4-18-1969

Congressional Record Navy Reconnaissance Plane Incident Page 3900

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001
April 16, 1969

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

I appreciate the fact that the Administration and other countries are making every effort through search missions to locate possible wreckage and to save, if possible, the lives of any survivors of the Navy reconnaissance plane which was shot down off North Korea. I commend the President for his cool and deliberate approach to this crisis.

The incident, however, raises several questions in my mind. First, let me say that it is my belief that this particular intelligence operation was carried on without the personal knowledge of President Nixon even as the incident of the USS PUEBLO was carried on without the personal knowledge of President Johnson. The questions I have in my mind are: 1) why was this trip necessary; and 2) why are relatively unarmed ships, like the PUEBLO, and unarmed planes like this one, sent into areas where the risk of incidents of this kind is very high?

It appears to me that what has happened has resulted from a carry-over of an intelligence policy and procedure which had been in existence for some years and which has been continued automatically into the present, in the absence of orders to the contrary from the new administration.

The President and the nation require protection from that sort of situation. We need to make certain that the activities of the diverse intelligence agencies are in accord with present need, as determined by the responsible elected leadership and that the agencies do not work at times at cross purposes. They must be brought under the control of the
President of the United States. I would suggest that serious consideration be given, therefore, to the creation of a headquarters element within the White House. It could evaluate the numerous continuing intelligence programs of the agencies and departments so that the responsible administration will know what intelligence activities are being carried on by whom, where, and for what purpose. This information should be at the disposal of the President if he chooses to have it or at the disposal of someone directly responsible to him on a daily basis so that his administration will be fully aware of what is happening throughout the world and would not be placed in the difficult position of its predecessors as in the cases of the U-2 incident and the FUEBLO.
by Judge Wyzanski makes neither sense nor justice. As Judge Wyzanski put it, "Indeed a selective conscientious objector might reflect a more discriminating study of the problem, a more sensitive conscience, and a deeper spiritual understanding."

In the courts, in the universities and in Congress democracy is reassessing itself. It is engaged in a holding action against the new militarism. But as long as there remain at war, it can only be a holding action, because—if I may adapt an old military axiom—in a democracy there is no substitute for peace.

FOOTNOTES
4 Statement by Dr. George Rathjens, March 28, 1969, Strategic and Foreign Policy Implications of the ABM Systems.
13 Ibid., pp. 219-221.
14 “The New American Militarism,” p. 84.
17 Democracy in America, p. 624.
18 Ibid., p. 625.
19 Senators Goodell, Cook, Hatfield and Saxbe, in a statement issued by Senators Goodell and Cook at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, April 3, 1969.

THE NAVY RECONNAISSANCE PLANE INCIDENT IN THE SEA OF JAPAN

Mr. MANSFIELD Mr. President, I appreciate the fact that the administration and other countries are making every effort through search missions to locate possible wreckage and to save, if possible, the lives of any survivors of the Navy reconnaissance plane which was shot down off North Korea. I commend the President for his cool and deliberate approach to this crisis.

The incident, however, raises several questions in my mind. First, let me say that it is my belief that this particular intelligence operation was carried on without the personal knowledge of President Nixon even as the incident of the U.S.S. Pueblo was carried on without the personal knowledge of President Johnson.

The questions I have in my mind are: First, why was this trip necessary; and, second, why are relatively unarmed ships like the Pueblo, and unarmed planes, like this one, sent into areas where the risk of incidents of this kind is very high?

It appears to me that what has happened has resulted from a carryover of an intelligence policy and procedure which had been in existence for some years and which has been continued automatically into the present, in the absence of orders to the contrary from the new administration.

The President and the Nation require protection from that sort of situation. We need to make certain that the activities of the diverse intelligence agencies are in accord with present need, as determined by the responsible elected leadership and that the agencies do not work at times at cross purposes. They must be brought under the control of the President of the United States. I would suggest that serious consideration be given, therefore, to the creation of a headquarters element within the White House. It could evaluate the numerous continuing intelligence programs of the agencies and departments so that the responsible elected administration will know what intelligence activities are being carried on by whom, where, and for what purpose. This information should be at the disposal of the President if he chooses to have it or at the disposal of someone directly responsible to him on a daily basis so that the elected administration will be fully aware of what is happening throughout the world and would not be placed in the difficult position of its predecessors as in the cases of the U-2 incident and the Pueblo.