

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Mike Mansfield Speeches, Statements and Interviews

Mike Mansfield Papers

10-26-1971

Carolina Forum - University of North Carolina

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Mansfield, Mike 1903-2001, "Carolina Forum - University of North Carolina" (1971). *Mike Mansfield Speeches, Statements and Interviews*. 1014.

https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches/1014

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Mike Mansfield Papers at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mike Mansfield Speeches, Statements and Interviews by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY A.M.'s

REMARKS OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

at the

CAROLINA FORUM, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1971 - 8:00 p.m., e.d.s.t.

NEW APPROACHES TO FOREIGN RELATIONS

It may well be recorded in the future that the whole international order shifted and reorganized itself in a short span of time in the early 1970's. The accelerating transition is evident for those of us who are living through today's changes. What cannot be foreseen is what the shift portends. Does it lead to a new era of confrontation or toward a new plateau of international stability? How the die is cast depends heavily on the wisdom which we in the United States bring to our understanding of our times.

At the outset, I would point to several manifestations of the current transition in the world and the responses to them in the nation's foreign policy. The most immediate, of course, is the President's new economic program. Twenty-five years of over-extension has stretched the U. S. economy to the breaking point. In what amounted to a financial crisis, the President combined a de facto devaluation of the dollar and a

blanket increase in import duties with a domestic freeze of wages and prices.

That something had to give in the way the U. S. government was managing the nation's financial affairs was evident for a long time. When the moves came, however, it is understandable that they caused great distress abroad. What is feared elsewhere, notably in Europe and Japan, is not so much the moves themselves but what they could portend. At stake are the export markets in the United States and, hence, the shrinking of a great deal of international purchasing power.

It is understandable, in the circumstances that the search for new economic alignments has intensified. The United Kingdom is moving, for example, toward the European Economic Community, now, with the support of France. Germany, in fact the whole of Western Europe, is tending toward closer commercial relationships with Eastern Europe. For its part, the Soviet Union seems eager to facilitate this process through political stabilization. Thus, the legitimacy of West Berlin as an

appendage of West Germany has been acknowledged and the Soviet government is pressing for agreement to legalize the territorial changes in Eastern Europe after World War II, including the division of Germany. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the German Chancellor Willy Brandt, which, in my judgment, is well deserved, traces in major part to the impetus that he has given to these developments. The United States is acquiescing, in the new trends in Europe, at a pace, however, which seems sometimes as reluctant as it is belated, and one would hope that the President's planned visit to Moscow represents an acceleration of the adjustment.

U. S. policies are in transition, too, with regard to the Far East. It seems to me, we may have learned, at last in Viet Nam, the folly of extending ideological fears and great power animosities into the inner conflicts of underdeveloped regions. The Vietnamese war has been drained of

meaning for this nation. It is revealed, now, as a tragic waste, a revelation that is reflected in the President's program of phased troop withdrawals. In that sense, the war is over for this nation. There is left in Southeast Asia, however, the vestige of the mistakes of the past which continue to exact a toll of senseless death and devastation. One way or another-- by the action of the President or the Congress or by both-- that vestige must and will be removed.

Perhaps, an end to the Indochinese involvement will be facilitated by the re-awakening of the Sino-U. S. relationship. In any event, China seems to be moving out of a phase of isolation into one of more active participation in world affairs. The effect of this transition and the U. S. response to it may well be causing internal distress in China, the Soviet Union, in Japan and Taiwan and, undoubtedly, new thoughts in all of them.

There is a point of central significance in these and similar phenomena. The lingering legacies of World War II are being liquidated in a massive readjustment. It is a cataclysmic process, analogous to the geological adjustments

of the earth's crust when pent-up stresses give way along fault lines to produce a new equilibrium. The international upheaval, like its geological counterpart, causes sharp reverberations which are widespread and unsettling.

What is involved in the adjustments, is, in part, the removal of certain legal straitjackets, self-imposed, which may come to be regarded, someday, as having been extended exercises in ideological rigidity and national pride. An example is the prolonged diplomacy of non-recognition in which we chose to engage after World War II. We refused to countenance the Soviet enforced territorial changes in Eastern Europe or the consequences of the Chinese Revolution. For what seemed good and ample reasons at the time, it was felt necessary to cling to the pre-war territorial status quo in Europe, particularly with regard to Germany, and the pre-revolutionary political status quo for China. We are coming to realize, I believe, that such policies extended indefinitely are self-defeating and contrary to this nation's best interests. That is usually the

case with policies based on dead fictions as opposed to living circumstances.

The changes in the legal perspective of our policies are over-shadowed for the moment by the adjustments which seek to accommodate to contemporary economic realities. In general, these adjustments reflect the fact that the United States, having served in a variety of roles, as the world's chief banker, policeman, storekeeper and consumer, as well as the chief pioneer in outer space, has now approached the limits of its economic capacity and that some of the burdens and the "firsts" have to be redistributed. At last reports, I understand, we had even abandoned the efforts of the cultural warriors to "catch up" and surpass the Russians in the classical ballet.

Current adjustments in our international position have concentrated more heavily on the commercial-financial elements than on certain other over-extended roles abroad, which I shall discuss shortly. However, I would like to take a moment to consider at this point what has occurred under the

President's new economic program. The economic power of the United States has been preeminent in the world for the past quarter century. U. S. markets have absorbed vast quantities of goods from other nations and sent abroad even greater quantities. This nation has led world policy, notably in the so-called Kennedy round of tariff negotiations, into an era of vastly expanded international trade through the reciprocal removal of trade barriers.

At the same time, the U. S. has been the central banker, of the international payments system. Settling of accounts between nations has been based for a quarter of a century on the dollar and on its convertibility into gold. The system worked well as long as other nations were prepared to hold dollars in their reserves or had free access to U. S. gold. Neither of these conditions remains operative at this time. So a search for new devices to facilitate financial exchange is underway. In recent international conferences, there have been proposals for the realignments of values among the various

currencies, all acknowledging a lessening of the relative value of the dollar. There have also been proposals for devising an international substitute for the dollar as the central element in the international payments system.

Proposals of this sort reflect, in my judgment, both a healthy decline in the economic dependency of others on the United States as well as an unhealthy loss of confidence in the stability of the United States economic structure. Clearly, the "temporary" surtax on imports causes the deepest concern abroad. It ought to be of similar concern on our part. In my judgment, the curtailment of international trade which is implicit in this measure is not the best way, in terms of the interests of the people of this nation, to bring international payments into better balance. If, for no other reason, the new import levy, by raising the price of foreign goods, creates a predisposition to higher prices for similar goods within the United States.

Far more important, we should not lose sight of the fact that the era of expanding international trade which we have fostered for two decades may go down as one of the truly positive advances in international relations in the 20th century. It has stimulated a highly useful economic exchange that has strengthened the fabric of world stability. It has served to underwrite, too, a long period of mutual economic well-being and cultural enrichment.

Necessary though they may be, the new economic policies are, at best, temporary expedients. Without indulging, I hope, in excessive hindsight, I am bound to say that the adjustments might have been easier for us and all the world, had we faced up to our predicament at an earlier date and proceeded in a more measured way to negotiate the necessary relief.

So far, the other principal trading nations have eschewed acts of reprisal. That unfortunate possibility, however, does exist and on the basis of very recent reports has now been

expressed for the first time by a reciprocal tariff increase by Denmark. That is a small beginning. Should there be a trade war, it would unravel the strands of a beneficial interdependence which have been woven so carefully over the past two decades.

In the circumstances, I endorse fully the President's stress on the temporary nature of the surtax and his emphatic opposition to a return to economic isolationism. The possibility of an inadvertant slide in that direction, however, is not to be overlooked. To avoid it, it seems to me that we must take more fundamental steps to redress the economic balance than are contained in the New Economic Policy.

This brings us to the non-commercial aspects of the nation's international economic difficulties. Our present problem of balance of payments is not so much one of buying too much and selling too little of goods and services in international commerce; the fact is that, for years, we have sold a great deal more than we have bought. Rather, the difficulty arises,

in major part, from the spending of vast amounts of public funds in order to maintain an outmoded military-diplomatic position in the world. Dollars spent abroad to underwrite that position flow overseas just as surely as those which go for imports of goods from other nations. Dollars spent at home to backstop that position contribute just as certainly to the inflationary pressures as any other non-productive expenditure in the federal budget.

In my judgment, we are paying exorbitantly--in billions of dollars--to sustain foreign policies and practices which are simply out of date and which no longer have much to do with the security and welfare of the people of the nation. Like other legacies of World War II, these policies and practices are in urgent need of revision.

There is no greater urgency than the liquidation of the war in Viet Nam. Ending the war is the most compelling business of this nation. It is obviously not only a matter of cost; before all else, Viet Nam is a vast human tragedy which

tears at the fibers of the nation's cohesion. Nevertheless, Viet Nam is also a root cause of the nation's present economic difficulties. What is involved is an astronomical levy of government expenditure on the nation's economy in order to finance the war, to date, something in the neighborhood of \$130 billion. This expenditure has burdened the productive economy at home with a heavy surcharge in taxes and inflation, hence, reducing the competitive position of the nation's commerce in the world. A great deal of it, moreover, has been spent abroad, contributing directly to the negative balance of payments.

In two and a half years, it should be noted, the President has brought about a significant reduction of the cost of the involvement in Viet Nam. Prolonged as the reduction has been, it is all to the good. It is to be hoped, however, that what is being attempted is not simply a gradual tapering off of the war to a forgotten, Korean-type residue. In Viet Nam, that would still involve, for many years, in my judgment,

continuing expenditures of billions in aid to the Saigon government as well as the maintenance of U. S. forces in coastal enclaves in order to shore up a regime with few roots in its own people. It would be a continuation of a mistaken war by other means. It would be a way of being involved without seeming to be involved. Even if it were possible to attain, it would be a solution that is ill-suited to the needs of either Viet Nam or the United States.

The Senate has tried to establish a date certain for a total withdrawal of U. S. forces as the policy of this nation. Since definite assurances do not yet exist on this point--and I might say that the outright opposition of the Executive Branch on this matter only leads to apprehensions as to what the long range intentions really are--it can be expected that the matter will be pressed in the Congress; it will be pressed again and again until the involvement on the Southeast Asian Mainland ends, lock, stock and barrel. As elusive as it has

seemed, the day must and will come when the last U. S. soldier boards the last troop carrier, the last helicopter lifts off Vietnamese soil, and the last U. S. troop ship leaves the Vietnamese coast.

When we leave Indochina, we will have closed the book on military involvement on the Asian mainland. It would not be in this nation's interest, however, to close our eyes to what transpires on the other side of the Pacific. It is time to ask ourselves now what will remain, not just in Viet Nam but in all of East Asia, not in terms of the devastation and disruption which is self-evident but in terms of new policies which will safeguard this nation's interest and contribute more effectively to peace in the years ahead.

It has seemed to me that the Nixon Doctrine might contain guiding principles in this respect. In my judgment, that will not be the case unless the Doctrine means the complete termination of U. S. military involvement everywhere

on the Asian Mainland. It will not be the case unless the Doctrine means an end to the practice of maintaining quasi-dependencies of the United States in Southeast Asia.

In short, the high purposes of the Nixon Doctrine will be ill-served if it is bent in practice to sanction a continuing intervention, direct or indirect, in the inner affairs of Asian peoples.

On the other hand, the Doctrine will have constructive meaning for the years ahead, if it implies as I believe it implies, a new era of shared responsibility, not only in Asia but throughout the world. It will have constructive meaning if it both preaches and practices a new relationship with other nations. It will have that meaning if it calls for "no more Viet Nams" and "no more Cambodias" anywhere in the world.

In my judgment, international circumstances neither warrant nor permit, as in the past, the pursuit of peace by the exercise of the predominant effort of the United States. The New

Economic Policy should make clear to all that we are headed down the road to national debilitation if we continue to pursue peace on that basis.

What, then, of the future of U. S. policy in the Western Pacific? The answer, it seems to me, is a clearer and cleaner perception of our national interests in the Western Pacific and an attempt to serve them by a new and flexible system of relationships. Let me say that, as a starter, I fully support the initiatives of the Administration in seeking to build a contact of civility with Mainland China. This process of diplomatic bridge-building, however, ought not to proceed in isolation. It should not lead us to by-pass other anchor-stones which have already been set in place. In this connection, it should be noted that the U. S. approach to Peking burst on the Japanese government with disturbing suddenness. It came at a time when Japan already was in a sensitive position due to a special vulnerability to this nation's new economic

policies as well as to the contraction of our military projection in Southeast Asia.

In any event, the emergence of China from a period of isolation does seem to me to open new approaches to Pacific security by the avenue of negotiations. One would hope, for example, in the not too distant future, for quadripartite discussions between China, Japan, the Soviet Union and the United States. Such discussions could do much to allay unwarranted fears and establish a basis for adjusting national interests. They could provide insights into vital questions involving the internal situation in China, including the status of Taiwan, into the anxieties and intentions of the Soviet Union in the Western Pacific, into the economic needs not only of Japan and the U. S. but of all four nations, and into the prospects for curbing nuclear developments in Asia. Of immediate importance, quadripartite

discussions might provide a vehicle for stabilizing and restoring the Indochina peninsula in the post-war era. Any regional security arrangements which might ensue therefrom could be dovetailed with a progressive reduction in the U. S. military presence around the rim of Asia over the next few years.

In Europe there is also a need to cut outmoded military commitments by new security arrangements, the door to which has now been opened by West Germany and the Soviet Union. Insofar as this nation is concerned, it is long past the time to lighten the archaic burdens of NATO. Two decades ago, the United States joined the nations of Western Europe in a common commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty. The Treaty remains pertinent today, but the bureaucratic organization--NATO--which has grown up under the Treaty corresponds not so much to contemporary circumstances in Europe but to those which existed in Europe before many of you were born.

At that time, the free societies of Western Europe were heavily dependent on the United States and the fear of Communist totalitarian takeovers was great. A war was raging in Korea. It was a time of trouble, of great international uncertainty.

That is not the scene today. Against what is now visible-- a prosperous, stable Western Europe and a growing contact with Eastern Europe, NATO is over-staffed, over-manned, over-officered and over-financed by this nation.

Of the budget of the Department of Defense, about \$14 billion is estimated to be traceable to NATO. Over a half-million American servicemen and dependents are still consigned to Europe. That is an immense diversion of our resources. Yet, the basic question of NATO is not cost. If a commitment of that magnitude were essential for the security of the nation and the stability of this nation's peace, of course, it should be made. More to the point, however, is whether a huge U. S. deployment in Europe continues to have relevance a quarter of a century after World WarII.

In this connection, I returned just a month ago from a series of consultations in a number of nations in Western Europe. The overwhelming mood there is that of detente and peace; it is not of confrontation and war. The emphasis is on reconciliation; it is on intra-European commerce, technological exchange, travel and other cultural interchange. It is not on military power or fear of military conflict. Only in NATO circles are the games of war still played with any sense of expectancy or conviction in Western Europe.

Let me reiterate my belief that we do need the North Atlantic Treaty and Alliance. We do need to preserve the structure of NATO as an element-in-being of western defense and unity. But I also believe the organization can be trimmed to a streamlined standby force and our proportionate role can be reduced. I am persuaded that that can be done without additional danger to our security or the stability of peace in Europe and with great benefit to the nation's well-being. I am persuaded, too, that unless it is done soon, Western unity may very well give way under the weight of its anachronisms.

There is a basic lesson in the excesses of policy in Europe and Asia of the past decade or more. It should be recognized and applied to other areas of the world. It is this: Military and other national power calcified around rigid foreign policies tends to be not only wasteful but dangerous to the nation's future. We must become extremely wary of all commitments of military assistance and all forms of foreign aid in areas of instability abroad where our national interests are not wholly clear or clearly at stake.

That applies with special relevance today to our involvement in the chronic troubles of the Mideast. It hardly needs to be said here that there is a great deal of sympathetic interest in this nation with regard to the survival of Israel. It is not inconsistent with either that sympathy or the interests of this nation, however, to avoid a U. S. military entrapment in the Middle East which can take the form of an inadvertent military confrontation with the Soviet Union or another Viet Nam.

What is in our national interest in the Mideast, as it is in the interests of all the nations of that region and the world is the stability of the present truce, the resolution of territorial conflicts, and, remote as the possibility may now seem, progress towards a new era of co-existence and economic interchange between Israel and the Arab States.

In this connection, I support the efforts of the Secretary of State in cooperation with others to secure an interim peace agreement which has as its main objective the reopening of the Suez Canal. As I understand them, the Secretary's proposals provide for preliminary agreement on a cease fire and on the principle of troop withdrawal without final or complete agreement at this time. The rationale, I should think, is that agreement on this ultimate objective, may make it possible to locate way-stations en route.

If military restraint and a new emphasis on multilateral action applies in Asia and the Middle East, it applies, too, with regard to Latin America. Policies for the Southern hemisphere, it seems to me, must resist temptations to extend additional military or other unilateral aid and to reduce further what now flows through these channels. Unilateral aid can come to represent an intrusion into volatile political environments and lead, in the end, to direct involvements.

It should be noted that just last week, the Senate passed legislation to fund the Inter-American Development Bank at the annual rate of \$900 million for the next two years. This multi-national institution, along with others of its kind, should constitute the heart of the nation's foreign economic aid policy. The sooner it brings about the termination of unilateral U. S. assistance the better for all concerned.

Let me close these remarks on the same note on which they were opened. Let me stress my belief that we have

come to a notable turning point and a notable moment of opportunity. We will have to make many changes to adjust policies effectively to the realities of the 1970's. The changes have much to do with an end to the illusions of national omnipotence and omniscience and the tragic adventurism to which they have led in Southeast Asia. The changes involve a readiness to share the glare of world leadership which has focused upon this nation for too long.

We stand, now, on the threshold of a new era in which prime motivations are appearing which are other than the fear of aggression and war. There may exist a possibility of breaking down antagonisms along the gulf separating the Communist states from those of the Western world.

The promise is there. To realize it will take a vision of the world far less constrained than has been the case for the past twenty-five years. We will have to begin to view national power not just as an instrument of territorial defense or the defense of ideological systems, but rather as

an element of human survival and well-being. National resources can then be committed in far greater degree to the fundamental problems which know no boundaries of race or nationality: Population control, the preservation of natural resources, pollution abatement and the enlightenment of the human spirit wherever and however it is oppressed.