1939

Jefferson Dinner Democratic Party

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001
Jefferson Day demurs are in themselves a reaffirmation
of our faith in the principle of Democracy. We celebrate
the occasion as a mark of honor to one whom many
consider the real founder of the democratic party. To this
man — to Thomas Jefferson — we pledge ourselves to fight
for the continuance of the ideals which he so courageously
inaugurated.

In the near future our party will meet in a
great national convention for the purpose of nominating
a president. We, as Democrats, should do all in our
power to see to it that at this convention the
principles of Jefferson, Jackson, Wilson and Roosevelt
— each the greatest liberal of his day — are
carried forward. There must be no surrender to
reaction but there must be a continuation of the
liberal, progressive and humanitarian ideals which
have set our party off and above all others.

As Democrats, we can be proud of the record of
accomplishments of our party. Eight years ago, when
the nation was faced with one of the worst crises
in all its history, the Republican leadership was
frightened and bewildered. The people called for action
and results. We gave them action and produced results: In no
other seven year period of our history has so much
been done. Mistakes have been made, but on the whole, we
have served the nation honestly and well.
We shall stand upon the great humanitarian principles upon which the party of Jefferson was founded. These principles, we hope, will permeate the 1940 campaign with enthusiasm and confidence. Once again our party will be the progressive party. Our platform will consider the present and the future. Our candidates will have the vision; our minds and our hearts will combine to battle for the rights of the American people. Our thoughts are not in defeat but in victory so that Democracy as we know it, love it, and understand it, will continue to be the shining light for our country. As Democrats we must not fail. As Americans we will not fail.
Our party has helped all groups in our population. The farmer has been benefited — and he will admit it; the youth of our country have benefited — they will admit it; labor has made many gains — they will admit it; and business, through public spending, government subsidy, and beneficial legislation, has much to be thankful for but — they hate to admit it.

Nevertheless, our record speaks for itself. As liberals we have been attacked on many fronts but as intelligent people we realize that only through a continued fight for the security of our fellow men can Democracy be preserved. We intend to keep up the good fight, come what may, we know we're going to win.

We shall win because of our achievements in the interests of all the people. We shall win because we deal with vital issues straightforwardly and without evasion. We must tell the voters not only of our past results but our plans for serving the general welfare in the future.