

6-24-1964

Montana Agriculture Publication

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Mansfield, Mike 1903-2001, "Montana Agriculture Publication" (1964). *Mike Mansfield Speeches*. 578.
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June 24, 1964

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

The people of Montana placed a trust in me when they elected me to the United States Senate. As I see it, that trust requires me to be as helpful as possible to Montanans in their problems with the federal government. It also requires me to concern myself with certain matters of great importance to the state. I have in mind, for example, federal assistance in the recent flood disaster or the plight of the silver dollar. And from time to time, questions of specific state interest also arise in mining, lumber, livestock, agriculture, resources and other activities.

Then there are the national issues of our times. These issues, such as ^{equal} ~~civil~~ rights, educational needs, adequate health care for older citizens, taxes, national defense, poverty and many others, affect all Americans. If the President and the Congress come up with the right answers to these questions, the entire nation benefits and Montana, as a part of it, benefits. If the federal government fails in these responsibilities, eventually all Americans--Montanans included--suffer the consequences.

Something similar is involved in the great international issues which confront the nation. Decisions have to be made with respect to a treaty on nuclear tests, on wheat sales abroad or a ban on trade with Communist China or on the conflict in Southeast Asia, on United Nations actions and on many other international matters. Through their Senators the people of Montana and every other state are entitled to a voice in the national response to these situations, although the President has the

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great burden of responsibility. Therefore, Senators, if they are to represent their states effectively, must study these international questions and form judgments on them. They have an obligation to think independently and constructively in order to help the President, whether he is a Republican or Democrat, to find the right answers for the nation in foreign policy.

The interests of Montana may not always be immediately apparent in international questions. But, as in the great national issues, they are of great importance to our people. No state is an island unto itself. We are all parts of the United States. And whatever affects the welfare and security of the nation as a whole--as most national and international issues do--must eventually affect the citizens of each state.

Every state should, indeed, do what it can to stand on its own feet and solve its own problems. But this virtue of self-reliance has nothing in common with isolation of the state from the nation. We cannot turn our back on the nation. We are of the nation, one nation. Citizens go back and forth across state borders freely. Commerce moves in and out without hindrance. If war comes, we are in it together. If peace prevails, we share its benefits. In short, the security of every state in a troubled world and the welfare and the prosperity of every state, in the end, are dependent upon a high degree of national unity.

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So, to sum up, I see my responsibilities in the Senate as doing the best I can to look after the interests of the people and state of Montana and to contribute whatever I can to the security and progress of the United States in a world at peace. That is how it has been for many years. That is how it will be for as long as Montanans see fit to continue their trust and confidence in me.