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Statement of Mike Mansfield

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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The President has presented to the people his views on labor legislation now pending before Congress.

The fact is that anti-racketeering labor legislation is clearly necessary. The problem for Congress has not been recognition of that necessity but to get legislation which strikes at racketeering without doing violence to labor's legitimate aims and practices. That is a difficult thing to do and that was what the Senate was trying to do when it passed a measure aimed at racketeering earlier this session. That it was a good bill is indicated by the vote--90 to 1.

Now the House of Representatives has the matter under consideration. At this point, in a delicate and difficult legislative situation, the President chooses to make a political issue of the matter by going to the people in a nation-wide address. Since he has done so, I believe it is only fair and in the public interest for the same networks that carried the President's address to set aside equal time for an appearance by Senator Kennedy, the principal author of the Senate bill or for Speaker Sam Rayburn of the House to express Congressional views on the matter.