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CABINET OFFICE

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From the Secretary of the Cabinet: Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO

12th March, 1980

Ref. A01665

Dear Michael,
Olympics

I enclose a record of the meeting which the Prime Minister held on Monday, 10th March to consider the possibility of a Parliamentary vote on the Moscow Olympics.

I am sending copies of this record to the Private Secretaries of all the Ministers present and also to the Private Secretaries to the Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Hon. Douglas Hurd, and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Department of the Environment, Mr. Hector Monro.

*Yours ever,
David*

(D. J. Wright)

M. O'D. B. Alexander, Esq.

MOSCOW OLYMPICS

cc. ~~Master~~ Sek.

Note of a Meeting held at
10 Downing Street on
Monday 10th March at 2.30 pm

PRESENT

Prime Minister
Home Secretary
Lord Privy Seal
Secretary of State for the Environment
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
Parliamentary Secretary, Treasury

Sir Robert Armstrong, Cabinet Office
Mr R L Wade-Gery, Cabinet Office

In accordance with the Cabinet's decision on 6 March (CC(80) 9th Conclusions, Minute 2) the Meeting considered the possibility of a Parliamentary vote on the Moscow Olympics and the basis on which it might be held. It was agreed as follows.

- a. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in consultation with the Chief Whip, should arrange for a half-day debate on the Moscow Olympics in the House of Commons on 17 March, unless the Opposition preferred 12 March, which they seemed unlikely to do.
- b. The Chief Whip should make clear, both to the Government's supporters in Parliament and to the Opposition, that in the vote at the end of the debate the Government's supporters would be free to vote as they wished and not subject to Party discipline. This might well lead the Opposition similarly to allow their own supporters a free vote. The Chief Whip should however make clear privately to Government Ministers that they would be expected to support the Government, and to all the Government's supporters in the House that they would be expected to take part in the vote.

c. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster should settle the precise wording of the motion for debate in consultation with the Lord Privy Seal and the Chief Whip. It might appropriately record the view of the House that the British Olympic Association should reconsider their decision to support the attendance of British athletes at the Moscow Olympic Games and that Britain should not take part in those Games.

d. The opening Government speaker in the debate should be the Lord Privy Seal and the closing Government speaker should be the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Environment (Mr Monro). The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr Hurd) would be abroad at the time.

Cabinet Office

11 March 1980



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