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## Ideals of the Democratic Party

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD ON IDEALS OF THE  
DEMOCRATIC PARTY

You may not be aware that the Democratic Party is the oldest political party in the world in terms of continuous activity. It was founded by Thomas Jefferson and still remains true to most of the ideals espoused by Jefferson.

A basic principle of Jeffersonian philosophy is an inherent belief in the right of the "little man"--no matter how educationally or financially unfortunate he may be--to have an equal voice with his fellow citizens in deciding the destiny of his country. While there are elements within the modern Democratic Party which are not sympathetic to this thesis, one can safely say that the vast majority of Democrats do believe in majority rule. This factor, in my opinion, marks a major difference between the Democratic Party and its competitor in American politics.

Likewise, the Democratic Party is more alive to the forces of change in the nation and in the world and is not afraid to move forward to meet a crisis head-on. A good example of this was the historic Trade Expansion Act passed last year by a Democratic Congress to permit the United States to bargain effectively with the growing European Common Market. It is hoped that the move will help provide future jobs for American workers engaged in overseas trade. This type of "preventive maintenance" is proof of the Party's sincere concern for the welfare of the individual, whom it regards first in human terms, and

only secondly as a consumer, or a statistic on an economic chart.

The Democratic Party is traditionally the party of many interests, representing all walks of life, the rich and the poor, the laborer and the businessman, the housewife and the professions.

The Democratic Party stands for a free and vigorous economic society, a land of equal opportunity, a country where the minority and the talented are encouraged but cannot dominate and a nation where the troubled and afflicted find compassion and understanding. The Democratic Party stands for a Federal system of government which encourages initiative and enterprise but stands ready to aid its people, state and local governments, when they cannot adequately provide the necessary services and guarantees.

The Democratic Party has found its greatest success when it has resisted attempts to place control and leadership in the hands of a few and those of special interests. The Democratic Party encourages freedom of expression and the right of criticism, but above all we seek to move forward with unity of purpose, a purpose which will benefit all America.