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Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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*duplication of double design
many omission*

September 8, 1972

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONT.)

Mr. President,

On Wednesday, September 6, the headline writer for the "Christian Science Monitor" put it best: "Nixon Picks His Target: Democratic Congress."

With increasing momentum, the President has chosen to take on the Congress this election year in his drive for a second four-year term as the head of this Nation's government.

I have seen the reports of these statements, some issued by him personally, others by various bureaucrats downtown and all with a single objective--to point the finger at Congress for the administration's own failings, for its own commissions of misfeasance and nonfeasance in the area of the economy, the environment, social needs, health and welfare, and all the rest of the many critical neglects this Nation still continues to suffer.

In early 1969, Attorney General John Mitchell recommended that one "would be better informed, if instead of listening to what we say...watch what we do." I hope the American people will follow this advice. It is a most revealing experience to compare the platitudes and generalities of the rhetoric with the foot-dragging, side-stepping and often adamant resistance to any attempt to implement those stated policies. Between the sweetness of the

statements and the specifics of their proposals lies the darkest ^{of} shadows--a shadow that at times bears no resemblance to its original object.

I sincerely hope the American people will take this advice handed by the former Attorney General and make the comparison. Back in Montana, our original settlers have^a/characteristically wise expression about such discrepancies; the Indian refers to this activity as speaking with a forked tongue. The charge that Congress has not moved in the areas of the environment, consumer protection, health, education and problems of the cities is simply without foundation. In fact, the record shows that Congress, in the opinion of the administration and the President, has sought to do too much.

With all due respect, it must be said that the finger has been pointed in the wrong direction. The neglect for failing to address promptly and adequately such vital concerns as health and welfare reform, tax reform, recession and inflation, and environmental needs rests in one spot and one spot only--at the front door of the White House.

It is not often that this Senator rises ^{allegations} ~~with~~ ^{to answer unfounded} such deep and thorough indignation. But never before has it been so justified. The record of this administration is one matter. And their positions on the issues and approaches to the problems of the

country can be held validly and honestly. But when the position in the environment is to go slower; when in the field of education it is to do less; when in the field of health care and hospital construction it is to reject Congress as seeking too much, then let this record speak for itself. To endeavor to conceal the record as the election approaches and blame Congress for administration policies cannot be tolerated and this Senator cannot sit idly by and permit such duplicity.

time to
p.4 Let us begin with the economy. A good place ^{*to start*} and, ~~but for~~ the ~~administration's persistence in continuing the war in Vietnam,~~ perhaps the ~~low point of the administration record--in this instance~~ *is the* record of skyrocketing costs, increasing unemployment and increasing welfare rolls.

It was the Congress that recognized the dire plight of the economy and enacted the authority for proposed controls over prices and wages. It was the Congress by itself that opened the door to nearly a million new jobs in the public sector in the areas where assistance is needed--policemen, firemen, hospital workers, etc. For more than a year the President turned his back on wage and price action. For more than a year the economy continued to stagnate and suffer. As for jobs, the administration thought so much of finding new sources of employment that the President vetoed ~~the~~ bill to put the unemployable to work, a bill designed to keep

the American citizen off the welfare rolls and on the Nation's payrolls. And what has this lack of economic initiative meant to the American consumer? For one thing, food prices have risen at a rate of nearly 5% a year--a record for the century. Rents have been climbing at an annual rate of about 4%--another record. By the end of 1971 there were well over 5 million Americans without work. Still, on June 29th of last year, the President vetoed the emergency jobs bill Congress passed, thereby depriving the willing and able-bodied American from gainful employment. The jobless situation remains virtually unchanged today in spite of the glowing rhetoric.

The recitation of such economic mismanagement could go on and on. But let's be honest; the Congressional initiatives that in the past received White House scorn or rejection are today the only effective tools that are being used in the fight to shore up this Nation's ailing economy. Rather than play it with partisan breast-beating, I would instead commend those members of the minority in both the House and Senate who joined in voting for proposals to help stabilize the Nation's financial and economic crisis in the face of the administration's unequivocal opposition.

And what about the so-called "spendthrift" label with which this administration seeks to tag the Congress? No charge could be more ~~hypocritically~~ outrageous. This is a Congress that, in

the Nixon years to date cut a total of 14.5 billion dollars from the spending requests of this Republican administration. There is no mistake. For 1970, 1971 and 1972, this administration requested program expenditure funds of 458.4 billion dollars. In response the Congress has granted only 443.9 billion dollars--a difference of 14.5 billion. No rational American can turn a savings of 14.5 billion into a spendthrift charge no matter how hard he tries. What this Congress has done--and once again in the face of administration opposition--has been to devote savings cuts taken from wasteful and unneeded military and foreign spending to vital domestic programs such as education. Indeed, ~~the~~ Congress invested more than two billion dollars into the education of American youth over and above what the President sought. In part the President vetoed this investment saying it was inflationary to spend such sums on America's future. But it was not inflationary to spend such sums when the President asked for a billion dollars to bail out failing and mismanaged railroad and aircraft companies. Nor was it inflationary for the administration to ask for billions more to develop the dubious and unneeded supersonic transport.

But these are only a few examples of misplaced priorities on the part of this administration. There is the environment. And this issue raises particular concern to me, simply because it

was just a few days ago that the President himself was reported to have blamed the Congress for "inaction" with regard to the environment saying ~~(and I quote)~~, "that the members of the Senate and the House are simply not keeping pace with the concern of the citizens throughout the nation for positive action."

This Orwellian charge deserves the stiffest response. In the interest of fair play I hesitate to raise the outlandish record this administration has compiled against environmental legislation proposed by the Congress. But the President was surely aware of how steadfast has been the opposition and resistance of his agencies.

They have refused outright to spend millions already authorized and appropriated for environmental protection.

The Congress appropriated three times more than the President asked for sewage treatment assistance alone.

National Water Quality standards have been flatly opposed.

All versions of the Environmental Class Action Act have been opposed.

The Administration sent up a weak Toxic Substances Control Act and consistently opposed all efforts to strengthen it. Its opposition to pre-market review of new chemical substances has hurt this legislation badly.

It has opposed new lead paint poisoning legislation and has requested pathetically low amounts of money to carry out the grant

authority of existing law.

It has opposed all ocean mammal protection legislation which has been initiated by the Congress.

It opposed original pure drinking water legislation.

The administration opposed the goal of clean water by 1985.

It opposed the goal of clean auto engines by 1975.

The administration has opposed new requirements for the FDA to monitor food for harmful pollutants.

It opposed the tough Port and Waterways Safety Act amendments that Congress passed to help insure safer and cleaner waters, free from obnoxious pollution by steamships and oil tankers.

In short, it is a record of out and out opposition--a refusal to make industry clean up for what industry terms progress and what in reality has meant pollution--in the air we breathe and in the water we drink.

Even today conferees are meeting on a new and tough water pollution bill hovering under the veiled threat of another administration veto.

It has been an outrageous record, a record of administration resistance every step of the way making what environmental progress the Congress finally made seem enormous by comparison. To endeavor now to blame Congress for the Administration's failings in this area is simply ludicrous. The hearings were held. The

administration witnesses appeared. Letters were written. And the record of opposition has been made.

But protecting privileged corporate interests in the field of the environment has been minor when one considers this administration's resistance to tax reform.

It was a ~~Democratic~~ Congress in 1969 that conceived and executed the first major equitable revision of our tax laws since their inception and the task was performed over the strenuous opposition of the Nixon administration. In all, the 1969 Tax Reform Act implemented \$6.6 billion in tax reforms and \$9.1 billion in cuts, mostly for taxpayers in the lower and middle-income brackets.

The law included a five percent reduction in all tax brackets, a low income allowance to remove 21 million poor families from the tax rolls and an increase in the personal exemption to \$750.

But the tax fairness Congress attempted to establish by the 1969 reforms were only to be eroded last year when the administration changed by executive fiat the depreciation rules ^{which, in effect, reduced the corporate} by a tax rate significant percentage. In addition, business tax credits worth \$8 to \$9 billion a year were pushed through last year under the guise of helping stimulate an economy that was then only using 75% of present capacity.

Tax reform and a more equitable distribution of the tax burden

is simply not a policy of this administration.

Indeed, the President has expressed his outright opposition to the proposal I offered along with Wilbur Mills. It would have assured the most careful examination of over 54 tax loopholes designed mostly to benefit only those individuals and corporations making the most money in our society.

For too long, in my judgment, the middle income taxpayer has borne too much of the burden and it is now clear beyond question that this administration will refuse to take any steps to correct that imbalance.

The Congress suffers still another misdirected charge raised in recent days. It is that it has failed to address itself properly to the administration's four major legislative requests--welfare, reorganization, health insurance and revenue sharing.

The first priority was to be welfare. Yet it was the administration and not the Congress that asked that welfare be set aside to consider first the Phase I proposals last session and then revenue sharing most recently. Moreover, it has been members of the President's own party who have blocked this measure so often in Committee. So if the welfare rolls which have grown so enormously during the economic mismanagement of the past four years are to be brought into check, the administration must exert more authority and influence over its own party members.

As for health, the administration record is equally indefensible. It has been written for posterity in the Presidential veto of four major health bills over four years--one for each year of the President's term. The utter neglect for health needs was demonstrated first by his veto of \$1.26 billion in funds that were to be used in large measure for the Nation's health needs back in 1970. The major Hill-Burton Hospital Construction bill was next vetoed and but for the willingness of Congress to override the President's rejection, millions more for health facilities would have been lost.

In December of 1970, the President again showed his ^{opposition} ~~complete~~ ~~disdain~~ for health needs by vetoing the bill that would have provided \$233 million for medical schools and hospitals. And most recently he vetoed this year's added appropriations for the entire HEW health program. ~~Let there be no mistake about this administration's lack of commitment to the Nation's health needs.~~ It has been only in the face of total administration opposition that Congress has endeavored to provide for those needs and any statement otherwise is to be buried by the President's own veto messages on health.

The story for the reorganization proposal is about the same.

Beyond the rhetoric, I have detected little interest by the administration in pushing even its own party members on this

matter. Indeed, I have detected little genuine interest from any quarter inside the government or out. I would say also that if as much pressure for reorganization were exerted by the administration here as it was for aid to the mismanaged Lockheed Corporation or to the mismanaged Pennsylvania Railroad, the result might well be different.

Revenue sharing is now before the Senate. It will pass.

One cannot have it both ways making the difficult decisions that the responsibility of leadership requires.

One cannot seek Congressional approval of the Interim Agreement in the limitation of strategic arms--an agreement that can bring sanity to an arms race that has been out of control for so many years--and then ignore the effect of seeking more resources for increased arms-spending.

One cannot advocate the terms of the agreement and as well advocate support of an amendment that would undermine its impact and meaning.

One cannot deplore the deterioration of the environment and then fail to implement the commitment ~~the~~ Congress has enacted into law to remedy this condition.

One cannot advocate a fairer tax system in this country and oppose every effort by ~~the~~ Congress to change the present system of glaring inequities.

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One should not--but apparently one can--because this is the record of this administration--an administration espousing economic policies of too little, too late that have caused the national debt to jump by nearly \$110 billion since it has been in office. And it would have been even higher had ~~the~~ Congress not pared back the budget requests.

So the record is clear. I believe we should judge this administration by its own standard; not by its words but by its actions.

One must realize that in a political environment just as in an advertising ^{Campaign} ~~promotion~~, there is an enormous gulf between the claim and the product. I hope the product will be viewed and not purchased on the basis of the claim alone.

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The story for the reorganization proposal is about the same.

The President asked for pie in the sky, a huge reorganization, which was impossible to consider in toto, certainly impossible to consider in one Congress. I say this, approving of what the President has recommended, but suggesting that he slice it into pieces and give us a shot at one particle at a time.

Beyond the rhetoric, I have detected little interest by the administration in pushing even its own party members on this matter. Indeed, I have detected little genuine interest from any quarter inside the Government or out. I would say, also, that if as much pressure for reorganization were exerted by the administration here as it was for aid to the mismanaged Lockheed Corp., or to the mismanaged Pennsylvania Railroad, the result might well be different.

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