1961

Miscellaneous Statements - Carbon Copies of Speeches in Blk.

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001
REMARKS OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

Mr. President:

I should like to compliment the Vice-President on the selections which he has just announced. The responsibility for making these assignments to the Joint Economic Committee, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, and the Civil War Centennial Commission rests with the Vice-President and he has exercised it with impartial and wise judgment. Speaking for the Democratic selectees, I know that the distinguished Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. Proxmire) brings a wide acquaintance with domestic economic affairs to the deliberations of the Joint Economic Committee and, similarly, the new Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. Pell) will be able to interject his highly pertinent and extensive experience abroad into the international economic problems with which this most important committee under the Chairmanship of the learned Senator from Illinois (Mr. Douglas) concerns itself.

As for the selection of Mr. Metcalf for the Migratory Bird Commission, I know of no one with a greater awareness of the problems of conservation in all of its aspects. My distinguished colleague from Montana not only understands these problems of preserving our natural heritage of wild-life, he has the knowledge and dedication which will enable him to act purposefully on his understanding.

Finally, Mr. President, I would point out that the able Senator from Texas, Mr. Yarborough, who is a most modern-minded man, has nevertheless retained a passionate interest in our national history, particularly of the Civil War period and I know that he will see to it that the part played by Texas and other trans-Mississippi regions in that conflict is duly recognized and commemorated by the Civil War Centennial Commission.
Once again, then, Mr. President, I should like to compliment and to thank the Vice-President for these four selections. They are excellent selections and will be most helpful in every respect.
STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

THE LAOTIAN CRISIS

Mr. President:

At his press conference last night, the President made it clear that this nation and the Soviet Union, indeed, the entire world stand on the verge of very grave decisions. The necessity for these decisions arises from the situation in distant Laos. This most remote and un-warlike of nations has become the critical hinge on which the door to world peace will open or close.

At this moment in Laos, there is a minor military confrontation of opposing local forces. But because it is minor does not mean it is insignificant. This confrontation has opened a fissure in the membrane of international stability. And behind each side in the local confrontation powerful international forces have begun to accumulate.

If the process that has now commenced in Laos is not checked, it will widen the fissure until it spreads from what is remote and obscure to what is immediate and clear. It will spread from Vientianne to Moscow, Delhi, London, Paris and Washington. That is the prospect of the crisis in Laos. It is still a small fire but it is a fire burning in the dry brushwood of a highly unstable world. For that reason it cannot be played with with impunity by any nation.
Those who mean to have peace will act now to close the Laotian fissure, to put out the Laotian fire. While there may be differences as to how this should be done, there can be no difference on the need to do it at once. There can be no difference on the need for an immediate supervised cease-fire in Laos and the convening of the nations most directly concerned with this situation.

A time of accounting is at hand. Powerful nations may properly be judged by the less-powerful on their reactions to this situation. This is a moment for the world to ask bluntly: Who works for peace and who talks peace but does not do its work?

There can be no evasion in Laos. What is done there will ring the bell for what is done elsewhere. If the great nations cannot resolve in peace this distant problem, where their particular national interests are remote, how then are they to resolve problems where their interests are direct and intimate? A failure of peaceful settlement in Laos will cast the shadow of impending failure over disarmament negotiations, over peaceful evolution in Africa, over settlement in Europe, over the entire world's hope for peace and progress.

It is clear to us and I am confident that it will become equally clear to the rest of the world that the President of the United States is prepared and determined to use every instrument of peace to deal with the situation in Laos. He will do so because he is aware that those instruments and those alone can really serve the interests of the Laotian people and the higher interests of all people. He is doing so in the expectation that others will also act with the same sense of reality and responsibility.
In the course which the President is pursuing, I am confident that he has the full support of the American people. I wish to interject at this point a tribute to the distinguished Minority Leader (Mr. Dirksen) who, yesterday, made it clear that on vital questions, this nation must and will stand united behind the President. I know that the people appreciate this attitude of the Minority Leader. I know that the President appreciates his high sense of national responsibility, for on the President has fallen the burden of grave decisions in this long-festering difficulty, two months after assuming office.

With the President's wise leadership, with united support at home which is typified by the expressions of the distinguished Minority Leader, with the cooperation of closely allied nations, with what I am confident will be the growing support of the world's peoples, we may anticipate that all that can be done for the peace of the Laotian people and for the peace of the world will be done.
PRESS RELEASE
May 20, 1961

COPY

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

The Vienna meeting will be neither a conference or a summit nor will it be a base for negotiating differences between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.

It will provide an opportunity for two chiefs of state to get together on a personal basis and to discuss, in general, the differences that exist between two of the three great blocs in the world of today.

These differences cannot be avoided or wished away and, whether we like it or not, they must be faced up to.

The responsibilities which confront a new President and an old band are tremendously difficult. In their custody may well lie the future of the world as we know it.

Other nations within a few short years will have nuclear capabilities. Therefore, the question of arms control is of the highest importance and will become increasingly so.

Old problems such as Laos, Berlin, Cuba, and others remain and will not be settled overnight.

We cannot, nor should we, expect miracles but we can hope that a confrontation may furnish a basis for a possible settlement, later on, of differences with dignity and honor.

I commend the Republicans in and out of the Congress for their support of this meeting even though some of them have grave reservations. They realize that what is at stake is our security and welfare and they have risen nobly to the President's support.
I believe former Vice President Nixon has shown his unpartisanship in his advocacy of such a meeting and his support for it, once the decision was made. I am sure all Americans of both our great parties will rally behind the President and give him their faith and backing on the voyage he will undertake.

The times call for solidarity and understanding. I have no doubt that our people are aware of the dangerously serious situation in which the world finds itself today.
STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D. MONT.)

AUTHORITY TO SELL GOVERNMENT-OWNED BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
ELECTRIC AND TELEPHONE LINES

Mr. President, as my colleagues in the Senate know, various agencies of the Federal Government operate their own electric and telephone systems in isolated areas. During the past year I have discovered that the Federal Agencies are not authorized to expand this service to accommodate the general public.

This matter was brought to Senator Metcalf's and my attention when the Range Telephone Co-op, Inc., at Forsyth, Montana, made an application to purchase the Bureau of Indian Affairs' telephone system at Lame Deer, Montana, on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. The local community was not receiving telephone service and the Agency switchboard was not being used to capacity because their services were limited to the local Bureau offices and facilities.

When there are existing utilities, when there is a demand for the service I think it is perfectly reasonable to permit the utility which is serving the immediate area to come in and negotiate for the purchase of the existing system so that new telephone or electric service can be provided to the area. The provisions of the bill which I have sent to the desk in behalf of Senator Metcalf and myself will permit the sale of the Federal facilities now operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

It is my general impression that the Department of the Interior is sympathetic with the situation that exists on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and I hope they will be able to expedite their report on this legislation.
Favorable consideration of this proposed legislation will permit the extension of new services in areas that are now isolated.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed at the conclusion of my remarks in the Congressional Record the language of the proposed bill and three pieces of correspondence which are of direct concern in this matter.
A B I L L

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to contract for the sale, operation, maintenance, repair, or relocation of Government-owned electric and telephone lines and other utility facilities used for the administration of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, Except for electric utility systems constructed and operated as a part of an irrigation system, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to contract under such terms and conditions as he considers to be in the best interest of the Federal Government for the sale, operation, maintenance, repairs, or relocation of Government-owned utilities and utility systems used in the administration of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
Honorable Roger Ernst
Assistant Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Mr. Ernst:

We are informed that an application has been submitted by the Range Telephone Co-op, Inc., Forsyth, Montana, to purchase the Bureau of Indian Affairs' telephone system which operates at Lame Deer, Montana, on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

As you know, there is no commercial telephone service in Lame Deer and the only telephone system is operated by the Bureau for its own use. Until such time as some other company or agency is prepared to supply this service to the Bureau there is no alternative. We now understand that the Range Telephone Co-op, Inc., is investigating the possibility of extending their lines to serve this area if there is an adequate number of interested consumers. Surveys show that service to the agency offices is vital in any plan which would bring commercial telephone service to Lame Deer.

Officers of the Range Telephone Co-op, Inc., visited our offices last week and stated that they were interested in buying the Bureau's exchange and integrating it into their system in the area. The application has been submitted authorizing this purchase and is now pending before the Director of Property and Management in the Department of the Interior. According to our information no objections have been made in the field or here in Washington. Such a purchase appears to be in the best interests of the general public and would promote the extension of telephone service to more isolated areas.

We would appreciate your checking into the status of this application and your assistance in expediting final action would be most appreciated. Telephone service is widespread in the rural areas of...
Hon. Roger Ernst

Montana but this area within the Northern Cheyenne Reservation still remains unserved and the local inhabitants are very anxious to have telephone service made available to them.

Thanking you and with best personal wishes, we remain

Sincerely yours,

JAMES E. MURRAY, U. S. S.

MIKE MANSFIELD, U. S. S.

LEE METC LF, M. C.
Dear Senator Mansfield:

This is in response to letter dated August 17, 1960, signed by you, Senator Murray, and Congressman Metcalf, which concerns the desire of the Range Telephone Co-op, Inc., Forsyth, Montana, to purchase the Bureau of Indian Affairs' telephone system at Lame Deer, Montana, on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

It is true there is no commercial telephone service in Lame Deer and such service is needed. It is also true that the only telephone system there is operated by the Bureau for its own use; and it is not authorized to spend Government funds for the purpose of expanding this service to accommodate the general public. The logical move, therefore, seems to be for a commercial telephone company to supply the service needs of the Bureau and the needs of the general public.

The difficulty we face is the fact that there is no authority to dispose of a serviceable utility system when there is a continuing need for the service by the Federal Agency. Authority exists only to dispose of property no longer required.

We do believe that in such cases, and this is not the only Bureau utility with these circumstances, we should have authority to negotiate sales when there would be a resultant benefit to the Government and to the general public. To that end we are planning to seek legislation in the next session of Congress which will authorize such dispositions. Until we obtain such authority we feel there is no way this transaction can be consummated. It is regretted that our reply must be unfavorable.

An identical reply is going to Senator Murray and Congressman Metcalf.

Sincerely yours,

(sgd) Elmer F. Bennett

Under Secretary of the Interior

Hon. Mike Mansfield
United States Senate
Washington 25, D. C.
Dear Senator Mansfield:

In answer to your letter of January 31, you are advised that the telephone system at Lame Deer, Montana, is not excess to the needs of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and therefore cannot be disposed of without special legislation.

We are pleased to be able to inform you that the Bureau now has an excess line running from Ashland, Montana, to Lame Deer, Montana. This line will be disposed of by the Bureau’s Area Office in Billings, Montana, in accordance with existing regulations. By acquisition of this line, the Range Telephone Cooperative, Inc., will be able to provide dial service to the residents of Lame Deer immediately. It is hoped that disposal of the line from Ashland to Lame Deer by the Bureau of Indian Affairs will result in phone service being made available to the residents of Lame Deer without delay.

In accordance with your request there is enclosed a draft of a proposed bill which would provide authority for the disposition of the system at Lame Deer. We have drafted this bill broad enough to cover all other similar utility systems operated by the Bureau. At the present time the Bureau has perhaps six or eight systems that are similar to the circumstances surrounding Lame Deer. As Cooperatives and Utility companies move closer to reservations, others will develop and the Bureau should have the authority to act when these commercial companies are in a position to provide a utility service to the general public around an Indian Reservation and disposition of the system is in the interest of the Government.

The draft has been prepared as a drafting service, and I am sure you understand that because it has not been cleared through the Bureau of the Budget it is submitted without commitment from the Department.

The enclosures with your letter are being returned and a copy of this letter is being sent to Senator Metcalf.

Sincerely yours,

(sgd) John A. Carver, Jr.

Hon. Mike Mansfield
United States Senate
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosures