FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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REMARKS BY SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN
TO THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BOARD OF RABBIS
Wednesday, September 6

I have released a text which states my position on a number of issues of concern to the Los Angeles Board of Rabbis and to your congregations.

But this is not the time.

I come here on a day of mourning across the world for the young Israelis who died yesterday. And I come in anger.

This desecration of the Olympic peace is the latest act in a brutal wave of terrorism, carried out by international gangsters, in order to destroy the State of Israel. That is a goal they will never win on the field of battle. It is a goal they cannot win by a cowardly attack on innocent youth.

But it is not Israelis alone who are under attack. All of civilized society was a casualty of this invasion of the Olympic camp--just as all of civilized society was the victim of the June massacre at Lod Airport in Tel Aviv--and of the attacks upon airline passengers in Germany and Switzerland, and of the repeated highjacking of commercial aircraft that has become part of a planned policy of international terrorism.

At Lod, it was innocent civilians--most of them Christian pilgrims--who suffered and died. Yesterday it was athletes

in the strength of their prime, engaged in peaceful sports competition. Tomorrow there will be more violence, unless the world acts to place the responsibility where it belongs and to assure that this never happens again. We are all potential hostages of a few fanatics in the Middle East.

So we must place the responsibility, and we must be honest and clear. The blame lies with two Arab governments--Egypt and Lebanon.

Egypt has bestowed its blessing on indiscriminate terrorism as an instrument of its own foreign policy. In November 1971, four members of the same Black September gang that boasts responsibility for the Olympic killings, murdered the Foreign Minister of Jordan. The Egyptian state prosecutor announced that the assassination was justified, and the four confessed murderers were released on bail and freed to return home. Can anyone doubt that they have resumed their terrorist savagery?

And there is blame, too, for the government of Lebanon. The main offices of the terrorist gangs are in Beirut. There the funds are collected that buy the weapons of murder. There the travel documents are issued, the plans drawn, the sabotage plotted, the training given and the rehearsals held. There is the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization, of which the Black September gang is apparently a member.

There is only one way to stop the terrible wave of terror. The world community must ostracize and punish any country that harbors or offers sanctuary to these criminals. As long as we fail to do so we will continue to see death in the daily paper and face danger every time we travel abroad.

There are reports that our government may resume diplomatic contact with Egypt. I urge the President to demand, as a condition of that step, that Egypt shall root out these international outlaws who seek to impose the peace of the grave on a whole region of the world and on innocent people from every part of the world.

Only when all nations accept the existence of the State of Israel as an historic fact that no threat or terror or war can change--only when the Arab nations finally sit down and negotiate a permanent peace, can the bloodshed we saw in Munich be lifted from the conscience of the earth.

And what of these eleven athletes who will never run a race or lift a weight or even smile again? Let us at least draw meaning from their martyrdom. As I said here in Los Angeles last night:

"I have no careful solutions to offer, and nothing that is strikingly new to say. What needs to be said once more is 'stop the killing.' Stop the killing everywhere. Stop it before we come to believe that death is the only way of life. Stop it while we still have the capacity to love one

another--not just the few people we know and talk to--but people everywhere, who like us, want their share of years and happiness.

"And if I have anything to say about the course of events in the years ahead, there is one thing above all else that I want to do. I want to try to make it possible for a child in the Middle East to live a full and secure life before he dies. I want to try to make it possible for a little girl in Vietnam to be blessed by the warmth of love instead of being burned by the flames of napalm. I want to try to make it possible for people to live as though we were created in the image of God, and not in the image of our worst fears of each other. I say peace--not just now--but always. I say peace--not just in one land--but in every land where there are men and women and children who know what it is to see a sunrise, or flowers bloom or trees in the springtime. I say peace, on a planet which gives us life--among people who have no right to take life away from one another.

"And I ask you to say with me in the words of St. Francis of Assisi, 'Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love.'"

And then we will reap all the blessings we and the generations before us have hoped for--and our children will bless us because we have given to them the fullness of life.

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