6-16-1966

The Shadow of War - The Substance of Peace - Yeshiva University

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches/626

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Mike Mansfield Papers at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mike Mansfield Speeches by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
Wed. August 10, 1966

Have heard there is going to be a picnic at Gregson Spring on Sunday about 11 a.m.

About 1 p.m. it should be in full swing, and maybe if you drive through you might want to stop by.

Peggy
OPERATION HOLD

(Blast Off Libby Dam)

Ground Breaking Ceremonies

Saturday, August 13, 1966, 2:00 p.m. (MST)

Libby, Montana

It is good to be home, to be in Libby and to have the opportunity and the privilege to talk to you and with you.

I have never forgotten the fact that for 10 years the people of western Montana sent me to the House of Representatives and for the last 14 years, people of the entire State have sent me to the Senate. For 24 years, therefore, I have had the honor and the privilege of representing you. In this span of years, the people of Libby and Lincoln County have always given me their support.

When you sent me to Washington, you did not ask me to be the handmaiden of any group or any lobby. You did expect me to use my own best judgment and you did expect me to vote in what I considered Montana's and the Nation's interest. This I have tried to do, and when I cast votes that may not have coincided with your individual views or the views of any particular group, you have usually given me the benefit of the doubt.

During these 24 years, almost a quarter of a century, we have witnessed a world in turmoil. We have won one world war, stalemated another in Korea—where an uneasy truce still exists 15 years later—and are now engaged in still another
unhappy struggle in Viet Nam—the end of which is not in sight. We have also witnessed a measure of instability within our own country—a combination of conditions and incidents which will require the best efforts of all people of good will if the public interest is to prevail. Throughout it all, I have never lost faith in the people of Montana and the nation to do what is right when faced with the facts.

I am proud of my State and my country. While I may find fault with some Court decisions, with some of our domestic policies, and some aspects of our foreign policy, I try my best to understand and to support the law and the policies of our government. And I try, too, to make my position understood on the basis of reason and logic and not on the basis of emotions. I do not look at all questions on a black or white basis because there are always shades of gray in between.

There are, however, no shades of gray in my feelings about Montana. To me, it is without question the best State in the Union—a State to work in, to raise families in, a State to hunt and fish in, a State in transition from the Old West to the new, a State which in outlook and scope is an empire and a symphony combined.

It is an empire of vast size and potential, of great beauty and grandeur. It is an empire where opportunities and possibilities drew people from everywhere to work and to live in its generous surroundings.

It is a symphony whose music is the Missouri, the Yellowstone, the Musselshell, the Flathead, the Columbia, the Big Horn, the Powder, the Tongue, and the Kootenai.
It is a symphony whose players are the descendants of the original Americans, the Northern Cheyenne, the Blackfeet, the Salish and Kootenai, the Sioux, the Crows, and the Chippewa Cree. They number in excess of 30,000 today. Add to them the 675,000 other Americans, immigrants or sons of immigrants, who came from all parts of the globe. All of us together, the old and the new, give substance and being and devotion to our state.

It is a symphony with a backdrop provided by the Little and Big Belts, the Bitterroots, the Crazies, the Badlands, the Sapphires, the Rubies, and the Tobacco Range. It is also Silver Bow, Two Dot, Paradise, Hell Gate, Ekalaka, the Beaverhead, the Madison, Big Timber, and Plentywood.

Where can you find a sweeter melody than our rivers, better players than our people or a finer backdrop than our mountains, our lakes and forests, our cities and towns, our mining and lumber camps, our ranches? Nowhere except in Montana.

In an era when State lines and State identities are becoming increasingly blurred, Montana continues to project that certain "something"—that "flavor", that "aura" which is distinctly its own. Ours is a State with an exciting past and prospects for a great future. Just how great a future will depend on how wisely we develop our abundant resources, keeping in mind the goal of the greatest public good. At times, progress will depend entirely on our own efforts. At others, it will require cooperation between our State and the Federal government. We are here today to witness an example of the latter.
There is no finer example of constructive Federal-State cooperation than the project for which we are about to break ground. The turning of the earth here today signals the beginning of a new prosperity for northwestern Montana. What we are beginning today can be of tremendous benefit to our great State if utilized with care and organization.

This Corps of Army Engineers project is a tribute to the ingenuity of man and comprehensive planning. Libby Dam will rise about 420 feet above bedrock and it will be 3,055 feet long at the crest. There will be three 105,000 kilowatt generators and room for more. The dam will create a reservoir with a 5,850,000 acre-feet capacity. All of this will cost approximately $350,000,000, the entire amount of which is fully repayable with interest. This is a good investment in the future of Montana, and it is a resource upon which we can build.

The story of Libby Dam covers a span of many years. In fact, we have been talking about Libby since my early days in the House of Representatives. One of the earliest supporters of this multi-purpose project was the late and beloved Senator Jim Murray. He recognized in Libby Dam a feasible plan of controlling flood waters in northwestern Montana and northern Idaho, a new source of power generation and many associated benefits such as recreation. We all worked together on this project. In fact, this is one of the very few Federal projects of this magnitude that has generated a minimum of opposition. My able colleague and good friend, Senator Lee Metcalf, has been a strong source of support as have Congressman Arnold Olsen and Jim Battin, and all our state officials in bringing this project to the point of construction.
Libby Dam and Reservoir was authorized for construction in 1950. For the next ten years the future of the project was in doubt because of our inability to come to an agreement with Canada on a plan of cooperative development of river basins in western Canada and the Pacific Northwest. Libby was held in this suspended state because it would create a vast man-made lake which would back water into Canada. After years of negotiation, we now have the Columbia River Treaty which is a good workable plan which will be of mutual benefit to both nations.

Libby is not only a great project, but it is a symbol of a good working relationship between two nations who are concerned about the proper development of their resources. The people of Montana are most cognizant of the value of this international friendship. This is a joint venture of which both Canada and the U.S. can be very proud.

The construction of a project of the size of Libby Dam stimulates economic booms, inflated values and congestion. The local merchants will benefit as will real estate interests. Libby, Troy, and nearby communities will grow, the economy of the entire northwestern part of Montana will receive benefits of one form or the other. If the tremendous influx of people and the demand for services is to be absorbed, it will require planning and a cooperative effort. More importantly, we should look to the future and what will come after the project is completed. The boom will die down but there can be lasting benefits. New industries, expanded tourism are the most immediate long range benefits. If we didn't have Hungry Horse Dam, we wouldn't have one of the State's finest communities, Columbia Falls. The entire Flathead Valley and western Montana is enriched because of this project.
And when Libby's power is integrated into a grid with that of Hungry Horse, it will not only add tremendously to the prosperity of Western Montana, but it is my hope that its benefits will eventually spill over into eastern Montana where an even greater power shortage exists.

There are difficult days in the preconstruction of these huge multi-purpose projects. Much private land must be acquired, communities have to be relocated and public utilities have to be moved. All this is done at the inconvenience of some for the general benefit of all. Real estate values are subject to many interpretations. If I owned property in the reservoir area, I admit I would ask as much as I could get—but we all must be reasonable. Collective understanding and negotiation are needed at a time like this.

The tremendous impact of a construction project of this magnitude focuses attention on the role of the Federal government. Uncle Sam is not all good or all bad. Frankly, there are areas in which the role of the Federal government might be more desirably reduced or eliminated. On the other hand, in many cases, the Federal government has had to expand its role or enter in new activities to fill a void or public need.

The construction of Libby Dam fills a need. There is an ever increasing demand for hydroelectric power. If a community does not have ready access to power, it loses one of the basic requirements in developing new industries. This project will provide all of these things—power generation and a healthy competition in the utility market. Unquestionably,
there is a need for flood control. The resources of the Federal government are sufficiently large and able to control the periodic ravages of mother nature. As our Nation's productivity and wealth grow, our population makes greater demands on our recreation resources. We all know tourism is a big item in our State's economy. The development that is planned around Libby Reservoir will make additional areas available to the public.

Quite frankly, we all wouldn't be here today at this ground breaking ceremony if it were not for the government of the U.S.--your government. I know of no one in the private sector who has offered to construct this project as now planned.

Ideally, the Federal government of our Nation is a partner in a joint effort to build prosperous communities. It assists in areas where local resources are inadequate or previous efforts have failed. Here in Lincoln County, the Federal land acreage will expand, but this is compensated with additional payrolls, new industries, expanded economic resources. At this point, I wish to reiterate that I feel that your government has an obligation to contribute its fair share to maintaining local services and schools. I have been in close touch with your very capable Superintendent of Schools, Carl Engbrethson, on this matter and shall continue to be a strong advocate of the Federal impact program for schools.

I didn't come here today to lecture. I came to celebrate a great occasion and to visit with my friends. But I do have one more comment. The government in Washington, your government, is a government
supported by and responsible to the people of fifty states. The problems of everyday life are more demanding than at any time in our history. If you do not desire the services of the Federal government with its resources and technicians, then the states and their municipalities must demonstrate the ability to resolve these problems to the satisfaction of the majority, protecting the rights and needs of the minority. If this is not done, then under our Constitution, the Federal government has a strict responsibility to act. Through cooperation, we can blend the best of each and the end result will be a more prosperous, better educated, solvent and economically healthy Nation, well-prepared to meet the demands of this last half of the 20th Century.

In closing, let me repeat my pleasure at being here with you today on this important occasion. The combination of clean mountain air and old-fashioned Montana hospitality has done wonders for me. It has renewed my spirit and made much more bearable the thought of returning to the Senate for the final, hectic weeks of a busy session. Thank you.