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### Montana School of Mines

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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→ Return to Senator Mansfield

November 8, 1963

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

Mr. President:

In Butte, Montana, there is located one of the great technical schools of the nation and of the world. The Montana School of Mines is so recognized, not only by the Senator from Montana, who happens to have been a student there some years ago, but also by the entire engineering profession.

This reputation is a source of great satisfaction to all the people of Butte and to all the citizens of Montana. And we take pride, too, in the football team of the School which is affectionately known as the "Orediggers."

A year ago, Mr. President, I happened to be in Butte in attendance at <sup>the homecoming</sup> a game from which this outstanding team emerged victorious. It was the first time the team had won a game in ten years. The victory broke a 44 game losing streak. This year I was again present at a game in which the Orediggers triumphed. This time they won after they had lost only five games in a row.

I wish that I could claim some credit for these somewhat unique victories, but I do not see that I can in good conscience claim anything more than coincidence. For the fact is that when I was a student at the <sup>MINES</sup> ~~school~~, I was a member of the football team. And in all honesty, I must admit that I was rated 16th on a squad of 16 and when confronted, at times, with a desperate substitution the coach was inclined to <sup>go</sup> ~~go~~ in himself rather than send me.

When I speak of this team as being outstanding despite a rather consistent tendency to lose games, I want to assure the Senate that I am being neither facetious nor ironic. It is an outstanding team in the best sense of the word and the reason for this characterization is clearly set forth in the letter of Professor John G. McCaslin which appears in the November 5th issue of the Montana Standard.

Professor McCaslin, among other things, notes that "if a football player (of the Orediggers) is being congratulated on Monday, it is probably for making an "A" on a calculus or thermodynamics examination as well as for the fine play he made on Saturday." And he notes further that "In this day when paid athletics are the rule rather than the exception, the ability to keep sports in proper perspective is rare. These, however, are rare young men at Montana School of Mines. It has a tradition of graduating only men of the highest caliber." Further, Professor McCaslin notes that "None of the players receives board, room or--good heavens!--spending money to play football."

Mr. President, we are often accused of cluttering up the Record with matters of local interest only. The Orediggers football team may, indeed, be of great local interest to the people of Butte. But I want to say that in what it stands for in the way of decency among the young people of the nation, what it stands for in the wise relating of education and sports is not of local interest only. And in the consistent understanding which its loyal supporters give to this team of young men, and in their



ability to put winning and losing in wise and humorous perspective, there is a profound meaning for all of us wherever we may be in the nation. It is for that reason, Mr. President, that I commend Professor McCaslin's letter to the attention of the Senate. It would be my hope that the Record will always contain occasional statements such as this one which serve as a kind of tonic for the spirit and a replenishment of hope for the future. I ask unanimous consent that the letter previously referred to be included at this point in the Record.