

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

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CONFIDENTIAL-EXDIS

March 8, 1980

To: The Secretary  
From: S/OL - Nelson Ledsky *Nh*  
Subject: Summer Olympics: Early March Update

The starch seems to be slowly going out of our boycott effort. Though more than fifty countries stand with us, a number of critical Third World states such as Nigeria and Brazil, thus far on the fence, appear to be slipping away at the same time as some stalwart supporters--the UK and Australia--are finding it increasingly difficult to keep their national Olympic associations from accepting invitations to Moscow. This, coupled with the unwillingness of the FRG and Japan to work openly with us now, have hurt both our boycott effort and our drive to organize alternative games.

Here is where we stand in each area of current activity:

1. World Support. Our current count stands at 28 countries publicly supporting non-participation in Moscow and 22 others privately committed to our position. An additional 18 states lean in our direction. (List is attached.) There are at least another 20-25 countries clearly undecided. The fact that many states are waiting as long as possible before accepting or declining their invitation to Moscow in the hope of a change in the situation in Afghanistan has prevented us from developing a bandwagon of support especially in Africa and Latin America.

2. Commitment to Alternative Games. We have not had any positive responses as yet to your letters last week to the Foreign Ministers of the UK, Australia, China, West Germany, France, Italy, Japan and Kenya seeking an

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early commitment from their athletes to participate in alternative games. We expect positive replies from Nairobi, Canberra, and Beijing, but others may well straddle the fence, arguing that the locus should for the time being remain on getting National Olympic Committees to boycott the Moscow Games.

3. International "Steering Committee." A second intergovernmental meeting to plan for the organization of alternative games has been set for March 17-18 in Geneva. Participants as of this date are: US, UK, Australia, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Philippines, Kenya, Sudan, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Canada (as an observer). The meetings are expected to concentrate on concrete dates, sites and participants for alternate games to be held in late August. The British, Australians and Kenyans are prepared to have some games scheduled in their countries. Several U.S. cities are also eager to host games this August.

4. Funding of Alternative Games. The White House is working with interested private citizens to organize a public corporation that could begin receiving donations from individuals and companies for our alternative games. These funds might also be used to assist countries in the Third World, thus obviating the need for any kind of governmental assistance program for sports.

5. Position of U.S. Olympic Committee. The Executive Board of the U.S. Olympic Committee will convene on March 15 to draft a resolution supporting the President's position on non-participation in Moscow. This resolution will be confirmed by the USOC at its scheduled House of Delegates meeting in mid-April. Nonetheless, the USOC will then delay, at least until May, sending a letter to Moscow, confirming that a U.S. team will not compete in the Summer Games. The USOC has, however, begun considering the possibility of working directly with us on developing plans for alternative games in August or September.

Attachment:  
List of Countries

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