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Transcript of Radio Tape of Senator Mike Mansfield

Report, with Senator Metcalf, on accomplishments
of 87th Congress
September 29, 1961

My fellow Montanans, this is Mike Mansfield, and my distinguished colleague in the Senate, Lee Metcalf, making a report on the doings of the 87th Congress, 1st session. We are getting together on this occasion, as has been our custom over the years, to tell the people of Montana what we have done on the basis of the stewardship and responsibility which you have conferred upon us.

Lee, suppose you start out and take the ball from here.

Thank you, Mike. Of course, Montanans are proud that Senator Mansfield has been the Majority Leader of the 87th Congress of the United States Senate and proud that he has attained the highest legislative position that any Congressman or Representative from Montana has ever attained. This has been one of the most productive sessions of Congress in the history of the United States and a good deal of the credit, especially on the Senate side, is due to Senator Mansfield. Not only have we done a good job for the country in putting over the Kennedy program, what we want to talk to you about today is what has happened in the program for the state of Montana. The fact that Senator Mansfield has been the Majority Leader has been, of course, very helpful in developing this program. Senator Mansfield and I have worked for the development of the state, for general research of various programs underway. We have developed about a half-dozen small, useful legislative programs.

September 29, 1961

Page 2

The Huntley Project, for instance, is one. The Huntley irrigation project is one of the oldest projects in Montana, and it is one of the oldest irrigation projects in America, in fact, and Senator Mansfield and I have succeeded in passing a law that provided for a reclassification of land of the Huntley Project and provided for new terms of obligation of about a half-million dollars under unclassified land. Then, in the Fort Shaw project, which is a very similar one in northern Montana, Senator Mansfield and I have managed to put through a bill that is still pending in the House of Representatives for a reclassification of land and a repayment of this project. We have put through several Indian development programs. The Northern Cheyenne Reservation has been handicapped for many years because they couldn't lease their land for oil and mineral development and this has been taken care of with this session of Congress. The Fort Belknap Reservation program has been handicapped for many years because we couldn't turn some of the money and control of the project over to the Indians and we have somewhat improved their position on the Fort Belknap Reservation.

Lee, don't you think too that we have to bring home to the people of Montana that we are interested in the welfare of these Indians on Montana's seven reservations and we are also interested in the Indians who live off the reservations--as those who live on Hill 57, Mount Royal, in the vicinity of Great Falls. I think that it should be brought out that due to Senator Metcalf's outstanding initiative and leadership a better hospital program has been put into operation in behalf of the Indians who, we think, should be treated as full citizens and

September 29, 1961

Page 3

to whom the Federal Government must fulfill its obligations.

Mike, you know we are fortunate that Secretary Udall with whom we both served in Congress is the Secretary of the Interior.

Yes, indeed, and we are looking forward to being with him when the Yellowtail Dam dedication takes place around the 17th or 18th of October.

And it is a significant thing because he was very helpful. He served on the conference committee, you remember, on the House side when the Yellowtail Dam appropriations came up and when the authorization for the payment to the Indians for the Yellowtail project. Secretary Udall has been very interested in the Indians in Montana. He has sent task forces out to look at Hill 57 in Great Falls; he sent a task force down into the Northern Cheyenne and the Crow Reservations and in our conferences with him, he is concerned with the development of the Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, the Crow, Blackfeet, and the Flathead, and I think we are very fortunate in having a new Secretary of Interior who is concerned with Indian development in Montana.

No question, Lee, because he is not only from the West, he knows the West, and he is interested in the West. We in Montana think we have a first rate friend in Secretary Udall.

You know, Mike, we just finished the water pollution conference in Missoula, Montana.

Yes, I recall that you were primarily responsible for

getting the various groups together back here to go out to Montana to hold meetings in Missoula, Butte, and elsewhere on the most important problem because it does affect Montana. It is not a matter which affects only the big, industrialized areas. It is something which is of importance to our own people, as well, and I hope the results will be beneficial to our people to fight some of the criticisms and objections raised while this group was out there.

You know, fifty-one of the Montana communities have benefited from the appropriations that we have secured to help the water pollution control in Montana. Almost one-third of the population of Montana is benefiting from water pollution programs that we have put through. Clean water in Montana is just as important to the development of recreation and sports, etc., as it is back here where it is a matter of health. This is one of the most important programs that has been put through as far as Montana is concerned.

That is true and I hope, Lee, that this kind of a program will continue to be pushed by the Federal government, the state governments and the local authorities, as well. It is a program which must be administered and administered in the public interest. I think though, Lee, that we ought to bring home to our folks that, while we have achieved a very good degree of success insofar as Federal-state relationships are concerned covering the state of Montana, we have also met with failures, at least on a temporary basis. You may recall that just

September 29, 1961

Page 5

recently the Senate sent in an appropriation at the request of the administration for funds which, along with those to be brought into being by the FAA, would have started the work on the construction of an airport at West Yellowstone. Unfortunately, that was knocked down in Congress but we think the groundwork has been laid and next year we expect to achieve more in the way of tangible success. Then, of course, the other project that Senator Metcalf has been advocating for so long, the survey of the Missouri between the area north of Lewistown going up to Fort Benton---we had some funds in there but those too were knocked out in conference. That does not mean that that stretch of the Missouri is forgotten because next year we intend to continue and hope to get the funds to carry on a survey there which will help develop and benefit that part of our state.

Mike, I talked to Secretary Udall today about that survey and, of course, the fact that the funds were not available and weren't in the appropriation bill has handicapped him somewhat, he says in a limited way he is going to start that survey anyway and so, if we can get something next year, and I am sure we can, it will go forward. That means dams north of Lewistown. That means a fish and wildlife reservation, maybe a wildlife reservation for elk and buffalo along the Missouri River, conservation and preservation of the historic sites along the Missouri River, national, monumental park in that area, a truly multi-purpose development.

September 29, 1961
Page 6

This has happened elsewhere and on a cooperative basis. I think also, Lee, that we ought to tell the people of Montana that we are very happy that, after a good many years, we were at long last able to achieve a degree of success, of legislation seeking to establish a research station in the vicinity of Sidney, Montana. When you were in the House, you were very much in favor of such a project and worked vigorously in its behalf. In the Senate, Senator Murray and I did the same thing. This year we were able to break the ice. We were able to raise the rating of Sidney from thirty-nine, I believe, in the order of priority, far enough up so that it will become available for funds and we hope that this research station will be of benefit, not only to northeastern Montana, but to western North Dakota as well. The reason why we did achieve a degree of success this year was due to the fact that the grasshopper-drought situation added strength back here for the plea of our city.

Mike, that's true; however, I think it should be brought out that your fine relationship with Secretary of Agriculture, Freeman, enabled you to prove the cause that we had as a result of the drought and the grasshopper situation, so that you were able to go to him and demonstrate to him the people of the Sidney area had already established the research, had done some work on it and had the land there and you convinced Secretary Freeman that here was a research program of high priority. Mike, I think that while we are talking about the farm situation, we should just mention what you and I did on the farm program

on the Durham wheat. We were able to put in an amendment to provide for unlimited growth of Durham wheat in Montana, an important Durham wheat area, so that the people who had a history of growing Durham could participate in the program and, along with Senator Young of North Dakota and Senator Burdick of North Dakota, we were able to provide for the Durham wheat people of Montana.

May I say there, Lee, that, while we were partially successful, we were not as successful as we would like to have been but some progress is better than no progress. Then, of course, I think you ought to say something about the wheat bill which Lee introduced and got something on the order of twenty-five or thirty other senators to join with us.

I think that that's going to be the most dramatic and the most important wheat bill that will be introduced in our era in Congress, not only in this Congress but in the time that we both have served. I know that time is running out, Mike, but I think that we should talk about the Columbia River Treaty which is successfully being put through and we still have hopes that, as a result of the treaty, we will have Libby Dam and we have made a fine record on the floor, I think, between you and the chairmen of the various committees so that power will be reserved for Montana and for Montana industry when Libby Dam is built.

That's right, Lee, we can't do anything more ourselves.

September 29, 1961
Page 8

we have done everything that we can do on this side of the border. It is now up to the province of British Columbia to decide finally what it wants to do because the stumbling block seems to be the differences between the Federal government in Ottawa and the provincial government in Victoria. We certainly would like to see Libby get underway. We want to see a reservation of power for Montana as is the case in Hungry Horse. I want to say before we conclude, Lee, that it has been a real pleasure to work with you this year in the Senate and I think we have developed a fine partnership which I know will continue in the years ahead and which we both devoutly hope will continue to benefit Montana in the years to come.

Mike, it has been a wonderful experience to serve with you. I know that I, along with 98 other members, who have served with you, admire the way that you have acted as Majority Leader and I am proud that I am a part of the body and a colleague of the Majority Leader of the United States Senate.

Well, thank you, Senator Metcalf. This is Mike Mansfield and Lee Metcalf, both senators of Montana, both reporting to our people in the state of Montana. So long and good luck.