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TO THE BERLIN GAMES: THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT IN
GERMANY FROM 1896-1936

THESIS

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This thesis examines Imperial, Weimar, and Nazi Germany's attempt to use the Berlin Olympic Games to bring its citizens together in national consciousness and simultaneously enhance Germany's position in the international community. The sources include official documents issued by both the German and American Olympic Committees as well as newspaper reports of the Olympic proceedings. This eight chapter thesis discusses chronologically the beginnings of the Olympic movement in Imperial Germany, its growth during the Weimar and Nazi periods, and its culmination in the 1936 Berlin Games. Each German government built and improved upon the previous government's Olympic experiences with the National Socialist regime of Adolf Hitler reaping the benefits of forty years of German Olympic participation and preparation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The preparations were complete. The actors had been selected, rehearsed their scripts, and were now ready for the grand opening. The curtain rose, exposing to the entire world the Berlin showcase--the XI Olympic Games. One hundred and ten thousand spectators filled the newest and largest stadium in the world to witness the long-awaited international festival. The distinguished visitors began to arrive. Heading the list of dignitaries were three individuals largely responsible for this Olympic celebration: Count Henri Baillet-Latour, president of the International Olympic Committee (I.O.C.); Dr. Theodor Lewald, head of the German Olympic Organizing Committee; and Adolf Hitler, chancellor of Germany and patron of the Berlin Games. The triumvirate emerged from the Olympic motorcade and entered the overflowing arena. Kings, crown princes, and distinguished Olympic officials and guests followed. The blast of thirty trumpets greeted the Olympic entourage; a German orchestra and three thousand voice choir escorted the dignitaries with song to their viewing stand--the Tribune of Honor.

The Olympic Bell's toll signalled the fifty-three nation athletic parade to begin. Greece, the originator of

the Olympic Games, led the nations into the stadium, followed in alphabetical order by the largest field of participating nations in Olympic history. One by one, each filed past the Olympic viewing stand paying tribute to the Olympic officials. The predominantly German crowd acknowledged each team's arrival with loud and enthusiastic ovations. The Austrians greeted the crowd with the Nazi salute, the Bulgarians goose-stepped, the French gave the Olympic salute, and the Swiss flag bearer entertained the crowd with his juggling tricks. The loudest ovation occurred as the German team, the last team according to Olympic procedure, entered the stadium. The orchestra's rendition of "Deutschland über Alles" and "Horst Wessellied" brought the German crowd to its feet as they welcomed their team to their Olympic Games.

After the teams had settled in their infield position, Dr. Theodor Lewald performed his official Olympic duty. His twenty minute speech eulogized Adolf Hitler as the man most responsible for this great international contest. Hitler then stepped to the microphone and "proclaimed the opening of the Olympic Games of Berlin, celebrating the XI Olympiad of the modern era."¹ The Olympic flag was then raised, a twenty-one gun salute sounded, twenty thousand doves were released, and the orchestra played the new Olympic Hymn. The last runner of the Olympic relay, holding high the sacred

¹"Olympic Games," Time, 10 August 1936, 40.

Olympic flame, appeared at the East Gate. He ran down the stairs, across the arena, and up the West stairs to the Olympic cauldron. Dipping his torch into the bowl, he lit the Olympic fire. The Olympic Games had finally come to Berlin.

For the next fifteen days, the world was witness to the achievements and accomplishments of the "new Germany." The Berlin Games afforded the Nazi government a golden opportunity to impress the world with a positive image of the Third Reich. During this Olympic period, Germany's new master dazzled all in attendance and entertained with a splendor that rivaled the displays of le Roi Soleil or the Tsars of Russia.² The Third Reich used the XI Olympic Games to produce the greatest publicity stunt in history with Adolf Hitler emerging as its chief beneficiary.

This thesis will attempt to show that the Imperial German government of Kaiser Wilhelm, the Weimar government and the National Socialist government of Adolf Hitler all believed their national life as a whole could only benefit from the healthy enthusiasm and competition found in sport. They supported sport as an agent of German nationalism and a builder of invaluable prestige in the world community. All three governments sought the Olympic Games, the greatest international sports contest, to bring the world to Germany

²Alan Bullock, Hitler: A Study in Tyranny (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 355.

and use the Games to convince foreigners of the accomplishments and achievements of the Fatherland. Imperial Germany's preparations of its Olympic team and the Olympic facilities for the VI Olympiad scheduled for Berlin in 1916 was the most complete and determined effort in Olympic history up to that time. Imperial Germany was determined to show the world the best athletic team ever assembled performing in the finest athletic facility in the world.

The Weimar government sought the Olympic Games to convince the world that they were not the outlaws of Europe that the Allied Powers had branded them. Germany wanted to be accepted back into the European community and the Olympic Games would be its opportunity to show the world they were peace loving and were capable of staging a great sports event just as Antwerp, Paris, and Amsterdam had done since the end of the war. The National Socialists used the Olympic Games scheduled for Berlin in 1936 to unite the German people and rejuvenate the confidence and pride missing since the Treaty of Versailles. They sought to bring the world to Germany and show foreign visitors the achievements and accomplishments of a peace loving Germany, a new Germany.

This thesis, like Richard D. Mandell's The Nazi Olympics, will take the reader from Pierre de Coubertin's establishment of the modern Olympic Games in 1894 through the first ten Olympiads and focus on the 1936 Berlin Olympics. This thesis, however, will take the reader into areas

that Mandell neglected or only mentioned. A case in point is the 1916 Berlin Games which were cancelled because of World War I. The German preparations for these Games can only help the reader understand the German interest in sport that culminated in the German success in the 1936 Olympic Games. This thesis will also discuss the trip that German sports leaders made to the United States in their attempt to Americanize German sport. It will also discuss the sports movement in Germany after the war in which athletic training was based on scientific research and the establishment of German National Games, similar to the Olympic Games in which they were denied. This thesis will also inform the reader of information found concerning the 1936 Olympic Games since the publication of The Nazi Olympics.

Chapter II describes Germany's participation in the first five Olympic Games and its acceptance as the site of the VI Olympic Games scheduled for Berlin in 1916 as well as its preparation for both its Olympic team and the Olympic athletic facilities for this grand occasion.

The third chapter recounts the role sport played in Germany during the Weimar period. The chapter ends with Berlin's selection as the site of the XI Olympic Games in 1936.

The National Socialist's views toward the Olympic Games are discussed in Chapter IV. This chapter relates

the Nazi totalitarian doctrine as it pertains to sport and in particular to the 1936 Games; how the National Socialists gained control of the German Olympic Committee and prepared the Olympic facilities and Olympic team in a manner that reflected their philosophy.

Chapter V describes the reaction throughout Europe and the United States to Nazi totalitarian policies especially Germany's racial policies and ~~their~~ suspected violation of the Olympic ideals. The chapter ends with boycott movements dying and the largest contingent of countries ever to participate in the Olympic Games coming to Berlin.

Chapter VI and VII recount the Olympic sideshow and attractions which the Nazis used to rekindle the pride and glory that was Germany's during the Second Reich; it was Hitler's chance to convince the German people of how far they had come since the days of Versailles and how far they were yet to go under his leadership. The chapters also show that the Olympic Games afforded Hitler and the National Socialists an opportunity to show the rest of the world the achievements and accomplishments of the Nazi system.

It is amazing how neglected the history of sport is as a focus of investigations by professional historians. Historians have looked at political, economic and social institutions in their quest to gain an understanding of a particular society, but sport, unfortunately, has been neglected by historians. Sport is an institution, the

examination of which can provide valuable insights into the complexities of the larger society. Sport is a reflection of some values of society, human life in microcosm. In sport, man develops many of the character traits and virtues his society deems desirable. Competitive societies breed competitive sport, where winning, not necessarily pleasure in the activity, is the ultimate goal. Materialistic societies breed participants who search for material rewards. Totalitarian societies create the environment in which sport exists to glorify the philosophy and attitudes of its leaders.

Moreover, in modern society, sport occupies a significant amount of peoples' waking hours. To use the United States, where statistics are easily come by and reliable, as an example, sports are among the most popular activities in American life. It is estimated that fifty percent of the population participate in some sport activity. To mention only a few of the many possible activities, in 1978, 38.5 million Americans swim, 34.7 million play tennis, 27.7 million bowl, 26.4 million play baseball or softball, and 18.7 play golf.³ Americans expect sports coverage in the mass media, and if quantity is a measure of interest, Americans spend a significant portion of their time receiving information about sporting events. In many of America's

³ Leonard Wilber, A Sociological Perspective of Sport (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Burgess Publishing Company, 1980), 2-4.

most popular newspapers, the sports section is often the most thoroughly read section of the paper. In some American newspapers the sports section is the largest section of the paper devoted to any single subject. Some circulation managers say that about thirty percent of the people who buy their papers do it primarily for the sports news.⁴ Seventy-five percent of the male and fifty percent of the female population read the sports page in their newspaper at least once per week. Almost seventy percent of all males and fifty percent of all females talk about sport at least once a week.⁵ Television has taken just about everything but news and music from radio, but radio stations in the United States still broadcast over 400,000 hours of sport. In 1981, television covered 350 hours of sport events, an equivalent of almost twenty full days of sporting events.⁶ Sixty-four million people viewed Super Bowl V while three weeks later only fifty-five million people

⁴ Bernice Parrish, They Call It a Game (New York: Dial Press, 1976), 111.

⁵ Donald W. Ball and John W. Loy, Sport and Social Order: Contributions to the Sociology of Sport (Reading, Massachusetts, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1975), 246.

⁶ D. Stanley Eitzen and George H. Sage, Sociology of American Sport (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1982), 246. In September, 1980, Entertainment and Sports Program Network (ESPN) was licensed which broadcast sport twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year. Many local cable networks have been established which televise every game involving that city's sports teams such as Ted Turner's WTBS in Atlanta.

watched the launch of the Apollo 14 spacecraft.⁷ All this illustrates the point that sport is an important feature of society and for the historian to ignore sport would be for him to ignore a major institution in society.

Sport is difficult to define. Many scholars have made attempts, but most would have to agree with the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga who states that "in our hearts we know that none of our pronouncements are absolutely conclusive."⁸ Howard Slusher claims that sport defies definition, it goes beyond definitive terminology.⁹ John W. Loy, Jr. writes that "sport is a highly ambiguous term having different meanings for various people."¹⁰ In this thesis, sport will be defined, however imprecise. Too often, the terms sport and game are used interchangeably. What distinguishes a chess match from a cricket match? billiards from basketball? darts from diving? To gain a better understanding of sport one must be able to differentiate between play, games, and sport, and to visualize them on a continuum with play and sport as opposite poles.

⁷Ball and Loy, Sport and Social Order, 247.

⁸Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture, Trans. R. F. C. Hull (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), 212.

⁹Howard Slusher, Men, Sport and Existences: A Critical Analysis (Philadelphia: Lea and Febiger, 1967), 141.

¹⁰John Loy, Jr., Gerald Kenyon, and Barry McPherson, Sport, Culture and Society: A Reader on the Sociology of Sport (Philadelphia: Lea and Febiger, 1981), 23.

Johan Huizinga has probably made the most thorough effort to delineate the fundamental qualities of play. In Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture, he describes play as a voluntary activity which is outside "ordinary" life, offering no material profit. Play proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. Play is designed for social involvement where the participants interact with the social roles of that society. Play is used to socialize an individual into a culture; it teaches the skills, traits and behaviors desired by a society.¹¹

Games can be contrasted with play, although one or more aspects of play constitute basic components of games. Roger Caillois in Man, Play and Games distinguishes games from play by the degree of the activity's organization, complexity, and formality.¹² John T. Talamini and Charles Page in Sport and Society: An Anthology state that "Games are rulebound and competitive; they are won or lost by skill or luck or both."¹³ Harry Edwards in Sociology of Sport defines a game as

an activity manifest in physical and/or mental effort, governed by formal or informal rules, and

¹¹ Huizinga, Homo Ludens, 13.

¹² Roger Caillois, Man, Play and Games, trans. Meyer Baruch (New York: Free Press, 1961),

¹³ John T. Talamini and Charles Page, eds., Sport and Society: An Anthology (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), 43.

having as participants opposing actors who are part of or who represent collectivities that want to achieve a specific goal that has value beyond the context of the game situation, that is, prestige, recognition, influence. . . .¹⁴

Games, therefore, can be placed on this continuum where activities that are free with informal rules such as hide-and-go-seek are on one end and highly regulated or disciplined activities such as professional football are on the other.

What then constitutes sport? D. Stanley Eitzen and George Sage in Sociology of American Sport define sport as any competitive physical activity that is guided by established rules.¹⁵ If this definition is true then the only characteristic which distinguishes a game from a sport is the physical element. Eitzen and Sage say that in sport, one attempts to defeat an opponent through superior strength, speed, stamina and/or accuracy not excluding the employment of strategy as well as chance.¹⁶ Football would, therefore, be a sport and cards would be a game. What about darts? Would the arm motion constitute a physical activity? Harry Edwards defines sport as

Activities having formally recorded histories and traditions, stressing physical exertion through competition within limits set in explicit and

¹⁴ Harry Edwards, Sociology of Sport (Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1973), 55.

¹⁵ Eitzen and Sage, Sociology of American Sport, 18.

¹⁶ Ibid.

formal rules governing role and position relationships, and carried out by actors who represent or who are part of formally organized associations having the goal of achieving valued tangibles or intangibles through defeating opposing groups.¹⁷

Would this definition include war? According to some American coaches, sports contests are warlike.

In this thesis, sports will be distinguished from games by their formal setting. All sports are games, but not all games contain the elements necessary to be considered a sport. Both are competitive, and in many cases physical activities which are guided by established rules. Sports at the Olympic level, unlike games, are administered by governing bodies which enforce rigid rules and provide a formal setting with standard rules that do not change with location. Sports are further distinguished from games in the selection and the specialization of the participants and the training and preparation required to compete. It is with this understanding that sport will be discussed in this paper.

¹⁷Edwards, Sociology of Sport, 57-58.

CHAPTER II

IMPERIAL GERMANY AND THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Germany felt an important link with the ancient Olympics. Long before Hitler, the Germans viewed themselves and their vigorous culture as the reincarnation of the ancient Greeks.¹ This attachment to the Hellenics was manifested in the excavation attempts of the ancient site of Olympia by German archeologists Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Ernst Curtius. In the mid-eighteenth century, Winckelman planned an expedition to Olympia to exhume the ancient stadium. The plan was suspended with Winckelman's death in 1767, but not forgotten.²

A century later, Ernst Curtius, a professor at the University of Berlin, actively pursued Winckelman's objective. In 1875, Curtius led a German expedition to Olympia. Within six years, Curtius unearthed the Atlis, where the ruins of the Temple of Zeus and Hera were uncovered.³ The German archeological success could be attributed to the active support of the Crown Prince (later King Frederick)

¹Richard Mandell, The First Modern Olympics (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1976), 39.

²Peter J. Graham and Horst Ueberhorst, eds., The Modern Olympics (Cornwall, New York: Leisure Press), 4.

³Ibid., 7.

who perceived the methodical excavation as a great cultural undertaking. The German Reichstag generously financed Curtius's ambitions from the German treasury. The German undertaking resulted in the unveiling of the ancient Olympic site where for a thousand years the Olympic Games had been held.⁴

German activity in Olympia and information about the discoveries themselves were published in scientific journals between 1890-1897 and helped to acquaint the Western World with the idea of reviving the Olympic Games.⁵ The Germans began to claim the ancient Greek Olympic site as their own.⁶ They were able to bring to life the knowledge of Olympia, painting clear and certain pictures of the Olympic site and the procedures of the Games.⁷ The German accomplishments were a challenge to the rest of the world. Ernst Curtius suggested a suitable undertaking for the intellectuals and educators of his age might be the revival of the Olympic Games.⁸

⁴Organizing Committee for the XI Olympiad, Berlin 1936, Olympic Games News Service, 24 April 1934, 1. Cited hereafter: Olympic Games News Service.

⁵Jeffrey Segrave and Donald Chu, eds., Olympism (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1981), 4.

⁶Mandell, The First Modern Olympics, 38.

⁷Olympic Games News Service, 24 April 1934, 1.

⁸Mandell, The First Modern Olympics, 34.

This challenge was heard by many Germans, but actively pursued by a Frenchman--Baron Pierre de Coubertin. Coubertin felt that France could equal the undertakings of the German excavation of Olympia by restoring the old splendor of Olympic competition.⁹ In 1892 at the annual meeting of the French Athletic Association of whose board he was a member, Coubertin urged the revival of the Olympic Games. His proposal received little initial support, and he spent the next two years winning friends for his movement. In June, 1894, under the pretext of solving the problems of amateurism, Coubertin summoned an athletic congress.¹⁰ Seventy-nine delegates, representing twelve countries met at the Sorbonne in Paris to discuss seven points on the Congress's agenda.¹¹ Coubertin added the revival of the Olympic Games as the eighth point. The Congress, exhausted with its discussion of the first seven points, accepted the eighth point without opposition. The Congress agreed that the Games would be held every four years, that they would embrace all modern sports, and that the Games would be allotted to different countries instead of always being held at one location as in ancient times.¹²

⁹ Segrave and Chu, Olympism, 4.

¹⁰ Olympic Games News Service, 26 February 1934, 2.

¹¹ John Lucas, The Modern Olympic Games (South Brunswick: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1980), 35.

¹² Olympic Games News Service, 26 February 1934, 2.

Germany, the government which had financed the excavation of Olympia and spawned the revived interest in the Olympic Games, was not officially represented at the Sorbonne Congress.¹³ The problem lay in part with the hostility between the two countries, the result of the Franco-Prussian War a generation before.¹⁴ J. Sansboeuf, a revanchiste and militant French nationalist, told Coubertin that he would withdraw all of the gymnastic clubs under his control if any German attended the Congress. Coubertin, however, solicited German participation. He claimed to have visited the German Embassy in Paris in May, 1894, one month prior to the Sorbonne Congress to ask support for his proposal to revive the Olympics from the powerful German Gymnastic societies.¹⁵ Here, military attaché Colonel von Schwartzkoppen supplied Coubertin with the name of Victor von Podbielski, a leader of German athletics in Berlin. Podbielski responded "as pettily as possible" to Coubertin's letter.¹⁶ Coubertin's public appeal in a Berlin sports journal produced no response.¹⁷ Whatever the truth of the

¹³ Carl Diem, Weltgeschichte des Sports und der Leibeserziehung (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1960), 966-967. Cited hereafter: Sports.

¹⁴ Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 35.

¹⁵ Ibid, 34. ¹⁶ Diem, Sports, 967.

¹⁷ John J. MacAloon, This Great Symbol: Pierre de Coubertin and the Origin of the Modern Olympic Games (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 168-169.

claim, the Germans stated that Coubertin never invited them to the Congress.¹⁸ Years later, Carl Diem, the leading advocate of sports in Germany, claimed in his book, Weltgeschichte des Sports und der Leibeserziehung, that the letter to Podbielski, which had been forwarded from the German Embassy in Paris to the Berlin Union Club (a horse racing society), was ignored.¹⁹

The issue was further complicated by an interview Coubertin gave to the Paris newspaper Gil Blas on June 12, 1895. The newspaper reported Coubertin as saying that "Only Germany, which perhaps on purpose, was invited very late frowned at us and refused to take part in the Congress." Coubertin's remark in Gil Blas created a storm in Germany when reprinted in the influential National-Zeitung. Coubertin's denial in that paper that he had ever said such things failed to lessen the commotion.²⁰ Dr. Goetz, a leader of the German Gymnastic Union, echoed many of his countryman's sentiments when he wrote in March, 1896, "Our German feelings do not endorse such French doings!"²¹

The German Gymnastic Union transferred its lack of representation at the Sorbonne Congress to an opposition to

¹⁸ Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 34.

¹⁹ Diem, Sports, 967.

²⁰ MacAloon, This Great Symbol, 169.

²¹ Quoted in Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 11-12.

the Olympic Games. The Union ignored the invitation submitted by the Greek Olympic representative in 1895.²² The German Gymnastic Union hesitated to participate. The Union believed in all-around body development and mocked athletes who specialized in one area of sport. The Union believed that gymnastics and sport were opposing concepts. The German gymnasts held to the traditional, regimented, and highly nationalistic physical exercise founded by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn and were opposed in principal to the cosmopolitan ideals of Olympism. The German gymnasts denounced sports such as soccer, rugby, tennis, competitive swimming, and boxing as unGerman, materialistic, unmeritorious, and lacking in any higher ideals such as service to the Fatherland. They argued that Germany should participate in Olympic Games only if they were national games--games for Germans only.²³ In late 1895, the German Gymnastic Union officially announced it would not participate in the Games.

The country which had been instrumental in reawakening interest in the Games, apparently would not participate. Coubertin felt this was unfortunate. In his book, Mémoires Olympiques, Coubertin stated that he found this French-German tension ". . . not only hateful but humiliating. I have suffered from this attitude, this false and mean

²² Diem, Sports, 967.

²³ Richard A. Woeltz, "Sport, Culture, and Society in Late Imperial and Weimar Germany: Some Suggestions for Further Research," Journal of Sport History, 4 (1977): 297.

spirited conception of patriotism imposed on my generation."²⁴ Coubertin got into contact with Dr. Willibald Gebhardt, a physiological chemist and German sports leader, who differed from his countrymen in that he understood and sympathized with Coubertin's plan for sports cosmopolitanism.²⁵

In 1895, Coubertin appointed Gebhardt the German member of the newly established International Olympic Committee.²⁶ On December 13, 1895, at the Hotel of the Four Seasons in Berlin, Gebhardt founded the "Committee for the Participation of Germany in the Olympic Games" which fielded a fourteen member German team to compete in Greece in 1896.²⁷ This small but highly specialized German team placed first in seven events at the Greek Games. They were overshadowed only by the United States which won eleven first places and the hosting Greeks with eight. German success in this Olympic contest focused on gymnastics. The Germans dominated the team gymnastic competition by capturing the parallel and horizontal bar events. The Germans were equally successful in the individual gymnastic events taking three first places. Alfred Flatow on the parallel bars, Hermann Weingartner on the horizontal bars, and Karl Schumann on the vaulting horse brought first place honors back to Germany. The Germans

²⁴ MacAloon, This Great Symbol, 169-170.

²⁵ Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 41.

²⁶ MacAloon, This Great Symbol, 170.

²⁷ Diem, Sports, 967.

proved weak in the track and field events, which were dominated by the United States, but Fritz Hoffman, who finished a close second behind the American T. G. Burke in the finals of the one hundred meter dash, showed German potential.²⁸ Once back in Germany, this "black squad" from the German Gymnastic Union was excluded from the Deutsche Turnerschaft because of the squad's choosing to participate in a cosmopolitan celebration.²⁹

On their return trip from Athens, the German Olympic officials discussed the prospect of holding the Olympic Games in Berlin.³⁰ Berlin would have to wait. The Second Olympics was awarded to Paris where an "Exposition Universelle" was scheduled for the summer of 1900.³¹ The International Olympic Committee in 1897 had assured Coubertin that his city would be the location despite the petition of the United States for the Games and a strong Greek lobby that wanted to make Athens the permanent Olympic site.³² At the Paris Games, a German team won five first places, well behind the French who won twenty-eight

²⁸ Bill Henry, An Approved History of the Olympic Games (New York: G. P. Putnam Sons, 1976), 38.

²⁹ Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 14.

³⁰ New York Times, 9 June 1913, 3.

³¹ Alexander Weyand, The Olympic Pageant (New York: The McMillan Company, 1952), 20.

³² Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 48.

first places, and the United States with twenty-two first places.³³

Preparations for the Berlin Olympic Games began in earnest at the turn of the century. Coubertin had recommended that Germany establish a committee which would meet when the Olympic Games were drawing near. The German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games was then established on a permanent basis to organize national Olympic Games in the German Empire, to ready participants for the international Olympic Games, and to achieve a more universal representation by uniting the various German organizations which promoted gymnastics. This board consisted of the leaders of sport who lived in Berlin and individual gymnasts, who did not permit themselves to be contaminated by their colleagues' hostility toward sport.³⁴ The German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games established a committee to raise money and secure a location for the construction of a suitable arena for the future games. An attempt to secure land from the German government failed, and a public collection fared only slightly better, raising only one thousand marks.³⁵ The committee members continued their search, and their attention focused on a piece of land

³³Weyand, Olympic Pageant, 41.

³⁴Diem, Sports, 966.

³⁵Ibid., 968.

which the Berlin Union Club was leasing from the Prussian Office of Forest Management. On this land, at the edge of the Gr newald forest, the Berlin Union Club had constructed a horse racing track. General Graf von der Asseburg, president of the German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games and member of the Berlin Union Club, convinced the German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games that an athletic arena could be built on the natural depression within the oval track. Asseburg deduced that since the horse track and the arena would be used for racing, the contract with the Prussian government would not be violated.³⁶

While the German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games was busy securing a location for the Berlin stadium, the International Olympic Committee awarded the 1904 Olympic Games to Chicago. Theodore Roosevelt, president of the United States, and James E. Sullivan, president of the Amateur Athletic Union of the United States (A.A.U.), were strongly opposed to this site. They felt the Olympic Games should be celebrated in St. Louis on the grand occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary of the United States's purchase of the Louisiana territory, and the I.O.C. moved the games to St. Louis. The United States dominated the competition compiling a remarkable seventy-seven first place awards. The German team finished a distant third, placing first in five events.³⁷

³⁶Ibid., 968. ³⁷Weyand, Olympic Pageant, 60.

Shortly after the St. Louis Games, the I.O.C. met in London and officially recognized the formation of the National German Olympic Committee.³⁸ The German bid for the 1908 Olympic Games which German I.O.C. member Dr. Willibald Gebhardt made at the Olympic Congress in Paris in 1901 was rejected on the claim that it lacked evidence of municipal or governmental support. Rome, which had the support of the Italian government and sports federations, was selected over Berlin.³⁹ The selection was short lived.

In 1906, Mt. Vesuvius erupted killing two thousand people and inflicting great property damage. The Italian economy was devastated, and the Italian Olympic Organizing Committee withdrew Rome as the Olympic site.⁴⁰ The I.O.C., meeting in Athens at the time of the announcement, invited Britain to take over the reorganization of the 1908 Games. The British Olympic Association accepted.⁴¹ The German Olympic team left London with three first place medals and a fifth place team finish. The German athletes' lack of distinguished success in Olympic competition, however, did not diminish their desire to host the Games.

³⁸ Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 55.

³⁹ Henry, Approved History, 64.

⁴⁰ Weyand, Olympic Pageant, 80.

⁴¹ Lord Killanin and John Rodda, eds., The Olympic Games 1980 Moscow and Lake Placid (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1980), 56.

Berlin offered to host the 1912 Olympic Games. In 1909, the I.O.C. met in Berlin to decide the site for the V Olympiad. Berlin and Stockholm both presented their credentials. Stockholm received the majority of delegates' ballots and was awarded the Games.⁴² According to Carl Diem, member of the German Olympic Committee, the I.O.C. members left Berlin very impressed with German athletic attitudes which were manifested in the fact that in 1907 the German Gymnastic Union formally declared that it was willing to participate in all upcoming Olympic Games.⁴³ The I.O.C. members informed the German Olympic Committee that it should begin serious plans for the 1916 Olympic celebration.⁴⁴

This announcement inspired German action. A first phase of stadium construction began in 1909 with the building of a forecourt under the Grünewald horse track⁴⁵ to house dressing rooms, a police station, and a first aid station.⁴⁶ That same year, Asseburg died and the presidency of the German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games was handed to General Victor von Podbielski. Podbielski had

⁴² Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 62-63.

⁴³ Diem, Sports, 967.

⁴⁴ Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 63.

⁴⁵ Diem, Sports, 968.

⁴⁶ New York Times, 13 April 1913, sec. 4:3.

been actively involved in German athletics and had served with the Prussian government as Postmaster General and later as Minister of the Interior. Podbielski's government connections helped to further the building of the stadium. He was able to borrow 2.75 million gold marks from the German government and to secure the reputable architect, Otto March, to draw blueprints and direct construction.⁴⁷

The second phase of stadium construction called for the leveling of the floor of the natural depression in order to build a four-hundred meter foot race track. Around the perimeter of this track a 660 meter cycle track was also constructed. Stands for 34,000 spectators were built into the sides of the depression stopping slightly above the arena floor. At the northern edge of the arena a one-hundred meter pool was built surrounded by bleachers with seating for four thousand spectators.⁴⁸ To accommodate the predicted overflow crowds, a terrace was constructed around the top of the stands.⁴⁹ All construction was below ground level so as not to impede the spectator's view of the horse racing that took place at ground level.⁵⁰ The German Imperial Olympic Committee was intent on creating a stadium that would exceed both London's and Stockholm's in

⁴⁷ Diem, Sports, 968.

⁴⁸ New York Times, 13 April 1913, sec. 4:3.

⁴⁹ New York Times, 9 June 1913, 3.

⁵⁰ Diem, Sports, 968.

accommodations for athletes and spectators and exceed those cities also in architectural design.⁵¹

As the building of the stadium continued, official word arrived in 1911 that the I.O.C. had selected Berlin as the host for the VI Olympics.⁵² This excitement and confidence quickly turned to disappointment. The German team finished sixth overall in Olympic competition.⁵³ A bright spot for the Germans was the performance of Hans Braun, who made a bid for Germany's first track and field victory, in the four-hundred meter finals. He placed a close second to C. D. Reidpath from the U.S. who set an Olympic record.⁵⁴ German athletics were lagging behind the other European powers and the United States. Athletics in Germany could not keep pace with the nation's commercial and military achievements. Through the first five Olympiads, the Germans had not won a gold medal in any track or field event. According to the New York Times, the Germans felt athletic reform necessary.⁵⁵

Every host nation had done extremely well in its Olympic Games, and Germany did not want to be an exception.

⁵¹New York Times, 13 April 1913, sec. 4:3.

⁵²New York Times, 26 May 1911, 10.

⁵³Weyand, Olympic Pageant, 129.

⁵⁴Henry, Approved History, 91.

⁵⁵New York Times, 9 August 1913, 3.

The German Imperial Olympic Committee was intent on correcting the mistakes of the past and making the best possible showing at the German Olympic Games. Podbielski set athletic success in the 1916 Berlin Games as the German Olympic Committee's first priority. Podbielski viewed German physical development as far inferior to that of other countries participating in the Olympic Games.⁵⁶ The German Imperial Olympic Committee felt that German training techniques were lacking in effectiveness. They looked to the American college athletes as the world's best in most track and field events and viewed the American athletic system as an excellent example to study. The German Imperial Olympic Committee selected a four man contingent to visit the United States for the sole purpose of learning American training methods with the idea of adapting them to Germany.⁵⁷

The German commission consisted of Dr. Carl Diem, secretary-general of the German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games, Lieutenant Walter von Reichenau, representing the Ministry of War, Joseph Wartzel, a prominent athletic coach in Germany, and Martin Berner, a young German sportsman and writer.⁵⁸ Reichenau, in a New York Times interview, explained the commission had three objectives for their visit. First, the members planned to study American sport

⁵⁶Diem, Sports, 971.

⁵⁷New York Times, 9 August 1913, 3.

⁵⁸New York Times, 19 August 1913, 7.

in all its phases, including the American techniques for motivating athletes. The Germans also believed they needed to understand the American spirit which contributed to the molding of great athletes. Reichenau told the reporter that the committee wanted to understand the special methods used for athletic training from the grammar school level through high school and college to the various city athletic clubs. Finally, the commission wanted to hire an American coach to lead Germany into competition in 1916.⁵⁹

The committee departed from Berlin on August 7, 1913, sailing to New York aboard the North German Lloyd Steamship Bremen. Upon arriving in New York City, the committee was welcomed by several members of the New York Athletic Club. At the luncheon given in the Germans' honor, William Page, president of the New York Athletic Club, warned Americans to watch out for the Germans in 1916 and not to rely on their reputation from previous games. Page stressed Germany's remarkable commercial expansion during the last twenty years under Kaiser Wilhelm and predicted similar athletic successes for Germany. Carl Diem accepted the American praise and returned the compliment by stating his desire to study the inside workings of a country that had produced the greatest athletes in the world.⁶⁰ Diem emphasized that the results at Stockholm plainly showed

⁵⁹ New York Times, 31 August 1913, sec. 5:2.

⁶⁰ New York Times, 21 August 1913, 6.

how much the Germans had to do to overcome their deficiencies in athletic competition.⁶¹ Diem described America as the "land of the superlative, the land of records, not only in sports, but in technology, science, in everything."⁶²

The members of the German Committee spent their first week in New York. Here, they inspected New York City's municipal parks, taking notes on the systematic methods used in developing the athletic skills of boys. The Germans were also fascinated with the Amateur Athletic Union, especially with the number of athletes belonging to this organization. They concerned themselves with studying the various features of management and organization of the A.A.U. so as to incorporate these features into their own athletic associations. The New York stay also included a visit to the New York Board of Education camps and a view of America's national pastime--a baseball game at the Polo Grounds. Of special interest to the group was a visit to West Point Military Academy. Here they viewed the ways their German gymnastic methods were adapted to U.S. military training.⁶³ Walter von Reichenau was very impressed with the extent of sport in the U.S. army and navy and concluded "that the German army as the 'Schule unseres Völkes' must assume the

⁶¹New York Times, 9 August 1913, 3.

⁶²Carl Diem, Sport in Amerika (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1931), 5.

⁶³New York Times, 29 August 1913, 10.

role of justifying the physical and moral advantage of sport."⁶⁴

The committee traveled to Washington, D.C., and had an interview with President Woodrow Wilson. The members then proceeded to the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland. There, they visited with Lt. George S. Patton who had finished fifth in the Modern Pentathlon in Stockholm the previous year. The committee members then turned their attention toward the major universities in the Midwest and West, planning to return to New York City in late September to watch the Metropolitan Association Track and Field Championships.⁶⁵

In Chicago, the German committee accomplished one of its objectives. The members were able to obtain the service of an American athletic coach. On September 6, 1913, Dr. Alvin C. Kraenzlin signed a five year contract to prepare the Germans for the Olympic Games. Kraenzlin, a former University of Pennsylvania and intercollegiate track champion, was considered by many to have been one of the best all-around athletes during the 1890s.⁶⁶ Dr. Kraenzlin had displayed his athletic prowess internationally in the 1900 Paris Olympic Games, where he won first place medals in the sixty meter dash, the high hurdles, the two hundred

⁶⁴Woeltz, "Sport, Culture and Society," 302.

⁶⁵New York Times, 29 August 1913, 10.

⁶⁶New York Times, 6 September 1913, 8.

meter hurdles, and the broad jump.⁶⁷ Besides his personal great athletic ability, the German committee was impressed with Kraenzlin's knowledge of the German language and institutions.⁶⁸ He seemed a perfect choice.

On its return visit to New York City, the committee was again honored by the New York Athletic Club. The Germans showed their gratitude by conferring "the Order of the Golden Eagle," an honor authorized by Kaiser Wilhelm, on leading members of the A.A.U. Dr. Carl Diem summed up the Germans' feelings when he said that "this tour could not but help being of benefit and great value to developing the German Olympic team for 1916." He admitted that after seeing the perfect system in the United States, he could easily understand why the United States team had won every set of Olympic Games since the revival in 1896. Diem felt there was nothing in Germany to compare to the American system. Diem was optimistic

that with the help of Dr. Kraenzlin, we shall be able to undertake the work of preparing our athletes upon modern lines and thereby produce a favorable team for 1916. We have the material and know how to get the best results. Athletes and athletic life in America has astounded us.⁶⁹

The Imperial Commission and Dr. Kraenzlin then sailed for Germany.

⁶⁷ Henry, Approved History, 64.

⁶⁸ New York Times, 24 September 1913, sec. 4:1.

⁶⁹ New York Times, 23 September 1913, 12.

Kraenzlin was expected to do for German athletics what Field Marshal von Moltke had done for the army in 1871--to organize victory.⁷⁰ To accomplish this task, the German Imperial Olympic Committee gave Kraenzlin complete control of German athletics. Kraenzlin was assisted by four American directors who sent their assistants throughout the Empire giving pointers to likely candidates for the German Olympic team.

Upon his arrival in Germany, Kraenzlin told a New York Times correspondent that he witnessed a great athletic renaissance. He told the reporter that the Germans firmly believed their national life as a whole could only benefit from the healthy enthusiasm and rivalry found in athletic competition and in the Olympic sports.⁷¹ This new athletic enthusiasm was manifested on June 8, 1913, when Kaiser Wilhelm dedicated the new Berlin Stadium, in celebration of his twenty-fifth anniversary as the King of Prussia. The dedication of the Grönewald Stadium was hailed as the "greatest athletic exhibition Europe had ever witnessed,"⁷² a combination of religious fervor and German military pomp.⁷³ Thirty thousand athletes comprising the pick of young Germany

⁷⁰ New York Times, 5 October 1913, sec. 4:4.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² New York Times, 8 June 1913, sec. 3:2.

⁷³ New York Times, 9 June 1913, 3.

and representing every outdoor sport paraded around the stadium. The program consisted of games and the demonstration of athletic skills in honor of the Kaiser. The closing speech, given by General von Podbielski, president of the German Imperial Olympic Committee, urged the three million members of German athletic societies to organize for victory in the upcoming Olympic Games. He then dedicated the stadium "in the name of peace, to the development of physical strength, to the steeling of the will, and the fostering of patriotism."⁷⁴ As Podbielski concluded, ten thousand military carrier pigeons were released from the tower located in the center of the stadium. These pigeons carried a printed copy of the General's oration to the four corners of the German empire. Upon the arrival of the pigeons at their destinations, Podbielski's message was publically proclaimed to the citizens of Germany.⁷⁵

Thomas Beech, reporting the dedication ceremony for the London Daily Mail, remarked:

The new stadium will be the temple of a new cult; it is a super stadium for super Germans who are being trained into physical perfection superior to that of Frederick the Great's body-guards. The Kaiser's athletes will serve the national cause like soldiers.⁷⁶

The following day an editorial in the New York Times

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ New York Times, 8 June 1913, sec. 3:2.

⁷⁶ New York Times, 9 June 1913, 3.

proclaimed that the United States would find Germany a more formidable opponent than in previous Olympic Games and confirmed that the encouragement of the games by the Kaiser was in accordance with Germany's political policy.⁷⁷ The encouragement of the Olympic Games by the Kaiser, like that of Adolf Hitler twenty years later, conformed with German political policy and was looked upon by both leaders as an excellent instrument in which to carry out the German plan to impress the world with the achievements and accomplishments of the Fatherland.

Many of the delegates to the International Olympic Congress held at Lausanne in May, 1913, had recognized this German enthusiasm and energy. The talk of the Congress, as reported by a Daily Mail correspondent, concerned the astounding thoroughness and organization for the Berlin Games conducted by the German Organizing Committee, which the German Olympic Committee had delegated to manage the preparation for the VI Olympiad. The Daily Mail reported that the delegates "spoke of little else."⁷⁸ An example of this thoroughness was the German Organizing Committee's attempt to remedy a problem plaguing earlier Olympic Organizing Committees: How to quarter the hundreds of athletes participating in the Olympic Games. The German Organizing

⁷⁷ New York Times, 10 June 1913, 13.

⁷⁸ New York Times, 12 May 1913, 3.

Committee developed a novel plan. They offered private training camps to all participating nations. The German Organizing Committee asked each nation to bear a proportion of the expense necessary for the construction of athletes' quarters near the stadium. The Committee secured a large plot of land in the Gr newald pine forest for the purpose of building these dwellings. This locations would afford each participant the opportunity to reside in seclusion within walking distance of the Olympic stadium. Each facility would include all the comforts of home. Each country's furnishings, private cooks specializing in that country's foods, and an adjacent athletic field would be provided. The Swedes were first to take advantage of the German offer, and they paid to erect a traditional Swedish country house for their athletes. The German Organizing Committee, knowing many countries did not want to incur the cost of a building for a limited stay, also offered an alternate plan. The athletes would be housed in special portable barracks during their stay in Berlin.⁷⁹

The New York Times reported that this Olympic thoughtfulness and athletic explosion caused an Italian historian attending the International Olympic Conference to claim that "the movement is a phenomenon of which history will have to take serious notice."⁸⁰ Baron von Stein, of the

⁷⁹ New York Times, 11 January 1914, sec. 4:6.

⁸⁰ New York Times, 12 May 1913, 3.

German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games, speaking in behalf of the Imperial Chancellor, said, "The government looks upon the forthcoming Olympic Games as a national deed of the first magnitude, and must be prepared to support them by all means at its command."⁸¹ Late in 1913, the German Imperial Parliament supplemented the private donations received by the German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games with \$75,000 in order to provide the athletes and coaches with all ingredients necessary to guarantee victory in 1915.⁸² With a new stadium and a very supportive government, the 1916 Berlin Games looked as if they would be the best ever.

On June 4, 1914, the I.O.C. met at the Sorbonne in Paris to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the revival of the Olympic Games. At this meeting, the program for the 1916 Berlin Games was put into final form.⁸³ Antwerp, Belgium made a bid for the 1920 Olympic Games,⁸⁴ and the symbolic, five ringed Olympic flag--the flag of peace--was unfurled for the first time.⁸⁵ Robert Thompson, president of the American Olympic Committee, left the conference

⁸¹New York Times, 20 February 1913, 9.

⁸²New York Times, 22 September 1913, 4.

⁸³New York Times, 4 July 1914, 5.

⁸⁴Killanin and Rodda, Olympic Games 1980, 73.

⁸⁵Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 81.

convinced "the Berlin Games would be the greatest ever held" because of the thoroughness of its preparation and organization and the lack of political questions being addressed by the participating nations despite the nationalism and militarism building in Europe.⁸⁶

Five days after the Sorbonne Congress adjourned, an assassin shot and killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo, and World War I followed. Europe became engulfed in a war that touched all aspects of life. Dr. Kraenzlin promptly sailed back to the United States with his wife and family.⁸⁷ Another American trainer, Jim McCoughlin, who had been hired by Denmark in the summer of 1914, returned to the United States because Danish Olympic officials were convinced that it would be impossible for the Germans to hold the Olympic Games in 1916.⁸⁸

The Germans disagreed. The German Imperial Board for the Olympic Games anticipated a short war and therefore continued with their ambitious plans for the VI Olympics.⁸⁹ As the war progressed, the status of the Berlin Games remained in limbo. The German Imperial Olympic Committee

⁸⁶New York Times, 4 July 1914, 5.

⁸⁷New York Times, 25 July 1914, 4.

⁸⁸New York Times, 26 November 1914, 11.

⁸⁹Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 82.

firmly stated that Berlin was the only site for the VI Olympics and the games would be held as planned. At the November, 1914, I.O.C. meeting in Lyons, France, at which Germany was not represented, some members called for moving the games to a different site. Rumors leaked from this meeting that the I.O.C. had chosen the United States as the new Olympic site. It was believed that the American Olympic Committee, along with the A.A.U., was to be given a free hand in selecting the 1916 Olympic city but must use the program decided upon by the I.O.C. at the Sorbonne Congress in 1914.⁹⁰

The Germans stood their ground. In March, 1915, the German Imperial Olympic Committee announced to the I.O.C. members that Germany was still making official preparations for the Berlin Games and that only nations allied with Germany and neutral countries would be invited. Count Clary, president of the French Olympic Committee, promptly replied to this German claim. He felt

it may seem a trifle premature to speak now of the possibility of Olympic Games in 1916 and if the German Committee has assurance that its allies will participate, we doubt that neutral countries will do so. We refuse to believe the I.O.C. will allow the Olympic Games to be organized next year in one of the two empires responsible for the sanguinary war in Europe and we do not think there can be an Olympic meeting before 1920.⁹¹

⁹⁰New York Times, 10 March 1915, 11.

⁹¹New York Times, 11 March 1915, 12.

Many U.S. cities felt otherwise. Bids for the VI Olympics arrived from Chicago, New York City, Newark, Cleveland, San Francisco, and Philadelphia.⁹² Philadelphia businessmen tried to entice the I.O.C. with plans for a new 75,000-100,000 seat stadium.⁹³ Despite the protests of Count Clary and the growing movement to change the Olympic site, the Germans stood firm and claimed that Berlin was the only site for the next Olympic Games.⁹⁴ Coubertin expressed his feelings concerning the 1916 Berlin Games in a March, 1915, letter to the Associated Press. He claimed,

The I.O.C. has not the right to withdraw the celebration of the Olympic Games from the country to which the celebration was given without consulting that country. The Sixth Olympic Games remain and will remain credited to Berlin, but it is possible that they will not be held. In olden times it happened that it was not possible to celebrate the games but they did not for this reason cease to exist. I consider all that is said and written on this subject now to be useless; the I.O.C. will not allow its hand to be forced.⁹⁵

In April, 1915, Count von Franken-Sierstorpff of the German Imperial Olympic Committee said the Olympics would take place in Berlin at the end of the war.⁹⁶ A month later, the London Daily Chronicle reported what Coubertin had

⁹² New York Times, 13 March 1915, 11.

⁹³ New York Times, 11 March 1915, 12.

⁹⁴ New York Times, 13 March 1915, 11.

⁹⁵ New York Times, 19 March 1915, 12.

⁹⁶ New York Times, 10 April 1915, 8.

earlier forecast--the Berlin Olympic Games would not be held.⁹⁷ The summer of 1916 found the Berlin Stadium vacant of the projected great international contest. The Olympic flag of peace was not seen in Berlin.

The fact that Berlin was selected as the city to host the VI Olympic Games was a recognition of the tremendous growth of interest in sport in Germany. The founding of German associations for bowling, cycling, swimming, skating, fencing, and lawn-tennis during the late nineteenth century supported the new feeling in Germany of the importance of the spirit of contest and the pursuit of athletic records as opposed to the traditional views of the German Gymnastic Union. The Olympic Games provided Imperial Germany an opportunity to demonstrate to the world that they were as successful in the realm of sport as they had become industrially and commercially. Through the first five Olympiads, however, the Germans did not achieve the athletic success they had anticipated. To remedy this situation, Imperial Germany attempted to "Americanize" German sport by adapting American athletic ideas and methods for its sports associations. The year 1916 was to have been Germany's year to demonstrate its athletic prowess and its ability to stage the best Olympic Games ever held. The German Imperial Olympic Committee had selected a team that they hoped was destined for Olympic victory, while the German Organizing

⁹⁷New York Times, 4 May 1915, 2.

Committee, with help from the Imperial Government, constructed Olympic facilities never before witnessed at previous Olympic Games. Imperial Germany's chance to shine athletically disappeared with World War I. Germany would have to wait.

CHAPTER III

SPORT IN WEIMAR GERMANY

The war did not diminish German athletic endeavors. During the war, the German government stressed the importance of athletic participation for its entire population. German studies concluded that recreation and games were necessary to satisfy a basic human need. Therefore, the "Athletic Area Law" was passed requiring each German town to set aside public lands for the construction of athletic facilities.¹ The law prescribed that each town designate three square meters of playing area and one tenth square meter of gymnastics floor for each inhabitant living within two kilometers of the town. The law was willingly accepted, and the towns gradually achieved the standards the government had prescribed. Athletic facilities in German towns increased from one square meter per person in 1922 to 2.3 square meters by 1935.²

During the war, the German government also established the "Athletic Duty Laws." The government hoped to interest all Germans in some type of sport or exercise club. To provide external motivation for the German masses, an

¹Diem, Sports, 971.

²Ibid., 988.

athletic point system was established. Awards were given to individuals who fulfilled their quota and public recognition given for outstanding participation and performance.³

After the war, Germany witnessed a tremendous increase in the participation of its population in sport. One reason for the growth of sport was the eight hour day introduced in 1918, allowing more time for leisure activity. Another reason for this interest in sport may be attributed to the unpleasant conditions facing many Germans. They now sought escape in forms of pleasure that were readily available which included sport.⁴ This was evidenced by the German Sports Federation which claimed over fifty sport associations numbering over fifteen million members. Sport associations grew tremendously during the 1920s.⁵ For example, in 1919 the German Soccer Association had 150,000 members on its rolls; by 1920 it had over a million members and by 1927 this association claimed almost four million members under its auspices.⁶ One could speculate that the trend of escapism which expressed itself in Germany's growing sports associations was also responsible in part for Germans joining paramilitary organizations such as the

³Ibid., 972.

⁴Woeltz, "Sport, Culture and Society," 296.

⁵Horst Ueberhorst, Friedrich Ludwig Jahn 1778/1978 (Munich: Heinz Moos Verlag, 1978), 82-83.

⁶Woeltz, "Sport, Culture and Society," 296.

Free Corps and the Sturmabteilung. After the war, German sport associations began to take on a more military nature because of the Versailles Treaty's restriction of the German army to a professional force of 100,000 men. Sport could be used as a means of physically training the German population through paramilitary activities.

The Allied Powers had recognized the martial role sport could play in Germany after the war. Article 177 of the Treaty of Versailles prohibited

educational establishments, universities, societies of discharged soldiers, shooting or touring clubs and generally speaking associations of every description, whatever be the age of their members, from occupying themselves with any military matters. In particular, they were forbidden to instruct or exercise their members, or to allow them to be instructed or exercised, in the profession or use of arms. These societies, associations, educational establishments and universities must have no connections with the Minister of War or any other military authority.⁷

During the Weimar period, many paramilitary organizations used sport as a camouflage for their illegal military activities. When the Allies ordered the German government to disband the Free Corps in 1920, many Free Corps commanders kept their men together by establishing sports associations. The Sportverein Olympia, which included hundreds of former members of the Reinhard Free Corps, was one of dozens of sports groups, gymnastic societies and hiking clubs which were founded by former Free Corps leaders.

⁷U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919, Volume 13, Article 177, 331.

Members of the Rossbach Free Corps, for example, founded the Turnerschaft Ulrich von Hutten, which like the Sportverein Olympia, was only a clever camouflage for the Free Corps.⁸ Another camouflage for the disbanded bands of Free Corps was the Turn-und Sportabteilung, a sports association established in November, 1920, which served as a paramilitary arm of the National Socialist German Workers Party.⁹ According to the Party proclamation, the Gymnastics and Sports Division was established within the Party to serve as a means of bringing the National Socialist youthful members together in a powerful organization for the purpose of utilizing their strength as an offensive force at the disposal of the National Socialist movement.¹⁰ During the summer of 1920, the name S.A.(Sturmabteilung) gradually came into use but the National Socialists still used the name Turn-und Sportabteilung when appealing for membership in the paramilitary organization in their newspaper Völkischer Beobachter.¹¹ Many organizations adopted sport as a disguise for their true intentions.

⁸Robert G. L. Waite, Vanguard of Nazism The Free Corps Movement in Postwar Germany 1918-1923 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1952), 204.

⁹James M. Diehl, Paramilitary Politics in Weimar Germany (Bloomington, Indiana: University Press, 1977), 105-106.

¹⁰Quoted in Bullock, Hitler, A Study in Tyranny, 73.

¹¹Diehl, Paramilitary Politics, 105-106.

The Conference of Ambassadors, the overseers of the Versailles Treaty, were not satisfied with the results of Article 177. On January 17, 1927, the eve of the Inter-Allied Military Commission of Control's withdrawal from Germany, the Commission instructed the German government to issue a circular to the German states demanding the immediate dissolution of associations which concerned themselves with military questions. Many associations disregarded the warning while others halted their military exercises temporarily and then resumed them immediately after the evacuation of the occupying troops.¹² For many people, sport began to serve a dual purpose in German society.

The foundation of modern athletic training in Germany was built upon the lessons learned from Dr. Kraenzlin and his assistants in 1913-1914. The Germans now took a scientific approach to training their athletes.¹³ When Kraenzlin and his assistants decided to return to the United States in 1914, an athletic vacuum developed. The National Board for Physical Exercise was established to fill the void left by the Americans' departure.¹⁴ This athletic board faced an immediate problem. Germany lacked qualified coaches capable

¹²U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919, Volume 13, 308.

¹³Diem, Sports, 971.

¹⁴Ibid., 972.

of teaching athletics on the basis of scientific research. The National Board for Physical Exercise therefore organized a smaller committee, the Office of Research Coordination, to train instructors and to teach the new scientific methods to the coaches of German athletes. The coaches then would incorporate the new athletic methods into the German school system as was the case in the United States. The Germans felt that their scientific training methods would eventually produce positive results.¹⁵

Using the United States as its model, the National Board for Physical Exercise desired to establish a competitive athletic atmosphere beyond the university level. This was accomplished in 1920 with the establishment of the Hochschule für Leibesübungen, a graduate school for athletics. The best athletes in Germany eventually found their way to this establishment. Here the intention was to make the good athletes great ones, capable of competing on an international level. The school was staffed with physiologists, anatomists, and educators who combined their expertise toward the goal of developing world class competitors. The knowledge acquired from their athletic experiments were presented regularly to German athletic trainers in lectures conducted at the University of Berlin and the Grünewald Stadium.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibid., 982.

¹⁶ Ibid.

The Hochschule produced a revolution in German athletics. The commonly accepted Swedish training methods were cast aside and replaced in Germany with a carefully devised systematic program based on medical research. The Hochschule also graduated a large number of women athletic instructors knowledgeable in the new progressive ways. From this, other changes quickly developed. Women were beginning to feel the need to build an athletic training program that was uniquely female. This trend culminated in 1925 with the Föhr Island athletic conference, organized and attended solely by women athletic activists. From this conference, exercise programs led by female instructors were developed solely for the needs of women.¹⁷

The individual largely responsible for the sound tradition of German athletics during and after the war was Theodor Lewald. Lewald firmly believed that the well-being of the state went hand in hand with the physical well-being of its population. In 1919, he served as president of the National Board for Physical Exercise and in that capacity presented reports to German civic organizations supporting the cultural significance of athletics. He held educational conferences on such subjects as physical development, the building of school athletic facilities, and the development of athletic teachers.¹⁸ At the same time, he held an

¹⁷Ibid., 983.

¹⁸Ibid., 977.

official position within the German government. Lewald served as an undersecretary of state in the Reich Ministry of the Interior and negotiated the Commercial Treaty with Poland in 1923.¹⁹ Despite his busy schedule, Lewald always made time to pursue his athletic duties.²⁰ Politically, Lewald helped influence the National Assembly to make physical exercise the responsibility of the national government. The assembly recommended that national rules for athletics be established. It recommended adult gymnastic instruction and year-round daily one hour gymnastic workouts in all German schools. The National Assembly also urged the support of sports clubs through special travel rates and tax exemptions as well as the appointment of officials to enforce all of these on a national, state, and local level.²¹

German athletics, however, was being smothered because most international sport federations would not allow Germans to enter into competition. Lewald wanted the wound of war healed. He desired German participation in the Olympic Games.²² The first Olympic Games after the war were in Antwerp, Belgium, which a hastily called I.O.C. meeting in

¹⁹ International Who's Who, 5th ed. (1940), s.v. "Lewald, Theodor," 666.

²⁰ Diem, Sports, 977.

²¹ Ibid., 989.

²² David Kanin, Political History of the Olympic Games (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1981), 51.

April, 1919, had selected as the 1920 Olympic site.²³

Germany did not participate in these games. Coubertin, in his book Mémoires Olympiques, addressed this situation by remarking that

A difficult problem posed itself--the participation of the "Central Empires" as they were known. Few months had passed since the last gun had been fired. Good sense indicated that German athletes could not participate . . . The solution was simple, it was that at each Olympic celebration it is the Organizing Committee, that, following the formula established and employed since 1896 issues the invitation.²⁴

Germany along with Austria, Hungary, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Bolshevik Russia would continue to watch the Olympic Games from the sidelines until their adversaries felt they had earned a place in the political system.²⁵

The New York Times reported on January, 1922, that the French sporting periodical AUTO predicted that Germany would be shortly readmitted into international sports organizations and foresaw German participation in the VIII Olympiad scheduled for Paris in 1924. The periodical based its forecast on the grounds that Germany had been invited to participate in the Genoa conference. The article said AUTO predicted that neutral countries would use the conference to schedule athletic contests with Germany.²⁶ Later that

²³ Lucas, Modern Olympic Games, 95-96.

²⁴ Quoted in Henry, Approved History, 156.

²⁵ Kanin, Political History, 47.

²⁶ New York Times, 21 January 1922, 11.

year, at an Olympic reception at Lausanne, Switzerland, Pierre Coubertin, the president of the I.O.C., speaking as a private citizen, stated that Germany should be allowed back into Olympic competition. Coubertin said that "the right of Germans to compete at the Olympic Games stands above discussion. The I.O.C., in my opinion, cannot fail to elect very soon new German members." The French Olympic Committee, however, chose not to invite Germany and the other "villians of peace" to the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris.²⁷ In 1924, however, Theodor Lewald was appointed as the German member of the I.O.C.²⁸ The wound of war was gradually healing. In September, 1924, the New York Times reported that Coubertin called the Olympics "a games for all nations" and said there would be no restrictions on the invitations to the next Olympics in Amsterdam, Netherlands in 1928. Coubertin added that "there has never been any question of sidetracking the Germans in Olympic competition" and said the reason for Germany's absence from the Paris Games was due to the interference by bureaucratic French politicians.²⁹

The German people, however, were not inactive in athletic competition during their absence from the Olympic

²⁷New York Times, 11 December 1922, 20.

²⁸Diem, Sports, 978.

²⁹New York Times, 25 September 1924, 19.

Games. The Germans held their own National Games. The Winter Games were held in January, 1920, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in Bavaria followed by a summer meet at Berlin's Grünewald stadium. More than ten thousand German athletes participated, and they pronounced the Games a success.³⁰

The Grünewald stadium had survived the war, and by 1920 was commonly referred to as the "stadium without rest." Doctors, physical educators, journalists, and leaders of various sport unions occupied offices in the stadium. Athletes from throughout Germany came to listen to lectures and use the first-class facilities provided at the stadium. The Grünewald stadium eventually proved inadequate to accommodate the athletic demands. To remedy this situation, plans were drawn to expand the stadium to the north, incorporating drained marshland on which the Berlin Union Club had hereditary tenure. The Reichstag appropriated funds to build a sports forum to supplement the stadium overflow. On October 18, 1925, Paul von Hindenburg, president of Germany, laid the foundation stone for the sports complex. Werner March, son of the original Grünewald stadium architect, directed the construction of the sports forum. The sports forum construction temporarily came to a halt because of the German government's decision to cut programs and save

³⁰ Diem, Sports, 986.

money because of economic problems. A four hundred meter tunnel connecting the stadium to the sports forum, a women's residence, and a half-constructed gymnastics hall, housing the German College of Physical Education, stood as a reminder of the grandiose plans the German government envisioned. The world-wide depression in 1930 caused the temporary halt to become permanent.³¹ Another German regime would finish the job the Weimar government started.

In 1923, Germany had begun to compete against its former allies and neutral countries in soccer matches. In September, 1925, Italy, because of its disappointment with the Treaty of Versailles, influenced the International Fencing Federation to allow Germany back into its fold.³² A month later, Germany signed the Locarno Treaties, which guaranteed the French-German and German-Belgium post-war boundaries. In March, 1926, the League of Nations admitted Germany and gave it a permanent seat on the Council. The Germans then reopened athletic relations with their former enemies, France and England, and rowed in the World Crew Championships in 1926.³³

The Germans continued their National Games in 1926. Their German National Games, however, were not held

³¹Ibid., 984.

³²Kanin, Political History, 51-52.

³³Ibid., 52.

exclusively in Berlin. They, like the Olympic Games, changed sites. There might be several reasons for this. German cities, in order to get the Games, constructed new stadiums to entice their selection. These stadiums could be paid for with the receipts from the Games. Also with the National Games, Germans from throughout Germany and Europe spent days in the host city, spending money and helping the municipal economy. The German government, in turn, could use the National Games to encourage cities to build athletic complexes in hope of getting the games, which in turn helped the well-being of the nation. The 1926 German National Winter Games took place in Triberg/Titisee and Garmisch-Partenkirchen and the summer games in Cologne, where a new stadium had been constructed in 1924. According to Carl Diem, Cologne was selected because the tension was relaxed and the atmosphere was good because of the French army's withdrawal from the Rhineland.³⁴ German women started competing in the second Women's World Games in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1926. The success of women's athletic programs in Germany was seen in the German women's first place finish in a seventeen team field in Prague, Czechoslovakia, at the Third Women's World Games in 1930.³⁵

³⁴Diem, Sports, 986.

³⁵Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 70. The German women defended their crown in 1934 finishing first again at the Fourth Women's World Games held in London.

The IX Olympics had been awarded to Amsterdam, Netherlands. The Netherlands, a neutral in World War I, believed that Germany was once again a member of the international community and invited Germany to the Games. Germany promptly accepted. Fifteen years of German athletic research and training produced positive results. The German team exhibited a good all-around performance in the track and field events, winning five bronze medals. The German four-hundred meter and sixteen-hundred meter relay team finished second behind the United States. Lina Radhe made German athletic history by winning the eight-hundred meter run, becoming the first German to bring a gold medal in track and field back to Germany.³⁶

In September, 1928, the New York Times reported that Germany was optimistic concerning the Olympic Games and its benefits to the Fatherland. German politicians saw the games as profitable for Germany because it allowed Germany intercourse with other nations which not only helped dispel the hatred bred from the war but furthered the idea of permanent peace. Politicians said because of their long isolation in world affairs all contacts with foreigners must be used for better international relations. For these reasons the Olympic Games were gratifying to German political circles. The New York Times reported the Weimar government appropriated 1,500,000 marks annually for the encouragement

³⁶Henry, Approved History, 190-192.

and promotion of sport in Germany. In addition, various states contributed toward the building of stadiums and provided suitable athletic places and equipment for the growing athletic associations in Germany. The German government, through this policy, strove to coordinate the physical development of its population with the mental. The New York Times reported this athletic policy was adapted by the Weimar government to correct the ten years (1914-1924) of short rations and malnutrition that the German population had experienced because of the war and the following inflation. In 1928, Carl Diem, secretary-general of the National Board for Physical Exercise, in an interview with the New York Times stated that this movement still absorbs the energies of the German government leaders. He claimed the government was pleased with the growth of German athletic associations and that the German success at the Amsterdam games justified the Weimar government athletic policy.³⁷

Carl Diem told the New York Times that the preparations for the Amsterdam games created a more general interest in sport than had ever been shown in a country before. Diem said, "Not only did the nation watch the daily progress of the games themselves but young and old enrolled in athletic associations bent on gaining strength and keeping them

³⁷New York Times, 2 September 1928, sec. 2:7.

physically fit." Diem stated in the past few months that membership in sport associations had grown nearly 30 percent and that in universities a new athletic spirit had become evident. He told the reporters that "athletic perfection had not been reached but a start has been made." Diem said that the German's aim of providing general training for the masses, not the creation of a few athletic record holders, has been attained to a high degree. Diem pointed out that this was evidenced at the Amsterdam games where German athletes showed a high degree of sportsmanship by finishing in the top six places seventy-seven times. He told the New York Times correspondent that most Germans lacked the stamina to win first place which he traced back to the retarded development due to the living conditions of these men and women during the war. Diem affirmed that politically Germany had benefitted through contact with foreign people at Amsterdam. He said that Germany and France were on the best of terms athletically. According to Diem, German leaders of sport and politics welcomed the Los Angeles Olympics and they saw great benefits for the Reich in them. Diem reminded the New York Times that Germany did not share the doubts found in English papers that the Olympiads were not worthwhile, nor did Germany share the fear of the Pope that the Olympic games did not improve international

relations. Diem emphasized that Germany was optimistic toward the Olympic Games.³⁸

This feeling was also realized by the I.O.C. In 1932, the German National Board for Physical Exercise received the Coup Olympique award from the I.O.C. for their success in the Amsterdam Games held in the summer of 1928. Carl Diem explained the I.O.C. decision was based on the fact that "the German flag was raised eleven times (including their first track & field victory) on the highest victory mast and twenty-six times on the other." Germany, which had not participated in the Olympics for sixteen years was second best of forty-five participating nations and surprised the world.³⁹

The Germans looked forward to the X Olympic Games in 1932 which had been voted unanimously to Los Angeles in an I.O.C. session in Rome in 1923.⁴⁰ This German enthusiasm was manifest at the German National Games of 1930, held in the new Breslau stadium. These Games were hailed as unforgettable days of German national consciousness. These Games attracted Germans living overseas as well as Germans living in southeast Europe, especially Czechoslovakia. Many Germans felt these games were to the Fatherland what the first Olympic Games had been for Greece.⁴¹

³⁸Ibid. ³⁹Diem, Sports, 995.

⁴⁰Henry, Approved History, 102.

⁴¹Diem, Sports, 986.

With active participation in the IX Olympics in Amsterdam and the Olympic facilities already intact in Berlin, the German Olympic Committee began to campaign for the games that had been impossible in 1916. The Germans were given a grand occasion to impress the I.O.C. delegates at the ninth Olympic Congress held at the University of Berlin from May 25-30, 1930. The purpose of the Congress was to discuss important Olympic questions such as the Los Angeles Olympic program, rules of athletic qualifications, and the participation of women. The Germans viewed the Congress as an excellent chance to express their desire for the 1936 Games. Delegates to the Congress immediately came face to face with the German hard sell. They were welcomed at the opening ceremony by Dr. Joseph Wirth, the German minister of the interior. Wirth, speaking on behalf of the German government, emphasized the importance of making physical culture a life-long habit. He pointed out to the delegates that Germany possessed more than fifty large sport organizations, numbering more than eight million members. Dr. Ferdinand Schmidt, rector of the University of Berlin, told the delegates that Germany emphasized both intellectual and physical accomplishments. He urged the delegates not to allow the Olympics to lose sight of the original Greek ideal of balance. Schmidt described the athletic atmosphere in Germany when he claimed that "if formerly, too much value was placed on intellectual as opposed to physical cultures

in Germany, the pendulum now threatens to swing in the other direction." Theodor Lewald, president of the German Olympic Committee (G.O.C.), then reminded the delegates that Germany, through the efforts of Johann Joachim Winckelman and Ernst Curtius, had an excellent claim as the original author of the modern Olympics.⁴²

The Germans planned a gala week of entertainment for the I.O.C. The delegates spent the opening night of the Congress at the State Opera House witnessing the best in German gymnastics. The program progressed from simple somersaults to the most complicated rhythmic mass drills and terpsichorean dancing. Many international experts declared it was the finest exhibition of its kind and predicted that Germany would be a serious competitor in these events at the X Olympic Games in Los Angeles.⁴³

The following night, the delegates were entertained at a dinner given by the German secretary of state and city officials of Berlin. The festivities continued. The delegates attended a garden festival with President Paul von Hindenburg, a reception given by the Prussian government at the castle at Potsdam and a startling performance of airplanes at the Tempelhof Aerodrome. The Germans provided an impressive show for the international visitors. Before leaving Berlin, the I.O.C. took time to inspect the

⁴²New York Times, 26 May 1930, 17.

⁴³Ibid.

Grünewald stadium and stated that with a few alterations it would meet the requirements for Olympic competition.⁴⁴

Daniel J. Ferris, secretary-treasurer of the American Amateur Athletic Union, spent several weeks in Berlin following the Olympic Congress. He arrived back in the United States impressed with German athletics. Ferris claimed,

the entire German nation is in back of athletics and the ordinary athletic fields are as finely equipped as those at our great universities. At one field I saw a high jump pit where fifteen men could practice at the same time with similar arrangements for the shot putters. As a striking instance of how athletic-minded the German nation is, I visited one playground at 9:15 A.M. and there were over 200 boys practicing. Those fields hold as many as 1,000 athletes daily.⁴⁵

Ferris predicted a German Olympic victory in 1936. He claimed "Germany will be reinforced in its determination to win in 1936 by the fact that it is likely to be the scene of the 1936 Games." Ferris noted that Berlin, Cologne, Frankfort, and Nuremberg were all bidding for the 1936 meet.⁴⁶

The German interest in sport was also recognized by others. Writing in 1929, American educators Thomas Alexander and Beryl Parker commented that the first request of the German schoolboy upon meeting an American is always about sports in America. Alexander and Parker stated that

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ New York Times, 15 June 1930, sec. 10:1.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

this German eagerness to find out about sport in foreign countries revealed one of the outstanding traits of the people of Weimar Germany--their enthusiasm for sport and recreation. The educators stated that the whole country had embarked upon a crusade for health and renewed vitality. This crusade could be seen in the transformation of the well-known corpulent German youth of years past into the slender, flexible and vigorous German youth of today.⁴⁷

Alexander and Parker also noted that every social caste and political party devoted much time and attention to the sport phases of its organization. They said that both the proletarian and monarchist leaders claim that the athletic field is the best recruiting and training ground for their young members. The Americans said that religious groups also make sport a part of their programme and vie for control of the young German's free time.⁴⁸

The twenty-ninth session of the I.O.C. met from April 25-27, 1931, in Barcelona, Spain, to consider the final program for the X Olympics to be held in Los Angeles the following year and to select the site for the XI Olympics, to be held in 1936. Barcelona, which was competing with Berlin for the 1936 Olympic Games, was the focal point of

⁴⁷ Thomas Alexander and Beryl Parker, The New Education in the German Republic, (New York: The John Day Company, 1929), 84.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 91.

autonomist, anti-clerical, and working class protests against the traditional Spanish state. The I.O.C. sessions were held almost within the sound of rifle shots.⁴⁹

According to the Official Report of the German Olympic Committee for the 1936 Berlin Games, the revolution in Spain prevented the Spanish members of the I.O.C. as well as many other I.O.C. delegates from attending. The German members were present. Dr. Lewald presented the advantages which Berlin enjoyed in comparison with Barcelona. Lewald presented the latest plans for the remodeling of the Grönewald Stadium and called attention to Berlin's ideal situation in the heart of Europe. He emphasized Berlin's justified claims to an Olympic Festival in view of the fact that the 1916 Games had been prevented by the World War. He referred to the large number of people which could be expected to make the journey to Berlin, whereas Barcelona, because of its less favorable location and the problems at home, could not hope for nearly so many active participants or spectators.⁵⁰ The voting on the question of the XI Olympics was left to secret ballot, according to

⁴⁹ Henry, Approved History, 40.

⁵⁰ Organisationkomitee für die XI Olympiade Berlin 1936, Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, Berlin, 1936 (Berlin: W. Limpert, 1937), 42. Cited hereafter: Official Report The XIth Olympic Games.

I.O.C. procedure. News filtering from this session reported that "Berlin was understood to be in the van."⁵¹

Baillet-Latour, president of the I.O.C., proposed, however, with the German delegates approval, that in view of the reduced number of members present at the Barcelona meeting the absentees be requested to submit their votes by telegraph or by letter. This resulted in forty-three votes for Berlin as opposed to sixteen for Barcelona.⁵² The three German members of the I.O.C. received official word of Berlin's acceptance as the 1936 Olympic site on May 15, 1931.⁵³

Carl Diem believed the favorable impression made upon the I.O.C. through the German preparations for the Olympic Congress, a booklet distributed to all I.O.C. delegates describing in detail the German Sports Program, and the athletic demonstrations performed during the Congress greatly contributed to Germany's selection over Barcelona.⁵⁴

The Official Report of the German Olympic Committee boasted that Germany greeted this announcement with jubilation. The official organ of the German National Board for Physical Exercise declared that

. . . The World expects the German nation to organize and present this Festival in an exemplary

⁵¹New York Times, 27 April 1931, 28.

⁵²Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 42.

⁵³New York Times, 16 May 1931, 20. ⁵⁴Diem, Sports, 995.

manner, emphasizing at the same time its moral and artistic aspects. This means that all forces must be exerted, that sacrifices of a physical as well as financial nature must be made, and there is no doubt but that all expectations will be fulfilled for the advancement of the Olympic ideals and the honor of Germany.⁵⁵

The German members of the I.O.C. guaranteed the Berlin Games would continue the Olympic tradition of splendor even though Germany was experiencing the world-wide depression. The three German members of the I.O.C.--Theodor Lewald, a former German under secretary of the state, president of the central German sport federation and the man most responsible for Germany's return to the Olympic Games; Karl Ritter von Halt, a member of Germany's 1912 Olympic team, an international banker and president of the German track and field federation; and Herzog Adolf Friedrich zu Mecklenburg, an international sportsman who retained the European tradition of nobility in athletics--immediately started making plans for the 1936 Berlin Games.⁵⁶ The New York Times reported these three men said that the financial questions that concerned the previous Olympic Games did not worry the city of Berlin because the sports complex constructed for the 1916 Olympics was still intact. The complex had been maintained throughout the 1920s and was in excellent condition. The Germans planned to enlarge the

⁵⁵ Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 43.

⁵⁶ Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 168.

stadium from 50,000 to 90,000 and aimed to make the sports grounds the most modern and beautiful in the world although they all agreed that it would be difficult to surpass the Los Angeles stadium, the site for the 1932 Olympic track and field competitions.⁵⁷

The German athletes almost did not get to Los Angeles. The Depression in Germany almost caused the German Olympic Committee to modify its plan to send 132 athletes to the X Olympic Games. The New York Times reported that Carl Diem said that 490,000 marks were needed to fund German participation in the Los Angeles Games. On August, 29, 1930, the New York Times reported that the German government pledged to contribute 190,000 marks and informed Diem that the balance must come from sporting organizations and public drives.⁵⁸ In October, 1930, however, the German government informed the G.O.C. that it needed to finance the Olympic venture as much as possible. The government said that unless money was raised by public drives the G.O.C. would have to send a smaller squad than first projected to Los Angeles.⁵⁹ On November 16, 1930, the New York Times reported that the Germans' financial worry was now solved. The government agreed to pay one third of the

⁵⁷ New York Times, 16 May, 1931, 20.

⁵⁸ New York Times, 29 August 1930, 15.

⁵⁹ New York Times, 25 October 1930, 14.

expenses with the G.O.C. and other German athletic organizations paying the other two thirds. The New York Times said that German-Americans in the United States expected to raise a special fund of \$100,000 to guarantee Germany's participation in the 1932 Games.⁶⁰ The German Olympic Committee hoped that Germany's persistence to be represented at the Los Angeles Games in the face of its extremely critical economic and political situation would influence the participation of the world in the Berlin Games in 1936.⁶¹

The Depression did not seem to bother the X Olympics held in Los Angeles in 1932. The United States Organizing Committee spent fifteen million dollars for the smooth and efficient operation of these Olympic Games. The Los Angeles Games surpassed all previous Olympic Games in the number of spectators viewing the contests (1,750,000) and the number of athletes participating (4,000). The United States Organizing Committee felt that no other Olympic Games could surpass its attendance record and Olympic facilities.⁶²

The Los Angeles athletic facilities were magnificent. The United States Organizing Committee was able to use several existing sport facilities and establishments in Los Angeles. These facilities were altered to meet Olympic requirements. Only two new stadiums were necessary. A ten

⁶⁰New York Times, 16 November 1930, sec. 10:12.

⁶¹Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 43.

⁶²New York Times, 16 July 1936, sec. 5:3.

thousand seat swimming stadium and a seventeen thousand seat rowing stadium were constructed to complete the Olympic facilities. The focal point of Olympic activity was the new 104,000 seat Los Angeles Memorial Colosseum. Boxing, wrestling, and weightlifting events were held in the ten thousand seat Olympic auditorium. Eighteen-hundred spectators could view fencing matches in the State Armory located in the Olympic Park, while 95,000 people were capable of watching the equestrian events at the Rivera Country Club. The 85,000 seat Pasadena Rose Bowl was the site for all the 1932 cycling races.⁶³

Bill Henry, sports technical director of the X Olympiad in Los Angeles and a member of the executive staff of the Los Angeles Organizing Committee, stated that the Los Angeles Games offered a facility never found at any previous Games. Henry said the Los Angeles Organizing Committee built an Olympic village to provide equality of living conditions for all athletes and to promote friendship among the athletes of the various nations. The village was an Olympic ideal which had never materialized because the National Organizing Committees had lacked sufficient financial assets. Paris in 1924 and Amsterdam in 1928 had attempted a village but dropped the proposition

⁶³United States Organizing Committee, The Games of the xth Olympiad--Los Angeles 1932 Official Report (U.S.A.: xth Olympiade Committee of the Games of Los Angeles, 1933), 67-74. Cited hereafter: The Games of the xth Olympiad.

on the grounds that it was too large an expense for something temporary. They viewed the venture as financially unsafe.⁶⁴

The construction of the Olympic village was first conceived by the Organizing Committee for the X Olympiad in 1930.⁶⁵ A 250 acre tract of land in the Baldwin Hills, located ten minutes from the Olympic stadium, was donated by its owner for temporary occupancy. Construction of the portable "Olympic cottages" began on April 1, 1932, and the structures were completed in time for the early arrivals for the summer Games. Four men shared a wooden house containing two bedrooms, a shower-bath, and a front porch. Each nation was provided its own dining room and kitchen complete with native menus prepared by its own chef. A hospital, fire station, police station, post office, short-wave station, a hospitality house, and open air theater were all housed within the fenced-in privacy of the village. Each athlete living in the village paid a fixed cost of two dollars per day which covered housing, meals, transportation, entertainment, and other services provided by the Organizing Committee.⁶⁶ The women of the X Olympics were housed in the Chapman Park Hotel in Los Angeles. The hotel offered all services provided the men for the same price.⁶⁷ The village

⁶⁴Henry, Approved History, 310-311. ⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶The Games of the Xth Olympiad, 287.

⁶⁷Ibid.

plan which the Germans had planned for the 1916 Games proved so successful and popular it has become customary at every Olympics since.⁶⁸

The German Olympic Committee was intent on picking up where Los Angeles had left off, making the 1936 Berlin Games the new model for all future celebrations.⁶⁹ This task was willingly accepted by Theodor Lewald and Carl Diem who became the two most observant spectators at the Los Angeles Games. Lewald, as president of the German Olympic Committee, attended to fulfill his ceremonial duties. Carl Diem, as secretary-general of the German Olympic Committee, went to Los Angeles for practical reasons. He paid particular attention to the presentation of the Games in Los Angeles in order to derive useful knowledge for the great task facing Germany. He worked behind the scenes gathering information on flags, programs, and tickets; he sketched the composition of the Baldwin Hills Olympic village and recorded conversations with Olympic cooks regarding the dietary preference of the participating nations.⁷⁰ The two German officials left Los Angeles with the expressed aim of making the Berlin Games the best Germany had to offer.

Upon their return, Lewald and Diem utilized the knowledge gained at the Los Angeles Games to draw up a plan for

⁶⁸ Killanin and Rodda, Olympic Games 1980, 98.

⁶⁹ New York Times, 16 July 1935, sec. 5:3.

⁷⁰ Official Report the XIth Olympic Games, 238-239.

the entire work of preparing for the Berlin Games. In October, 1932, Carl Diem submitted a memorandum entitled "Our Expectations" dealing with the preparatory work for the XIth Olympiad to the German Olympic Committee. Diem wrote:

In order that the success of the Olympic Games may be assured, they must not be regarded as the exclusive affair of the German sporting and gymnastic circles nor of the City of Berlin, but must command the interest and support of the entire German nation. If they can be organized on this basis, the Games of 1936 will be the most outstanding Festival of modern times, for German interest in sport is not less than that of the United States and is probably greater than that of any country in Europe . . .⁷¹

Diem noted that the Olympic Festival could be used as a means of getting the world to Germany which in his opinion had become a center of interest because of its outstanding achievements in the face of its difficult economic situation. Diem said that the response to the Berlin Olympics would be great among Germans in foreign countries and that the 1936 Olympic Games would be the most imposing of all international festivals, a German celebration of unparalleled proportions. He said the Olympics afforded Germany the chance to invite all Germans living in foreign lands to visit the Fatherland to see its beauty and significance. According to Diem, the Olympic Games are not just confined to Berlin but concern every German. Diem wrote that "Berlin is only

⁷¹Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 44-45.

the meeting place and the first objective of the visitors and from here they will tour all Germany, this being true of athletes as well as spectators."⁷² The German Olympic Committee approved Diem's plans during a meeting on November 11, 1932. The German Olympic Committee authorized its president, Theodor Lewald, to form a special Organizing Committee which would be responsible for the presentation of the Berlin Games.⁷³

Lewald and Diem had returned to a changing political climate in Germany. Various groups were struggling to gain the support of the socially discontented. The electoral strength of the National Socialist Party (Nazi) was growing in the Reichstag as their power grew in the streets. Through a series of Reichstag elections, the National Socialist Party of Adolf Hitler was able to seize power. On January 30, 1933, President Paul von Hindenburg appointed Hitler chancellor of Germany.

World War I did not erase the programs for sport instituted in Germany before the war. After World War I, Germany was considered an outlaw nation and was isolated from international competition until 1926 when they were accepted into the League of Nations. During this international athletic hiatus, however, German sport continued to prosper as evidenced by the German National Games established to bring all

⁷²Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 44-45.

⁷³Ibid., 46.

Germans together in athletic competition similar to the Olympic Games to which they were not invited. Through the efforts of Theodor Lewald, Germany was invited to the IX Olympic Games. The German Olympic Committee sent a team to Amsterdam that performed better than any German team in previous Olympic competition. Germany's position in the European community was affirmed in 1931, when Berlin was selected as the city to host the XI Olympic Games to be held in 1936. The German Organizing Committee, picking up where they left off in 1916 and using the 1932 Los Angeles Games as their example, were determined to produce the best Olympic Games to date. But the effect of the sudden political change that swept over Germany beginning in January, 1933, was still unclear.

CHAPTER IV

SPORT IN NAZI GERMANY

The first pronouncement by the National Socialist Party regarding the Olympic Games, which had been awarded to Germany in 1931, was negative. Heinrich Himmler, leader of the Schutzstaffel (S.S.), originally opposed hosting the Olympics, while the Nazi anti-Semitic newspaper Der Stürmer, published by Julius Streicher, denounced the Games as an infamous festival dominated by Jews. Streicher's headlines preached that the "new Germany " would have nothing to do with the Olympic Games.¹ The Nazi Party called the German Olympic Committee "a liberal, pacifist foreign-loving organization and a slave to the Jews." The Nazi Party denounced the president of the German Olympic Committee, Theodor Lewald, because of his Jewish ancestry. Parrots of the Nazi Party protested against the dishonorable intention of hosting an international athletic contest in Germany.² This attitude was soon to change.

On January 9, 1933, three weeks before the National Socialist takeover, the German government had appointed Dr. Erich Gritzbach, right hand man of Franz Bracht, German

¹Henry, Approved History, 174.

²Diem, Sports, 1000.

minister of the interior, to act as chief commissioner for the German government for the 1936 Games. The German Olympic Committee greeted this appointment with enthusiasm because it supplied the missing link between the German government and the German Olympic Committee. The official participation of the German government was considered necessary by the German Olympic Committee because it afforded the committee financial stability in the operation of the 1936 Games and guaranteed the remodeling of the Grönewald Stadium, a project beyond the financial ability of the city of Berlin or any unofficial body.³

The German Organizing Committee for the 1936 Olympic Games held its initial meeting on January 24, 1933, at the Berlin City Hall less than one week prior to Adolf Hitler's appointment.⁴ German I.O.C. members Karl Ritter von Halt, and Herzog Adolf Friedrich zu Mecklenburg along with Carl Diem, secretary-general of the German Olympic Committee, and Heinrich Sahn, mayor of Berlin, joined Lewald as the leaders of the Organizing Committee.⁵ The Times (London) reported that at this meeting the German government announced it would give its full cooperation to ensure the success of the 1936 Games.⁶ The minutes of the German

³New York Times, 11 January 1933, 24.

⁴Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 46-47.

⁵New York Times, 17 March 1933, 25.

⁶Times (London), 27 January 1933, 5.

Organizing Committee stated that the committee proposed to the Secretary of the Interior a budget of 5.5 million marks as financing for the preparations of the upcoming Olympic Games. The Organizing Committee planned to repay the German government through spectator revenues received during the Olympic festival. The money was acquired.⁷ The first hurdle was cleared, but the German Organizing Committee would soon face a more determined obstacle--The National Socialist Party.

On February 9, 1933, the German Organizing Committee asked German President Paul von Hindenburg to accept the patronage for the 1936 Berlin Games. It was customary for the head of state of the host nation to give his support to the Games. Hindenburg accepted in order that the high significance of the Berlin Games, the peaceful cooperation of the participating nations, might be recognized.⁸ The New York Times reported that the German Olympic Committee also expected the support of the Olympic Games by Chancellor Adolf Hitler since Hindenburg had assumed its patronage. On March 15, 1933, the Associated Press was informed by German high officials that the German government favored holding the games in Berlin.⁹

⁷Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 172.

⁸Olympic Games News Service, 30 November 1934, 1.

⁹New York Times, 15 March 1933, 22.

During a March 16 meeting Hitler told Lewald and Heinrich Sahn that the Berlin Games would contribute substantially towards furthering understanding among the nations of the world and would promote the development of sport among the German youth which in his opinion was of vast importance to the welfare of Germany. He expressed his best wishes to the Organizing Committee for the success of its work and promised it his constant support. An official statement printed in the German press informed the German nation of the attitudes of their chancellor towards the Berlin Games.¹⁰ The Nazi attitude toward the Olympic Games did change by the time Hitler assumed the position of chancellor in January, 1933. The fact that Reich President von Hindenburg announced on February 9, 1933, in response to the invitation of the German Organizing Committee, that he would be glad to accept the patronage over the Eleventh Olympic Games suggests that there were now no strong anti-Olympic feelings expressed by the National Socialist Party. Hitler's statement on March 16, 1933, to Lewald and Sahn seems to confirm this speculation.

Two days later, the New York Times reported that Hitler told Lewald and Sahn that he would do all in his power to promote the games. Hitler stated, "I will do everything possible to advance the games as well as all sports interests."

¹⁰ Official Report The XIth Olympic Games. 47.

Hitler affirmed his interest in sport by praising it as an indispensable instrument in invigorating German youth.¹¹ The Nazi newspaper, Der Angriff, echoed the sentiments of its leader as it preached the importance of maintaining and advocating international relationships in sports.¹² Hitler's view of the Olympic Games was expressed in his introduction of Friedrich Mildner's work Olympia 1936--Physical Training in the National Socialist State. Hitler claimed

that sporting chivalrous contests arouses the best human attributes. It does not sever but unites the opponents in mutual understanding and reciprocal respect. It also helps to knit the bond of peace between the nations. Therefore may the Olympic Flame never expire!¹³

After Hitler's acceptance of the Games, the Nazi officials welcomed the games with open arms.¹⁴

In their meeting of October 5, 1933, Lewald said that Hitler wanted the stadium to be expanded and the entire Gr newald premises to be developed into a German sporting center. Hitler told Lewald that "the stadium must be erected by the Reich; it will be the task of the nation. If Germany is to stand host to the entire world, her

¹¹New York Times, 17 March 1933, 25.

¹²New York Times, 15 March 1933, 22.

¹³Olympic Games News Service, 30 March 1935, 1.

¹⁴New York Times, 15 March 1933, 22.

preparations must be complete and magnificent." Hitler considered money no object in the completion of his plans.¹⁵

Later that month, Lewald told the members of the German Organizing Committee that Hitler wanted to change the 1936 Berlin Games because he could visualize himself as host to the world. Theodor Lewald told the members that Hitler explained to him and Joseph Goebbels that

Germany is in a very bad and difficult situation internationally. It should therefore try to impress world public opinion by cultural means. In this context, it is fortunate that the Olympic Games will be held in 1936, at which countries of the world take part. If one invites the world to such a festival, one has to show to the world what this new Germany can do culturally.¹⁶

This desire was also shared by Goebbels. In his diary, dated April 3, 1933, Goebbels writes, "Often now I receive strangers visiting Berlin and explain new Germany to them. They all come full of prejudice. Most of them go away converted."¹⁷ Both men saw that they might use the 1936 Berlin Games as their chance to show the world how modern and progressive Germany was, how far she had come since the days of Versailles, and how happy and prosperous the Germans were under the Nazi system.

On December 15, 1933, the New York Times reported that Hitler had issued a pronouncement in which he assumed

¹⁵ Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 55.

¹⁶ Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 172-173.

¹⁷ Joseph Goebbels, My Part in Germany's Fight (London: Huist and Blackett, Ltd., 1940), 240.

personal charge of the 1936 Berlin Games. Hitler said,

with this day I have given my final consent to the construction of the Olympic stadium. Germany, hereby, obtains a sports field without parallel in the world. But buildings alone are not sufficient to guarantee adequate representation of German sports, which is of utmost importance to our nation. The decisive thing is the united and ready will of the nation to select the best competitors from all parts of Germany and train and steel them in order that in the coming competitions we may come out with honor. A task no less important is the permanent and effective cultivation of physical exercise among the entire people as one of the most important cultural values in the National Socialist State. Thereby we shall create a permanent foundation for the spirit of the new Germany.¹⁸

The following month, on January 20, 1934, the New York Times reported that Goebbels had taken over the direction of the propaganda for the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games. The New York Times stated that this is probably the first time the publicity of an Olympic Games has been in the hands of a government.¹⁹ Two days later, an editorial in the New York Times claimed that Goebbels would use German sport and the Berlin Games to glorify the German state, to unite all German people, and to protest against the Treaty of Versailles. The editorial claimed that Nazi ideology violated the Olympic ideals.²⁰

¹⁸ New York Times, 15 December 1933, 31

¹⁹ New York Times, 20 January 1934, 8.

²⁰ New York Times, 22 January 1934, 14.

The initial meeting of the Publicity Commission of the Propaganda Ministry was held on January 15, 1934, under the chairmanship of Reich Minister Goebbels. At this meeting the Olympic Publicity Commission under the chairmanship of Ministerial Councillor Haegert was formed. At its meeting, held on February 8, 1934, Haegert suggested a plan novel to the Olympic Games that an Olympic torch relay be organized from Olympia, Greece, to Berlin. He also proposed a plan be developed in decorating Berlin for the Games, the enlistment of German artists for the designing of posters, diplomas, and medals as well as a number of measures for the purpose of arousing interest in the Olympic Games throughout Germany and the rest of the world.²¹ The entire German nation, with the Chancellor and Reich Government at its head, had now accepted the responsibility of the Berlin Olympic Games.²²

Nazi ideology and the Olympic code, however, were traveling on a collision course. The Olympic code stated that the National Olympic Committee as well as the Organizing Committee should be free of direct political influence.²³ Hitler confirmed his knowledge of this fact when he assured Lewald and Mayor Heinrich Sahm of Berlin, the vice president of the Organizing Committee, in March, 1933, of the Nazi

²¹Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 58.

²²Ibid., 57.

²³Quoted in Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 172.

party's support for the Games and his promise that both Committees would be independent from government control in their preparations, without specifically mentioning who would take direct leadership in how the Games would be run.²⁴

Hitler then empowered a Nazi Committee to research the statutes of the German Olympic Committee as to their agreement with Nazi party principles. The first evidence of a clash occurred on April 12, 1933, when Theodor Lewald resigned his position as president of the German Olympic Committee to dedicate himself to the organizing of the Games.²⁵ A number of factors influenced his decision. After the Nazi Coup, Lewald began to feel the growing heat because of his Jewish ancestry. Lewald also foresaw the loss of athletic freedom in Germany.²⁶

When the Nazi party came into power, the sports associations felt they would be well taken care of because of Hitler's advocacy of physical fitness in Mein Kampf.²⁷ In Mein Kampf, Hitler had included some theoretical statements about the value of purposeful, physical activity. His views on physical training were only part of his reforming schemes for all of German education. He believed that in a folkish state the school itself must set aside more time for physical conditioning. Hitler stressed that not a day should pass in which the young person's body is not schooled at least an

²⁴Diem, Sports, 997. ²⁵Ibid., 998.

²⁶Ibid., 978. ²⁷Ibid., 987.

hour every morning and evening in every sort of sport and gymnastics. Through bodily power and agility Germans must fortify their faith in the invincibility of their whole race and nation. Hitler claimed that what once led the German army to victory was the sum total of the faith which each individual felt in himself, and the faith all together placed in their leadership.²⁸ Point Twenty-one in the Program of the National Socialist German Workers Party stated,

the state must improve public health . . . by imposing a physical fitness program by means of establishing legal obligations in gymnastics and sport and by supporting all organizations concerned with the physical training of youth.²⁹

In short, physical education being of national importance was no longer a matter for the individual, or even for parents, but directly a matter of state concern for the welfare of Germany.

According to Carl Diem, Lewald felt that sports associations in Germany would not defend the freedom of athletics because of advantages that would occur to them if they cooperated with the new regime. Athletic freedom would become passe in Nazi Germany.³⁰ Sport would now become an arm of the National Socialist government. If the sports

²⁸ Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, trans. by Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1943), 408-410.

²⁹ Barbara Miller Lane and Leila J. Rupp, eds., Nazi Ideology Before 1933--A Documentation (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1978), 41.

³⁰ Diem, Sports, 978.

associations accepted that position they could expect favorable treatment from the state.

When the Nazis took over the government, the German Olympic Committee, German sports associations, and the Turnerschaft were left in limbo, waiting for the formation of a specific Nazi program of athletics. Several people aspired to become the leader of the not-yet-created ministry that would coordinate athletics inside the Reich. To have total control of the organization, Adolf Hitler appointed Sturmabteilung Gruppenführer Hans von Tschammer und Osten to the position of Reichssportführer on April 29, 1933. As Reichssportführer, von Tschammer und Osten held the rank of an under secretary of state for sports in the German Home Office. The forty-six year old von Tschammer und Osten, a staunch Nazi party member, had a good war record. He had been wounded early in World War I, promoted to first lieutenant, and left the service as a captain. In 1922, he joined the Order of the Young Germans, and became a member of the Nazi party in 1929. In 1931, he obtained the leadership of the S.A. Flag Group 103 and quickly rose in S.A. leadership.³¹ On December 15, 1933, the New York Times reported that Hitler said that von Tschammer und Osten was responsible only to Hitler and the Minister of the Interior and requested all organizations and authorities

³¹ Ibid., 997.

to give von Tschammer und Osten "all possible support and aid." The New York Times stated that the significance of Hitler's statement was to kill efforts by some German officials to oust von Tschammer und Osten and put all German sport under the authority of the S.A.³²

The establishment of the Nazi sport ministry forced the various German sports associations and the Turnerschaft to wonder how far they should go in adopting the basic Nazi party statutes. Their independence was soon to end and eventually they would have no choice in the matter. Hans von Tschammer und Osten, as head of sport within the Reich, was appointed by Hitler to head the German Olympic Committee, occupying the position that Theodor Lewald had vacated earlier that month.³³ Von Tschammer und Osten further coordinated German sport with the Nazi system by the addition of Nazis to the German Olympic Committee. The Reich Sport Leader appointed S.A. Group Leader Beckerle, S.S. Group Leader Heydrich, Motor Staff Brigade Leader Nord, Dr. Decker of the Nazi Labor Service, and Staff Leader Lauterbacher of the Hitler Youth. These men were joined on the committee by Dr. Mahlo of the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Major General Busch, commander of the Twenty-third Division, and Colonel Mahncke of the

³²New York Times, 15 December 1933, 31.

³³Diem, Sports, 997.

German Air Sport Federation.³⁴ In this way the German Olympic Committee was now linked to and controlled by the Nazi government.

The German Gymnastic Associations (Turnerschaft) also suffered the same fate. Alexander Dominicus, the leader of the Turnerschaft, was so much a solid Democrat that the Nazis felt the party could not tolerate him. His position was taken by Nazi party advocate Edmund Neuendorff. Through Neuendorff's proclamations, the Nazis made ideological use of Friedrich Jahn's physical education program, which had renewed the spirit of German national defense and liberation against Napoleon. Neuendorff stressed that German gymnasts must be proud Germans, upholding the character of their largely nordic blood, must uphold and defend their German freedom and self-reliance, and must regain what had been lost since 1918.³⁵

In 1933, in accordance to the Nazi ideology, Neuendorff instituted anti-Semitic regulations in the Gymnastic Association. A pre-military program of field exercises, marches, hand-to-hand fighting, disciplinary exercises, throwing competitions, and small bore shooting were incorporated into the Gymnastic Association's program. Neuendorff attempted to transform the Turnerschaft into a paramilitary

³⁴Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 12.

³⁵Ueberhorst, Jahn, 77.

force, an obvious violation of the Treaty of Versailles. At the fifteenth Gymnastic Festival in Stuttgart in 1933, Neuendorff and the Turnerschaft made a public declaration of allegiance to National Socialism. Neuendorff said an adherence to Adolf Hitler and National Socialism went hand in hand with the renewal of the "spirit of Jahn," the father of gymnastics. Other leaders of the Turnerschaft declared, "There will never be better or more powerful hands into which to lay Jahn's legacy than those of the Führer."³⁶

Under the leadership and influence of Neuendorff, the Turnerschaft was completely absorbed into the National Socialist movement, losing its independence. It was done "in a sense of duty to National Socialism" at the Coburg Day of German Gymnastics in 1935. The German Gymnastic Association now became part of the National League for Physical Exercise, a centrally directed Nazi sport association.³⁷

The nazification of German sport associations was no different than the nazification of other areas of German national life. One by one, Germany's most powerful institutions began to surrender to Adolf Hitler. The independent German trade unions constituted one such institution. The trade unions passed quietly out of existence. Joseph

³⁶ Ibid., 78.

³⁷ Ibid., 79.

Goebbels wrote in his diary, dated April 17, 1933, that the Nazis

shall make the first of May serve as a fine demonstration of our German purpose. On May 2, the houses belonging to the Trade Unions are to be seized. This may entail a few day's disturbance, but then they will be ours. One must not be considerate in this matter any longer. We do the workman the service of freeing him from parasitical leadership, a leadership which up till now has only made life hard for him. Once the Trade Unions are in our hands the other parties and organizations will not be able to hold out long. In a year's time Germany will be entirely in our hands.³⁸

To lull the workers and their leaders before they struck, the Nazi government proclaimed May 1, 1933, as a national holiday, officially named it the "Day of National Labor" and prepared to celebrate it as it had never been celebrated before.³⁹ Goebbels's diary entry on April 28, 1933, said the May Day celebration "is to be a masterpiece of organization and of demonstration by the masses."⁴⁰

On May 1, 1933, Goebbels wrote, "The Tempelhofer Feld teems with the multitude. Berlin is already on its way there, lock, stock and barrel, workmen and bourgeois, high and humble, employers and employees....."⁴¹ Labor leaders were flown to Berlin from all parts of Germany; they were invited to lunch with Hitler and afterwards they

³⁸Goebbels, My Part, 246.

³⁹William Shirer, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1960), 202.

⁴⁰Goebbels, My Part, 250.

⁴¹Ibid., 252.

were received by Paul von Hindenburg, the president of Germany. According to Goebbels, the celebration symbolized the Nazi regime's solidarity with the German worker. Later that night Goebbels wrote, "Tomorrow we shall seize the houses of the Trade Unions. There will hardly be any resistance anywhere."⁴² He was right.

On May 2, 1933, S.A. and S.S. troops occupied trade union headquarters throughout Germany. They dissolved the unions, confiscated union funds, and arrested union leaders. All the unions were merged into the Nazi Party-dominated German Labor Front, headed by the National Socialist Reich Organizational Leader Robert Ley. Hitler and Ley assured the workers their rights would be protected and in fact furthered. The Law of May 19, 1933, however, ended collective bargaining and allowed Hitler to appoint labor trustees who regulated labor contracts and maintained labor peace. As organized labor, the German workers now had no real rights. The German Labor Front controlled the Germans' working hours as well as their leisure time. Robert Ley established the Strength Through Joy movement, {Kraft durch Freude}, to provide regimented leisure for members of the German Labor Front. It provided mass entertainment and cheap vacations for millions. Members of the German Labor Front were provided bargain rates to the theater, opera, and concerts, as well as inexpensive holiday excursions on

⁴²Ibid., 253.

land and sea. For example, a Strength Through Joy skiing excursion to the Bavarian Alps cost eleven dollars a week which included carfare, room and board, rental skis and lessons from a ski instructor.⁴³ Labor and sport were just two of many institutions swallowed up in the process of Gleichshaltung ("coordination") by which every phase of national life was brought under the single control of the Nazi Party. The lessons and experience gained in controlling the German masses through demonstrations and propaganda were to prove invaluable for the Nazis in their administration of the Olympic Games in 1936.

This nazification of German sport was evidenced at the German National Games held in Nuremberg in 1934. These Games represented a deviation from the previous German National Games. Earlier Games had been under the auspices of the German Olympic Committee and the hosting city's officials, independent from government control. The 1934 Nuremberg Games were under the direction of the National Socialist leaders of athletics who had infiltrated the German Olympic Committee and who conducted the Games in accordance with Nazi policy.⁴⁴ The International Olympic Committee saw a preview in 1934 of the problems they would have to face when the Olympics came to totalitarian Germany in 1936.

⁴³Shirer, Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, 266.

⁴⁴Diem, Sports, 986.

One of the last links with the past faded away with President Paul von Hindenburg's death in August, 1934. Hitler was now free to combine the office of president and chancellor in his own person. The German Organizing Committee then asked Hitler to assume the patronage for the Games, the position having been left vacant by Hindenburg's death. On November 13, 1934, Adolf Hitler sent a letter addressed to Theodor Lewald, who had retained the presidency of the Organizing Committee, gladly accepting the invitation extended to him by the Organizing Committee and wishing Lewald and the Organizing Committee further success in their labors.⁴⁵

The Nazi government established a special department under the direction of the German Home Office to coordinate the state's efforts concerning the 1936 Games. Nazi Secretary of State Hans Pfundter became a member of the German Organizing Committee to make sure the government's appropriations were used properly.⁴⁶

Clashes over authority were frequent between members of the Organizing Committee and the German Home Office. Since April, 1933, contrary to the Olympic code, the German Home Office had been trying to gain influence over the Organizing Committee. According to a report of the German Olympic Committee dated December 15, 1934, this clash led to the

⁴⁵Olympic Games News Service, 30 November 1934, 1.

⁴⁶Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 173.

German Home Office's decision to issue a legal document to the German Organizing Committee. The document stated that

one could not change the status of the Organizing Committee as an independent non-profit organization or this would give those abroad who customarily slander Germany, the chance to say that an independent organization was no longer possible. The Organizing Committee should therefore maintain to the outside its independent position with the right of communication with the I.O.C. Inside, however, it was acting as agents of the German Olympic Committee and therefore legally bound by directions from this body.⁴⁷

With Lewald's signature in December, 1934, the independence of the Organizing Committee ceased to exist, and the Committee became an arm of the German Home Office. The German Organizing Committee was now bound to the German Olympic Committee which was headed by Hans von Tschammer und Osten, the Reichssportführer in the German Home Office, and followed orders issued by the Nazi state, a violation of the Olympic code.

A year before, on December 18, 1933, the German Organizing Committee had sent invitations to all countries of the world having National Olympic Committees.⁴⁸ Baillet-Latour, president of the I.O.C., wrote on that occasion that

Berlin invites the sporting youth to the festival of the XI Olympic Games and it is hoped that this invitation will be accepted throughout the world. We are convinced that magnificent contests will take place when strength and ability are matched. We hope, however, that the Games will have a deeper significance than this and that from this

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Olympic Games News Service, 21 December 1933, 2.

international festival a strong, mutual understanding will develop and that this peaceful competition will lead to permanent friendships which will serve the cause of peace.⁴⁹

The New York Times reported that Germany had issued invitations to all nations with Olympic Committees regardless of their political relations to the Reich.⁵⁰ The German Olympic isolation from 1920-1928 had apparently been forgotten.

Theodor Lewald, in his report to the German Organizing Committee, reported that Adolf Hitler believed if one invited the whole world to Berlin then something great and beautiful had to be prepared.⁵¹ Carl Diem, secretary-general of the German Organizing Committee, through his close contact with the Organizing Committee of the X Olympiad at Los Angeles, felt the 1916 Olympic facilities too meager compared to those of the 1932 Los Angeles Games. Diem convinced Hitler that more extensive land holdings adjoining the Grünewald Stadium were necessary.⁵² Hitler inspected this property in October, 1933, and proclaimed the land uncommonly suitable for the Games because it had excellent access to trains, subways, and buses and because

⁴⁹ Organisationkomitee für die XI Olympiad Berlin 1936, Official Guide Book to the Celebration of the XI Olympiad (Berlin: Reichssportverlag, 1936), 10. Cited hereafter: Official Guide Book.

⁵⁰ New York Times, 7 January 1934, sec. 3:5.

⁵¹ Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 172.

⁵² Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 55.

the land was level. At Hitler's command, this property was bought for a fair price from the Berlin Union Club and the city of Berlin and became the property of the Reich.⁵³

The six months following the visit of Hitler in October, 1933, were devoted to the completion of the construction plan, and for this purpose a special Reich Stadium Construction Department was created under the supervision of Construction Councillor Sponholz. Work on the Sport Forum as well as the razing of the old stadium was begun immediately.⁵⁴ Werner March drew up plans to develop the 250 acres between the Stadium Tube Railway Station and the Pichelsberg District Railway Station into a gigantic sports park. All existing athletic facilities connected with the Grünewald Stadium were incorporated into this new sports park⁵⁵ which gave Germany a sports center almost as large as the city of Berlin of 1688.⁵⁶ (See Figure 1.)

The design of the new sports park consisted of eight units collectively called the "Olympic City." All the athletic facilities centered around the new Olympic Stadium. On December 14, 1933, German workers began breaking up most of the old Grünewald Stadium to construct a new stadium accomodating 110,000 spectators. The entire area west of

⁵³Diem, Sports, 1015.

⁵⁴Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 58.

⁵⁵Olympic Games News Service, 21 December 1933, 11.

⁵⁶Official Guide Book, 15.

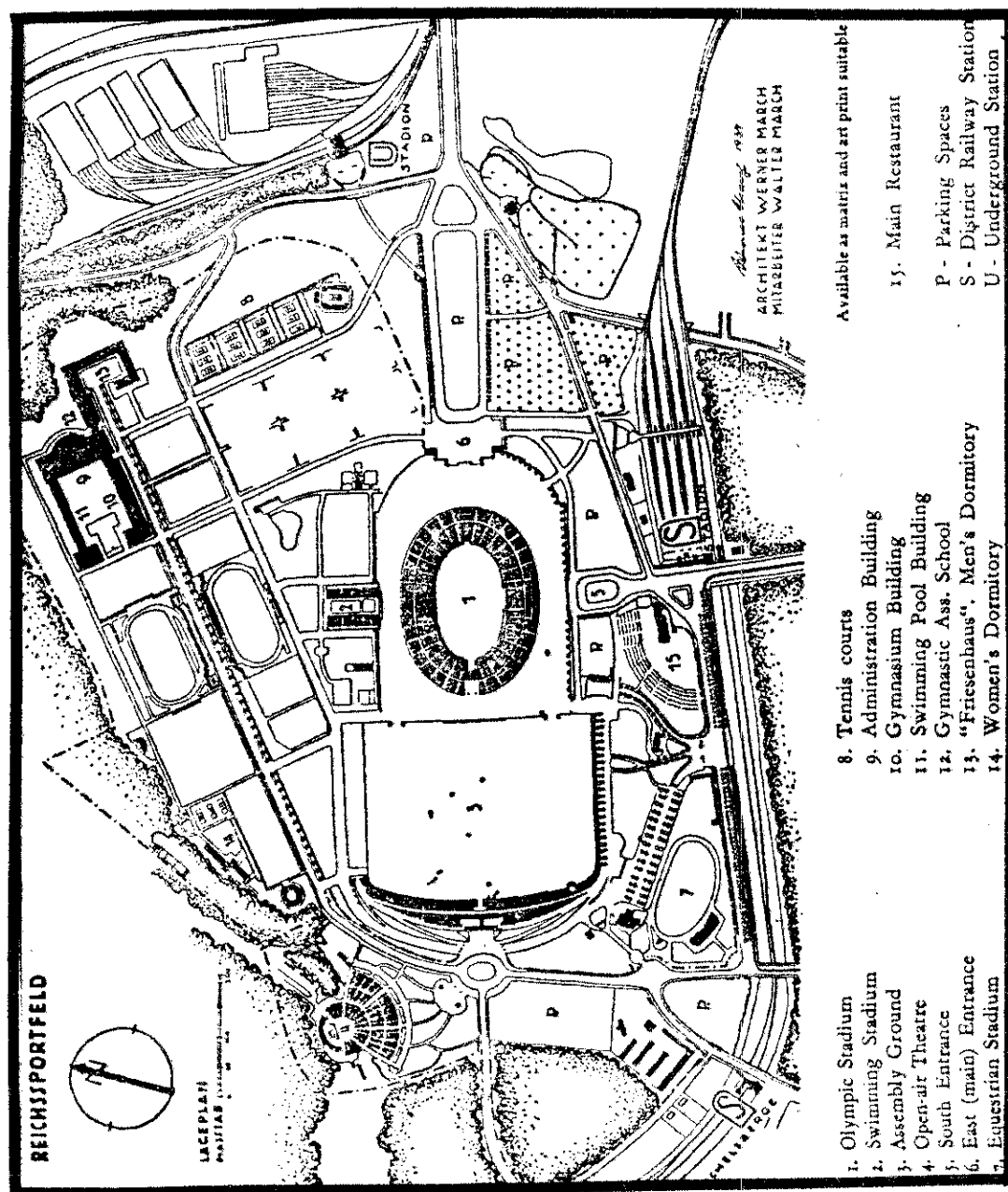


Fig. 1--Reichssportfeld

the stadium served as a great festival ground capable of holding 250,000 people. An open air theater built into a hillside lay west of the festival grounds. The race horse stables, once connected with the Grönewald race track were

leveled and reconstructed as part of the new equestrian stadium located in the southwest corner of the park. A 333 $\frac{1}{3}$ meter cycle track with covered stands for fifteen thousand spectators was built on the east side of the park, near the Stadium Tube Railway Station. North of the cycle stadium was a ten thousand seat lawn tennis stadium complete with twelve practice courts.⁵⁷

The Olympic Stadium (Figure 2) was constructed on two levels. There were seventy-two rows of seats separated by a wide circular colonade. The lower section was built entirely below ground, and measured fourteen meters, while the walls of the upper section rose to a height of fifteen meters above the surrounding sports field.⁵⁸ All track and field participants competed within the main stadium on a newly installed red clay surface unlike the coal black cinder surface used in previous Olympic Games.⁵⁹ The four hundred meter track contained seven separate lanes throughout and eight in the straightaway. There were two sets of runways, pits and rings for all field events including six pits for the high jump. The grass plot in the center of the arena was the size of a standard football field (seventy

⁵⁷Olympic Games News Service, 30 August 1934, 3.

⁵⁸Frederick W. Rubien, ed., Report of the American Olympic Committee, Games of the XIth Olympiad, Berlin, Germany August 1 to 16, 1936. VIth Olympic Winter Games, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany February 6 to 16, 1936 (New York: American Olympic Committee, 1936), 91. Cited hereafter: Report of the American Olympic Committee.

⁵⁹New York Times, 26 July 1936, sec. 5:2.

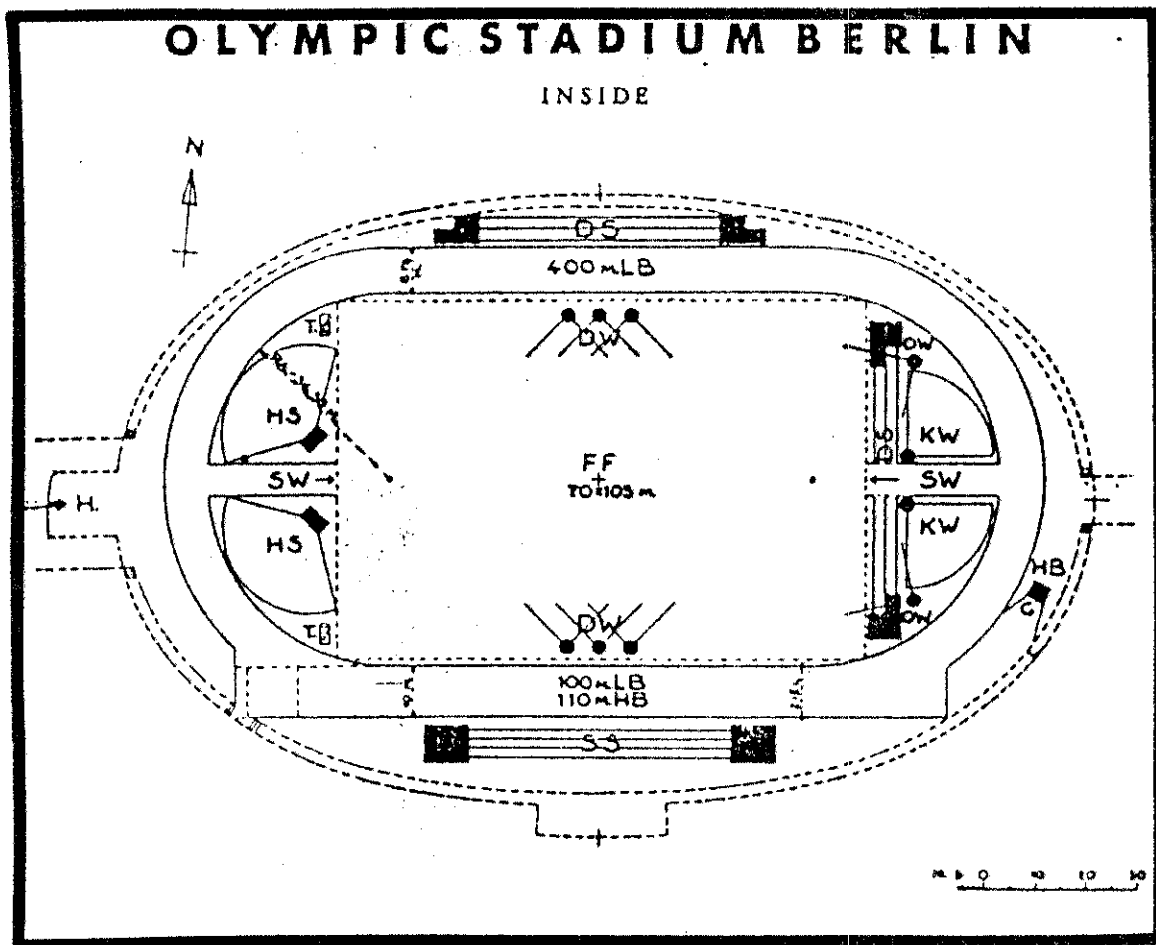


Fig. 2--Olympic Stadium. Interior view.

meters by 105 meters). Two tunnels ran under the running track direct to the field, connecting the dressing rooms with the track. On the circular ramp between the upper and lower sections were the dressing rooms for the teams and also shops, refreshment rooms, a post office, and a first-aid station. On the top of the stadium, above the seats, were some glass cubicles containing the broadcasting apparatus used to sent reports of the Games to all parts of the world and in which from time to time, winning athletes who had

become Olympic champions would be interviewed.⁶⁰ A sixteen meter column, erected in advance to commemorate in stone all nations' 1936 Olympic victories, overlooked the sports arena.⁶¹

Due north of the Olympic Stadium and connected to the Olympic Stadium by a tunnel were the grandstands of the Swimming Stadium (Figure 3), with accommodations for twenty thousand spectators. The two pools, a diving pool twenty meters square, and a swimming pool twenty meters by fifty meters were provided with a special plant for filtering and heating the water. Behind the ten meter high diving tower, at the south end of the Swimming Stadium was a restaurant with terraces overlooking the swimming pool while the north end commanded a view of the adjoining recreation grounds.⁶²

Diem claimed the Olympic preparations in Berlin were the most important project in the Reich.⁶³ This public works project was done almost entirely by manpower and not machines to help alleviate the unemployment problem in Germany. Twenty-five hundred Germans were employed in two shifts of excavation work and three shifts of construction work.⁶⁴ They adhered to a strict work schedule and

⁶⁰ Report of the American Olympic Committee, 91.

⁶¹ New York Times, 24 November 1935, sec. 10:2.

⁶² Report of the American Olympic Committee, 91.

⁶³ Diem, Sports, 1016.

⁶⁴ Olympic Games News Service, 5 June 1935, 3.

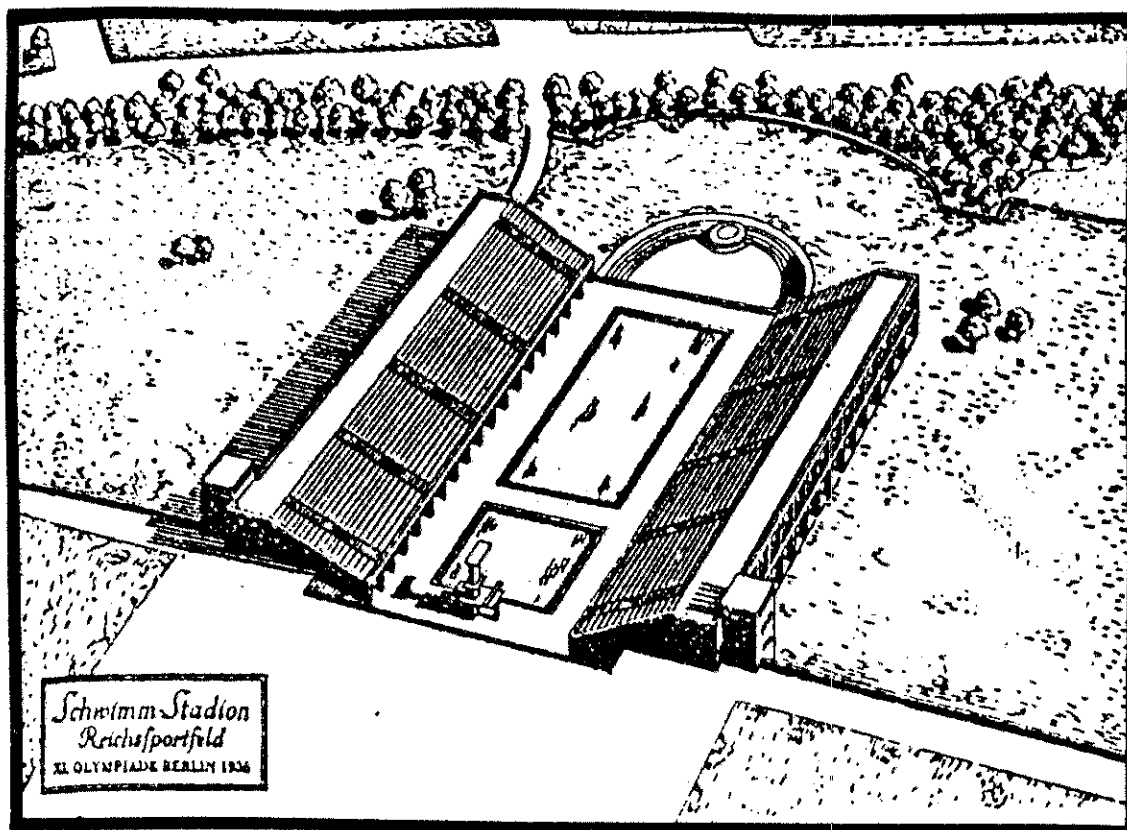


Fig. 3--Swimming Stadium

completed the stadium in thirty-four months, in accordance with the Nazi plan.⁶⁵

The new sports plant, the first representative monument of the Third Reich,⁶⁶ was not constructed without delays. Hitler was not pleased with the stadium plan designed by the stadium architect, Werner March. March had designed a concrete stadium with glass partition walls similar to the Vienna Stadium. Hitler inspected the site and returned to his office in a state of anger and agitation. He summoned

⁶⁵ Official Guide Book, 15.

⁶⁶ New York Times, 18 December 1933, 26.

Albert Speer to discuss alternative plans for the stadium. Hitler threatened to cancel the Games if the design were not changed. The Führer emphasized he would never set foot inside a modern glass box like the one under construction. Speer redesigned the original plans.⁶⁷ Upon Hitler's recommendations, the steel skeleton already built could be clad in shell limestone instead of concrete. The fine, unpolished and weather-resisting material stone, procured from Wuerzburg, not far from the river Main, was selected as more pleasing to the eye for the facade of the Olympic Stadium. Speer eliminated the glass partitions. Hitler was satisfied and believed German culture and strength would now be properly represented to all the world.⁶⁸ The New York Times reported the Olympic Stadium stood as an architectural monument portraying the greatness of Nazi ideology.⁶⁹

Money for the facilities was appropriated by the Nazi government when needed, with part of the financing of this project coming from advance Olympic ticket sales.⁷⁰ Tickets for the sixteen day competition were sold for three classes of seats and for standing room. Both single

⁶⁷ Albert Speer, Inside the Third Reich (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1970), 80.

⁶⁸ Diem, Sports, 1016.

⁶⁹ New York Times, 26 July 1936, sec. 5:2.

⁷⁰ Diem, Sports, 1016.

tickets and season tickets were available from the Ticket Office for the XI Olympiad. The cost of the Olympic tickets varied according to the type of ticket purchased and the proximity to the competition desired. Season tickets which entitled the spectator to view all the competitions of a particular sport cost twenty-five percent less than the sum of single tickets. The most expensive ticket was the "Olympic Pass" which allowed the spectator the right to view all events taking place within the Olympic Stadium, including the opening and closing ceremony, all track and field events, and all special demonstrations. The price of an "Olympic Pass" closest to the track cost one hundred Reichsmarks (approximately forty-two American dollars); a season ticket for the track competition in the same area cost forty Reichsmarks (\$16.60), and a single day ticket for the Olympic finals cost ten Reichsmarks (\$4.00). Standing room prices varied from one to two Reichsmarks (\$0.50 - \$1.00) depending on the competition taking place that day.⁷¹

The German official report stated that the German Organizing Committee set their prices so that the average person could afford to buy a seat or even a season ticket. The German Organizing Committee wished to announce to the world that the Olympic Games were not a commercial

⁷¹Olympic Games News Service, 31 January 1935, 4-5.
New York Times, 31 July 1936, 29.

enterprise but a festival in which the spectators play an important role, and the privilege of participation should not be confined to those able to pay the highest price.

The report said that the German Organizing Committee

. . . did not intend that anyone in Germany or abroad should be able to say that the high price of admission prevented him from being present at the Games. Moreover, we did not wish to create difficulties for visitors from countries whose currency was low in its exchange value since they were just as important and their presence was as vital to the success of the Festival as that of guests from more prosperous nations.⁷²

The Berlin Sports Park belonged to the German people. The athletic facilities at the park were available for the general public's use. Berlin citizens seeking recreation exercised on the wide playing fields and swam in a pond constructed especially for the Olympic visitors' use, near the Swimming Stadium. Even during the Olympic period, the sports fields were open for the general public when organized competitions were not taking place.⁷³ Nazi plans called for the completion of the Sports Forum in accordance with the original plans which had been drawn up by Werner March in 1925.⁷⁴

The main building of the Sports Forum was the "House of German Sport." The building provided Germany with the largest and best equipped facility in the world for research

⁷²Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 60.

⁷³Olympic Games News Service, 30 August 1934, 1-2.

⁷⁴Olympic Games News Service, 21 December 1933, 2.

and education in the area of recreation and physical education.⁷⁵ Accommodations for all the fencing contests were provided at this facility. Epée events were held in the courtyard while saber and foil events took place in the large gymnastics hall, the swimming hall, and the display hall.⁷⁶ The display hall was added to the main building just for the occasion of the Olympic Games to display athletic and Olympic artifacts. The German Gymnastics School, also located in the Sports Forum, was expanded to house resident students of the German Gymnastic Association. This gigantic sports park with all its facilities and equipment offered a novel dimension to Olympic competition. For the first time ever, all Olympic events (except rowing and sailing) were held on the Stadium grounds. The Germans had created an ideal center, one whose like had never previously existed for athletic contests.⁷⁷

A vital part of the "Olympic City" was the Olympic village at Döberitz, which like the Los Angeles Village housed all male athletes during the Games. The German Olympic Committee planned that the village would be a showplace compared to the simple, isolated housing that Los Angeles had provided. To provide a physical comparison between the

⁷⁵New York Times, 18 December 1933, 26.

⁷⁶Olympic Games News Service, 29 June 1934, 3.

⁷⁷Olympic Games News Service, 21 December 1933, 2.

Olympic Games, the Nazis planned to transport a house from the Los Angeles Olympic village to Germany and place it next to the German model. The Nazis felt a favorable impression of Germany was guaranteed by providing the athletes with an atmosphere similar to, or even better than, the one provided at home. With this in mind, the Nazis established a new standard in Olympic village design.⁷⁸

In the autumn of 1933, the Reich Minister of Defense, upon the recommendations of the Chief of the Defense Department, Lieutenant-General von Reichenau, resolved not merely to place the Döberitz barracks at the disposal of the German Olympic Committee, but to erect a special Olympic village for the athletes at the military training grounds north of the Hamburg highway, nine miles from the Olympic Stadium. Hitler gave his consent.⁷⁹

The building of the Döberitz Olympic village began in the autumn of 1934. According to The Olympic Games News Service, the Reichswehr (National Army of the Reich), under the direction of army engineer Wolfgang Fuerstner, undertook this project as their gift to the athletic youth of the world.⁸⁰ Everything possible was provided by the Germans to ensure the comfort and well being of their guests.

⁷⁸Richard Mandell, The Nazi Olympics (New York: Ballantine Books, 1971), 98.

⁷⁹Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 56.

⁸⁰Olympic Games News Service, 2 July 1935, 3.

The Olympic village was composed of 160 homes constructed of brick, stone, and concrete. Each house would accommodate in thirteen bedrooms twenty-four to twenty-six men, each man sharing a double room. The Hindenburg Hall would provide motion pictures and entertainment nightly for international socializing and a television room for viewing films from the day's competition. Two stewards, well versed in the native language of the inhabitant, would be on twenty-four hour duty at each house to assist and advise the athletes in any possible way.⁸¹ The American athletes would sleep on American mattresses, the Swiss and Austrians would sleep on feather comforters and the Japanese on floor mats. All national preferences were known and would be provided for in the Olympic village.⁸² The meals would be prepared by the stewards department of the North German Lloyd Combine, whose network of passenger ships served the entire world. There would be no common menu. So that every nation's athletes might enjoy their own particular dishes, thirty-eight separate dining rooms and kitchens were constructed. These facilities were housed in the three story main Dining Hall, the largest building in the village.⁸³ If a team brought its own cook the Olympic management would

⁸¹Official Guide Book, 82-83.

⁸²Official Report The XIth Olympic Games, 238-239.

⁸³Olympic Games News Service, 2 July 1935, 4.

provide a sufficient number of assistants to help in the preparation of the food.⁸⁴ On request, lunches would be prepared for the competitors to take to the various training grounds, preventing the necessity of returning to the Olympic village especially for meals.⁸⁵

After dinner the athletes could gather at the "Bastion," a meeting place overlooking the entire Olympic village. Here, they could obtain non-alcoholic beverages of all kinds and listen to the concerts being played directly below them at the "Birch Ring." An athlete who desired religious services could attend the service of his choice offered on various days at the village.⁸⁶

The Olympic Post Office located inside the village would be equipped to take care of both local and foreign mail and telephone calls to any part of the world. The Olympic Village Bank would be available to transact any business for the athlete especially for exchanging money and for procuring Reichsmarks. This bank would also contain a special safe in which valuables and documents of a team could be stored. The property of the participants which was stored in the Olympic dwelling would be insured by the G.O.C. with the Victoria Insurance Company, Berlin.⁸⁷

⁸⁴Official Guide Book, 83-84.

⁸⁵Report of the American Olympic Committee, 89.

⁸⁶Official Guide Book, 85.

⁸⁷Ibid., 86-87.

Pop and chewing gum stands, barbers, newspaper and magazine stands, police, medical and dental care would all be provided for the Olympic athletes.⁸⁸ The German Organizing Committee planned to do everything possible to make the foreign athletes' stay in the Olympic village a pleasant and memorable one. The Olympic Games News Service reported that the German Organizing Committee hoped the days spent together in comradeship would instill into the athlete the spirit that had always been a means of bridging over the difficulties of language and nationality when athletic youth come together.⁸⁹

Several Berlin youngsters voluntarily planned to take language instruction in order to equip themselves for the Olympic Honorary Service. They would run errands, carry messages, and conduct sight-seeing tours for the village inhabitants. A young German officer with a command of the native language would be placed at the disposal of each national group to assist and advise in every possible way.⁹⁰

Training arrangements in Berlin differed drastically from those of Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Organizing Committee found training facilities throughout the Los Angeles metropolitan area. They assigned countries to these training locations, arranged training schedules and

⁸⁸"Olympics: Nations Eye Each Other on the Eve of the 1936 Games," Newsweek, 1 August 1936, 20-21.

⁸⁹Olympic Games News Service, 2 July 1935, 4.

⁹⁰Ibid.

organized a transportation system to and from the fields. Seven Los Angeles high schools, the University of Southern California, and numerous athletic clubs provided track and gymnastic facilities for the competitions. The Los Angeles Playground and Recreation Department provided a number of municipal pools for the swimming and diving contestants.⁹¹

The Döberitz Olympic Village boasted almost as many athletic facilities as the Reichssportfeld. These training facilities would be installed for the benefit of all teams participating in the 1936 Games. The Athletic Field with its four hundred meter track was identical with the arena of the Olympic Stadium. The Swimming Hall would be opened daily to members of all teams, enabling the participants to keep in form. Two athletic halls would provide training in gymnastics, boxing and weightlifting, complete with all the apparatus prescribed by the I.O.C. for the competition. A physical education instructor would be stationed in each hall to render any assistance necessary. The Hindenburg House provided seven training halls to accommodate the wrestling, boxing, and fencing competition. After working out, the athlete could soothe his sore muscles in a sauna, a Finnish vapor bath. A wide expanse of woodlands throughout the village offered the athlete the opportunity for refreshing and relaxing cross country runs.⁹²

⁹¹The Games of the Xth Olympiad, 298-314.

⁹²Official Guide Book, 93-94.

The American Olympic Committee in their report of the XI Olympic Games would state that "too much praise cannot be given the German Organizing Committee for the marvelous arrangements at the village. Everything possible was done to make the stay of the team pleasant."⁹³ This was not the case for Wolfgang Fuerstner, the German who oversaw the planning and construction of the Olympic village. A few weeks before the foreign athletes began to arrive Captain Fuerstner, a "non-Aryan" in the German military, was replaced as chief administrator of the village by Lieutenant Colonel Werner von und zu Gilsa. Fuerstner continued to serve nominally as second in command of the village until the Games were over. After a banquet honoring Gilsa for his services to the Reich in making the Berlin Games a success, Fuerstner went back to his room and killed himself. The New York Times reported that German newspapers were instructed to report that Fuerstner died in an automobile accident while General Werner Blomberg, German minister of defense, covered up the suicide by arranging a well publicized funeral with full military honors.⁹⁴

Almost forty years after the Berlin Games, the Olympic "village of peace" near Döberitz was found to have served a dual purpose. In 1975, Klaus Ullrich-Huhn, sports editor

⁹³ Report of the American Olympic Committee, 89.

⁹⁴ New York Times, 21 August 1936, 4. 23 August 1936, 5.

of Neues Deutschland, informed Doug Gilbert, a Canadian journalist, that in his research of the 1936 Berlin Games he had discovered that the "civilians" who inhabited the village before the first athletes arrived were actually the German Condor Legion. The files of the German army engineers, who constructed the village, stated that this legion of dive bomber pilots used the village as a training camp before their departure to Spain. The beautiful duck-filled lake which offered the athletes an area for reflection and relaxation had earlier served as a German submarine training center.⁹⁵

Janet Flanners, European correspondent for the New Yorker magazine, reported that after the Games the Olympic village became an important demonstration center of Germany's new "organized career" theory, requiring every man aiming for a top position to learn his job from the bottom up. In the Döberitz officer school, young officers instead of being granted a commission at once because of blood or brains, served one year as privates, passed their technical exams, were made cadets, and then, as lieutenants went into the Reichswehr.⁹⁶ The Döberitz Olympic Village survived World War II and, according to Klaus Ullrich-Huhn, is now

⁹⁵ Doug Gilbert, The Miracle Machine (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc., 1980), 213.

⁹⁶ Irving Drutman, ed., Janet Flanners World: Uncollected Writings, 1932-1975 (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), 30.

used as a Soviet military installation in East Berlin.⁹⁷

The Grünewald Olympic Stadium also survived World War II and now is located in West Berlin. An international track meet was held in Berlin's Olympic Stadium, August 17, 1983, four days after the World Track and Field Championships were held in Helsinki, Finland.⁹⁸

The XI Olympic Games which had been awarded to Berlin in 1931, two years before Adolf Hitler became chancellor, would now be held in a country which strove to control all facets of German life. According to their totalitarian doctrine, the National Socialists absorbed all German sport into Nazi sport associations. The German Olympic Committee, the group which selected and trained German athletes for the Olympic Games, became the Nazi Olympic Committee. Since the German Organizing Committee which provided the facilities and organized and managed the Games was granted its authority by the German Olympic Committee, it too was bound to the German government. Even though the actual running of the Olympic Games was under the direction of the International Olympic Committee, the Nazi government used both German committees to convince the world and the German people of the wonders of the Nazi regime. The National Socialists took their first step in that direction when

⁹⁷ Gilbert, Miracle Machine, 210.

⁹⁸ Kenny Moore, "Above and Beyond the Call of Duty," Sports Illustrated, 29 August 1983, 20.

they expanded the Grönewald Stadium and constructed other athletic facilities to form a sports park never previously known in Olympic history. The National Socialists, through the efforts of the German Olympic and Organizing Committees, were well on their way to making the XI Olympics the best athletic contest ever held. Nothing seemed to stand in their way in reaching their objective.

CHAPTER V

THE OLYMPIC BOYCOTT MOVEMENTS

Anti-Semitism was a major element of Adolf Hitler's propaganda as he drove to power. Blaming Jews for such crimes as Germany's defeat in World War I and Germany's exploitation by both capitalists and communists, Hitler constantly played up anti-semitism. Hitler's anti-semitism statement was included in his twenty-five point Nazi ideology platform, proclaiming "only those who are of German blood can be considered as our own countrymen, regardless of creed. Hence no Jews could be regarded as a fellow-countryman."¹ Anti-Jewish legislation was enacted shortly after Hitler's appointment as chancellor. On April 1, 1933, all Jewish concerns, with the exception of banks and newspapers, were placed under guard by Storm Troopers from ten o'clock in the morning until midnight. The Nazis kept out the few who attempted to enter the boycotted establishments. Signs announced that "no German buys from Jews" and windows were smeared with the word "Jew" in large red or white letters to indicate the establishment to be boycotted.²

¹Lane and Rupp, Nazi Ideology, 41.

²Mildred S. Westheimer, "Jews in the Third Reich," Foreign Policy Reports, 9 (11 October 1933), 176.

Storm Troop pickets kept Jewish judges, lawyers, and juries out of the court houses, Jewish students off the grounds of the University of Berlin, and Jewish readers from the Prussian State Library. On April 7, 1933, the government purged officials of Jewish descent from the German Civil Service and "regulated" Jewish admission to the Bar. A September 22, 1933, law brought all journalists, and musical, theatrical, and radio workers, categories which included many Jews, under the control of Joseph Goebbel's Reich Chamber of Culture.³ The Nazi racial theory of Aryan supremacy was even advertised in shop windows where displays featured "Aryan wool," "Aryan pork sausage," and "Aryan anything and everything."⁴

The Nuremberg Laws of September, 1935, took citizenship and civil rights from Germans of Jewish blood. These laws forbade people of Jewish origin--defined as those with one Jewish grandparent--to marry or to have sexual relations with Aryans.⁵ No German Jew was immune to this legislation. A scandal developed after a cattle fair near Düsseldorf where a Jewish peddler was discovered leading his cow to

³Mildred S. Wertheimer, "Political Structure of the Third Reich," Foreign Policy Reports 10 (29 June 1934), 106.

⁴Drutman, Janet Planners World, 18.

⁵Ambassador in Germany (Dodd) to the Secretary of State, 19 September 1935, U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1935, Volume 2, 405-408.

her new Nazi barn. The cow was declared to be a non-Aryan, capable of producing only non-Aryan milk, cheeses, and calves. The Woolworth five and dime stores in Germany were boycotted because Woolworth was declared to be a typically Jewish-American name.⁶

Signs throughout Germany expressed the Nazi anti-Semitic feeling. Road signs warned, "Jews are not desired here. Attention Jew: This is not the way to Palestine. It is dangerous for Jews to enter this town."⁷ A sign near Rothenburg read, "Jews are like moths in the coat closet, like mice in the cupboard. They are not wanted here."⁸ A sign near Ludwigshafen instructed Germans to "Drive Carefully! Sharp Curve! Jews seventy-five miles an hour."⁹ Jews who left Germany voluntarily became victims of expired German passports, which the Nazi government refused to renew. The Jews were not only people without a country, but what was worse in bureaucratic Europe, people without identity papers and therefore unable to obtain visas.¹⁰

German sport was no exception to the Nazi racial policies. German Jews were forced to leave German sport organizations shortly after the Nazi revolution in

⁶ Drutman, Janet Flanners World, 183.

⁷ Quoted in Mandell, Nazi Olympics, 58.

⁸ Drutman, Janet Flanners World, 18.

⁹ Shirer, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, 234.

¹⁰ Drutman, Janet Flanners World, 18.

accordance with the Nazi policy of Gleichschaltung, the bringing into line of all German life under Nazi direction. On April 26, 1933, the German Boxing Federation announced it would no longer tolerate Jewish fighters or referees. On June 2, 1933, the Nazi Minister of Education announced that Jews were to be excluded from youth, welfare, and gymnastic organizations and that the facilities of these German sporting clubs would be closed to them.¹¹ Julius Streicher, editor of the anti-Semitic newspaper Der Stürmer, preached,

We need waste no words here, Jews are Jews, and there is no place for them in German sports. Germany is the Fatherland of Germans and not Jews, and the Germans have the right to do what they want in their own country.¹²

Bruno Malitz, a Nazi sports theoretician, believed that all clubs should be free for German people. His treatise on German athletics stated,

Frenchman, Belgian, Pollacks, Jew-Niggers, have all raced on German tracks, played on German football fields and swum in German swimming pools. All kinds of foreigners have been having a marvelous time at our expense.

He continued,

Jewish sports leaders, like the Jewish leaders, like the Jewish players, . . . have absolutely no place in German sport. They are all worse than rampaging hordes of Kalmucks, worse than flaming conflagrations, famine, floods, drought, locusts, and poison gas--worse than all of these horrors.¹³

¹¹Mandell, Nazi Olympics, 65.

¹²Quoted in Mandell, Nazi Olympics, 65. ¹³Ibid.

As mentioned earlier, the Nazi government commissioned Captain Hans von Tschammer und Osten to reorganize German sports, to coordinate Gleichschaltung in the area of sports. As minister of state for sports in the German Home Office, von Tschammer und Osten was able to bring all organized athletic groups into one organization--the Reichbund für Leibesübungen.¹⁴ In May, 1933, von Tschammer und Osten issued statements declaring that the confessional churches' youth organizations were to be disbanded and their sports activities prohibited, that Protestants and Catholics were not permitted to belong to clubs other than those sanctioned by the Reichssportführer. For example, the one million member Deutsche Jugendkraft, an organization established in 1920 to coordinate and foster the athletics of German Catholic young men, was forced to disband by the German government. The Hitlerjugend insisted it alone was entitled to train and educate German youth. Baldur von Shirach, head of the Nazi youth, confirmed "that confessional youth groups were out of the question, since for the rising generations belief in Germany took precedence over every conviction."¹⁵ A decree issued by Wilhelm Frick, German minister of the interior, said that Catholic occupational and youth organizations did not fit into present day life and are "often

¹⁴"Forth to War: America's Athletes Take Ship for Berlin Olympic Games," Literary Digest 122 (11 July 1936): 33.

¹⁵"The Olympic Games," Commonweal 22 (9 August 1935): 353.

active in fields which the Nazi state must reserve for itself."¹⁶ Herman Goering forbade Catholic Youth Organizations in Prussia from indulging in anything but religious activity. Officials in Bavaria and Württemberg imposed severe penalties on Catholics who belonged or permitted their children to belong to Catholic organizations.¹⁷ Employees in the Civil Service were threatened with dismissal from their positions unless their children joined the Hitler Youth Association.¹⁸ Members of the Catholic Youth groups were constantly molested by the Hitlerjugend and their activities curtailed; priests criticizing the Hitler Youth were jailed. By July 25, 1935, the New York Times reported that Catholic Youth Organizations were officially forbidden to engage in sports, social, or educational activities.¹⁹ Hitler was able to swallow up Catholic schools and its youth organizations. By the time of the Berlin Olympics, Hitler had almost effectively destroyed the influence of church education; nearly all Catholic schools were closed and those who remained open faced a persecuted existence. Hitler was able to end the existence

¹⁶ Mildred Wertheimer, "Religion in the Third Reich," Foreign Policy Reports 9 (29 January 1936): 303.

¹⁷ George Shuster, "General Sherrill and the Olympics," Commonweal 22 (8 November 1935): 40-42.

¹⁸ "The Olympic Games," Commonweal 22 (9 August 1935): 353.

¹⁹ New York Times, 27 July 1935, 1.

of church youth organizations which threatened his totalitarian policies concerning the German youth.

The Jewish problems in the Third Reich had emotional importance both inside and outside Germany. The German racial and religious policies brought cries of protest from many members of the International Olympic Committee and various national Olympic committees. According to some Olympic committee members threats to change the Olympic site or boycott the Games were possible ways to force the Nazis to cease their discriminatory practices. The American Olympic Committee (A.O.C.) was one such national Olympic committee that protested the treatment of Jews in Germany. The New York Times reported that Avery Brundage, president of the A.O.C., warned the German government that they might lose the Olympic Games because of their anti-Semitic attitude. In response to Brundage's statement, the German Olympic officials pledged no discrimination would exist against athletes participating in the XI Olympics, that all athletes would be welcomed regardless of race. Carl Diem, secretary-general of the German Olympic Committee, stated, "The German committee stands squarely on the grounds of the Olympic ideas. There can be no question at any attempt at discrimination."²⁰ Reichssportführer Hans von Tschammer und Osten's statement in May, 1933, that "German sports are

²⁰New York Times, 19 April, 1933, 21.

for Aryans. German youth leadership is only for Aryans and not for Jews" added fuel to the protest fire.²¹ The most vocal protests were heard from the United States. In May, 1933, the American Jewish Committee decided to call for the boycott of the 1936 Games in Berlin on the basis that

the discrimination against Jews in Germany is contrary to all tenets of sportsmanship, and that the strength of the teams to participate would be weakened in view of the fact that no Jew in America or in other countries could, in self respect, undertake to appear in Germany under present conditions.²²

The American Jewish Congress urged I.O.C. member Charles Sherrill, who would represent the United States at the I.O.C. meeting scheduled in Vienna for the first week of June, 1933, to take a firm stand against American participation.²³

On June 6, 1933, the I.O.C. delegates met in Vienna for their annual conference. One of the agenda items was to discuss the discriminatory practices within Germany. Although many delegates felt the Nazi policies were contrary to all tenets of sportsmanship and Olympic principles, they agreed with Kornel Kelemen, president of the Hungarian Sports Committee, who said

that if the Germans declare at the congress they will abide by all the principles that govern Olympic participation and guarantee not to disturb

²¹ New York Times, 9 May 1933, 24.

²² New York Times, 31 May 1933, 26.

²³ New York Times, 2 June 1933, 26.

the conduct of the festival we are not in favor of transferring it elsewhere.²⁴

The I.O.C. delegates had earlier expressed their concern for Theodor Lewald who had "resigned" his position in May as president of the German Olympic Committee because of his Jewish ancestry.²⁵ The I.O.C. protested this action and demanded the reinstatement of Lewald. The Nazis, feeling they might lose the 1936 Games because of Lewald's international athletic prestige, bent their Gleichschaltung policy in order to appease their worldwide critics and reappointed Lewald to an "advisory position" in the German Olympic Committee.²⁶ During this I.O.C. meeting, Charles Sherrill received petitions from twenty former American Olympic champions²⁷ as well as track coaches and athletic directors from many prominent colleges in the United States, who echoed the American Jewish Congress's belief that America should not participate in the Games if they were held in Berlin.²⁸

²⁴New York Times, 7 June 1933, 10.

²⁵New York Times, 17 May 1933, 21.

²⁶Mandell, Nazi Olympics, 67-68.

²⁷New York Times, 6 June 1933, 15.

²⁸New York Times, 7 June 1933, 10.

The I.O.C. decided that the Games would remain in Berlin.²⁹ The I.O.C. decision was based upon the German pledge given by Theodor Lewald "in accordance with the German government" that they would observe all Olympic rules and that as a principle Jews would not be excluded from the German team. Von Tschammer und Osten added, "We shall see to it that both in our national life and in our relations and competition with foreign nations only such Germans shall be allowed to represent the nation as those against whom no objections can be raised."³⁰ Despite von Tschammer und Osten's statement which suggested that no Jews would represent Germany, the I.O.C. was satisfied.

Nevertheless, the Amateur Athletic Union (A.A.U.), the largest sports organization in the world and the United States athletic body which certified athletic eligibility, questioned the United States' participation in the 1936 Games. In November, 1933, at its annual conference, the A.A.U. went on record as opposing United States' participation and adapted the resolution of Gustavus Town Kirby, treasurer of the A.A.U., that the U.S. should not participate in the Berlin Games if matters in Germany did not improve.³¹ His lengthy resolution recorded the Nazi wrongdoings and notified the International Olympic Committee and

²⁹New York Times, 8 June 1933, 1.

³⁰New York Times, 6 August 1933, 1.

³¹New York Times, 21 November 1933, 1.

the German government that no American athlete would be certified for competition

until and unless the position of the G.O.C., of the Organizing Committee of Berlin and of the German government is so changed in fact as well as in theory as to both permit and encourage German athletes of Jewish faith or heritage to train, prepare for and participate in the Olympic Games.³²

The A.A.U. resolution

urged upon the American Olympic Committee that there be impressed upon the I.O.C. and through it upon the German Olympic Committee and the Organizing Committee and the German government, that the plea of the athletes of the United States be taken not as one of threat or bitterness but one of concern and of desire that a way be found for Germany to satisfy the world that, in all ways all and not merely some of the fundamental principles of democracy of sport and the Olympic Games are and will continue to be dominant.³³

The resolution further reminded the I.O.C. and the German Olympic Committee

that the relations between German and American athletes have been, are and should continue to be friendly, cordial and cooperative. The desire and expectations of American athletes to compete in the 1936 Games are keen and enthusiastic.³⁴

The day following the acceptance of the A.A.U. resolution, the A.A.U. received a cablegram from the three German delegates to the I.O.C., giving their assurances

that the obligations incurred by the German Olympic Committee in Vienna relative to the participation

³² Quoted in New York Times, 21 November 1933, 1.

³³ Ibid., 25.

³⁴ Ibid.

of the German Jews in the Olympic Games . . . will be strictly fulfilled and since the meeting in Vienna neither government nor the Olympic Committee has passed any regulations or decrees to the disadvantage of Jewish athletes in Germany. Signed Theodor Lewald, Duke Adolf Friedrich of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Karl von Halt.³⁵

The A.A.U. replied,

there was never any doubt in our minds that, if these three delegates had their way about it, the terms of protocol would be lived up to and to the very letter. Our point is that we have no assurance that the German government will permit them to live up to their promise.³⁶

The German I.O.C. members may have given bona fide pledges, but what were these pledges worth in a totalitarian state such as Nazi Germany?

The A.A.U. hoped the American Olympic Committee would adopt their resolution. A month earlier, Bernard S. Deutsch, president of the American Jewish Congress, had requested that the A.O.C. boycott the Games. In a letter to the A.O.C., Deutsch stated, "In the five months which have elapsed since the pledge of Germany was given . . . the policy of the Hitler government to the Jews has become more violent and more stringent."³⁷ On November 23, 1933, the A.O.C. took a more moderate stand on the Olympic question than the A.A.U. According to Charles Sherrill, the A.O.C. chose to amend the A.A.U. resolution because "in the present form it is a

³⁵New York Times, 22 November 1933, 25.

³⁶New York Times, 22 November 1933, 25.

³⁷New York Times, 9 October 1933, 13.

threat to Germany." The A.O.C. resolution was "a protest and not a threat--a protest against the present unfair treatment of Jewish athletes by German authorities." The A.O.C. resolution expressed the hope that all Nazi restrictions on its Jewish athletes would be "lifted so that athletes of the team of the United States can and will be certified for competition under Olympic standards."³⁸

On November 24, 1933, the Nazi government claimed that there was no discrimination in German sports. The New York Times reported that Helen Mayer, a 1928 Olympic gold medal fencer, would be on the German Olympic Team despite her Jewish ancestry and non-membership in a Nazi athletic association.³⁹ A month later, the New York Times reported that Jewish athletes in Germany had formed their own sports clubs and had received approval from von Tschammer und Osten to train at the Olympic training courses.⁴⁰

In May, 1934, Representative Emmanuel Celler of New York cabled the I.O.C. expressing the belief that "any government that abets Jewish persecution and which threatens daily through Dr. Joseph Goebbels to intensify anti-Jewish atrocities cannot be trusted to keep its promise not to discriminate against Jewish athletes."⁴¹ Jeremiah T. Mahoney,

³⁸ New York Times, 23 November 1933, 26.

³⁹ New York Times, 24 November 1933, 26.

⁴⁰ New York Times, 18 December 1933, 26.

⁴¹ New York Times, 23 May 1934, 24.

president of the A.A.U., a New York judge, and Roman Catholic, followed the November, 1933, A.A.U. resolution to the letter. In his public speeches, he stressed the more general moral aspects of participation. Mahoney stated, "We want to go to a country where the government believes there is a Creator who controls our destinies. We don't want to go to places where the rulers are pagan reactionaries."⁴²

Samuel Untermyer, president of the Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League to Champion Human Rights, urged Jewish athletes to shun the Olympics. He warned those who did participate deserved only the contempt of their fellowmen, be they Jews or Christians.⁴³

The liberal Catholic magazine, Commonweal, claimed it was not their business to regulate the policy of the A.O.C. or to tell an individual athlete what to do,

but in the interest of justice and fairness we suggest that no Catholic and no friend of the sports activities of Catholic institutions ought to make the trip to Berlin. We request each and every organization identified with the Church to make it clear to its members that participation in the approaching games means endorsement of willful and violent persecution. And we respectfully petition the hierarchy to warn the faithful concerning the issues involved, so that no Catholic young man or his friends unwittingly give to the enemies of our faith opportunity to question the sacred solidarity of the Church belief.⁴⁴

⁴² New York Times, 1 August 1935, 5.

⁴³ New York Times, 12 August 1934, sec. 2:6.

⁴⁴ "The Olympic Games," Commonweal 22 (9 August 1935): 353.

One of the first to alert the United States State Department to the political ramifications of the Olympic festival to be held in Nazi Germany was George S. Messersmith, American consul in Berlin. In 1933, Messersmith advised Cordell Hull, the United States secretary of state, to put pressure on the A.O.C. to send a representative to Germany to witness the anti-Jewish measures adopted in German sport. He felt,

Unless the American Olympic Committee can definitely satisfy itself by first-hand knowledge and observations that this discrimination against Jews no longer takes place, I do not believe that it would remain representative of American sport tradition if American athletes participate in the Olympic Games in 1936.⁴⁵

In June, 1934, Avery Brundage, president of the A.O.C., embarked as a committee-of-one on a fact-finding mission to discover first-hand the conditions which existed in Germany. Brundage had the authority to accept or reject the German invitation on the spot or to submit a report of his findings to the executive committee of the A.O.C., which would jointly make a decision.⁴⁶ In Germany, Brundage talked with Nazi political leaders who assured him the Olympic spirit was being practiced. Americans living in Germany and various Jews were interviewed in public cafes, always under the supervision of von Tschammer und Osten's

⁴⁵ George Eisen, "Voices of Sanity," North American Society for Sport History Proceedings and Newsletter, (1980) 57-58.

⁴⁶ New York Times, 4 June 1934, 21.

deputies.⁴⁷ Brundage was directed to an athletic camp where seven Jewish athletes were training and was assured by the G.O.C. that Jews would be allowed to try out for the Reich team. Brundage accepted all of this information at face value and concluded that Germany was obeying all Olympic rules.⁴⁸ Brundage's conclusions were reinforced when, in the presence of von Tschammer und Osten and von Halt, he was assured by leaders of two Jewish sports organizations that they were satisfied with the regulations laid down by the leaders of German sport concerning the treatment of Jewish sports clubs in the German sport system. Von Tschammer was also satisfied with Brundage's visit because it allowed a high ranking American athletic official a "true" insight into the Jewish question.⁴⁹ That same month, the Olympic Games News Service reported that Palestine had been extended an invitation to the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games. Brundage, like most other foreign visitors, left Germany thoroughly impressed with the preparations for the Games, the relative prosperity of the country, and the lack of discrimination.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ New York Times, 4 June 1934, 1.

⁴⁸ New York Times, 8 December 1934, 20.

⁴⁹ Richard Gibson, "Avery Brundage: Professional Amateur" (Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 1976), 60.

⁵⁰ Mandell, Nazi Olympics, 81.

The New York Times reported that many people did not agree with Brundage's report and felt Brundage was prejudiced and biased in favor of the Germans before the German trip. They felt the Jews whom Brundage interviewed were intimidated by the Nazi officials who were always present during the conversations.⁵¹ Brundage replied to this accusation, saying he only spoke with one individual who was against the U.S. participating in the Berlin Games. In a letter to Mrs. Merwyn Winston Baum, a personal friend, Brundage claimed that the conditions present in Germany were not as grim as the newspapers were leading the people to believe. Brundage accused the newspapers of "deliberately misrepresenting the true situation in Germany, inspired by Jews and Communists who were arousing the same class and race hatred which they claimed to despise in Germany."⁵²

The most vocal critic of Brundage's report was Representative Emmanuel Celler of Brooklyn, New York. The New York Times reported on August 8, 1934, that Celler declared that recent reports from Germany indicated that discrimination against Jewish athletes was still rampant. He stated that this should be sufficient reason for the United States not to participate in the Berlin Olympics. Celler pointed out that Brundage's remarks in the "Olympic News" concerning

⁵¹New York Times, 26 August 1934, 2.

⁵²Gibson, "Avery Brundage," 61.

the German's thorough and efficient organization and preparation for the upcoming Games and his call to American athletes to prepare for these Games showed that he had already made up his mind in regard to America's participation in the Olympic Games. Celler accused Brundage of not examining the facts in Germany, of not doing the job which the A.O.C. had entrusted to him.

Twelve days after Avery Brundage's visit, the seven Jewish athletes training for the German Olympic team were told they were not good enough to compete. Opponents of United States' participation pointed an accusing finger at Brundage. Brundage rationalized this situation by claiming "that just because they (Jews) did not make the team does not mean discrimination exists. In forty years of Olympic history, Brundage doubted if Jewish participation totalled one percent in the Games."⁵³ The A.O.C. voted unanimously in September, 1934, to accept the Berlin invitation "in light of this report of Mr. Brundage and the attitude and assurances of the representatives of the German government."⁵⁴

Messersmith, now the United States's consul in Vienna, believed Brundage and later the A.O.C. based their decision to participate in the Berlin Olympics on doubtful moral grounds. He felt the A.O.C., in taking the stand which it

⁵³Quoted in Gibson, "Avery Brundage," 62.

⁵⁴New York Times, 27 September 1934, 28.

had, had failed in its duty toward the young people of the United States. Messersmith maintained that the German delegates of the I.O.C. had betrayed their fellow I.O.C. members by claiming that Jews would be on the German Olympic team and by claiming that the German Olympic Committee was acting as an athletic body independent of Nazi control. Messersmith reported that he had approached Lewald about his pledge of non-discrimination in Germany. Messersmith said that Lewald believed he had no other choice in the matter. Lewald replied that Messersmith "must know what the consequences would be to him if he had made any other reply." Messersmith accused Lewald of misusing the confidence which the A.O.C. put in him.⁵⁵

William C. Dodd, the United States ambassador in Berlin, shared Messersmith's concern about holding the Games in Berlin. He opposed American participation in the 1936 Games in Nazi Germany. Dodd sent his embassy staff to investigate conditions surrounding the Olympic controversies. Dodd's meetings with German-Jewish athletic leaders and his personal observations confirmed the deep concern of German Jews. Dodd claimed,

It is no exaggeration to say that the Jewish population awaits with fear and trembling the termination of the Olympic period which has vouchsafed them a certain respite against molestation, although

⁵⁵Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 180.

it may be doubted whether the National Socialists will be quite so foolish as to spoil the good impression upon foreign opinions made by the management of the Games by an immediate resumption of the more spectacular anti-Jewish activities.⁵⁶

The decision of the A.O.C. favoring participation was not accepted by many factions within the United States. Many influential individuals, civic and religious groups called for a boycott as the most effective means of expressing the moral indignation of civilized people at the return to barbarism of the present terrorist rule in Germany.⁵⁷ Representative Emmanuel Celler asked Catholics, Jews, and Protestants everywhere in the United States to mete out some punishment to Germany. He claimed,

It is within our rights to do so. I believe that Germany should be thoroughly boycotted. Not until she is deeply stirred will she come back to a sense of her responsibility and cease these brutal attacks upon defenseless people of the Catholic faith and the Jewish faith and of other sects that refuse to adopt Nazi ritual and worship Nazi leaders.⁵⁸

Cellar submitted a resolution to the United States House of Representatives which prohibited the allotment of funds for participation of American athletes in the 1936 Olympic Games. Celler's H.J. 381 read,

⁵⁶ Extract from Political Report of the Ambassador in Germany (Dodd), 19 August 1936, Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936, Volume 2, 202.

⁵⁷ "Olympic Boycott," Commonweal 22 (18 October 1935): 609.

⁵⁸ Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 22 July 1935, 70, pt. 11: 11569.

In order to discourage America's participation in the Olympic Games to be held in Germany, and as a protest against the unsportsmanlike attitude of the Reich, no public or semi-public funds shall be allotted or used to defray expenses of any American athletes to participate in the Games of the eleventh Olympiad to be held in Berlin, Germany, August 1 to 16, 1936.⁵⁹

On August 9, 1935, Senator James Davis of Pennsylvania read to the United States Senate and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations the resolution adopted by the Joint Conference of Anti-Nazi Organization of Philadelphia which protested the latest manifestations of the tragedy in Germany under Adolf Hitler. The resolution claimed,

The voice of the American government should be heard in no uncertain terms, conveying to the Hitler government the protest and condemnation of the corporate representations of the American people. Too long has this condemnation been delayed.

The conference proposed the adoption of the resolution which would voice the United States's disapproval of the actions of the Nazi government. One provision of the resolution asked the A.A.U. and the A.O.C. to rescind America's conditional acceptance of Germany's invitation to participate in the 1936 Berlin Games " as a solemn obligation in defense of the spirit of sportsmanship and the principle upon which the Olympic Games are founded."⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 23 August 1935, 79, pt. 13: 14397.

⁶⁰ Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 9 August 1935, 79, pt. 12: 12768.

The following week, Representative William Middleton Citron of Connecticut wrote a letter to the American Olympic Committee protesting the United States's participation in the Olympic Games. Citron objected

to participating in these games if they are held in Germany. I object to the spending of American money in Germany during these times. I object to our participation in Olympic Games in a land where hatred and persecution is preached by its rulers and where tyranny and oppression is the foundation upon which its government rests.⁶¹

Citron emphasized that it was difficult for Americans to understand that the Berlin Olympics were totally different than those of Los Angeles in 1932. He stressed that the United States's sports organizations were autonomous where German sports associations were pawns of the German government. The Berlin Olympics were not being arranged by sports federations but by the German War Ministry. Citron pointed out that the Olympic village at Döberitz was the property of the War Ministry and would eventually become a Reich garrison and barracks, that soldiers and sportsmen are identical in German opinion, since both foster the spirit of comradeship.⁶²

That same day, Senator Peter G. Gerry of Rhode Island asked Congress to seriously consider not taking part in the 1936 Games if the conditions in Germany continued to exist.

⁶¹Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 19 August 1935, 79, pt. 13: 13747.

⁶²Ibid., 13748.

Gerry felt

with conditions such as those which exist in Germany, with the animosities which are bound to be engendered, that it might be a serious matter, for example, if an American of Jewish extraction should win an important event in the Olympic Games, or if there were some questions of a deadheat involving such an American, and a controversy should arise on the decision. It seems to me, in view of all the turmoil, and the different races and religions of the contestants competing in the Olympic Games there might result very bad feelings.⁶³

That night, Judge Mahoney, president of the A.A.U., in a speech delivered over radio station WABC in New York City, protested against American participation in the Berlin Olympics. Mahoney perceived the conditions in Germany as "created by the Nazi government in defiance of the rules and laws of humanity and of the spirit of sportsmanship and fair play, and contrary to Olympic principles." Mahoney said the greatest aid Americans could give to the millions of people suffering in Germany was to make a positive statement to the Hitler government that the United States shall not participate in the Berlin Olympics unless the "unjust and inhuman and unsportsmanlike conditions which have been created are eliminated forthwith."⁶⁴

The Christian Century, a leading Protestant journal, claimed the best way to tell the Nazis that American Protestants, Catholics, and Jews disapproved of the shocking

⁶³Ibid., 12913.

⁶⁴Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 23 August 1935, 79, pt. 13: 14398.

events occurring in Germany is to move the Olympic Games.

To let the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish youth of Germany know that the outside world is not indifferent to the persecution being inflicted upon them, and to let the Nazi leaders know of the horrors with which their brutality is regarded, let the athletic authorities of America move to take the Olympics from Berlin. A move of this sort made in this country will be followed in other countries. It will have immediate moral effect inside Germany. It should, therefore, be made without delay: Germany must be told.⁶⁵

Commonweal instructed its readers not to make the trip to Berlin. The magazine requested that every organization identified with the Catholic Church make it clear to its members that participation in the Berlin Games meant endorsement of willful and violent persecution. Commonweal said that the decision to boycott the Berlin Olympics was a sacrifice to all sports enthusiasts but the magazine emphasized that "it is not the first time or last time in history that an offering which hurts has been made on the altar of God. Let there be no compromise."⁶⁶ The National Council of Methodist Youth issued open letters to Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish pastors and lay persons to support the boycott movement.⁶⁷ S. Brodetsky, president of the Maccabi World Union, an international organization of Jewish sporting clubs, "urged all Jewish sportsmen, for their

⁶⁵ Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 19 August 1935, 79, pt. 13: 13748.

⁶⁶ "The Olympic Games," Commonweal 22 (9 August 1935): 353.

⁶⁷ "Olympic Boycott," Commonweal 22 (18 October 1935): 609.

own self-respect, to refrain from competing in a country where they are discriminated against as a race and our Jewish brethren are treated with unexampled brutality."⁶⁸

Representative John P. Higgins of Massachusetts echoed the protesters' sentiments and asked Congress if the racial and religious persecution in Germany was not a matter of concern to the civilized world? "Have we not as citizens of the United States the right to raise our voices in protest against injustice, against the continued violation of fundamental human rights?" He brought to Congress's attention that the Massachusetts House of Representatives had gone on record condemning the Nazi persecution in Germany as abhorrent to the humane and liberal sentiments of the people of Massachusetts.⁶⁹

Many American newspapers, including all the New York dailies, opposed the preparations for choosing an American Olympic team.⁷⁰ A New York Times editorial claimed that the team representing Germany in the Olympics will be a political team molded by the National Socialists. The editorial stated that just as in every other activity, the totalitarian Nazi state claimed a monopoly right in sports. It claimed that the whole Olympic organization and

⁶⁸Quoted in Mandell, Nazi Olympics, 89.

⁶⁹Congressional Record, 74th Cong., 1st sess., 21 August 1935, 79, pt. 13: 14040.

⁷⁰Mandell, Nazi Olympics, 86.

preparation are a government affair; that the Berlin Olympic Games will be totally under National Socialist control and will therefore be totally Nazi.⁷¹ Westbrook Pegler stated in the New York World Telegram that the A.O.C. has no right to commit American sport to participate in "a political undertaking intended to glorify the Nazi program."⁷² That feeling was brought to life in August, 1935, when over twenty thousand people, under the auspices of the Anti-Nazi Federation, held a mass meeting in Madison Square Garden in New York City to demand withdrawal of the United States from the 1936 Games.⁷³

Sonja Brunting of the Women's League for Peace opposed participating in the Olympic Games because it would be dangerous to send American athletes to Berlin where they would be subjected to the most insidious Nazi propaganda.⁷⁴ In October, 1935, Judge Mahoney asked Dr. Theodor Lewald, in an open letter, if the German Olympic Committee was under Nazi control. He asked Lewald why it was necessary for the German Olympic Committee to obtain consent from the German government before it could give its word to the I.O.C., the A.O.C., and the A.A.U. that it would observe the rules of

⁷¹New York Times, 12 August 1935, 1.

⁷²Westbrook Pegler, "The United States Should Withdraw," New York World Telegram, 19 August 1935.

⁷³The Times (London), 12 August 1935, 9.

⁷⁴New York Times, 27 October 1935, 12.

the Olympic Games and not discriminate against German Jews. "In all the history of the Olympics has it ever been necessary for any government to give such a pledge with respect to the Games?" He questioned Lewald why Adolf Hitler's picture appeared on the official Olympic calendar which was issued by the German Olympic Committee. Mahoney pointed out that it was an Olympic code violation to have Hitler personally call the youth of the world to the Olympic Games. Mahoney asked Lewald if he expected the world to believe "the Nazi government which has deprived Jews of their citizenship, and degraded them in every way, wants Jewish athletes to represent them in the Olympic Games."⁷⁵

George Shuster wrote in the Commonweal that the Berlin Games were no ordinary athletic games but were designed to reveal to the world in a grandiose way what the Third Reich had done for the adolescent male. He believed that the Berlin Olympics had an evident and sinister anti-Catholic purpose, setting approval upon the radically anti-Christian Nazi doctrine of youth. Shuster warned that no Catholics could share in these Olympic Games as a participant or spectator without aiding and abetting an effort to destroy the Christian faith. He claimed that the point against participation was a matter so simple that "anyone slightly

⁷⁵Gibson, "Avery Brundage," 69.

above Avery Brundage's level of intelligence ought to be able to grasp it."⁷⁶

Ernest Lee Jahncke, an American member of the I.O.C., shared Judge Mahoney's and the Commonweal's concern. He, like Mahoney and the Catholic magazine, advocated a United States boycott of the Games. He felt the United States's non-participation would be catastrophic to the prestige and self-esteem of the Nazi regime. Participation would be a mistake for America. The Olympic idea could only be saved if the United States and other countries refused to give their approval to the manner in which Germany had treated its Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant athletes.⁷⁷

An article entitled "The Olympics" appeared in the Survey and stated that all United States citizens

. . . have a stake in this issue as to whether American athletes shall take part in the Olympics at Berlin, when to do so strikes a blow at fair play in sports. We regard this in no sense sheerly a Jewish problem. All minority groups are under the ban in Germany, whether Socialist, Democratic, Catholic, Jewish, Communist, trade union or liberals. Their athletic organizations have been disrupted. No one who differs from the Nazi mold has a fair chance to try for Olympic honors. We do not need to take the word of refugees, Gentile or Jewish, who had had to leave Germany because of political suppression or economic persecution; the official German statements carry their own condemnation . . . In the name of the fair play and sportsmanship that our settlement clubs strive for, we urge the adult athletic

⁷⁶ Shuster, "General Sherrill and the Olympics," 40-42.

⁷⁷ American Hebrew, December 1935, 124.

organizations of the country to refrain from participating in the Olympics if they are held in Germany.⁷⁸

Governor George Earle of Pennsylvania warned Americans

if you want your children to be taught that might is right, that women are a lower animal than men, that free press, free speech and religious freedom are false ideals, that peace is weakness, that liberty as we have learned to love it in America is a myth--if you want these doctrines inculcated in the youth of America, then send your boys and girls to Germany.⁷⁹

An editorial in the Catholic World warned "that to accept the Nazi hospitality would be to tacitly condone Nazi brutality."⁸⁰

Leading the charge for American participation was Avery Brundage, president of the A.O.C. and past president of the A.A.U., an organization whose signature was needed on an athlete's certification for participation in the Olympic Games. The arguments for participation relied on the German pledge made by Theodor Lewald, Carl Diem, and von Tschammer und Osten confirming Jewish participation in athletic organizations and representation on the German Olympic team. Brundage denied that any Nazi discriminatory practices existed and emphasized that the Olympic Games were under the sole jurisdiction of the I.O.C. Brundage stressed that the strength and importance of the amateur

⁷⁸"The Olympics," Survey, December 1935, 368.

⁷⁹New York Times, 4 December 1935, 26.

⁸⁰"The German Olympics," Catholic World 142 (January 1936): 393.

sports organization came from its independence and did not tolerate political, racial or religious interference of any kind. With this in mind, the A.O.C. or A.A.U could not interfere in the international, political, religious, or racial affairs of any country or group.⁸¹

General Charles Sherrill, an American member of the I.O.C., joined Brundage in his desire for American participation in the Olympics. In 1934, Sherrill returned from the I.O.C. conference in Berlin and proclaimed that the German government had generously pledged Jewish representation on its Olympic team in the person of Rudi Ball, one of Germany's top ice hockey players, and Helen Mayer, the 1928 gold medal fencer. Sherrill returned to Berlin in August, 1935, to investigate why Helen Mayer, who had been promised a spot on the German Olympic team, had not yet been officially invited to join the squad. Sherrill visited Adolf Hitler feeling the I.O.C. had been betrayed and the Vienna Pledge of 1933 had been broken. Sherrill informed Hitler that if Jews were excluded from the German team, the I.O.C. would probably move the Olympic Games from Germany. Hitler replied if the Games were moved he would simply organize a purely German Olympic Games.⁸² Sherrill's one hour conversation with the Führer could only make Sherrill

⁸¹"Brundage to Stand on German Promise," Chicago American, 26 July 1935.

⁸²Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 172.

think the German Olympic Committee was under Nazi control. Sherrill wrote to Baillet-Latour, president of the I.O.C., urging him

to talk personally with the Führer and show him the Ministerium des Innern June, 1933, letter you received in Vienna from Berlin about the exclusion of German Jews from the German Olympic team. You are in for the greatest shock of your entire life. It will be a trying test even for your remarkable tact and savoir fair; and the sooner you meet the situation the better the hope for your success, instead of a destructive explosion.⁸³

Sherrill's visit, however, had made an impression upon Hitler. Shortly afterwards, von Tschammer und Osten extended Helen Mayer an invitation to participate on the Germany team. Mayer accepted. Sherrill was satisfied that Germany had kept its Olympic pledge.⁸⁴ Sherrill added that American had no more business discussing the treatment of Jews in Germany than the Germans would have in discussing the treatment of blacks in the South or the Japanese in California.⁸⁵ Frank W. Rubien, secretary of the A.O.C., returned from Germany in September, 1935, claiming that discrimination against Jews did not exist in Germany; Jews had their own sports clubs. He felt the United States was the country responsible for mixing politics into the Olympic Games. Rubien pointed out that a lack of Jewish representation on

⁸³Quoted in Ibid., 175.

⁸⁴"Hitler's Olympic Games," Nation 141 (16 October 1935): 426.

⁸⁵New York Times, 22 October 1935, 1.

the German Olympic team could be substantiated because few German-Jewish athletes showed a competitive caliber much better than the high school level in the United States.⁸⁶ The only German-Jew who had a real chance of making the German Olympic Team was Gretl Bergmann, a Stuttgart high-jumper whose best jump was one inch off the world record. She was excluded from a national contest held in preparation for the Olympics not because she was Jewish but because she was not a member of an official Nazi sports organization. Gretl Bergmann could not belong to a Nazi sports organization because she lacked Aryan parentage.⁸⁷

Sherrill warned in October, 1935, that the boycott movement would have a harmful effect on the thousands of American athletes training for the Olympic Games when they confronted the fact that somebody was trying to defeat their ambitions to get to Berlin. He felt this would provoke an "anti-Semitic" feeling in the United States.⁸⁸

The boycott movement finally alarmed Adolf Hitler. In November, 1935, Baillet-Latour met with Hitler and guaranteed the German Führer that the Games would remain in Berlin. The Times (London) reported that Latour felt the boycott movement was a result of political machination and would

⁸⁶ New York Times, 10 September 1935, 10.

⁸⁷ "Boycott the Olympics," Nation 141 (21 August 1935): 201.

⁸⁸ New York Times, 22 October 1935, 1.

only succeed if the athletes refused to participate and fell victim to the political maneuvering.⁸⁹

Avery Brundage added that "alien agitators and their American stooges are trying to deny American athletes their birthright as American citizens to represent the United States in the Olympic Games"⁹⁰ Dr. Frederick B. Robinson, president of the City College of New York, offered an alternative reason for American participation. Robinson declared that a "strong representation of American-Jewish athletes at the next Olympic Games in Berlin would gain greater glory both for our own country and for the Jewish people of the world."⁹¹

The quarrelling over United States participation was settled in a showdown vote at the forty-seventh annual meeting of the A.A.U. from December 6-8, 1935. Even though the I.O.C. had accepted the Nazi pledge as sincere and guaranteed Hitler the Games would remain in Berlin, many members of the A.A.U. were undecided in their opinion concerning the Berlin Games. The 500,000 member National Labor Committee for Palestine sent a resolution to the A.A.U. convention urging a U.S. boycott of the Games.⁹² An educators' statement signed by presidents of forty-one

⁸⁹ The Times (London), 7 November 1935, 16.

⁹⁰ New York Times, 4 December 1935, 26.

⁹¹ New York Times, 13 October 1935, sec. 2, 3:2.

⁹² New York Times, 2 December 1935, 15.

universities throughout the United States claimed, "The Games are going to be used by Nazi Germany as an instrument for the propagation of her ideals which represent the destruction of democracy and progressive society." They believed that Americans should refrain to take part in the Games and that such refusal would serve to elevate and preserve sport and the sporting spirit.⁹³ Walter White, secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, telegraphed the A.A.U. claiming that "Germany has violated her pledge against racial discrimination and for Americans to participate would be to negate the principle upon which the Olympic Games are based. A boycott would help the world realize that racial bigotry must be opposed in its every manifestation."⁹⁴ Some members of the A.A.U., therefore, felt a boycott was their only alternative.

Avery Brundage, president of the A.O.C. and chairman of the American Olympic Finance Committee, accused those who wished to boycott the Games of spending millions in America to keep an American team away from Berlin. Brundage claimed that an acceptance of a resolution to boycott the Games would only insult the fifty other nations who had already accepted the invitation.⁹⁵ Other A.A.U. members

⁹³ New York Times, 2 December 1935, 17.

⁹⁴ New York Times, 7 December 1935, 1.

⁹⁵ New York Times, 8 December 1935, 30.

claimed the Nazi propaganda machine would use the proposed American boycott to their advantage. They pointed out that the Nazis would claim the United States was afraid to face the superior Aryans in athletic competition. Some people favored a racially and religiously mixed United States Olympic team whose athletic victories would be viewed as a victory over the Nazi Aryan myth.⁹⁶ On December 6, 1935, Mahoney proposed the boycott resolution to the executive committee of the A.A.U. The executive committee vote resulted in a tie. The executive committee voted, however, to send the resolution to the general session of the A.A.U. where one-third of the delegates were undecided on the Olympic issue. Both Olympic factions vied for the undecided delegates' support. On December 8, 1935, after five hours of speeches and electioneering the final vote on the resolution was taken. The A.A.U. decided by a 58.25 to 55.75 margin in favor of the United States participation in the Berlin Olympic Games. Upon hearing the decision, Mahoney resigned his position. Avery Brundage was then chosen to fill the empty spot. Brundage, now the head of the A.O.C. and the A.A.U., asked for the resignation of all "anti-Olympic" members in the organization.⁹⁸ The vision of George Messersmith and many well informed observers in

⁹⁶ New York Times, 13 October 1935, sec. 2, 3:2.

⁹⁷ New York Times, 9 December 1935, 1.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

Europe that the holding or non-holding of the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936 would play an important part in determining political developments in Europe was viewed as pessimistic and exaggerated by Brundage and his Olympic advocates.⁹⁹

That the 1936 Games would take place was now assured because the United States, the premier sports nation in the world, had decided to send a team to Berlin. Germany was very satisfied with the decision, although German papers did not discuss the closeness of the showdown vote. Nazi newspapers claimed, "The American sport conscience won and the boycott agitators and Olympic saboteurs have been defeated."¹⁰⁰

The boycott movement did not die after the A.A.U. decision. Judge Mahoney, ex-president of the A.A.U., along with many morally offended Americans and Europeans, were trying to arrange a "Workers Games" in Barcelona, Spain, to rival the Berlin Olympics as a protest against the nazification of international sport. Ironically, these Games were cancelled in July, 1936, a month before the Berlin Games, because of the civil war in Spain. With the backing of the federation of labor and supported by socialists, many countries had planned to send athletes to these Games. The French Chamber of Deputies had granted a French squad

⁹⁹ Graham and Ueberhorst, Modern Olympics, 179.

¹⁰⁰ New York Times, 10 December 1935, 2.

600,000 francs to finance their trip and stay in Barcelona. The United States team sailed to Spain only to return disappointed.¹⁰¹

Charles Ornstein, an American member of the A.O.C., a member of the Jewish Welfare League, and a leader of the United States boycott movement, announced that a world labor athletic carnival would be held August 15-16, the last two days of the Berlin Games, at New York City's Randall's Island Stadium.¹⁰² This meet, consisting of twenty-three open events, gave the left-behinds the opportunity to compete, and gave the Olympic protesters the satisfaction of doing it their way.

The boycott movement created financial worries for the American Olympic Committee. The money usually donated to the Olympic Committee did not materialize. Don Parker, sports columnist for the New York Daily Mirror, joked that the American team might have to swim to Germany.¹⁰³ By July, 1936, the American Jewish Congress claimed the American Olympic Committee lacked \$150,000 needed to send a full contingent of American athletes to Berlin.¹⁰⁴ Wealthy

¹⁰¹ New York Times, 10 July 1936, 14.

¹⁰² New York Times, 28 May 1936, 32.

¹⁰³ "Olympic Fund Problems," Literary Digest 121 (18 1936): 44.

¹⁰⁴ American Jewish Yearbook Review of the Year 5697 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1937), 206.

American Catholics and Jews withdrew their customary financial support.¹⁰⁵ To alleviate this problem American Olympic Finance Committee added from ten cents to fifty cents Olympic donation charge to tickets for all athletic events sponsored by the A.A.U. Advertisements in the New York Times appealed to Americans to "Help Today. . ."¹⁰⁶ Avery Brundage appealed to German descendants living in the United States to pick up the slack. Most of the money needed was received.

In the Report of the American Olympic Committee, Avery Brundage claimed the boycott movement proved detrimental in some cases to the financing of the Games, but in other respects the boycott movement was beneficial. Brundage stated,

on one hand it misled a number of people, intimidated a few and gave some an excuse for not contributing. On the other hand, it aroused the resentment of the athletic leaders, the sportsmen, and patriotic citizens of America and induced them to work harder and contribute more. More than anything else, the boycott brought the Olympic expedition to the attention of millions who ordinarily take no notice of it.¹⁰⁷

Gustavus Kirby, treasurer of the American Olympic Committee, believed that many people felt they were helping the Jewish cause by opposing America's participation in the Games. He

¹⁰⁵ "Forth to War: America's Athletes Take Ship to Berlin Olympic Games," Literary Digest 122 (11 July 1936): 33.

¹⁰⁶ New York Times, 6 July 1936, 14.

¹⁰⁷ Report of the American Olympic Committee, 73.

also believed that owing to economic conditions many people felt there were better causes to serve than those of Olympic participation. Kirby emphasized that despite all this, the American public provided sufficient funds to defray the expense of participation.¹⁰⁸ American Olympic Committee officials, however, had to finance their own trip to Berlin because the "team came first."¹⁰⁹ The City of Los Angeles, which according to Olympic tradition was to transfer the Olympic flag to Berlin for the opening ceremony, refused to contribute the two thousand dollars necessary to send their mayor to Berlin to deliver the flag.¹¹⁰ William May Garland, an American member of the I.O.C., carried the Olympic flag personally to Berlin.¹¹¹

The boycott movement was alive in Europe as well. Many international artists refused to take part in the fine arts competition in Berlin. They met in the Netherlands to display their works of art referring to their exhibition as "The Olympic Games under a Dictatorship."¹¹² The Times (London) reported that the Austrian Sporting and Athletic Front had issued an official statement considering a boycott

¹⁰⁸ Report of the American Olympic Committee, 59.

¹⁰⁹ "Olympic Fund Problems," Literary Digest 121 (18 April 1936): 44.

¹¹⁰ "Trials and Tryouts," Time, 20 July 1936, 50-52.

¹¹¹ New York Times, 17 July 1936, 35.

¹¹² New York Times, 30 July 1936, 13.

of the Olympic Games. The Austrian athletic association prohibited any Austrian athlete or team from competing in Germany or against German teams. The reason for their actions stemmed both from the violent personal attacks on Prince Starhemberg, head of the Austrian Sporting and Athletic Front, in the official Nazi newspaper Völkischer Beobachter¹¹³ as well as the assassination of Austrian Chancellor Engelbert Dolfuss on July 25, 1934, by Nazi rebels. The animosity between Berlin and Vienna lessened, however, on July 10, 1936, when a political truce was agreed to. Athletic restrictions were lifted. The Austrians decided to compete in Berlin.¹¹⁴

Many people in England felt a boycott necessary, even though the British Olympic Association had accepted the German invitation in December, 1934. The National Workers Sports Association called for a boycott from London, claiming that Nazi politics should not interfere with international sports.¹¹⁵

They claimed that Olympic visitors will only be shown what the National Socialists want them to see. The British Workers Sports Association said foreigners in Berlin will be shown

¹¹³ The Times (London), 21 August 1935, 9.

¹¹⁴ New York Times, 25 July 1936, 4.

¹¹⁵ New York Times, 19 January 1936, sec. 5:1.

the Reichstag, partly "burnt out" in 1933, and falsely alleged to be the work of Communists; happy workers cheering the Nationalist Socialists at popular demonstrations; Jews sitting in their cafes unmolested (for the period of the Olympic Games) enjoying their glass of beer as well as any Aryan; contented women nursing their children in houses especially painted up for the Olympic Games; eggs and butter in the shops, hoarded up by instruction for the last few weeks; busy factories, and signs of plenty of work and attention for the condition of the workers; many new and impressive buildings like the new Air Ministry; the magnificent buildings of the Olympic village and district which will be used as a military centre after the Olympic Games and the peaceful unity of the nation.¹¹⁶

The British Workers Sports Association asked the Olympic visitors to inquire about

the oath, under penalty of treason, which every guide was asked to take; the secret rules laid down to chambermaids, waiters and porters whom they will meet in Berlin; the Columbia House, and other prisons with their torture chambers; the leaders and other members of the old Trade Union Movement who have not yet been shot while attempting to escape; Jewish surgeons who, after years of training to save life, are denied not only hospital appointments, but also general practice because they are Jews; Jewish teachers and scientists who have lost their position because they are Jews; the women and baby hostages still languishing in concentration camps and prisons--their only offense being the fact that their menfolk were Pacifists, Socialists, or Communists; the daily sittings of the political tribunal at Bellevue-strasse 14, only to see whether heavy sentences are being passed there hourly on a continuous stream of men and women who do not think like Hitler; . . . and great religious leaders of the Catholic and Protestant Church whose sermons have been seized by secret police.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Karl Heinz Jahnke, Gegen des Missbrauch der Olympischen Idee 1936: Sportler im antifaschist (Frankfort/Main: Rödenberg-Verlag, 1972), 90.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 92.

In November, 1935, The Times (London) posed the question of British participation to its readers. Cyril Henrique, of the East India United Service Club, in his letters to The Times served as the spokesman for the faction that opposed attending the Olympics. He felt the Nazis had broken their pledge made to the I.O.C. in June, 1933.¹¹⁸ Lord Aberdare, British member of the I.O.C. executive committee, defended the British Olympic Committee's decision to attend the Games. He asked advocates of non-participation to present proof that the Germans had violated the I.O.C. understanding. Aberdare, like many British citizens, claimed to regret the Jewish situation in Germany but felt the British government had no right to direct the German government. He warned that individuals and groups should be careful before they interfered in the affairs of Germany.¹¹⁹ He reasoned that Britain should have no problems attending the Berlin Olympics, since it had so few Jewish citizens.¹²⁰

The Olympic question was also raised in the House of Commons. On March 23, Commander Locker-Lampson asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he was aware that the Olympics would assist Germany to finance armaments. He wanted to prohibit British citizens from spending money in Germany.

¹¹⁸ The Times (London), 12 November 1935, 10.

¹¹⁹ The Times (London), 13 November 1935, 8.

¹²⁰ Richard Epsey, The Politics of the Olympic Games (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 55.

Locker-Lampson was told that Parliament had no power to keep people from spending money in connection with the Olympic Games.¹²¹ On July 22, Brigadier-General Clifton Brown informed the Commons that the Olympic stadium was going to be permanently used for military and air purposes after the completion of the Games. Other members of the House of Commons wanted German government assurances that the Nazis were not going to use the Olympics for political propaganda and that the persecution of Jews would not start again after the Games. Anthony Eden, secretary of state for foreign affairs, replied that the English government had no right to request this of the Germans.¹²²

The German government felt they had a friend in the British Olympic Committee. On November 30, 1935, an airliner of the Deutsche Lufthansa arrived at Croyton Field to present to the British citizens exhibitions of the spectacle of the 1936 Games. The following month, this good feeling between Germany and England was displayed at a soccer match between the two countries in which England defeated Germany 3-0 before sixty thousand fans. The following night, the Anglo-German Fellowship held a dinner at the Hotel Victoria in honor of von Tschammer und Osten. Members of both German and British Olympic Committees were

¹²¹Parliamentary Debate (Commons) 5th series, Volume 310 (1936) col. 887.

¹²²Parliamentary Debate (Commons) 5th series, Volume 315 (1936) cols. 416-417.

in attendance. Theodor Lewald stated that the soccer game showed the English that the Germans were good fighters and good losers. He was greeted by loud cheers as he told of the great plans for the 1936 Games. Lt. Colonel T. C. R. Moore, a British sports leader, praised von Tschammer und Osten and stated that he had done more for sport for the German poor than any other living German. Von Tschammer und Osten replied that the language of sport was international, that sport was an educational and cultural force of the first order. He stressed that all peoples in Germany were now able to participate in sports thanks to the National Socialists.¹²³

In March, 1936, Hitler sent German troops into the Rhineland, a renunciation of the demilitarization clauses in the Versailles Treaty. Some French officials stated that this action might mean the collapse of the Olympic Games. The socialist deputies within the Chamber of Deputies wanted France out of the Olympics because of Germany's betrayal of the Locarno Pact, its racial discrimination, and its violation of the Olympic spirit. The French Socialists felt Britain, Belgium, and Italy would follow suit. They planned to vote against appropriations necessary to subsidize a French team's travel and stay in Berlin.¹²⁴ The majority of members of the French Chamber of Deputies,

¹²³The Times (London), 6 December 1935, 18.

¹²⁴New York Times, 9 March 1936, 22.

like those in Britain, felt that political maneuvers had no place in the world of sport. On July 10, 1936, the Chamber of Deputies voted to give a credit to the French Olympic team of one million francs to finance their participation in the Olympic Games.¹²⁵ In the end, although many countries considered a boycott, fifty-three countries accepted the German Organizing Committee's invitation and planned to be in Berlin for the XI Olympic Games.

The National Socialist's racial policy affected all phases of German life. Sport was no exception. Catholics and Protestant sport associations were forced to disband and join the Reich's sports association. Jewish sports associations were left in limbo, prohibited from association with the Reich sports association and therefore from participation on the German Olympic team. Some people from Europe and the United States felt one way to try to change this Nazi policy was to either boycott or change the site of the Olympic Games. The most vocal protest was heard in the United States. Many religious groups, civic and sport associations, and influential individuals called for a boycott of the Games. Others believed that the United States had no business interfering in German affairs and stood firm on the premise that sports and politics do not mix. In the end, through the efforts of Avery Brundage and people who thought like him, the United States sent a team

¹²⁵ New York Times, 10 July 1936, 14.

to Berlin. No major country boycotted the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games.

CHAPTER VI

THE NATIONAL SOCIALISTS AND THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The National Socialist government spared no expense or opportunity to strengthen their grip on the German nation through the Olympic Games. Every resource of German ingenuity and German organization was brought to bear to produce a setting and mood never attained in Olympic history.

The participation of the entire German nation in the Olympic Games began with an educational decree issued by the Reich. Bernard Rust, the Prussian minister of education, instructed teachers in all German schools to stress the Olympic ideals in their course of instruction. Every opportunity was seized to establish German natural connections with the meaning of the Olympic Games. The knowledge of the Olympics and sport was incorporated into classes for national politics, history, language, geography and natural sciences.¹ Teachers taught the National Socialist doctrine

that bodily fitness on the part of the individual man and woman leads to a nation's bodily strength and health. An upright and healthy people would never succumb spiritually to the mistakes to which the one sided and overburdened brain is all too easily liable. Brilliant peoples without courage and strength are constantly degraded into becoming the private tutors of more healthy races.²

¹Olympic Games News Service, 28 February 1936, 4.

²Quoted in Ueberhorst, Jahn, 78.

The German people were constantly reminded of their link to the ancient Olympic past. The State Propaganda Ministry, which had staged the huge Nuremberg National Socialist Party rallies, cemented its hold on the Olympic spirit through a German Organizing Committee inspired ceremony. The torch relay, a German innovation, was conceived as symbolizing the transfer of Olympic ideals from Greece to Germany. The German Organizing Committee proposed to the I.O.C. in June, 1934, the idea of a torch relay from Olympia to Berlin, so that the light brought from the classic site of the Olympic Games should set ablaze the Olympic Fire which would burn throughout the duration of the Games.³ Relays had been very popular in Germany since the turn of the twentieth century. Relay races from one German city to another were not uncommon with some athletic unions entering as many as ten teams in these relay competitions. The importance of participation was such that no athlete wanted to be excluded from these competitions.⁴ The I.O.C. approved the German idea. They were sold on the German Organizing Committee's concept of a greater participation in the Games by sports enthusiasts who lived in countries too far from Berlin for them to attend. The German Organizing Committee had the torch relay plans worked out to the least detail. The Olympic

³Olympic Games News Service, 28 September 1934, 2.

⁴Diem, Sports, 970.

Committee of the six countries through which the relay was run were instructed by the German Organizing Committee to select their runners and make all preparations necessary for the safe and smooth movement of the Olympic flame.⁵

The relay (See Figure 4.) began when the torch was lit during a special dedication ceremony on an altar at Olympia, Greece, at midnight July 20, 1936. From here, the torch was carried on a three thousand kilometer route through Athens, Delphi, Salonica, Sofia, Belgrade, Budapest, Vienna, and Prague. The twelve day relay was calculated so the final torch bearer would enter the Berlin Stadium at exactly four o'clock on Saturday, August 1, the opening day of the XI Olympic Games.⁶

Each runner advanced the torch one kilometer except in thinly populated areas where the individual countries were at liberty to allow a runner to go a longer stretch. No stretch could take more than ten minutes to cover because the torch, containing incendiary magnesium, could only burn for that short time, yet it would be unaffected by wind, rain, or tumbles. As the torch was transferred, a second torch was lit and held by a reserve runner in that spot until the flame was passed to the next relay runner. In order to keep the torch on its correct time schedule, an Olympic Hour was planned in market squares of various towns

⁵Official Guide Book, 24-25.

⁶Ibid.



Fig. 4--The Olympic torch relay route

through which the runners passed. When ahead of schedule, addresses were delivered concerning the significance of the torch relay and the Olympic Games, ending at the precise moment the torch was to once again be carried forward. Besides carrying the torch, each runner carried a quiver in his back in which an olive branch from Olympia had been placed. The olive branch along with the Olympic flame was passed from runner to runner. All runners received a special diploma from the German Organizing Committee in recognition of their Olympic service. They also received

the stainless steel torch holder fashioned by the Frederick Krupp Firm as a gift from the German Organizing Committee.⁷

All precautions for the successful sojourn of the Olympic torch had been taken by the German government. The propaganda Ministry traveled the route by car in September, 1935, in order to prepare interesting and accurate copies in advance for international distribution. German diplomats, with help from Eastern European officials, devised pompous welcoming ceremonies for the Olympic torch as it passed through the capitals of Greece, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Austria, and Czechoslovakia.⁸ The roads on which the Olympic flame traveled were closed several hours before the torch bearing relay runners' arrival. Each runner was accompanied by the official German Olympic Committee car, the German Propaganda Ministry's radio truck, and by the cameras of the German Olympic Film Company under the direction of Leni Riefenstahl with whom the Nazi government had made a contract to create a cinematic record of the XI Olympic Games.⁹

Adolf Hitler took full advantage of the propagandistic possibilities of the cinema. Triumph of the Will, Riefenstahl's presentation of the Nuremberg party rally of 1934, communicated the rally's festive affirmation of the National

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Mandell, The Nazi Olympics, 147.

⁹ New York Times, 21 July 1936, 21.

Socialist prosperity and loyalty. In this film, Hitler had been portrayed as the long awaited German savior, the spiritual leader who deeply felt the pleasures of his fellow participants and would lead them to the promised land. Riefenstahl's Olympia--the Film of the XI Olympics, would present Adolf Hitler and his Nazi associates as lovers of athletic competition, applauding and cheering all athletes in their efforts to win the gold. Olympia would represent the artistic merger of sport and cinema, and it would successfully present the splendor of the unique festival to the whole world.

While the German Organizing Committee's symbolic torch relay was bringing the Olympic spirit to Berlin, Theodor Lewald had earlier commissioned the Berlin sculptor, Walter E. Lemcke, to design an Olympic Bell which would call the world to Berlin. The design of the bell had changed with the change in governments. The original plans, drawn up in 1932, featured the feathered Weimar eagle. With the National Socialist Revolution came the angular Reich eagle which clutched the five Olympic rings in its claws. Solemn ceremonies and patriotic speeches, comparing the bell to the staunch will of the German nation, greeted the bell as it traveled from Bochus, where it was cast, through the towns of northern Germany to its destination in Berlin. Broadcasts of the movement of the bell and its warm reception along its journey were transmitted by the German

National Radio Company under the direction of the Propaganda Ministry.¹⁰ Upon its arrival in Berlin, the bell was presented to the German Organizing Committee by the Bochumer Verein für Gussstahlfabrikation, the architects of the bell. Dr. Lewald then presented the bell to Dr. Wilhelm Frick, German home minister, who in turn transferred it to the Reichssportführer von Tschammer und Osten.¹¹ The bell was then hoisted to the top of the 243 foot Leader Tower, high above the assembly ground of the Reichssportfeld.¹²

The German Organizing Committee did not want to exclude any good citizens from the Olympic Games. The Olympic train, the travelling Olympic exhibition, toured the major cities of Germany instructing the public in the aim and ideas of the Olympic Games and sentimentally linked the projects of the German nation with those of the ancient Greeks.¹³

The Olympic Caravan, composed of four Mercedes-Benz diesel trucks, took the Olympic Games to the rural Germans. The trucks pulled two trailers each which were linked together to form a ring of exhibition rooms. In that exhibition the comparison of German and Greek culture was held to a minimum because most rural Germans simply did not

¹⁰ New York Times, 15 December 1935, sec. 5:4.

¹¹ Olympic Games News Service, 25 January 1936, 3.

¹² Olympic Games News Service, 28 February 1936, 4.

¹³ Olympic Games News Service, 28 February 1936, 4.

understand the connection. The caravan showed smiling German workers laboring in the Olympic village and the Reichsportfield preparing the Olympic facilities, Nordic youth engaging in physical activities training for the Olympic Games, and a large picture of Adolf Hitler overseeing all the progress. The Olympic caravan was intended to cement the ties of rural Germany with the National Socialist regime in Berlin.¹⁴

The German Organizing Committee felt the necessity of including a touch of the Fatherland in the Olympic celebration. In view of Germany's great musical heritage, Dr. Lewald urged the I.O.C. to allow Germany to compose the Olympic hymn to be performed at the opening ceremony of the XI Olympics. The I.O.C. agreed. The German composer Richard Strauss consented to write the music. The German Organizing Committee first held a limited competition to find a suitable text. This proved unsuccessful. A public competition with a prize of one thousand Reichsmarks (\$400) was held. Over three thousand poems were received. Dr. Lewald and the German poet Baron Boerries von Muenchhausen selected the poem of Robert Lubahn of Berlin entitled Olympia! as the finest and most suitable for the 1936 Olympiad.

¹⁴Mandell, The Nazi Olympics, 137.

OLYMPIA!

Völker! seid des Volkes Gäste,
 Kommt durchs offne Tor herein!
 Ehre sei dem Völkerfeste!
 Friede soll der Kampfspruch sein.
 Junge Kraft will Mut beweisen,
 HeiBes Spiel Olympia!
 Deinen Glanz in Taten preisen,
 Reines Ziel: Olympia.

Vieler Länder Stolz und Blüte
 Kam zum Kampfesfest herbei;
 Alles Feuer, das da glühte,
 Schlägt zusammen hoch und frei.
 Kraft und Geist naht sich mit Zagen.
 Opfergang Olympia!
 Wer darf deinen Lorbeer tragen,
 Ruhmesklang: Olympia?

Wie nun alle Herzen schlagen
 In erhobenem Verein,
 Soll in Taten und in Sagen
 Rechtsgewalt das Höchste sein.
 Freudvoll sollen Meister siegen,
 Siegesfest Olympia!
 Freude sei noch im Erliegen,
 Friedensfest: Olympia.

To promote world acceptance, the German Organizing Committee proposed to award prizes to all non-Germans for the best translation of this hymn into their own native languages.¹⁵

The Olympic Games News Service wrote "the German Organizing Committee, striving to preserve the honor of the Games, felt that the Olympic Games must not become the object of commercial interest."¹⁶ The Organizing Committee took steps to prevent trade and industry from flooding the market with cheap and worthless souvenirs and abusing such words as

¹⁵ Olympic Games News Service, 28 September 1934, 1.

¹⁶ Olympic Games News Service, 30 July 1934, 3.

"Olympia," "Olympiad," and "Olympic" as well as the Olympic symbols--the five rings and the Olympic bell.¹⁷ The German Organizing Committee authorized only one firm, the Staatliche Porzellan-Manufakturer of Berlin, founded by Frederick the Great in 1763 and known for its first class workmanship, to manufacture small models of the Olympic bell. The German Organizing Committee felt the miniature replicas of the Olympic bell would keep the Olympic ideal fresh in the minds of all in attendance and help preserve memories of the eleventh Olympiad.¹⁸

In order to ensure that the symbols of the Olympic Games were not misused by industrial or any other concerns, the "Advertising Council of German Industry" issued an order which prohibited the use of the five rings and Olympic bell for commercial advertising unless definite and written permission had been granted by the German Organizing Committee.¹⁹ The white five ring Olympic flag could be used in only one setting: to decorate the sports grounds and streets on the occasion of the Olympic and pre-Olympic gatherings. The flag could not be used for shop-window decorations or similar advertising purposes. The use of small Olympic flags for decorating motor-cars, cycles, and

¹⁷ Olympic Games News Service, 25 January 1936, 3.

¹⁸ Official Guide Book, 54.

¹⁹ Olympic Games News Service, 30 July 1934, 3.

boats was restricted to members of the International and National Olympic Committees and members of the German Organizing Committee.²⁰ The German Organizing Committee encouraged other countries to follow this example and to take similar steps so the symbol of the Games would be protected from abuse not only in Germany but all over the world.²¹ There could be several reasons why the Olympic Games News Service reported that the German Organizing Committee was so concerned about the Olympic Games becoming the object of commercial interest. The Propaganda Ministry could use the German Organizing Committee's desire to keep the Olympics noncommercial as a propaganda tool to convince the world as well as the German people of Germany's respect for the sacred nature and the ideals of the Olympic Games. The Propaganda Ministry made the German government look like they were trying to conduct the Olympic Games in accordance with the ancient Greek tradition. Secondly, the Nazi government could reward their capitalist friends, who helped pay the Nationalist Socialist Party's debt in 1933, with contracts to produce Olympic souvenirs and use the Olympic Games for advertising purposes and their own personal gain.

The Nazi government was determined to use the Berlin spectacle as a propaganda tool to convince foreign visitors

²⁰Olympic Games News Service, 25 January 1936, 3.

²¹Olympic Games News Service, 30 July 1934, 3.

of the achievements of the "new Germany."²² The first step in that direction was to make a favorable impression on foreign journalists attending the Olympic Games. They, in turn, would broadcast to an international audience reports of the Nazi's thorough and efficient organization, the lavish entertainment surrounding the Games, and a country on its best behavior.²³ The use of the radio as a propaganda tool was nothing new to the National Socialists. The Nazi leaders' faith in the propaganda potential of radio was limitless. Hitler wrote in Mein Kampf that radio "is a terrible weapon in the hands of those who know how to make use of it." The Nazis used a radio campaign in 1934 in their attempt to reincorporate the Saarland into Germany. The German Propaganda Ministry's frank emotional appeal to German feelings resulted in ninety-one percent of those who voted in the plebiscite in January, 1935, to opt for the return of the Saar to Germany. This gave the Nazis the confidence that they could achieve almost anything through the planned use of radio propaganda. The success of radio propaganda in Germany resulted in the German government's ability to adapt their psychological tool to fit their audience's fears, hopes and prejudices.²⁴ The

²² Shirer, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, 232.

²³ Ibid., 233.

²⁴ Julian Hale, Radio Power Propaganda and International Broadcasting (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975) 1-3.

Olympic Games afforded the Nazis the opportunity to influence the foreign press to broadcast reports favorable to the National Socialist regime.

The Propaganda Ministry greeted the journalists upon their arrival in Berlin with a dinner party. Twelve hundred journalists were entertained by two bands and greeted by Dr. Funk, head of the Nazi Press Bureau, and Dr. Goebbels who lauded the influence the journalists had upon forming world opinion. The New York Times reported that both men exhorted the journalists to tell the truth about Germany and the Olympic Games, holding back none of their convictions. Goebbels reminded the journalists of the unhappiness and suffering which had occurred in Europe the past few decades and urged the journalists to speak of the positive, the happiness of a nation rather than the shortcomings of a nation.²⁵

Transmissions from Berlin made an indelible impression on foreign audiences. Foreign journalists were informed about facilities provided in Berlin through the Olympia Dienst, a periodical issued in four languages by the German Organizing Committee. This periodical informed the press that there would be eight hundred seats reserved for them on the main stand in the Olympic Stadium. Of this allotment, which was one hundred more than Los Angeles had

²⁵New York Times, 31 July 1934, 13.

offered, half would be saved for the German press and the other half for the foreign press.²⁶ Dr. N. Bollman, sports editor of the Wolff News Agency and a member of the press committee, emphasized that Germany would furnish facilities similar to those which Los Angeles had afforded foreign writers in 1932.²⁷

The Germans surpassed Los Angeles in its press facilities when they made simultaneous reporting of sporting events possible. The German government provided a special allowance of two million Reichsmarks for broadcasting, including 450 additional wireless workers to aid with the transmissions.²⁸ The broadcasting from Berlin was carried over a special station of the Reich Broadcasting Company. The German directors and announcers arranged a complete program in which the competitions, as well as life on the streets and festivities around Berlin, were broadcast. The German government cordially invited each nation to send its own radio announcers to Berlin.²⁹

These foreign broadcasters were provided with three hundred microphones, 220 amplifiers, and twenty transmitting vans, along with specially constructed observation booths in

²⁶ Olympic Games News Service, 28 February 1935, 2.

²⁷ New York Times, 19 April 1933, 21.

²⁸ Z. A. B. Zemen, Nazi Propaganda (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 110-111.

²⁹ Official Guide Book, 67-68.

all Olympic arenas to broadcast commentaries and reports to their respective countries. The facilities provided in 1936 would be used by nineteen European and thirteen overseas countries to broadcast 2,500 reports in twenty-eight languages.³⁰ The Propaganda Ministry boasted that German radio coverage was so elaborate that if the radio wires in the Olympic field were placed end to end, it would take an express train three days to pass it without stopping.³¹

The Reich Ministry of Publicity provided a telegraph office for the journalists just below the Press stands at the Olympic Stadium and equipped it with the most modern facilities for news transmission. These facilities allowed reports to be sent throughout the world within seconds. The Olympic Press Headquarters was located in the Schiller Theater in Berlin. This headquarters was the meeting place of the newspaper representatives before and after the events. The headquarters was equipped in the same manner as the main telegraph office at the Olympic Stadium with addition of a press dining room and private lockers. The reports of the events taking place each day were assembled and reproduced as quickly as possible to provide the press with a complete resumé of the day's activities. An express messenger service composed of cyclists and motor-cyclists

³⁰ Zemen, Nazi Propaganda, 110-111.

³¹ New York Times, 26 July 1936, sec. 4:5.

as well as interpreters and errand boys were at the press' disposal. In addition, the press was provided free transportation on the trains, buses, municipal and underground railways serving the city of Berlin.³² The German Organizing Committee considered speedy picture-taking as important for the press as the rapid transmission of news. They allotted the photographic rights for all events exclusively to the Reich Union of Picture Reporters, in order to limit the number of foreign photographers in the arena. The Olympic Games News Service wrote that this was done so that the large number of photographers attending the Games would not interfere with the spectators or competitors. The Olympic Games News Service emphasized that this practice was not new to the Olympic Games having been done by both Organizing Committees at Amsterdam in 1928 and at Los Angeles in 1932. Developing and printing rooms were available in the Stadium, and photographs of each event could be purchased by the press an hour after they took place. The public was able to acquire the pictures the next day.³³ The most important events of the Olympic Games were transmitted directly by the Berlin Television Sending Station. The people, not fortunate enough to have tickets to the Olympic contests, were given the opportunity to witness the events as they are taking place in television receiving

³² Olympic Games News Service, 28 February 1935, 2.

³³ Ibid.

rooms provided by the German government throughout Berlin. The Olympic Games News Service stated that this will be the first occasion on which comprehensive television pictures of such open-air gatherings have been transmitted.³⁴ This was not the first television broadcast. In 1930, the National Broadcasting Corporation began operating W2XBS in New York City. The following year, the Columbia Broadcasting System began regularly scheduled telecasts over W2XAB. By the time of the Berlin Olympic Games, regular broadcasts had begun in London and over ten television stations were in operation in the United States. The Berlin Games, however, was the first sports event to be televised, preceding the United States first sports telecast by almost three years.³⁵

The accomplishments of the German Broadcasting System did not go unnoticed. Foreign radio representatives left Berlin impressed with the German broadcasting operation. An American National Broadcasting director summed up their feelings in his concluding report for Berlin. "The work done by the Reichsrundfunh remains without precedent in the history of broadcasting."³⁶

³⁴ Olympic Games News Service, 25 January 1936, 4.

³⁵ Robert St. John, Encyclopedia of Radio and Television Broadcasting (The Man Behind the Microphone) (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Cathedral Square Publishing Comapny, 1967), 435.

³⁶ Quoted in Zemen, Nazi Propaganda, 110-111.

The Nazi government felt the city of Berlin needed a facelift in order to present a favorable impression for the upcoming Games. The Nazi government spent 16,500,000 Reichsmarks for municipal improvements to accomplish their goals. The Berlin municipality extended the four main thoroughfares leading in all four major directions from the Olympic Stadium in order to solve the traffic problems expected during the Olympic period.³⁷ The seven and one-half mile Via Triumphia, a boulevard running from the former Imperial Palace through the heart of Berlin over Adolf Hitler Square to the Reichssportfeld, was resurfaced in asphalt to be worthy of the opening day Olympic procession.³⁸ Roads in the west end of Berlin were widened, public squares rebuilt, all walks in the city cleaned, and new government buildings and museums constructed to house great exhibits demonstrating the success of the Nazi system of government and economics.³⁹ Two thousand men working day and night completed a new subway system in which spectators could reach the Reichssportfeld underground station from most points in and around Berlin on subway trains running every two minutes.⁴⁰

³⁷ Olympic Games News Service, 29 June 1934, 3.

³⁸ Olympic Games News Service, 16 May 1935, 6.

³⁹ L. F. Gittler, "Death Takes a Holiday," Nation, 1 August 1936, 124-126.

⁴⁰ Official Guide Book, 96, 102.

Ordinances were passed by the Berlin city government that prohibited the hanging of bed wash from the proletariat's balconies, decreed that garbage be dumped out of visible sight, and forbade the spitting of cherry pits or saliva on the sidewalks.⁴¹ Berlin was to be the model against which all other cities of the world were to be compared. Julius Lippert, Reich commissioner for Berlin and a member of the German Olympic Committee,⁴² was given 400,000 Reichsmarks to decorate Berlin. Houses were freshly painted, flowers and shrubs were planted throughout the city, and the streets were free of litter. The Nazi swastika, the Olympic banner, and the national flags of all competing countries flew side by side along the avenues.⁴³

On July 22, 1936, The Manchester Guardian reported that Walter Darre, German minister of food and agriculture, had issued a confidential circular instructing the German rural population on their behavior during the Olympic period. Local officials were held responsible for cleaning away the rubbish from all villages on the main roads, for cleaning the streets and footpaths, and for seeing that the villages as a whole made a favorable impression. Houses on the main roads were to be whitewashed, or if possible, to be freshly

⁴¹Gittler, "Death Takes a Holiday," 124-126.

⁴²Official Guide Book, 10.

⁴³New York Times, 15 December 1935, sec. 4:5.

painted. The poorer inhabitants were to be aided by a collective effort on the part of the community. Their houses were to be given a pleasant appearance by cheaply painting them over in the simplest manner, which was done not to last very long but to serve the desired purpose of creating a favorable impression for the Olympic visitors. Darre instructed the villages to put in order their front gardens and plant them with summer flowers, to paint their fences, renovate their signs and signposts, and overhaul their street lighting. The circular further stated that gangs of farm laborers working in the fields must not spend their breakfast or lunch breaks on the edges of the roads from July 1 to September 15. Convict laborers must not be worked near the roads. If this was impossible, then their work had to be suspended altogether for the Olympic period. Darre emphasized that political prisoners and inmates of concentration camps were under no circumstances to work on the land from July 1 to September 15. He further instructed the German rural population that all foreign currency coming into their possession from the sale of produce to the Olympic visitors or through jobs such as motor car repairs must be handed in to the German government. The Germans were told that it was the highest patriotic duty to place foreign exchange that entered the country at the disposal of the state.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Manchester Guardian, 22 July 1936.

Darre's circular included the warning that

it is necessary to make special mention of the fact that there may be Jews amongst the foreigners, for the German government has given the I.O.C. a pledge to guarantee the protection of all Olympic guests. Possible Jews must be treated as politely as Aryan guests. In no case must Jewish provocateurs get a chance of creating incidents which will add grist to the mills of hostile propagandists abroad. For this reason, all illuminated signs, all Klebezettel (gummed labels with anti-Jewish slogans) must be removed during the period in question. The fundamental attitude of the German people toward Judaism remains unchanged.⁴⁵

The American Jewish Congress claimed that Jewish newspapers in Germany were prohibited from reporting anything about the activities of Jews on Olympic teams. They also reported the Gestapo, secret state police, ordered Jewish institutions not to maintain contact with foreign visitors wishing to study the Jewish question, but to report to the Gestapo the names of visitors desiring to get into direct touch with the Jewish organization. The American Jewish Congress noted also that special guides were sent to conduct Olympic visitors through the ghetto cafes on the Kurfuerstendamm, which were frequented chiefly by foreign Jews, in order to impress upon the foreigners that Jews were still free in Germany.⁴⁶ A letter to the July 30th, 1936, edition of the New York Times reported that visitors to Berlin who wished to talk to Jews or otherwise investigate the "Jewish question" in Germany were required first

⁴⁵ The American Jewish Yearbook, 344-345.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

to contact officials of the Gestapo and were afterwards followed by the police.

William Dodd, American ambassador in Germany, claimed the Nazi Propaganda Ministry, in their efforts to render Berlin colorful during the Games, instructed Jewish stores in Berlin, who would ordinarily be prohibited from flying the national emblem, to participate in the ordered general display of flags.⁴⁷ The Nazi government, to guarantee a favorable impression on the visiting tourists, trained a corps of two thousand interpreters who not only were proficient linguists but also skillful in evading embarrassing questions and in insinuating praise of National Socialism in their small talk.⁴⁸

Radio broadcasts impressed upon the German people that the Olympics were the year's great national undertaking and every one must do his part to make it a success.⁴⁹ Every German hotelier, every German employee, every servant, and every taxi driver was considered a representative of the National Socialist State. Each German citizen was host to the world, and it was his duty to behave himself accordingly

⁴⁷ Extract from Political Report of the Ambassador in Germany, 19 August 1936, U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States 1936, Volume 2, 202.

⁴⁸ The Ambassador in Germany (Dodd) to Secretary of State, 30 January 1936, U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States 1936, Volume 2, 199.

⁴⁹ New York Times, 11 January 1936, 38.

and not to shame the Fatherland.⁵⁰ Der Angriff instructed its readers to "be more charming than the Parisians, more easy going than the Viennese, more vivacious than the Romans, more cosmopolitan than London, and more practical than New York."⁵¹ Hitler's official statements, likely to influence public opinion in other countries, mellowed. In large German cities, most of the leading American, English, and French daily newspapers were for sale as opposed to earlier days when the Manchester Guardian, the Parisian LeJour, and the New York Times were banned.⁵² Berlin became a city filled with happiness and a sparkling joie de vivre. Berlin theaters played the best plays with their best casts. Cinemas screened the best films.⁵³

The Schauspielhaus gala of "Hamlet," starring and produced by Gustav Grundgens, afforded visitors to the Olympic Games a remarkable theatrical evening. The German presented a new and strictly Nordic version of the melancholy Dane, with his castle built of rough logs and his rampart guards wrapped in furs. Hamlet's death scene, endlessly prolonged by marching soldiers, trumpets, and the

⁵⁰Gittler, "Death Takes a Holiday," 124-126.

⁵¹New York Times, 6 July 1936, 14.

⁵²Drutman, Janet Planners World, 19.

⁵³Victor Reimann, Goebbels (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1976), 202.

presenting of arms left the visitors impressed that Hamlet was going to be given a fine Party funeral.⁵⁴

Germans from all walks of life were rehearsed for the August celebration. Waiters, taxi drivers, porters, hat check girls, and street walkers enrolled in classes, studying the English, French, Italian, and Swedish languages. Policemen exchanged their stiff uniforms and weapons for light comfortable attire. They were taught to be polite and prejudiced in favor of the foreign visitors. The Nazi government prescribed a social atmosphere of laughter, gaiety, and good cheer in order to maintain a good impression for the Third Reich.⁵⁵ The New York Times reported that the German Labor Front suggested a "week of laughter be proclaimed during the Games to demonstrate the joyful side of German life under the Third Reich. No Berliner should miss the chance to receive their guests with merry hearts and a friendly expression on their face."⁵⁶

The job of enticing thousands of foreign visitors to Germany for the Games was entrusted to the Advertising Bureau of the German Organizing Committee. The Bureau used all in its power to bring the world to Berlin.⁵⁷ The Bureau issued through the advertising office of the Reich Railways

⁵⁴Drutman, Janet Flanners World, 32.

⁵⁵Gittler, "Death Takes a Holiday," 124-126.

⁵⁶New York Times, 18 June 1936, 13.

⁵⁷Gittler, "Death Takes a Holiday," 124-126.

throughout the world, no fewer than 6,167,000 Olympic booklets, 2,500,000 Olympic postal seals, 422,500 Olympic wall posters, and 167,500 free Olympic postcards. The Olympic booklets, printed in fourteen languages, devoted one half of their contents to the Olympic Games and the other half to German tours. According to the New York Times, these German tours were inspired by the Soviets Intourist tours which were directed by propaganda guides. The Olympic posters, printed in nineteen languages and designed by the Berlin artist, Werner Wuerbel, pictured a Nordic athlete with his brow crowned with laurel and the five Olympic rings towering over the Brandenburg Gate.⁵⁸

Advertisements were placed in foreign newspapers and magazines to make Berlin the mid-summer focal point of travel. American readers came face to face with the German Railroad Information Office's full page advertisements featuring the official poster of the Olympic Games. The advertisement reminded the reader that German genius for organization had scheduled rallies, exhibitions, competitions, and congresses in various cities throughout Germany during the Olympic period so that everyone could enjoy them during a glorious vacation in Germany. In addition to their special events, Germany was shown to offer scenic grandeur and natural beauty, famous health resorts, romantic castles, picturesque folk festivals, medieval towns,

⁵⁸ New York Times, 12 July 1936, sec. 4:5.

cosmopolitan cities, and the Rhine River. The German railroad offered its customers "modern travel comfort and traditional hospitality of the land of Wanderlust and Gemutlichkeit" along with a sixty percent transportation discount and registered travel marks which assured the Olympic visitor a stable rate of exchange. The Hamburg-America Steamship Line advertised a forty-two day summer vacation cruise aboard the Reliance with a stop in Germany to coincide with the XI Olympic Games. Americans were told that "this summer the Olympics gets the call . . . and the modern crowd of smart travelers are sailing one class run of the ship on the Red Star and Arnold Bernstein Line." The company's advertisements of low-cost round trip tickets to Antwerp, "the heart of the Continent and gateway to the Olympic Games," made an excursion to Germany accessible and inviting for themselves as well as their automobiles. The Bremen Europa's Columbus, sailing from New York to Bremen, offered leisurely low travel rates, and docking alongside the Berlin Express, a direct carrier to the Olympic Games.⁵⁹

To encourage overseas nations to send large teams to the Berlin Games, the German Organizing Committee negotiated with various shipping companies throughout the world. A twenty percent reduction for one way or round trip fares

⁵⁹ "And Now The Olympics Where to Go and How to Get There," Review of Reviews 93 (April 1936): 4-8.

was available to all Olympic parties traveling to Berlin. Actual competitors, officials of sports association, members of the I.O.C. or National Olympic Committee and their wives and dependent children under eighteen could take advantage of this offer.⁶⁰ The German Organizing Committee also arranged a thirty percent discount on return trips from Germany to any South American port.⁶¹ Exhibition goods and objects sent to Berlin in connection with the Olympic Art Competition received a special discount on the return trip.⁶² The German Foreign Travel Service also offered a twenty percent savings for Olympic visitors traveling to the Games aboard German airlines or steamboat carriers. Once in Germany, competitors and visitors staying for at least seven days were granted a sixty percent reduction of fares by the German Railway Company. The German Foreign Travel Bureau claimed that foreign visitors could travel throughout Germany for a little as 1.8 cents per mile.⁶³ The Nazi government assured the tourists that they would not be victims of German profiteering and the slogan in Berlin was "The guest is always right." In Berlin, all competitors, their doctors, trainers, masseurs, and team leaders could travel free on city, circle, and suburban

⁶⁰ Olympic Games News Service, 30 July 1934, 3.

⁶¹ Olympic Games News Service, 16 May 1935, 2.

⁶² Olympic Games News Service, 30 July 1935, 2.

⁶³ "And Now The Olympics Where to Go and How to Get There," Review of Reviews 93 (April 1936): 4.

lines.⁶⁴ There would be fixed prices on all rooms and plenty of hotels and private rooms available.

The German Organizing Committee's prediction that the Olympic Games of 1936 would attract the largest participation of nations ever was confirmed by the preparations of the Olympic committees throughout the world. For example, the Argentine Olympic Committee established five committees for their successful participation in the Games. Their press committee issued leaflets and posters to the many sports clubs in Argentina and made public broadcasts to stimulate interest in the Games. Another committee selected the Olympic competitors while others made preparations and secured financing for the journey to Berlin. The English Olympic Team secured the services of a Norwegian athlete to train English athletes in jumping and throwing events in which the English felt insufficient. The Austrian Olympic Committee hired an Englishman to coach their oarsmen⁶⁵ and Harold Anson Bruce, the former United States marathon team coach for the 1932 Olympics, as their head coach.⁶⁶ Bulgaria planned to send one hundred competitors to the Olympiad in Berlin, the largest athletic expedition ever to leave their borders.⁶⁷

⁶⁴Olympic Games News Service, 16 May 1935, 2.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Olympic Games News Service, 2 July 1935, 3.

⁶⁷Olympic Games News Service, 21 October 1935, 5.

In many countries financial institutions and newspapers developed plans to help their customers and readers finance their journey to the 1936 Games. Nuremberg, the citadel of the National Socialist movement, had its municipal savings bank issue an Olympic savings card. The customer filled up the card with stamps ranging from one to ten Reichsmarks with every deposit. When the Olympic period arrived, the customer had saved enough money with which to have an enjoyable time. The Bremen municipal savings bank contacted interested sports clubs and lent them money to procure tickets for the Games. The club members who wished to see the Games made weekly or monthly payments to their clubs until the cost of the loans was repaid. The Swedish newspaper, Idrottsbladet, decided to organize an Olympic trip in 1936 to satisfy the demand of its readers. The plan called for a ten day stay in Berlin, entrance tickets to the Reichssportfeld, hotel and meals, for only 255 crowns. A travel fund for the Berlin Games was also established by the Union of Latvian Sports Association and the Latvian Olympic Committee. Memberships were acquired by paying in a least eight lats monthly. By June 1, 1936, every member had paid a total of at least two hundred lats which was enough money to purchase foreign passes and sufficient foreign currency for board and lodging in Berlin as well as admission to the Olympic Stadium.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Olympic Games News Service, 31 January 1935, 6.

The Finnish Olympic Committee established a special Financing Committee which divided the country into eighteen smaller areas. Subcommittees in these areas used the services of leading personalities to raise funds for the Olympic Games. The Finns believed they would be able to finance their Olympic expedition through the efforts of their sport-loving population.⁶⁹

The Belgian State Railway Company granted a thirty-five percent reduction of fares to athletes participating in the Berlin Games for all journeys connected with preliminary preparations and with the Games themselves. The Swiss federal council contributed six thousand francs in addition to a large fund raised by the Swiss National Committee for their Olympic team's expedition to the Games. The Austrians and Dutch introduced "sport pennies," an additional amount of money added to the admission tickets of sport club competitions, which went solely to the financing and training of that country's Olympic team. The Dutch planned an Olympic Day on June 25, 1935, in the Amsterdam Olympic Stadium, with cycle races, track and field events, and an international football contest with profits going to the Dutch Olympic fund. The Dutch Olympic federation sold Olympic badges, and the postal authorities issued a special Olympic stamp, sold at a price greater

⁶⁹Olympic Games News Service, 16 May 1935, 5.

than its face value, with the balance going to the Olympic fund.⁷⁰ The Polish Olympic Committee in connection with the sporting newspaper, Przegląd Sportowy, instituted a competition for its readers in which they forecast the winners of some important sporting contest. Six cents accompanied each entry form with the winner receiving twenty-one dollars which produced a profit that went to the Polish Olympic Preparation fund. The Yugoslav Olympic Committee developed an attractive Olympic badge selling for five Dinars (ten cents).⁷¹

Hess Lessing, director of the Olympic Committee Ticket Department, greeted the Olympic year by proudly announcing that all track and field events had been sold out. Standing room still existed for the swimming events, but would quickly be filled by Berlin citizens and Nazi youth groups.⁷² The German quota, which ranged from sixty percent to eighty percent depending on the sport, had been sold. Sweden, Finland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia had sold their quotas and had asked the German government to increase them. The Nazis claimed that even if there were no foreign attendance there still would be a capacity attendance at the Games.⁷³

⁷⁰ Ibid., 6.

⁷¹ Olympic Games News Service, 5 June 1935, 3.

⁷² New York Times, 7 January 1936, 27.

⁷³ New York Times, 15 December 1935, sec. 4:5.

It was estimated that during the XI Olympic Games from one hundred thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand people would visit Berlin each day. This great influx of visitors during the Olympic period posed a serious problem to the Berlin Organizing Committee. There were simply not enough beds in Berlin hotels to accommodate such a great gathering. Berlin hotels possessed thirty thousand beds. Under normal circumstances fifteen thousand people, businessmen, government official, and so forth, visited Berlin each day. This left only fifteen thousand beds available for the Olympic guests. Two thousand beds were required for official Olympic visitors with leading foreign dignitaries and guests occupying the other thirteen thousand. To solve this problem the Berlin Organizing Committee established the Olympia-Verkehrs-und-Quartieramt, a special agency to determine the number of rooms available in Berlin and arrange the bookings for the lodging of Olympic visitors. The agency decided the only way to solve the overflow problems was to establish "Olympic colonies." These Olympic colonies were private homes, that in total would offer beds for at least one hundred thousand visitors. Each Olympic colony offered services similar to the ones offered in the Olympic village and the Women's Olympic residence. An administrative office, complete with interpreters, guaranteed that any problems between hosts and guests were ironed out immediately. The prices for such facilities ranged

from three to six Reichsmarks depending on the situation and standard. The homes were inspected by the National Socialist People's Workers Organization before and during the Olympic Games to insure a favorable and comfortable stay for the foreign visitors.⁷⁴

The National Socialist government of Adolf Hitler, in accordance with its totalitarian doctrine, played a direct role in all the preparations for the Berlin Olympic Games. The government controlled everything, from television and radio broadcasts of the Berlin Games to spitting cherry pits on the sidewalk and the education of Berlin street walkers in foreign languages. The Nazis intended to use the Berlin Games to convince the German people of their proud heritage, a consciousness that had perhaps diminished since their defeat in the First World War. The German Organizing Committee linked the German people to the glories of the ancient Greeks and reminded the Germans of their proud heritage through unique government inspired and organized ceremonies, demonstrations, and exhibitions. Through these, the Nazis sought to make each German citizen feel himself to be an important part in the upcoming Games; the Olympic caravan traveled to rural German areas bringing the Olympics to people unable to make the trip to Berlin, the Olympic Bell toured the German countryside, and the Olympic

⁷⁴ Olympic Games News Service, 21 October 1935, 5.

torch relay was run through major German cities. The Nazis also used the Games to convince foreign visitors of the achievements of the "new" Germany. The Nazi government made all travel arrangements for foreign visitors so that the government could be assured that the experience foreigners had in Germany during the Olympic summer would be the best they could possibly experience. The National Socialists strove to impress both the German nation and foreign visitors with a setting and mood never before attained in Olympic history, a mood and setting most easily achieved by a totalitarian society.

CHAPTER VII

THE OLYMPIC SUMMER

Once in Germany, the visitor faced a pleasant dilemma: how to see all the special events scheduled throughout Germany during the Olympic period. Germany was one great festival. The city of Düsseldorf sponsored the "Art Exposition--1936" throughout the summer. Munich enjoyed weeks of cultural exposition at the Bavarian State Theater, featuring the music of Wagner, Mozart, and Strauss, and the drama of Shakespeare. Frankfort offered contemporary and classic opera, drama, art, and music. Heidelberg celebrated the 550th anniversary of its university during the Reich Festival Week featuring musical and theatrical productions. Marburg celebrated its 700th anniversary with weeks of festivals at the Castle Park Theater. The Neuschwanstein Castle, nestled in the Bavarian Alps, entertained its visitors with Wagner concerts throughout the summer, while Braunschweig held festive weeks for young poets and composers. The Bayreuth Wagner Festival Plays were performed before the Olympic Games and resumed after the Games were over.¹

¹"And Now The Olympics Where to Go and How to Get There," Review of Reviews 93 (April 1936): 4.

Berlin was also filled with attractions. The city hosted the German Beethoven Festival in May and June.² The German organizing Committee invited all countries participating in the XI Olympic Games to compete in an International Dancing Competition from July 15-31 at the State Opera House in Berlin. Each country had been invited to send its best dancers to compete in solo, free style, and theatrical ballet. An international jury of dance specialists awarded prizes and diplomas to the winners at the House of German Sport on August 3 during the first week of Olympic competition.³ The Deutschland Exhibition was on display in Berlin from July 18 through August 16. The exhibition presented a comprehensive look at German landscape and life, emphasizing the variety of German life, its wealth of natural beauty, and its many folk customs. The program included portraits of the great men of Germany ranging from the early German empire to recent times, excluding living persons. Four hundred outstanding men, including poets, philosophers, musicians, painters, sculptors, statesmen, and military leaders, were presented.

The present government, the National Socialist, was also favorably portrayed. The Deutschland Exhibition revealed the creative achievements of the Nazi state, the constructive forces at work, the victorious advance of the

² Ibid.

³ Official Guide Book, 62.

spirit of cooperation in politics and economics, the training of German youth, and the creation of the social welfare programs as triumphs over individualism.⁴ Germany was shown in the exhibition to have found in National Socialism the fulfillment of her historic mission. Visitors to the exhibition came face to face with one of the largest photographs ever made of Hitler, with its accompanying legend reading, "Germany's thousands of years of history find their ultimate meaning in Adolf Hitler." Excerpts from Hitler's speeches and his book Mein Kampf decorated the walls of the exhibition hall. Visitors left the exhibition hall convinced the entire German nation was behind Hitler and that his regime was a striking success.⁵

At the University of Berlin there was an exhibition of archaeological finds, including plaster casts of antique works of art and statues unearthed at the excavation of Olympia. A resumé of literature concerning the German excavation attempts and successes was also available to the public as a reminder of the German link with the ancient Greeks.⁶ Art shows in German museums presented a pictorial essay on "Sport in Hellenic Times" and afforded Olympic visitors, as well as Berliners, the opportunity to gain an impression of the importance of sport to the Greeks.⁷

⁴Ibid. ⁵New York Times, 18 July 1936, 13.

⁶Official Guide Book, 64. ⁷Ibid., 60.

Other groups scheduled meetings to take advantage of the Olympic preparations. The International Municipal Congress attracted fifteen hundred officials representing forty-five countries to Berlin during the second week of June. The International Congress of Film Amateurs met in Berlin the following month, followed by the German Radio Exposition--1936 in August.⁸

A week prior to the opening of the Games, internationally known recreation and leisure specialists were brought together. The World Congress for Leisure and Recreation, chaired by Dr. Robert Ley of the German National Labor Front, discussed the multiple aspects of the world-wide holiday movement, a Nazi movement which strove to secure adequate leisure opportunities for all workers. Ley and his assistants portrayed the German holiday movement as a valuable medium in the promotion of peace and happiness. At a "Peoples' Festival" in Hamburg, the representatives of the World Recreation Congress had the opportunity to display their own popular holiday customs through music, dancing, plays, and songs. At the conclusion of the Hamburg Festival, the foreign representatives, as guests of the German Organizing Committee, were given the chance to participate in other popular displays and festivals held throughout Germany during the Olympic period and to become

⁸Ibid., 62.

acquainted with the leisure activities of the German people.⁹ Gustavus R. Kirby, secretary of the Amateur Athletic Union and author of the 1933 resolution threatening an American boycott of the XI Olympics, visited Germany regardless. While touring Hamburg, he witnessed a "Strength Through Joy" parade that included 200,000 people accompanied by two hundred floats. His amazement was reflected in his comment to Robert Ley that he had seen "only joyful faces, and laughing contented happy men and women."¹⁰ Thus the German efforts were successful in winning over at least one opponent. Ley had guaranteed that the "Strength Through Joy" movement would be reserved a place at the Olympic Games. Every morning of the Games, twenty to thirty special trains brought sixty thousand German workers into Berlin to enjoy one minor Olympic event. The Third Reich provided accommodations for its workers by constructing a second Olympic village. This Strength Through Joy Village was a collection of huge halls under straw roofs located near the Olympic Stadium. The village provided a beer drinking and rest area for as many as 24,000 people. Twelve kitchens were in operation in the village from five o'clock in the morning to midnight. Thus, the Nazi government provided a day long festival and a return home late that night for Strength Through Joy members. In addition to Olympic

⁹Olympic Games News Service, 25 January 1936, 2.

¹⁰New York Times, 25 July 1936, 7.

attractions, caberets were performed every afternoon and night for the entertainment of the German workers. The Strength Through Joy Village was open to foreign visitors so that they might view first hand the happiness and contentment of the German common man.¹¹

The German Organizing Committee and the German Olympic Committee along with Bernard Rust, Prussian minister of education and culture, invited participating countries to send a team of male sports students to an International Encampment of Physical Education students. Teams of thirty men, aged twenty-three to thirty-one, arrived July 23 and stayed until August 17 as guests of the Third Reich. These men were accommodated in simple, soldierly fashion, and they examined the educational aspect of sports as well as the competitive aspect. The participants heard lectures from international physical education experts and held group discussions, sport displays, and physical demonstrations in the morning session. The afternoons were free to witness the Olympic contests, inspect the German sports facilities and Olympic grounds, and take excursions throughout Berlin.¹² The Nazi government gave each participant an "Olympic Pass" which admitted him to all the contests. This pass provided for free travel on all buses, subways, and street cars in Berlin, admitted the bearer to museums,

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Olympic Games News Service, 16 April 1935, 3.

and offered reduced rates at many places of entertainment. The evenings in Berlin could be spent in several ways, such as attendance at a military band concert, an international folk festival, or demonstrations featuring dances, stunts, singing, and wrestling. Dr. John Brown, Jr., national secretary of the Y.M.C.A. and leader of the American delegation of physical education students to Berlin, in his official report commented that "the Physical Education Congress was a great success. The German authorities were admirable hosts." He claimed, "Those who attended had an opportunity to learn a great deal about the sports education programs throughout the world and hoped that a similar Congress be held in Tokyo in 1940 in connection with the next Olympiad."¹³

An international youth rally was also held in Berlin in conjunction with the Olympic Games. Invitations from Theodor Lewald, president of the German Organizing Committee, and von Tschammer und Osten, president of the German Olympic Committee, and Baldur von Schirach, leader of the Hitler youth, urged countries to send a group of thirty youths ranging in age from fifteen to eighteen under the direction of a leader to Berlin to experience the Olympic ideals firsthand. Many countries accepted the Nazi invitations. The German army provided tents and equipment and

¹³ John Brown, Jr., "Report on Physical Education Tours," Report of the American Olympic Committee, 375.

the Nazi government paid for all the expenses within Germany. The youths stayed near the Olympic Stadium from July 30 through the conclusion of the Olympic Games. They lived and ate together, followed an exact plan of work, engaged in physical training, became acquainted with the sights and beauties of Berlin, and attended the Olympic competitions.¹⁴ This youth encampment was established with rules and regulations similar to those of the Olympic village.¹⁵

There was a strong demand from the German departments representing the various types of sport--together they constituted the German Reich Association for Physical Culture--for a share in the Olympic Games. The German Olympic Committee accommodated this demand by offering five hundred German youth from each category of sport an opportunity to spend eight days as guests of the Nazi government, encamped near the Olympic Stadium. Here they lived together as comrades, enjoying the Olympic contests in mass.¹⁶

The Aero-Club of Germany, together with the German Organizing Committee, arranged a world gathering of sport flyers to meet in Berlin on July 30, 1936. All who arrived at the Berlin aerodrome on that prescribed day received a memorial medal from the German Organizing Committee and a

¹⁴Olympic Games News Service, 16 April 1935, 2.

¹⁵Official Guide Book, 75.

¹⁶Ibid.

reserved seat the following day at the International Acrobatic Flying Championships as well as one at the Olympic opening day ceremonies. During and after the Olympic Games, the Aero-Club of Germany arranged flights to East Prussia to visit the various gliding clubs and national shrines, to South Germany to visit Nuremberg, Munich, and Berchtesgaden, and to the Rhine to visit Bonn and Cologne.¹⁷

During the first week of the Olympic Games, the Germans demonstrated their national sport--gliding at the Staachen Aerodrome near the men's Olympic village. Spectators saw methods of taking off, towing, and landing at a prescribed spot. Acrobatic flying and the towing of several gliders simultaneously were also featured. The Official Guide for the 1936 Olympic Games pointed out that the German pilots received no medals for their achievements because the I.O.C. had not yet approved the sport because of its unfamiliarity to most countries. The Germans, however, took pride in being the pioneers in this new sport.¹⁸

The State Propaganda Ministry arranged five tours for the benefit of all foreign guests. The tours focused on locations which the Third Reich had developed rather than ancient monuments. The tours brought visitors to new party buildings in Munich and Nuremberg on new motor roads built by the Hitler regime. Nazis served as guides for the

¹⁷Olympic Games News Service, 28 February 1935, 2.

¹⁸Official Guide Book, 57.

tours and showed the German guests only what the Nazi leaders wanted them to see. To conduct these tours, the Nazi government trained nine hundred discreet students with facility in a number of languages as guides so as to minimize any misunderstandings.¹⁹

The German Organizing Committee planned a great rally for all former Olympic victors. Those people who had placed first, second, or third in any previous Olympic Games, who planned to be in Berlin the first week of the celebration, were honored at the Kroll Opera House on August 4. At the conclusion of the Games, all male competitors were honored at a social gathering sponsored by the German Olympic Committee at the Deutschland Hall. The women were given a similar ceremony at the White Hall in the former Imperial Palace in Berlin.²⁰ No one was forgotten.

The German Organizing Committee also presented awards to all people who were contributing to the success of the Olympic Games. Breeders, whose carrier pigeons took part in the opening ceremonies, received an Olympic badge as did the demonstration groups, international students of physical education, international youth rally, and all German youth association representatives.²¹ All participants

¹⁹New York Times, 26 April 1936, 27.

²⁰Olympic Games News Service, 4 October 1935, 5.

²¹Official Guide Book, 65.

in the Games received a bronze memorial medal inscribed with the Olympic eagle and the five Olympic rings. Gold medals designed by Professor Cassisli of Florence, Italy, were presented to the victorious competitors. They received a small oak tree to be replanted in their homeland.²²

The Olympic period found Germany in a state of domestic calm, busy finishing the final preparations for the Olympic Games. Ferdinand Latrop Mayer, the United States chargé in Germany, noted to United States Secretary of State Cordell Hull that

for the Nazis this year's Olympiad assumes all the importance of a foreign political drive to obtain the favor and approval of the outside world. Discipline has been enjoined by Nazi Party leaders on their followers, Dr. Goebbels has exhorted the population to receive the foreign guests in a spirit of hospitality and assistance. Currency regulations, and informally even customs restrictions, have been relaxed in the visitors' favor, and the Berlin police have already begun to put on their best Olympic manners. While incidents will probably occur, it is obviously intended that they shall not be the Nazi's fault and it may be confidently said that woe will undoubtedly betide the Party enthusiast who yields to the temptation to assault a foreigner for failing to give the Hitler salute.²³

Mayer reported that the conflict between the church and the state, Hitler's attempt to bring into line all confessional churches, would remain relatively quiet owing to the coming Olympic Games. William E. Dodd, United States

²²Ibid., 26.

²³The Charge in Germany (Mayer) to the Secretary of State, 14 July 1936, U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936, Volume 2: 142-143.

ambassador in Germany, reported that the external evidence of the anti-Jewish campaign were being curbed and predicted in January, 1936, that they would completely disappear by the time of the Olympic Games. Dodd stated that many of the red vending machines in which Julius Streicher's Der Stürmer was displayed no longer bore the title of this paper, and the vending machines would probably be used to put on view more edifying literature during the Games.

"Whether or not Der Stürmer and other anti-Jewish periodicals of its kind will be completely suppressed remains to be seen although certain of the more plausible Party officials steadfastly maintain that this step will be taken."²⁴ The New York Times forecast the publication of the periodical Judenkenner (Observer of the Jew), an organ of the anti-Jewish world alliance which was created and supported by the Nazi Party to spread anti-Semitism throughout the world, would be discontinued until after the Olympic Games.²⁵ Dodd agreed with Mayer that

the Nazis are putting great store by the Olympic Games to rehabilitate and enhance the reputation of the "New Germany" and if all goes smoothly, their hopes are likely to be filled particularly as it has been observed that foreigners who see only the usual tourist contacts with the people, are inclined to reject as libel, press reports respecting such unpleasant occurrences as Jewish

²⁴The Ambassador in Germany (Dodd) to Secretary of State 30 January 1936, U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936, Volume 2: 198.

²⁵New York Times, 19 May 1936, 9.

persecution which they have previously read in their home papers.²⁶

The city of Berlin held a dress rehearsal for the Games two weeks before they were scheduled to start. Training contests were held in various arenas in the Reichssportfeld providing a trial run for athletes and spectators alike. Forty thousand members of the Strength Through Joy organization were bused to the arena to make the German athletes feel appreciated and give the police, ushers, and street railwaymen an indication of things to come.²⁷

Representatives of the German Organizing Committee met each team participating in the 1936 Games as it crossed the German frontier. From there, the teams traveled by rail to Berlin. At the Berlin railway station, each team was greeted by a German rendition of that country's national anthem,²⁸ and welcomed by reception committees composed of that country's residents living in the German capital. The Yugoslavian residents in Berlin took the initiative on this measure and established the German-Yugoslavian Committee to look after the four hundred Yugoslavian competitors. The Swiss Committee followed their lead and greeted the 250

²⁶The Ambassador in Germany (Dodd) to Secretary of State, 30 January 1936, U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936, Volume 2, 198-199.

²⁷New York Times, 20 July 1936, 7.

²⁸"Olympics: Nations Eye Each Other on the Eve of the 1936 Games," Newsweek, 11 August 1936, 20-21.

Swiss participants who arrived in Berlin.²⁹ Tens of thousands of Germans lined the streets and greeted the teams as the German Organizing Committee's fleet of buses transported them to the Berlin City Hall. At the City Hall, the teams shared in a sherry sipping ceremony with the Mayor of Berlin, an old German custom to seal friendships.³⁰ The Americans, in particular, were greeted by rousing cheers from the large German crowd gathered for their arrival at the City Hall. Avery Brundage in his report to the American Olympic Committee claimed

that hundreds of thousands of spectators cheered and waved greetings to the American athletes from every sidewalk, window, balcony, roof and other points of vantage. It was a cordial and inspiring welcome.³¹

Avery Brundage, the man most responsible for getting the American team to Berlin, was awarded a commemorative medal by the German Olympic Committee and responded to the welcome by claiming that "no nation since ancient Greece has captured the true Olympic spirit as has Germany."³² The teams were then escorted by the German Voluntary Youth Service to their Olympic accommodations, the women to the

²⁹ Olympic Games News Service, 28 February 1936, 4.

³⁰ "Olympics: Nations Eye Each Other on the Eve of the 1936 Games," Newsweek, 1 August 1936, 20-21.

³¹ Report of the American Olympic Committee, 29.

³² "Olympics: Nations Eye Each Other on the Eve of the 1936 Games," Newsweek, 1 August 1936, 20-21.

Women's Dormitory located at the Reichssportfeld and the men to the Olympic Village in Döberitz. Here they witnessed the hoisting of their national flag, a reception by administration supervisors, the presentation of keys, and the distribution of Olympic badges and pamphlets.³³

Spain had to withdraw from the Berlin Games before the Olympics started. The Spanish Republic, which had earlier appropriated funds for the Spanish Olympic Committee, was now battling the Spanish Nationalists for control of the country. The Spanish team with no financial support went home.³⁴ Two countries which eagerly awaited participation in the Berlin Games were Japan and Italy, who like Germany, had made enthusiastic preparations for the 1936 Games to increase their international renown and advance the prestige of their nation. Japan, like Germany, had embarked on a national sports program the results of which had been demonstrated in Los Angeles in 1932. Japan's annexation of Manchuria in 1931 had not prevented their participation in the Olympics in 1932. In fact, the Japanese attempted to send a team from Manchukuo to the 1932 Games but were prevented by the United States who issued the invitations to the Los Angeles Games on the grounds that they did not recognize conquests by aggression.³⁵

³³Official Guide Book, 82.

³⁴"Olympics: Nations Eye Each Other on the Eve of the 1936 Games," Newsweek, 1 August 1936, 20-21.

³⁵New York Times, 26 May 1936, 32.

Their aggression in Manchuria did not prevent Germany from inviting them to the 1936 Berlin Games. The Olympic Games News Service kept its readers informed of the Japanese swimming records established during their European tour in 1935 and forecast that Japan would be an athletic power to be reckoned with in Berlin.³⁶ The Italians also saw the XI Olympics as a proving ground for their patriotically oriented sports program. Their invasion of Ethiopia in 1935-1936 did not prevent them from participating in Berlin. The Olympic Games News Service reported the enthusiastic preparations of the Italian Olympic team whose "unexpected" good results at Los Angeles demonstrated the success of Mussolini's fascist regime.³⁷ The aggressive nature of both countries was ignored by the I.O.C. which was considering both Tokyo and Rome as sites for the next Olympics. Shortly after the Berlin Games, the I.O.C. awarded the Games to Tokyo.³⁸

The biggest fan at the Berlin Olympic Games was Adolf Hitler, who followed the athletic contests with great interest and excitement. Each German victory elated him. German success was most evident in the track and field competition, which had always been a weakness of German athletics. German shotputter Hans Woelke smashed the

³⁶ Olympic Games News Service, 2 July 1935, 3.

³⁷ Olympic Games News Service, 30 March 1935, 1.

³⁸ Killinan and Rodda, Olympic Games 1980, 116.

Olympic record and won the first gold medal of the 1936 Olympic Games, becoming the first German male athlete to win a gold medal in Olympic track and field competition. German hammer thrower Karl Hein and javelin thrower Gerhard Stoeck added two more first places to the German total, accomplishing a feat which had eluded the German men in the first ten Olympiads. Two German women, Tilly Fleischer and Luise Kruger, finished first and second in the javelin throw on the opening day of competition. Another gold medal was won by Gisela Mauermayer who set a new Olympic record of $156'3 \frac{3}{16}"$ in the discus throw. Overall, the German women outpointed the second place United States women team $51 \frac{1}{2} - 22 \frac{1}{3}$ in their six event women's track and field competition. The point difference would have been greater if the German women's four hundred meter relay team, which had set an Olympic and world record of 46.4 in their qualifying heat, had not been disqualified. At the final exchange, the Germans had a ten meter lead over the United States, but dropped the baton during their final handoff. The systematic and scientific athletic training of women introduced in Germany during the 1920s was now paying positive results.

Men's track and field competition was still dominated by the United States. The Germans placed a distant third behind the United States and Finland in this competition. The records set four years previously at Los Angeles were

surpassed in Berlin. In the twenty-nine track and field events, fifteen new Olympic records were set. Jesse Owens, of the United States, won four gold medals, setting Olympic records in the two hundred meter, the running broad jump, and as a member of the four hundred meter relay. Owens' 10.3 clocking in the one hundred meters set both an Olympic and world record but was not allowed because of a following wind.³⁹ Hitler was highly annoyed by Owens' Olympic triumphs and the victories of other American black athletes. He claimed that people whose recent ancestors came from the jungle were primitive and their physiques were stronger than those of civilized whites. Hitler felt these people represented unfair competition and ought to be excluded from future Olympic Games.⁴⁰

Olympic records were also set by Jack Lovelock of New Zealand in the 1500 meter run, the Finns Gunmar Hockert in the five thousand meter and Volmari Iso-Hollo in the three thousand meter steeplechase. Japan's Kitei Son and Navto Tajima set Olympic records in the marathon and triple jump respectfully. American Forrest Towns set an Olympic record in the 110 meter hurdles as did Cornelius C. Johnson in the high jump, Kenneth Carpenter in the discus throw, Glenn Morris in the decathlon, and Earle Meadows in the

³⁹ Bill Henry, Approved History, 241-255.

⁴⁰ Albert Speer, Inside the Third Reich, 73.

pole vault. Of the six women track and field events, only the winner of the high jump failed to set an Olympic record. New Olympic and world records were established in the featherweight, middleweight, and heavyweight lifting divisions as well as in pistol and rifle shooting. Ten Olympic records also crumbled in the sixteen event swimming competition.⁴¹

"We Won" headlined the Berlin newspapers. Der Angriff, commenting on Germany's success, exclaimed, "We can scarcely contain ourselves for it is truly difficult to endure so much joy."⁴² The official Nazi newspaper Völkischer Beobachter's Olympic scoring table showed the Germans winning more gold, silver, and bronze medals than any other participating nation. The Germans won thirty-three gold medals, nine more than the second place United States; twenty-six silver medals, six more than the United States; and thirty bronze medals, eighteen more than the United States. Because the I.O.C. rules state there is no official winner in Olympic competition, Germany's victory in the Berlin Games was unofficial. Helene Mayer, the Jewish athlete who was selected to the German Olympic team, placed second in the fencing competition. As she stood upon the platform awaiting the presentation of her silver medal, she snapped a Nazi salute toward Hitler, an act which brought a

⁴¹ Henry, Approved History, 241-255.

⁴² New York Times, 17 August 1936, 12.

roar from the crowd. After the Olympics she emigrated to the United States. After World War II, she returned to Germany and married where she died of cancer in 1961.⁴³ Werner Seelenbinder, a German wrestler and Communist, decided to salute Adolf Hitler on the victory platform, not with a Nazi salute but with the middle finger of his right hand. He planned to go to an international press conference afterward and tell the world exactly what he thought of the National Socialist government. His plan misfired when Seelenbinder lost his first match and finished fourth in the Olympic wrestling competition. In 1944, Seelenbinder was executed by the Germans in Brandenburg concentration camp, but his legend lives on in East Germany where he is looked upon as a hero. The major indoor track facility in Berlin, Seelenbinder Hall, is named in his honor as is the bell tower at Leipzig Stadium where the Sixth National Sports and Gymnastics Festival was held in 1977.⁴⁴

The Germans were winners both on and off the field. Off the field, the German government shattered all previous Olympic records. Six thousand eight hundred athletes representing fifty-three nations competed in twenty-one events. The Nazi government spent thirty million dollars

⁴³William O. Johnson, Jr., All That Glitters Is Not Gold, An Irreverent Look at the Olympic Games (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1972), 175.

⁴⁴Gilbert, Miracle Machine, 16-17.

on the XI Olympic Games which attracted 4.5 million spectators. After the first week of competition, the Berlin Games surpassed the record for total attendance set in Los Angeles in 1932. Berlin's peak day for Olympic attendance, 300,000, was three times that of Los Angeles' best day.⁴⁵ The German Olympic Committee ticket department sold 100,000 season passes for the sixteen day competition compared to 69,485 sold in Los Angeles. The German Tourist Affairs Department claimed that 1,200,000 visitors were in Berlin during the Olympic period. The Reich Railway Department ran one thousand special trains. On any given day during the Games, they transported from 60,000 to 145,000 visitors to Berlin.⁴⁶

Germany took everything Los Angeles had offered and improved upon it, except for the weather. German technicians in the German Organizing Committee advanced the technical methods for conducting the Games, previously used unofficially at Los Angeles. The Germans improved electric timing and synchronized automatic cameras to record close finishes. Mechanical devices smoothed the announcing system for athletes, judges, and spectators.⁴⁷ The decorations for the Via Triumphalis on which the government had spent 710,000 Reichsmarks became weatherworn as the Games

⁴⁵ New York Times, 18 August 1936, 26.

⁴⁶ New York Times, 17 August 1936, 11.

⁴⁷ Henry, Approved History, 235.

drew to a close.⁴⁸ The closing night ceremony, however, enjoyed all the excitement and festivity of the opening day ceremony. A crowd exceeding 100,000 packed the Olympic Stadium to bid farewell to the athletes. The athletes of fifty-three nations assembled in the infield. Henri de Baillet-Latour, president of the I.O.C., ascended the rostrum and made, according to Olympic tradition, the closing declaration. Speaking on behalf of the I.O.C., Latour thanked Adolf Hitler, the German people, the municipality of Berlin, and the German Organizing Committee. Latour proclaimed

the closing of the XI Olympic Games and in accordance with tradition we call upon the youth of every country to assemble in four years at Tokyo, to celebrate with us the XII Olympic Games. May they display cheerfulness and concord so that the Olympic torch may be carried on with greater eagerness, courage, and honor for the good of humanity throughout the ages.

The bulletin board flashed the last words in German, the orchestra and chorus burst into Beethoven's The Flame Dies as cannons boomed in the distance.

Fifty-three tall German girls dressed in white presented laurel wreaths to each nation's flagbearers assembled in front of the Tribune of Honor. The Olympic flag was lowered and presented to Mayor Lippert to be held in Berlin for the next four years. The flags of Greece, Germany, and Japan were then raised to symbolize the past, present, and future.

⁴⁸ New York Times, 19 December 1936, 4.

Olympic Games. As the Olympic flame was extinguished, the stadium rose to its feet and stood in silence. The chorus began to sing the farewell song, "The Games are Ended." The crowd linked arms in a typical sign of German sentiment and joined with the chorus in song, "Friends, farewell, even if the sun should sink for us, others will beckon. Friends, farewell." Germany, the host nation, led the procession of nations out of the stadium. Greece, the originator of the Games, exited last.⁴⁹ The XI Olympic Games, the Berlin Games, were over.

The Berlin Olympic Games was a German success. Years of disappointment, frustration, and failure were now things of the past. After the closing ceremony, the German Olympic team, the German Olympic Committee, and the German Organizing Committee enjoyed a reception at the Chancellory as guests of Adolf Hitler. Hitler thanked his countrymen for their accomplishments at the Berlin Games and pledged his full support for the next Olympic Games scheduled for Tokyo in 1940.⁵⁰ Hitler promised to send the largest foreign Olympic team to Tokyo, the site of the XII Olympic Games, accompanied by several shiploads of German fans, including members of the Strength Through Joy organization. He informed the athletic officials and athletes that no expense or time would be spared in the training of German

⁴⁹ New York Times, 17 August 1936, 11.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

athletes for the XII Olympics.⁵¹ Herman Goering presented Hans von Tschammer und Osten with the title "Prussian State Concillor" in appreciation for von Tschammer's work in the Olympic athletic conquests.⁵² The German victors were rewarded with jobs in the Civil Service and promotion in the German military for their accomplishments at the Games.⁵³

The Olympic spirit persuaded Adolf Hitler to resume the excavation project at Olympia which the Second Reich had abandoned in 1881. He proclaimed that

the philosophical foundation for presenting the revived Olympic Games to the world are of hallowed antiquity. These spiritual forces come out of a sacred city which for more than a thousand years was the site of festivals expressing the religious feelings and the basic conviction of the Greek Volk. As an enduring monument of the celebration of the XI Olympiad in Berlin, I have decided to recommence and to see to a conclusion the excavation at Olympia. That these projects will succeed is my and our sincerest wish.⁵⁴

Hitler, like his German predecessors, wanted to glorify Nazi Germany by reestablishing her kinship with the ancient Greeks. A German archeological expedition was sent to Olympic in late 1936 and pursued their attempt to unearth the ancient stadium until 1941.⁵⁵

⁵¹ New York Times, 23 August 1936, V, 2.

⁵² New York Times, 18 August 1936, 23. ⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Quoted in New York Times, 2 August 1936, 33.

⁵⁵ Ludwig Drees, Olympia: Gods, Artists and Athletes, trans. by Gerald Onn (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 167.

Other plans were also on the Nazi drawing board. Hitler wanted a four hundred thousand seat stadium constructed in Nuremberg on a 6.5 square mile tract of land. Money again was no object for Adolf Hitler. The Nazi government appropriated 250 million dollars for a building that they hoped would stand for a thousand years and glorify the Third Reich.⁵⁶

Adolf Hitler had succeeded through the Berlin Games, the XI Olympiad, in helping restore the self confidence and self respect to the German people which had been lacking since the Treaty of Versailles. Hitler had also impressed the foreign correspondents and world-wide audiences with the elaborate demonstration which glorified the Olympic Games and brought a favorable light on the "new Germany." The Berlin Games had hypnotized the world with athletic competition, which according to the Olympic ideals, fostered world peace and understanding and lessened international animosities and tensions.

Hitler now set his sights on other goals. He sent men and military supplies to Spain to help General Francisco Franco, and signed an alliance with Italy. Within two years he annexed Austria and the Sudetenland. Hitler's grandiose dreams could also be seen in his plans for future Olympic celebrations.

⁵⁶ Speer, Third Reich, 70.

In the spring, 1937, Adolf Hitler visited his architect, Albert Speer, in his Berlin showroom. Both men viewed the seven foot high model of the proposed Nuremberg Stadium. Speer reminded Hitler that the athletic field with the stadium did not possess the prescribed Olympic proportions.

Without any change of tone, as if it were a matter settled beyond the possibility of discussion, Hitler observed: "No matter: In 1940, the Olympic Games will take place in Tokyo. But thereafter they will take place in Germany for all time to come, in this stadium. And then we will determine the measurements of the athletic field."⁵⁷

Germany was in a festive mood during the Olympic period. The National Socialists, through the efforts of the German Organizing Committee, scheduled special events, attractions, and celebrations in many German towns for the benefit of Germans and Olympic visitors. Congresses, rallies, and festivals brought groups from throughout the world to Germany to witness the achievements of Nazi Germany, peace-loving Germany. The Olympic Games were a German success. Years of athletic frustration seemed to be forgotten when the German Olympic team for the first time were the winners of the Games, even if unofficially. The National Socialists, through an international sporting event, had succeeded in bringing the world to Germany and having the world witness a country and government on its best behavior, a model for

⁵⁷ Ibid.

others to try to emulate. All was done in the name of the Olympic Games.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Sport was a vital part of German society from the time of Imperial Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm through the Weimar period and the National Socialist regime under Adolf Hitler. All three governments believed that German life as a whole could only benefit from the competitive physical activities found in sport. All three German governments believed that the Olympic Games afforded them the opportunity to bring their citizens together, promoting national consciousness; the Olympic Games would also provide a valuable public relations tool with which to enhance Germany's position in the international community. All three German governments strove to use the Olympic Games for their own benefit, with each government building upon the Olympic preparations of the previous government. Each government took the Olympic preparations one step further, the culmination being the 1936 Berlin Olympics, an Olympic Games completely under German-Nazi control.

The nineteenth century excavation of the ancient Greek site of Olympia by German archeologists helped to call the world's attention to the ancient Greek games and to introduce to the western world the idea of reviving the Olympic

Games. This German undertaking provided the preliminary framework which Baron Pierre de Coubertin used in reestablishing the Olympic Games at the Sorbonne Congress in 1894.

The German lack of athletic success in the first three Olympic Games can be attributed to the rivalry between the powerful, nationalistic, German Gymnastic societies who wanted no part in the Olympic Games, and the growing German sports associations. This rivalry can also be attributed to the International Olympic Committee continually rejecting Germany's bid to host an Olympic celebration. This practice ended in 1907 when the German Gymnastic societies changed their minds concerning participation in the Games. The International Olympic Committee now viewed the Germans as a legitimate Olympic partner and in 1909 awarded the VI Olympic Games, scheduled for 1916, to Berlin. This decision caused an unparalleled athletic growth in Germany. The Imperial Government supported the Games and wanted to surpass the athletic success in the Olympic Games which other European nations and the United States had experienced in the first five Olympiads.

Athletic success in the Berlin Olympics was in accordance with Germany's political policy. German Olympic success was viewed as another way to convince the German population and the world of Germany's place in the sun. To guarantee this, Germany revamped its sports organization and reformed its athletic training methods along the lines

of the United States. The German Imperial Olympic Committee, with the financial support of the Imperial Government, constructed an athletic facility in Berlin which no other European city could equal. It also tried to develop a German Olympic team that would surpass all previous German teams in athletic performance. The Games were viewed as a national undertaking. In the Games, German athletic success would reflect the achievements of the larger German society.

The stage was set, but the play never materialized because of the World War I. The 1916 Berlin Games would very likely have been the most successful Olympic Games to that date owing entirely to the cooperation of the German sports associations and the Imperial German government's determination. Germany would settle for nothing less. Germany's resolve is seen in Germany's determination to hold the Olympic Games even though it was engulfed in war. International movements to change the Olympic site did not deter the German effort to stage the Olympic Games. This German effort to hold the Games persisted until the International Olympic Committee cancelled the Berlin Games in 1915. Sports historians might find research on American opinion concerning the 1916 Berlin Games fruitful. They might examine boycott movements that developed in the United States from the outbreak of the war until the cancellation of the Berlin Games.

The War did not diminish athletic spirit in Germany. In fact, the War fostered the increased participation of German citizens in sport associations. As a way of keeping its population physically fit, the German government enacted legislation to encourage Germans of all ages to get involved in sports. After the War, sport served, in many cases, as a vehicle to disguise military activities which were prohibited by the Treaty of Versailles.

The Germans were the victims of politics in their absence from the Antwerp Games in 1920 and in Paris in 1924. The Olympic Games were established as "a game for all nations" but the Organizing Committee of both countries ignored the Germans to punish them for their participation in World War I. Both Belgium and France viewed Germany an outlaw in the European community. Germany would be invited to the Olympics only when the European politicians felt that Germany had purged itself of its guilt for causing World War I. Due to this international isolation, the Germans established their own national games to allow their athletes an opportunity to compete as well as to give its population an occasion for national enthusiasm and pride. Nineteen hundred and twenty-six, after the Locarno treaties, was a turning point for Germany's Olympic dream. The Amsterdam Organizing Committee for the 1928 Games invited Germany to participate. Germany's invitation to the 1928 Olympic Games can be attributed in part to Amsterdam's

neutrality in World War I. If the Olympics had been held in London in 1928, it is possible that Germany might have continued to be the victim of Olympic politics even though Germany was now a member of the League of Nations.

The success of the scientific approach to athletic training which the Germans had developed after the War was evident in Amsterdam. German athletes performed better than ever before. The Germans were the most improved team at the Games and emerged from the Games as one of the top athletic nations of the world. The years of athletic frustration had finally come to an end.

The German success in Amsterdam forced the International Olympic Committee to once again consider Germany as a possible Olympic host; Germany could no longer be ignored. Germany was officially accepted into the European athletic community in 1931 when the International Olympic Committee awarded Berlin the 1936 Olympic Games. The men most responsible for Germany's athletic growth during the Weimar period and its acceptance into international sporting contests, in particular the Olympic Games, were Theodor Lewald and Carl Diem. Sport historians, however, have neglected these men. Lewald and Diem and their part in sport and the Olympic movement in Germany need further study.

The International Olympic Committee awarded the XI Olympic Games to the Weimar government. There was no way in 1931 for the International Olympic Committee to predict that

Adolf Hitler would soon control Germany even though the National Socialists were the second largest part in Germany by September, 1930. Lewald had established the German Organizing Committee for the 1936 Games before Hitler became chancellor. When the Nazis took control in 1933, the Olympic Games took on a different nature; they were going to take place in a totalitarian society for the first time in Olympic history. Shortly, the German Organizing Committee and the German Olympic Committee lost their independence, a clear violation of the Olympic code. The 1936 Berlin Games, like the proposed Berlin Games twenty years earlier, became a German national project. The Nazis, however, took the Olympic Games one step further because they directed the preparations and management of the Games and selected the German Olympic team. The official report of the German Organizing Committee stated, "The gymnastic and sporting circle no longer faced the Olympic task alone; the entire German nation with the chancellor and the Reich government at its head had accepted the responsibility."

A major problem arose in response to the National Socialist's racial and totalitarian policies established in Germany shortly after they gained power. These policies raised concern with the International Olympic Committee who wanted German assurances that no discrimination existed in Germany concerning the selection of the German Olympic team.

Lewald gave the International Olympic Committee appropriate assurances and it was satisfied. They took Lewald's statement as the truth even though Lewald now had no power in Germany. The Nazis were merely using Lewald because of his international athletic reputation. The International Olympic Committee apparently had failed to realize who they were actually dealing with or did not want to recognize who they were dealing with.

The American Amateur Athletic Union was not as easily swayed. They wanted Nazi action, not just Nazi assurances. The American Amateur Athletic Union believed the assurances of the leaders of German sport were not binding because of the Nazi control of German sport. Their threat of non-participation held considerable weight because it was the American Amateur Athletic Union that certified the American athletes for participation in the Olympic Games. The American Amateur Athletic Union tried to convince the American Olympic Committee to follow its lead.

The American Olympic Committee decided to wait and see if the situation in Germany changed before accepting an invitation to Berlin. This move indicated that they wanted to participate in the Berlin Games. Avery Brundage, the president of the American Olympic Committee, was in Europe in June, 1934, to attend a meeting of the International Amateur Athletic Federation in Stockholm. Taking advantage of already being in Europe, Brundage went to Germany to

view the racial situation himself. It seems likely that Brundage undertook this side trip to quiet the criticism the American Olympic Committee would make when it decided to accept Berlin's invitation. Brundage reported that he found no discrimination in Germany, but it seems likely that he found none because he was not looking very closely. Brundage should have realized that the Nazis would make sure he saw no discrimination. Just like the Olympic visitors in 1936, Brundage only saw what the Nazis wanted him to see, and it is inconceivable that Brundage failed to realize what the Nazis were trying to do. The American Olympic Committee used Brundage's report to justify their acceptance of the Olympic invitation. In December, 1935, Brundage, now president of both the American Amateur Athletic Union and the American Olympic Committee, guaranteed the United States would send a team to Berlin. The protests that continued could only try to influence individual athletes not to try out for the United States Olympic team. They were unsuccessful.

Without the efforts of Avery Brundage and sports leaders in the United States who felt as he did, the United States might very well have boycotted the 1936 Games. In that case, the 1936 Berlin Games would have lost some of their prestige, but they would have taken place as scheduled. The only people hurt would have been the American athletes, many of which would never have the opportunity to participate

again because of their diminished athletic ability. A similar situation arose when the United States boycotted the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow. Because the Games were not held in 1940 or 1944, owing to the war, it seems certain that the athletes who failed to participate in 1936 would get no second chance.

Even if the United States had decided not to participate, the National Socialists planned to use the Olympic Games to foster German national pride in the Third Reich and to tighten their grip on the German people, as they did in the German National Games in 1934. In their attempt to use the Olympic Games, the German government developed unique celebrations, demonstrations, and exhibitions. The Nazis were able to do this because they played a direct role in all preparations for the Berlin Olympic Games. No country, previous to 1936, had attempted such projects. No other country in Olympic history had been able to construct an athletic complex to rival Berlin's Reichssportfeld. For example, the German Organizing Committee stated that the remodeling of the Grönewald Stadium originally estimated at 2.5 million Reichsmarks had developed into a gigantic new structure costing 36 million Reichsmarks, a project easily attainable by a totalitarian government.

Germany was also able to sell the Berlin Olympics to the world. Germany, which had withdrawn from the League of Nations and had broken various provisions of the Treaty

of Versailles, was able to influence foreign visitors to believe that Germany was one of the driving forces in the movement of peace found in the Olympics. Although many American diplomats in Germany recognized the Nazi propaganda plan and were not taken in, visitors to Germany for the XI Olympic Games came face to face with a country on its best behavior, at least until the Olympic period ended, and many, including the American Olympic Committee, left Germany impressed with the Nazi's version of the Olympic Games.

Years of German hard work culminated in the summer of 1936 with German victories on and off the field. The Germans outpointed the United States for the first time in Olympic history. In the American Olympic Committee's final unofficial point tabulation in the 1936 Olympic Games, the totalitarian governments outpointed their democratic counterparts. Germany outpointed the United States 628 to 451; Italy outscored France 164 to 134, and Japan outpointed Great Britain 151 to 108. The German men won their first gold medals in track and field competition, an area in which they had experienced little success in previous Olympic Games. Although finishing behind the United States in track and field competition, Germany won the greater number of Olympic honors in the other sports on the Olympic program.

Off the field the Nazis broke all previous Olympic records. The American Olympic Committee in their report of the 1936 Games, stated, "The Games of the XIth Olympiad at Berlin, Germany, was the greatest and most glorious athletic festival ever conducted--the most spectacular and colossal of all times." Through their presentation of the Olympic celebration and their athletic victories on the field the Nazis strengthened their grip on the German nation and simultaneously made a favorable impression on an international audience. The Nazis were able to take an international sports contest and use it to their advantage. The Nazis were able to use sport to get the individual in Germany to identify with the Third Reich and its policies. The Olympic Games served the Nazis as a cohesive agent, bringing all Germans together under the common banner of the swastika for the rest of the world to see.

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