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Biography of Senator Mansfield

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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BIOGRAPHY OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (DEMOCRAT, MONTANA)

Senator Mike Mansfield was born March 16, 1903; raised in Great Falls, Montana, and educated in Montana, with two quarters on his Ph.D. at UCLA. Senator Mansfield did not complete the 8th grade, but left home in 1917, and on February 23, 1918, at the age of 14, he joined the U.S. Navy for the duration of World War I. In 1919 he enlisted in the U.S. Army for one year, and then, in November, 1920, enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps for two years.

Mike Mansfield is married to Maureen Hayes, a former high school teacher in Butte, Montana. The Mansfields have one daughter, Mrs. Robin Marris.

In 1922 Mike Mansfield returned to Butte, Montana, where he worked in the mines as a miner and mining engineer until 1930. Never completing grade school or high school, he was admitted to Montana School of Mines, in Butte, by examination, where he studied from 1927 to 1928. He transferred to Montana State University, in Missoula,* where he received his B.A. and M.A. degrees. From 1933 to 1943, he was a Professor of Latin American and Far Eastern History, at Montana State University. He is now a Professor of History on permanent tenure at the University of Montana.

Mike Mansfield was elected to the United States Congress in November, 1942, and served five terms as Representative of Montana's 1st District. In October, 1951, he was appointed by President Truman as a Delegate to the United Nations Sixth Session in Paris. He was elected to the United States Senate on November 4, 1952, and reelected by the people of Montana in 1958, 1964, and 1970. He was elected Assistant Majority Leader (Majority Whip) of the United States Senate on January 3, 1957. He served in this capacity until January, 1961, when he was elected Majority Leader of the United States Senate, a position he has held since that time -- longer than any other Majority Leader in the history of the United States Senate.

In September, 1958, Senator Mansfield was appointed by President Eisenhower as United States Delegate to the 13th General Assembly of the United Nations. In November and December, 1962, he undertook a foreign policy assignment to West Berlin and Southeast Asia for President Kennedy, and in November and December, 1965, he undertook a similar foreign policy assignment for President Johnson, and in August, 1969, a foreign policy assignment for President Nixon. He visited People's Republic of China, with the Senate Minority Leader, upon invitation from Premier Chou-En-lai, in 1972.

Senator Mansfield is a member of the Senate Committees on Foreign Relations and Appropriations. In his capacity as Majority Leader he serves as Chairman of the Senate Democratic Conference, the Democratic Policy Committee, and the Steering Committee.

* The University at Missoula is now referred to as the University of Montana.