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Subject: Sport
UK participation in the
1980 Olympics: A2.

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

PRIME MINISTER'S 10 March 1980

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T 52/80

My dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your telephone call and for your letter of 5 March about the Olympic Games. I very much agree that we must keep the pressure up.

The next meeting in Geneva, which the Americans have now suggested should be on 17/18 March, should certainly provide an opportunity to examine in detail the possibilities, sport by sport, of mounting alternative games. We need to have a clear idea of these possibilities because the European Olympic Committees will be having an important meeting on 22 March and our own British Olympic Association are intending to reach a final decision on 25 March. I have therefore asked Douglas Hurd, the Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who has been overseeing the Olympic issue, to go to the meeting in Geneva. I take it therefore that you will be sending Mr. Ellicott, as indicated in your letter.

There are of course some difficult hurdles ahead. Alternative games could not be organised by Governments themselves; that has to remain the responsibility of the individual national and international sports federations. They in turn need to satisfy their athletes that alternative competitions would be as valid, in sporting terms, as the devalued Moscow Olympics. But this makes it all the more important that sportsmen and the sporting organisations would have in front of them the best indication which we can give them of what is on offer. We need to move the public debate to more positive ground by showing that a

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boycott of the Moscow Olympics need not deprive athletes of international competition of the highest standard. We will be ready to play a full part in this task.

We should certainly be glad to see Mr. Ellicott in London, perhaps just after the Geneva meeting.

Yours sincerely

Raymond D. White
