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Statement of Senator Edmund S. Muskie on Nixon's Proposed Trip to China

Edmund S. Muskie

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MUSKIE

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FOR RELEASE

IMMEDIATELY
JULY 16, 1971

MUSKIE COMMENTS ON NIXON'S PROPOSED TRIP TO CHINA

"I am encouraged by the President's announcement that he plans to go to China to meet with the leaders of the People's Republic. That trip is symbolic of the changes which ought to take place in our relations with that country.

"We do not know what each side hopes to achieve at the talks. Such a meeting cannot resolve all of the outstanding differences between our two countries, but it can, if matched by other steps, lay the groundwork for more normal and healthy relations and reduce the dangers of conflict.

"We should not, in the glow of this symbolic step, forget two crucial questions which should be of immediate concern: first, how are we going to end the fighting and the killing in Indochina at the earliest possible moment? and, second, how are we going to stop the arms race before it gets completely out of control?

"I hope the trip to China will not divert attention from the negotiations which affect the lives of the people of Indochina and Americans who are still there. And it must not be allowed to increase suspicion between the United States and the Soviet Union and must not decrease the chances of a comprehensive arms agreement between us.

"This trip is important. But we must not reduce our efforts devoted to the specific and immediate job of negotiating agreements on those questions which affect the lives and hopes of people throughout the world."

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