



File

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cc: FCO

Subject file Sport
- Olympics - #3

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

4 June 1980

RECEIVED
SERIAL No. 1118A/8

Dear Nicholas.

Many thanks for your letter of 28 May about participation in the Moscow Olympics.

As you say, many countries have now decided not to participate in the Olympic Games in Moscow and their absence must diminish the value of the event.

I very much regret that the British Olympic Association (BOA) decided at their meeting on 25 March to confirm their acceptance of the invitation to go to Moscow. Neither the individual governing bodies which constitute the BOA, nor individual sportsmen and women, are bound by this decision. At the meeting, the British Hockey Board resolved not to send a team and they have since been joined by the Royal Yachting Association, the Joint Shooting Committee and the British Equestrian Federation.

We too remain firmly in favour of a boycott of the Summer Games and will continue to advise sporting bodies and individual athletes accordingly. As in the case of your Government, I and my Ministers have been urging sportsmen and women, through meetings, letters and broadcasts, not to go to Moscow. The House of Commons has supported a boycott by a large majority. I myself have now written four letters to the Chairman of the BOA on this subject. My latest letter to him on 20 May, which was copied to the Governing Bodies of Olympic Sports, set out once again the Government's views and informed him that British attendance at Moscow could only serve to frustrate the interests of Britain. We have at present under consideration a

meeting

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meeting between a senior Cabinet Minister and the relevant sporting federations in another effort to persuade them to change their minds.

I am encouraged to see that your and your Ministers' efforts have been recently rewarded by significant individual resignations from sporting bodies and teams and the resolve of the Men's and Women's Hockey Teams, the Equestrian Federation and the Yachtsmen not to go. Their action must further discredit the Moscow Games and give cause for reflection among athletes in this country as well.

I share your hope that the actions we are taking in our respective countries will convince our sports people that they have the same rights and the same responsibilities towards freedom and its maintenance as every other citizen.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher
