



# The Olympic Selection Process: Baden-Baden, 1981

Herb Weinberg

**B**aden-Baden, Germany is a town deep in water. In German the name means “baths” twice, and the city sits over hot springs to which people come to enjoy the naturally heated bathing for pleasurable and supposedly medicinal reasons. Fountains sprout everywhere; waterfalls cascade down hills; a large stream parallels the main street and it rains a great deal. However, the people who flowed into town to attend the Eleventh Olympic Congress in September of 1981 had little time to loll around in baths.

These were representatives from the 149 nations that competed in the Olympic Games as well as representatives from the 26 international sporting federations that organized 31 Olympic sports. They’d come to meet with 80 (of 82) members of the International Olympic Committee who’d called this once-a-decade Congress that takes place over a two-week period.<sup>1</sup>

The two major working issues at the Congress were to redefine the rules of Olympic eligibility, and the task of selecting the two cities that would host the 1988 winter and summer Olympic Games, respectively, seven years hence.

We could go on to discuss other aspects of Olympic eligibility. However we will leave that subject for another time because it is the primary purpose of this article to concentrate upon the aspects, and campaign tactics involved with the means of acquiring an Olympic Games, using as our primary example the campaigns of Seoul, South Korea and Nagoya, Japan in 1981 to garner the ‘88 Olympic Summer Games and how the tactics of such campaigning may surprise, misfire, or succeed.

In Baden-Baden there were also three municipal candidates for the ‘88 Olympic Winter Games: Cortina D’Ampezzo in Italy, Falun in Sweden, and Calgary in western Canada.

Strange, there were only two cities bidding for the Olympic Summer Games, the world’s mightiest extravaganza: Nagoya, an industrial city in central Japan, and Seoul, the capital of South Korea that is 30 miles south of the 38th parallel and the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the no-man’s land that divides the country from North Korea.

As background, however, we should understand a bit about the politics of the

*The arm twisting between the two super powers became so intense and bitter the IOC diplomatically opted themselves out of the situation by granting the '76 summer Olympics to the surprised Montrealers.*

bidding process. Historically it has been an honest process but not one without complications.

Take 1970, for example. At the IOC's annual session in Amsterdam there were three candidates bidding for the '76 summer Olympics: Moscow, Montreal, and Los Angeles. The power players were Moscow and Los Angeles, although it was generally accepted that Montreal was the dark horse. The Canadian city had little hope of winning the bid. The strategy of the Canadians was to get their foot into the Olympic doorway in order to become serious candidates at a later time--scoring points now while waiting for Moscow and Los Angeles to have their Olympiads. Los Angeles wanted those Games as an adjunct to help celebrate the United States' 1976 Bicentennial, counteracted by the Soviet Union's claim they'd never hosted an Olympics in contrast to the USA's having been an Olympic host four times: in the summer of 1904 in St. Louis, the winter and summer Games of 1932 in Lake Placid and Los Angeles respectively; and the winter Olympics in Squaw Valley in 1960. The inspiration for the Montreal bid had been the success of their "EXPO '67" World's Fair of that year.

In any case, the arm-twisting between the two superpowers became so intense and bitter the IOC diplomatically opted themselves out of the situation by granting the '76 summer Olympics to the surprised Montrealers, with the implied and sub rosa understanding that Moscow and Los Angeles would be granted the '80 and '84 Games respectively. And as a sop to the Americans, the Committee granted Denver, clearly the weakest among a group of winter candidates, the '76 Winter Olympics for the USA's Bicentennial. It was a candidacy so weak it failed to materialize, as those Olympics were embarrassingly handed back to the IOC in '72 after a referendum asking Colorado citizens to fund those Games failed to pass. (Denver is the capital of the state of Colorado.) Fortunately Innsbruck, Austria stepped in to fill the breach with only four years of preparatory time, most of the venues

already in place because Innsbruck had hosted the '64 winter Games.

Obviously, for environmental and other reasons, the people of Colorado never fully favored Denver's Olympic bid, as exemplified by that failed referendum. And thus was created the IOC requirement wherein any bid city must provide evidence of a very positive local reaction before candidacies are put forward.

As implied and expected the '80 summer Olympics took place in Moscow, and the Los Angeles Games occurred in '84, an understanding that found no other bidders for those Games. And in Baden-Baden, only Nagoya and Seoul put forth candidacies for '88, a total of only five cities having bid for four consecutive Olympic Summer Games from '76 through '88.

Was the honor of being an Olympic host city losing its appeal, its cachet? What was happening?

Recall that the Baden-Baden Olympic Congress took place in '81, only five years after those Montreal Olympics and only one year after the Moscow Games. In Montreal the Olympic organizers found themselves burdened with a one billion dollar cost overrun, which their city council, according to their contract with the IOC, had to cover. The debt had been created by a combination of overconfidence and mismanagement. Then four years later the Moscow Games had been crippled by a USA-led boycott, inspired by the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which found fifty-six nations staying away from those competitions. Eighty-five nations competed within those Olympics, while twenty-seven withdrew and twenty-nine did not reply by the invitational deadline.

Boycotts are bad enough, however it was the one-billion-dollar debt accrued by the Montreal organizers that most affected potential municipal bidders. In reflecting on that debt and being aware of the IOC contractual requirement that host cities must cover such cost overruns, and with Montreal as precedent, other cities considering making a bid

had second thoughts and withdrew. Montreal's debt is still being paid off in accordance with an agreement in which Montreal, the province of Quebec, and the Canadian federal government agreed to share the burden of payment.

Not surprisingly, two years later, in Athens in '78, where the IOC was meeting to accept Los Angeles' singular summer bid for '84, the Los Angeles City Council emphatically and expressly informed the Committee it would not sign any contract requiring the city to cover cost overruns. And since L.A. was the only bidder for those games, the Committee had no other candidate to consider and had no choice but to remove the requirement from the Los Angeles contract. However, for the sake of appearances the United States Olympic Committee stepped in to make a guarantor's promise as to overruns, although that scenario had the look of farce about as the USOC was on the verge of bankruptcy, as was the IOC. And with the IOC and its most powerful National Olympic Committee in such precarious financial condition, in combination with Montreal's recent financial disaster dissuading other cities from putting forth bids, not to mention the devastation brought on by a severe boycott of the Moscow Olympics in '80, an observer might well have wondered if the very existence of the Olympic Movement was in jeopardy.

It was. Ironically, however, the coming overwhelming financial success of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games saved both committees, sending each onto an ever-rising economic curve that continues to this day.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, in 1981, Nagoya and Seoul were the only cities that dared come to the Congress as bidders, seeming to throw economic caution to the winds.

Both cities are East Asian, lying almost within a geographic stone's throw of one another. A summer rain cloud that forms over Seoul on the Korean Peninsula of the Asian land mass would float eastward over the Sea of Japan to drop cooling rain on Nagoya at dusk, less than 600 miles away (900 kilometers).

Meteorology notwithstanding, however, there was and is historic bitterness between these two nations: Korea and Japan.

Japan had invaded and conquered the Korean peninsula in 1910, an occupation that did not end until 1945 at the conclusion of the Second World War. Sohn Kee-Chung, a Korean, won the 1936 Olympic marathon

in Berlin and his countryman, Nam Seung-Yong, placed third. Both had been required to register under Japanese names (Kitei Son and Soryu Nam) and during their medal ceremony they were embittered to hear the Japanese national anthem played and to see the Japanese flag raised. Therefore, there was poignancy at the '48 Olympics in London when Sohn carried the South Korean flag during Opening Ceremonies, and even more significance when, at age 76, he carried the Olympic torch for the ceremonies of the '88 Games in Seoul.

Thereby, these two nations shared some common history of a sort, a history not exactly reflective of Olympic traditions of peace, brotherhood and understanding.

In any case, the stage was set in Baden-Baden, although it was conceded Nagoya was the heavy favorite. Japan had staged two very successful Olympiads: the Summer Games in Tokyo in '64 and the Winter Games in Sapporo in '72, while the Koreans' Olympic organizing talent was of an unknown quality. All that notwithstanding, the Koreans were justified in their claim that it was their turn; it was time that an Asian Olympics take place somewhere outside Japan, which had had its share of Games.

**I**n a way it all took on the look of an American political convention: multimedia displays, slide presentations, posters, pamphlets, brochures, buttons and fountain pens and umbrellas adorned with their names and slogans. Representatives from each faction became stalkers, buttonholing anyone they believed might have the ear of IOC members, who themselves had to develop deft dodging techniques whenever they sensed lobbyists coming at them in hallways, elevators, restaurants, and sometimes in the men's rooms, was not out-of-bounds.

It all begins with an examination and an understanding of the Olympic contract.

First, as mentioned within my description of the Denver fiasco, there must be a very positive public reaction when city fathers announce their intention to make an Olympic bid. For example, when Anchorage, Alaska made its winter bid for '88, its organizing committee asked citizens to each send in five dollars to help finance that candidacy. And those pledges flowed in by the tens of thousands within a city of 175,000 people, making a favorable impression within the IOC. Other

*The election process involves a series of ballots depending on the number of candidates. Of course with Nagoya and Seoul representing only two candidacies there could be only one ballot, win or lose.*

organizing committees test public reaction by means of local and national referenda and if that reaction is not strongly positive it is wiser to withdraw. Those who oppose an Olympic bid cite matters about the environment, traffic disruption, and of course fears about possible cost overruns. Or possibly they prefer not to be bothered by the hustle and bustle brought on by the world's largest extravaganza.

The Olympic contract asks many hard questions, such as: what will be the degree of municipal, regional, and federal governmental involvement, and will such involvement including being financially supportive find those governments being overly controlling in the organization of the Games, or do the organizers believe they can maintain their independence? The IOC needs assurances about federal financial and political stability and evidence of intergovernmental agencies' abilities to be coordinated in developing systems and programs involving security, communications, or systems of transportation, among other systems. Can ground transportation and airports handle the influx of incoming spectators before and during the competitions? How about decent accommodations for those spectators and the media and the Olympic family? Will the Broadcast Center have the means of meeting the daily broadcast reporting needs of every Olympic nation, in fact all nations? What will be the primary means of funding beyond television and commercial contracts, and ticket sales; and what will be the system of distributing those tickets? Will governmental contributions be in currency or by means of capital construction and road building? Will organizers control hotel, restaurant, and apartment rates so that visitors are not gouged? Even crime rates and average weather patterns are taken into consideration.

Can the Press Center provide the room and electronic means of accommodating thousands of print reporters: computers, telephones, and cellular phones? Will the drug laboratory and its drug-testing equipment be the best the world has to offer, meeting the standards of the IOC's Medical Commission,

and what pre-Olympic cultural and educational programs will be taking place and how will these events be used to educate children?

What will be the function of the competitive venues post-Olympics? Will these venues be given to local organizations and institutions and by what means? Has the city's legislature guaranteed coverage of the feared Olympic cost overruns, and will the organizers guarantee that venues will meet the standards of each sport's international federation? What will be the quality of the Olympic Village: do those facilities already exist or are they yet to be constructed; and how convenient will the Village be to the venues? What arrangements have been made to be sure that the Village, the venues and the public are secure, safe? How many training venues will there be and what plans have been made for their post-Olympics use? Can the Olympic Village comfortably serve thousands of athletes, trainers and officials; and can Village cooks meet the nutritional requests of the athletes and be able to serve cuisine that involves six continents?

And on and on.

**T**he election process involves a series of ballots depending on the number of candidates. Of course with Nagoya and Seoul representing only two candidacies there could be only one ballot, win or lose. However, when there are three or more candidacies, if a majority is not achieved on a first ballot, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and another ballot is taken, and that process continues until a candidate achieves a majority. And when the list is long, say five candidates, things get interesting.

For example, in Birmingham in '91, there were five cities bidding for the '98 Olympic Winter Games: Aosta (Italy), Jaca (Spain), Nagano (Japan), Osternund (Sweden), and Salt Lake City (United States). On the first ballot none of these candidates came near achieving a majority (45 votes were needed); therefore Aosta, having achieved the fewest votes, was eliminated and the Committee went on to a

second ballot and then a third wherein Jaca and Ostersund were eliminated; then on the fourth and final ballot Nagano won those '98 winter Olympics by a vote of 46 to 42, defeating Salt Lake City. It was a close and exciting contest to the very end.

Of course there are regional blocs within the IOC: blocs voting for their regional or continental candidates, a kind of loyalty. Deals are made within the course of a campaign. However, these are not always corrupt so much as they are natural political actions. Therefore, there may be campaigns within campaigns. For example, two blocs may make a deal wherein each pledges to switch their votes to the other's candidacy if their original preferred candidate is eliminated early on, as the balloting continues and the list is narrowed before that majority vote is achieved. Lobbyists may extract promises that may apply as far down as the third and even the fourth ballot, each city's representatives optimistic if not praying they are still in the running on those late ballots: 'I'll vote for your city if my first and second choices are eliminated,' and so on.

The recent scandals involving Salt Lake City notwithstanding, historically this has been an honest process although it may seem political and therefore manipulative. However, its integrity has been confirmed among observers, including the press, who agree that the best candidate city usually wins the contest, that the most qualified candidate wins the bid. [Denver notwithstanding].

A worthy exception would be Nagano's win over Salt Lake City at the IOC session in Birmingham in '91. Most observers believed Salt Lake City's bid for these '98 winter Olympics was superior, however Atlanta was already in line for the '96 Summer Games and there would have been a sense of unfairness had the Committee granted two consecutive Olympic Games to United States cities. And justice, in its way, was achieved four years later, in '95 at Budapest, when Salt Lake City won the bid for the 2002 winter Olympics.

Coming back to Baden-Baden on September 29, 1981, the day before the balloting took place, representatives from each bid city made their final presentations to the Committee at the Kurhaus, the meeting hall in Baden-Baden. The luck of the draw found their appearances in alphabetical order: Calgary, Cortina and Falun in the morning, then Nagoya and Seoul in the afternoon, after lunch.

These presentations are limited to one half-hour, followed by another half-hour of questioning by Committee members. Each candidate city is limited to six presenters, a group that customarily includes a key government official (the mayor makes the formal bid), at least one national sports leader and others involved with technical aspects of the bid's preparation. Although anyone may speak, usually only one or two do so, the others being present as the most qualified to answer any question asked by Committee members.

Thirty brief minutes, for whose preparation millions of dollars and thousands of work hours have been spent, all distilled into this brief moment in time, the weight of their national honor upon the shoulders of each group of presenters. In the presence of the Committee they talk of stability, finances, transit, technical facilities, an Olympic Village to be filled with brotherhood, the loveliness of their city and the welcoming nature of its citizens, and guarantees about their abilities to fulfill the Olympic contract. It is not uncommon for presentations to include a brief film or a slide show picturing such things as models of capital construction and proposed venues along with pastoral views of their natural scenery and various cultural sites.

Calgary, Cortina and Falun made presentations in the morning. Lunchtime came and went, after which the Nagoya and Seoul representatives each made their own presentations.

Neither candidate could really depend on a specific continental bloc of IOC members voting on their behalf since both were Asian cities, and of the 80 IOC members present only 13 represented Asian nations. Therefore, traditional Olympic politicking did not apply here.

All that notwithstanding, among experienced observers, including the press, it was assumed, even conceded, that Nagoya would win the nomination.

The Japanese were favored not only because of past Olympic successes, but also because there were specific weaknesses within the Seoul candidacy:

(1) Technically, the Republic of Korea (ROK) was still in a state of war with its northern neighbors, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). No longer fought on battlefields, the war between South Korea and North Korea is now a war between social systems: capitalism versus communism. The animus

*By this time  
boycotts  
had become  
an  
Olympic  
cancer.*

still exists, and both nations, 28 years after a truce was declared, were still armed camps and a peace treaty has never been signed.

Thereby, would it be wise to grant an Olympic Games to a nation still at war with a neighbor? Seoul, the ROK's capital, is only 30 miles south of the 38th parallel, the approximate dividing line between the two nations, and would an ongoing Olympic Games be a tempting staging ground for an attack from the north? Howard Cosell, a distinguished colleague of mine at ABC-TV, remarked 'You can't hold an Olympics in the middle of a war zone'.

(2) Although the ROK was a nominal democracy, the nation's president, Chun Doo Hwan, a former army general, had assumed power in the latest coup only a few months prior to the Congress, following a series of national upheavals. Thereby, questions about the ROK's political stability and therefore its financial stability were legitimate issues to be considered. There was no guarantee as to the people's faith in this new regime which had its dictatorial characteristics including control of the press. Would this government last seven years until the Games, long enough to support them financially and otherwise?

(3) There was in place within the IOC a solid segment of members very much set against the Seoul candidacy. These were the ten Committee members representing communist nations, led by the Soviet Union, the ideological enemies of the South Koreans. North Korea was a client state of the Soviets and in no way, despite each IOC member supposedly having independence of thought, would this bloc vote in favor of Seoul.

In fact seventeen communist nations had boycotted the World Shooting Championships in Seoul in 1978 and the following year the world champion Soviet team had boycotted the women's world championships, also in Seoul, along with their spiritual allies, the Czechs and Bulgarians. Therefore, there was precedent.

However, as to boycotts, interestingly both

the ROK and Japan shared the distinction of having joined the United States-led boycott of the '80 Olympics in Moscow only a year earlier. That year President Jimmy Carter had strong-armed the United States Olympic Committee into boycotting Moscow over the issue of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979. Overall, 65 nations, most of whom had political and financial stakes in not offending the United States juggernaut. Carter was running for re-election and assumedly figured he could gain votes by means of a moral crusade against the Soviets.<sup>3</sup>

However, although both the ROK and the Japanese had not taken part in the Moscow Games, all the Olympically involved communist nations had diplomatic relations with Japan, but none had such a relationship with the ROK.

By this time boycotts had become an Olympic cancer. There had been major boycotts or threats of boycotts at the four Olympic Summer Games that preceded the Congress: in '68 at Mexico City, '72 at Munich, '76 at Montreal, and '80 in Moscow.

Thereby, Japan, in contrast with the ROK, was a stable nation at peace and with favorable international relationships which precluded a possible Olympic boycott by Communist nations. This was a guarantee the ROK could not provide.

All of which would seem to recommend a Japanese strategy of holding back, allowing the nomination to come to them in good time. Instead, however, and mysteriously, the Nagoyans took an aggressive tack, an aggressive strategy. Their delegation started to play Olympic politics, in fact a new sort of politics. Among their tactics they combined their summer campaign with Cortina's winter campaign, which offended more than a few committee members who considered the ploy unethical, out-of-bounds.

A leak occurred, not denied, that Nagoyan officials had made a deal with the Cortina delegation wherein the Japanese would deliver whatever Asian votes they could muster for

Cortina's bid, and the Italians would reciprocate by endeavoring to deliver western European votes for Nagoya's bid. Although lobbying and campaigning were acceptable tacks within and among winter campaigns or within summer campaigns, however, there were IOC members somewhat put off at this mixing of unrelated winter and summer bids.

Ironically, the tactic probably cost votes for both campaigns as may have been reflected by Cortina's low vote count on the first winter ballot, quickly eliminating them from the contest, and a wiser head would assume this embarrassment would have taught the Japanese a lesson.

Not so. Unfortunately they continued to be heavy-handed when it would have been wiser to be subtle. And they continued to be conspiratorial.

That final half-hour before the Committee is so brief that presenters barely have time to make all the points relative to their bid, although of course Committee members had regularly been briefed by lobbyists and most of them had already visited all the proposed Olympic sites. Therefore, within that brief time there isn't time, nor is it wise, to emphasize an opponent's weak points. The emphasis should be on one's own positive, not upon the negatives of rival bids, which is considered bad form and even unsportsmanlike within this body of sportsmen.

The Japanese, however, came to believe there was a way around this moral restriction, that there was an indirect means of introducing a negative implication about South Korean financial stability. The Nagoyans mentioned nothing negative about aspects of the Seoul bid during their own early afternoon presentation, but later in the day, during the questioning period following the Korean presentation, a Committee member from a communist nation asked a question relative to the ROK's financial steadiness. And the question was asked as though it was being recited, dictated, like so much rote, clumsily. Thereby it became apparent the question had been planted, given to the Committee member, obviously by the Japanese, placing the smell of politics into the atmosphere. Why were the Nagoyans clearly injecting themselves into the Seoul presentation? Why were the Japanese, the favorites, playing with fire, going out-of-bounds, striving so hard for more votes? Too hard.

Current IOC Vice President Richard Pound was there and within his thoroughly detailed and interesting

book about the '88 Olympic Summer Games, *Five Rings Over Korea*, he describes that moment, an insider's account of the strategy:

'The question WAS asked and their answer was devastating to the Japanese, who were clearly exposed as not only having planted the question (which would probably never have occurred to the individual who posed it) but to have done so for the specific purpose of trying to embarrass the Koreans, rather than advancing the Japanese bid on its own merits'.

The Japanese also failed to consider that of course the Koreans realized the issue of their financial stability would be strongly probed during the questioning period of their presentation; they had divined that such a question would be asked and therefore they were prepared for it. They had given over one of the precious positions on their presenters' committee to a former ROK Deputy Prime Minister and economic planner, Yoo Chang Soon, who answered the question to the satisfaction of the Committee and which was 'devastating to the Japanese.' Therefore, the Japanese had played into the hands of the Koreans instead of the other way around.

In any case, once again the Japanese had introduced intrigue, manipulation, and politics into the process and certain IOC members were again offended.

Another misjudgment involved a small band of Japanese protesters whose picket signs, off to the side of the Kurhaus, stated 'No Olympics for Nagoya!' They expressed to the press their fear that Olympic construction would create and exacerbate pollution within this already smoky industrial city, and could threaten traditional Japanese architecture. The protesters were few and seemingly insignificant.

However, mysteriously and foolishly, the Japanese scoffed at the protesters saying they were not representative of the high level of support for the bid in Nagoya, when common sense would have advised them not to have raised the issue, not to have mentioned those few picketers at all. And thereby more than a few Committee members who had not been previously aware of the protesters made the significant point of going outside to talk and to listen to them.

Another factor involved the relatively advanced state of South Korean capital construction.

Both Nagoya and Seoul had been ravaged by the bombing attacks of the Second World War, with Seoul

*Subtly, did the Koreans turn a negative into a positive by reminding the Committee that since the cessation of hostilities between the two Koreas at the DMZ almost three decades earlier, there had never been a peaceful crossing of the 38th parallel?*

suffering even more devastation during the three years of the Korean War in the early '50's. And during reconstruction both cities left sizeable areas of land bare after these conflicts in the assumption that recreational and athletic facilities would eventually be built on those tracts. Now at the Congress both cities had come to the common conclusion they wanted these sites to be the locale of the '88 Olympic Summer Games.

However, for the most part the Nagoyan proposal was still in the planning stage, needing the spur of a coming Olympic Games to assure that facilities and venues would be constructed, while in Seoul most Olympic capital construction had either been completed or was in the process of being built on two tracts within a few miles of each other. And when IOC members visited the two cities they noted the comparatively advanced status of the Korean sites, coming away positively impressed.

Of course those '88 Olympics were still seven years in the future, time enough for the Nagoyans to fulfill their plans and proposals; still there was the contrast of what existed as opposed to what was promised. Consciously or unconsciously Committee members started to lean more favorably toward the Seoul bid. Seoul was ready.

Of course the Koreans were aware of their weaknesses: questions about governmental and financial stability, a possible boycott of a Seoul Olympics by ideological enemies, and their technical state of being at war.

However, as they observed the Japanese becoming ever more brazen in their tactics the Koreans took an opposite tack, rarely criticizing any aspect of the Nagoya bid so much as they boosted their own bid, allowing it to speak for itself. This was their tactic not only during their formal presentation before the Committee but also during earlier formal and informal meetings with IOC members. Negatives about the Nagoya bid, the Japanese had managed to introduce into the equation

on their own.

The Koreans realized less is more, a strategic tack the IOC took note of and appreciated.

Of course the point that 'It is our turn', was a legitimate argument in the Koreans' behalf. But there was one other point that became apparent. The IOC takes great pride within its peacekeeping reputation, an ideal that is not without justification. The ancient Olympic tradition of warring armies laying down their weapons in order to compete in the Games, peacefully, against their enemies, is carried on today within the internationally accepted 'Olympic Truce' wherein nations agree not to wage war during the tenure of an Olympiad. For example, where else but within an Olympic Village will athletes from two warring nations be interacting within the camaraderie that exists between competitors?

Subtly, did the Koreans turn a negative into a positive by reminding the Committee that since the cessation of hostilities between the two Koreas at the DMZ almost three decades earlier, there had never been a peaceful crossing of the 38th parallel? Was there the possibility, though not part of their formal bid, that several Olympic competitions, a few events, could take place in North Korea? And wouldn't it be wonderfully symbolic, for example, if long-distance cycling races could start in Pyongyang, the northern capital, to conclude in Seoul, the distance between the two capitals being approximately 120 miles (200 kilometers), about the length of the Olympic long-distance road race? What better symbol of Olympism's healing process than to have Olympic athletes making that significant and initial peaceful crossing of the parallel and the DMZ, creating an aura of Olympian dignity and reconciliation as an example to the universe.<sup>4</sup>

That scenario never came to pass, but at the time of the Congress the possibility was there and it may have been a factor and the Koreans believed it was time for an Asian Olympics that took place beyond Japan.

In summary, the Koreans accentuated the positive and eliminated the negative, believing less is more, that the IOC would come to see the superiority of their bid.

And the International Olympic Committee bought it.

The next day, in the Kurhaus, on September 30, 1981, Seoul, the capital of the Republic of Korea, was granted the 1988 Olympic Summer Games over Nagoya by a vote of 52 to 27.5

It was not even close.

The favorites had lost, quite possibly because the Japanese had decided that mere victory would not be enough so much as they ineptly pursued overwhelming victory. Thusly they did hang themselves by their own petard and returned home with serious loss of face.<sup>6</sup> They had been out-manuevered by the Koreans, even out-psyched. The tortoise had beaten the hare.

The Japanese had snatched defeat out of the jaws of victory.

In the winter balloting Calgary defeated Falun on the second ballot by a vote of 48 to 31, to acquire the 1988 Olympic Winter Games.

**A**nd on that autumnal day the years of planning, effort, campaigning and prayers had come to an end for the five national delegations, all of whom had dreamed the same dream. Having won or lost it was all over and they felt that mixture of exhaustion and the realization they could now get on with the rest of their lives.

Of course the representatives from Calgary and Seoul had the joy of celebration before the realization set in that they had seven hard years of preparation before them, while the defeated delegations: Cortina, Falun and Nagoya had to decide whether to maintain themselves as a representative body for the purpose of bidding for the '92 winter and summer Games or whether they should dissolve.

Cortina and Falun each made a bid for the Winter of '92, losing again, this time to Albertville, France.

Nagoya never again put forth an Olympic bid.

#### Notes

1. Currently there are 199 member nations, 36 international Olympic sporting federations (29 summer, 7 winter) and 43 sports in the Games (several federations administer

more than one sport). There are now 113 IOC members.

2. In 1986, at the 91st IOC Session in Lausanne, not too long after the L.A. Games had helped restore the attraction and the economic health of the Movement, 13 bidders had come forth to bid for the '92 Olympics: seven winter and six summer. There Lord Killanin, the IOC President Emeritus, told me of the moment in 1972 when he assumed the Committee presidency, how a depressed and departing President Avery Brundage handed him the keys to the IOC headquarters at the Château de Vidy in Lausanne, saying 'You won't have much use for these; I believe the Olympic Movement will last no more than another few years,' as issues of finance, politics, eligibility, commercialism and banned drugs seemed about to overwhelm Olympism. Killanin told me that Brundage, who'd died ten years earlier, had obviously been wrong.

I said to Killanin 'And now he's looking down on 13 bid cities'.

Killanin replied 'Frankly sir, I don't know whether he's looking down or is looking up!'

3. He lost that election to Ronald Reagan and about all his crusade accomplished was a retaliatory boycott of the '84 Olympics in Los Angeles on the part of 17 communist nations.

4. Such sharing of competitions did not come about despite Juan Antonio Samaranch's efforts. The North Koreans made demands to host a major portion of the games which neither the IOC or the ROK were willing to concede.

5. Although there were 80 IOC members present, President Juan Antonio Samaranch established the precedent of the chief executive not taking part in the voting unless his ballot was needed to break a tie.

6. "Face" in Asian societies is an important reflection as to how one is seen by others, and is an assessment as to their personal and public reputation. It is important not to bring shame to one's self. Doing one's duty is an aspect of face and failures may be considered as losing face.