

S P E E C H B Y

T H E L O R D K I L L A N I N

Vice-President of the I.O.C.

Zagreb, 7th December, 1969



Mr. President, Friends,

Unfortunately, Mr. Avery BRUNDAGE, President of the IOC, has found it impossible to return to Europe - he has already been over five times this year - and he has designated me to represent him and the IOC at your 50th anniversary celebration today. Therefore, may I, Mr. President, commence by bringing you the greetings, congratulations and best wishes of the President and all the IOC. Perhaps I may be allowed a personal note. My Olympic life began as a member of an NOC, and I am still President of the Olympic Council of Ireland. We have two years to wait until we celebrate our half century, for, like you, although an old civilisation, our independence only came to us after World War I; but also like you we have been repre-

sented in previous Olympic Games under different flags and indeed like you we have had over the years emigrants who have represented their adopted countries. Therefore not only as a member and a Vice President of the IOC but as a President of a small NOC I am honoured to be invited to join in your celebrations, and bring you my good wishes.

It is the second time I have been to Yugoslavia this year, and I hope this visit will be as memorable as that to Dubrovnik - when you successfully organised for the IOC the meeting between the Executive Board and NOCs in wonderful surroundings. Since Baron de Coubertin at the end of the last century embarked on his great venture, the Olympic Movement has lived through a period of the most dramatic scientific and social changes the world has ever seen - from the start of the internal combustion engine to men, not only landing on the moon, but being seen doing so by the world in colour TV.

At the same time the Olympic competitions have changed from a handful of perhaps select and privileged people to the vast multitudes of the present Games - composed of competitors selected from almost 130 countries, and watched not only by the spectators who are able to be present in person, but also by millions - at Munich the viewers are estimated to an average audience figure of 8 million - throughout the world.

This contact in addition to written and spoken Press enables the Olympic message to reach all people.

It must be accepted, due to changing and improving economic and social conditions, despite the many tragedies, which daily fill the papers, of civil and international wars, that progress has been made. The IOC, of which I am a member, is often accused of making no progress or making it too fast, too late. My own view is that de COUBERTIN's far sighted ideals and aims have not changed, but the conditions under which they have to be implemented have. There are some countries where the individual may be subservient to the state; there are others where the social and economic conditions may tempt the athlete to be subservient to commercial pressures. These are the facts that have to be faced and are those usually referred to as the problems of "amateurism", "commercialism", "nationalism". In fact they confront the eligibility of athletes not only at the time of the Games but at all times; they confront not only the athletes but also the organisers and officials, both in NOCs and International Federations.

We are all apt to see our differences but it is easier to find common denominators in the Olympic world than variances. That is why National Olympic Committees, composed as they are of National Associations, which have their own ties to the International Federations, have the most important roles to play. Those roles are of especial importance to countries and committees like yours, with longer and evolving experiences, to pass on to the new and developing countries or "the old" countries in other continents and hemispheres who have only recently been able to join the Olympic Movement as new and individual members.

The IOC is the Trustee of the Olympic Movement. Without the IOC there would have been no NOCs and few International Federations, in fact no Olympic Games. The objectives of the Trust remain unaltered from the time of origin, but the methods of implementing that Trust may alter as they do for trustees of money or other endowments.

The IOC, now that it may be financially possible, is building up its headquarters and Secretariat in Lausanne - without a good staff it is doomed - and this will take time. We are particularly lucky to have with us a long experienced Yugoslav athlete and official, Mr. Artur Takac, as Technical Director. The coming years will see the development of that headquarters to assist and ensure the IOC is able to carry out its trust to the NOCs and IFs.

The President, Executive and members of the IOC, who devote their time and services voluntarily, have only one intention and that is to promote the Olympic Movement. It will not be done by revolution but by evolution. We are all conscious of some of the weaknesses and faults of the IOC, but what must not be forgotten is that from a handful of men and countries, the IOC has built up the great movement which is known throughout the world today.

This is a day for celebration and the end of your Olympic week. As the representative of the IOC I wish to congratulate the medallists, the officials, newspapermen who are here today,

and who have contributed towards a more intensive development of sports and the Olympic Movement in Yugoslavia and in the world.

I also wish to thank my colleague, Mr. Boris BAKRAC, who has assisted so much within the IOC and President POLIC and the Yugoslav Olympic Committee for their contribution not only to the Olympic Movement in your own country but to the world.

May the Olympic symbols long flourish in your country and may our motto, Citius - Altius - Fortius, lead you through the next half century and the centuries to come.

Thank you.

*Mr. Boris BAKRAC,
I.O.C. Member
for Yugoslavia.*

