

ARTICLE BY R. DECKER - FOUR LANGUAGES ABSTRACTS (E)(F)(S)(P)

PRIVILEGING SPORT FOR ALL

The Forum was attended by key personalities from the world of sports and physical education. They discussed topics related to sport and social integration, the international role of European sport and sport and media literacy. (Complete conclusions at: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/sport>)

It has been scientifically proven that a physical (and sporting) activity that meets the individual's abilities is beneficial in terms of health and improved quality of life. Sport is also a promoter of social integration among children and youngsters.

In contrast to "sports for all", which has numerous positive links with other social systems, extreme media coverage, excessive marketing and other factors created a separate social system known as Elite Sport. Despite offering potential educational effects, this kind of competitive sport is a privilege of particularly talented young people and adults. People who simply need to 'exercise' are not interested in it.

Therefore, it is necessary to change the sports policies, focusing on "sports for all" and promoting the integration of the minorities, including the physically and/or mentally disabled.

Appeal for Fundamental Objectives

- Education through sport must aim at improving personal performance and not top performance. Its mission consists in helping children to grow physically, intellectually and morally and to develop their personalities. It helps building self-confidence and self-esteem as well.

- The "European Sport for All Charter", launched in 1975 will allow all European citizens to practice the sport they choose in full freedom, without race, sex or age discrimination, at affordable costs.

PRIORITE AU SPORT POUR TOUS

Le Forum a réuni des éléments-clés du monde des sports et de l'éducation physique. Les conclusions de ces travaux se trouvent au site: (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/sport>).

Une activité physique (et sportive) convenable aux possibilités de l'individu fait du bien à la santé et augmente la qualité de vie. Le sport proportionne aussi l'intégration sociale des enfants et des jeunes-gens pour lesquels les jeux ont une fonction vitale.

Au contraire du sport pour tous, qui a des liaisons avec d'autres systèmes sociaux, la surexposition par la média, le marketing excessif et d'autres facteurs ont créé un système social à part, appelé Sport d'Élite. Quoique il ait un effet éducatif potentiel, cette forme de sport s'adresse aux gens qui ont du talent tandis que la plupart des gens veut seulement faire des exercices et ne s'intéresse pas aux sports compétitifs. Il faut donc faire un changement radical des politiques sportives avec la priorité du sport pour tous, en stimulant l'intégration des minorités, y compris les handicapés physiques et mentaux.

Retour aux objectifs essentiels

L'éducation à travers le sport doit envisager le rendement personnel et non le plus grand accomplissement. Elle est plutôt un outil efficace à la formation de la personnalité des jeunes-gens et au développement de l'amour propre et de l'esprit d'équipe.

Le «Statut Européen du Sport pour Tous» publié en 1975, permettra la pratique des Sports de libre choix, sans distinctions (de race, sexe ou âge) et à prix accessibles à tous les citoyens européens.

PRECEDENCIA AL DEPORTE PARA TODOS

El Foro ha reunido elementos-clave del mundo de los deportes y de la educación física. Las conclusiones de los trabajos se pueden encontrar en el site: (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/sport>).

Una actividad física (y deportiva) adecuada a las posibilidades del individuo trae beneficios a la salud y aumenta la calidad de vida. El deporte también impulsa la integración social de niños y jóvenes para quienes los juegos tienen función vital.

Al contrario del deporte para todos con sus relaciones con otros sistemas sociales, la exposición excesiva en los medios, el marketing excesivo y otros factores han creado un sistema social separado como el Deporte de Elite. Aunque el deporte tenga un efecto educativo potencial, bajo esta forma él se dirige a personas de talento, mientras que la mayoría solamente quiere ejercitarse, sin hacer caso de competición.

Por eso es necesario un cambio radical en las políticas deportivas con precedencia del deporte para todos promocionando la integración de las minorías, e incluso de los disminuidos físicos y mentales.

Regreso a los objetivos esenciales

- La educación a través del deporte debe de considerar el rendimiento personal pero no el rendimiento máximo. Ella es ante todo un instrumento eficaz para la formación de la personalidad del joven y el desarrollo de su auto-estimación y del espíritu de equipo.

- El «Estatuto Europeo del Deporte para Todos» editado en 1975 permitirá la práctica de deportes, con posibilidad opción, sin distinguir raza, sexo o edad, a precios accesibles para todos los ciudadanos europeos.

PRIVILEGIANDO O ESPORTE PARA TODOS

O Fórum reuniu elementos chave do mundo dos esportes e da educação física, que debateram temas críticos referentes a essas áreas. As conclusões destes trabalhos encontram-se no site: (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/sport>).

Está cientificamente comprovado que uma atividade física (e desportiva) adequada às possibilidades do indivíduo traz benefícios à saúde e aumenta a qualidade de vida. Além disso, o esporte também promove a integração social de crianças e jovens para os quais os jogos e as brincadeiras têm função vital.

Contrariamente ao esporte para todos, que possui várias ligações com outros sistemas sociais, a superexposição na mídia, o marketing excessivo e outros fatores criaram um sistema social separado, conhecido como Esporte de Elite. Apesar de possuir um efeito educativo potencial, esta forma de esporte dirige-se a pessoas especialmente talentosas, e a grande maioria deseja apenas se exercitar, não se interessando por esportes puramente competitivos.

Portanto, torna-se necessária uma mudança radical nas políticas esportivas, privilegiando o esporte para todos, promovendo a integração das minorias, inclusive os deficientes físicos e mentais.

Volta aos objetivos essenciais

- A educação mediante o esporte deve objetivar o rendimento pessoal e não o desempenho máximo. Ela é, antes de tudo, uma eficiente ferramenta na formação da personalidade do jovem, no desenvolvimento de sua auto estima e do espírito de equipe.

- O "Estatuto Europeu do Esporte para Todos", lançado em 1975, possibilitará a prática de esportes, com liberdade de escolha, sem nenhum tipo de distinção (racial, sexual ou etária), e a preços acessíveis a todos os cidadãos europeus.

ROBERT DECKER
Vice-President of FIEP for Europe

Invited by the European Commission, the Forum gathered together delegates from the Sports Ministries and major sports bodies in Europe, as well as representatives from the federations governing the various disciplines practised in Europe, and major agencies for physical education and sport for all, including F.I.E.P. – Europe and Panathlon International.

Divided into three work groups, the delegates discussed the following topics:

1. Sport as a factor for social integration.
2. The role of European sport in an international context.
3. Sport and media literacy.

The conclusions of these works are published on the Internet site of the European Commission (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/sport>).

By launching 2004 as the European Year of Education through Sport, the European Union underlined that alongside challenge and competition, sport (if correctly understood) can promote other social, educational, health values. "Values that sport transmits through play and in an apparently unconscious way, essential for a happy, gratifying life within our community"**, said Viviane Reding, European Commissioner for Education and Culture.

DEFINITION

Often, texts of general politics concerning physical and sporting activities discuss "sport" and its specific functions – educational, public health, social, cultural and ludic functions – without specifying, however, which form of practice, at which performance level and which repercussions on the human body we refer to. In actual fact, depending on whether we are referring to children, adolescents, males or females, adults or elderly people, effects change remarkably. What is beneficial for young people can be dangerous for the elderly. It all depends on the dosage, on the intensity, duration of procedures that per se could be harmless, but, at the same time, can either produce the best or the worse results.

ELITE SPORT OR SPORTS SHOW

While 'sport for all' has numerous positive links with the other social systems, such as health, education, art, science and religious systems, extreme media coverage of elite sports, just like their excessive marketing, as well as too much politicisation, without forgetting the intrinsic problems related to doping, created a separate social system.

SPORT'S EDUCATIONAL VALUES

Today, in contrast with a few decades ago, physical education circles recognise that sport, in its controlled, coded competitive form, offers potential educational effects. However, this form is a prerogative of particularly talented young people and adults, with a high physical and motor potential. On the contrary, people who simply need to move, 'exercise', integrate a physical activity with everyday life' are not interested in purely competitive sport.

BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF PHYSICAL AND SPORTING ACTIVITIES

Having said this, we should recall that it was scientifically proven that a physical (and sporting) activity that meets the individual's abilities is beneficial in terms of health and improved quality of life. There are, however, some preliminaries for achieving these objectives. We have to remember for example, that according to an investigation by Sporthochschule, Cologne, running is only beneficial if practised at the right rhythm.

A RADICAL CHANGE IS NEEDED IN SPORTS POLICIES

In the future we shall have to privilege "sport for all" in national policies. If, for national prestige or political reasons, elite sport can to some extent prove to be useful, politicians must provide the population with sports facilities and staff organisation in order to give everybody the opportunity to regularly practise the activity that meets their requirements and possibilities. By being enthusiastic, but passive consumers of sports shows, the sedentary populations of post-industrial, consumer societies will not be able to benefit from sport.

SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNGSTERS

Movement is very important for the development of children and youngsters, in particular for young people with disabilities, as well as for their social integration. Through movement children conquer the world of people and things. The child needs to take, grasp, go closer, perceive with his senses the world of objects and people to better understand them, to control them, to further develop his language and thought. Games and playing are therefore existential requirements for children and youngsters.

MODERN VISION OF SPORT

Sport is a multi-faceted phenomenon. Its fundamental characteristics are: motor activity, social interactions, performance, competition, rules, experienced values (pleasure, joy, compensation, self-satisfaction). Sport takes different forms: sport-leisure time, sport-health, sport for all, competitive sport, elite sport. It is practised in regulated disciplines but also in non-competitive, alternative, free forms. The modern meaning of sport should not be limited only to the notion of victory or defeat.

Only with an open approach we can understand the multiple values of sport and its objectives, experience and we can satisfy motivations that often vary according to the type of sport being practised. Only an open approach, in contrast with top level sport, allows us to actually achieve sport for all, with the integration of women, of the elderly, of marginal groups, including the physically and/or mentally disabled.

It's mainly open meetings and games played together by disabled and non-disabled people that allow to achieve a full integration. Such approach should lead us to abolish the privileges of the non-disabled, to the detriment of those who need them more and can benefit from them.

APPEAL FOR FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVES

- Education through sport must aim at improving personal performance and not top performance.
- The European Union and the European Parliament have long been trying to improve the role of sport in society; by focusing in particular on sport for all or health-sport. The "European Sport for All Charter", launched by the European Council way back in 1975, will allow all European citizens to practise the sport they choose in full freedom, without race, sex or age distinction, and at reasonable costs.
- Education through sport should not be understood as simple introduction to sport. The mission consists in contributing to the development of the child's personality, helping him/her to grow physically, intellectually and morally; and has the duty to instil confidence in the youngster, to teach him/her to take decisions, to collaborate together with the others, to have friends, to believe to be important for the group, for the team: "to act all together" and not "one against another".

(*) Paper presented at the EUROPEAN SPORTS FORUM 2003 HELD IN VERONA

(**) Free translation from Italian

"PHYSICAL EDUCATION CONCEPT"

Stated in World Manifesto of the Physical Education FIEP 2000

FIEP concludes

Art. 2 - Physical Education, as a right to all, is a process of Education, no matter if it is made in formal or informal ways,

- That by Interacting with the cultural and natural influences (water, air, sun etc.) in each region and facilities and appropriate artificial equipment;
- That by Using Physical Activities in the form of gymnastic exercises, games, sports, dances, adventure activities, relaxation and other options of educationally-purposed active leisure;
- That at Aiming at learning and development of motive abilities of children, young people, adults and seniors, increasing their personal conditions for the acquisition of knowledge and favorable attitudes to consolidate systematic habits of Physical practice;
- That by Promoting an effective Education for the health and sound use of free leisure time;
- That by Recognizing that corporal practices related to the development of values can lead to the participation of socially responsible roles seeking for citizenship-oriented practices;

CONSTITUTES an effective form for human beings to conquer an active lifestyle.