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Statement by Mike Mansfield - Interior Appropriations Bill H.R. 5085

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Mr. Chairman, I wish to submit at this time a statement in behalf of several items in the 1956 appropriation bill for the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies. The appropriation items that I am particularly interested in are embodied in this bill, H. R. 5085 as reported to the Senate.

Bureau of Indian Affairs

The first topic I wish to discuss comes under the Bureau of Indian Affairs subdivision of the appropriation bill. Recently when the Second Supplemental Appropriation Bill, 1955 was reported out of this Committee and subsequently passed by the Senate, additional funds were made available to my State, Montana, for the education of Indian children under the Johnson-O'Malley Act.

The necessity for this deficiency appropriation was the result of a misunderstanding or disagreement between officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and officials of the State Department of Public Instruction in Montana. The local school districts prepared their 1955 budgets anticipating an increased Federal contribution. After the budgets were set up these school districts eligible for Johnson-O'Malley funds learned that they would not receive funds in the amount they were instructed to plan for. Thus, a supplemental was needed to take care of this deficiency in the local school district budgets.

It is my understanding that the Indian Affairs Subcommittee of the Interior Committee intends to study the Johnson-O'Malley program. At this time I wish to request that this Committee give the necessary instruction to see that these misunderstandings and disagreements do not re-occur and thus avoid the necessity of any further deficiency appropriations in this respect.
Geological Survey

Next I would like to turn to funds for cooperative water-resources investigation under Geological Survey in the Department of Interior. As you know the Geological Survey has carried out cooperative investigations with states and subordinate government agencies whenever the joint interests warrant such joint participation. When these funds are available, it has been the practice to participate on a 50-50 basis.

The Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology has been working for over a year on plans for modern engineering studies of ground water resources of various critical areas in the State of Montana. As in 43 other states, the State hopes to make this a cooperative project with the United States Geological Survey. The Montana Legislature has agreed fully with the need for such studies and has authorized $14,000 per year.

It has been brought to my attention that there is serious doubt whether Federal ground water funds will be sufficient to meet the 50-50 cooperative agreement. Because this program is now in Montana and so greatly needed, it would be most unfortunate to be forced to postpone it.

I appreciate the fact that because of the continually increasing need for water facts, the Survey's cooperative program of water-resources investigations has grown rapidly and that cooperative offerings of cooperation have proved to be greater than the estimates of them at the time of the preparation of the budget. I understand that various states and municipalities have made available $4,714,000 to be matched with similar funds from the United States Geological Survey. The House Appropriations Committee, however, appropriated only $4,000,000.
I recommend to this Appropriations Committee that they increase these funds sufficiently in order to allow Montana and other States to participate fully in this program. Continued delay will only weaken the program. In Montana there are signs that with the State's expected growth in the next few years, our ground water problem may become serious, and it is important that basic data be gathered before the situation becomes crucial.

This is true not only in my State but throughout the Nation. The need for more water-resources investigations is real and pressing.
Topographic Mapping

Mr. Chairman, The appropriation bill contains a Geological Survey request for topographic mapping in the amount of $11,320,000. In addition I am told that the Geological Survey expects to receive through state cooperation and from other federal agencies approximately $2,500,000. The allocation currently proposed for topographic mapping in Montana is $350,000 for fiscal year 1956.

Of the 147,000 square miles comprising the State of Montana, 119,000 square miles have no standard quadrangle topographic map coverage. 14,000 square miles are covered by good maps suitable for modern usage and an additional 14,000 square miles are in various states of progress.

The cost of completing the mapping of the entire State including the $975,000 for work now underway is estimated at approximately $14,500,000. Under the present program it will be a number of years before the topographic mapping of Montana is completed.

At this point I wish to make note of a Joint Memorial No. 6 coming from the House of Representatives in the Montana Legislature "urging that the Congress of the United States make sufficient funds available to develop topographic maps for the entire State of Montana as soon as possible."

Topographic maps are important to many industries, including mining, lumbering, and the development of air-bearing lands. They are invaluable in developing land and water resources. They are essential in locating rights-of-way for telephone, telegraph and rural electrification lines, highways, railways and pipelines, and in planning the operation and management of both State and national agricultural, grazing and forest lands.

In view of the importance of topographic mapping I wish to recommend to
this committee that the fiscal year 1946 appropriations under this category be increased to meet the urgency of speeding up this program.
Mr. Chairman, there are several items in the Interior Department appropriation request for the National Park Service to which I wish to make note. I am interested particularly in highway construction and repair funds in and around Glacier National Park in Montana.

I understand that the 1956 fiscal year estimates for highway construction in Glacier Park total $110,700. These funds will be used for campground roads and spur at Kintla Lake, roads and parking areas at Swift Current Cabin and at Lake McDonald Hotel areas.

Construction and repair of highways and roads within Glacier Park are extremely important. Glacier Park is one of the most scenic and beautiful parks in the Nation and is becoming more popular each year. In order to accommodate the vast influx of tourists during the summer months, it is necessary to have an adequate highway system.

In addition to the maintenance of roads and highways within the Park I wish to make reference to the Blackfeet Highway, the eastern approach to Glacier Park. It is my understanding, from information received from Montana, that this road is in very poor condition and maintenance has been neglected. I urgently request that the 1956 fiscal year estimate of $47,600 for annual recurring maintenance of the Blackfeet Highway be approved by this committee. I also understand that this amount will not take care of the heavy backlog of deferred work which is necessary to, maintain the road.

The reason that I am so concerned over this particular highway is that the Blackfeet Highway is the only approach to Glacier Park from the East. In addition this highway is an integral part of the Park system and is generally considered to be a seasonal highway.
Fish and Wildlife Service

There is an item under "Management of Resources" in the Fish and Wildlife Service section of the Interior Appropriation bill which disturbs me very much. I refer to the House reduction of $75,000 in an Interior Department survey program needed in the Northwest.

The Coordination Act requires that the Service's office of River Basin Studies appraise the effects of proposed water development projects on fish, wildlife and recreational resources. These surveys are for the benefit of Congress, which certainly should have all information on the merits and demerits of any water development project.

Several large projects are under study in the Northwest, particularly in the Middle Snake River Basin. It is my belief that studies of these projects should begin as soon as possible. I therefore request that Senate restore the appropriation for this item to the full amount requested, $6,725,500.

I had hoped that this appropriation bill would include a request for Fish and Wildlife funds for improvement and expansion of the Federal Fish Cultural Station at Creston, Montana, but I am informed that it does not.

It is unfortunate that the necessary funds for this project are not being requested. The Creston Station was built to stock water in Glacier Park. Now it is being called on to stock trout in a great portion of the waters in the northwestern part of Montana. It is at peak production now. But increased fishing pressure and the greatly expanded tourist trade make it necessary that increased stocking of trout be used to supplement natural propagation. With the necessary improvements, the Creston Station can double its production of these two species of trout for local distribution at much less cost per pound than is now the case, according to recent reports.
If the Committee does not see fit to include funds for this project during fiscal year 1956, I certainly hope that it receives early consideration in preparation of the 1957 budget proposals.
Department of Agriculture

Now I would like to discuss several Department of Agriculture items in H.R. 5035. As you gentlemen know I submitted letters in support of funds in the Second Supplemental Appropriation for a stepped-up program for spruce budworm control in our national forests. Briefly I wish to voice my support of these funds which are so vital to combating the spruce budworm infestation in our Federal, State and private forested lands.

In regard to funds for construction of needed range works and maintenance of existing improvements under jurisdiction of the Forest Service, I wish to say that I am in complete accord with the action taken by the House. In the fiscal year 1936 the amount authorized to be appropriated by the formula contained in Section 12 of the Cranger-Thye Act was estimated at $750,000, the budget estimate was $280,000 and recent action by the House increased this amount to $400,000, the same amount appropriated by Congress for fiscal year 1935. The House acted wisely in recognizing the necessity of these funds and I sincerely hope that the Senate Appropriations Committee will see fit to maintain this increase over the budget estimate.
Watershed Studies

The Forest Service Budget for F. Y. 1956 includes a $200,000 increase for research. This increase is intended for watershed management studies at some 15 locations over the country. New studies will be started at locations where the need for information is most urgent; at other locations studies now underway will be strengthened to provide more nearly adequate research programs.

The Northern Rocky Mountains in Montana make up the headwaters of important streams tributary to the Missouri River. Water from these high mountain sources furnishes domestic supplies for numerous communities and provides the needs for thousands of acres of irrigated farmlands to the east of the mountain range. These uses require well-regulated yields of silt-free water. This area is also a major timber-producing region and furnishes forage for domestic livestock, and for deer, elk and other big game animals.

No watershed studies are underway in the Northern Rocky Mountain area. And yet there is an urgent need for information as to how these forested areas can be logged without accelerating runoff and erosion rates with resulting damage to the water resource. Studies are needed to furnish the guidelines for timber removal consistent with watershed protection. Additional studies are needed to point the way toward the proper integration of watershed management and range management practices so as to insure stable yields of good quality water and at the same time provide continued production of forage.

The budget increase will provide for the establishment of watershed studies in this area.
Cooperative Fire Control Program

Again I wish to concur with the action taken by the House in another matter. The 1956 budget proposed $9,600,000 for the cooperative programs of the Forest Service with state and private interests. This was a reduction of $1,033,690 below the 1955 appropriation for the same purpose. It was proposed to apply this reduction to the state cooperative program for fire control. I am in full agreement with the restoration of these funds and the recommendation for an appropriation for fiscal year 1956 amounting to $10,633,690. In support of this action, I wish to have printed in the body of my remarks, at this point, two attached letters received from Garth G. Moon, State Forester in Montana, dated February 9 and March 15, 1955.

Forest Management

Before concluding my statement I would like to discuss one additional item under the general heading of State and Private Forestry Cooperation in the Agriculture Department section of this bill. I refer to the appropriation request for cooperation in forest management and processing, $632,429. This is the item under which the United States Forest Service cooperates with 35 States in giving advice and assistance in forest management to owners of small woodland properties.

The small owners do not have the technical skill necessary to manage their forests for continuous crops of trees. Most of them do not have enough timber individually to make it practical to hire a forester even on a part-time basis. More than half of the privately owned woodlands are in the hands of small owners. Many of these forested areas have been improperly cut over the years and only through the advice of a farm forester can they be made productive and kept that way.
There has been no increase of Federal funds for this cooperative farm forestry work since the Cooperative Forest Management Act was passed in 1950. Prior to this legislation the work was carried on in a limited way under the Norris-Dominy Cooperative Farm Forestry Act of 1937. Montana discontinued cooperation in this program in 1949 because the State was unable to meet the matching funds provided by the Federal Government. Montana, as well as other states, are planning to rejoin this cooperative program if Federal matching funds are made available. Unfortunately the present Federal appropriation does not provide enough funds for all the farm foresters needed in the 36 cooperating states. In almost half of the counties with small woodlands in cooperating states there are no farm forester services.

A small increase is urgently needed in this item to permit this worthwhile cooperation with the states to be extended. According to my information, the annual authorization in the basic legislation for this cooperative work is $2,500,000. A small increase of at least $100,000 is in order to help meet this situation. The total fund would still be far below the amount set by the authorization act. The cooperating States are now spending over $1.2 million annually in this cooperative endeavor. Many additional farm foresters are needed to carry out this program effectively, and can be provided only by an increased appropriation. This seems to be a switch on the common complaint so often heard at appropriation time, in this case it is not the states who are failing to contribute their share.

In conclusion I wish to express my appreciation for being allowed to express my views and recommendations on H. R. 5065. I am sure that each and every provision of this appropriation bill will receive proper consideration from this Committee.