

4-2-1969

9th Mexico-U.S. Interparliamentary Conference

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Mansfield, Mike 1903-2001, "9th Mexico-U.S. Interparliamentary Conference" (1969). *Mike Mansfield Speeches*. 752.
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April 2, 1969

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REMARKS OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD, PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, MEXICO CITY

NINTH MEXICO-UNITED STATES INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

Mr. President:

On behalf of the United States Delegation, thank you for receiving us and for your generous words of welcome. Your expressions of friendship are most cordially reciprocated. It is my hope and expectation that this Ninth Interparliamentary Conference of Mexico and the United States will strengthen the understanding which already exists between the two Congresses.

Deputy Luis Farias, and his colleagues of the Mexican Delegation have prepared a challenging program. Without anticipating the discussions in Aguascalientes, I would note that the agenda puts heavy emphasis on matters pertaining to arms control and disarmament. That is most appropriate. Not only is the question critical, it is one in which Mexican leadership has already made significant contributions in the Hemisphere and in the United Nations. The Treaty of Tlatelolco, for example, which provides for a nuclear free zone in Latin America, is largely the result of Mexican initiative. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the Treaty would never have been signed had not it been for Mexican persistence over many month of difficult and exacting negotiations.

Mexican concern has gone beyond curbing the atom for use in war to releasing its potential for peaceful purposes, particularly in the desalinization of sea water. One such project as you know, Mr.

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President, brings together the governments of the United States and Mexico in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency. I mention it, in particular, because it resulted from an Interparliamentary Conference in La Paz in 1965 and originated with a suggestion first made by two members of our delegations at that time--by Senator George Aiken who is the dean of the Senate Republicans and the distinguished Deputy Alfonso Martinez Dominguez.

The desalinization project is only one of many examples of Mexican American cooperation which has grown steadily more fruitful. As a participant in the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary meetings since their inception, I have seen and felt the steady emergence of a new trust and a new confidence between Mexico and the United States. The mutuality deepens with the years and underwrites the rich promise of the future for both nations.

Many persons have contributed to this happy state of affairs. However, I wish to take this occasion, Mr. President, to stress what you have done--out of your personal dedication, your humanity, and your statesmanship, for the building of a responsible and respectable relationship between the Republic of Mexico and the republic of the United States, a relationship based on equality, dignity and friendship.

We thank you for your welcome. We are happy to be in Mexico where, already, we feel at home once again.