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Congressional Record re: Copper Strike

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I am delighted that the distinguished Senator from Arizona has once again brought up the copper strike, which has now been plaguing five Western States, primarily, for 8 months.

It is my understanding that while I was in Salt Lake City last Wednesday, there was a meeting at the White House attended by Governors from copper-producing States in the Rocky Mountains and Members of the House and Senate from those States.

Mr. FANNIN. The Senator is correct.

Mr. MANSFIELD. It is my further understanding that at that meeting the President indicated a deep personal interest in the copper strike and suggested that the Governors and the Members of the House and Senate contact the companies and the unions to see if something could not be done to get them both down to hard day-to-day negotiations.

Mr. FANNIN. The Senator is correct. The President did request the Governors and the Members of Congress to help to bring this copper strike to a close.

I am sorry that the distinguished majority leader did not have the opportunity to be there. I know he would have certainly contributed greatly to that meeting.

Mr. MANSFIELD. I am sure the Governors and my colleagues in the House and Senate were aware of my feelings in this matter. I was in Salt Lake City that day, and being in the heart of the copper country I heard a great deal about copper. I was in touch with the White House later that evening so I was able to receive a fairly verbatim report of what happened.

As a result of that conference I know that the Senator and his colleague from Arizona did not have the benefit of this body, and others have sent telegrams and established contact with the companies and the unions in an attempt to get them together.

My junior colleague from Montana (Mr. METCALF) and I did the same thing. We contacted the Anaconda Co. and the steelworkers.

I have before me an answer from Joseph P. Molony, chairman of the Nonferrous Strike Coordinating Committee, of the Steel Workers Union. The telegram is in answer to the telegram sent by Senator METCALF and me. The telegram from Mr. Molony reads as follows:

We also received a telegram from C. Jay Parkinson of the Anaconda Co., in response to our joint telegram to him, and his telegram reads as follows:

Mr. President, this is a slight sign of progress. We believe that the unions and companies mean business when they meet on either March 4 or March 6, and that is too long a time to wait. I am down around the table to try to work out differences that keep them apart at the present time.

The strike itself has had a deadening effect on the copper-producing States and has crippled their economies drastically. It has worsened the Nation's balance-of-payments deficit, and it has driven up the cost of many articles because of the high cost we pay for copper at the present time.

All in all, the strike has had a very debilitating effect, not only on the individuals concerned but on the economies in general of the States of Montana, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico. I hope that the time for these factors to get together is long overdue and I would hope they would get away from this ballyhooing which has been going on for an long time and that they would get down to negotiations—and I refer to both officials of the unions and the companies—to see what they can do to bring about some sort of a settlement. This is an economic plight which faces the miners and the smeltersmen throughout the Western States.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print a copy of this telegram in the Record. (Signed) MOLONY.
Mr. FANNIN. I certainly agree. The magnitude of the suffering of our people is almost unbelievable. I understand that the President has been sustained when 28 times the Taft-Hartley emergency provisions have been invoked. The court has never once turned down the President when he has invoked the emergency provisions of Taft-Hartley.

Mr. MANSFIELD. The sad thing is that a great many of our good people are going into other parts of the country in order to find employment. They will never come back. We will be the losers because of their leaving.

Mr. FANNIN. I agree with the Senator.