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Test Ban Treaty

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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that it does lead us toward a brighter and more peaceful future.

After the consideration of all this testimony—as we stated originally in the report of the Preparedness Investigating Committee to the Senate—due to the importance, because of necessity, Senators, I am convinced that this treaty would deny us the necessary opportunities to test fully and fairly all our military requirements, and that any of the prospective positive and constructive gains resulting from the treaty did not overcome those losses or disadvantages and did not justify our giving up what we are having to surrender and what we will surrender under the terms of the treaty.

Therefore, Mr. President, I remain of the opinion and the final conclusion that the treaty does jeopardize our security and should not at this time be approved and ratified.

I wish especially to commend the distinguished minority leader (Mr. Mansfield), although others deserve commendation, but I wish to pay the very fine way in which he has handled this extensive and very important debate preceding what will be the most important vote in this body in my time. I commend him very highly for the very fine way in which he has performed his duties and carried out his obligations. Certainly, I think that he has had the confidence of the American people. He is the great chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Disarmament, of the work of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. Gore), the member of the committee, the ranking Republican member of the Foreign Relations Committee, the Senator from Iowa (Mr. Hickenlooper), the member of the committee, the Senator from Idaho (Mr. Atkin), and others who have observed the actual process of negotiation over the years, on behalf of the Senate and made signs of the necessity of the work of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. Church), and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. Dods), whose creative contribution to this conception with the modifications which ultimately produced agreement.

I think of the bipartisan contribution of the Senators who journeyed to Moscow to witness the signing of the treaty—Mr. Atkin, Mr. Saltonstall, Mr. Pastore, Mr. Sparkman, Mr. Fulbright, and Mr. Humphrey.

I think of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. Russell), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. Goldwater), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. Stennis), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. Thurmond), and the Senator from Maine (Mrs. Smith), all distinguished experts in military matters, whose penetrating questions and arguments have sharpened our understanding of this step. The RECORD should reflect their contributions.

And it should reflect, too, Mr. President, the work of the great chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations (Mr. Fulbright). In considering this treaty he represented not only the members of that committee but the members of the Armed Services Committee and the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy in one of the most profound, impartial, and thorough investigations ever made by an agency of the Senate. I can recall of no other occasion in which the Senate was better equipped by the work of its committees to carry fully informed and with due deliberation to decision.

Finally, Mr. President, I wish to allude to the contribution of the great American who conveys his views and advice to the Senate from Illinois, the distinguished minority leader (Mr. Dirksen). He withheld his judgment until he had fully informed himself on this treaty, until he had pondered its implications, not to his party, not to himself but to the Nation and to the living generations and those yet to come. When he knew in his mind and in his heart that it was right, then he spoke. When he had decided, he was a rock of granite, impervious to the storms of criticism which beat about him.

The Senator from Illinois is a great American. And, Mr. President, he could not be a great American unless he was also an understanding and compassionate human being. His guidance, his reassurance, his wisdom, in this instance, increases the debt which the leadership owes to him, and which the Senate and the Nation as a whole owe the Senator from Illinois for his high patriotic public service.

Mr. President, shortly we will vote on the nuclear test ban treaty. What needed saying on this treaty has been said again and again in full and fair debate. It will be clear by this time that not a single Senate proponent favors the treaty, because he believes that the Russians have no need of it. And the United States. There are no dupes in the Senate on that score. The Russians have their own reasons for signing this treaty. They may not need it for military advantage at all although that possibility has been discussed thoroughly. Indeed, one does not have to search far for plausible reasons for the Russian signature.

Mr. Khroushchev has his share of internal difficulties. The Soviet-Canadian wheat deal of Canadian wheat for $500 million is one example. The Russian people are consumers, too, and nuclear leks is not yet a substitute for nutrition. The race to the moon is not yet producing edible greens. Jell-O. The nuclear fallout does not drop as the gentle rain on parched agricultural lands.

The internal difficulties are insufficient to explain the Russian acceptance of this treaty, we may find other reasons in Mr. Khroushchev's external difficulties and his desire to obtain good relations with China. The Soviet Union is confronted with a militant and hostile ideological challenge from the Chinese. Therefore, it is confronted with what many say is a great stress on its racial affinity with all Asians as against European Russia. It is confronted with growing Chinese territory in Central Asia. In this connection it should be noted that the Sunday papers carry the reports from Moscow that Russia charges that its frontier was violated by China on September 19, 1962, and that the Chinese five times in 1962. And also in this connection I ask unanimous consent that there be printed at the end of my remarks an editorial appearing in the New York Herald Tribune dated September 25 and a statement which I made on September 6 referring to the Sino-Soviet border issue as, possibly, a major motivation in the Russian interest in the nuclear test ban treaty.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See Exhibits 1 and 2.)
Mr. MANSFIELD. In short, Mr. President, quite apart from military matters, there are two balances of plausible reasons for the Soviet Union to want this treaty for the United States. But that is the business of the Russians. It is not ours. Perhaps there are similar valid reasons for seeking this treaty. We do not have to love the Russians to see the advantages of this treaty. We have only to recognize what unrestricted testing of nuclear weapons, let alone nuclear warfare itself, may do to the civilization we know and to the health of the peoples of the United States, particularly to younger generations here and on the way. Is that in itself not sufficient reason for seeking this treaty?

Let no Member forget that this treaty was proposed and pursued, not by Mr. Khrushchev, but by President Eisenhower and by President Kennedy in succession. And let no Member suggest that they pursued it—and none has—because they are fools or careless or not as wise or as well informed as Senators in these matters. And let no Member suggest—and none has—that these Presidents pursued the treaty for any reason other than that they were convinced that, on balance, it is in the interests of the United States, first and foremost.

Now it is possible to disagree with the judgment of two Presidents in succession. That is what the constitutional practice of ratification is designed to permit, and I question no Senator's motives if, in his judgment, he votes in the end for the rejection of this treaty. But I would plead with those who are so inclined to consider one last time what the failure to ratify this treaty would mean.

It would mean the resumption of tests in the atmosphere and on the sea, not only by the United States but by the Soviet Union as well, with consequent rise in the exposure to radiation-induced sicknesses of our people as well as others. It would insure a marked increase in defense expenditures and, hence, in the already heavy burdens of the U.S. taxpayer. For, if we cannot take this step toward security by an instrument of peace, then it follows that we had better put more of our resources into the instruments of war. For that is precisely what others will also be doing, as the fears and antagonisms multiply in the fertile soil of a sanctioned international nuclear anarchy.

To reject this treaty would be to precipitate a worldwide revulsion among the dozens of nations who have followed the leadership of this Nation for many years and who have already signed this treaty in good faith.

To reject this treaty, Mr. President, will be to snuff out that flicker of light which for a brief moment lit the rational and reasonable hopes of the Nation and the world.

It will, in short, bring an end to the hope for a more reliable peace through negotiations, and properly so. For it will make clear that, while the President does not fear to negotiate, the Senate fears the consequences of negotiations which are finally successful. It will make clear that we reject these consequences even when they are most cir-