1952

Speech of Congressman Mike Mansfield

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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My opponent talks of the price of copper and I think there is much in what he says that I can agree with. But, when he says the Administration is "undermining the sources of the miner's and smelterman's livelihood" he is not stating the truth and he knows it. No workingman's livelihood is being undermined by the U.S. Government - our government - and the miners and smeltermen of Butte, Anaconda, and Great Falls know it. And they know, too, who is protecting their livelihood.

My opponent talks of inflation but he offers no alternative. He blames taxes and they are high. But he does not tell you that I voted against the last tax bill because I felt that Congress - including my opponent - had fallen down on its job of controlling inflation and protecting the people. He doesn't tell you that copper is in such short supply that every copper camp in the U.S. - with one exception - will be down in 25 years. That exception is Butte and it will be going strong 100 years from now. One of the reasons Anaconda is going into Aluminum is because the world supply is so insecure and you, and you, are going to stay in business expansion in other lines must take place.

My opponent is using the technique of the Big Lie - the Hitler - Stalin technique - by repeating falsehoods over and over again. I will use the old fashioned American procedure of the Big Truth as I always
have because I believe the people of Montana want the facts and I believe further, they know the two candidates - myself and my opponent very well - and, as always, want to see fair play.

My opponent talks of counterfeit prosperity, appeasement, and the Korean War. I have never mentioned prosperity in this campaign because I am not running against Hoover and I am not running in 1932. But I would like to ask him what he has done to better the life of the workers, farmers, and businessmen of Montana when they called on him or when he voted on legislation in Washington? What has he done to stop Communist aggression except talk about it during campaigns? Does he call Greek-Turkish Aid, the Marshall Plan, Mutual Security, the Berlin Airlift, and stopping aggression in Korea, appeasement? Talk is cheap but action counts.

Is my opponent trying to tell the people that policies which he never opposed - never opened his mouth on - in the Senate - is appeasement? Is he trying to tell you now - after his years of silence - that there is an easy way and a cheap way out of our difficulties? If he is, then I want to hear about it and the people of Montana and the nation do too. Tell them the whole truth, Senator, because that's what I am trying to do.
My opponent says the State Department put pressure on Chiang to take Communists into his government. Tell that to MacArthur, Wedemeyer, Pat Hurley, and Admiral Spruance - all Republicans - but don't try and tell it to an ex PFC in the Marines. Don't tell me you doubt me because I have the documents and the personal letters and I'll be glad to show them to you anytime.

My opponent says this was the Communist line but you're wrong, it was the Republican line - the line of the Republican Admirals and Generals - all Test men - whom I've just mentioned.

My opponent states I was sent by the State Dep't to put the "Screws on Chiang" and that I saw "the right people" so that I would come home "with the right report". No, Senator, the State Dep't didn't send me but President Roosevelt did. No, Senator, I did not "put the screws on Chiang" but I did see "the right people" such as Chennault, Chiang, Hurley, Wedemeyer, etc. and, strange as it may seem, I did not see a single Communist among them.

Speaking of agrarian reforms, Senator, you have the wrong man on the hook and you know it. Remember what General Pat Hurley and Frank Kerrill said? How could an ex G.I. like me doubt their words. Tell the truth, Senator, because a man in your position should know it.
My opponent says Truman handpicked me to run against him. I must dissent vigorously because no one has ever picked me for any office and no one has ever drafted me for any office. The idea of running for the Senate is mine and I only hope that the people of Montana will handpick me in November to take your seat.

Furthermore, if any federal resources, including the federal treasury - as you say - are being used in my behalf, it is news to me and I'd like to have the details. You know, Senator, that I never operate that way, never put on pressure, and never ask for favors. I fight clean, I work in the open, and I depend on the judgment and the faith of the people of Montana.

My opponent says I've been endorsed and commended by the Communist Daily Worker. Tell that to Vishinsky not to the people of Montana because they know - and you know - that you are lying. I do know, though, that I have been commended by the Reserve Officers Assoc. and the Marine Corps League for my work - with Senator Douglas - in getting a Marine Corps of 3 divisions and 3 air wings on the books. I've been commended by the Eagle magazine - speaking for a great American fraternal organization - for my fight with and defeat of Andrei Vishinsky, the Soviet Foreign Minister, in the U.N.
And, incidentally, Senator, you will recall that there was not one vote against my confirmation as a delegate to the U.N. by the Senate. Even you voted for me then which you should not have done if I am as wicked as you are trying to paint me before the people of Montana. But, you weren’t campaigning then, were you? You were trying to be a Senator then but you’re being a vicious demagogue now. Don’t you realize, Senator, that it is far more important to tell the truth than it is for you and to be elected to any office. The people should know the truth - not to make them free, for they are - but to keep them free. And, Senator, freedom is worth paying for, worth fighting for, and if need be, worth dying for because without freedom, we cannot live as Americans and as free men. As for me, I will live no other way.

There is no easy way, there is no cheap way to fight Communism and the people of America know it, I’m sure. We are engaged in a struggle for survival against the most insidious enemy the free people of the world have ever known. This atheistic ideology wants to conquer the world and wants to degrade and enslave us all - regardless of race, color, or creed. As for me, I intend to continue to vote for every measure that will increase our strength and security. I will help to build up the defenses of the free world - including Germany, Spain, and Nationalist China -
because I know that we cannot live in isolation and survive, I know that in the event of another World War, our cities, and our factories, and our farms will be hit, and I know that I'm living in the year 1952 and not 1930.

I can't brush over issues and I won't tell you falsehoods. Whether or not you see fit to elect me Senator is not really important but the security and the welfare of our country and the future of our children is terribly important. That is the issue because our understanding of it will bring peace - a peace based on strength and preparedness - a peace based on justice and tolerance and a peace which will create a brotherhood of men under the Fatherhood of God.

And speaking of an atomic bomb dropping on Helena, Senator, as you stated in that city last week, why don't you tell the people there that the main reason we are fighting in Korea is, in the words of Capt. John Jabara, the first jet ace of the Korean War, "to keep from fighting in Helena" or any other city in the U.S. - Tell the people of Helena that their city - or any other city in the U.S. - is less than 50 hours by air from the farthest point away. Tell them of the British jet that flew the Atlantic last month - both ways - in less than 8 hours and tell them of the American jet fighter flying non-stop in less than 5 hours from
Travis Air Force base in Texas to Honolulu. Tell them, Senator, that our oceans are no longer barriers in our defense and that the air above is no longer free. Tell them, Senator, that 7000 combat planes of all types flew north from Great Falls during World War II and saved Great Falls Air Base from being dismantled and tell them, Senator, that time and space have both shrunk to such an extent - and is still shrinking - that we cannot live alone in isolation and live. Tell the people we're not living in 1918 or 1932 but that we are living in the present - in 1952.

Tell the people the truth, Senator, because while you and I are unimportant people we do have a solemn obligation to report the facts to the people we have the honor and the privilege to represent. They are our employers and they are entitled to an accounting of our stewardship - of yours for 6 years, of mine for 10 years. Let them make up their own minds but let's not try and pull the wool over their eyes. One thing I have never done is to try and bluff anyone because people are smart and they can tell a phony a mile away.