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## Copper Strike

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. FANNIN. I yield to the distinguished majority leader.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I have listened to the distinguished Senator from Arizona with great interest and great respect. There are some questions I would like to raise, however, and some comments which I would like to make.

As far as the NLRB is concerned in the Kennecott case, it is my impression that the President is not holding up that decision but that it is the NLRB itself which is doing so.

As far as the President playing into the hands of international Communist interests and the Associated Press dispatch which stated:

British and continental Europe operations have been buying substantial tonnages of copper from East Germany and the Soviet Union to replace supplies they have shipped to the United States to take advantage of high copper prices there during its 7-month copper strike.

I should point out that East Germany produces practically nothing in the way of copper.

I have no figures as to what the Soviet Union has. I do not think it is too substantial. However, as the Senator indicates himself in the first paragraph on page 2, the larger part of the imports have come from places like Chile, Zambia, Australia, and Canada, as well.

The Senator also raises the question with respect to Taft-Hartley and it is a question which he has been consistently raising since the start of the strike. The information which the administration has given me, and this bears out what the Senator has said, is that there are only certain conditions under which Taft-Hartley can be invoked, and they have to do with a national emergency.

I understand the Government at the present time is getting all the copper it needs by paying a very high price for it, far above the 38 cents that was the price before the strike. Furthermore, the Government has 259,000 tons of copper—I do not know whether they are long or short tons—in the strategic stockpile.

As far as the Taft-Hartley Act is concerned, if it had been invoked in the beginning I think it would have been more effective then than now, but that is a decision which the President would make. I make that statement because of the fact that the companies will have to dewater the sumps in the shaft mines, retimber, take care of falling rock, and do other work to get the shaft mines in

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operation. That would take some time. Less time would be required in open pits in States such as Utah, Nevada, and Montana. We might well face a situation, however, at the end of 80 days where no settlement had been reached and where the strike would again resume.

I do not think the President should be accused of inaction because he has been guided largely by his Secretary of Labor and Secretary of Commerce and he has depended on them for advice and counsel.

I must admit I have been to see the President, I have written to the President, and I have telegraphed the President to see if he would not do something to bring about an end to this terrible strike which has lasted so long now, and is going into the eighth month, and there is no end in sight.

I wish to read a telegram which I sent to the President a week ago Sunday:

FEBRUARY 17, 1968.

HON. LYNDON B. JOHNSON,  
The President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I am sorely disappointed and disturbed that the White House mediation panel seems to have failed in its efforts to settle the seven months old copper strike. It appears that both sides the union and companies have arrived at an impasse and are still operating on an arms length basis and as it is my understanding that there is no possibility of other direct Government intervention, that the issue must now be carried a step further. I would most respectfully request that if the panel in fact has failed to make progress towards a settlement, that you give serious and personal consideration to calling the two sides together, lock them up in a room and keep them there until a settlement is achieved. I make this request because of the hunger, distress and hardship facing over ten thousand miners and smeltermen and their families in Montana alone as well as others in the Rocky Mountain States. Seven months is too long for any kind of strike. This matter must be met head on. The companies and unions must be brought together and they both must get down to bedrock and engage in serious free collective bargaining.

Sincerely and respectfully yours,

MIKE MANSFIELD,  
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate.

I omitted one thing. If he will get them in a room he should not only lock the door on them until they arrive at a settlement, but he should throw away the key, as well. The time for action is now.

I commend the distinguished Senator from Arizona for his unfailing and unflagging interest in this strike which cannot continue and which must be faced up to now before it is too late.