

JOHANNESBURG - MECCA FOR WORLD SPORT

by

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ADDRESS:

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- by Charles Fortune

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

You know, I don't really thoroughly understand the title of this talk that I am about to attempt to deliver. It runs something like "Johannesburg - Mecca for World's Sportsmen". The word 'Mecca' rather worries me in connection with sport. I suppose we must take it in rather its wider sense, and you know when I was a kid I lived in a part of England where there were just two classes - the gentry and the serfs - and sportsmen were entirely gentry, and they divided themselves into either chaps who shot pheasants and partridges or chased foxhounds. So the word 'Mecca' and 'Sportsmen' don't entirely ring a bell within me, though I must say that the many many hours I have spent chasing foxes, were certainly one of the more delectable parts of my youth.

Well, I suppose if I had a nightmare early this morning, I might have hoped that something would crop up which would suggest that sport is a pretty important part of our community life. Low and behold, I wake up this morning as I do every morning, I wot of tottered more in sleep than in sanity to the front door and picked up the morning paper, and, Gentlemen, you will agree that it seems rather a rare occasion that on the front page of our Rand Daily Mail, both the leading stories are very specifically sport and quite different. Here we have the story of a little bit of fun and games at a place called Sabina Park, away in the West Indies, and we have one of our leading sporting administrators, Mr. Jannie le Roux, telling us how he hopes to make Johannesburg a sort of Mecca for sportsmen. Well I read them through and I thought that these in a way seemed to me to exemplify the real dangers in our modern sporting life. I thought of the wives of those England cricketers, back in Northampton and Somerset and possibly one or two up in Yorkshire being utterly terrified at what might be happening to their husbands and their sweethearts away in the West Indies. Of course I knew that the husbands and sweethearts in the West Indies would, in fact, be enjoying themselves immeasurably. The thought of being under fire whilst on the Sabina Park cricket ground undoubtedly has given them something to talk about for the rest of their lives and I can assure you that not one of them lost a moment's sleep last night thinking of what might happen today. If I can let you into a secret, I will tell you why some of them will have lost a night's sleep. History in sport as well as history in higher circles does have a slight way of repeating itself - if it doesn't at least we can imagine it does. And those chaps will have had a restless night because they will cast their minds back to no more than two years

ago, when in the second Test at Lords, England had the West Indies 95 for 5 whereupon a gentleman by name of Sobers and a cousin of his by name of Holford proceeded to bat all next day to put on a partnership of nearly 300 runs and England never took another wicket. It is Holford and Sobers who were still batting when the MCC went to bed last night.

Now the thing that really terrifies me is Jannie le Roux. Jannie le Roux, at the airport yesterday, made the statement that he and his Transvaler rugby community were intent on building a stadium that would be a great prestige symbol for Johannesburg. Gentlemen, Mr. Jannie le Roux and his administrators were elected not to build prestige symbols, they were elected to see that Transvaal produces the finest rugby players in South Africa - that means the finest rugby players in the world - and I view a great deal of distress the thought that the elected community charged with the business of looking after the way young men play rugby are now going to turn themselves into a community which want to entertain the masses and not rear the up and coming young hopefuls. This I believe is the great danger to sport today.

Let me tell you why I came to South Africa. I was born in a quiet little village in the West of England, which I have already mentioned. I remember my Father taking me to Lords to see the first Test Match which was ever my good luck to see played. He was a sensible Father. I was at school in London and he decided to come up for a couple of days and he got permission for me to come and watch the Second Test Match with the South Africans playing and being, as I say a sensible father, he had a little bottle in his hip pocket and a 5 lb. basket of strawberries under the seat for me. Now all I really remember of that match is the magnificent stature of the S.A. players. I can think of one called Morkel. Now if ever there was a sportsman who seemed built completely in the image of Apollo, it was this Morkel. I don't really remember how the game ran, but I can see a visual rhythmic gigantic figure coming into bowl from the Pavilion End and his whole action - everything about him, everything about the South Africans - it captivated my fancy because it seemed to me that these were men built on a pattern that was rather different from anything I had ever seen before.

Later on I came to play rugby with a good many South Africans. I saw Benny Osler's side in England and here were a type of sportsmen that were endowed with physical qualities which I had never quite experienced before. It is the same today. If one chanced to watch the Eastern Province side playing here only a few weeks ago. The two Pollock boys - there were others. Van der Merwe himself. These are young men who are the pride and joy or should be the pride and joy of this country and we must never overlook the fact that if S.A. is to be a mecca for sportsmen, it is infinitely more sportsmen see by coming here and see us trying to imitate cities which have far far greater resources than we have. Our real image is the young men we can send abroad - that Schools cricket side that went abroad in recent years. This is the image of S.A. The image is in our sportsmen. The image is not going to be in the size of our stadium we can build.

It is not going to be in the Patron's clubs we can find, it is going to be entirely in the sportsmen we can produce and if I have one message for you it is that. In all our planning for sport never forget that the number one objective of sporting education is to turn out young men of magnificent physique, magnificent character - young men who can be our emissaries and when I say young men please bear in mind there has never been a finer team sent abroad from this country than the Women's Hockey side we sent away to Europe about six months ago. So in using the term men, it is merely the fact that I happen to be one and I generally overlook the fact that the woman does play a very considerable part in sport as well as we he-characters.

Well, gentlemen, I do notice in the screed - a very short one - that seems to sum up what I am to talk about, there is a mention of the economics of sport. This immediately brings us up against the topic of where professionalism begins and how far does it send its roots right down deep into the very substrata of our sporting existences.

I do view with a certain amount of trepidation the recent developments particularly in lawn tennis. Now lawn tennis has always been a very much enjoyed sport in S.A. I remember when I first came to Grahamstown some 30 years ago saying to the man with whom I was living and who like myself was a detribalised Englishman who found his place in life in Grahamstown - crazy about lawn tennis - I said, "how many people live in Grahamstown?" He said, "about 8000 white people." I said, "how many tennis courts have you got?" He said, "I'll tell you in 24 hours." He told me. There are 128 lawn tennis courts in Grahamstown for a community of 8000 people. That is a fantastic number. This was 30 years ago.

Well now, what is happening the lawn tennis world today. I think Australia is perhaps the best example to quote. Now Australia, as long as I can remember, has had an almost unbroken line of great lawn tennis players. You can go right back to Norman Brooks in the early years of this century and you can come up through the Vivian McGraths, Jack Crawford and the years immediately before the war you jump over and you find yourself with the Bromwiches and the Sedgmans and so through the Hoads and the Rosewalls up to the present Newcome and Roach. It has been an unbroken line in which there has always been great players taking the young hopefuls round the world with them.

I remember an afternoon at Wimbledon about 20 years ago in which John Bromwich got into the finals of the singles championships. He got to 5 - 2 and 30 - 0 in the final set and then he was beaten. An hour later he had to come on court to play the semi-finals of the men's doubles. This was a Bromwich who was broken hearted - I won't say he was broken down - and with him was Sedgman making his first visit to Wimbledon and the young Sedgman, as it were, girded up his loins, he carried Bromwich through that semi-final and they went on to win the final. That is the basis of Australian lawn tennis. That has been its secret. That the experienced hands have always been there to shepherd the young ones along. Suddenly this is broken. Suddenly professionalism has taken off all the Australian top stars and I think that this will mean that Australia will not

emerge as a great tennis power perhaps for the next half dozen years. In this I see a great danger of professionals being as it were skimmed off - the cream taken off - in all the countries and for what purpose are they going to be used. They are not going to be used for the well being of tennis. They are going to be used first and foremost to provide entertainment for those who view television. That is going to be the major objective of the professional lawn tennis circuit. Yes, make what you can by attracting people to watch it but the real market is going to be the television replay. That is why they want to alter the scoring so that they can get, as it were, a match which is going to last for a pretty nearly predictable period. This is one of the difficulties you know in broadcasting lawn tennis. I have often broadcast on to tape as much as an hour and a half in order to get in the last 3 games of a big match. You record and record and the wrong chap keeps on winning. These are, as I see them, the economic dangers of sport.

Of course everybody knows that the Soccer world has gone utterly and completely crazy but this is largely due to the British tax system and not to the Football people. If you can pay £100,000 for a player to another club and a bit later on they pay £100,000 to you for their player, then both of you can show expenses against your total income. So this is a bit of a wangle.

These are some of the little dangers I see in modern sport. I do see a tendency to exalt the few to the complete neglect of the waste majority. Now you yourselves will be thinking, as indeed we all are, in terms of Johannesburg as a mecca for sportsmen. With respect I would say that in many ways Johannesburg has done pretty well already.

Now we come again to that definition of sport, but if one accepts that those who play bowls are sportsmen - I know some of you will look at me with eyebrows slightly raised when I say that I doubt if bowls players really are sportsmen - I'll tell you why in a moment - if you think of Johannesburg and the great bowls tournaments, both men and women, we can stage in this country, in this town, this city, I doubt if it can be done better anywhere else in the world. Now why I say that I doubt if bowls really is sport, is that in my job I do have to draw a line. If I don't draw a line very soon your programmes would be filled all sorts of things such as contract bridge and chess, women's netball, and we wouldn't have any of what I call real sport on the air. So I do claim to make my own definition of a sport - a sport is something which you are at your best when you are at your physical prowess. In other words, unless you are at your best somewhere between your twenties and thirties, I don't really think it is sport. I think it is entertainment. I think sport demands that the absolute acme of physical fitness is a prerequisite of maximum excellence. If you have got that, then I say it is sport. If it is a pasttime in which brains more than physique are going to play a major share then I say it goes into the category of entertainment and it doesn't come into Sports Round-up, but that is merely a safeguard of my own.

But going back to Johannesburg as a mecca for sportsmen. You know I have been to one or two cities which for brief moments have become mecca for sportsmen. I think particularly of that delectable Australian city, Perth. Now some half dozen,

perhaps a little more years ago, Perth for a fleeting moment became the centre of the Commonwealth Games and Perth built itself a very very fine stadium - a glorious stadium. Today it is a very very considerable burden on the citizens of Perth. They can't use it. When they do use it, they can only fill it at maximum about half full, and this only a couple of times a year and then more likely for Australian Rules Football than for the athletics and what have you for which it had been intended.

This is something one has to guard against and I assure you that I see no real likelihood of Johannesburg ever having a famous stadium that it can really fill as long as our transport system is such as it is. Jannie le Roux might get away with the railway going to Ellis Park, but if you think of the great stadiums all around the world, I don't know many of them, a few I do know, invariably they have transport that can contend with 40,000 people an hour right at their doorstep. Now the one mighty stadium that I do know well, is Melbourne Cricket Ground. Now the Melbourne cricket ground, is to my way of thinking, the biggest silo in the world. It is exactly like a silo, that has come up out of the turf. It is very nearly a circular pattern and there is just one gap, just one small gap where there is the cricket score board. Otherwise it goes round towering right up and the temperature on the playing field down below is often 10 degrees higher than the temperature anywhere else around, because of the enormous heat coming in from 100,000 bodies all immediately surrounding this cricket field. But the secret of this ground is that it has a railway system right to its gates, it has a tram service right to its gates, and I have been on the Melbourne Cricket Ground when there have been 75,000 people in that ground and 15 minutes afterwards, save only the few who come in cars and can't get them out of the parking ground, the whole lot have vanished. Now this is the secret if you are going to have a big stadium. You must see to it that you can move 40,000 people within the hour right away from that ground.

Now Twickenham has managed it. You know how it happens at Twickenham. The railway trains are there, you walk 200 yards to the railway station, you get 20 in a compartment intended for 10 and you are taken away in double quick time and it all adds to the glory of the day to have been squashed up against a delectable kid whom otherwise you wouldn't have met.

These, gentlemen, are a few of my thoughts on sport. I did notice that there was a little mention in the brochure here concerning tours. It is one of the words I can't really say, is tours. Well, the tendency in recent years has been to cut down on the length of tours. I suppose nobody ever gives a thought to the very early tours. One of the reasons that I came to this country was because of a Bishop, who first came here to play rugby in the second British team ever to visit this country. He came back, he was Bishop of Bloemfontein for many years, and he more or less kicked me into going to S.A. I was very keen on his daughter at the time and I think his daughter wanted to come and live in S.A., but that broke down as so many of the best plans do. Anyhow, I came. Now, he used to tell me about his tour here. He was an under-grad at Oxford at the time and the whole tour

took them something very close to six months - the journey out was a slow business. When they played in the Eastern Cape, they managed to get to Port Elizabeth by train, and then they made their way via Grahamstown, Kingwilliamstown and East London by postcart. One of the great moments of that tour, he always said, was finding himself staying for the night at a place called Komaties Drift, between East London and Kingwilliamstown. They found themselves in a hotel, which was just four walls and they saw fires in the distance and they went out into the veld and they had a glorious time drinking Kaffir beer around a camp fire with the indigenous citizens of that area. When they came up to the Transvaal they had to declare customs at Vereeniging. These days have all gone. But their tour was a slow moving business and anyway it brought a love of S.A. which eventually became a life's work for him.

It is only a few days ago that I was talking to Peter van der Merwe and Peter said to me, you know, the devil of S.A. tours these days is that they allow us only 15 players, they rush us from pillar to post so that we never have anything except a Sunday. With only 15 players there are always 2 that are injured which means that the other two have to stand by as 12th and 13th man. He said you go to Australia, you go to England, and when it is all over in England you have seen a couple of London theatres and 20 English cricket grounds and that is your experience of England. You go to Australia, you have seen the inside of 20 television studios and 20 cricket grounds and that is the end of your visit to Australia. These days instead of cutting down on the cricket tours I wish our authorities were a little less keen on everything having to be an economic proposition and a little keener on letting their players see something of the countries they visit. Well these are aspects of the short tour. The short tour is admirable in many ways. It does enable everyone to get leave, but my goodness it does deny the chaps what one might almost call the educational even the spiritual side of a long tour to a distant land.

Well gentlemen those are approximately the thoughts I have on sport. From my own point of view, I was lucky of course to have been allowed to travel around with S.A. sportsmen to the extent I have. They have taken me many times to Europe, quite a number of times to Australia. I must thank you all for suffering with me for many hours on the radio and thank you still more for putting up with me now. I hope I haven't been unduly contraversial. Anyhow, I would leave with you one last message. S.A. wealth in sport is our young entrants. They never never fail to carry abroad an image of this country that is attractive, exciting and don't let's lose our thoughts of sport as it is played in getting over excited about sport as a major entertainment. This is the danger. Sport is moving out of the realms of physical activity into the realms of popular entertainment. We shall be an unlucky country if that ever become the modus operandi of sport and sportsmen in S.A.

Thank you.

DISCUSSIONS ON ADDRESS

JOHANNESBURG - MECCA FOR WORLD SPORTSMEN

- by Charles Fortune

QUESTION:

I would like to ask Mr. Fortune to make a few comments on cricket in the Afrikaans medium schools. We of the older generation, to us sport in S.A. meant rugby-football, nothing else. Now, I was very fortunate as a young boy to grow up in a little village where a number of Englishmen had settled just after the Anglo Boer War and they started a cricket club in this little village. In no time, this little village, which today is still a very small village, could challenge a big town, by the standards of those days like Potchefstroom, and could even challenge a big town, by those standards, like Pretoria and beat them by an innings and so many runs. We had the very good fortune of learning cricket from the people who brought it to S.A. from England.

Now these days, we hear a lot of the Afrikaans community in S.A. having adopted cricket as its second national game, all most. I would like to ask Mr. Fortune whether he has any comments to make on that and whether there is real progress in cricket in the Afrikaans schools and whether that would make a significance contribution to the cricketing strength of this country in the future?

Mr. Fortune:

Mr. Chairman, if you remember when last the MCC were in this country I had helping me, in fact doing most of the work, a huge delightful Englishman by name of Brian Johnston. Well, during the course of that tour, I got a telegram from South West Africa signed by the Chief Magistrate. Being a cagey sort of chap, I don't willing get caught up by Chief Magistrates and I thought this might be a leg pull so I did nothing about it. A day or two later I get a similar telegram signed by the Head Prefect of a school in S.W.A. and they were asking us could we by any manner of means get them a cricket mat. They had started playing cricket, they had only half a mat, and I said to Johnston, "Should we put this over the air," and he said, "Yes, let's have a go." So we put it over the air and I don't know whether you remember within half an hour we got a message back from London saying that Lords Taverners would be happy to provide this club with a cricket mat. This is all quite genuine, they not only provided a cricket mat they also provided lots of equipment for this school. The outcome of this was that for the next six months I received letters from all over Southern Africa, Malawi, Zambia, all wanting to know if I wouldn't put out an appeal for cricket gear for all these schools.

Now this is an interesting aspect of the way that the desire to play cricket has spread. Now going back more particularly to the Afrikaans schools. I don't think there is any doubt that there has been an enormous lift in excitement in Afrikaans communities when cricket is available. Our own SABC's had to take cognizance of this with the result that we have ball by ball in Afrikaans as well as in English these days. Well you don't put these things on the air for the mere fun of putting them on. They are a great strain on resources and the SABC does try and please its listeners, believe it or not.

Well, I would point out that I think there is one slight matter that our Afrikaans enthusiasts will have to keep in mind. Cricket generally tends to run a little bit in families. Now this has got nothing to do with breeding. It has nothing to do with the genes that produce this particular specimen. What it is due to, if you happen to be born in a cricketing family, you will have a little cricket bat put in your hands very early in your life and you will have a little bit of, if not expert coaching, at least enthusiastic coaching, from the moment you begin to toddle around.

I remember the very first time that John Arlott, and I went with him, went to see his son in a nursing home, and John having looked at the baby and at the last moment remembered to kiss his wife, put his hand in his trouser pocket and he produced a little marble. He put it in the baby's hand and he said, "Watch," and he said, "It will be a leg spinner."

Now this is what makes in particular a batsman. I think that the Afrikaans community will find itself producing fine fieldsmen, good wicket keepers, good bowlers, a little while ahead of producing top-notch batsmen. I think top-notch batsmen on the whole begin to get the art almost from the moment they come out of the cradle. They get it from their environment and I rather feel that we will have to wait 15 or 20 years until we have a great string of Afrikaans speaking batsmen. Though they will come and I hope that when this does happen, as indeed it will happen, there won't be quite as much shall I call it political feeling in the Cricket Association as there has sometimes been evident in the Rugby Association, which hasn't been very good for rugby and I hope it won't ever happen in cricket.

QUESTION:

I would like to put an idea in your head. You may not be quite so correct about your fears about the professional tennis move. I think possibly the thinking here started in England and followed in Australia and America and various other countries, including S.A., is that this very move is going to stop the cream being skimmed off the top. It is a law to counter, surely, the pure professional circuit who is playing, as you say, with a new scoring system for the television circuit only, at least with the television finance in view. It has happened quite happily and successfully in cricket. There was a period at one stage in England, when county finances were a little bit shaky and a lot of professionals were wondering whether the purely professional weekend game of the Lancashire League might not be the better bet, where they could get a reasonable fee from them and also a day time job. The professional and the amateur cricketer have now got together so happily that there is purely a player. The idea behind the British move as far as tennis is concerned surely has been to just establish players, which will keep the ordinary game as we know it, keep the top names in that game with the top names there to encourage the youngsters not only by their example but by the continued

ability of being able to play with and against these top names. I feel personally that apart from getting rid of a lot of phony, under the counter, passing of money which has been going on for so long, it is a move surely in the right direction and keeping tennis more on the lines as we know it and not depriving it of a game as Fortune fears it might.

Mr. Fortune:

Mr. Chairman, two thoughts occur to me. One, and I am a bit old-fashioned, that perhaps too much I think that all change is for the worse. Secondly, I think the analogy between cricket and lawn tennis is possibly a false one. The essential difference, as I see it, is this. Agreed in England there is today a very considerable level of professional cricket. But, save only when they go abroad, those English professional cricketers stay in England. They are there encouraging, maintaining, coaching the standard of their own country's cricket. Therefore, although they are being paid for their job, their job goes much deeper than mere entertainment.

With the tennis players - when shall we see our Drysdale again. How often would Australia see its Newcome and its Roach. These inspirations are being whipped away out of the country. I hope that the whole thing will prove entirely successful. That the fears I have are unfounded. They probably are, but I don't think the analogy was quite a just one and it hasn't really convinced me at all when he joins this bandwagon of suddenly the lilywhites who say we are making tennis clean. These people who are saying it are the very people who have been paying the under the counter payments. I do not somehow see these lawn tennis leopards suddenly becoming Dalmations.

QUESTION:

You find that schools where there are a lot of boarders are far stronger at sport than a school with a lot of dayboys, because these chaps have somewhere to play - a field where they can actually hit a ball without breaking a window or go into their Mother's rose garden. You find that even in the city where people live on acre stands their children can't really play soccer or rugby or cricket or tennis in their garden. They are always inhibited so that it doesn't develop them as sportsmen. In a city like this where children can't play in their front or backyards, there should be facilities, convenient facilities, where these children can play within their own neighbourhood. They are not allowed to use their school grounds unless for organised sports; not during the vacation. My point is that we should do something to develop this in the same way as has the Playing Fields Association in England.

There is something I have always wanted to ask Mr. Fortune. We get these wonderful West Indian cricketers. Is there any reason that these youngsters are so good - have they facilities to give it a bash from the time they can walk?

Mr. Fortune:

You mentioned boarding schools and day schools. I think you have got a point there. There is no doubt that the youngsters at boarding schools do seem to come on more quickly. There is also another point, which always intrigued me when I was a schoolmaster. In Grahamstown, the school I was at - St. Andrews - a school of about 400 boys - there was a little Roman Catholic school nearby of about 120 boys, and I always got the impression that if you really wanted to have plenty coaching at games you had to go to a small school. The smaller the school the better off you were. If you went to a small school you had the chance of being in the first cricket eleven by the time you were fourteen, if you went to a bigger one you wouldn't get in to it until you were seventeen.

But now you mention this other point. How do the West Indies do it? I will tell you how they do it. They don't demand that Mother take them to a sports shop and fit them out with pads and gloves, cricket bat and even a protector. They get out in to the streets, out on to a bit of veld, they have got nothing else to occupy themselves. They play their cricket with what is probably a wooden ball, at best a composition ball, with no equipment whatsoever. They fight like little cats over who shall have the ball and who shall have the bat and above all other things they have a great capacity for imitation. The best way to learn to bat, the best way to learn to be a scrumhalf is to go and watch the best players. Don't watch the game, watch an individual player. If you can drum it into your children when you take them to rugby, if they want to be a good rugby player for goodness sake forget about the ball, watch the player whose position you wish to occupy on the field. Watch him all the time, until an image of him becomes implanted in you, so that without thinking all your actions are an imitation of this great player. This is terribly true of cricket. Watch the great bowler don't watch the ball after it leaves his hand, watch his follow through. Watch him the whole time. Try to imitate his movements and I know no more likely way of becoming a good player yourself than to try to make yourself the image of someone who really catches your fancy and who is a great exponent of the particular sport. I am sure that I haven't answered the question, but I hope that it is somewhere along the line.

QUESTION:

Mr. Fortune, has the standard of sport amongst the Bantu increased to such an extent that you broadcast their matches? If you do not broadcast them would it not stimulate their interest in sport if you did so?

Mr. Fortune:

I think that this question is a little bit outside my terms of reference, but I would assure you that a great deal of Bantu sport is broadcast by our Bantu service. Our Bantu service is far, far bigger, has more hours on the air than the English and Afrikaans services put together. Our Bantu sports are broadcasted over the air frequently.

QUESTION:

May I make a quick observation for your benefit that the purpose of the fourteen recreation centres in the city should cover the very problem he had in mind. That is why the City Council is encouraging the recreation centres. Perhaps Mr. Fortune will tell us, the Witwatersrand Agricultural Show has probably the worst traffic assess of any large stadium in this entire city - probably in this entire country. Yet vast numbers of people manage to get there over restricted periods and get away over restricted periods. How does Mr. Fortune reconcile this with his statement that Johannesburg can never have a large stadium without a speedy rail access?

Mr. Fortune:

People who go to the Rand Show in the first instance are spread over an infinitely larger area than those going to watch a rugby match or a cricket match. Your stadium covers a vastly larger area. Your performance lasts from dawn to well after dusk. They don't wish to rush in at the same moment or leave at the same moment. This is the problem of matches of set duration, particularly rugby matches. Everybody wants to get there at the same moment, everybody wants to leave at the same moment. I do think that the organisation for the Witwatersrand Show is a marvellous business. I would also point out that, save only on the Public Holidays, the vast majority of people who do attend that regularly are pretty well-to-do and have got cars and they can arrange chauffeurs for parking and things of that nature. It isn't quite a true analogy with the hoi polloi who want suddenly to rush to Ellis Park.

QUESTION:

That doesn't quite answer this question. We had an old racing circuit on the outskirts of Johannesburg. The access was shocking. It used to take them five, six, seven, eight hours to get back from the circuit at the end of a game but yet that did not deter motor racing in the early days before the war.

Mr. Fortune:

Everyone who went to the motor racing had a car. This is not true and will become less true of Johannesburg as this city grows and grows. It won't be possible for 100,000 people to get to a stadium each using their own motor car. You will then have a traffic problem. It is beyond solution, if you think that is possible.

QUESTION:

Mr. Chairman, we have heard from Mr. Fortune the background to the problems inherent in the training and presenting of sport. I am wondering if Mr. Fortune could say a few words about planning for the future. Those of us responsible for planning would like some guidance on whether we should have more stadiums for the future. How can we make Johannesburg a world's centre for sport, and how should we do it in bricks and mortar?

Mr. Fortune

Let me say at once that Johannesburg is already looked upon by sportsmen who come here from all parts of the world as extraordinarily well provided with sporting facilities. You can travel the world over and most certainly, in Europe, in Australia, but you won't find any city anywhere in Europe which offers more sporting facilities for its quite small population. Now this is a great city but it is not a large city, in terms of the truly big population centres and here you will find infinitely more sporting facilities for everybody. You will find a higher proportion of golf courses, bowling greens, lawn tennis courts, cricket fields in this city than you will find anywhere else. So, don't think I have in anyway tried to under rate what has been achieved in this city.

Now when you come to the question of what should you do to attract the big sporting audiences - it is audiences you have in mind, is it not? There are certain limiting factors. You know the tremendous hullabaloo there has been about the Olympic Games being held in Mexica city at an altitude of 6,000 ft. This is a limiting factor. It must always be a limiting factor in the development of Johannesburg as a centre where people will come to watch sport. If one wants to have a great sporting centre, I think it is essential that you shall have good facilities for aquatic sports, yachting, rowing and so on. These are very difficult to find in the immediate vicinity of Johannesburg.

Then again I would draw your attention to two of the stadia that have been put up in recent years in S.A. The first is the one in Port Elizabeth - the rugby ground at Humewood. This ground is a misfit. It has been built in a way in which the great majority of spectators are far too distant from the scene of activity to really enjoy it. And precisely the same thing has happened at Bloemfontein, where they have tried to incorporate a rugby field, a running track and a cycling track all within the same circumference. The result is that this will be ideal for the running and cycling, but it is rather ghastly for the rugby, where for instance my commentary point is just on 200 yds from the distant corner flags and if I can't see it very clearly nor can the spectators. These are points you have to keep in mind.

I mentioned that great silo in Melbourne. Well, in order to get in another 10,000 people there, they took it so high and so far back that the first time we did television cricket from this ground they thought the place to put the cameras was right at the back and the commentators trying to add a little bit to the picture found that they had no hope of watching the cricket at all. We had either to use our binoculars or talk about the picture on our monitors in front of us. We couldn't see from the distance we were what was happening out there in the middle. These are points you have to keep in mind when you come to erecting your great stadium.

I think if the rugby people can manage it, Ellis Park might be the place to have a great stadium. Because if you can arrange transport, the closer you can have your stadium to your centre of population, the better. This is true of the great Melbourne stadium. It is within walking distance of the centre of the town. These are important features.

Any thought that Johannesburg can really become a close packed series of stadia where every sport can be adequately put on view, I think is a little too ambitious. Geographic considerations do impose their limitations.

QUESTION:

I was most interested in the statement about West Indian cricket, and the upsurge of interest in recent generations in the West Indies. I find this dovetails with the popularity that one finds among the Bantu people for soccer. They play soccer in the streets and more recently in the stadia and soccer fields set up for them by the local authorities. I would like to ask Mr. Fortune two questions: To what extent would African soccer playing compare with the European standards? Recently we have had in this country an American scout who was looking for talent for American professional soccer and he expressed that he could find only one S.A. soccer player who was worthy of this honour and that was Kaiser Motaung who is now in America. Is there at this stage any comparisons to be made between the standards of the European and Africans?

Mr. Fortune:

I can't give you very much guidance on this. All I can say is that some years ago I happened to be in Nigeria for a couple of nights in Kano. Sheffield United - a much honoured British side - were there. I saw them play against the Nigerians in Kano. The match was a 2 All Draw and I thought the standard of the Nigerian soccer was very very good indeed. There have been one or two chaps go from this country. The fellow who plays Outside Right for Leeds United - I think his name is Johansen - who is unquestionably a top-notch player. I think the Native soccer players in this country probably lack skill, which I found was the case with the Xhosa rugby players. Now when I lived in Grahamstown, from time to time, they used to ask me to referee one of their rugby matches. These boys could play quite excellent rugby, but they couldn't play it for 35 minutes each way. They could play it for 15 minutes each way and after that they seemed not to have the stamina to see it through, and I think this is possibly still the case. The African hasn't quite the stamina for top class sport that long centuries of better eating, better training have possibly given to the pick of the white races. I would add that in one way the Xhosa rugby players were delightful. Whenever I refereed a match for them, you could be quite certain that at 10 o'clock the Sunday morning afterwards there would be two of them on our front doorstep with a bouquet for my wife.

QUESTION:

There is no sport which is more popular with the Africans in this country than soccer, for very obvious reasons. They grow up with this sport. But unfortunately in recent years there has been a gradual breakdown of the soccer league, among the players and clubs. Does Mr. Fortune know the inner story of why this should be and what can be done to resuscitate an organised league and who would do it?

Mr. Fortune:

No, I am afraid this is a subject on which I am completely ignorant. All I can say is that several of my friends in the National Football League are very interested in the wellbeing of our African soccer. But it is one of the great blank spots in my sporting experience that I have never made the time to becoming acquainted with African sport in Johannesburg.

Comment:

With regard to this question, this matter is receiving the very urgent attention of the City Council.

QUESTION:

I think we have now got to recognise that sport has now moved into the big business and entertainment field and I agree that from our personal recreation point of view we are wonderfully equipped with tennis courts, bowling greens, golf courses, but this is a symposium on what we can suggest for tomorrow in Johannesburg. I don't think tomorrow that sport is going to move back out of big business and public entertainment. Have you any clear cut views as to what you feel the next twenty years are going to demand as far as sporting facilities in the top echelon in Johannesburg are concerned.

Mr. Fortune:

I will be quite honest with you about this. I am a little fearful about the future of sport. I think that sport has got a great great disease coming into it and that is television. More and more people are finding it a happier way to enjoy their sport sitting at home than getting out to play it. I think this is largely the reason why English sport today is not as good as it was a decade ago. When last was there an English tennis player of any calibre or an English golfer. These things are happening because people are taking sport as entertainment and not as something for their own enjoyment. One finds it everywhere. The Australians complain bitterly. They can no longer find the hundreds of young cricketers they used once to have. I know to some extent this is due to the fact that every Australian great city is on the coast and water sports, surfing, have taken a large chunk.

I think the nigger in the woodpile regarding the future of sport is television. This is why I have been a little disparaging concerning television this morning. So what can you do about the future of sport in Johannesburg? I think you can pretty safely say that as long as you continue inculcating into the children doing is better than looking, Johannesburg sport and S.A. sport will look after itself.

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