

# Mansfield's Reply To Nixon Address

Washington

Senator Mike Mansfield said last night the federal courts must pursue "the crimes of Watergate" for 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 Mr. Nixon's "State of the Union" speech, Mansfield rejected the President'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 Mr. Nixon presented his speech to a joint session of Congress.

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

In 20 minutes, he answered 42 questions from the six reporters, declaring:

- He does not think Watergate and the move toward impeachment have crippled Mr. Nixon's ability to govern.

- He doubts the Senate Watergate Committee can make its report by the February 28 deadline because of Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski's request to the committee to delay publishing its findings in order to

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avoid jeopardizing Watergate criminal trials.

- He favors televising of both House and Senate impeachment proceedings. However, he said, the Senate, while "watching with great interest what happens in the House," has not started any studies of how it would proceed with a trial if Mr. Nixon is impeached.

- He hopes that, "by acting and moving," Congress can help overcome the widespread loss of faith in the ability of government to function properly.

Mansfield said the congressional election in November will "test the record of the past two years" and declared that the record of Congress last year, while "not earthshaking," represented "a sustained and sober effort on the part of Republicans and Democrats alike."

As primary goals in the 1974 legislative program, Mansfield listed election tax and pension reform; health insurance, and a minimum wage increase. He 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," and 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.

"If that means rationing,

then let us not hesitate to use this device," Mansfield said, a contrast with Mr. Nixon's vow "to do everything we can to avoid gasoline rationing."

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 Mr. Nixon a presidential landslide.

Citing congressional action to halt U.S. bombing of Cambodia and limit presidential war powers, Mansfield said the 93rd Congress' first session succeeded in acting to limit what he termed "an ominous shift to one-branch government."

"The erosion of the system of checks and balances was halted," he said. "A greater congressional impact began to be registered on all of the basic decisions of the federal government."

While devoting most of his speech to major domestic and foreign concerns, Mansfield raised the Watergate question, and what he called "the related questions of impeachment and resignation," early in his remarks.

As for the question of resignation, Mansfield said: "The President has stated his intentions bluntly in that regard" by vowing to serve out the remainder of his second four year term.

"Insofar as the Congress is concerned," Mansfield added, "that closes the matter of resignation."

"Impeachment is the responsibility of the Congress," Mansfield added, declaring "it is being handled properly and deliberately."

In what amounted to a pledge to make sure the matter is resolved one way or another by the end of 1974 and not permitted to drag on, he said: "I would anticipate that it will be dealt with fully in this session."

Mansfield said, "The question of impeachment and the matters of the Watergate hearings create onerous responsibilities for the Congress.

"As for the crimes of Watergate — and there were crimes," Mansfield said, "they cannot be put to rest by Congress. Nor can any words of the President's or from me mitigate them.

"The disposition of crimes is a function of the Justice Department and the courts," he continued, declaring that as far as he can tell, Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski "is doing his job and so, too, are the courts."

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