

LOBBY BRIEFING

time: 11.00 date: 18.1.80

● PRIME MINISTER'S ENGAGEMENTS

Working at No. 10 and spending the weekend at Chequers.

The White Paper List was distributed.

STATEMENTS

Humphrey Atkins on Security in Northern Ireland at 1100.

ANSWERS OF INTEREST

No. 160 - Mr. Ernie Ross: rules relating to members of the Cabinet holding directorships or shareholdings in companies.

No. 210 - Mr. Dennis Canavan: immunity from prosecution after being involved in espionage activities.

No. 211 - Mr. Dennis Canavan: whether Messrs. Blunt and Cairncross received any Civil Service pension or other state benefit.

No. 236 - Mr. Robert Kilroy-Silk: support for President Carter in his attempt to put pressure on Iran.

Mr. William McKelvey: state aid to political parties.

Mr. Dennis Canavan: Standing Commission on Pay Comparability Report on teachers' salaries.

STEEL

We understood that the meeting between union leaders and Messrs. Joseph and Prior was not yet finally fixed. Ministers were available as from today for the meeting. We would probably know later today the date and time of the meeting.

/OLYMPICS

OLYMPICS

We were consulting the Canadians to see whether a switch of the Games from Moscow to Montreal might be practicable. As regards the outcome of these consultations, we could not guide on timing. We also drew attention to the Prime Minister's answer yesterday that we were consulting our major international allies - not just the Canadians - and correspondents could assume that this was being done through the diplomatic channel.

Was the British Government considering other sites, apart from Montreal or the proposal from some quarters to split up the Olympics between several sites? We had seen these ideas and we assumed that they were being evaluated by those concerned in the sporting community.

Asked whether we supported President Carter's ultimatum to the USSR to withdraw troops from Afghanistan within a month or face a possible American boycott of the Olympic Games, we said that we would not quibble with the timetable President Carter had suggested.

Asked whether HMG favoured postponement of the Games until later in the year to allow more time for a switch of sites, we were non-committal but pointed to the practical problems of postponement - the need, in the Northern Hemisphere at least, to hold the Games in summer, training timetables for athletes trying to reach peak fitness for a given date, etc.

CVA