



ABRAHAM LINCOLN



SEN. MARK HATFIELD

... originated past and present proclamations

A Day of Penitence

Senate Designates April 30 For U.S. 'Fasting, Prayer'

The Senate adopted a resolution yesterday calling for observance of a "national day of humiliation, fasting and prayer" on April 30.

The resolution was introduced by Sen. Mark O. Hatfield (R-Ore.) and adopted by voice vote with no debate or opposition.

It declares that because of the nation's failings, it "behooves us to humble ourselves before almighty God, to confess our national sins and to pray for clemency and forgiveness."

Hatfield's proposal is modeled after a proclamation issued by Abraham Lincoln fixing April 30, 1863—when the Union cause in the Civil War had reached a low

point—as a day for reflection.

In a Senate speech, Hatfield said:

"We witness a country torn apart with division and lacking the spiritual foundation which would restore its vision and purpose. We, as a people, through our own acquiescence to corruption and waste, have helped to create a moral abyss that produces a disdain for honesty and humility in high levels of national leadership."

Senate leaders of both parties said they have received an unusual number of Christmas cards with more than the customary seasonal greetings.

Republican Leader Hugh Scott told the Senate he had "never seen so many messages in Christmas cards—messages of hope and despair, of concern with the state of the Union."

"I have noticed the same phenomena," Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield said. "It indicates a concern about the way things are going in this most troublesome year."

Mansfield said that Congress "has been the anchor of the people's freedom. It has been the rock of the nation at a time when the executive branch has been seized in a whirlwind of resignations, disclosures, denials, dismissals and indictments."