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BROADCASTING AND ~~THE NEW DIMENSIONS~~ OF THE NEWS
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REMARKS OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

BEFORE THE

FIFTY-SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION

OF THE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS

SAM HOUSTON COLISEUM

HOUSTON, TEXAS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 1974, 12:30 P.M.

It is my understanding that broadcasting is the prime news source of the nation. It could hardly be otherwise. With TV sets in 99.8% of the homes and radios in 99.9%, who can escape it?

More difficult to comprehend is the credibility of broadcasting. It is reported to be greater than ^{that of} the press. Newspapers are suffering, apparently, from the same contemporary lack of sex appeal as politicians. The Harris poll, I believe, showed a bare 20% approved of the Congressional performance. It is small solace to note that the rating of the Presidency was only slightly higher. To make matters worse for me,

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personally, I find that during the entire thirty-odd years of my service in the Legislative Branch, Congress has consistently been held in low esteem. I do not have the temerity to inquire into the prior situation.

That the broadcasting profession has not yet joined the press and the Congress in popular ill-repute is particularly surprising since you are the messengers who usually are there, first, with the bad news. And history records the custom of beheading the bearer of bad tidings.

It is not that you have spared the nation the unpleasant details. When the Emperor has been without clothes you have not dressed him up with words. During the past year, in particular, yours has been a narration of unremitting gloom except for the streak of streaking. So faithful have you been in carrying the bad tidings on petroleum, Watergate, pollution and what not that one suspects a tendency in your profession to find a disaster of one kind or another to fill the vacuum between the

commercials and the movie re-runs. **COPY**

But enough of that. I have not come ^{here} to make light of your industry and its practices. I know better. Those who have been foolhardy enough to do so in the past have not escaped unscathed. In any event, I would prefer discussions of the fairness doctrine or public financing of political broadcasting and similar issues to take place on my home grounds. Before Committees of Congress, the Congressman and not the broadcaster gets the last word.

Bread and butter issues of your industry are important but they do not begin to compare in significance with the influence which, over the last twenty years, broadcasters have had on the thinking of the people of the nation. Speaking of your influence, I should like to interject a public-service plea at this point. I urge you to use a little of that influence on a matter which I believe to be of the highest importance. In 1972, as you know, Congress enacted a law which permits voters to earmark a dollar

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of their income tax for financing future Presidential elections.

The check-off feature for the Presidential Campaign Fund appears on the front page of the tax forms in 1973.

The Internal Revenue Service and the League of Women Voters both have prepared non-partisan shorts which explain the operation of this new law to the public. You will perform a distinguished public service if you will cooperate in the dissemination of these TV films during the next couple of weeks.

In looking at broadcasting in the mid-twentieth century, even with its trivia and its wastelands, historians of the 21st century may find ~~it~~, nevertheless, ^{that it} played the major role in forging a great intellectual revolution. They will see that during this period increasing numbers of people throughout the world were reached via the airways. The facts, theories, ideas and discussions which were once limited to the salons of the few were made available to all. In this fashion, countless men and women began to

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to examine broad aspects of human life on this planet which otherwise could not have come to their attention. In short, broadcasting will be seen to have had, in our times, the effect of democratizing intellectualism.

That is not said to flatter your industry. I must confess that broadcasting has seemed to me to be a kind of massive farm machine, such as can be found in Montana or any other wheat state during harvest. In the distance, a harvester in operation appears to be only a massive cloud of dust; at closer range, it is seen as a machine which spews out vast amounts of relatively useless chaff. With all the turmoil, chaff and dust, however, the harvester yields the grain which nurtures us all.

So it is with broadcasting. The product may be part entertainment, part palliative, part stimulant, and part depressant. Be that as it may, broadcasting also exposes vast numbers of people to conditions of life throughout the world and to ^{the} separate

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and common problems of nations. It puts information and ideas into millions of human minds, much as data is fed into computers. The consequence of this immense activity is beyond specific comprehension. There is not the slightest doubt, however, that a profound influence is at work.

My principal concern, today, is with the nature of that influence on public affairs in this nation. From World War II through the Indochina withdrawal, it seems to me that the primary emphasis in broadcasting was on happenings beyond our borders. A survey now, I believe, would reveal a trend away from concentration on events involving foreign policy unless they also relate directly to current domestic concerns. To be sure, the peripatetic Secretary of State still makes the airways and his achievements the subject of a great deal of broadcasting commentary. The cutting edge of reportage, however, appears to be shifting towards a greater concern with events at home or, at least, of events with

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more immediate relevance to the needs of the people of the nation.

Mr. Kissinger is covered well, for example, when he goes to the Mid-east to try to turn ^{open} the valves on the pipelines. His meeting in Mexico City a few weeks ago with the foreign ministers of the American States was less noticed although in terms of durable national interests, it may prove to be the more important in the long run.

The main thesis of my remarks today is that even as we give our attention increasingly to domestic problems, we cannot turn away from the international underpinning of these problems. Many of them are attributable, in great part, to the course which we have pursued abroad in the past. Foreign policy now and in the future will continue to underlie our most severe domestic anxieties.

The interrelationship of foreign and domestic developments, of course, has long been recognized. I would go further, however, and suggest that our involvement in what goes on outside

is greater
the United States/~~than is commonly realized~~. What has happened
abroad and how we have responded, in my judgement, has done much
to delineate the situation which now confronts us at home.

I do not propose to try to answer the question of whether
this is as it should be. What I should like to do in these brief
remarks is to examine some recent examples of ways in which cer-
tain foreign policies have affected our life here in the United
States.

There is, first of all, the tremendous impact of two
decades of U.S. activity in Southeast Asia which culminated in
one of the most tragic wars in modern history. The circumstances
and the attitudes which led us into the deep involvement in that
remote part of the world have already receded into the past. What
ought to remain fresh in our minds is the price we have paid and
will continue to pay for that involvement. Beyond the obvious
cost in human lives and suffering, beyond the tons of thousands of

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paraplegics, our policies in Southeast Asia have been responsible in major part for:

- Stoking the fires of inflation;
- a loss in international value of the dollar;
- the appearance of a nationwide drug cult;
- a decline of public credibility in the basic institutions of free representative government,
- lawlessness at home;
- the alienation of a substantial part of a generation of young people; and
- an eventual increase in the total cost of government in the United States ~~of~~ several hundred billion dollars without constructive return to the people who will continue to pay ^{for} these ~~costs~~ ^{added} costs well into the 21st century.

Some may still believe this many-faceted price was justified. I think you know that, not just for this year, but for many years, I have not held that belief. Insofar as I am concerned,

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it saddens me to realize that we might have chosen to stay out of Vietnam or to withdraw from the conflict at points along the way during the Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon administrations with just as much honor as accrued to us in the end. We would have done so, moreover, with far less damage to ourselves and to the Vietnamese people.

That, however, is hindsight. What is relevant now is that the war has had a lasting and deleterious impact on life inside the United States. In my judgement, moreover, continued involvement in Indochina for purposes other than reconstruction of war damage, involvement in terms of the supply of petroleum, munitions, food, advice and what not to South Vietnam, to Cambodia and to Laos is reinforcing that impact.

In much the same fashion, a general line of foreign policy which has consisted of providing military equipment and supplies to just about any nation willing to take it has also

distorted the domestic situation of the nation. In fiscal year 1974, even after Congressionally imposed retrenchment had been legislated, we still managed to sell, give or otherwise make available equipment and supplies to seventy-eight countries. Last year, \$5.4 billion of military equipment was sold abroad-- most of it through the Department of Defense. An additional \$4 billion worth was given to nations without capacity to pay for it.

That this great outflow of devastation has had a profound effect on some recipient nations is obvious; even a few artillery pieces can sometimes make a difference in the precipitation of coups and in the outcome of power struggles in new or unstable nations. What is not nearly so obvious, however, is that an export of \$10 million worth of military equipment is also not without deep effect on this nation's inner affairs. In the first place, a massive outpouring of military equipment, year in and year out, feeds

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domestic inflation. It draws down stockpiles of strategic materials. It depletes supplies of finite raw materials such as iron, coal, and oil. It diverts large amounts of inventive genius and engineering skill to the production of military equipment which lives a short and not very useful life and then goes into obsolescence. It directs a flow of Federal resources from areas of urgent domestic need into a vast and largely useless overseas drain.

Moreover, as I detect the pride in personnel of the United States government who, in the manner of modern day Sir Basil Zaharoffs, peddle this material abroad, when they refer to rising levels of military sales ^{As} ~~of~~ positive contributions to the balance of payments;

As I contemplate that while we are turning out ever more refined military equipment, other nations are doing better at producing electronic equipment, pollution-free automobiles,

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and are buying U.S. resources such as timber for manufacture and re-sale to the United States;

As I contemplate, in short, the equanimity with which the federal government has been engaged in a world-wide arms business, I find it difficult to discern by what yardsticks we are measuring the contemporary performance of that government.

A third aspect of our foreign relations which inter-relates with our domestic situation is the maintaining of large U.S. military garrisons in bases abroad. This practise has been going on ever since World War II. Its effect is not unlike the give-away of billions of dollars of military equipment and supplies. Even now, we have 300 major overseas military bases and a thousand minor bases. There are over 300,000 American servicemen, plus dependents, in Western Europe. Another 45,000 are stationed in South Korea; U.S. outposts in Southeast Asia contain still another 40,000.

The financial drain of these deployments is readily

apparent. What is only beginning to become clear, however, is that we can no longer afford to use federal funds and exchange resources for extravagances of this kind. There has been a severe shrinkage in the large margin for error which this nation possessed a quarter of a century ago. Years of attrition have weakened the value of the dollar abroad. Years of deficits are doing the same thing at home.

The U. S. military presence overseas has been too much for too long. Nevertheless, the federal government seems to be incapable of a significant reduction of a military presence anywhere abroad, not to speak of a close-out, unless we are invited to leave, politely and otherwise, by erstwhile host-nations or unless the people of this nation rise up in revulsion at policies of unwarranted involvement, as occurred in the case of Vietnam.

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and Cambodia. When reductions are finally compelled in these circumstances, they may very well come too late to salvage what might have been worth preserving at an earlier time.

In all candor, that seems to me to be the likelihood with regard to NATO. For too long, the Executive Branch has fought tooth and nail to forestall any reduction of the U. S. commitment of forces on the European continent. Successive administrations have moved from argument to argument and from stall to stall in order to resist the rising pressures for redeployment. Successive Congresses, nevertheless, have come closer and closer to a legal insistence on reductions. We may now be about to witness not orderly reductions but withdrawals in haste and anger with consequent damage to the vital cooperative relationship of the North Atlantic region. In this connection, I must say that the recent exchanges between this nation and the European nations seem to me to be most ominous.

Overseas ~~deployments and military~~ exports constitute

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only a part of the sum of the current military enterprises of federal government. Total expenditures for the Defense Department have become so astronomical that they are now a key element in the general economic condition of the nation. This year's military budget request of \$85.8 billion is the largest in our history, surpassing even the \$81.6 billion we spent in 1945, the last year of World War II. At the height of the Indochinese war the military budget was \$20 billion less than the amount requested for the coming fiscal year.

Secretary of Defense Schlesinger has stated that this request is "necessary to assure the foreign policy objectives of the United States." Without disputing the assertion at this time, I would call your attention to the impact of such an expenditure on the nature of our economy and our society.

Of the greatest concern in this connection, is a contention of the Secretary that the economic health of the United States can be enhanced by defense expenditures. In answer to Representative George H. Mahon, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations,

Secretary Schlesinger on February 25 acknowledged that there was "an element of economic stimulus" in the Defense budget. Mr. Mahon, who is probably the most knowledgeable man in the government on military expenditures, stated that he had it on good authority that the Federal budget had been increased by about \$5 billion during the last stages of preparation in the Executive Branch, "for the reason of stimulating the economy." It was in the framework of that exchange that there was acknowledgement by the Secretary of Defense of the use of the Defense budget as a tool in reviving a lagging domestic economy.

May I say that the Defense budget is, at best, a dubious tool for any purpose other than providing military security. When used for purposes of economic stimulation, it is an ominous tool. This nation will have reached a sorry point when it inflates military budgets to help a national economy which has already been damaged by excessive and wasteful expenditures for military purposes. In the end, economic difficulties cannot be cloaked in inflated military budgets. History is filled with the wreckage of great nations which found it expedient to meander along that course.

The use of the nation's manpower, materials and other

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resources for military purposes must be held by the Executive Branch and the Congress within dimensions which are commensurate with what is necessary to meet reasonably defined threats to the nation's security. If we fail to do so, we will not need anyone else to bury us; we will bury ourselves.

A fourth area of foreign policy which will have a continuing impact on our domestic situation is the nature of our relations with nations controlling significant sources of the ~~energy~~ and industrial raw materials. We have come to a shocking realization of the precariousness of our situation in this connection in the past six months. I do not profess to know whether any U. S. policy towards the states of the Middle East might have avoided the Arab cut-off of oil exports. I do know that we have done little until recently to pursue a policy which might lead to an acceptable stability in that region. Faithfully, we have paid our annual \$20 million share of the costs of the United Nations Palestine Refugee Organization. Faithfully, we have re-pledged support for the people of Israel

and backed it with substantial aid. All the while, we have hoped, somehow, that sparks would not light the tinder.

Without reflecting on the men and women who have struggled with the problems of the Middle East for many years, the fact is that the Middle East has scarcely been a pre-occupation of our principal policy makers except when the blood of war begins to flow. Fortunately, Dr. Kissinger with his background, intelligence, ability, and capacity for hard work, has been available to the nation at this time. His efforts under the President have been outstanding and there are now the glimmerings of hope for a durable settlement.

A byproduct of his efforts has been the resumption of oil shipments to this nation from the principal Middle Eastern fields. However that may be, it should be apparent to us, as we ride out the crisis of oil, that other domestic disruptions are likely as the result of an increasing U. S. dependence on raw materials from abroad. If oil is in short supply now, how long will it be before it is joined in that category by copper, bauxite, iron and other materials?

Nor are we ~~alone in this bind~~. If our problems are complex, contemplate the situation which confronts Japan and Western Europe. The resources to meet contemporary needs are finite--not infinite--and their distribution over the planet is indifferent to the political barriers which have evolved over the centuries. Barbara Ward speculated recently "that interdependence of our planetary life will enormously strengthen our sense of the seriousness of the economic and technological challenge before us. . ."

Foreign Relations and how they are conducted in these years will have much to do with proving or disproving the accuracy of her observation. May I say that, in my judgment, the President and the Secretary of State have been exercising leadership in bringing this nation to perceive that the quality no less than the security of life in the United States depends on more than a balance of terror, on more than our relations with individual nations or even with groups of nations. In the not too distant future we may have to speak not of foreign policy, but of planetary policy.

I should like, ~~in conclusion,~~ **COPY** to revert to my opening

comments. At the outset I said that broadcasting is a source of enlightenment which is doing much to create a universal intellectualism. In the United States the rays of this enlightenment are in a new focus on domestic problems. Nevertheless, it seems to me that, seen in perspective, some of our domestic difficulties might have been avoided or mitigated by a more restrained view of our international purposes and responsibilities in Indochina and elsewhere. To avoid the intensification of these difficulties, moreover, we must now face up to the fact that the U. S. military influence is spread abroad in a haphazard fashion. Much of our current activity abroad is archaic and wasteful. The whole structure is in urgent need of reformulation and contraction.

At the same time, we must also face the fact that a decent future for the people of the United States cannot be found by shutting a non-existent door. We need the rest of the world even as it needs us. In short, the challenge is to look outward with new perceptions, even as we turn inward to build anew at home.

In this context, the role of the broadcaster takes on
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immense importance. Your perceptions of a world in transition
will be communicated to countless millions. You hold in your
hands an instrument by which all of the inhabitants of this planet
can become aware of the evolving nature of their Earth-home,
comprehend a common destiny, and move forward together to its
realization. May you use this instrument even more wisely for
the benefit of the living generations and those yet to come.