

447

FROM THE OFFICES OF
SENATOR STUART SYMINGTON (D-MO)
SENATOR HUGH SCOTT (R-PA)
JUNE 1, 1970

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

73 SENATORS URGE U.S. JETS FOR ISRAEL

WASHINGTON, D.C. A bipartisan group of 73 Senators today sent a letter to Secretary of State William Rogers requesting a meeting to discuss recent Soviet moves in the Middle East and urging the United States to provide additional jet aircraft to Israel in response to Soviet escalation of the Middle East conflict.

The letter was circulated by a group of ten Senators including Stuart Symington (D-Mo) and Republican Minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa). Others circulating the letter, in order of seniority, were, for the Democrats: Sen. Herman E. Talmadge (D-Ga), Sen. Gale W. McGee (D-Wyo), Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass), and Sen. Abe Ribicoff (D-Conn); for the Republicans: Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.), Sen. Edward W. Brooke (R-Mass), Sen. Robert J. Dole (R-Kan), and Sen. Edward J. Gurney (R-Fla).

In a joint statement issued at the time they released the letter, Senators Symington and Scott said: "This letter, signed by nearly 3/4 of the Senate, represents an unprecedented expression of support of a policy that seeks to protect vital United States strategic interests and to further the cause of peace."

In addition to those who circulated the letter, the following Senators signed the letter:

James B. Allen (D-Ala)
Howard H. Baker, Jr. (R-Tenn)
Birch Bayh (D-Ind)
Wallace F. Bennett (R-Utah)
Alan Bible (D-Nev)
J. Caleb Boggs (R-Del)
Quentin N. Burdick (D-N. Dakota)
Harry F. Byrd, Jr. (D-Va)
Howard W. Cannon (D-Nev)
Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.)
Frank Church (D-Idaho)
Marlow W. Cook (R-Ky)
Alan Cranston (D-Calif)
Carl T. Curtis (R-Nebr)
Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn)
Thomas F. Eagleton (D-Mo)
Paul J. Fannin (R-Ariz)
Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz)
Charles E. Goodell (R-N.Y.)
Mike Gravel (D-Alaska)
Fred R. Harris (D-Okla)
Philip A. Hart (D-Mich)
Vance Hartke (D-Ind)
Spessard L. Holland (D-Fla)
Ernest F. Hollings (D-S.C.)
Roman L. Hruska (R-Nebr)
Harold E. Hughes (D-Iowa)
Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii)
Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash)
Hiram L. Fong (R-Hawaii)
John Stennis (D-Miss)

EVERETT

~~Sam~~ B. Jordan (D-N.C.)
Warren G. Magnuson (D-Wash)
Charles McC. Mathias (R-Md)
George S. McGovern (D-S. Dak.)
Thomas J. McIntyre (D-N.H.)
Lee Metcalf (D-Mont)
Jack Miller (R-Iowa)
Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn)
Joseph M. Montoya (D-N. Mex.)
Frank E. Moss (D-Utah)
George Murphy (R-Calif)
Edmund S. Muskie (D-Me)
Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis)
Robert W. Packwood (R-Oreg)
John O. Pastore (D-R.I.)
Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.)
Charles H. Percy (R-Ill)
Winston L. Prouty (R-Vt)
William Proxmire (D-Wisc)
Jennings Randolph (D-W.Va.)
William B. Saxbe (R-Ohio)
Richard S. Schweiker (R-Pa)
Ralph T. Smith (R-Ill)
John Sparkman (D-Ala)
William B. Spong (D-Va)
Ted Stevens (R-Alaska)
Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.)
John G. Tower (R-Tex)
Joseph D. Tydings (D-Md)
Harrison A. Williams (D-N.J.)
Ralph Yarborough (D-Tex)
Stephen M. Young (D-Ohio)

-2-

Following is the text of the letter to Secretary Rogers:

(COPY)

May 26, 1970

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We feel compelled to express our sense of urgency respecting the deteriorating situation in the Middle East. The decision by the Soviet Union to undertake a direct military role in the Arab-Israel conflict by flying combat planes over Egypt represents, in our judgment, a significant change and a challenge to American strategic interests and a growing threat to world peace. Recent Soviet moves have encouraged Arab belligerence, and are creating a growing military imbalance in favor of the Arab states.

Your decision in March to hold in abeyance the sale of additional jet combat aircraft to Israel under the then prevailing conditions has failed to induce the Soviet Union to exercise reciprocal restraint with respect to the arming of the UAR and the other Arab states. In addition, the Soviet Union has taken the unprecedented step of overtly involving an increasing number of its own military personnel in a state far from its own borders.

We believe, Mr. Secretary, that the United States should now announce its intention to provide Israel with the aircraft so urgently needed for its defense. Such action will serve as a significant element of a credible response to the reckless Soviet escalation of the Mideast conflict. We feel that the strengthening of Israel's military posture at this time is the best guarantee against the outbreak of major hostilities.

We also suggest prompt consultations with our NATO allies because of the dangers posed to their own security and economies by the Soviet build-up in the Middle East. We urge the United States to redouble its efforts to reestablish the cease fire as a preliminary step to eventual peace negotiations.

We would be grateful for an early opportunity to meet with you at your convenience, so that we may have a full exchange of views on all aspects of the issue which we believe is warranted by the critical situation that has now developed.

Sincerely,