

Mansfield Says Watergate Crimes Should Be Pursued

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Mike Mansfield said Friday night the federal courts must pursue "the crimes of Watergate" as long as it takes to deal with Nixon administration scandals.

The Senate Democratic leader pledged Congress will deal fully this year with the question of impeaching President Nixon while giving first attention to a legislative agenda aimed at leading the nation to "a decent future."

Delivering the Democratic response to Nixon's State of the Union speech, Mansfield rejected Nixon's statement that "one year of Watergate is enough" and his plea for a prompt end to congressional and judicial probes of the scandal.

"Whether it is months or years," the Montana Democrat

said, "there are no judicial shortcuts."

Mansfield spoke to the nation from his office, across the Capitol from the House chamber where Nixon presented his speech to a joint session of Congress.

After his speech, the Senate leader, his party's designated spokesman to answer Nixon, responded to questions from a panel of radio and television newsmen.

Mansfield listed election, tax and pension reform; health insurance; and a minimum wage increase as primary goals in the 1974 legislative program and expressed hope that President Nixon's \$304.4-billion budget due Monday can be cut.

He called for public support for congressional efforts to clean up what he called "the campaign-financing mess." He

declared "we shall not finally come to grips with the problem except as we are prepared to pay for the public business of elections with public funds."

Mansfield said that "what Watergate did to public confidence with regard to the nation's politics, the energy crisis

has done in the realm of the nation's economy."

He added that "the immediate responsibility of government is to make certain that the shortage does not devastate the economy and that the price of past neglect is borne equitably by all Americans.

Mansfield said the events of the past year "have underscored the wisdom" of the nation's judgment in 1972 when it returned Democrats to control of Congress while giving Nixon and the Republicans a presidential landslide.