

Nixon Said To Favor Bills Changing Public Land Laws

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Washington (Special) — Interior Secretary Fred A. Seaton says that Vice President Richard M. Nixon does not favor any "wholesale disposition" of western public lands by transfer to the states.



Nixon, on the contrary, favors enactment of several bills sent to Congress during the past year to "modernize" the public land laws. None of them involves a "land grab" or a "giveaway," Seaton added.

This, in effect, was the Administration's reply to a blast of last week from Sen. James E. Murray (D-Mont.) issued from Democratic campaign headquarters which charged that Nixon favored a "notorious land grab" that would transfer a substantial portion of the public domain to the states.

Seaton said the most important bill which Nixon has endorsed would permit the sale of relatively small tracts — up to 1280 acres — to counties, cities and individuals. The purpose of this measure is to permit expansion of private land in the vicinity of growing western cities for urban or industrial use.

Important Western Bill

In urging Congress to enact this measure, Seaton in the past year has described it as "the most important western bill since the Taylor Grazing act." Congress, however, has not moved toward its enactment, for no apparent reason other than preoccupation with other proposals.

The Murray charge against Nixon was based upon a newspaper story published in the Arizona Republic at Phoenix which quoted Arizona Gov. Paul Fannin as saying Nixon had endorsed a major public land transfer proposal.

Fannin, a Republican seeking re-election, personally favors turning much of the public domain over to the states. He told the Phoenix newspaper that Sen. Barry Goldwater had agreed to introduce in January a bill to effect this transfer. Under such a proposal, his state would gain 13 million acres of federal land, he noted.

Based on Misunderstanding
No Goldwater's office says the newspaper article was based on a "misunderstanding" of the facts. Gov. Fannin had no ground on which to declare that Nixon favored the wholesale land transfer, Goldwater's office indicated. Seaton intimated the same point by saying he

could not speak for the "elected officials of Arizona" but that "I am able to comment on the position the vice president personally has taken on the matter."

"And, of course, it has been my responsibility as secretary of the Interior to establish the basic policies of the Eisen-

hower-Nixon Administration on the matter," Seaton observed.

His remarks were made in a letter to the National Wildlife Federation, whose executive director, Thomas L. Kimball, had inquired about the matter. Seaton said he was well aware of the opposition

of the organized conservation groups to any wholesale land transfer.

"We believe that there is ample land available to satisfy the pressing needs for land necessary to meet the demands of expanding western communities for urban and

public purposes without disturbing any of the programs in which you are interested," Seaton said.

Seaton referred to the long-range program for the Bureau of Land Management known as Twenty-Two, pointing out that it contemplates no wholesale land transfers to

the states or individuals.

Goldwater also issued a statement saying it was a "deliberate exaggeration" to say the Republicans favored wholesale western land transfers. He and Nixon favor disposition of only "surplus" lands to rapidly expanding areas, Goldwater said.

Romulo Stresses Asian Importance

Portland — Carlos P. Romulo, Philippine ambassador to the United States, said Wednesday night "Asia is important to your national security, because the U.S. Pacific chain of defense is there."

Romulo made his remarks to 420 members of the Knife and Fork Club here. Romulo warned that U.S. world leadership is "very seriously being contested by the Russians in these critical times." He said "If the Russians provoke an incident anywhere in the world, whatever position the U.S. takes must be in the interest of world peace and security."

through Japan, Korea, Formosa and down to the Philippines. He warned "If you lose one link of that chain, you lose all of Asia; if you lose Asia, you are doomed."

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Morse Testifies To Union Money Gift

St. Louis, Mo. — (AP) — Sen. Wayne L. Morse, (D-Ore.) testified Thursday he encouraged St. Louis Teamsters Union officials to raise funds for his 1956 reelection campaign.

The government called on Morse as a witness in its federal court case against St. Louis Teamsters Local 688 and four of its officers, including Harold Gibbons, international vice president of the Teamsters Union.

They are charged with conspiring to violate the federal corrupt practices act by contributing union funds, instead of voluntary contributions from members, to the campaigns of candidates for national office in 1952 and 1956.

Morse said he met with Gibbons and Sidney Zagri, then head of local 688's political activities, at a Midwest Teamsters conference in St. Louis in 1956.

"They offered to raise money for my campaign," Morse said, "and I encouraged them to do so, as I had others."

He said he received \$1,800 from St. Louis Teamsters sources, "including some individuals."

California Police

Report Highway Crash

Yreka — Norma Ruth Slack, 19, of Malin, was taken to Klamath Valley hospital Wednesday for treatment of injuries suffered in an accident on the Haveline rd. in Tule Lake.

California Highway patrolmen said she was in a car operated by Thomas E. Slack, Malin, which was involved in the accident with a farm tractor operated by Glen Anton Steyskal, Malin.

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