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Recommended Citation

Mansfield, Mike 1903-2001, "Watergate, Inflation, Energy Crisis, Campaign Reforms, Health, Education, Etc." (1973). *Mike Mansfield Speeches, Statements and Interviews*. 1119.

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August 17, 1973

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

COPY

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Senator in Mont*

The Watergate and related inquiries will continue to be as important if not more important until the facts are fully clarified and corrective legislation is designed and recommendations are made to the Department of Justice. The Senate Committee is not concerned with imposing penalties and will not do so. That is a matter for the courts. In the end, that is what the hearings are all about. Just as important, however, the functions of the government in the Executive and Legislative branches must also continue; the immediate problems confronting the nation must be faced.

There are matters of overriding importance at this time--inflation, especially the price of food which will show close to a 20% jump in calendar 1973, a gathering energy crisis, campaign reforms, health, education and the skyrocketing cost of housing and many others. These needs must be attended to and attended to now.

The Senate has been moving to face up to these issues. Together with the House, the Senate is ready, able and willing to work closely with the Executive Branch under the President in coping with these problems and in finding solutions.

Ahead of us lie growing shortages in beef, grain and heating oil. Money is already in tight supply as attested to by prime interest rates of 9% and above, and with the trend still upward. It is shocking to note, too, that in spite of a decline in the unemployment rate to 4.7%, in spite of an inflationary boom, there are also fears of a recession.

On the positive side, a record number of people have jobs. The bombing in Cambodia has ended and the possibilities of a return to stability in Indochina and our further disengagement have been increased thereby.

The courts are functioning. The Senate and the House are facing up to their responsibilities in line with the checks and balance system of the Constitution.

The record of the Senate has been an excellent one so far this year. It will be even better in the months ahead. While there may be differences between the Executive and Legislative branches, I want to repeat that there is no obstruction of the regular functions of the government. Insofar as the Congress is concerned, there will not be any obstruction. On that score, the leadership in both Houses--Republican and Democratic alike--is in full accord. The U. S. government must continue to function, it is functioning and it will continue to function.

We are passing through a difficult period. It is not only Watergate and all that it implies. It is years of neglect of inner national needs. It is the long night of a devastating war.

With the phasing out of the war in Indochina, it seems to me that we must turn to face directly the urgent difficulties inside this nation. To be sure, major problems still confront us abroad and they must be dealt with in the long-range building of a stable peace in the world. All of them, however, will be more readily resolved if we do what we must do at home to put our national house in order.