

HELLO FROM VIDY

The constraints of technology mean that it is usually three to four weeks after I have written the “Hello from Vidy” before you, dear readers, get to see it. In the normal way, this delay is not a problem, for what is relevant to me as I write it is relevant to you as you read it.

But today the pace of events and their highly unpredictable nature render precarious and potentially derisory any topical remark which would claim to be so a few days later.

Yet this phenomenon, which we all hope will be short-lived, may be a blessing in disguise. Indeed, it forces us to go back in time to the sources of the work of Pierre de Coubertin so that our desire to serve our society through the Movement he created might remain unshakeable in the face of the contingencies of the moment.

In my January “Hello”, I underlined the essential and constant role which Olympism must play in the behaviour, actions and self-control of every one of us, at a time when the upheavals of history are the cause of violent confrontations between the instinctive choleric reactions of so many of our contemporaries.

But, sooner or later, the day will come when we have to “sew things back together”, to return to the expression I used last month, if we do not want to witness the extinction of those values to which we are all mutually attached.

It is here that our destiny lies. The affirmation so often repeated, some might feel bombastically, that the Olympic institution is one of the few able to maintain a common language, the same ideal, and a place for all people of goodwill to meet in brotherhood, suddenly takes on a real and striking topicality. We shall need each other in order to go forward beyond our divisions. That will require exemplary control over our behaviour. We shall succeed only if we

all constantly and primarily ask ourselves in what way we can act constructively and effectively for, and with respect for, others. What lies ahead of us in the coming months will most certainly represent a challenge to act like true Olympians. Our influence and our aura are considerable, and we must make use of them unreservedly and judiciously.

Viewed in this way, the Games in 1992 possess enormous significance. This was the predominant feeling amongst the participants at the ceremony in Vidy on 9th February during which the IOC President signed an invitation to all the NOCs to take part in the Winter Games in Albertville, which will open on 9th February 1992.

The same ceremony will be repeated on 25th July 1991 when invitations will go out to the whole world to gather at the Games of the XXV Olympiad in Barcelona. The response from our NOC friends will set the tone. It will reveal how far we have succeeded in surmounting the hurdle which confronts us during these painful times. For the Olympism that we love the deadline will be decisive. We must get ready to take the ball on the rebound when it is returned to us.



By Raymond Gafner

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