to urge them on to even greater attainment. And, as new records are broken and new discoveries made, we can take pride from our small role in what will become the achievements of mankind.

I would like to suggest that there is also another parallel in our institutions when we reflect on the fact that being a champion means more than exerting brute strength. I find it interesting that the much talked about runner, Philippides, who is alleged to have made the trip from Marathon to Athens in 490, is remembered as much for what he said as for what he did. When he arrived on the scene, he is supposed to have said, "Rejoice! we conquer" whereupon he died. Some 400 hundred years earlier, in a scene not unlike that which transpired at Marathon, a King known as David was awaiting word from a very important battle. The runner, who insisted upon bringing the message, was a man called Ahimaaz. He was the fastest of all runners at that time and, as he had so many times before, outran all others and returned to his



The President with, from left to right, the Chancellor of the University of Calgary. Mr. Brian Norford. President and Vice Chancellor, Mr. Norman Wagner and the Dean of the Faculty of Physical Education, President of the Canadian NOC. Mr. Roger C. Jackson.

master. When asked by the King as to the outcome of the battle, Ahimaaz stammered and said, "I saw a great tumult, but I don't know what happened". Fast he was, but a champion he was not, and as a result very few of you in this room have ever heard of Ahimaaz.

More than one individual has pointed out that countless people in our world seem to turn from page one of their newspaper, where they read of turmoil and grief to the sports pages. We have all wondered why. Many scholars have suggested that in so doing, temporarily, at least, conflicts seem to be resolved and perfection is attained. If page one tells us that all is in turmoil, the sports pages tell us that there is a clear winner, that the battle has been resolved, that all is in order. We cannot tolerate a tie. Somehow, even if it requires overtime, we want a winner to emerge. In this small way then, the battle takes on an importance far greater than the game itself. George Santyana, the eminent philosopher, stated that watching an athletic contest is a drama of great importance because "the whole soul is stirred by a spectacle that represents the basis of life". So in universities, a time comes when a grade must be assigned to a student in a class,

and a time when the student graduates or fails. We can, neither of us, live with endless indecision. At some point, even if only for a moment, we must resort to a scoring and a ranking in all that we do.

And so eminent Chancellor, I would reiterate that there are in fact numerous parallels between universities and the Olympic Movement. We both have constant challenges and conflicting demands. We understand the world of politics all too well. Occasionally we stage spectacles, events worthy of attention. And in the last analysis, the public is what sustains and determines whether or not we shall succeed. One thing is certain, more of us must become competitors and not observers. We must learn to give our all for the cause which we have chosen to pursue. We can only do so if we believe in the reason for our existence and if we believe that the rewards truly outweigh the costs. May I allude to Robert Faulkner's well known comments that "we will not merely endure, we will prevail". It is this challenge which confronts both of our institutions throughout our lives. It is the challenge which at once motivates and sustains us to become champions.

N. W.

IOC PRESIDENT :

It is very kind of all of you to share this special moment with my colleagues of the Olympic Movement, my wife and myself. When I was advised by the Rector that the University of Calgary had selected me for such an outstanding honour, I was first of all very touched, but also surprised. I did not consider that my personal achievements justified this award. And then I realised that it was not in fact Juan Antonio Samaranch who had been selected, but myself as President of the International Olympic Committee. It was therefore the Olympic Movement as a whole which had graduated and this honour has been highly prized by those of us who share its ideal.

Not so long ago, it was difficult to conceive that sport and high level education could go together. However, educational institutions and the Olympic Movement have had a very successful relationship throughout the history of the Modern Games. Most of you probably know that it was at the Sorbonne University in Paris that the International Olympic Committee was created on the 23rd of June 1894.

In examining the history of the beginning of the modern Olympic Movement, one would be astonished to discover the many links established between the Renovator of the Games, Pierre de Coubertin, and the highest universities throughout the world. This is not so surprising when we know that Pierre de Coubertin's primary motivation in re-establishing the Games was to use them for the generalisation of sport and physical exercise as an integral part of any education. Education in fact was Coubertin's main objective, and his only task after he left the presidency of the IOC in 1924.

I can therefore say for sure how happy and interested he would have been to visit the Faculty of Physical Education of the University of Calgary, which is so closely linked with the welcoming, and planning of the XVth Olympic Winter Games. The first ever National Olympic Academy to be held in Canada was hosted last year by this Faculty and my wife and I were delighted to attend its inaugural session. I must say that it is also of great satisfaction to the Olympic Movement to see that the Winter Olympic Games in Calgary and this University are

so closely associated and will mutually benefit from this collaboration.

Material advantages will come with the construction of new dormitories, new premises, the renovation of a large part of the existing buildings, the construction of a new sports complex with the first covered oval ice rink for speed skating in the world. Together with research and sports medicine programmes.

More important : there will be many opportunities for the students to participate in this "once in a lifetime" Olympic experience. Also when studying the Olympic Movement, they may even learn something new about politics and economics. I know that by tradition, volunteering is very popular in Calgary. I am convinced that after the huge success of the volunteer programmes in Los Angeles and Sarajevo, this trend will be confirmed. Participation in the Olympic organisation is an exceptional experience.

Another aspect of the Olympic Movement is its focus on youth. The Olympic principles include the pursuit of excellence, friendship, mutual respect, fair-play, dignity and education. The athletes who take part in the Games are much more than proud members of their nations. They are ambassadors of the human spirit and as such, vested with the integrity, purity and courage that must be our goals. They are an inspiration for all of us. In our present-day world, we need the Olympic Games and what they represent, more than ever before. The spirit of the Olympic athletes must be an example for mankind.

It is therefore essential that the Olympic Movement and indeed the IOC itself, do not remain static, but constantly evolve. What I find of considerable interest is the fact that the principles and the vision of a revitalised Olympic Movement, are unfolding and developing. After several decades during which we concentrated upon the firm establishment of the Games themselves, we have now been able to extend our field of activities to give a better and more complete response to our aims. We, at the International Olympic Committee are attempting to develop our involvement and interest as well as those of the National Olympic Committees in various specific domains.

This is the reason why, for example, we are now engaged in the re-structuring of the Olympic

Museum in order to establish a world center of Olympic Studies. We have at the same time encouraged all the NOCs to create national sports museums in their own countries. An international art competition for children was recently initiated to associate Art and Sport more closely. I would also mention here our action for handicapped people, since you were able to witness this for the first time at the Olympic Games in Sarajevo and Los Angeles.

With the organisation around the world of National Olympic Academies, the patronage given by the IOC to many mass sports events in various countries, the creation for the first time of an athletes commission within the IOC and the encouragement we gave to NOCs and IFs to do the same, you can see that the Olympic Movement has truly become one of the greatest social forces in our present world. As such, it draws much attention. One of the most serious issues that has faced our Movement during the last ten years has been the pressure brought to bear around the world by governments who wish to intervene for political purposes. The Games have won such a high reputation world wide, that they have become one of the most important political targets.

When I was elected President of the IOC in July 1980 in Moscow, I promised to visit all the recognised National Olympic Committees around the world. I have now been to 132 out of the 160 NOCs, and at each of them, I speak the same language. I say : The Olympic Games must be understood by governments and politicians alike to be a great celebration of youth and sport, without any political, religious or racial discrimination. They must be the finest opportunity to test oneself in an atmosphere of friendship and fair-play. It is therefore our responsibility to make every effort to convince world leaders that to use sport for political goals only serves to create new sources of conflict.

I have learned at least one thing in my life – and that is that only through human contact can differences be overcome, dialogue opened, and solutions found to problems. Perhaps that is what the world today lacks most – human contact. This is why I travel so much to other countries to meet both governmental officials and sports leaders. Each National Olympic Committee has its own responsibility and should endeavour to maintain the closest and best possible relationship and collaboration with its government, as sport nowadays cannot be organised on a sound basis without the help and comprehension of the latter.

But I claim that governments must also respect our autonomy and independence.

In fact, it is to our advantage that we are acknowledged by the majority of people as a non-political, independent voluntary body that has world-wide membership and clear, important principles. All we require is that our rules, traditions and way of life be accepted by all those in positions of responsibility.

You can be sure that the Olympic Movement does not belong to any government ; it is not even the property of the International Olympic Committee. Today, it belongs to humanity.

I am convinced that the excellent results you obtained in Los Angeles and Sarajevo will greatly contribute to the involvement of all Canadians in the preparation of the Olympic Winter Games in Calgary. We highly value the progress of the Organising Committee, together with the full support of the three levels of government the whole population of this area, and the strong participation of this University. The accomplishments to date can receive our admiration.

And finally, you Calgarians are a warm and generous people. You have every right to be proud of your reputation for hospitality, and very soon, the whole world will be able to appreciate it. As for myself, I would like to reiterate how happy I am to have been awarded this Honorary Degree by such a famous university, an honour which I receive on behalf of the whole Olympic Movement. During the course of the last ninety years, we have shown the world that a private and benevolent organisation can develop, on a world-wide basis, human ideals such as generosity, friendship, comprehension and understanding, and resist two world wars and many more crises which threaten our activities.

The awarding of this Honorary Degree is the recognition of our contribution to the betterment of mankind, to international understanding and world peace. Therefore, I can say that each and every member of our Olympic family, to which you also belong, has been honoured.

You can rest assured that all members of the Olympic Movement are grateful to you and very much look forward to being here in three years time for the XVth Olympic Winter Games in Calgary, 1988.

I thank you very much for your kindness, and for this wonderful evening.

J. A. S.