3-15-1973

Congressional Record - Reduction of Military Spending Overseas

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches/1091

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 by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
MAJORITY CONFERENCE RESOLUTION ON REDUCTION OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES OVERSEAS

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, earlier today the Senate majority conference adopted a resolution on the question of reduction of military outlays overseas. I ask unanimous consent that the text of that resolution be printed in the RECORD at this point.

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

POLLICY COMMITTEE RESOLUTION
Whereas, At home, Americans are plagued with inflation, and abroad the value of the dollar declines;
Whereas, The current U.S. military base structure and deployment around the world constitutes a serious drain on the budget and bane deeply into tax revenues available for essential needs inside the United States;
Whereas, Reductions of U.S. forces overseas and the closing of excessive and obsolete military bases abroad would save billions of dollars and help, thereby, to halt inflation, strengthen the dollar and permit additional use of tax revenues for domestic purposes;
Whereas, Such reductions are commensurate with the nation's defense, feasible in terms of present military strategy and technology, and in no way contradictory to the nation's foreign policies under the Nixon Doctrine;

The Majority Policy Committee urges:
1. That the Administration consider, forthwith, in conjunction with the appropriate committees of the Congress revisions in the proposed budget with a view to making specific recommendations on the reduction of military expenditures through the prompt close-out of installations abroad which are obsolete or excessive to the current security needs of the nation;
2. That the contingent of U.S. troops stationed overseas be substantially reduced, such reductions to be accomplished in stages over the next one and one-half years.

The concerns which led to the adoption of this resolution are not too difficult to pinpoint. This month, wholesale prices climbed at rates more excessive and inflationary than at any time in over two decades. Food prices alone went up by 12 percent. To the consumer, the cost of fuel, lumber, and basic commodities and services are going out of reach. Abroad, the value of the dollar continues to shrink. The Senate is about to accept gold by 10 percent to cover the lost dollar devaluation—the second in about 14 months. Still, monetary stability remains in doubt.

It was in part to accommodate to this financial situation that the administration says it was forced to cut back domestic priorities. Nevertheless, the administration has continued to pour even more money into the military budget and foreign assistance.

In the past, Senators have taken the lead in efforts to have the executive branch pare back superfluous foreign military and other involvements. Time and again, this administration has been urged from the Senate floor to act, and to no avail. Finally, with the support of the Democratic policy committee, amendments to compel cuts in U.S. forces in NATO were offered to legislation in the last Congress. The first attempt on May 19, 1971, called for a straight troop reduction of 50 percent. It was defeated by a margin of 55 votes. The second try came late that year. It would have provided staged reductions, removing 50 percent of our forces from Europe over a 3-year period. The amendment was again defeated 39 to 54 but the idea had gained strength and the losing margin shrank to 18 votes.

It costs the people of the United States about $30 billion annually to maintain bases, troops, and facilities abroad. Using the administration's own figures, the price to the United States of NATO participation is about $17 billion. The balance-of-payments impact of NATO is in the neighborhood of $5 billion, considering official expenditures and dollar usage by dependents of servicemen.

While Europe receives the greatest portion of the defense dollar outflow, the
March 15, 1973

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

S 4831

United States maintains well over 600,000 uniformed service people around the globe at $10,000 per man in pay and allowances. This total figure represents more than a quarter of a billion dollars annually. This number includes American servicemen, still in place, in the United States or on the oceans. Actually speaking and whom we have been told, we have more men embodied in Europe than are necessary and our allies in Europe are not living up to their obligations. In all these years, we are not saying that for one moment. What we are saying is that many of the weapons in Europe today are obsolete and are not serving the purpose intended at the time they were installed, that we have more weapons in Europe than are necessary, and our allies in Europe are not living up to their obligations. In all these years, we are the only Nation in the alliance which has lived up to its commitments.

What we are asking today is that our friends in Europe do a little more for their own survival, their own defense, and their own protection.

Here they are, sending negotiators to Moscow to make trade agreements — I mention specifically, Italy, France, Great Britain, and Belgium. They are all there in Moscow, and also the Japanese, to work out what business arrangements they can make with the Russians.

Here we are on the other hand supporting a tremendous military posture in that part of the world, at a tremendous cost, for the American people. The weakness of the dollar in Europe is attributable to the fact that our commitments there are too great.

All we are saying today is to look at it sensibly, from the vista of 1973 and not from the vista of 1950.

If we intend to remain in Europe and do our share, I think the time has come when we have to bring our posture up to date. If we do, even our allies will congratulate us for stabilizing the American dollar.

Once more, I congratulate the distinguished majority leader.

Mr. MANSFIELD. I thank the distinguished Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. MOSS. Mr. President, I commend the distinguished majority leader for his statement. I certainly join wholeheartedly in supporting the kind of action that he has outlined. It seems to me that the adjustment talked about is long overdue.

As the distinguished Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. PASTORE) has just pointed out, this does not mean that we are giving up from Europe or retreat into any sort of isolationist position. It simply means that we recognize the realities of the times in which we live today which, coupled with our economic problems, indicate that we must withdraw a great deal of the money we are sending overseas for no apparent purpose.

What could we do with three divisions in Europe if a ground war started there? All those three divisions could constitute a trip wire. All of us recognize that.

Why do we need three divisions, over 300,000 men, or whatever the number is, if all we are doing is a symbolic thing, of having a trip wire and concern for the Europeans? We must recognize that fact.

As I understand it, we are talking about other worldwide commitments that we have. We have fortress bases around the world, many of them set up at one time which, for one reason or another, have been left behind. I think that if they are to be maintained, we continue to support them for no reasonable military purpose.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Mr. President, the time of the Senator from Montana has expired.

Mr. ROBERT C. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my remarks and those of other Members of the minority party in Congress, to take the immediate steps we need to withdraw much of our military power abroad. I thank the distinguished Senator from Missouri.

Mr. MOSS. Mr. President, I shall conclude because I know many of my colleagues wish to speak in the same vein and I need not argue the ground all over again, but it seems to me that the time is long past due when we must make this kind of economic commitment, because of what we have been doing so profitably around the world. At the same time, we should take immediate action, in concert with the President and with our minority party in Congress, to take the immediate steps we need to withdraw much of our military power abroad.

First, the time to eliminate waste of money is when you identify a waste. I think we have long discussed the importance economically of the kind of waste that divides us, that it is a sense of waste. I think we have long discussed the importance economically of the kind of waste that we have been doing so profitably. I thank the distinguished Senator from Missouri.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Mansfield). I yield to the Senator from Michigan.

Mr. HART. Mr. President, I will not take more than a moment to voice support of the action that has been described by the majority leader. Many reasons can be assigned in support of it. First, the time to eliminate waste of money is when you identify a waste. I think we have long discussed the importance economically of the kind of waste that divides us, that it is a sense of waste. I think we have long discussed the importance economically of the kind of waste that we have been doing so profitably. I thank the distinguished Senator from Missouri.

I yield to the Senator from Montana.

Mr. SYMINGTON. Mr. President, I commend the distinguished Senator from Montana, our majority leader, for the submission of his resolution in the matter of reducing American troops overseas. He has been the leader in this matter in the Congress, but not the leader in the United States. The original suggestion came from the late, great President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who knew at least as much about the military aspects of NATO as anybody, he being the first commander of SHAPE.

It would seem the problem is becoming even more acute. Do we or do we not want to destroy the economy of the United States? Ten years ago, 1963, in the Johnson series of speeches, he presented that if we continued with policies which resulted in shipping billions, upon billions, upon billions of dollars out of the United States, we could end up by passing over the control of our economy to foreign central banks and foreign governments, primarily, of course, the British and the French. Not long ago the Smithsonian Agreement was termed by the President the greatest financial arrangement in the history of the world, but 14 months later, the dollar was devalued again; and I am as sure as I am standing in this Chamber that unless the change, it will be further devalued.

The distinguished majority leader has been consistent over the years in his position on this matter. I believe a sound economy is as important to the security of the United States as the latest weapons system, and I am only sorry some of my colleagues have not agreed.

Today may not if most of the control of the American economy has passed to financial interests outside of this country. That is a dangerous development; therefore, I am glad to support the resolution brought to the floor by the distinguished majority leader, for this reason as well as others. Mr. MANSFIELD. I thank the distinguished Senator.

I yield to the distinguished Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I commend the majority leader on his leadership.

The point here is that, since the President laid down the gauntlet of fiscal integrity, balanced budgets, controlled spending and spending limits, the reaction of the U.S. Congress has been only that of increased spending. This reaction was brought about by the fact that the President unconstitutionally imposed an economic order upon the American people. The original idea of the Nixon Administration was to reinstitute them and to reaffirm our confidence in them as viable and responsible programs. But that action has brought us generally into disrepute, because it has caused the people to believe that rather than trying to save, rather than standing foursquare for balanced budgets, rather than pursuing our prior record during the Nixon years of 1969-73 which actually reduced President Eisenhower's budget by $20.3 billion, I am not guilty of being reckless spenders.

It is significant, therefore, that the majority leader is taking the lead in the manner how we should and responsibly respond by the constitutional act of Congress, and come to grips with the problem.

I emphasize "constitutional act" rather than "constitutional law" or "petition." Up to now, some of our colleagues have used these terms in different ways; it is time to cite the Constitution; to angrily appear on TV, talking about image and the unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of congressional power by the President.

The people can care less about power. They are looking for results. They are looking for economy, and a government that can stabilize and control itself and order its priorities.

The majority leader has begun to order those priorities. In a responsible fashion by stating, simply, that we are not bugging out, that we are not going soft, but that we are looking at the front line of the defense of America—the stability and value of our American dollar. As we look to that, we find the dollar severely devalued. In the last month—the Warsaw and Moscow Treaties—I think highlight the kind of stability that has developed on the continent, which argues against what I believe is unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of congressional power by the President.

The people can care less about power. They are looking for results. They are looking for economy, and a government that can stabilize and control itself and order its priorities.
March 15, 1973

a restricted basis. We can look at last month’s issue of U.S. News & World Report and find out that the Soviet Union has an advantage in troops and tanks. She has a 2-to-1 advantage in aircraft, that she has a 3-to-1 advantage in the number of tanks. So discard the word “balance,” and the notion that anything there is balanced. That is one of those Madison Avenue gimmicks that have gone on since NATO was established. There is no idea of employing a so-called balance of threat with the Soviet countries. Colleagues will talk about Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and I say to them, we did not use that so-called balance because that is not the posture of the U.S. defense.

Our posture is the same policy of commitment and resolve of the little country of Israel. Those who support Israel come her and argue about putting the rug from under NATO, and those who support NATO talking about withdrawing commitments and making things shaky in the area of commitment.

Let us hearken the physical fact and experience of Israel. I went to the front lines of this little country, and on the Hebron-Ossetia-Suez Canal where men were enbunkered in a 360 degree posture and could be easily overrun in 2 hours by 140,000 Egyptian forces on the other side. The Israels say they could be overrun in the first hour or two, but in the next hour Israel would take Cairo, and the Egyptians know it. They are supplied by 14 countries. They stand fast. Why? Not because of the number of troops in the front line; but rather, because of the posture of the commitment. And this is America’s first or front line as well.

Specifically, as to our forces in Europe, I visited the Central Army Command in Heidelberg last November. I reiterate my support for ABM, for equipment, and materiel, but it is my considered judgment, and I would challenge military representatives to refute the statement, that our military policy, posture and deterrent in Europe is too small and too weak.

With the present mutual balance of force reduction, we would have to go to this present minute. They will tell you from the lowest private to the highest general that we have to go nuclear in 72 hours.

Then we can back our Commander in Chief, Gen. Dwight David Eisenhower, one of the greatest military minds of all time, the Republican President of 8 years. He was not pulling the rug from under anybody, he was not springing up by sudden Senate resolution. On March 15, 1973. On the contrary, as a result of his considered judgment, experience as both Commander in Chief and President, military, and civilian, he said, and I quote him:

One American division in Europe can show the flag as definitely as can mount a thousand divisions.

This is a Republican initiative and I hope Republicans will respond to it.

So there it is. What we are getting at is 100,000 trip wires are just as good as 380,000 troops and dependents. At the present time we have 380,000 and troops, and the rest are dependents they are all spending their time skating, sledding, and apple straddling all over Western Europe, especially Germany. They are getting large arguments involving drugs and other things—and from a policy standpoint, they are bringing reduction on the defense budget upon America itself. We do not need those dependents, we do not need all those troops to maintain our posture. We can accomplish our military objectives with 100,000 troops.

We can save the reccriminations and dispute by bringing the rest home.

If 27 years later we had foreign troops walking down my main street, I would resent it. It is human nature. The admonition is on the main street in Bonn, Germany: get out of your uniform and try to look like a German. We do not want to go through the terrible political struggles that came about in France recently, and not gotten out a free government would have fallen. France and Charles de Gaulle knew. He was tickled to death to have our troops over there. Then he had become an object of disregard and dispute and it worked against our military policy and national security, rather than assisting it.

I would trust the American public, another point about unilateralism. I accompanied the distinguished majority leader to seven capitals in Europe. One could see that State Department crowd at work. Wherever we went the local interests knew about Senator Mansfield and the Mansfield amendment. They wanted to get him into immediate action by pointing out how it would all come apart at the seams if he did anything by way of reducing our number of troops. The multinational corporations and the local interests are concerned about financial support and deposits.

Well, it did not come apart at the seams when France said to get out. It did not come apart at the seams when Norway said, “We do not want them here.” It did not come apart at the seams when Denmark acted unilaterally and reduced its draft from 1¼ years to 6 months. It did not come apart at the seams when Israel acted unilaterally and brought into question our base there. It did not come apart at the seams when any other nation has acted unilaterally. It did not come apart at the seams when they acted, as the leader pointed out, to tax our facilities.

It all comes into focus when the Germans say, “Mr. America, defend your dollar.” Here we have gone out for years helping to pay the bills of the other crowd, being taxed by them, and actually being derided about not being economically sound. Then, when we act in an economically responsible fashion, we are asked to defend our dollar.

Mr. President, this has gotten to the ridiculous stage.

The PRESIDENT OFFICER. The time of the Senator from Montana has expired. Under the previous order the Senator from Virginia is recognized for 15 minutes.

Mr. HARRY F. BYRD, JR., Mr. President, I am glad to yield 3 minutes to the Senator from South Carolina.

The PRESIDENT OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.