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LETTER DATED 29 JANUARY 1969 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE
SECURITY COUNCIL

I have been instructed by my Government to draw to your attention the following statement issued by Secretary of State William P. Rogers on 27 January 1969, when he learned of the public execution of fourteen persons convicted for espionage in Iraq:

"We have had no United States representation in Baghdad since the Government of Iraq broke relations in 1967. We are not, therefore, in a position to comment on the facts surrounding the trial. On humanitarian grounds these executions are a matter of deep concern to us. The spectacle of mass public executions is repugnant to the conscience of the world. At my request, Ambassador Yost has called Secretary-General U Thant today to express our deep concern and to tell him that we share the expressions noted in his statement issued earlier today."

The Government of the United States recognizes the legal right of any Government to bring to trial and administer justice to any of its citizens. However, the manner in which these executions and the trials that preceded them were conducted scarcely conforms to normally accepted standards of respect for human rights and human dignity or to the obligations in this regard that the United Nations Charter imposes upon all Members. Moreover, the spectacular way in which they were carried out seems to have been designed to arouse emotions and to intensify the very explosive atmosphere of suspicion and hostility in the Middle East.

The United States hopes that the world-wide revulsion aroused by the reports of these trials and executions will induce those responsible to carry out their solemn Charter obligations to promote "universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex,

language, or religion." Repetition of the recent tragic events would be bound to make more difficult efforts within and outside the United Nations toward the goals of peace, tolerance, and human understanding among nations and peoples, in the Middle East and throughout the world.

I respectfully request that this letter be circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Charles W. YOST
Ambassador
