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Press Release - Muskie Urges Far-Reaching Middle East Negotiations

Edmund S. Muskie

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MUSKIE

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FOR RELEASE

AM's
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MUSKIE URGES FAR-REACHING MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS

Kansas City -- Senator Edmund S. Muskie (D-Maine) said Sunday night that Middle East peace depends not only on a ceasefire but also on "honest negotiations between Israel and her neighbors" to establish secure Israeli boundaries, to ensure passage through Middle East waterways and to solve the refuge problem.

In remarks prepared for delivery at a dinner of the State of Israel Bond Association in Kansas City, Senator Muskie added that "Israel's neighbors must recognize that Israel is in the Middle East to stay.

"And they must be convinced that Israel is not an expansionist state. On these foundations of mutual restraint, peace can be built," he added.

Senator Muskie said that "Israel's right to live as a free and independent democracy must be affirmed. That right must be maintained. That right must not be challenged by force of arms.

"The United States must provide whatever material aid is required for Israel's protection and sustenance. We cannot afford to do less.

"We must provide the credits which are necessary and we must seriously consider providing new forms of assistance, such as Lend-Lease, so long as Israel remains a beleaguered State."

The Senator, who received the association's Truman Commendation Award, told the audience he planned to travel to Israel next month and that he looked forward to the trip with great anticipation.

Mr. Muskie said that people in Israel share "a purpose to survive and a purpose to grow" and others should have a "right to pursue that vision in a country which is prepared to welcome them.

"People of the Jewish faith from the Soviet Union should have the right to pursue that vision in the State of Israel."

He added that "Israel has offered to cooperate in raising the standard of life throughout the Middle East. Israel's neighbors could benefit greatly by accepting that offer.

"After all, men and women from around the world have traveled to Israel to study and to prepare themselves for service to their own countries. Instructors from Israel have also traveled to more than 60 nations in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America. They have provided technical assistance in the areas of farming and transportation and medical care.

"How fruitful the investment in peace could be, compared to the price of war."
