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Senate

TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1969

next half century to new heights of service for God and Country.

SENATOR MANSFIELD INTERVIEW- ED ON "MEET THE PRESS"

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have a transcript of a television show in which I participated, "Meet the Press," be printed at this point in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the transcript was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MEET THE PRESS, MARCH 30, 1969

Produced by Lawrence E. Spivak.

Guest: Senator Mike Mansfield (D. Mont.), Majority Leader, U.S. Senate.

Moderator: Bill Monroe.

Panel: William Thels, Hearst newspapers; Samuel Shaffer, Newsweek; John W. Flinn, New York Times; Lawrence E. Spivak, permanent panel member.

Mr. MONROE. Our guest today on "Meet the Press" is Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana, Majority Leader of the United States Senate since 1961. Senator Mansfield is a member of the Foreign Relations Committee and the Appropriations Committee.

We will have the first questions now from Lawrence E. Spivak, Permanent Member of the "Meet the Press" panel.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator Mansfield, Tomorrow will be exactly a year since President Johnson took himself out of the race for the Presidency and stopped the bombing in order to speed negotiations for peace.

Do you think we have made any significant progress towards peace?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, not of any significance. The only significant factor that I am aware of is the statement made by President Thieu the other day that he would be willing to meet with the NLF, the political arm of the Viet Cong, and also at the same time in which he stated that he did not believe that the bombing of the North should be resumed.

Mr. SPIVAK. Have you any reason to believe that the Administration's secret negotiations are being more productive towards peace than the public negotiations suggest?

Senator MANSFIELD. Yes, indeed. How much I am not aware, but some progress has been made in that direction. How much I cannot say.

Mr. SPIVAK. Do you have any hope that we will get a peace treaty before the end of '69?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, I would hope so. I think we have got to make every effort and we ought to get away from this act-react syndrome that has been developing in Vietnam since the President's announcement of a year ago, and most especially since the stopping of the bombing around the first of November last year.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator, some members of Congress, including you have been pressing President Nixon for a new American initiative for peace in Vietnam. Are there many new initiatives available to him, really?

Senator MANSFIELD. None of any real consequence, because with the passage of time, with the duration of the war, his options have decreased as had President Johnson's before him, but it does appear to me that what is necessary is a move like that suggested by President Thieu by means of which the NLF and the Saigon government will get together because they are both South Vietnamese and if there is going to be peace in Vietnam, its got to be between those two elements which reside in that country. Then

I think it is proper that the U.S. and Hanoi get together and try and work out questions concerning deescalation of the fighting, troop withdrawal and other related matters.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator, during the campaign President Nixon said he had a plan to end the war. As far as you know, has this plan been tried and failed? Is it quietly being put into effect?

Senator MANSFIELD. I have no idea what it is.

Mr. SHAFFER. Senator Mansfield, one short follow-up on the question asked by Mr. Spivak, on President Nixon's secret plan for ending the war. Have you or any other Congressional leader been given an inkling of that plan by the President?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, and I don't think we should. If he wants privacy, he should have it. This matter is going to be concluded not in public, not by telling too many members of the Congress but by his negotiators getting into contact in a side room, a back room or somewhere in private so that a political settlement of responsible proportions can be achieved.

Mr. SHAFFER. Now, Senator, I want to ask you about what is currently the biggest fuss in Congress, and looks as if it is going to continue that way for weeks and months. The anti-missile system. How do you assess the chances of beating the ABM in the Senate?

Senator MANSFIELD. I would say it is the most immediate issue being given the most overt prominence by the Senate at this time, but I would say the great issue is still Vietnam, as it is in effect underlying what we are discussing now.

As far as the ABM situation is concerned, there will be much probing into that. There will be a great debate on the subject. As far as the votes go, my best guess—and it would be only a guess—is that at the present time it would be a standoff.

Mr. SHAFFER. Do you agree with Senator Gore of Tennessee, who is one of the opponents of the ABM system, that this will cause a senseless arms race and poses a potential disaster to mankind?

Senator MANSFIELD. Yes, generally speaking I do, although I am trying to keep an open mind on the subject. I am personally being affected by what is going to happen because one of the sites is in my own State. I am doing this, even though my prejudice is pretty well known, not only during the course of the debate this year but even during the course of the previous Administration.

Mr. SHAFFER. But if this is something that is in the interests of mankind and you are still short of votes to beat it, you have enough Senators there who could mount a successful filibuster to stop it. Would you participate in or countenance a Senate filibuster?

Senator MANSFIELD. I don't believe much in filibusters because I think that they are counter-productive to the objective desired. I would hope that we would face up to this issue on the basis of our individual responsibility and vote according to what we think is the best way to face this particular problem, which could develop into an arms race of tremendous proportions and bring about greater internal insecurity at home.

Mr. FINNEY. Senator, don't we have a convergence developing here in the Senate between the ABM issue and the Vietnam issue, and an overall new skeptical attitude toward the military?

Senator MANSFIELD. Without question.

Mr. FINNEY. This brings us back to this question of Vietnam. Obviously one of the important factors in the Administration's thinking and approach towards negotiations in Paris is how long the doves are doing to stay quiet.

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, the doves, so-called, have stayed quiet since the President made his speech of renunciation a year ago tomorrow. I have been very much impressed with the discretion and understanding

shown. However, rumblings are heard, discontent is spreading and while very few members have spoken up to this time, with the passage of time more and more members are going to make their views known. I am very much aware of the fact that the President is aware of this discontent, this feeling of uneasiness not only in the Senate but among the American people as a whole and I am sure that in his own way he is trying to do everything he possibly can to bring this barbarous and tragic and futile war to what he has referred to as a responsible settlement.

Mr. FINNEY. You, in an earlier answer, seemed to give a little—display a little discontent yourself. You talked about the action-reaction syndrome that has developed. Are you suggesting by that that the United States bears a share of the responsibility for the recent escalation of the military activities in Vietnam?

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, yes, because it is my understanding that once the bombing of the North stopped completely—that is, below the 20th parallel—that instructions were given to General Abrams to keep the pressure on. When you do that, they will come back and you have the act-react syndrome. It is my further understanding that within ten days of the stopping of the bombing of the North that a number of North Vietnamese regiments withdrew into Cambodia and Laos. Maybe that was the time—of course, this is hindsight on my part—that we might have been able to develop a situation which would have called for a cease-fire and standfast, which would have been helpful, in my opinion, to the negotiations at Paris.

Mr. THEIS. Senator, the Communist shelling of Saigon and other cities continues. I believe there were some more rockets, today, into Saigon.

If this continues, would you countenance a military foray into Cambodia, or Laos, as has been suggested as an option, to knock out the Communist bases, there, and you think Prince Sihanouk, for example, would go along, as has been suggested in some reports?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I would not countenance such a move and I don't think Norodom Sihanouk would go along because it would mean an invasion of his country, it would very likely mean the entrance into the war of Cambodia and instead of trying to bring about a deescalation and a possible peace. I think the war would be enlarged, more Americans would be needed and a difficult situation made more dangerous.

Mr. THEIS. You have maintained rather personal contact with Prince Sihanouk and that whole area. Do you have any personal doubt that Cambodia is being used by the North Vietnamese, the Viet Cong, as a way station, a military way station?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I have no doubt that both Cambodia and Laos are being used but I do not think the way to bring about an end to this barbaric struggle is to go through an invasion of the Kingdom of Cambodia, itself.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator, I'd like to ask you one question on Viet Nam. I know you are against unilateral withdrawal of troops in Viet Nam, but do you think a token withdrawal to indicate U.S. intentions might serve a useful purpose at this time?

Senator MANSFIELD. I think it would show to the Saigon government that we mean business about getting out in time and turning more and more of the responsibility over to them.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator, on the ABM, did I understand you to say that you had not yet made up your mind as to how you are going to vote, that you are going to wait for the debate?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I did not say I hadn't made up my mind. I did say I was trying to keep an open mind in spite of my prejudices, made known during two administrations, against the ABM. But I think President Nixon ordered a review on his own

responsibility, tried to look at all the options open to him in this area, with an open mind, and if he can be that responsible, I think I in turn can be just as responsible.

Mr. SPIVAK. Didn't the Congress vote under the Johnson administration to deploy the ABM system? Didn't they vote the money for deployment? What happened to change the situation over the last year, Senator?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, I must reiterate I was one of those who voted three times against this proposal during the last year of the Johnson administration, but I think since that time there has been a greater recognition of the fact that, as in Viet Nam, where you have an act-react pattern, that here you might develop the same kind of action. If we were to build a number of bases we are told that the Russians would understand that they were defensive and would do nothing. In my opinion, the Russians will match us base for base and maybe more and the end result will not be \$6.1 billion for a very thin system around missile bases to defend sites, not people, and the figure could become astronomical.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator, when he left office in 1961, President Eisenhower warned the American people against the influence of the military-industrial complex. How do you appraise that influence today in the United States?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, I think there is such a complex and I would add the labor unions to it, so it would be a military-industrial-labor union complex, but I do not think it is a deliberate complex. I think it is just because of the great stress placed on scientific development, technology and the like in the past twenty years, which has drawn these various elements together. I do not doubt the patriotism of these people who are in it. I do doubt their judgment.

Mr. SHAFFER. Senator Mansfield, when I interviewed you in your office a few days ago, we touched on the Viet Nam war and you said, "We have to get out. We never should have gotten in."

Will you vote for appropriations to continue financing the war?

Senator MANSFIELD. Yes, I will, because the men who are out there should be given every protection. They are there not by choice but because they have been ordered to go there by their government and, despite my great distaste for the Vietnamese war, going back to even before it began, I feel that I have an obligation to these youngsters who are carrying out their obligations as citizens of a country.

Mr. SHAFFER. Senator, this has been called on the Senate Floor, McNamara's war, Johnson's war. How long, in your opinion, will it be before it is thought of and called Nixon's war?

Senator MANSFIELD. I hope never. I hope sincerely that the President will be able to reach a responsible settlement before that stage can be reached, but after all, it is hard to call it his war. He didn't inaugurate it, all he did was inherit it.

Mr. SHAFFER. Isn't the public patience and the Congressional patience getting very thin and won't the distaste for this finally turn against the President if the war continues?

Senator MANSFIELD. Very likely. That is the way of politics, that is the way emotions run. It is unfortunate but that is a good assumption.

Mr. FINNEY. Let's try to pin you down to some time period, if we can, on this. Has the administration two months, six months? How long does it have?

Senator MANSFIELD. I couldn't say. It is up to each individual senator's judgment, speaking for the Senate, as to when he thinks he should speak out and make his views known. I feel just as badly as any member of the Senate who is opposed to the war but I feel just as strongly that the President ought to be given some leeway and allowed to exercise some flexibility in his great responsibility.

Mr. FINNEY. If we can turn to Congress, Senator, the new has been in session now for three months. During that period you have done some housekeeping legislation, you have voted yourself a pay raise, you have approved the nonproliferation treaty. Aside from that, you have done very little.

When is this new Congress going to start legislating?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, we are still waiting for the President to let us have the benefit of his suggestions and proposals. We are waiting especially for the next budget to show up. We really can't get down to business until that is sent down, even though at the present time, three or four subcommittees are working on the old Johnson proposals.

It is my opinion that we haven't done much up to this time—not because we aren't eager and ready and willing but maybe it is just as good that we haven't done so much. Maybe in the past eight years we have passed too much legislation. Now it is time to get down to bedrock, see that the administrative overhead is reduced, that the intent of the Congress is carried out and the moneys are spent as the Congress intended.

I look for this Congress to be an appropriation-minded, oversight-oriented Congress and I do not anticipate much in the way of new legislation, nor do I think much is needed.

Mr. FINNEY. Turning to appropriations, obviously one area that can be cut—not can be cut, necessarily, but that will be subject to close scrutiny in Congress—is the military budget. Do you think it is perhaps time to revive your idea of reducing our troop strength in NATO?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I do not, and I make that statement most reluctantly. I feel that in view of the situation which developed in Czechoslovakia last August that for the time being we have to stand fast. Basically, I still feel that, having 300,000 troops and 300,000 dependents in Western Europe is entirely too much, too many, too costly; that they should have been reduced years ago but in view of the Czechoslovakian situation I must, for the time being, hold my fire.

Mr. THEIS. Senator, going back to the matter of budget cuts in the economy, the White House has indicated that they are being advised that inflation has peaked and it should turn down. How serious do you regard the inflation situation? Is it a temporary, passing thing?

Senator MANSFIELD. I am not an economist, Mr. Theis. I hope the White House is right but I think we can help in trying to bring about a ten to twelve billion dollar reduction in appropriations this year and to insist at the same time—as we did with President Johnson—that President Nixon and his people in the executive branch, with the cooperation of the Congress—not alone—bring about a five to six billion dollar reduction in expenditures, because we are spending too much money, appropriating too much money and there are many places where cuts can and should be made.

Mr. THEIS. Well, traditionally in Congress when all the supplemental appropriations are added up at the end of the year, some of those cuts have not shown up in a net term.

The Democrats are still in control of Congress. Will the Democratic leadership take the lead if the Administration doesn't have the votes to see that there is a substantial reduction, and you can't have an increased surplus?

Senator MANSFIELD. We will.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator, earlier this year you said the United States has no hard and fast commitment to go to the aid of Israel. What should our role in the Middle East be, in your judgment?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, what it is now. Working together with France, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union and in that

way see if we can't bring about a meeting between Israel and the Arab states to the end that they can work out a final solution to the difficulties which have been in existence since the Six Day War.

Mr. SPIVAK. Don't you think, Senator, it would be better if all the nations, the big nations, stayed out of the Middle East altogether and allowed the Arabs and the Israelis to settle their own problem?

Senator MANSFIELD. If it could be done, yes. The Israelis seem to think it can be done. I do not agree with them in that respect and I think it is going to take the meeting of the big powers to see if they can't collectively, and working through the Jarring mission, bring about a settlement to that tempestuous area.

Mr. SPIVAK. Just what do you think the big powers can do, particularly if the Arabs and the Israelis refuse to accept any kind of imposition?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, there are many things that could be done. There could be an arms embargo all the way around on the part of the Soviet Union and the United States who are the two chief suppliers at the present time to that area. There are certain questions, of course, which have to be considered. For example, the Israeli position in so far as the Golan Heights are concerned. Free passage of the Gulf of Aqaba, the control of Sharm el Sheik which guards the entrance, the reopening of the Suez Canal which is fast losing its economic significance. The return in some part at least, of the area on the west bank of the Jordan and the area of the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator, you have said we have no commitment to go to the aid of Israel. What would we do if the Russians went to the aid of the Arabs, though, in a military way? Could we possibly stay out of the Middle East?

Senator MANSFIELD. It would be quite difficult, but there you are asking me a question which could better be directed to the President of the United States. I would point out that the only legal tie that we had there that I know of is the so-called Eisenhower Resolution which is applicable to all countries in the area equally and is subject, I think, to only one condition and that is a threat from the outside of communism.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator, may I ask one more question: In December of this year you urged President Nixon to visit with President de Gaulle and other Western European heads of state, soon after he took office, and I think he did that. I don't know whether it was your instigation or not, but he certainly did it.

Senator MANSFIELD. Not mine; his own, I am sure.

Mr. SPIVAK. Do you think the time has now come for a summit meeting with the Russians?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I think President Nixon is right that the groundwork should be laid first before there is a summit meeting. I would hope that is being done, especially in the field of disarmament, that it would not be on a linkage basis, tying in all the other questions on which there are differences. I would hope that a summit meeting would be held between Mr. Nixon and Kossygin and Brezhnev at an appropriate time—not too long, I would hope—and on the basis of results which had been achieved at a lower level and for the purpose of, in effect, putting the imprimatur of the chiefs of state on any agreements which had been reached. It is mandatory that the two countries get together for the sake of the peace of the world.

Mr. SHAFER. Senator Mansfield, there is a lot of griping right now over the tax load people are carrying. Do you favor extending the ten percent surtax?

Senator MANSFIELD. Reluctantly, yes, but only on the basis of what I said previously,

that there should be tied with it a five to six billion dollar reduction in expenditures and a \$10 to \$12 billion reduction in appropriations.

Mr. SHAFER. In connection with that your colleague, Senator Teddy Kennedy, has suggested tying tax reform to the extension of a surtax.

Senator MANSFIELD. A good idea.

Mr. SHAFER. Well, what loopholes would you like to see plugged? I understand you are against plugging the 27½ percent oil depletion allowance.

Senator MANSFIELD. That is correct. I come from an oil-producing state. But I would point out that there are a number—150 I believe is the figure—of people who earn one million dollars or more a year who pay no income taxes. What I would like to see is tax reforms made in all areas and at the same time an increase in the exemption from \$600 per person which was put in in 1914, and is of no significance today, to at least \$1,000 or \$1200.

Mr. SHAFER. But is there time for Congress to attach tax reforms to the extension of the surtax, which expires on June 30?

Senator MANSFIELD. Yes. We can do it at any time if we get the proper measure before us, at least as far as the Senate is concerned, even though tax measures must originate in the House.

Mr. MONROE. We have less than three minutes, which may mean a lot of room for questions with Senator Mansfield's short, snappy answers.

Mr. FINNEY. Senator, as you mentioned earlier, one of the Minuteman bases that is going to be protected is out in your home state. I wonder what you are hearing from back home. Are you getting any pressure from this military-industrial-union complex to go ahead with this system?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, some chambers of commerce, some bankers, some contractors are for it, but the people, on the basis of what I have heard to this date, are not for it.

Mr. FINNEY. Thus far this whole ABM debate has really been a very bipartisan thing. The partisan element hasn't come into it. But as you know, Senator Kennedy is sponsoring a book on this issue which will be, presumably, against the ABM deployment.

Is there a danger, here, of a collision or confrontation in a personal political sense developing between Senator Kennedy and the Nixon administration?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, there is always that danger, Senator Kennedy being who he is and President Nixon being where he is, but I would hope most devoutly that this would not develop into a partisan issue because it is too big for that and it is the welfare of the country that ought to come ahead of the welfare or the success of a party.

Mr. THEIS. Senator, as a former college professor and who, if he had his druthers, might want to go back sometime, how would you deal with the present campus unrest?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, I believe in demonstrations. I believe in dissent because it is guaranteed under the Constitution, but I do not believe in violence, nor in license, and I think that a mini-minority of the students in college, today, are putting a great blot on the image of the great majority of the students. After all a student is a transitory person going through a college just like a Senator is a transitory person going through Congress. It is the institution which counts. It is the institution which must survive and if these people cannot obey the laws of the land then I think the question of suspension should be given serious consideration, as well as the question of expulsion. The educational institution must live.

Mr. THEIS. That is a local decision but would you have federal funds going to stu-

dents withdrawn if they are either expelled or convicted of a serious offense—

Senator MANSFIELD. That decision has been made because the Congress passed a law last year which leaves it up to the discretion of the local administrators, the presidents or the chancellors or whatnot. They have not done anything in that respect. They say there is a Constitutional question involved. I say take it to the courts and find out.

Mr. THEIS. You would not see the present law changed?

Senator MANSFIELD. No.

Mr. SPIVAK. Senator, do you think inflation is going to be halted in this country short of wage and price controls?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, I felt so a long time ago, I recommended to President Johnson as long ago as three years ago that we ought to seriously consider the imposition of wage and price controls to combat inflation and also the restoration of Regulation-W, which would cut down on credit buying which amounts to about \$130 billion in this nation, today.

Mr. MONROE. I am sorry to interrupt, but our time is up. Thank you, Senator Mansfield, for being with us today on "Meet the Press."

COMMITTEE MEETINGS DURING SENATE SESSION

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all committees be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate today.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.