

to acquire unique programming for superstation WTBS and for syndication. Turner offered an additional explanation last week: "It's the first time since 1976 that [U.S. and Soviet amateur athletes] will compete together. [We hope to] promote the strengthening and cooperation of good will among all nations on earth."

Turner refused to discuss the costs of the project to TBS, but there was one report the total might be \$40 million or more. In addition to the costs the network will bear relating to production of the games, Turner said last week TBS will bear the expenses of getting the American team to and from Moscow to participate. Without being specific, he suggested the Soviets will bear the brunt of the costs of the games as the host nation. "It will cost the Soviets a ton" of money to stage the games, he said. The American team may well number 200, including many of the athletes who participated in the 1984 summer games. (Only one winter Olympics sport is on the list of events for the Goodwill Games—figure skating.) That's according to Ollan Cassell, executive director of the Athletics Congress, a national governing of U.S. amateur track and field sports which is coordinating the U.S. presence at the proposed games.

Cassell said the Goodwill Games concept was a "farsighted step" on Turner's part. "It's something that is sorely needed," he said. Cassell said that from discussions with other international amateur groups, he had the sense that "they are committed to providing strong teams" to the proposed games. It was unclear last week as to who would bear the cost of sending the teams of other countries to Moscow.

One reporter attending the press conference in New York last week asked a Soviet official, Marat Gramov, chairman of Soviet sports authority, Soyuzsport, whether Soviet participation in the proposed Goodwill Games was a signal that the Soviets would also participate in the 1988 summer Olympics at Seoul, South Korea. The reply that while the Soviets would "prepare seriously" for both the Goodwill and Olympics contests, a decision on whether to participate in the Seoul games would come only at the deadline, eight months prior to the games.

Another issue that dominated questioning at the news conference was the potential for the games to become highly politicized, as well as the potential for WTBS to be used as a propaganda tool by the Soviets. But Turner refused to answer such questions directly, saying he would "cross that bridge when we come to it." As the host country, TBS officials acknowledged last week, the Soviets have complete control of which countries, aside from the U.S., get invited to the games. Asked how TBS would respond if it appeared that decisions to include or exclude certain countries were based on political considerations, Turner replied, "What if, what if... anything is possible. The sky could fall... we'll cross that bridge when we come to it."

TBS said it would lay out its plans for broadcasting the games, including advertising and marketing plans for the games, around the first week of September. □

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