

THE NEW YORK TIMES

# GUN BUFFS OPPOSE MANSFIELD DRIVE

His Support of Curbs Leads to Backing of G.O.P. Rival

JUL 3 1970

By WALLACE TURNER

Special to The New York Times

BILLINGS, Mont., July 2—The gun buffs, who are thick as Jack Rabbits in the Big Sky country, have undertaken to make things difficult for Senator Mike Mansfield as he runs for re-election this year.

The issue is Mr. Mansfield's vote in 1968 to support Federal gun registration legislation and his support of other bills governing registration of ammunition purchases. To own and use guns of all sizes and shapes is a part of the historical tradition here in the Old West.

"If he feels an armed citizenry cannot be trusted, we feel he cannot be trusted with our votes," said Mrs. Francis P. Deisz, the Billings spokesman for the Association to Preserve Our Right to Keep and Bear Arms.

This unwieldy title belongs to an organization directed by A. J. Hollowell from Medford, Ore., where he publishes the *Armed Eagle*, which is the source of much of Mrs. Deisz's material for the attack on Mr. Mansfield.

The vigor of the anti-Mansfield campaign is surprising, for the Senate Democratic leader has become almost a father figure in Montana politics in the last decade. He was re-elected for a third term in 1964 with about 64 per cent of the vote against a very good Republican candidate.

## Another Victory Foreseen

Mr. Mansfield is expected to win easily again, but the rifle clubs are going to give him a run for it.

Mrs. Deisz said that the Senator "admitted on the Senate floor that his mail is overwhelmingly against gun controls," she added, "I believe he should respect the wishes of the people."

Mr. Mansfield has said that a Senator has to vote sometimes on issues where state and national interests conflict. He said he believed that gun controls were a crime control necessity from the national standpoint and so he voted for them. His attitudes were solidified, he has said, after a Montana Marine was shot to death in an argument in a Washington restaurant.

The candidate supported by the gun club members is Harold Wallace, 38 years old, Republican party nominee, who is on leave from his job in a sporting goods store in Missoula. Mr. Wallace, a native of Honolulu, has lived in Missoula since 1955 and formerly was a swimming coach at Montana University there.

"The gun issue shows that Mansfield does not represent the people," Mr. Wallace said in a telephone interview from Washington, where he said he was "visiting friends and getting things squared away."

## Some Gun Club Funds

But he said he saw other issues. He intends to criticize Mr. Mansfield's support for the Gulf of Tonkin resolution and for Southeast Asia treaties and the Senator's "votes on Communist issues."

"There are a good many things there," he said of the purported Communist issue, but he declined to develop the point until later in the campaign.

"The gun clubs are helping me financially," Mr. Wallace said. But he said he had received no financial help from the National Rifle Association, the prime foe of gun registration.

One of Mr. Wallace's main backers is Daniel J. Masse, who has operated Poor Henry's Bar in Clinton, Mont. for 15 years. Mr. Masse is the founder of the Committee Against Mansfield, which has 12 chapters in Montana.

"We ought to get him

straightened out on this gun issue," Mr. Masse said of Senator Mansfield. "He's showing a lot of arrogance."

Mr. Masse said he was a member of the National Rifle Association and of the American Legion and of other organizations but that he could not use their names in his campaign against Senator Mansfield. He gets no help from the rifle association, he said.

"But it would be fair to say all these gun buffs are behind me and they help me," he added.

"We'll work hard for Bud Wallace, said Ottley R. Tschache, the Montana Republican chairman. "It takes a courageous man to go up against Mans-

Mr. Tschache said the gun control argument could be used to support the view that Senator Mansfield "no longer represents the people of Montana but has come under Eastern influence."

However, political observers allied with both major parties from all sections of Montana predicted that Senator Mansfield would be re-elected.

"People may not like his vote on the gun control bill," said Orrin B. Hall, a schoolteacher and Democratic party worker in Wibaux near the North Dakota line. "But they like Mike Mansfield and they'll vote to re-elect him."