

DEMOCRATIC NOMINEE RIPS INTO RUSSIA AND NIXON ON RANSOM FOR JEWS

BY SENATOR GEORGE MC GOVERN

I was most disturbed by an article in an official Soviet Russian newspaper attacking me for urging permission for the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel. It was a crude form of interference in our American election and deserves condemnation as such.

The Soviet Union's policy of imposing a tax on Jews seeking to emigrate, based on educational attainment and amounting to thousands of dollars per person, violates every standard of international morality. It is regrettable that President Nixon has not joined in opposing it.

This head tax is a virtual ransom. Tens of thousands of persons are being held against their will, hostages in a land that does not let them live as Jews and will not let them leave.

I will not be silent in the face of this repression. I am proud to have joined 71 of my fellow Senators in publicly opposing the privilege of most-favored-nation status for the USSR in its commercial dealings with our country as long as the USSR continues to put a price tag on its citizens who wish to emigrate. I am not willing to trade this country's historic commitment to human rights for a commercial trade.

President Nixon has publicly urged us to be silent on this issue -- as he has -- until a trade agreement has been signed. But we learned

in this century the danger of remaining silent while a totalitarian country oppresses a religious minority.

The Soviet ransom charge violates the USSR's own solemn international commitments, as contained in the Declaration on Colonialism, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights -- all of which the Soviet Union supported and signed.

Under these treaties, the USSR assumed binding and contractual obligations to fulfill the right of emigration. The flouting of these treaties can only poison the atmosphere in which we and the Russians seek to work out a new relationship for the future.

I have welcomed the recent steps toward detente and increased cooperation with the USSR. But if the Soviet Union is genuinely interested in promoting improved relations with the United States, it will fulfill its treaty obligations by lifting the restrictions against Jews who seek to emigrate. And it will restore the cultural and religious rights, now denied to Soviet Jews, which are guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution. Such action by the responsible authorities of the USSR will remove a major obstacle to the improvement of relations between our two countries.

The US and the USSR are now discussing a trade agreement under which the goods we produce will be allowed to move more freely. But the people who produce these goods must also be afforded the opportunity to move freely. In the case of the Jews of the Soviet Union, tens of thousands have applied for emigration to Israel and Israel has opened its gates to receive them.

I will continue to speak out on this issue, despite the objections of the men in the Kremlin -- and in the White House -- as long as the Soviet Union builds walls around its people, whether they are made of concrete or of rubles. The plight of Soviet Jewry cannot be buried under our efforts to expand trade and cultural contacts. It cannot be an after-thought to our efforts for world peace.

The article's implication that my support of unrestricted immigration to Israel is politically

TEL AVIV (WNS)--A team of experts studying proposals for the reintroduction of capital punishment for Arab terrorists have concluded that such a change in policy is not justifiable.

motivated is an insult both to myself and the 71 US Senators who stood with me on this issue. My support of Israel in the Congress goes back to 1957 -- my first year of service. It has been consistent and will remain so.

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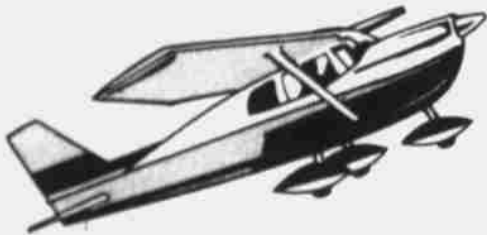
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