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Press Reports from Pakistan

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Mr. President, in June of 1958, I made public a letter to the Honorable William E. Knowland, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations. In that letter I called attention to certain press reports from Pakistan. Those reports indicated that USAID, IGA and State Department personnel and others directly or indirectly employed by this government had engaged in the disposal of their personal property on the markets of Pakistan at prices vastly exceeding the value of the articles. At that time, I asked for a detailed report covering the nature and extent of overseas disposal of personal property.

Since June, the Department of State has, from time to time, made available such reports to me. I ask unanimous consent that my entire correspondence with the Department of State concerning this practice be printed in the Congressional Record at the conclusion of my remarks.

This correspondence shows that during the twelve-months period from January 1 to December 31, 1957, 126 United States government employees sold a total of almost $678,000 worth of personal property in Pakistan—an average of $3,644 per employee. Similar data for the eleven-months period of January 1 to November 30, 1958 reveal that a total of 275 employees, leaving Pakistan during that time, sold personal property in the amount of $565,000—or an average of $2,054 per employee.
Recently I received the figures for December 1958 which indicate that 30 employees departing Karachi converted rupees totaling $15,135 for an average of $505 per employee.

When dubious practices regarding personal property disposal was brought to its attention, the Department of State showed a commendable initiative in recognizing the considerations of foreign relations which are involved in this matter. The Department established an interdepartmental committee to study the subject and this study has resulted in a report entitled "Guide for Use in Developing Uniform Regulations for a Particular Country Relative to the Importation and Disposal of Personal Property, the Acquisition and Conversion of Local Currency and the Importation, Operation and Disposal of Motor Vehicles." The report points the way to a sensible procedure for official employees to follow, as regards disposal of personal property which they do not desire to take with them when they leave a post abroad. I hope that it will result in world wide improvement of the dubious practices of personal property disposal which, as I pointed out in my initial letter, have heretofore existed in many countries.

Mr. President, for my part I consider this matter closed. I want to express the hope that the Department of State will continue to maintain a watchful eye on this situation not only as it involves employees of that Department but military and all other official United States personal abroad as well as employees of contractors engaged by this government for work abroad.