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INTERVIEW OF SENATOR MANSFIELD ON ABC'S "ISSUES AND ANSWERS" TELEVISION PROGRAM

Mr. MANSFIELD, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the transcript of a television interview which I had on ABC's "Issues and Answers" on Sunday, February 1, 1970.

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

ISSUES AND ANSWERS, FEBRUARY 1, 1970

Guest: Hon. MIKE MANSFIELD, Democrat, of Montana, Senate Majority Leader.

Interviewed by: John Scali, ABC State Department Correspondent; Bob Clark, ABC Capitol Hill Correspondent.

Mr. SCALI. Senator Mansfield, welcome to "Issues and Answers."

Senator MANSFIELD. Thank you.

Mr. SCALI. Yesterday you denounced the Nixon Administration's plans to expand the antiballistic missile defense system and said that another great debate is in the offing. Won't this wind up as a rehash of the debate that you and other opponents lost after 29 days of argument and counter-argument last year?

Senator MANSFIELD. Let me say "denounce" is a pretty harsh word. We haven't seen the details yet. What I want to see is a bill of particulars and I want to see also whether or not the questions which were in our minds last year have been answered to our satisfaction.

I would point out that as far as the two sites in Montana and North Dakota are concerned, they are under way. They were agreed to on the basis of a 50-50 vote in the Senate and an overwhelming vote in the House, so they will go ahead. It is the expansion beyond that which disturbs me, plus the fact that the questions which were raised last year will be raised again this year.

For example, it is our information that the radar system is highly vulnerable and if it is hit the whole ABM system dependent on the radar will be knocked out. We are not as yet anywhere near certain that the computer system is reliable and accurate and we have some questions about the shell of the Spartan which indicates on the basis of what the scientists tell us that it would be a little slow, unless it has been corrected in meeting an incoming missile.

May I say that as far as the ABM is concerned that no one in the Senate that I know of is against it if it is needed, reliable and accurate. If we are going to go into this area, then I think we better face all the facts, recognize it is going to cost tens of billions of dollars. On the basis of what little I know about the new proposals which will be made, it seems to me to be a combination of the Safeguard and Sentinel systems and the Sentinel system was supposedly discarded last year.

Mr. SCALI. Senator, you said the expanded ABM system might cost as much as \$50 billion.

Senator MANSFIELD. That is correct.

Mr. SCALI. A figure which I think is far higher than any administration spokesman

has put on it. Where do you get that figure and how do you support it?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, I would point out that it was estimated that the Sentinel system itself would cost somewhere in that vicinity, if not more, and if we are getting a combination, it appears to me that with the cost increase which must be added to it that it would come at least to that figure if you put in the whole system because, remember, it takes in Northwest Washington state, southern New England, Texas, the Southeastern part of the United States, Michigan, two sites in California, Washington, D.C. and perhaps eventually sites in Alaska and Hawaii. Those last two have not been mentioned, however.

May I say also that the present estimates for the hard point missile systems in Montana and North Dakota have already far exceeded the original estimates.

Mr. CLARK. Well, Senator, do you think if the President had told Congress last year that the ABM system was needed for defense of American cities rather than for the very limited protective system that was submitted to Congress for our own antimissile sites, that he would have won that big Senate battle which, of course, he won by only one vote?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, he didn't win it by one vote really because it was a stand-off and an amendment having to do with any particular to a bill fails because of—

Mr. CLARK. The margin was essentially one vote.

Senator MANSFIELD. The margin was essentially one vote.

I don't know. I would imagine that the results would have been the same whether it was a Sentinel system or a Safeguard system.

Mr. CLARK. There were two or three Senators at least—Senator Scott was one who had indicated some reservations about the system but then swung the other direction when the President proposed only the very limited system. You don't think some people who voted with the President last year might not be now pulled back the other way?

Senator MANSFIELD. That I couldn't say because this matter was in effect just sprung on us. I had only read speculative reports that there would be an expansion of the present system. Those reports were denied and then the President, of course, made it official in his press conference the other night.

Mr. CLARK. Do you see anything that has happened in the past year in the conduct of Red China, that would justify the shift in the Administration's position to point that anti-missile system now at China rather than just protecting our own missile sites?

Senator MANSFIELD. I have no access to such information, though I am quite certain the President undoubtedly has. There certainly can't be any question but that the Chinese are going ahead with their missile system. How good it is, how effective it is, whether it is an IRBM or an ICBM, I do not know at the present time—well, I do know they at least have the IRBM's, but whether they have developed an ICBM capacity, I am not in a position to state. But I do recall that the President last year, in giving one of his reasons for turning down the Sentinel System, said that he couldn't buy the idea that this system was being set up for use against a possible Chinese threat.

Mr. SCALI. Senator, I gather from what you say that the President's revised plans come as somewhat of a surprise to you. You talk with him and meet with him frequently. Were you consulted in advance at all? Did you discuss this?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, and I wouldn't expect to be, but in all fairness I must say the President indicated that he had talked it over with the National Security Council before he made his announcement. He also said

that Mr. Laird would make an announcement within 30 days. I would anticipate that he would call down the joint leadership and other appropriate Members of the Congress to discuss with them what his plans are, just as he did last year.

Mr. SCALI. Senator, as an expert on Asia, you appraised President Nixon's doctrine which would force the Asians to rely more on their own manpower while we hold a nuclear umbrella over their heads for safety, aren't the opponents of this new plan making it impossible to carry out that doctrine by making the United States vulnerable to a sudden attack by Red China.

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I don't think so because I don't think we are vulnerable at this time to a sudden attack by Communist China and I believe the President made it very clear in his press conference that this was somewhere in the future, in the seventies.

Mr. SCALI. Well, in the future, aren't you in effect denying the President the kind of safety that is needed to protect our own missiles while we hold a nuclear umbrella over the heads of our allies?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I wouldn't say so because as I have indicated, nobody is against the ABM if it is reliable, if it is accurate. Everybody in the Senate so far as I know is in favor of continued research and development, but I would hate to see a system put in which, if necessary to be used, couldn't be effective.

Mr. CLARK. Senator, if we can explore just a bit more the President's plans to expand this anti-missile system to protect the country against the possibility of a surprise attack by Red China, does this get to the heart of the new Nixon doctrine for Asia? In other words, you, in supporting this doctrine, if as we pull American troops out of Asia we have to extend a nuclear umbrella or maintain a nuclear umbrella over our Asian allies, is it the necessary to go to an anti-missile system in this country, no matter what the cost? Is this part of the price of the Nixon doctrine?

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, if it is necessary, the cost is of no significance. If it has to be done, it will be done, and it should be done. But if it is going to be done, it ought to be done on an accurate and reliable basis. The money shouldn't be wasted. There shouldn't be an overcost in the program. There is in the present ABM program and as I have been informed, and I think quite accurately by the GAO, there is at the present time a 20.8 billion dollar over-cost on weaponry contracts which have been let by the Department of Defense.

Now, I must say that practically all, if not all of these contracts had been let under a previous Administration and I think that Mr. Laird is doing a pretty good job in trying to correct some of these deficiencies.

Mr. SCALI. Senator, you mentioned the reliability several times. Is there any reason for you to believe that this system is less reliable now than it was when you voted on it last year?

Senator MANSFIELD. That is one of the questions we have to ask. We want to find out what has been done in the meantime to make the computers more reliable, to make the radar screens less vulnerable, and to see what has been done about the Spartan missiles as far as their speed capacity is concerned.

Mr. SCALI. Do you think that disclosure of these plans at this time will in any way jeopardize the beginning of the dialogue with Red China which the Nixon Administration has set up after so much effort?

Senator MANSFIELD. That is one of the things which worries me because we have the SALT talks going on which seek to bring about a diminution in the amount of armaments, missiles and other weapons of destruction which we are both developing, and

we both have enough to obliterate the world ten times over. We are probably on the verge of a mad momentum. I don't know what is going to happen if we keep on this way because if we keep on building weapons, someday you are going to use them and someday the people of the world are going to suffer.

Mr. CLARK. Senator, we have heard a great deal of talk from the Democrats in recent months about reordering national priorities. Now what happens to national priorities and how much we set aside to spend for pollution or health or education, if you get into an extremely costly program of anti-missile defense which you say is all right with you as long as the President in effect can prove that it is needed.

Senator MANSFIELD. Then priorities go out the window. What I want to see is a balance between our security needs and our domestic needs, and balance is the key word. It won't do us any good to have the best security system in the world if we have uneasiness, discontent, in some instances rebellion, at home. What we have to do is to have a good security system and we have to face up to the problems of pollution, the needs of the cities, the needs of our people here at home. Both of them must go together.

Mr. SCALI. Do you think the President is attaching too high a priority to defense, then, Senator?

Senator MANSFIELD. I think so, but I must admit that he has more information available to him than I have but we have been going helter skelter in the spending of defense funds and only in the past year or so has the Congress and especially the Senate been raising questions and trying to draw back on some of those over-costs, some of these ill-conceived contracts and some of these weapons which have proved useless but on which billions of dollars have been spent.

Mr. CLARK. There is, Senator, a mounting impression in Washington that Democrats are allowing the President to preempt the field in the critical areas of priorities, in thinking of pollution and health and welfare programs, even draft reform where the President moved in at the last minute in the last Congress.

Are Democrats being out-manuevered by a President who is a wiler politician than they expected in the White House?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I don't think so, and after all it is the welfare of the nation, the welfare of the people which must always come first. It isn't a matter of being politically astute or trying to take political advantage. It is a matter of doing what you can for the country as a whole and if it affects you personally and you lose, that is immaterial. The country must come first always.

Mr. CLARK. Scotty Reston, writing this last week in the New York Times, referred to you as a saint and he said a cooperative saint.

Senator MANSFIELD. He doesn't know me very well.

Mr. CLARK. But his point seemed to be that you were sometimes a little too gentle with the administration. Do you find your saintliness a handicap in the sort of rough partisan politics that some Democrats—

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, let me say I must disclaim the appellation of the saint. I am not a saint. I am just an ordinary human being trying to do the best he can and not succeeding very well, but trying.

I don't care much—I am not a political animal, really. I don't believe in going for the jugular. I believe in cooperating and accommodating and then let the chips fall where they may.

The thing that always counts with me is the welfare of my state and my country. If you don't have that, if you don't look at it in that way, you are being pretty selfish, pretty narrow-minded and not in a position to achieve much in the way of results.

Mr. SCALI. Senator, you called the President's State of the Union Address the other day hopeful and impressive—

Senator MANSFIELD. But general.

Mr. SCALI. A spokesman for the Democratic National Committee Policy Council labeled it fuzzy, misleading and partly inaccurate.

Now, who are the voters supposed to believe? Where is the unified voice for the Democrats?

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, the Democrats have never had a unified voice. If you expect that of us, you are expecting the impossible. But we survive and as far as whom the people should believe, that is up to them.

Mr. CLARK. Vice President Agnew said today on another program that the Democrats don't seem to be a cohesive force in this election year.

Senator MANSFIELD. Neither do the Republicans, so it works both ways.

Mr. CLARK. You wouldn't be concerned about the lack of a coordinated, cohesive drive behind the Democrats to show the voters where the party stands in this rather crucial election?

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, no. I think our divisiveness is our strength.

Mr. SCALI. Senator, a federal judge has just given the nation a ten-day reprieve from a coast to coast railway crisis. Does Congress plan to act now to avert another crisis in just ten days from today?

Senator MANSFIELD. Not at this moment, but any proposals the President wishes to send to us, we will be glad to receive and consider.

Mr. SCALI. Do you believe the President should do more than he has done to avert a new crisis?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, that is up to him. He seems to be loath to become involved in these labor disputes, which I think is a mistake. He deplores jawboning, but what have you got to lose by trying to talk these people into an agreement? And I think if this thing goes into effect, as it well might—it almost did yesterday—that the President will have to involve himself some way, and should.

Mr. CLARK. You feel then that a little jawboning by the President might be helpful in this critical period of—

Senator MANSFIELD. I think so. It wouldn't hurt.

Mr. SCALI. There is still considerable vocal opposition to Judge Carswell's nomination among some Senate Democrats. Have you decided whether you will vote to approve him and do you think Mr. Nixon will win this time?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I haven't decided because I think any nominee of any President is entitled to have the courtesy of having the hearings read and those hearings are continuing. I will read the hearings with great interest, then I will make up my mind.

Mr. CLARK. Senator, you said after the Senate's rejection last year of Judge Haynsworth that from now on all judicial nominations and other important nominations should be subjected to very intensive scrutiny by the Senate.

Senator MANSFIELD. That is correct.

Mr. CLARK. Do you think that process has been completed by the Senate in this case, in the case of Judge Carswell?

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, no, because the hearings are still going on, and I would assume they will not be completed for at least a week more, maybe longer, and then we will have to give due consideration to the findings of the committee when the nomination is reported out.

Mr. SCALI. Senator Mansfield, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is due to begin a new round of public hearings this week on Vietnam even though the Nixon Administration has expressed doubt that they can serve a useful purpose.

What useful purpose do you think they can serve at this time?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, first, let me say that the hearings are not necessarily on Vietnam. There are a number of resolutions which have been introduced by Senators in the first session of the 91st Congress. They have been held over. The Foreign Relations Committee has held back because of courtesy to the President, and the position in which he finds himself, but these Senators who have introduced resolutions are entitled to be heard and they will be heard.

Mr. CLARK. I believe, Senator Mansfield, the only one of the resolutions before the committee that you have signed is one generally supporting the President's Vietnam policy. Are you going to support any of the other resolutions that they will be examining—

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, yes, I am a co-sponsor of the Mathias resolution which calls for a reassessment and a reevaluation of the Tonkin Gulf, the Formosa resolution, the Mid-East resolution and any other extraordinary powers which have been given to the President since the end of the Korean War.

Mr. CLARK. Right. I meant the other specific plans for Vietnam withdrawal, and there are a number of those that are going to be examined.

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I think the President is doing the best he can in the light of the circumstances which confront him. I wish he could move faster. I am sure he wishes the same, but at least he is getting us out. That is the main word, out, and we aren't going in and up, as was the case—

Mr. CLARK. And you are happy with the present—

Senator MANSFIELD. Not happy, but it is a step in the right direction. I wish it could be faster.

Mr. SCALI. What do you think of the suggestion that the President announce a firm timetable for withdrawal and use this as a possible way to break through the deadlocked talks in Paris?

Senator MANSFIELD. Not at this moment. I don't believe that would be worthwhile because you have to allow the President a certain amount of flexibility and freedom.

Mr. CLARK. Senator, if we can talk politics for just a moment, would you agree that the Democrats have failed thus far to build up any single stand-out candidate who can take on Mr. Nixon in 1972?

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, no, I think as of now Mr. Muskie is the leading contender and he is a man of great integrity, dignity and knowledge.

Mr. CLARK. How wide do you feel that lead is?

Senator MANSFIELD. I would say as of the moment the President would be in the lead, but you asked about a candidate and I think we have one.

Mr. CLARK. I meant how wide do you think Senator Muskie's lead would be over other Democratic candidates?

Senator MANSFIELD. At the moment quite wide.

Mr. SCALI. Senator, Ambassador Sargent Shriver has been in Maryland in the past few days checking on prospects that he would run for Governor of Maryland. Would you like to see him run for Governor of Maryland?

Senator MANSFIELD. I never interfere in state politics.

Mr. SCALI. Do you see Sargent Shriver as a potential national leader?

Senator MANSFIELD. In time, yes.

Mr. CLARK. If we can get by for just a moment to that wide lead of Senator Muskie, what does this do to people like Hubert Humphrey who is making motions like he might be interested in having another go?

Senator MANSFIELD. Hubert may come back but you have to remember he has lost his

platform and the University of Minnesota and MacAlester College just isn't big enough to give him the national publicity which he should receive.

Ed Muskie has the platform. He is using it judiciously. He isn't pushing himself too far. When Hubert comes back to the Senate, as I assume he will, then, of course, he will have that platform. The picture then might change.

Mr. CLARK. You haven't mentioned any names other than Senator Muskie. Are there any others that you think are in the running?

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, yes. There is Senator McGovern, who has indicated an interest. There is Senator Harris, who has indicated likewise, and there will be others from time to time. There always are.

Mr. SCALI. Doesn't President Nixon look unbeatable right now?

Senator MANSFIELD. Well, he looks like he is in the lead.

Mr. CLARK. Senator, if we can move back into the foreign policy area for a while, the French Government has announced the sale of 110 or so Mirage fighters to the Libyan Government and the State Department has expressed concern on this. Are you at all upset?

Senator MANSFIELD. No, I think we have to just roll along with these things as they happen and do the best we can to try and maintain some degree of equilibrium in the Middle East to do what we can to bring the Israelis and the Arabs together, if that is possible, but in the meantime to work together with the other powers to see if we can't find some ways and means of preventing a holocaust in that area.

Mr. SCALI. Some of your colleagues believe that Mr. Nixon's effort to establish a more even-handed policy in the Middle East winds up helping the Arabs more than the Israelis. Do I take it that you disagree with that?

Senator MANSFIELD. I would think that the President is trying to work his way right through the middle of the difficulty which exists in that area, to move with an even hand. He has indicated that he intends to give some additional help to Israel based, I believe, on the visit of Golda Meir some weeks ago, plus previous commitments made by the previous administration. But it is a difficult area and I can understand the position in which the President finds himself. He is trying to find a way out. I would hope it would be possible for the Arabs and the Israelis to get together, so that the Israeli know-how could be used to help the Middle East and this matter could be done away with as far as the continuing uneasiness is concerned. Together the Arabs and Israelis could do great things; apart, there is nothing but trouble.

Mr. CLARK. In the eyes of the Israelis, Senator Mansfield, an even handed policy is an effort by the big powers to impose a solution for peace in the Middle East.

Senator MANSFIELD. No; I don't think we can impose a peace. All we can do is use our good offices and hope that out of that will come some sort of a settlement which will be as satisfactory as possible to both. You can't achieve a settlement, a complete settlement which will be satisfactory to one or the other.

Mr. CLARK. Some Democrats, including former Vice President Humphrey, have been very critical of the Administration's plans for the Middle East. Again, with this same line that it is taking an anti-Israeli turn, you disagree, I take it, with Mr. Humphrey?

Senator MANSFIELD. I don't think that is the Administration's viewpoint at all. If anything, I would say it is quite sympathetic towards Israel and as a matter of fact Israel is getting definite military assistance from this country in the form of planes and the like.

Mr. SCALI. Senator Mansfield, were you disturbed at all that Under Secretary of State

Richardson has shot down your suggestion that we begin to withdraw some of the 310,000 American troops that we still have in Europe?

Senator MANSFIELD. Not at all. As a matter of fact, I welcomed what he had to say in Chicago. It marks the beginning of a dialogue. There are two sides to the question. I would point out that in reality as far as a "Sense of the Senate" resolution is concerned, we already have the votes because there are 51 cosponsors of the resolution which seeks to bring about a substantial withdrawal of U.S. troops from Europe, who number at the present time, counting dependents something of the order of 600,000, and who comprise a balance of payments drain, a gold drain which extends into the billions of dollars.

Mr. SCALI. Mr. Richardson pointed out that studies have indicated that flying American troops to Western Europe in time of emergency instead of keeping them there would not be very efficient, that by the time the men were flown there, too much time might have elapsed and they might not be very effective.

Senator MANSFIELD. He has a point there, but he is thinking in terms of conventional warfare. In my opinion if a showdown ever comes in Europe, it won't be settled by means of conventional Armies, it will be settled on a nuclear basis.

Mr. CLARK. We don't want to end this program on too ponderous a note, Senator Mansfield, but we do want to solicit your feelings on the question that perhaps provoked more comment than any other in the Capitol this past week. What do you think about those new formal uniforms for the White House police?

Senator MANSFIELD. Not much.

Mr. CLARK. Do you think that the Senate might follow suit and have a Congressional Guard of Honor?

Senator MANSFIELD. Heaven forbid.

Mr. CLARK. Do you see this, even in a light way, as a little tactical mistake by the White House?

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, well, these things happen.

Mr. CLARK. You are not disturbed enough about it to propose that some new uniform be designed?

Senator MANSFIELD. Oh, no, not at all. I think there have been too many changes of uniforms in the White House already under this Administration.

Mr. CLARK. Senator, I am sorry, our time is running out. We have covered a lot of territory today and it has been a great pleasure having you with us on ISSUES AND ANSWERS.

Senator MANSFIELD. Thank you very much.