

4-1-1971

Congressional Record S. 4297 - Joint Res. S.J 77 - Mansfield-Aiken

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

Mansfield, Mike 1903-2001, "Congressional Record S. 4297 - Joint Res. S.J 77 - Mansfield-Aiken" (1971). *Mike Mansfield Speeches*. 966.

https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches/966

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.

April 1, 1971

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

By Mr. MANSFIELD (for himself and Mr. AIKEN):

S.J. Res. 77. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to the term of office of President and Vice President of the United States. Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, on behalf of the distinguished Senator from Vermont (Mr. AIKEN) and myself, I introduce a joint resolution providing for an amendment to the Constitution of the United States under which the term of the office of the President and Vice President would be limited to one term of 6 years only.

I ask unanimous consent that the joint resolution be appropriately referred and that a copy of the joint resolution be printed in the Record.

There being no objection, the joint

S 4296
APR 1 - 1971

resolution was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

S.J. Res. 77

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States:

ARTICLE —

"SECTION 1. The term of office of the President and the Vice President of the United States shall be six years. No person shall be eligible for election for more than one term as President or Vice President. A person who has been elected as Vice President for any term shall be eligible for election as President for a later term. A person who has been elected as Vice President for any term, and who during that term has succeeded to the Office of President, shall be eligible for election as President for a later term.

"SEC. 2. This article shall take effect on the first day of February following its ratification, except that this article shall not affect the duration of the term of Office of President and Vice President in which such day occurs.

"SEC. 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress."

Mr. AIKEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with Senator MANSFIELD in proposing an amendment to the Constitution limiting the President and Vice President to one 6-year term.

The one-term limitation has worked well in other countries and, in my opinion, it would prove successful in our country.

I hope this Congress will seriously consider this proposed amendment because it is an indisputable fact that no President can give his best to the Nation or maintain our prestige in the world as long as he is constantly being fired upon by those whose principal purpose is to keep him from being reelected.

This amendment would allow a President to devote himself entirely to the problems of the Nation and it would free him from the millstone of partisan politics.

A single term would allow a President to wear at all times his "Presidential hat" and forget for a while that he also owns a "politician's hat."

It is safe to say that, no matter who holds the Office of President, each wants to be the best President we ever had.

In the past, some have been more successful than others.

With the possible exception of President Eisenhower, each President I have served under—two Republicans and four Democrats—was assailed and harassed not only by members of the opposite party, but also by dissatisfied members of his own party.

At times, I have felt the opposition was warranted and contributed to the welfare of all the people.

In other instances, harassment and embarrassment of the President was purely politically motivated and proved costly to the American people.

The fact remains that under our system of government we have only one President at a time and the manner in which he conducts his office determines to a great degree whether the people of the United States are secure or insecure, prosperous or poor, happy or sad.

There is need for loyal opposition, but it should never become so zealous that it weakens the Office of the President and, therefore, weakens the Nation.

No President can expect to have a successful foreign policy if he does not have bipartisan support on the homefront.

No American President can boldly propose far-reaching domestic changes if he is constantly looking back over his shoulder at the opposition, expecting an attack from the rear.

Because our system of government places such great importance and invests so much prestige in the American Presidency, the Congress should consider steps to make the President's job easier without weakening the constitutional responsibility of the Congress.

This Congress should seriously consider the amendment proposed by Senator MANSFIELD and myself.