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MIDDLE EAST: MESSAGE TO UNITED NATIONS

The Prime Minister, Mr. John Gorton, said today that on behalf of the Australian Government he had sent the following message to the President of the Security Council and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations:-

"I wish to express the deep concern of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia at the recent trials and mass public executions in Baghdad which were contrary to the proper dictates of humanity. The timing and manner of the hangings have been condemned by peoples throughout the world including some in other Arab countries.

"It is the sincere hope of my Government that there will be no repetition of this spectacle which was so repugnant to the conscience of mankind and which can only exacerbate the situation in the Middle East and increase the difficulties of securing the objective for which we all are striving of a just and lasting peace. You may be assured of our support for your efforts to avert a repetition."

A message from the Prime Minister was read by the Speaker, Mr. Aston, at a rally arranged by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry in the Sydney Town Hall this evening. The text of the message is as follows:-

"The Australian Government is most concerned at the continued explosive situation in the Middle East, and abhors the recent mass public executions which, besides running counter to the world's conscience, can only exacerbate this situation.

"We believe that all parties to the dispute should, without delay, sit down around the conference table and begin discussions aimed at restoring peace and stability to the Middle East.

"Any such settlement must be formally based on the acceptance of Israel as a sovereign nation existing as of right, entitled to live and develop in security, free of constant threat, posing no threat to its neighbouring countries, and using for the good of all, rights and opportunities so dearly bought."