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Democratic Dinner re: Democracy

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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It is a real pleasure to attend this Democratic dinner and to be, once again, with so many of my old friends. As democrats we belong to a party which represents the highest ideals of the citizenry of our country.

But, Democracy - as we know it, understand it, and love it - is today facing a challenge as to its continuance. This challenge must be met, met by all who believe fundamentally in the processes and love the freedom and the responsibilities of democracy. In the world today it has become dangerous to take democracy for granted. It is time for all of us, whether we be farmers as many of you are or workers in any other profession, to evaluate our relationships to democratic operations and to clarify our thinking as to our responsibilities. Unless our daily lives proceed on a democratic basis we shall not long have democracy in government.

A people cannot long have freedom of thought and action in any field unless they have economic freedom. Individual economic security and freedom are more and more difficult to obtain. It was the frontier farmer who ushered in American democracy and the farmer today is the basis on which our modern civilization is built. If our modern policy does not take into account the needs and problems of the farmer - if it does not give him the opportunity to become scientifically trained, if we prevent him from earning enough money to enable him to buy modern machines - then we are keeping down the most efficient production of food-stuffs - food which

is essential to our civilization and without which, education and machines are useless. It is true that since 1933 much has been attempted and done for the farmer but his status is not yet secure. We, as democrats, must realize the farmer's problems and we must do all in our power, as a party, to see that needed legislation is enacted for the farmer because it is only in that manner that he will achieve what he deserves - security. In frontier times this was more easily obtained than now because of the fact that there were always new lands. Tenantry among farmers is the rule and not the exception - free land is gone. Our democratic foundations are trembling when such a condition is allowed to exist and, unless corrected, are in danger of falling into complete ruin.

We all realize that there is only one democracy left in the world and that one is our country. We want to keep that which our forefathers and we fought to obtain. We want to continue to have a type of government which allows us our freedom and liberty. We want to remain a friendly people. In other words, we want the continuation of Democracy, unlimited. How different the spirit of friendliness and humor which characterizes you is from the spirit of hate and distrust in other countries today. We are not regimented and told what to do and what not to do. Freedom, equality, and justice are to us not mere words but concrete facts. The law under which we live is not the law of a dictator but the law of the people.

Contrast the position of our country, even with our present problems, with other countries in the world today and you will

realize - as I know you have - that there is no comparison. We are indeed fortunate to live under a flag and in a country where we can practice what we preach, where we can disagree but still remain friends; where we can laugh and not be punished for it, and where we can live and enjoy life knowing full well that tomorrow the sun will shine and that all is well with America.