

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews

UCSJ ENDORSES REMOVAL OF OLYMPICS FROM MOSCOW

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, in keeping with the position advocated since July, 1978, has urged President Carter to officially sanction the removal of the 1980 Olympics from Moscow. The organization has also expressed its support of the President's reassessment of U.S. foreign policy following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Robert Gordon, president of the UCSJ said, "We strongly believe that, given the current situation, our presence in Moscow will make a mockery of the ideals of international cooperation and sportsmanship."

In a letter to President Carter, dated Jan. 10, Mr. Gordon said, "We feel that removing the Olympics from Moscow will serve the interests of the American people, as well as those of Soviet Jews, whose fate is of special concern to us. Major U.S. newspapers have already reported Soviet plans to brutally 'cleanse' Moscow of 'undesirable elements', i.e., refuseniks and other religious and political dissidents. We know the history of President Nixon's visits to the Soviet Union in 1972 and 1974, when refuseniks suffered house-arrest or languished in Soviet jails for the duration of his visits. We must not allow the presence of American athletes and spectators in Moscow this year to legitimize this oppressive regime."

"Holding the summer Olympics in Moscow in 1980 is the moral equivalent of holding the Olympics in Berlin in 1936. We, therefore, urge you to call upon the leaders of the 51 nations in the UN who have declared their opposition to Soviet aggression in Afghanistan to organize a '1980 Freedom Olympics' to be held in a free, democratic nation."

Congressman Robert Drinan (D-MA), acting on behalf of UCSJ presented the White House with petitions signed by more than sixty five thousand people, urging that the Olympics be removed from Moscow. In a letter to President Carter, Representative Drinan said, "The Soviet Union's disregard for the provisions of the Final Act of the Helsinki Accords, failure to assure news agencies that they will be able to report the games without censure, and failure to provide adequate assurances that all participants in the 1980 Olympics will receive adequate protection, necessitate removal of the Games from Moscow." (The full text of the Drinan letter appears on page 2).

UPDATE FROM THE USSR

As public figures and journalists in this country continue to debate the issue of American participation in the Moscow Olympics, little is heard from Soviet Jews. The little news we do receive is not good.

* An American tourist tries to contact refuseniks in Kiev. They are too frightened to talk to him. Some KGB men pick up the American and drive him around town in silence, giving no indication of what they are planning to do with him. He was later released unharmed.

* Also in Kiev, a number of people who had received exit visas were visited in the middle of the night by police who took the visas away.

* The number of Jews arriving in Vienna has dropped dramatically. In the first 11 days of this month 900 people were processed - down 30% from December (which was already down from the previous month).

In the face of such discouraging news, we ask adopters to keep writing to their Soviet Jewish families. In hard times like these, every bit of encouragement helps.



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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

January 16, 1980

COMMITTEES:
JUDICIARY
SUBCOMMITTEES:
CHAIRMAN—CRIMINAL JUSTICE
CIVIL AND CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

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SUBCOMMITTEES:
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MANPOWER AND HOUSING

SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

SUBCOMMITTEES:
HEALTH AND LONG TERM CARE
RETIREMENT INCOME AND
EMPLOYMENT

President Jimmy Carter
The White House
1000 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I commend you for your strong condemnation of the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan and endorse your efforts to seek the removal of the 1980 summer Olympic Games to a site (or sites) outside the Soviet Union.

For over a year now, I have supported efforts of citizen activist groups in the U.S. to have the Olympics removed from Moscow because the Kremlin has refused to guarantee that the rights of its own citizens would not be jeopardized. During President Nixon's visits to the Soviet Union in 1972 and 1974, for example, proponents of Soviet compliance with the Helsinki Accords were placed on preventive house arrest or placed in jails for the duration of the visit. The Soviet Union's disregard for the provisions of the Final Act of the Helsinki Accord, failure to assure news agencies that they will be able to report the games without censure, and failure to provide adequate assurances that all participants in the 1980 Olympics will receive adequate protection necessitate removal of the Games from Moscow.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has added new impetus to the growing numbers of people in this country who support removal of the Games. In a move unprecedented in recent years, the Soviet Union has violated the right to national self-determination of the Afghan people. Strong measures must be taken to condemn this Soviet aggression in the eyes of the world community.

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews has compiled sixty five thousand signatures on petitions urging that the site of the Olympics be removed. It is my pleasure to forward these petitions to you as an indication of the support for your current efforts.

It is my sincere hope and the hope of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews that you will take the necessary steps to insure that the summer Olympic Games are not held in the Soviet Union.

With every best wish, I am

Cordially yours,

Robert F. Drinan

Robert F. Drinan
Member of Congress

CONGRESSMAN JACK KEMP CALLS FOR REMOVAL OF GAMES FROM MOSCOW

The following is excerpted from a statement by Congressman Jack Kemp:

. . . Parallels between the 1936 and 1980 Summer Olympic Games are frighteningly similar. Then, as now, the games were fashioned into a showcase in which to glorify a totalitarian regime. Then, as with the Soviets, the Nazis regime had begun its practice of official religious discrimination and engaged in military aggression, genocide, and blatant disregard of the condemnation expressed by the world community, of its domestic and foreign policies.

In 1936, a boycott was seriously discussed, since it was felt that the games were being used for political purposes. Groups such as the "American Good-Will Athletic Union to Preserve the Olympic Ideal, Inc." were formed, with the approval of the U.S. Supreme Court, to seek the removal of the games from the manipulation of Hitler.

Sadly, those who took a stand in behalf of human rights did not prevail, as in the case of Ernest Jahncke, an American sportsman and former assistant secretary of the Navy, who was dropped from the International Olympic Committee after a nine year tenure. The reason for his removal: he dared to suggest that we could not be sure that American athletes would not be discriminated against for their racial background or religious beliefs.

Incredibly, the decision not to boycott the 1936 games was made within two months after the Nazis published the anti-racial, anti-Jewish Nuremberg Laws.

. . . The United States and its people need to stand up for what they believe, not give in to inevitability. That attitude led to the slaughter of six million Jews. We have many times vowed "never again." Removing the Olympic games from Moscow, along with all the related glory and celebration of the Soviet state, would be a giant step in keeping that commitment.

Unfortunately, neither the President nor the Congress have the authority to remove the games. But neither should remain silent in the effort to convince the U.S. Olympic Committee and the Olympic committees of the other participating nations of the desires of the American people and their elected representatives.

. . . We have heard a multitude of evidence that the Soviets are cleansing Moscow of dissidents and "refuseniks", preparing school children for the onslaught of foreign tourists with vicious lies to frighten them, and then will ship them off to summer camps so that they have no opportunity to be exposed to visitors.

Let's save the Soviets the trouble.

Let's show the Soviets that the West will not give them silent consent and that we have learned the lessons of history. Columnist George F. Will reminds us that the Olympics are big business and if we allow the Soviets to use them for purposes of propaganda "we will confirm the Soviets' belief in our pursuit of commerce to the point of self-destruction, and our pursuit of amusement to the point of decadence."



Rodgers dislikes boycott idea

BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE JANUARY 6, 1980

Rodgers responds

Proposed boycott is 'just a threat'

From Wire Services

NEW YORK — The possibility of an American boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow is contrary to the Olympic spirit, counterproductive and, luckily, also very remote, athletes and coaches said yesterday.

In the wake of President Carter's suggestion Friday of a possible boycott because of the Soviets' invasion of Afghanistan, those most directly affected felt politicization of the Olympics is of no use.

"I think it's just a threat and I don't think he would ever try to do that kind of thing," said Bill Rodgers, the United States' top hope in the marathon. "I don't think it's a good idea for any reason at all. I don't think politics has any part in the Olympics."

Rodgers, who has won virtually every prestigious marathon — except the Olympics — further said he might not respect such a call for withdrawal.

"I don't know a lot about what's happening over there and I would have to study the situation a lot better, but right now, off the top of my head I would not accept it (a boycott)," said Rodgers in a telephone interview from his Melrose home. "The Olympics are not a political tool for anyone's use — whether it is the President of the United States or the head of the Soviet Union."

"The Olympics are bigger than this. There are a million and one crises around the world every day. Maybe this isn't a little crisis but there are other ways to deal with it — political means, diplomatic means, economic means — and that's the way it should be done."

Olympic track coach Jimmy Carnes, who also feels the boycott is a long shot, said athletics can never be completely exempt from political pressure but questioned the propriety of the federal government's statement.

"Any time there's international competition there will be political overtones," he said from his Gainesville, Fla., office. "I still want to run against Russia, Cuba and East Germany because I want the world to know that our system is the best in the world, and I'd much rather see us on the playing field and track than at war."

"But how can our political leaders tell us we can't compete when they haven't done anything to help us pre-

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—BILL RODGERS

pare to compete? I've seen no federal funding. They might be able to take away passports, but if it comes to that, I think the American athletes should have the choice."

Another top contender to make the Olympic track team, Anthony Tufariello, said he would accept the President's call for withdrawal — if it came.

"If President Carter does do it, it's because he is acting in the United States' best interests and I would accept it," he said.

Rodgers and Carnes had little concern for the safety of participants.

"I wouldn't be worried the slightest bit," said Rodgers. "There will be some 150,000 athletes there, not to mention the whole world watching on TV. I don't think the Soviet Union would make trouble. Possibly one of our own organizations, the CIA or something, would do something, but I don't think the Russians would."

Although Rep. Robert Baumann (R-Md.), head of the National Conservative Union, said he would urge the 60,000-member group to ask the International Olympic Committee to shift the 1980 Games from Moscow, most athletes seemed to agree with Don Miller, executive director of the United States Olympic Committee, who said Friday he regretted that the federal government found it necessary to politicize the Olympics, and that

a boycott would be a "double-edge sword" which might endanger the entire Olympic Movement.

"If the US doesn't go, we really hurt ourselves and we open ourselves to a boycott at the 1984 Games in Los Angeles," said Rodgers, who added that his conversations with fellow American athletes as well as African competitors ordered home from the 1972 Games in Montreal by the countries indicated that athletes should not be used as political pawns. "Maybe there are some people who would support such action, but I haven't met them yet."

Perhaps the most basic sentiment was expressed by Al Oerter, 42-year-old four-time gold medal winner in the discus aiming for a fifth at Moscow.

"I would be disappointed to have the Games taken away from American athletes. I have worked 3½ years for this," he said. "In 1956, Russia invaded Hungary and the Games went on. In 1968, Russia invaded Czechoslovakia and the Games went on. That sort of thing continues to go on. How can you solve political problems through athletics?"

However, NCAA executive director Walter Byers sided with the President.

"I personally would support a decision to boycott the Games as a national response to an unacceptable aggression by the host country," said Byers. "I think the interest of the United States and its leadership position in the world far surpasses the interests of amateur athletics, even the Olympic Games."

'I would be disappointed to have the Games taken away from American athletes. I have worked 3½ years for this.'

—AL OERTER

Neville Trotter is as right as two martinis at lunch. He is the Conservative member of the British Parliament who has asked the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, to lead a worldwide boycott of the Olympics in Moscow to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

"Another venue should be found," Mr. Trotter says, "and if necessary the games should be postponed for a year. This is the one lever we have to show our outrage at this naked aggression by Russia. We should do all we can to reduce the Moscow Olympics to a shambles."

Sports
of
The Times

The boycott movement hasn't gained much momentum as yet. It was discussed as a possibility at a meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization nations in Brussels. On the "MacNeil/Lehrer Report" on television, Senator Carl Levin of Michigan said a boycott should be considered, and Senator Richard G. Lugar of Indiana said it would be "small potatoes."

At the International Olympic Committee headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland, Lord Kilianin, president of the I.O.C., declared the games would go on and pleaded for politicians to stay out of Olympic affairs. If horses ran as true to form as the Olympic oligarchy, the favorite would never lose. Ever since they learned to speak with heads buried in sand, the badgers have been saying that politics has no place in the Olympic movement, and as long as any of them can remember, the games have been a stage for political discord and social protest.

The official — and inflexible — position of the Olympic brass on these matters was enunciated almost half a century ago by the noblest badger of them all, the late Avery Brundage. In 1935 there was strong sentiment in this country against participation in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, on the grounds that sending a team to that carnival of Nazism would be tantamount to endorsing Hitler.

"Frankly," said Brundage, then president of the United States Olympic Committee, "I don't think we have any business to meddle in this question. We are a sports group, organized and pledged to promote clean competition and sportsmanship. When we let politics, racial questions or social disputes creep into our actions, we're in for trouble."

We Should Have Known.

The boycott movement was defeated, and Avery in victory was even franker than before: "Certain Jews must now understand," he wrote, "that they cannot use these games as a weapon in their boycott against the Nazis."

Hitler's anti-Semitism eventually led to the unspeakable Holocaust, but in 1935 the only known fatality was the suicide of Fritz Rosenfelder after his expulsion from an athletic club in Wurtemberg.

When Americans look back to the 1936 Olympics, they take pleasure only in the memory of Jesse Owens's four gold medals, in the discomfiture of Joseph Goebbels at the success of America's "black auxiliaries." Except for that, we are ashamed at having been guests at Adolf Hitler's big party.

We should have known better. As early as 1933, Julius Streicher's *Der Sturmer* had carried this comment on Rosenfelder's suicide: "We need waste no words here. Jews are Jews and there is no place for them in German sports. Germany is the Fatherland of Germans and not Jews, and the Germans have the right to do what they want in their own country."

Strength of an Ideal

We didn't know better, and we were painfully slow to learn. Gen. Charles E. Sherrill, an American member of the I.O.C., asked that Helene Mayer be invited to compete for Germany to prove that Jews would not be discriminated against. Daughter of a Christian mother and Jewish father, she was a champion fencer who had represented Germany in the 1928 and 1932 Olympics. On his return to America, General Sherrill said:

"I went to Germany for the purpose of getting at least one Jew on the German Olympic team, and I feel that my job is finished. As for obstacles placed in the way of Jewish athletes or any others in trying to reach Olympic ability, I would have no more business discussing that in Germany than if the Germans attempted to discuss the Negro situation in the American South or the treatment of the Japanese in California."

Jews were barred from swimming facilities in Germany, from the ski resort of Garmisch-Partenkirchen and from all private and public practice fields, and of course they were not permitted to compete in Olympic tryouts. Yet Frederick W. Ruben, secretary of the United States Olympic Committee, said:

"Germans are not discriminating against Jews in their Olympic tryouts. The Jews are eliminated because they are not good enough as athletes. Why, there are not a dozen Jews in the world of Olympic caliber."

Said General Sherrill: "There was never a prominent Jewish athlete in history."

The Olympic brass won that time. We did not meddle in the internal affairs of Germany.

The games went on in Australia almost immediately after Soviet tanks crushed a revolt in Hungary, though blood flowed when Hungarians met Russians in water polo. The games went on in Mexico City two weeks after Army machine guns massacred more than 30 students in the Plaza of the Three Cultures. The games went on in Munich while Arab terrorists were murdering 11 members of the Israeli delegation. On that occasion, though, they took time out for a memorial service that Avery Brundage turned into a pep rally.

"We have only the strength of a great ideal," Avery said. "I am sure the public will agree that we cannot allow a handful of terrorists to destroy this nucleus of international cooperation and good will we have in the Olympic movement. The games must go on."

That day it was written here: "The men who run the Olympics are not evil men. Their shocking lack of awareness can't be due to callousness. It has to be stupidity."

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 1980

Red Smith

Boycott the Moscow Olympics

Saturday, January 12, 1980

THE WASHINGTON POST

A 10

Times Finds a Smith Sports Column Unfit to Print

By Lee Lescaze
Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Jan. 11—A Red Smith sports column was killed this week for the first time in his 35-year career when his editors at The New York Times claimed his appeal for a boycott of the summer Moscow Olympics contained errors and amounted to a personal crusade.

The 74-year-old Smith, an institution on the American sports scene, said today he also was told that The Times didn't like the column's tone.

Smith's assertion that "sentiment in favor of a boycott [would] spread as Soviet tanks and trucks press on with their bloody work [in Afghanistan]" especially vexed Le Anne Schreiber, The Times' sports editor.

"Hell, I told her, you could have changed it to 'charitable work,'" Smith said.

"It's all a little difficult to figure out," Smith said of the decision to keep his Wednesday column out of The Times and to kill it after it had been sent out to clients of the paper's news service.

"If it hadn't gone out on the news service there wouldn't have been a problem," Schreiber said of the controversy.

Schreiber said she didn't relish being the first editor to kill a Smith column, but argued she had no choice because Smith had quoted "inaccurate" information he had picked up from a Washington Post story.

Smith cited a report by The Post's

Moscow correspondent, Kevin Klose, that Soviet authorities were preparing to ship dissidents, drunkards and psychotics out of Moscow to clean up the city for the 300,000 Olympic visitors expected in Moscow for the July 19-Aug. 3 games.

Schreiber said The Times earlier had asked its Moscow correspondent, Craig Whitney, about such reports and had been told they were only rumors and not fit to print.

"Had I known that, I wouldn't have used these facts. They weren't necessary to the column," Smith said, adding that he wondered why the offending paragraphs weren't simply excised.

"It was my best editorial opinion that to do that would butcher the column," Schreiber said. The decision was entirely hers, she said, though she added, "I would have liked to pass the buck to someone else."

The report Smith quoted ran in The Washington Post Dec. 17, 1979. Philip Foisie, assistant managing editor for foreign news said today that Klose's account was accurate and that the public needed to be aware of the situation in Moscow.

The column was doomed anyway. HAD IT SURVIVED Schreiber, it would have next faced deputy managing editor Arthur Gelb, who said he would have killed it even if it had been free of its alleged errors.

"The inaccuracies are one thing, but the main thing is that it sounded like a crusade," Gelb said.

In his Jan. 4 column, Smith called for a boycott as the nation's most telling response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. "He'd already struck that note. It really began to sound like a crusade."

Gelb and Schreiber agree that neither has any objection to Smith's advocacy of a U.S. pull-out from the Moscow games. "Ideologically, I agreed with him," Gelb said, "but journalistically, we don't agree that Red should be on a crusade."

Is Smith free to write about the Olympics again?

Gelb and Schreiber's answers differ, at least in tone.

The sports editor said he is free to rewrite his killed column any time and it will be printed when it is error-free.

Gelb said Smith could write about an Olympics boycott after The Times had done more reporting on the subject and new facts were available.

"I never have questioned the right of an editor to say what can go in his newspaper, but I can disagree with that decision as I do in this case," said Smith, who finds the flap about the column "a bloody bore." He said: "I can have my own fights inside the office."

Smith, who won the Pulitzer prize for commentary in 1976, said that his first reaction to the killing of his column was "that us kids should stick to fun and games" and leave events like

the invasion of Afghanistan to people more serious than sportswriters.

When asked what his future columns will deal with, Smith said dryly, "I'll write about the infield fly rule."

His column was potentially objectionable to The Times for one additional reason: In it, he referred to his paper in a not altogether admiring way.

"Chances are," Smith wrote, "savants who write editorials in The New York Times weren't even reading that page in 1936, but the newspaper opposed participation in the Nazi [Berlin] Olympics of that year. When the Nazis deliberately and arrogantly offend against our common humanity," The Times said, "sports does not transcend all political and radical consideration."

As a matter of Times policy, any reference to the newspaper on any page except the editorial and op-ed pages must be checked by news editor Allan Siegel.

Gelb said that the column would not have been killed for the mention of The Times of 1936, however.

The calls and letters Smith has received since word of the column kill got out support his call for a boycott, he said. "To my amazement, everyone agrees."

He finds something the Olympics chairman said in 1936 interesting. At the conclusion of the Hitler-inspired Berlin games, Avery Brundage declared, "except for the ancient Greeks, no country caught the Olympic spirit so well as Germany."



RED SMITH

... column killed by Times

Afghan crisis seen as threatening cutoff in visas to Russian Jews

By JONATHAN BRAUN

The sudden chill in Soviet-American relations, brought on by events in Afghanistan, is likely to result in a sharp decrease in the number of Jews permitted to leave the Soviet Union.

Such is the view of veteran activists in the Soviet Jewry movement — Americans who have specialized as much in tracking Soviet emigration policy as they have in mobilizing American public opinion.

"The outlook is very, very grim, at least in the short run," says Glenn Richter, executive director of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry. "Of course, at this preliminary stage of the game, all any of us can do is make a guess as to what is going to happen. Nobody has a line into the Kremlin."

The Soviet government is letting out about 4,000 Jews a month. Though a tightening of the emigration process appeared underway even before the Red Army moved across the border and into neighboring Afghanistan (see story on page 15), it is the unexpected prospect of even a temporary return to the Cold War that makes plausible Richter's pessimistic forecast.

Soviets' incentives in doubt

"For the past several years, the Soviet Jewry movement has looked at increased U.S.-Soviet contacts as an avenue for exercising leverage," explains Margy-Ruth Davis, executive director of the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry. "The more the Soviets wanted from us, the better our chances were to extract increased emigration numbers from them."

"During the past week," Davis continues, "President Carter has pulled many of the key levers in the U.S.-Soviet relationship. The proposed SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) treaty has been put on hold. The threat of an Olympics boycott has been raised. Sales of grain and technology items have been cancelled, and official visits and exchanges have been indefinitely postponed."

"All of these moves leave the Soviet Union without many of the incentives that propelled them towards increased emigration. With little more to lose, and as a slap at the President's human rights policy, a radical cutback in exit visas might well be expected."

Olympics a factor

The key word, according to some Sovietologists, is *might*. In the view of these experts, the Soviets are not likely to crack down on emigration unless their relations with the U.S. cool to a point of deep freeze.

"If the Russians are going to cut off emigration they're going to do it after the Olympics," says one informed source who rates the chances of a successful boycott of the Moscow summer games as "about

zero."

Besides, adds this Soviet specialist, "it has never really been clear what is the Soviet motivation for increasing or decreasing Jewish emigration. There is even a theory that they are letting some Jews leave for internal reasons — because they want to get rid of them."

Glenn Richter disagrees. Like Margy-Ruth Davis and other movement leaders, he believes that a desire for Western acceptance — as well as Western trade credits, technology and hard currency — are the prime factors behind the flow of emigrants.

Would he, then, favor a less dramatic U.S. response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan — in the hope of attempting to leave intact key pressure points?

Favor strong response

"No," replies Richter. "A strong America can stand on Afghanistan is, on balance, more useful right now than being in a position to apply pressure on these areas."

Richter maintains that sooner or later, the pressure points, or levers, will return to the Soviet-American relationship.

"After all," he adds, "once they finish with their initial posturing, superpowers have a way of accommodating each other."

"EXACTLY! YOU SHOULDN'T GET MIXED UP WITH POLITICS"

The Boston Globe Monday, January 7, 1980

Why light the Olympic torch?

By GEORGE F. WILL

WASHINGTON — For several years, and for a steadily lengthening list of reasons, many sensible people have favored two actions, one supremely important, the other less so but still worth doing: blocking SALT II and boycotting the Moscow Olympics.

SALT II, the critical matter, was blocked before the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. The Soviets know it was blocked. So when President Carter, responding to the invasion, made much of his decision to defer consideration of an agreement that he did not have the votes to ratify, the Soviets had one more reason for despising us.

Boycotting the Olympics is, needless to say, not adequate as a full response to the invasion. But it will injure Soviet interests, at least a bit, which is more than the Carter Administration has done in three years of unilateral and unreciprocated weapons curtailments, and record grain sales and liberalized technology transfers. More important, boycotting the Olympics will help put an end to the dangerous delusion that, regarding the Soviet Union, the period of maximum danger has passed. A boycott would be a fireball in the night, arousing Americans from the slumbers of detente.

President Carter, the surprised President, was so rudely awakened when Brezhnev lied to him about Afghanistan that he says he is undergoing a "dramatic change" in his "opinion of what the Soviets' ultimate goals are." Dramatic, peg-

haps, but how serious is change brought on by a 55-year-old man suddenly noticing a 62-year-old reality, the nature of Soviet statecraft?

The New York Times solemnly reports: "Some experts believe that relations may not be restored to normal again until after the elections next November." Some experts are expert at begging the question, which is: What should "normal" relations be with a regime that is increasingly expansionist abroad, and domestically has begun purges and other measures to "cleanse" Moscow for the summer games? To discourage them from having "corrupting" contacts with visitors, some Soviet teachers are telling children that Americans will offer them chewing gum, poisoned, or infected with bacteria to spread disease. The regime is compiling lists of "troublemakers," such as dissidents or Jews who have applied for emigration. Many will be sent from Moscow or put under house arrest before the games begin.

For the first time in 44 years, the Olympics will occur under the auspices of an aggressively anti-Semitic regime. The Nazis came to power in 1933, after the decision to hold the 1936 games in Berlin. The US Amateur Athletic Union then voted to boycott the games. But as sportswriter Jim Murray reminds us, America's "Olympics lobby," aided by German lies (such as that 21 Jews had been appointed to the German team), undid the boycott. This, in spite of the fact that the Nazis published the odious "Nuremberg Laws" two months before the decision was taken to overturn the boycott. In the spirit of

detente, mid-1930s-style, the Germans did remove, temporarily, the "Jews Not Wanted" signs from Garmisch before the Winter Olympics.

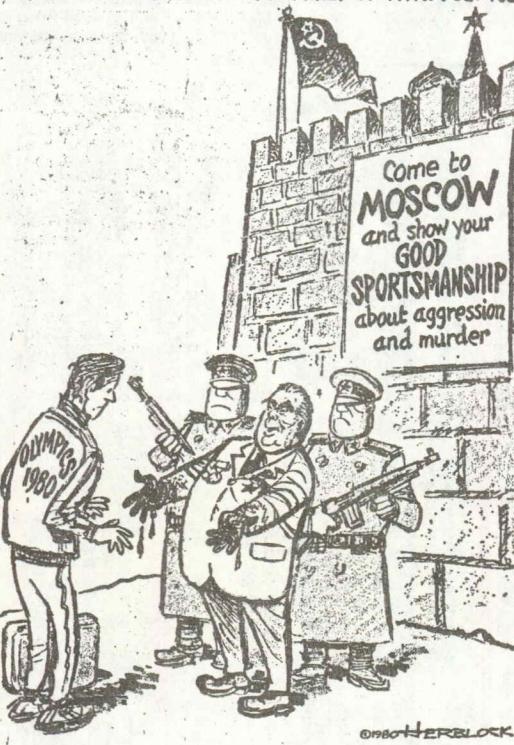
It is, of course, unrealistic to hope that our allies will act allied in boycotting the Olympics. And the United States alone cannot stop the 1980 games. But by boycotting, the United States could strip much of the glamour from them, sharply diminish their value as a media event, and minimize the Soviets' ability to use the 1980 games as the Nazis used the 1936 games: to put a human face on an inhuman system.

The other big loser would be NBC, which bid more than \$80 million for the broadcasting rights. NBC took a risk, when it paid so much for the right to do business with a totalitarian regime.

What NBC did was perhaps defensible as business, but certainly was dubious (to say no more) as citizenship. If NBC takes a bath, perhaps that will have a usefully chilling effect on the entire business community, which scrambles for Soviet contracts.

The Olympics, which are big business for a few and mere amusement for millions, will be a propaganda bonanza for the Soviets, if we let them be. If we do, we will confirm the Soviets' belief in our pursuit of commerce to the point of self-destruction, and our pursuit of amusement to the point of decadence.

Especially in recent years, we have given the Soviets too many reasons for despising us. But it is a depressingly safe wager that when the Olympic flame is lit, in Moscow, it will illuminate one more reason.



Washington Post - Jan. 1980

Jimmy Breslin/Bon Russkins from Winter Olympics

When President Carter spoke of a possible United States boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, we presume that he also meant that Russian teams might be barred from entering this country to compete in the Winter Olympic Games next month at Lake Placid, N.Y.

The Winter Olympics is an excellent place for Carter to show that all his words are lashed to fact; that when he speaks Olympics, there is no foot racing; when he mentions grain, there is no cattle feed, and if he ever tells the Russians that Saudi Arabian oil fields are untouchable, then it will be exactly that. The Olympics, therefore, is a way of ensuring that the chances of Russia discounting or dismissing what Carter says should be greatly diminished.

Carter also probably should announce that the Russians are not welcome at Lake Placid, to prevent them from beating him to it and declaring a boycott.

In disinviting the Russians to the Winter Olympics, Carter will show that for once this nation is not allowing money interests to interfere with policy: the television network and the sponsors and the people in the Lake Placid area depending on the Winter Games for income become secondary to letting a Russian team pass customs at Kennedy Airport.

that, then for sure they will wail in print that the treasured Olympics should be saved. Some Americans do have an emotion that to relinquish the Olympics is to give up a treasured value. Ordinary thought, however, shows the Olympic value to be something different.

The Olympics are artificial from top to bottom, and nowhere will this be more evident than next month at Lake Placid. The Winter Olympics consist of a lot of events that nobody ever has heard of, seen, or cared about: the luge, the Nordic combined, the biathlon. However, television will take one of these common events and mix it with so much fab and vivid color and dramatic camera angles and throbbing announcements that it will all seem fabulous to a person sitting at home.

Only a few will be present in the cold at Lake Placid. It is a tiny place, and there is no housing, no new grandstands or pavilions for spectators. There will be unknown competitors in unheard-of events, swarms of technicians at television camera locations and a few restaurants filled with rich trash who wear fur coats and arrive by helicopter.

So Carter will do no harm — the Winter Olympics are not worth discussion — and at the same time he will help Russia understand that we now draw lines with meaning.

Of course, we then step out of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. Here, too, nothing is lost. The history of the Olympic Games is so corrupt that you wonder what we were ever doing in them in the first place. People in this country always have been raised on the outrageous lie that it was a great occurrence in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin when Jesse Owens, black, won so many races that Hitler was made furious and

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foolish. This is a fable. Holding the 1936 Olympics in Berlin was a great stroke for Hitler. It made him appear legitimate in front of the world and it took at least a couple of years for that to wear off. Hitler's personal filmmaker, Leni Riefenstahl, produced a movie about the 1936 Olympics called "Olympiad." It made Hitler, through sports, a god. Today, still, it is the best sports movie I ever have seen.

In 1968, at Mexico City, 30 Mexican college students were gunned down before the Games and no mention of them was made. Then when the finest American runners, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, gave the black power salute as they were receiving medals, the American Olympic Committee, which seems to be made up of as many blazer-wearing, country club fools as can be found, went berserk.

In 1972 at Munich, 12 Israeli athletes were killed by Arab terrorists and the Olympic Committee went right on with the Games. That act of cold ignorance causes all Olympic drama to become pathetic and the idea of the Games worthless.

What are they, anyway? Every four years, international television creates a star out of some tiny Russian who was, at age 6, found to have excellent form at jumping up and down on her bed. The Russian girl was whisked off to a government camp and trained for years as a gymnast. Then, on the American networks covering the Olympics, here was an Olga Korbut and a Nadia Comaneci (who is from Communist Romania). Nobody ever cared about gymnastics until television made stars of these two. And nobody has been shown how the two of them wound up as brooding, ailing teenagers who now were too old for a sport that is essentially empty and boring. I once sat alongside Nadia at a luncheon in New York during which the sponsor, a gin company, gave her a \$10,000 check as woman athlete of the year. Nadia took the check and didn't even know how to say thank you.

The rest of the Olympics is a test of amateurs vs. subsidized professionals, with the East German team using more drugs per event than Americans are used to seeing in the worst supermarket parking lots.

Anyway, Carter probably has no choice. There can be no way for an American team to go to Russia, a country with an established policy of anti-Semitism, and by our presence give Moscow prestige and money. Forget the moral aspect. Just read the headlines and you'll see that Israel isn't such a burden to the United States this week. Rather, it is a wonderful country for air bases close to oil fields we depend upon.

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★★★ 43

Olympic Boycott: 'A Genuine Punishment'

For the Soviet Union, the Olympic Games are a matter of legitimacy, and that makes them a matter of grave concern. Participants in the debate over whether to boycott the Games in Moscow this year to protest the invasion of Afghanistan should realize that no other non-military move could so directly challenge the Soviet leadership, or so startle the Soviet public.

The quest for legitimacy has been one of the principal themes of Soviet history since the Bolshevik Revolution. This is not surprising in a system controlled by revolutionary usurpers. No Soviet leader has ever won a legitimate election, nor even inherited legitimate sovereign power. This simple fact guarantees the insecurity of Soviet leaders—security that leads, for example, to the harsh repression of Soviet dissidents even as they are dismissed in official accounts as a meaningless fringe element. Dissidents of any kind must terrify insecure autocrats.

The contemporary generation of Soviet leaders has sought to enhance its claim on the loyalty of 280 million citizens by increasing Soviet stature in the world and maintaining peace and prosperity at home. In Soviet terms, it has succeeded quite well on both counts. These have been good years for the Soviet autocrats.

But the fear of illegitimacy haunts the Soviet leaders still, partly because they know their society contains many potentially restless elements and partly because the Soviets have never been

able to establish reliable, stable relationships with foreign countries—even countries that they occupy militarily, like Czechoslovakia.

For many years the Russians sought to host an Olympiad, and repeated rejections of their applications caused anger and resentment. Finally, at a time when the era of détente seemed firmly established and when no other major country wanted to compete for the honor, the International Olympic Committee picked Moscow as the venue for this year's summer Olympics.

There should be no underestimating the significance the Soviets themselves put on their selection. They have been treating this Olympiad as one of the great events of their modern history, and the preparations have been lavish. The entire budget for new construction in the Soviet capital for several years has been devoted to building Olympic facilities. At the same time, the authorities have been making preparations to deport potential troublemakers—including political and religious dissidents—from Moscow during the Olympics. And until now, at least, they have refused to make arrangements to sell Western publications in Moscow during the Games.

Like Hitler in 1936 (and participants in this debate should also study that Olympiad), the Soviets are preparing a great propaganda offensive for this summer. Olympic committees in the West may see a distinction between politics and sports, but the Soviets do not, and never have. Only in the Soviet bloc do the same athletes represent their country in both professional and amateur world championships.

An effective boycott of the Games this summer would be a tremendous blow to Soviet prestige;

but perhaps more significant, the collapse of this Olympiad would send a genuine shock through Soviet society. The leaders would explain it as a hostile manifestation of imperialism and, in the short run, might fan Russian xenophobia on their own behalf; but in the longer term, the failure of these Olympics could cause the first serious challenge to the legitimacy of Soviet power in many years.

The Soviet public today is not totally isolated from the outside. Tens of millions of Russians listen daily to foreign radio broadcasts; thousands more travel abroad or meet visiting foreigners. The idea that an Olympiad could collapse because of international disapproval of actions by the Soviet government would certainly sink in. The consequences of this are unpredictable, but they must terrify Soviet leaders. It might turn out that the Soviet people decide they have been humiliated by their own rulers. This is not necessarily likely, but it is possible.

A boycott of the Olympics will not retrieve the national sovereignty of Afghanistan, nor ensure the future tranquillity of Pakistan and Iran, nor preserve Western interests in South Asia. But it would be a genuine punishment to the Soviet regime.

Moreover, a successful Olympiad would persuade the Soviet leadership that it has little to fear from the outside world, no matter what it has done to Afghanistan and the norms of international behavior. (Hitler reoccupied the Rhineland a few months before the 1936 Olympics.) Western Olympic committees may declare that by going to Moscow they are not endorsing the Soviet regime or its behavior, but the Russians will surely see it differently.

Robert G. Kaiser, a reporter on the national staff of The Washington Post, was this paper's Moscow correspondent from 1971 to 1974.

Union of Councils for Soviet Jews

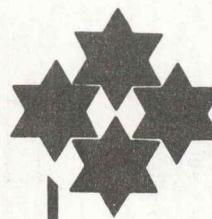
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SPECIAL OLYMPIC ISSUE

This special issue is devoted to the controversy raging over the 1980 Moscow Olympics; should the U.S. attend, boycott or remove the Olympics?

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