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KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

MONTANA STATE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

Saturday, September 12, 1964, 11:30 a.m., M.S.T.

Lewistown, Montana

This is the second convention which I have attended in recent weeks--at the first one I had a difficult time trying to convince everyone that the only job I really want is that of Senator of, for and from Montana. Here, at least, you believe me. I had more trouble back east. Eastern politicians seem to have a tendency to say no when they mean yes.

As all of us know ~~that~~ the prospects for America and the Democratic Party were made stronger and more secure by what we did in Atlantic City. But no less important to our country is what we do here in Montana in the course of the next several weeks. Few elections have been more important than the one we face this November.

The issues in this campaign are clear--the lines of battle are drawn. Our candidate, Lyndon B. Johnson, offers experienced, responsible, and decisive leadership. ~~The other candidate counsels us to pull our covered wagons into a circle when, because of his recklessness, the ICBM's lift off their pads and start their deadly journeys.~~

We meet today, in full knowledge of the issues, knowing too well the drastic consequences of defeat, and knowing also that the Democratic victory which the country needs will not come easily.

But defeat is not an easy word for Montanans--we don't use it often. Throughout our history our people have fought against long odds and managed to win. Our motto is Oro Y Plata, but our most valuable treasure, our greatest natural resource, is our people. For more than 100 years we have helped build America by building a greater Montana. And in this Centennial Year, I have become more keenly aware both of what we have done here and of our debt to the great American ideals which have nurtured us. They are the ideas that tell all what we really stand for as Americans, as Montanans, and as Democrats.

As Americans we stand for freedom and justice for all men--equality before the law and equality of opportunity. We stand for an America where men are free to make a better life and a better world for their children. We stand for peace and security through strength and the responsible exercise of our might--we do not stand for peace through war--we know how peaceful a cemetery can be.

As Montanans we stand for honesty, decency, individual initiative and straight talk. We do our thinking before we speak, not during the following week. We tend not to make wild statements, and when we hear that kind of talk from someone we pass him by. Lately we've been hearing it from some of the temporary leaders of the Republican Party. It's a mite difficult to tell exactly what they mean because they say one thing one day and another the next. It's hard for a simple man like me to discover the truth.

In contrast to this sorry picture of irresponsible talk, intra-party squabbling and charges and counter charges, the Democratic Party can present a sound record of achievement, a record based on the implementation of a rational, responsible and humanitarian philosophy of government. We categorically reject the extremists and the lunatic fringe which dog the Republican Party; we reject and repudiate the John Birch Society, the Communist Party, and the Klu Klux Klan. Instead of pursuing 19th century phantoms we work rationally and responsibly to meet the real needs of the American people. And we try to do this within the federal-state relationship established by the Constitution. The federal government is called in to help only when the state and its subdivisions cannot or will not do the job alone. This kind of cooperation has operated for the benefit of the American people for many years. What kind of roads, parks, power, and conservation projects would we have without such cooperation? This is the kind of pragmatic "let's get things done" approach which is one of America's great strengths.

As Americans, as Montanans and as Democrats we can view with satisfaction the accomplishments of the Kennedy-Johnson administration over the last four years.

It is a record of a massive assault on the unfinished business of the nation by the Kennedy-Johnson Administration and the Democratic majorities in both houses of the Congress. It is a record of concern for the needs of all Americans.

An 11.3 billion dollar tax cut has been passed--the biggest tax cut in history. It has already stimulated consumption, investment, and investment to record levels. It is helping to keep unemployment under control. And President Johnson has made it clear that he will not hesitate to call for another tax cut if the economy requires it.

We have taken a giant step in the effort to implement the Constitution's promise of equal opportunity for all Americans.

Nothing, in this modern age, is more important to our children than education. Under the Kennedy-Johnson Administration we began the effort to raise the caliber and capacity of our educational facilities until they are adequate to insure every boy and girl in this country an opportunity for a good education. That is the way John Fitzgerald Kennedy wanted it. That is the way it will be. The last two Congresses--Democratic Congresses--have done more to realize the ideal of equal educational opportunity for all American children than any other in a hundred years.

We have made great strides in our drive to expand and improve the facilities for the care and rehabilitation of the mentally retarded and the mentally ill. Congress has authorized funds for research and for construction of new community type, state operated facilities. Because of medical advances and the facilities that will be built under this bill, it will be possible to reduce the number of full-time patients in mental hospitals by one half in the near future. And I need not remind

you that, at present, the great bulk of hospital beds in the nation are now occupied by the mentally ill.

The Kennedy-Johnson Administration has shown a deep and enlightened interest in an area about which we Montanans know a great deal. I am talking about the need to conserve our great natural heritage for our children. The Wilderness bill, which has just passed the Congress, will help provide for the present and future recreational needs of the nation. Bills to attack the serious and growing problems of water and air pollution have also been enacted. Plans are going forward to provide for great hydroelectric power facilities and irrigation of millions of acres of farm and grazing lands--many here in Montana.

We have begun to meet the problem of hopeless and self-defeating poverty which plagues millions of American families. The Johnson anti-poverty bill will provide more than half a million underprivileged young Americans the opportunity to develop skills, to continue their education, and to achieve self respect in useful work. It will effect every community in America and assist millions of workers and farmers. In short, it will help extend to all Americans the opportunity to contribute to and share in the abundance of our country. And by so doing, it will add to the moral and economic strength and the unity of the nation.

The Democratic Party knows that it is not enough to wring our hands in sympathy for the plight of older citizens and their families when they are struck by costly illness. Right now the Johnson Administration is engaged in a battle to insure that the older people of the nation obtain adequate health care, not as a matter of charity or sufferance, but as a matter of right. They have earned that right. They are entitled to it and we have found a way to insure it. The pattern is there in the old age social security system which has served the nation well for a quarter of a century. The Senate has enacted a bill to provide health care for the aged, and we are working to see that it will soon become the law of the land.

I would also like to mention two accomplishments of this Administration which are dear to my heart and which I know are dear to yours. I am sure that you know what I mean--the Democratic Congress has passed legislation which will provide an adequate supply of silver dollars and also a beef import bill--both very important to our state.

In these and other ways a Democratic Administration and a Democratic Congress have shown that they are alert to the real needs of the nation. And, I might add, we have done it while incurring the smallest budget deficit since 1958. We will leave it to others to seek to rebuild the ghost towns of yester year. There is work to be done on the frontiers of today. Each era must define its vision, its "great society" and work toward it. That work, as it has been ever since the days of Franklin Roosevelt, is the work of the Democratic Party.

In foreign affairs as well, this administration has a record which the Republicans cannot challenge.

Under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson we have built our military strength to a level unprecedented in the history of the world. We have the capacity to respond quickly and appropriately to armed aggression of any kind. And I am happy to be able to say that this has been achieved at the lowest possible cost to the American taxpayer.

But military strength alone does not make a successful foreign policy. The other ingredients are responsibility, realism, restraint, and a high sense of purpose. The Johnson-Kennedy Administration has these qualities. They were shown by President Kennedy in the Cuban crisis. They were shown by President Johnson in the Bay of Tonkin. In each case our President acted with both firm resolve and restraint. Both knew that the U.S. cannot let armed aggression go unchallenged. But President Kennedy understood and President Johnson understands the awesome power of the nuclear weapons. They know that in a nuclear war there would be no victors, only the dead and the dying.

That is why John F. Kennedy worked long and hard for the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty which has stopped the pollution of the atmosphere with radioactive wastes and reduced the danger of nuclear war.

That is why the U.S. must have a President with the wit and courage, the experience and the stature, to face our adversaries across a conference table as well as a battlefield.

That is why it is so important for us to have a President who says what he means, and means what he says. There is no time for retractions and revisions in an age when a misstatement by the President may bring nuclear war.

That is why we cannot afford a policy of foolish belligerence and brinkmanship. We need a President who understands the unpleasant fact that the Soviet Union is likely to start a nuclear holocaust rather than meekly acquiesce in the destruction of its way of life or the loss of its vital interests.

That is why President Johnson takes so seriously the responsibilities imposed upon him by our nuclear arsenal. He knows that the American people want control of our nuclear weapons--all our nuclear weapons--to remain in the hands of their elected leader, the President of the United States, and he intends to keep it there.

That is why we must elect Lyndon Johnson President of the United States.

As thinking and responsible men and women we can see that the accomplishments of the past four years are but a beginning. We know that the road ahead is a hard one and that it can best be traveled by a Democratic President, Democratic Senators, congressmen, governors and state legislators, mayors and aldermen. And we know, as well, that the job we do here in Montana is a vital part of the national picture. We know that to a man we must give our own candidates all the support at our command--from governor and senator

right on down to local sheriffs, every candidate needs and deserves our wholehearted backing, the backing of the whole party.

The Democratic Party is the party of consensus, a party of unity. It is the party of all the people--rich, poor, farmer, laborer, businessman, old and young.

The choice facing the American people in this election is not the usual decision as to the pace of forward movement; it is whether we shall go forward or backward.

We know that Americans are proud of their history and their traditions. The Democratic Party has always been the leader in building that history. But however fine our traditions are, however much we look with pride on our history, however much we may learn from that past, we know that it can never be allowed to inhibit progress. We cannot return to those good old days. We cannot say, "Stop the world, I want to get off." Let us revere our tradition, let us have our fine memories but let us not turn away from today's realities--let us face up to our problems and work toward their solution--solutions consistent with today's needs, the needs of the 20th Century.

My fellow-Montanans, let us fight to win a victory in November. Let us fight hard but let us fight with honor and dignity. Let us fight on issues, records and ideas. We offer the people of America and Montana a choice. We offer a record of peace, prosperity, and progress and a promise for the future. We cannot say that all is well in the world or in the nation.

But we have begun to face our problems, we are on our way to the great society, we have started along the road to the realization of the great universal aspirations of the human race. As President Johnson has said: We are trying to create a world where, "the least among us will find contentment and the best among us will find greatness, and all of us will respect the dignity of the one and admire the achievements of the other... And then people shall say to people: There on this earth, as in the eyes of God, walks my brother."