

The Quiet Irishman – a final portrait of Lord Killanin

By Monique Berlioux (†)

'A hand of iron in a cashmere glove.' This is how I portrayed Lord Killanin in 1976, before the Innsbruck Games. The description appeared in a chapter of the book *The Olympic Games*, a book which the President co-authored with the English journalist, John Rodda.

I had first met Lord Killanin in London. Our second interview took place in September 1967, in a car driven by Johann Westerhoff. We were travelling from Lausanne to Grenoble on a visit of inspection for the forthcoming Winter Games. The two men sat in the front of the Mercedes. I saw only the very wide back of the future IOC President, and understood not a word of what he said, given his habit of mumbling, with his pipe clamped in his mouth. Against the background of the engine noise his low-pitched rapid delivery was full of pitfalls. Seeing him in profile during the lunch which followed enabled me to reply 'of course' whenever he ended his sentences with 'what?'

He was a man of imposing stature: square-shouldered with a rounded abdomen planted on two massive legs. Standing as upright and erect as a rider, he resembled a rock. His thick chestnut hair was greying at the temples. Pickwickian side-whiskers descended low on his cheeks, whilst round blue eyes peered out above his half-moon spectacles, perched on a rather pointed nose above an impish grin. His pink cheeks attested to a love of VAT 69 after 6 p.m. and the double chin was proof that good food held no terror for him.

Michael Morris was born on 30th July 1914 in London. A month later, on 1st September 1914, his father lost his life in France the early days of the First World War at the Battle of Villers-Cotterets. In 1927, at the age of 13, he inherited the title of 3rd Baron Killanin through his uncle, who had died without issue. He was very proud of his peerage, whilst all the time loudly protesting his liberal views. He never tired of pointing out that his family name, Morris, belonged to one of the fourteen clans of Galway, whose motto was 'Si Deus Vobiscum, quid contra nos' ('if God is with us, who is against us?')

Naturally he had been educated at Eton and Magdalene College Cambridge, where he was President of the renowned 'Footlights' dramatic club, and had studied at the Sorbonne. He ran and had boxed, and rowed. No sport was alien to him. His taste for classical culture had led him to take up a career in political



journalism, and as a foreign correspondent. From 1937–38, he was war correspondent for the London *Daily Mail* newspaper. He followed the Sino-Japanese conflict before signing up with the British Army for the duration of the Second World War. He reached the rank of Major, and took part in the planning of D-Day and the Normandy landings in 1944, acting as Brigade Major for the 30th Armoured Brigade, part of the 79th Armoured Division. Subsequently, he was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE). After demobilisation, he moved to Ireland.

He married Mary Sheila Dunlop in 1945. She herself had worked at the decoding centre at Bletchley, Oxfordshire, during the war for which work she too was awarded the MBE. The daughter of the Very Reverend Canon Douglas Dunlop, an Australian-born clergyman who became Church of Ireland Rector of the parish of Oughterard, near Galway, in the West of Ireland, Sheila was uncertain of her date of birth, having been born in India, and knew only the date of her baptism. They met at the famous Galway Races, and shared a love of horseracing. They had four children together: three sons and a daughter.

Sheila had a handsome face with high cheekbones, light-coloured eyes which looked you straight in the face, and thick, curly hair. She was embarrassed by nothing and no one. The perfect lady of the manor, and an accomplished hostess, she watched jealously over

**The Final Journey:
Opening of the Olympic
Games in Moscow 1980**

Photo: IOC/OSC Archive



**"Walkout of the
Africans from
Montreal" as
portrayed by the
British cartoonist
"Jon"**

Cartoon: *Daily Mail*,
20th July 1976

Lord Killanin, took part in the Normandy landing as a Brigade Major and was subsequently honoured with the Order of the British Empire. After demobilization in 1945, he married Sheila Mary Dunlop, who gave him three sons and a daughter.



her husband's health and comfort during his years as president, and incontestably influenced his decision not to seek a second mandate. 'Michael's health takes priority over everything', she told me one day.

At the end of a long hard day during Sessions or the Games, Sheila would pour out Michael's whisky. The President was as sober as judge during the day but, in the best British colonial tradition, once the sun was over the yardarm, he enjoyed relaxing with a Scotch, (or more often, an Irish), and animated conversations with friends in which the events of the day were reviewed with that characteristically British humour which makes light of everything.

Lord Killanin was an authoritative man with a strong sense of hierarchy and social differences. He was also a loyal friend. But one had to earn his friendship, and this took time. He greatly enjoyed rumour and small talk, and never tired of gossip and witty remarks. He punctuated his anecdotes with a 'yes?' or a 'what eh?', whilst arching his eyebrows and drawing on his pipe.

In 1950, he was elected President of the Olympic Council of Ireland. He was co-opted as a member of the IOC on 13th February 1952 during the 46th Session, held in Oslo, to replace John Joseph Keane, who had been elected in 1922. In 1967, in his role as Chairman of the IOC Press Commission, he was given the task of heading an enquiry into Apartheid in South Africa. His report resulted in that country not being invited to participate in the Mexico Games. He was elected Vice-President in Mexico in 1968, and in 1972, at Munich, he was elected President.

In 1952, he threw himself with enthusiasm into the world of cinema alongside John Ford, collaborating with him on the production of his masterpiece *The Quiet Man*. The author of several books, including a remarkable guide to Ireland, and a non-executive director of many companies, he was always a very busy Dubliner. He received numerous awards and honours,

was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy, and given Honorary Doctorates by the National University of Ireland, and the University of Ulster. He was a member of the International Association of Art Critics, a life member of the National Union of Journalists, a life member of the Association of Cinema and Television technicians, a member of the Red Cross Council (1947–1972), Chairman of the National Monuments Advisory Council until his death, a member of the Cultural Relations Committee (1947–1972), and one of the first persons to be elected an Honorary Life Member of the Royal Dublin Society when it celebrated its 250th anniversary in 1981. From 1961 to 1984 he was also Honorary Consul General for Monaco, and closely acquainted with the Grimaldi family, and of course Grace Kelly, who had been one of John Ford's favourite actresses.

A highly cultivated man, and an artist to the tips of his fingers, Lord Killanin was also passionate about equestrian sport and racing in particular. A member of the Irish National Hunt Steeplechase Committee, he was for many years a Steward of the Irish Turf Club. He was delighted when one of his twin sons, Michael, brother of John, and nicknamed 'The Mouse', became a jockey, and took part in the Grand National, before becoming a professional trainer.

All his children chose careers close to his heart: the eldest, Redmond, became a film producer; John is a talented photographer, with an interest in falconry, and his daughter Deborah trained as a potter.

I telephoned him one spring evening in 1977; we spent a long time going over various outstanding issues. I asked him how he was; 'I couldn't feel better', he replied.

The next day he went racing; his son Michael was competing in a steeplechase. He watched the race standing up, holding his breath. 'Mouse' won. Five minutes later, an ambulance was taking him to hospital following a heart attack.

Juan Antonio Samaranch, who had just taken possession of his Embassy in Moscow, learnt the news. He was then First Vice-President of the IOC. The statutes of the organisation provided for the First Vice-President to take over should the President be incapacitated. He lost no time in telephoning me, worrying about the President's health, and insisting that he was ready to step into his shoes, in accordance with the statutes. I replied that everything was in order, that the reports from Dublin were good, and that it would just be a matter of days.

'There's nothing urgent', I added before hanging up. A little later, I received the copy of a telex which he had sent to Dublin: 'my insistence on seeing you may seem excessive. But it is only my desire to fulfil the functions with which I am charged by our colleagues, and to lighten your load ...' Lord Killanin thanked him, but did not forgive or forget.

Hard-working but disorganised, forever losing things in the most unlikely places, his hand-writing was illegible, and his speech inaudible. He gave his secretary Norma a hard time.

Norma MacManaway was a pretty blonde with creamy skin. Her workload did not allow her much of a private life. Devotion personified, she arrived smartly dressed before each meeting but at the end of the day was one of the last to depart, looking drawn and dishevelled.

Lord Killanin had fitted out the basement of his house on Lansdowne Road, Dublin, as an office for Norma and her part-time assistant, Bridget Foley.

The President adored gadgets, and had purchased a couple of miniature dictating machines on which he would spend hours recording correspondence, notes, memoranda, and accounts of various conversations. Norma transcribed tirelessly. Lord Killanin re-wrote. Norma re-typed, all day long. She quickly absorbed the details of the Olympic Movement and its players. She also developed muscles from having to carry enormous bags full of files up and down the two flights of stairs which separated her office from the President's.

At the end of eight years, Norma returned to university in Dublin to study French Literature, in which she was highly successful. She later occupied a prestigious post at the University of Oxford, becoming a Fellow, and later an Emeritus Fellow, of Somerville College, before retiring to live in France.

The Killanins lived in a very beautiful house, situated close to the famous Lansdowne Road Rugby Stadium, built by Lady Killanin's grandfather, Henry Wallace Doveton Dunlop. It was where the Five Nations rugby matches were played. The roar of the crowd could be heard beyond the two bay windows of the dining room, at which hung two porcelain parrots, mounting an imperturbable guard.

One entered through a Georgian doorway, painted bright blue, with a brass doorknocker, to be welcomed by Shem and Shaun, two unruly rough-haired dachshunds, named in honour of two characters in *Finnegan's Wake*, by James Joyce, one of their master's favourite authors. They never left his side for a moment.

The hallway and staircase attested to the owners' love of painting, mostly figurative, and of a high standard. Certificates and diplomas had their place in 'the smallest room', situated on the first floor landing.

The president's office was on the first-floor return. It was a sanctuary of solid, comfortable furniture. Lovingly chosen books covered the walls, and photographs of his life and career were wedged in wherever there was a space. The room was a glory hole of statuettes, objects, and medals. It was hard to find a place to sit near the high windows amongst the newspapers and cups of tea, discreetly carried in by the thoughtful Sheila. It was easy to see that he felt comfortable there, with

everything close at hand, and the elaborate telephone, with all its buttons and loud-speaker, ready for use.

He would drag out a copy of a letter or telex from underneath an unstable pile of dossiers and hand it to you to read, steadying the wobbling stack of correspondence; then forage in another heap and pull out a different file. The muddle was deceptive however; Norma watched over it with order and method, each file labelled in its transparent plastic folder.

In the garden there was a circular pond about seven or eight metres in diameter. It was the swimming pool. Every day, weather permitting, Lord Killanin swam round it with great dignity in a sort of breast stroke, almost upright in the water.

He had invited me to Dublin in 1971 to give a lecture during a seminar on Olympism. The other lecturers were Hans Klein, whom I had nicknamed 'Lieber Hans', Press Chief for the Munich Games (he would later become an influential member of the GFR parliament), and Victor Savin, Secretary General of the USSR Volleyball Federation. Victor Savin was at the time the official interpreter of Konstantin Andrianov, the Soviet member of the IOC.



Proud of his Irishness, Lord Killanin drove us around to visit his country, explaining in detail the origins of the tombs of his distant ancestors 'who had discovered America long before Christopher Columbus'. One sensed his deep knowledge of his subject and his delight in telling us about Ireland and its passionate, adventurous, and brave people.

'I know exactly where I want to go and what I want to do', he used to say, 'but I don't always move in a straight line'. He would also remark: 'anything can be said if it is honest'.

When he had an important decision to take he would consult his friends and those around him, discussing it with this or that person, not so much in order to disclose to them what he had in mind, but rather to enable him

Relaxing in Honolulu on the return journey from the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne: left 1500 m gold medallist Ronald Delany, centre, the American film director John Ford, a long standing friend of Killanin.

Photo: Honolulu Advertiser

to think through his ideas more clearly. He was a man of profound intellectual honesty made all the more scrupulous by his doubts and hesitations.

He had a close-knit group of friends amongst the accredited journalists and his press conferences were a delight! Avery Brundage had of course attracted media interest; as soon as he opened his mouth he made the headlines. But alas, he was not well liked. First and foremost, this was because he himself did not like journalists. The trans-Atlantic press had often treated him roughly over the years and so he would arrive at a press conference in a grumpy, not to say aggressive, mood, and would deliberately use esoteric language before this pragmatic throng.



Silent Observer: Lord Killanin listens as the Marquess of Exeter, Sylvio de Magalhães Padilha from Brazil and President Avery Brundage confer.

Photo: IOC/OSC Archive

Lord Killanin was a member of the press himself and not only did he feel at ease in the presence of journalists but he clearly sought to help them. 'First of all, let's see what we have that would make a headline' he would say at the start. And he always had one or more funny stories to tell. He knew exactly how not to reply to embarrassing questions and when he had to face up to a problem he explained it with frankness and simplicity.

When I arrived at the IOC he was Chairman of the Press Commission and in this role he had got into the habit of talking to those journalists who followed the work of the IOC at the end of each meeting. He asked me to accompany him to these sessions and, in a way, taught me the job. He would hand over to me to speak on subjects I knew well, keeping back the tricky or spectacular ones for himself.

For many years, we were a double act, him speaking in English, and me in French, for the benefit of those of our audience who did not understand the language of Shakespeare and did not like using the simultaneous translation service. My old friend Gaston Meyer, then Editor-in Chief of *L'Equipe* was the first to protest

against the supremacy of English, going so far as to stay away from the press conferences held after the IOC meetings. He told me, furiously, 'in any case, my article is already written'.

Lord Killanin's approach was quite different to that of Avery Brundage where the minutes of meetings were concerned. The notion of a secrecy shocked his democratic ideals and his vision of Olympism. In his time, de Coubertin had already stressed the need for the IOC to be transparent. Passionate about history and modern technology, he was concerned to create archives worthy of the Olympic Movement. He decided to allow access to the minutes to any outsider on condition of a three-year embargo on Sessions, and a six-year embargo for meetings of the Executive Board. This liberal gesture made many people happy. Up until my departure I continued to respect Lord Killanin's decision, not having received any counter-order from Samaranch since he took office.

It was in January 1986 that I learnt from a young German researcher that his request to consult minutes of meetings of the Executive Board dating from before 1981 had been refused on the grounds that there was a total embargo on all Olympic minutes. As for recordings, they could never be consulted, other than for internal needs. Lord Killanin believed, as did Avery Brundage, and I quote, 'if certain improvisations are published they would make mountains out of molehills'.

Avery Brundage did not like Lord Killanin. Firstly because he was the protégé of his great rival, Marquess of Exeter. Secondly, as a decent American, he was impressed by, but also envious of, his aristocratic title. And besides, he sensed in him a potential successor, an eventuality that he did not like to think about. Finally, their political ideas were completely opposed.

Jean de Beaumont, Lord Killanin's unlucky rival for the presidency, did not appreciate him much either. He could neither understand nor accept how someone with a lesser title and what is more, a lesser fortune, had been preferred over him. He was the instigator of a question which was to cost him votes on that 22nd August 1972.

The IOC Session was taking place in the palatial Maximilianeum in Munich, in the meeting room of the Bavarian Parliament. Throughout the evening and late into the night the Soviets had tried, in vain, to persuade Brundage to remain in the presidential seat if only for two more years. There were debates about the electoral procedure: should the vote be carried out immediately? The elections were either the first thing on the agenda, or were held at the end of the Session. General Stoychev (Bulgaria) had then submitted an amendment to the rule relating to the presidential mandate, suggesting that it be reduced from eight to four years. Finally, should the number of votes obtained by each candidate be disclosed?

The ballot took place. It was decided to maintain the *status quo*: the vote would be held immediately, the mandate would be for eight years, and the number of votes would remain secret. Before proceeding to a ballot the members questioned the two candidates on their motivations. Lord Killanin declined, in a dignified manner, to make an electoral speech, promising only that if elected, he would try to work in the spirit of the Olympic Movement, and for its development. As for the Count de Beaumont, he made it clear that he wished to be elected for a mandate of four years.

It was then that a recently elected member, Louis Guirandou N'Diaye (Ivory Coast), a supporter of the French candidate, asked Lord Killanin if he had the means to bear the financial burdens of the presidency. Now everyone knew that Lord Killanin, although well-off, did not possess a fortune on the scale that of Brundage or de Beaumont.

The question shocked those present. The Frenchman lost votes and as soon as Lord Killanin was elected members voted a budget to enable the new President to cover the costs of his secretariat in Dublin and his travel expenses. The sum of 200,000 Swiss francs seemed exorbitant at the time but Killanin did not have the same delusions of grandeur as his successor.

Avery Brundage had nominated King Constantine and Vitaly Smirnov as scrutineers. The two men, although different in every way, got along well. They took an oath not to reveal the number of votes obtained.

Once the voting slips had been collected Vitaly and Constantine installed themselves at a table in the middle of the room to count the votes. Vitaly divided them systematically into two piles and counted the ballot papers one by one. The whole room counted with him. Constantine tried to say something to him, because the results were supposed to be a secret, but he continued imperturbably. It was thus that we knew, long before Brundage announced the result, how many votes the winner had obtained against his opponent.

Once it had been announced that Lord Killanin had obtained the majority of the votes, Constantine and Vitaly sought to dispose of the voting papers; they succeeded in blocking all the lavatories on that floor.

Of the 71 votes, only one, marked with a cross, was null and void, and that cross was traced to Brundage.

De Beaumont's sole consolation was to become Second Vice-President, occupying the place left vacant by Killanin.

Stepping into the shoes of so powerful a personality as Brundage was no easy matter. The group which had helped Lord Killanin to become president, the Marquess of Exeter and Jonkheer van Karnebeek, weighed heavily on him. Once the euphoria of victory had passed, he faced difficult beginnings which his predecessor had no intention of facilitating.

Killanin was the elected President, but during the period of the Munich Games which followed the Session, Brundage alone remained in command, right up until the flame was extinguished. Not once did the outgoing President deign to consult with his successor.

Successor! The word made Avery Brundage tremble in horror. As for Lord Killanin, he delighted in hitting back by referring to 'my predecessor'.

There had been no shortage of opportunities on which to speak with a common voice: the drama of the Israeli hostages; the disqualification of the American swimmer Rick DeMont, after he tested positive for a banned substance contained in his asthma medication, and the Puerto Rican basketball player Miguel Coll, the refusal to allow a convicted criminal to participate in boxing events, and others.

Early on the morning of 5th September Avery Brundage had been alerted by the Germans of the taking of hostages in the Olympic Village. He decided to act alone, with the Organising Committee. Circumstances served him in this: Lord Killanin and Jonkheer van Karnebeek had left for Kiel the day before where the yachting events were taking place.

When I finally managed to see Brundage, at about 9 o'clock in the morning, I asked him if I should warn Lord Killanin.

He looked me straight in the eye without replying. I sent a message to the President-elect.

Throughout the day, the members of the IOC paced about in the Hotel *Vierjahreszeiten* like lions in a cage. Samaranch burst into my office, in shirtsleeves and slippers, looking for news from the secretary on duty. Jean de Beaumont held a meeting in his suite. Maurice Herzog tried to collect enough signatures to call an extraordinary meeting.

Brundage remained sealed off in the Olympic Village with the Krisenstab (German crisis committee). When I told him that I had alerted Lord Killanin he sent back a message saying that the latter's presence was not required in Munich ...

Lord Killanin, having heard the news on the radio that morning, arranged to return to Munich immediately. He had received Brundage's message after mine and had ignored it. He counter-attacked and called a meeting of the Executive Board, which he asked Brundage to attend.

Once the President of the IOC had arrived, intentionally late, Lord Killanin announced, 'we have decided to call a meeting of the Session'.

Brundage was against it. On his own initiative, he had decided to suspend the Games for twenty-four hours, and Willi Daume, the President of the Organising Committee, had announced this to the Olympic Village. Lord Killanin pointed out that members had a right to know what was going on, and to voice their opinions.



The Quiet (Olympic) Man. Together with his friend John Ford, Killanin produced the film *The Quiet Man* in 1952 based on a short story by Maurice Walsh. The movie, with John Wayne in the leading role, received two Oscars. Killanin's son Red Morris, born in 1947 also became a producer. After his father's death in 1999 he inherited the title and became the fourth Lord Killanin. His last great film was *The Reader*, made in 2008, based on a novel by Bernhard Schlink, which was also nominated for an Oscar as "Best Film".

Photo:IOC/OSC Archive



Some might be worth considering. Brundage gave in. It marked the end of his reign as President.

The emergency meeting was scheduled for 9 p.m. One by one each member gave his opinion on what should be done. From time to time Daume left the room to check on what was happening in Fürstfeldbruck, the German Air Force base where the eleven Israeli hostages, and the eight members of the Palestinian group 'Black September' who had taken them prisoner, had been transported by helicopter from the Olympic Village, the terrorists believing that they would be flown from there to a friendly Arab nation.

Towards 11 p.m. he appeared in the doorway and cried 'Wir haben gewonnen' (we have won). The members applauded, and then, relieved that the drama had ended happily, left the room without delay. Alas! The information was incorrect; the hostages were all dead.

At 10.30 a.m. on 6th September a memorial service was held in the Olympic Stadium for the eleven Israeli victims of the Games' greatest tragedy. Gustav Heinemann, President of the German Federal Republic, Willi Daume, Ben Horin, the Israeli Ambassador, Shmuel Lalkin, the Head of the Israeli Delegation, and Avery Brundage were each due to speak.

But Avery Brundage had yet another message to pass on. Come hell or high water, and against all advice, the old lion would not let go of his objective. In his speech, in addition to paying tribute to the victims of terrorists, he condemned the pressures brought to bear on the IOC by African countries. The latter had threatened a boycott if Rhodesia were permitted to participate in the Games. As a result, Rhodesia's invitation had been withdrawn by the IOC just four days before the Opening Ceremony.

In the car taking us to the Olympic Stadium Avery read out his text. Fritz Rueggsegger and I tried to make him change it. Why include the Rhodesian question in a ceremony to honour the dead? No argument found favour in his eyes. For him, in both instances the IOC had brought under attack, and this should be recognised. He agreed to soften one or two words, but no more.

'The bigger and the more important the Olympic Games become, the more they are subjected to commercial, political and even criminal pressure. The Games of the XXth Olympiad have been subjected to two savage attacks. We have lost the battle for Rhodesia in the face of cynical blackmail.'

It was his parting shot. Lord Killanin was determined not to let the matter pass. The Executive Board backed him up and insisted that Brundage publish a correction, which he did on 7th September.

In taking on the presidency of the IOC Lord Killanin did not seek revolution but evolution. Three-quarters of a century after its creation, the organisation was in need of a shake-up. Avery Brundage had set the tone at the last Session over which he presided before the Munich Games by accepting the deletion of the word 'amateur', from the Statutes.

A huge step had been taken, although this was not fully recognised for several years. Killanin, a democrat at heart, who wanted sport to be open to all, had played a role in bringing about this change.

At the end of that September in 1972, Lord Killanin took stock. There were so many problems waiting for him.

First of all: resources. Since 1967 the IOC had been living off a loan advanced on the television rights for the Munich Games. Everything had gone well at the Winter Games in Sapporo earlier in 1972. The Munich Games having ended, and the loan paid off, it would be another four years before the next Games. Denver (USA) had been elected to host the Winter Games but these were now in doubt. In Montreal, host city for the Olympic Games, French and English speaking Canadians were locked in a bitter battle which, together with the problems raised by local unions, did not augur well.

In addition, the Varna Congress planned for the autumn of 1973 was a heavy burden. There had not been a meeting of IOC Members together with representatives of the International Federations and the National Olympic Committees since 1931 and the Olympic Movement had changed a great deal over forty years. New ways had to be found to organise a Congress, in a new spirit. Bringing four hundred people for a week in a Socialist country behind the Iron Curtain was no easy matter.

There were also the bigger issues. Lord Killanin wanted to see progress and liberalization. The return of continental China to the Olympic family was something particularly dear to his heart. The organisation needed to be opened up and modernized. In addition to the problems of doping and apartheid, there was the matter of relationships with other major international organisations, which had been banned by his predecessor. Finally, the IOC had to get to grips with the famous 'Rule 26', which at the time governed the eligibility of athletes for the Games.

This was the programme he had to tackle, and the eight years ahead of him seemed very short. Happily for him, he was unaware of what the future held for him with the Montreal and Moscow boycotts, not to mention lawsuits, for the IOC was to break new ground in this domain.

Up until the Munich Games, the IOC had carried on its business in relative tranquillity, settling all problems behind closed doors. Brundage had been intransigent on the issue of contracts. 'The best contract is based on word of honour' he had told me when I arrived at the IOC and was surprised not to have received any document confirming my employment. This was in fact how presidents and members had acted ever since the organisation had been set up.

We were entering the era of money, and with money came contracts, and lawsuits. A permanent legal adviser was needed, to whom was added a lawyer, and then several others, depending on the laws of the country with which the IOC was negotiating.

At the end of 1972, a referendum was held in Denver. The citizens of Denver had to vote for or against hosting the Winter Games. They voted against. Lord Killanin, the newly-elected President, lost no time in sending out a call for candidates. He received applications from Innsbruck (Austria), Lake Placid (USA), Mont Blanc (France), and Tampere (Finland), and having obtained views on the candidates from the Winter Sports International Federations, they were put to the vote by the Executive Board alone. Innsbruck, which had already hosted the XIth Winter Games in 1964, was selected on 4th February 1973. There were only three years left in which to organise the Games.

It was at this same meeting of the Executive Board that Killanin proposed that the election of the Winter and Summer Games take place at two separate Sessions, with a year apart. The Executive Board approved the suggestion but it was not voted in by the Session.

In 1974, when the organising cities for the 1980 Games were being nominated, I suggested that on the day of their election the successful bidders be asked to give a binding written promise to bring the Games to a successful conclusion. A document consisting of two paragraphs, tantamount to a contract, was drawn up and initialled by the Lake Placid and Moscow delegations. This undertaking was to prove very useful on numerous occasions in bringing pressure to bear on the organising committees whenever they tried to flout the rules or break promises that had been made.

Over the years the two paragraphs have turned into complex and elaborate conventions. They have become like these interminable American documents in which different situations are scrutinized but which remain nonetheless open to interpretation. At least they make the work for lawyers!

Lord Killanin's presidency ended at the Moscow Games. This time the handover between the outgoing and incoming President was carried out in a different style.

At the Moskva Hotel, Lord Killanin, Mr. Samaranch, and I all had apartments on the same floor. Anyone arriving on the floor passed the Spanish Ambassador's suite first of all. And so visitors to the President could be not only watched but intercepted. This was before the election. When the new President was elected, the footsteps ended more often at the top of the corridor, and the number of visitors to Lord Killanin diminished. A new court formed. Lord Killanin remained alone with a few old friends.



He had written a long Note on the IOC's state of affairs for his successor, adding his recommendations. He also asked that the handover ceremony be held at the end of the Games, in Moscow. It took place before a small group consisting of the two Presidents, Vitaly Smirnov, then First Vice-President, myself, and a few photographers. The ceremony began at 9.30 a.m. and lasted as long as it took to take a few pictures.

Lord Killanin and his wife left the same afternoon for Dublin, travelling with the Exeters. I accompanied them to Cheremetievo Airport. He was now an Honorary Life President, and although he must have felt sad he did not let this show, but talked about the book that he was planning to write about his experiences, *My Olympic Years*, and all his other projects. Sheila was relieved. She no longer had to worry about her husband being overworked. Henceforth he would follow Olympic Sessions and Games as a spectator. ■

Departure from the IOC: the symbolic handing-over of the key.

Photo: IOC/OSC Archive