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Senator Mansfield Statement On Defense Spending

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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February 2, 1970

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

Mr. President:

The President has submitted his budget for fiscal 1971 to the Congress; the days ahead will provide an opportunity for us to consider the emphasis of this Administration in the allocation of the federal resources. Last Friday the Minority Leader and I exchanged some comments with respect to a newspaper story on defense spending. A very cursory look at the requests of the Administration--cursory only because of the limited time available since receiving it--indicates that the requests for defense spending this coming year, (1971) will be significantly less than requested last year. However, the new budget requests for defense spending will exceed what the Congress appropriated last year by \$300 million if you include defense (\$69.3 billion), military construction (\$1.4 billion) and military assistance (\$454 million) for a total of \$71.1 billion. This compares with last year's appropriations totals of \$70.8 billion for all three categories.

Last year, the Nixon Administration requested \$75.2 billion for defense spending authority exclusive of military construction and military assistance. The Congress appropriated \$69.6 billion. The Congress cut the Administration's request by \$5.6 billion. This year, the Administration has requested \$69.3 billion. I am hopeful that the Congress will study these requests and adjudge that a similarly large cut may be made this coming fiscal year.

Last year, the Congress cut the Military Assistance request of the Administration by \$75 million--limited it to \$350 million. It is not encouraging to see that the new budget requests for military assistance in the Foreign Aid program has risen \$104

million over last year's figure to \$454 million.

It is not encouraging to note that the new budget authority for military construction is almost \$500 million over last year's requests. I think Congress will scrutinize these aspects very closely. Increases will be well justified prior to appropriations by Congress.

The budget does not specify how much of the reduced requests is attributable to reduced spending in Vietnam. It is safe to assume that all or most is. This is most welcome. We can look forward to the day when it is completely eliminated. Any reductions in defense budgeting, however, must be viewed in this context of where spending is reduced and what spending remains.

The personnel level for 1971 is estimated to be 150,000 men less than 1970. This would be a saving of almost \$1.5 billion alone.

The funding levels for other programs (i.e., procurement and construction of new weapons systems) do not reflect a significant change. In fact, this budget contains "seed" money for many systems that will cost tens of billions in the future years if the initial commitment is made this year.

The expanded ABM will cost in the tens of billions--the money in this year's budget for the expansion is less than \$1 billion.

Similar commitments would be made with very small amounts of money this year for programs like the F-14 fighter for the Navy; the F-15 fighter for the Air Force; the AMSA bomber; the AWACS air defense system.

The Defense budget must be viewed in the context of its full impact over the years ahead not just this year. It is encouraging to see ~~the~~ ^{The} total amount shrink but sometimes these shrinkages prove to be illusory. A close scrutiny must be made of the budget in all its aspects to assure that the momentum of the past has truly been reversed.