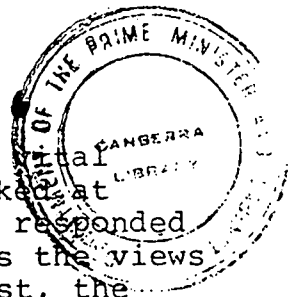


From the Press Office

SUMMARY OF ABC'S "A.M."



The Australian Olympic Federation today makes its decision on attending the Moscow Games. 'AM' looked at the way other countries throughout the world have responded to the call for a boycott of the Games, as well as the views of the Australian Government and Opposition. First, the Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser:

Prime Minister

I very strongly adhere to the view that the Government has stated right from the outset. Even though we know it involves difficulty for athletes and are sympathetic to that, we strongly have the view that Australia should not send a team to the Moscow Olympics. The Soviet Union has moved a very large and powerful army into Afghanistan - a small, inoffensive, non-aligned country. There is no justification for their move whatsoever. The Soviet Union has to understand that the Western world, independent nations of the world, are prepared to take actions to bring home their abhorrence and repugnance of that active invasion and suppression of a people. That is what it is all about. I have hardly met a person who doesn't say that boycotting the Moscow Olympics is the best way of bringing the message home to the Soviet Government and people. Our own Olympic Committee and Federation know the Government's views. I very much hope they will heed the Government's views in this particular matter, because when they make a decision it will be one that does not only involve sport, it involves the future of Australia in a real sense. It doesn't only involve sportsmen and women, it involves all Australians, young and old.

Next, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hayden:

Hayden

I believe Australia ought to go. Australian athletes ought to participate. It is quite clear that there will not be an effective boycott. A majority of the important countries of the world are going. It even seems as though the West German athletes may go. But in any case, most of the important countries are going, a majority of the African, and the Latin American countries are going. The simple fact is this: not being there will just impose an enormous sacrifice on Australian athletes; deny them the opportunity, quite literally, of a lifetime for them. It will do absolutely nothing about the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan. If anything, that presence will be larger and more formidable after the period when these Olympics are over. And there are other ways which will have to be explored to try to discourage Russia for her behaviour, quite inexcusable, in Afghanistan. But imposing this burden of sacrifice on Australian athletes is not the solution, and more than that, it reflects a very unfair, a very uneven way of responding to this problem. Wool, wheat, meat, minerals, all these things where vast profits are being made, continue to be sold to the Soviet Union. And indeed, contracts which expire for wheat, for instance, will be re-negotiated.

"AM" prepared an international round-up on the boycott. First to the home of the boycott, the United States. Report from Geoff McMullen.

United States

In President Carter's words, the United States does not wish to be represented in an Olympic host country that is invading and subjugating another nation in direct violation of human decency and international law. The American Government has fought hard to carry out the spirit of Mr. Carter's words and to rally other nations to express opposition to that picture of Soviet tanks rolling across Afghanistan, a strategic event, according to the Americans, that leaves the oil supplies of the Western world more vulnerable, and the Soviet Union poised to encourage more internal subversion in the shaky states around the Persian Gulf. The American Congress, and this nation at large, have been overwhelming supportive of President Carter's call for a Moscow Olympic boycott. Few have expressed much pleasure about not competing in Moscow, but it was widely agreed here that this was the moral and strategic course of action. For America's athletes, one of the greatest competitive teams on earth, I saw them at their training camp in the Rockies, feeling wretched that years of work would not give them the chance at an Olympic gold medal. In Washington today, a minority of 25 athletes was defeated in a last court action to request their Olympic Committee to change its mind. Difficult as that decision was last month, the American Olympic Committee voted overwhelmingly to boycott the Games, and that sealed America's course. The majority of the athletes, and of all Americans, has accepted and reacted with solidarity and patriotism to the President's call.

Canada

Despite the intention of several European countries to send Olympic teams to Moscow, the Canadian Government is holding firm to its commitment to boycott the Games. The decision, which had been made on April 22, will not be changed, says External Affairs Minister, who has also made it clear that the Canadian Government is disappointed by the defection of so many European allies from the boycott. In fact, it was on the premise that those allies would speak with a single voice against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, that Canada made its own announcement, somewhat belatedly compared to other countries. A few weeks before Ottawa had announced its intention to boycott the Games, the Canadian Olympic Committee had said it would send a full team. But when the Government finally did act four weeks ago, the Olympic Committee quickly acceded to the Government's wishes. Canadians by and large seem to favour the boycott. That is partly because the US is Canada's closest neighbour and major defence partner.

New Zealand

Here in New Zealand, the national Government of Prime Minister Rob Muldoon has made its no-go policy very clear. It has withdrawn the right of employees of the State to take special leave to go and participate, axed official Government presence at the Games, and ordered its Moscow Embassy to provide none of the special assistance to competitors usually provided. But it is sticking to its policy, in name at least, in not interfering in sports decisions. The sportsmen themselves are split. Most favour going, though yachtsmen, for example, voted against it, some with their boats already aboard ships steaming for Moscow. Meanwhile, the New Zealand Olympic Games Association is also divided. It has already voted as a whole to go, and the acceptance has gone to the Russians. But New Zealand Olympic chief, Lance Cross, has indicated he is against that decision and has called a meeting to review it. That was due last night, but it has now been postponed until next Thursday, much to the disappointment, we understand, of Australian Games officials who were hoping for a strong New Zealand vote in favour of going to strengthen their hand in making their decision today.

Most African countries are going. However, as John Burrell reports, the continent's newest nation, Zimbabwe, is still undecided.

Zimbabwe/Zambia

Newly independent Zimbabwe has not yet decided whether it will be sending athletes to the Moscow Olympics. It has been invited by the IOC, but Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, whose relations with Moscow are far from good, has yet to give the go-ahead. While sportsmen wait for the decision, however, the local Olympic Committee is preparing a team which will athletes, a shooting team and yachtsmen. The Committee Chairman said it would be a pity, after so many years of isolation following Mr. Smith's unilateral declaration of independence, if newly independent Zimbabwe was not represented at Moscow. Across the Zambisi River in Zambia, preparations for the Moscow Olympics have been underway for months. Like many other African countries, Zambia has rejected American pleas for a boycott of the Moscow Games. Its argument is that as Western countries refused to support Africa's appeal for a boycott of the last Commonwealth Games, because of New Zealand's sporting links with South Africa, there is no reason why Zambia should support a basically Western boycott of the Moscow Olympics.

Israel

Israel's Olympic Committee decided to boycott the Moscow Games by a vote of 17 against 8 just 48 hours before the deadline. This followed a recommendation for boycott by the Prime Minister, Mr. Begin, and by the sports committee of the Knesset Israel Parliament in Jerusalem. The athletes are disappointed, but they don't question the wisdom of the Olympic Committee's boycott decision. This country has often been the victim of discrimination by Arab States in international sports

Israel (cont)

meets, Israel has told the United States that in future it counts on American support to fight such discrimination against Israel as a gesture to mark Israel's refusal to go to Moscow.

The debate in Britain has been an intensely political one, with the Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher, taking a tough stand against participation.

Britain

Most of Britain's sporting bodies have rejected Government calls to boycott the Olympics. So Britain will be represented at Moscow. But some teams won't be there. The yachting, equestrian and hockey teams have decided not to go, and the shooting team are still deciding. And the overall size of the British Olympic team has had to be cut by a third to 200 athletes. The Olympic appeal has fallen well short of its target. The Government grant has been withdrawn, and many companies have also withheld their financial support. Mrs. Thatcher has conducted an unrelenting campaign against Britain's athletes for their decision to go to Moscow, and this week she made a final appeal for a change of heart. She said medals won at Moscow will be of inferior worth, and the ceremonies a charade. But most British athletes have said they are sick and tired of the repeated calls for a boycott. It is generally agreed that Mrs. Thatcher made a tactical error in pushing them too hard and too early, and if anything, it has strengthened the resolve of many sportsmen and women to press ahead regardless, to Moscow.

Scandinavia

Sweden will go to the Moscow. There has been no significant public opinion against going, and no Government involvement in the decision. So, on Tuesday this week, the Swedish Olympic Committee opted to go to the Moscow Games. As far as the other Nordic countries are concerned, only Norway has decided to back Carter's boycott. The Norwegian Government came out early, and strongly, for a boycott. The Norwegian Olympic Committee decided to let Parliament make the decision and the decision was not to go. The day the word came through, Norwegian wrestlers walked out en masse from the European Wrestling Championships, saying that if they were not to be allowed to compete against Russians in Moscow, it was hypocrisy for Norway to compete against them in the European Championships. The wrestlers action was a protest at their own Olympic Committee. Norway, Denmark and Iceland are all members of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, and are allies of the United States. However, the Norwegian Government was alone in its will to boycott. Denmark and Iceland are going. Finland and Sweden are neutral countries, but Finland's neutrality is of a special sort, overshadowed as that country is by the Soviet Union, and with, the same sort of friendship treaty with Moscow that Afghanistan enjoys, or enjoyed. Thus, Finland announced early that it would be taking part. There was no dissension.

Italy

Reported the Italians are deeply divided over whether to obey their Government's official decision this week to boycott the Games.

The Italian Government decided last Monday to follow the lead of most other Europeans and to boycott the Games. But the following day this decision was reversed by the Italian National Olympic Committee by a large majority vote. So now the athletes themselves are confused by what they call a decision Italian-style. About 200 Italian athletes were due to go to Moscow, a third of them serving in the armed forces. For them there will be no choice. They have to obey the Government order not to go. Teachers of physical education employed in State schools will also have to obey the ban. But many athletes say they intend to travel to Moscow all the same, even if there is no Italian flag and no national anthem.

France

France is also divided, despite the National Federation's recent decision to take part in the Games.

The French Government's attitude has always been that a boycott of the Games is an inappropriate repost to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The Minister for Youth and Sport agreed, however, that there will be no point in France taking part in Games reduced by other people's boycotts to an assembly of communist countries. On the other hand, it was for the French Olympic Committee to decide, which it recently did, saying France will take part in the Games. Not that this was a reflection of unanimous support. Four groups, representing football, hockey, ice skating and sailing wanted to delay a decision. Two, representing shooting and equestrian sports, had already announced that they did not wish to go to Moscow. Reaction among ordinary people has seemed to me uncomfortable. Athletes are divided as their Committee decisions showed, but one strong group here has announced that 'we don't want to be the hostages of politics. The Games belong to athletes and not to Governments'.

West Germany

West Germany, regarded by many as the lynch pin in the boycott debate, has decided to stay away from Moscow.

The Germans are angry and annoyed. Their decision to boycott the Games leaves them isolated in Western Europe, and their neighbours all decided to send teams to Moscow, with the exception of Norway, and tiny Lichenstein and Monaco. After the US boycott decision, the Bonn Government left no doubt it favoured a ban and it has given the political advice to the National Olympic Committee not to participate. After a lot of soul-searching, there was a majority of 59 to 40 in favour of a boycott. This met with public approval as 80% of the population were against German participation. The athletes are thinking differently. Their spokesmen said flaming appeals to the representatives to consider the interests

West Germany (continued)

of the athletes and not vote against Moscow. There is bitterness now, since the Germans are practically the only major sports nation in the world, besides the United States, which is not going.

Here in Australia, the Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Ellicott, has discounted reports that the German Olympic Committee is going to re-consider its decision to boycott the Games.

Question

Mr. Ellicott, is there any truth in the report that the Germans are re-considering their attitude towards competing in the Moscow Olympics?

Mr. Ellicott

I have had checks made with the Australian Embassy in Bonn, and the information we have received from them is that there is no substance to the story that the West German Committee is likely to re-consider its decision. And that has been checked with the Foreign Ministry in West Germany.

Rita Hamlyn in Melbourne: From what we learnt last night, the Australian vote today will be close. Kevin Gaspers, the Australian representative on the International Olympic Committee has just arrived in from overseas to attend the meeting. Ten delegates in all, three from Victoria and NSW, one each from South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania. The chairman is Syd Grange from Sydney. We were told last night that he has never used his casting vote, but there was speculation that today it could be different. Secretary-General, Judy Patching, was non-committal about which way the delegates would vote. It would be, we were told, a very, very close vote. It would be a democratic vote. John Rodder, South Australian delegate, says "yes, we are going", for Tasmania it is predicted that they will follow the no vote of the State body earlier this year. West Australian Housen(?) is in the hot seat. Every sporting body in that State wants to go. NSW, from what we have learnt, appears divided. One of the most active pro-Moscow lobbyists is athlete, Chris Wardlaw. He believes the vote will be very, very close, but they will make it to Moscow. His prediction: 6 to 5 in favour. 1:00 o'clock the meeting will begin. Four hours later, at 5:00 pm, President Syd Grange announces the result live on ABC radio. It will all be over: to Moscow or not. The tensions of the last few weeks will have ended for the delegates who have been torn between the Federal Government's wish for a boycott, and the wish of most athletes to compete at Moscow. Last night, Kerry Wheel spoke to a tense Phil Coles in Sydney about the agonies of the boycott decision today.

Phil Coles

I have known what was expected of me and I have canvassed the views of all of the sports involved in participation in the Olympic Games.

Question

If we do go then, what are our medal prospects?

Coles

Well, without putting too much pressure on the teams concerned, we have outstanding performances likely in rowing, canoeing. We have two very definite medal prospects. I understand the swimmers are really setting the pool on fire up in Brisbane, and there are one or two track and field athletes that are bound to show up.

Question

How much, though, do you think the medals will be worth?

Coles

Well, I suppose you can say what is the worth of an Olympic gold medal at any time.

It is argued by some officials of the Australian Olympic Federation that the absence of the United States and West German athletes will affect only the track, field and swimming events in the Games. They further argue that if Australia goes to the Games, it has a good chance in other events. This argument seems curious if you look at Australia's medal history. Report from Graham Ramsey. Since the modern Olympics began in Athens in 1896, Australia has won a total of 175 gold, silver, and bronze medals. Most of those, 73%, have been awarded for swimming and track and field events. The rest, only 27%, have been presented for events such as yachting, equestrian sports, boxing and cycling.

The civil insurrection in the provincial capital of Kwangju in the southwest of South Korea, has developed into a stand-off. 10,000 soldiers surrounded the city and the Korean airforce is standing by ready to strafe the city if necessary. Talks are being held between the South Korean administration and representatives of the people of Kwangju.

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Probably the most relieved Federal Minister now that Parliament is breaking for the winter recess, is Mr. Tony Staley. The Minister for Post and Telecommunications has been the target of Opposition Members in both Houses wanting to know why no action was taken over complaints by Sir Reginald Ansett that the Murdoch News Group had breached the Broadcast and Television Act in their purchase of Melbourne's Channel 0, now Channel 10. There have also been questions about the future of the Chairman of the Broadcasting Tribunal, Mr. Bruce Gyngell, whom Mr. Staley has appointed manager-designate of the proposed independent Multicultural Broadcasting Corporation. Talking of the independent Multicultural Broadcasting Corporation, the bill which would have brought the service into existence, was yesterday referred to a Senate committee, casting some doubt on the proposal to start ethnic television in October. Mr. Staley interviewed.

In France, the governing board of the International Energy Agency has achieved important co-operation between its 20 member countries, including Australia, on the question of oil imports. Report from John Starr in Paris: the IEA meeting has agreed to a substantial cut in oil imports by 1985 as a means of conservation.

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