

# HELLO FROM VIDY

The breath of spring which we so badly need after the first tempestuous weeks of 1991 wafts to us from Savoy.

My last two 'Hello from Vidy' were intended to help keep the Olympic ship on course through the storm raging across the world. And now, thankfully, the time has once again come for positive action. The ball is, as I hoped it would be, back in our court.

But how can I convey, in this March-April 1991 'Hello', this feeling of liberation? The answer is to be found in the press release which reached me from La Plagne, dated 8th February 1991. The text is devoted to the gathering of hundreds of young athletes from all over the world, meeting together in the context of the "Youth of the World" programme described in greater detail later in this issue.

Indeed, in 1986 Jean-Claude Killy and Michel Barnier pledged before the IOC that in the run up to the Games in 1992 they would welcome to Savoy 1992 young athletes in groups representing more than 160 nations. On their behalf, in the midst of the turmoil of February, the group in La Plagne drew up a five-point message which is more forceful, more topical and more convincing than the words which could flow from the pen of such an "elder" of Olympism as I. And so I shall step aside. Here, in its moving freshness, Olympian purity and impulsive style, is the cry of the youth of today. Listen to it!

## **A Universal Language**

*Whatever our race, skin colour, culture or religion, through sport we can speak to, listen to, meet and love one another. For one week in Olympic Savoy, this was the experience enjoyed by thirty two delegations from all over the world.*

## **The New World In Our Hands**

*In a violent, barbaric, mad and disintegrating world, young people keep their eyes open and say to you: "This is the world of today". And yet we have faith; the world is in our hands; it belongs to us; it is our responsibility to change it.*

## **Let us Preserve the Totality of the World**

*The world is a single entity, and to maintain its coherence and survival, young people place their trust first and foremost in the international organizations. In particular, they insist upon the essential role of the UN to which they want to give real powers - including coercive powers - in order to ensure a fairer distribution of the world's riches; combat poverty and illiteracy; protect the environment; and uphold peace.*

## **The Olympic Spirit : An Ethic for the World**

*Young people have a model to put forward, embodied within the Olympic spirit. Every day, young athletes learn to respect the rules of the game, a code of civility; respect for others, even in the fiercest competition; and physical and mental mastery of all their energies. The world which they wish to create must be governed by the same spirit, but here again their vision is clear: they warn against the perversions which today corrupt even the sporting spirit: drugs, money and politics. In this respect, Olympism is still fragile, and must be defended at all costs.*

## **No Speeches**

*They say again : Listen to our emotions, our conviction, our faith. What was said within the context of the Youth of the World programme must be transformed into action. For this, France has begun the movement, and the torch must be taken up again at future Olympic Games.*

To those of us called upon day by day to grapple with a hard and sometimes disappointing reality, these affirmations may seem like touchingly pious hopes. And yet we can feel that these are the expression of needs whose validity is beyond doubt. They come from boys and girls who will be the builders of Olympism tomorrow.

Was it not for them that Coubertin, prefiguring the composer Stravinsky, wanted to make his Olympic adventure a "Rite of Spring"? The young people of sport await our reply to their message. Not in words, but in deeds. Let us endeavour not to disappoint them.



**By Raymond Gafner**  
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