

# The Olympic Games and high politics

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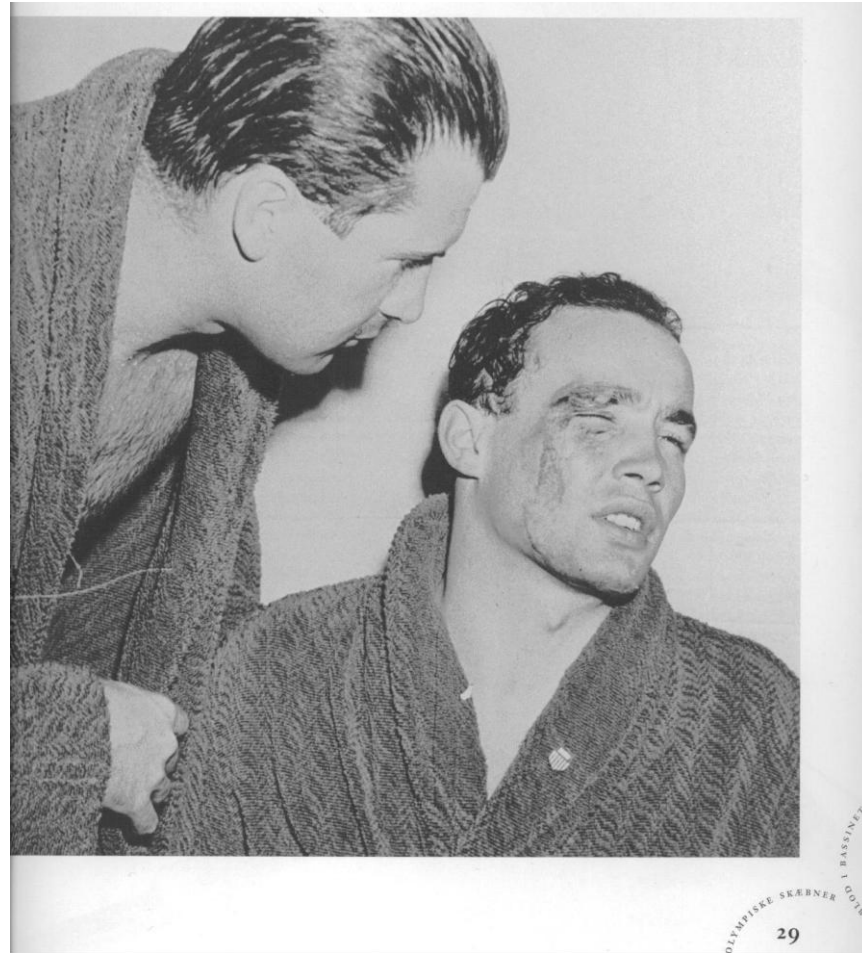
# The earlier Olympics in the light of international problems

- 1920, Antwerpen – in the shadow of First World War, no boycott because IOC decided that the host city should make the invitations – Germany, Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey were not invited – Hungary and Russia (USSR) decided not to take part
- 1924, Paris - again no invitation to Germany and Austria...

# The earlier Olympics in the light of international problems

- 1936, Berlin - more details later
- 1948, London - no invitation to Germany and Japan
- 1956, Melbourne (November) - in the shadow of the crisis in Hungary and Suez – the first boycott in the history of the Olympic games. Holland, Switzerland, Spain and Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon.

# The Water polo match in Melbourne



# The Danish Sports and the crisis in Hungary

- The first time Danish Sports organizations decided to interrupt sports cooperation with another country for political reasons
- Common declaration from Dansk Idræts-Forbund, De danske Skytte- og Gymnastik-foreninger, De danske Gymnastik-foreninger and Firmaidrætten 13th November 1956

# Part of the statement

- Our organization is apolitical but we can not be unfeeling observers when some one with violence and power try to destroy the national liberty of a people
- ...people from our sports organizations were fully represented in the resistance movement during the war ... that's why we have to protest...

# The earlier Olympics in the light of international problems

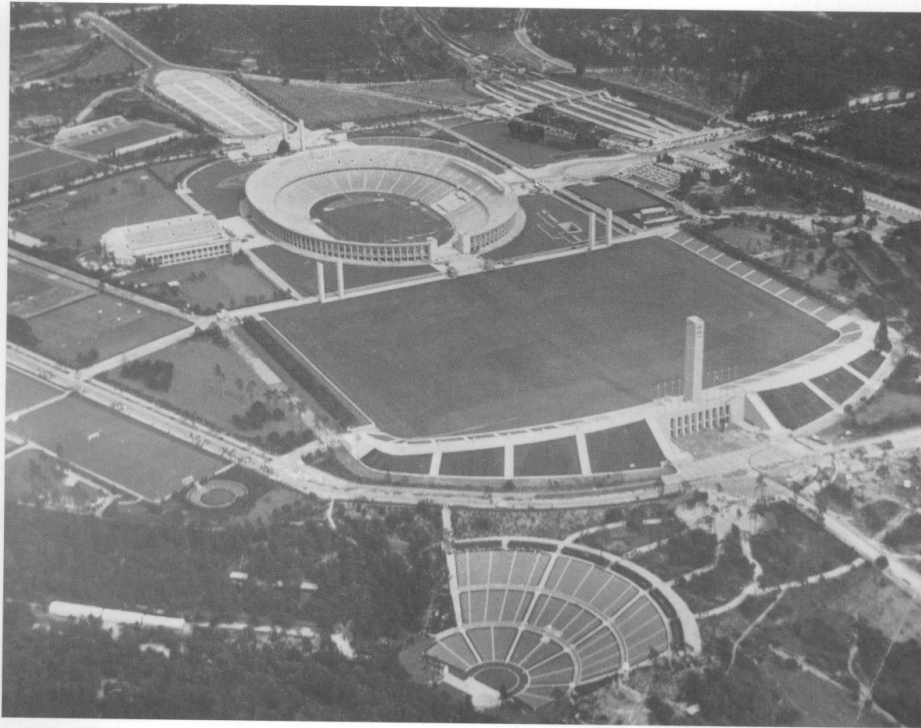
- 1968, Mexico (the crisis in Prague) - for the first time a statement from a Danish prime minister (Hilmar Baunsgaard) about sports and politics
- 1972, Munich - Black September
- 1976, Montreal - The South Africa problem
- 1980, Moscow - more details later
- 1984, Los Angeles - the turning point

# The earlier Olympics and the current debate

- Berlin 1936 - Moscow 1980 - Beijing 2008
- Dictatorship - the state ruled by one party
- Communism - Nazism/Fascism
- IOC - the organizing committee and the international debate
- The discussion in Denmark
- Similarities and differences



# Berlin 36



14

Das Reichssportfeld 1936    *The Reichssportfeld in 1936*

# Hitlers games

- 1931 IOC decided to give the Olympic games to Berlin (the end of the Weimar republic)
- Hitler convinced by Goebbels
- After 1933 the international debate, Carl Diem, Avery Brundage, and IOC – Brundage convinced by Hitler and Carl Diem – it was a “communist complot”

# The discussion in Denmark – inside the sports organizations

- Supporters: Danish Olympic Committee (DOK) – Prince Axel, member of IOC convinced DOK that everything was OK – The Danish Sports-Federation (DIF)
- Opponents: Danish Workers' Sports Federation (DAI), Hakoah, Jewish sports club (Abraham Kurland, wrestling) and Ivan Ossier, Danish fencer of Jewish origin

# The public opinion in Denmark

- In favour of the games: The bourgeoisie parties, except Christmas Møller. The newspapers *Politiken* Mr. Smile, Emil Andersen), *Berlingske Tidende*, *Jyllands Posten*...
- In opposition to the games: Frisindet Kulturkamp (*Kulturkampen*, *The Cultural Fight*) an anti-nazi organization. The newspapers *Social-Demokraten*, *Arbejderbladet* (Communist) and the communist party and the Social democratic party (but in a problematic position)

# A historic approach to Hitler's games

- The boycott was not an overwhelming success – DOK sent the hitherto largest number of competitors to Berlin and in general the Danish press saw the games as a success
- However this attitude was not unique – most other countries had the same opinion
- 1938 Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia*, second to *Snow-white* in Venice

# The Dread of Germany – Denmark and the Olympic Games

- A close neighbour to Germany
- The Danish government, a Liberal (Radikale Venstre), Social Democratic Coalition
- The Prime Minister Stauning, Social Democratic Party
- The Danish Foreign Minister P. Much, a Liberal
- The complaint from the German emissary in Denmark

# Moscow 1980

Udvalget fra OL i Moskva,  
hvor flere lande valgte at  
følge præsident Jimmy Car-  
ter's opfordring til en boykot  
på grund af invasionen i  
Afghanistan.



# The 1980 Olympics and the international relations

- Cold war NATO and USSR and the modernization of the nuclear defence - Afghanistan
- President Jimmy Carters TV-address (20th January 1980) mixed politics into the Olympics
- The governments and the NOC's - Great Britain and Italy
- Boycott 65 NOC's



# The discussion in Denmark – inside the sports organizations

- Danish Olympic Committee (DOK) and DIF wanted to participate in Moscow
- The exception: The chairman of the Danish Swim- and Lifeguard Federation, Kai Holm argued for a boycott
- Kai Holm, IOC and the discussion 2008
- Sports managers were afraid that a boycott would mean the end of the Olympics – Emanuel Rose

# The public opinion – the press

- In opposition: *Jyllands-Posten, Politiken and Berlingske Tidende*
- In favor: *Aktuelt, Ekstra Bladet, Information, Land og Folk*
- Gallup in February: each other Dane in favour of the Olympics in Moscow, every fourth against

# The debate in the parliament

- The government (Social Democratic): a principle not to interfere in the decision of the sports organizations – but against USSR in Afghanistan
- The debate, a question about a recommendation to DOK/DIF in favour of or against Moscow Olympics

# The position of the parties

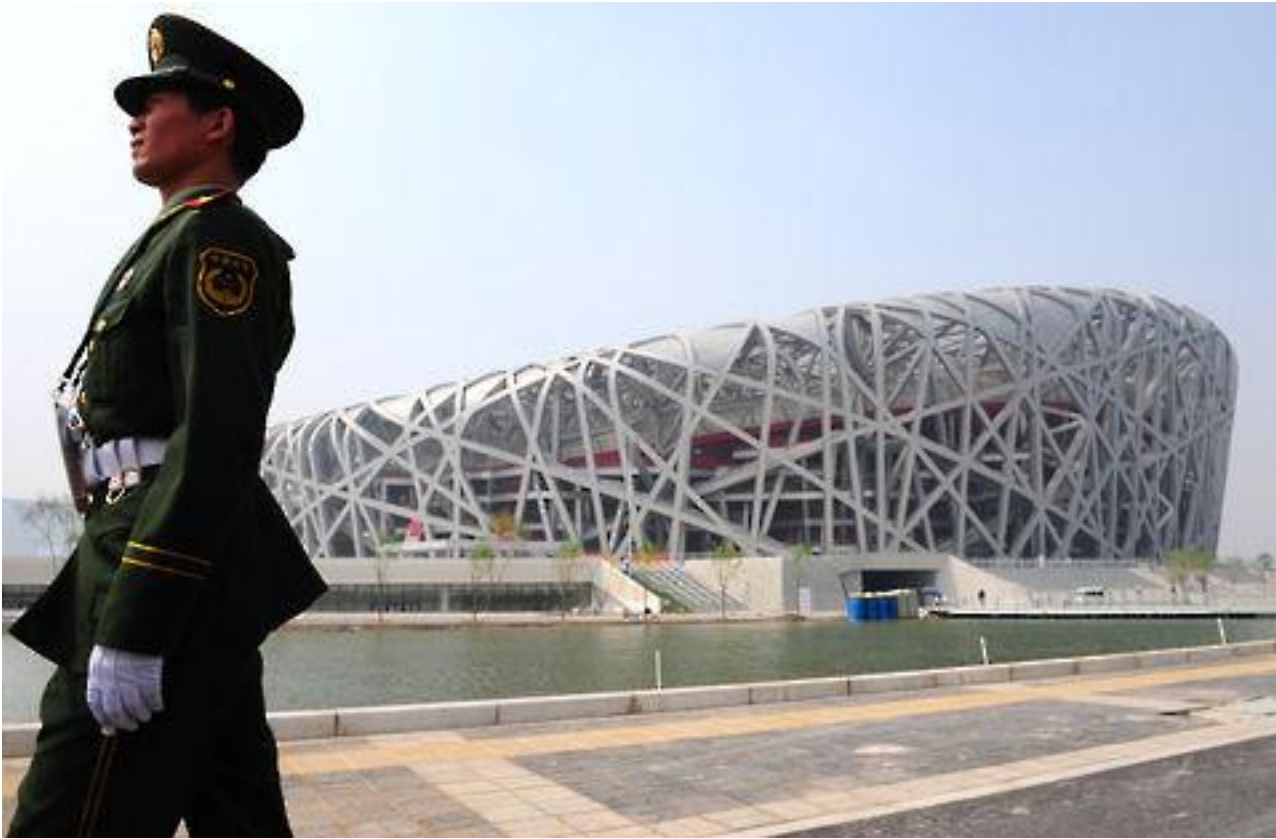
- In favour: Socialdemokratiet, Radikale Venstre, Socialistisk Folkeparti, Venstre-socialisterne – Fremskridtspartiet, Danmarks Retsforbund
- In opposition: Venstre, Det konservative Folkeparti, Kristeligt Folkeparti, Centrums-Demokraterne
- A majority for the government

# No national anthem and flag



*Fanebærer for det danske hold var finnjollesejeren Jørgen Lindhardsen.*

# Beijing 2008



# Market forces, Olympics and politics – a new agenda

- Los Angeles 1984 the turning point
- The People's Republic of China, member of IOC since 1980
- The capitalistic modernization of China and the huge market
- Common interest: IOC, China, and the global business (The Olympic Partners Programme)

# The application 1993 and 2001

- 1993, hesitation and uncertainty, the shadows from Tiananmen 1989 , China needs the Olympics, IOC needs Sydney – the petition from 60 USA senators
- 2001- China member of World Trade Organization, IOC and the world need China – Lenovo main sponsor for the application costs
- Amnesty International, Human Right Watch, Tibet...



# The discussion in Denmark about a boycott of the opening ceremony

- DIF (DOK incorporated 1993) a clear position in favour of participation
- The press – no clear line
- Gallup - a majority in favour of the Olympics
- The government (Venstre and Det konservative Folkeparti) – in principle in favour of – the Minister for Culture! – the role of the crown prince ...

# The political parties

- In opposition: Dansk Folkeparti, Socialistisk Folkeparti, Enhedslisten, Pia Christmas Møller
- Neutral: Socialdemokraterne, Radikale Venstre, Ny Alliance?
- In general, a contrary opinion compared to 1980
- Cooperation between Denmark and China in the fields of science and education
- The Companies – Bestseller: "Proud Sponsor"
- The Olympics – a moral substitute

# Berlin – Moscow - Beijing

- The application: IOC well aware of the political systems in Moscow and Beijing – contrary to Berlin
- Berlin 1936, aggressive military power, Moscow 1980, the last aggressive phase of the cold war, Beijing 2008 a society opening up for the last 20 years
- Only in Moscow was a boycott a question of national governmental politics – sport a political instrument

# Last remark

- Is there a new agenda for the mixture of sports and politics in the commercial global world?
- Is the government so engaged in the market (from the welfare state to the competition state) that sports and Olympics again will be a substitute for a morally correct politic?