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Feb 1957

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

THOUGHTS ON THE PRESIDENT'S IMPENDING VOYAGE TO
LATIN AMERICA

Mr. President:

Within a few days, the President will be leaving on a tour of Latin America. I know that other Members of the Senate join with me in wishing him a most pleasant journey.

There is every reason to believe that we shall not witness, in connection with the President's impending trip, a repetition of the reprehensible vilification that marked an earlier goodwill tour of the distinguished Vice President of the United States (Mr. Nixon). On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that the President will be welcomed with enthusiasm wherever he goes.

The President is a warm man and he evokes a warm response. I hope that after he leaves the Presidency, he will continue--as a private citizen--to make journeys such as he is now making, to various parts of the world. I hope that the next President will prevail upon Mr. Eisenhower to do so in the interests of the nation. Journeys by persons of such obvious goodwill as Mr. Eisenhower can only be welcomed in a world so replete with ill-will as the one in which we live.

But, Mr. President, I am bold enough to suggest that, at this moment in time, something more than a journey is needed in our relations with the nations of Latin America. The state of those relations is far from good. Nor are these relations likely to be improved merely by the ritual of goodwill tours endlessly repeated.

Travel by the President to other nations is not an end in itself. The President abroad is not just a tourist, he is the personification of the nation. His appearances on foreign soil can never be casual; nor can they be mere gestures of goodwill. The President is the fountain-head of action in this nation in matters of foreign policy. I would hope that his appearance in Latin America, particularly at this time, signifies action as regards inter-American policies.

Let us face it: The relations between this nation and Latin America are plagued with problems and irritants. Unless this impending voyage is a prelude to coming to grips with these problems and irritants it would be better if it were not made at all. Unless it signifies action, the goodwill effects will soon wear off and the after-taste will be doubly bitter. The pleasant climate which the visit will quickly engender will chill just as quickly.

I emphasize, Mr. President, it is the follow-through--what comes after--not the goodwill tour itself which will affect the deeper fortunes of this nation in its relations with the other Latin American republics. In short, the President, in his person alone, can open doors. But if they are to remain open it must be clear why they were opened in the first place; and, in subsequent action, the administrative bureaucracy of this nation must be led firmly by the President to keep them open.

For that reason, I commend once again to the Senate and to the President and his Administration, a recent report of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. Aiken) on a trip which he made to Latin America a few months ago. In his report, "Mr. Hemisphere,"--for that is a sobriquet which he most justly deserves--in his report, the distinguished

Senator outlines a program of far-reaching constructive action with respect to Latin America. In his report, the able Senator points the way to coming to grips with the problems and irritants which have accumulated in inter-American relations. I suggest that if the President wishes to give to this impending goodwill tour a fruitful and lasting value to the nation that he direct his attention to that report and consider its implications in conjunction with the heads of states with whom he will meet and, subsequently, that he lead the administrative bureaucracy in line with the implications.

I would add only two other thoughts at this moment to what is contained in the report of the Senator from Vermont. I believe that it is time to recognize--in Inter-American policy--the growing trend in the world toward regional groupings, towards common markets. This trend is already well advanced in Europe. Indeed, last year, it made its formal appearance in the Western Hemisphere--in an agreement among 5 Central American Republics which has since run into certain difficulties. This week seven additional Latin American nations have signed an agreement opening the way to a common market as among themselves. In short, there is a new force operating in the realm of international economics and trade and we will ignore its meaning to us and to the rest of the Americas only to our detriment. The implications of this new force of regionalism warrant full and joint exploration by all the American Republics. Its potential as a tool for dealing with some of the most unyielding economic problems of inter-American relations should be fully evaluated. We need to think boldly and with fresh inspiration. We need to consider whether a common market for

all the Americas, including Canada if it so desires, can serve the in-
terests of the nations of this hemisphere. I can conceive of no better
time and place for giving to this exploration a firm political impetus
than the occasion of the President's coming goodwill tour to Latin
America.

In this connection, I am delighted that the President is going
to stop in Puerto Rico. The relations between the Puerto Rican Common-
wealth and the United States are, in major part, built upon the success-
ful operation of what is, in effect, a common market. This operation
has redounded to the immense and pyramiding economic advantage of both
the United States and the Commonwealth.

I can think of no man who is better equipped to counsel with
the President in this matter as well as in other aspects of inter-
American relations than the brilliant and distinguished governor of
Puerto Rico (Mr. Munoz-Marin) and, indeed, I regret that he is not
accompanying the President on this goodwill tour. During his entire
life, Mr. Munoz-Marin has lived and breathed and pondered the basic
problems of Puerto Rico in its relationship with the United States.
He has led in the successful search for the solutions to many of these
problems. His wealth of experience can provide new insights into almost
every facet of inter-American relations on the larger scale of Hemispheric
relations.

If I may summarize, Mr. President, may I say again that I wish
the President a most pleasant journey to Latin America. And to make it
most useful, I respectfully direct his attention to the recent report of
the distinguished Senator from Vermont (Mr. Aiken), to the concept of a
common market for the Americas, and to the wise counsel which he can
obtain from the outstanding governor of Puerto Rico (Mr. Munoz-Marin).