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Congressional Record - Vietnam

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed for not to exceed 10 minutes.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I join with the distinguished minority leader, the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. Scott), in offering this resolution. My hope is that the Senate will express itself in a fashion that will strengthen the President's efforts to bring about the restoration of peace in Vietnam. I would be less than candid, however, if I were to tell the Senate that I nourished great expectations from this resolution in present circumstances.

I am concerned, I would support the principles enunciated by the President of the United States. But I am not aware of any quarrel with that principle in any quarter. Not only has the President of the United States expressed the principle, so, too, has the Government of North Vietnam, the Saigon government, and the National Liberation Front. The issue is now, when, and in what circumstances a government representing the choice of the people of South Vietnam be freely chosen?

The resolution would also “support the principles enunciated by the President that the people of South Vietnam are entitled to choose their own government by means of free elections open to all South Vietnamese.” I am not aware of any quarrel with that principle in any quarter.

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November 7, 1969
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

Example, to consider adding a plea with
regard to information on the U.S. war
prisoners in North Vietnam and for the
humane treatment of the wounded, the
crutches, and the helpless on all sides.

Let me emphasize that I would
expect the committee to take ample time
to consider this resolution in all of its
aspects. It is not introduced for purposes
of window dressing or propaganda and,
since it is sponsored by the joint leader-
ship, it is not introduced with partisan
inten. The day is very late for anything
other than the most sober consideration
of this question. There is no margin for
the misunderstandings of another Ton-
kin Gulf resolution in terms of the Sen-
ate's responsibility and in terms of the
urgent need of the Nation for an end to
this war.

It would be my fervent hope that what-
ever action is taken by the committee
and the Senate, it will be an action which
will not serve to prolong this conflict. If
the Senate acts at all, let it try to act
with the President not to enlarge this
tragic war but to shorten the path to
peace.

I ask unanimous consent that the text
of the resolution be printed in the Rec-
ord at this point.

There being no objection, the resolu-
tion was ordered to be printed in the
Record, as follows:

Resolved, That the Senate affirms its sup-
port for the President in his efforts to nego-
tiate a just peace in Vietnam, express the
earest hope of the people of the United
States for such a peace, calls attention to the
numerous peaceful overtures which the
United States has made in good faith toward
the Government of North Vietnam, approves
and supports the principles enunciated by
the President that the people of South Viet-
nam are entitled to choose their own gov-
ernment by means of free elections open to
all South Vietnamese and that the United
States is willing to abide by the results of
such elections, and requests the President
to call upon the Government of North Viet-
nam to join in a proclamation of a mutual
cease-fire and to announce its willingness to
honor such elections and to abide by such
results and to allow the issues in controversy
to be peacefully so resolved in order that the
war may be ended and peace may be re-
stored at last in Southeast Asia.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I ask
unanimous consent that I may proceed
for 2 minutes.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without ob-
jection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I wish to
congratulate the distinguished majority
leader and to join him in his declaration
of a desire to appear and testify before
the Committee on Foreign Relations. I
would express the hope that action could
be taken on this resolution or on its con-
tent, as the committee may wish to con-
sider it, and any possible revision, as
soon as possible.

I am aware of the importance of con-
sidering at that time the plight of pris-
soners of war. I joined in another reso-
lution touching on the unfortunate
A treatment of prisoners of war and the
lack of information regarding them or
the treatment of them.

I would hope, therefore, that the Com-
mittee on Foreign Relations would give
this resolution at least as high pri-
A orty as any other matters pending be-

I fore it so that the voice of the Senate may
be heard in its expression of its desire for
the earlier possible conclusion of the
war, as well as the total concern of all
Members of Congress in the plight of
the prisoners of war.