FOR RELEASE MONDAY, MAY 8, 1966

AMERICANS CALL FOR CONTINUED SUSPENSION OF SOUTH AFRICA FROM OLYMPIC GAMES

30 prominent Americans released a communication today to Mr. Douglas F. Roby, President of the U.S. Olympic Committee, asking that the Committee commit itself to preventing South African participation in the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico "as long as discrimination and racial segregation of any sort is practiced by South Africa."

Written on the occasion of the International Olympic Committee meeting in Teheran, the letter states that South Africa's recent attempts to regain admission into international sports events "does not alter the discriminatory pattern followed by South Africa" and the fact that "all competition inside the country is segregated."

The letter, originally sponsored by Jackie Robinson, was signed by other sportmen, including: Arthur Ashe of the U.S. Davis Cup Tennis Team; former baseball great Roy Campanella; Oscar Robertson of the Cincinnati Royals; and Buddy Young of the National Football League. Other signatories were: I.W. Abel, President of the United Steel Workers and Cleveland Robinson, National President of the Negro American Labor Council; Floyd McKissick and Bayard Rustin of the civil rights movement; William Booth, New York City Commissioner on Human Rights and Manhattan Borough President, Percy Sutton; editor Allan Morrison; Monseignor Thomas J. Carey of Newark and the renowned theologian Reinhold Niebuhr; and numerous individuals associated with the arts including Theodore Bikel, Ruby Dee, John Forsythe, Julie Harris, Peter Seeger, Ed Sullivan and Eli Wallach.

The letter cites numerous examples of South Africa's discrimination in sports and the contradiction between this situation and the Constitution of the International Amateur Athletic Federation. It states that the U.S. Committee must not allow a racialist team such as South Africa's back into the Olympics, from which it was expelled in 1964. "Especially because American Olympic teams are interracial, no compromise on this issue can be tolerated." (see enclosed letter and signatories)