

International Olympic Committee Problems with Recognition of Nations for Olympic Competition

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Under what conditions may a nation send competitors to the Olympic Games? Have the stated conditions changed since the inception of the modern Olympic Games? Has increasing nationalism and political manipulation had an effect on the recognition of a nation by the International Olympic Committee? This paper will examine the I.O.C. recognition regulations using specific examples to illustrate problems in applying the rules.

In the early years National Olympic Committees were few, and since the rules were virtually unpublished and left to the host city to interpret, a national sponsorship of the athlete was not demanded. As N.O.C.s were formed, they were recognized by the I.O.C. with only a few problems of government jurisdiction causing any discussion.

After World War I the I.O.C. managed to shift the responsibility for invitations to the 1920 Olympic Games to the host City (Antwerp), and so avoided any direct role in denying the participation of Italy, Germany and Austria. At the time of the 1948 Olympic Games the fact that Italy, Germany and Japan were occupied nations and therefore had no governments of their own permitted their exclusion from competition.

Up to this time the difficulties had been rare and quite easily handled. However, the emergence of two Germanies, two Chinas, and two Koreas presented major problems when these countries applied for I.O.C. recognition. I.O.C. insistence (under the evangelical leadership of Brundage) that the two Germanies were really one country led to "united" teams for a few years, but the experiment failed. The People's Republic of China caused I.O.C. consternation because of the political statements of her "representatives" at I.O.C. meetings, demands on the I.O.C., and the difficulties attending acceptance of her N.O.C. constitution. The two Koreas disagreed about the name by which each Korean team would be known. The German and Korean situations were finally solved, but the Chinese position has grown as an irritant to the I.O.C.



Early convention participants tour University of Texas facilities.