



HELLO FROM VIDY

We all know that the Olympic year which has just commenced will doubtless influence not just the immediate future, but the longer-term fortunes of our Movement. It is therefore encouraging that it should be starting under favourable auspices.

Indeed, it could not have started better on 1st January, 1988, than with the 125th anniversary of the birth of Pierre de Coubertin, a man who was to make his mark on the twentieth century in such a beneficial and enduring fashion. In connection with this, we are hoping in a few weeks' time to be able to announce the arrival from the publishers of the definitive version of the monumental edition of his works on sport and Olympism, the edition presented, while still at its experimental stage, to the 91st IOC Session held in Lausanne in October 1986.

Consequently, all those eager to discover the authentic thoughts of the founder of the Olympic Movement, how much these are a product of their time, but more importantly their enduring value, will be able to turn to the source of these thoughts to satisfy their thirst for information.

Another piece of good news is the announcement that the Swiss Federal Council has just allocated the IOC the sum of 1.5 million Swiss francs towards the cost of building the future Museum in the Olympic park near the

quai d'Ouchy in Lausanne. In doing this, the Swiss government is following the example of the State Council of the Canton of Vaud and Lausanne City Council, which have each offered the sum of 1.5 million Swiss francs for the same purpose.

Construction of the Museum, which already has the necessary official authorisation, can start as soon as the necessary funding is available. The contributions from the three Swiss political bodies, together with the money already promised by some large private bodies, provide us with an encouraging financial base. If these generous gestures encourage others to follow suit, the IOC will be in a position, perhaps as soon as the end of 1988, to give the go-ahead for a start to be made on the work, which will take a total of around three years.

The interest shown by the Swiss authorities at all levels is a striking indication of the excellent relationship these authorities enjoy with the IOC, which has had its headquarters here in Switzerland for almost three quarters of a century.

This excellent relationship is seen in many different instances. The close co-operation between the city of Lausanne and the IOC in creating the Museum and the Olympic park is a convincing example of this. It is proof that by pursuing a common goal, while each continues to remain within the sphere of its own particular concerns, the Olympic and political authorities can succeed in working together in harmony and to the benefit of all those involved.

Obviously, the media event which has dominated the headlines in the sporting world at the start of 1988, has been the press conference held at Vidy on Monday 18th January by the President of the IOC on the day after the deadline set for countries to declare their participation in the Olympic Games in Seoul.

H.E. Juan Antonio Samaranch was able to announce with great satisfaction that, contrary to all the pessimistic forecasts — some perhaps motivated by self-interest — 161 NOCs from a total of the 167 recognized by the IOC — have confirmed their participation, amongst them the main representatives of the different political and social systems which exist side by side within the Olympic Movement.

As a result, for the first time since the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972, and barring any last-minute catastrophe, almost all the Olympic

family will gather together in the South Korean capital, thereby giving full significance to that great fraternal gathering of young people throughout the world, represented by its best athletes competing under the authority of the IFs and NOCs.

Nor has there ever been such a great number of those present who want simply to be a part of the celebration, without any hope of winning a medal, and it must be stressed that it is such athletes who account for around 80% of the competitors.

Still, no-one can predict the future, and it is only in around 200 years' time that we shall know whether the autumnal Olympic harvest will be as promising as it looked in January.

For the moment, however, the great adventure which is just beginning is that of the Winter Games in Calgary.

As I mentioned before in the December 1987 issue of the Olympic Message devoted to these Games, our Canadian friends have every right to be proud of the tremendous amount of work they have undertaken in preparation for the Games. Throughout the month of February, we shall have a golden opportunity to appreciate their generous hospitality to the full. The conditions look right for "their" Games to beat all records in terms of the number of NOCs and athletes participating but also, of course, by the quality of the organisation and the welcome given and, we hope, by the performance achieved by the competitors.

So « GOOD MORNING CALGARY ! »

Raymond Gafner
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