

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Mike Mansfield Speeches, Statements and Interviews

Mike Mansfield Papers

1948

Campaign

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, "Campaign" (1948). *Mike Mansfield Speeches, Statements and Interviews*. 1335.

https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches/1335

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.

United States or any group of fifteen or more citizens of the United States could apply to the Library of Congress and receive, without charge, the voting record of any Member of Congress for any period desired. I feel that the people should know where their Congressman stands on every issue brought to the floor of the House. I am sorry to report that no action was taken on this measure.

On last Monday I asked my opponent a number of questions. I asked him to tell the people of Montana specifically where he stood on such questions as Tidelands Oil, the Taft-Hartley Bill, U.M.T., the Mundt-Nixon Bill, public power, housing, the high cost of living, and our foreign policy. The only answer that he made to any of these specific issues was a reference to the Taft-Hartley Bill, in which he stated "Labor knew his record." I think he should tell the people of Montana in general just what his stand is on this particular measure and all the other measures listed as well. You know where I stand because my votes are recorded in black and white in the Congressional Record. I also asked him to tell the people of Montana, in answer to an attack made on me, which I answered last Monday night, to name one project Montana should have gotten during my six years in Washington which she did not receive and I asked him to name one instance where I have knowingly fallen down on my job as a representative of the people. I have received no answer to date.

My opponent states that he stands for a reduction in

taxes and he attacks my vote on the tax bill passed by the Congress this year. He says it is a poor man's tax bill. I say it is a rich man's tax bill. I pointed out last Monday night that a person with a \$3,000 income had his taxes reduced by 3.2 per cent. If he received an income of \$25,000 he had his taxes reduced by 18.5 per cent, and that if he received an income of \$250,000 he had his taxes reduced by 58.4 per cent. I also pointed out, and I know this bill because I read it and studied it very very carefully, that 40 per cent of the Five billion dollar tax reduction went to only 5 per cent of the American taxpayers in the higher income brackets. I also said that based on the fact that the Republican majorities in both the House and Senate tried to put through a sales tax last June to pay for the cost of the government of the District of Columbia, that their next step would be the imposition of a Federal sales tax to which I am opposed. A few more figures on the tax bill which my opponent says has done so much for the little people of this country may be of interest to the people of Montana. This tax bill gave, to put it another way, a \$3,000 a year man five days additional take-home pay, but it gave the \$100,000 a year man 5 2/3 months additional take-home pay and it decreased estate and gift taxes by 30 per cent. To me the tax bill is an illustration, as far as the average individual is concerned, of what we should have done and what I tried to do was to do something about the high cost of living, because any

relief you may have received in the form of a tax reduction has been more than eaten up by the continued increase in inflation. You know that for the three years prior to the coming into power of the Republican majorities in both houses of the Congress that prices rose on the average only $6\frac{1}{2}\%$.

You know that in the past two years the average price increase has exceeded ⁴ \$5 per cent. Many of you heard over the radio a week ago Sunday that Chairman Knutson of the Ways and Means Committee of the House stated that there would be no tax reduction legislation this coming year. I have in my hand a copy of the Washington Post for Monday, October 25 in which Mr. Knutson stated: "We have got to see what happens before we can cut income taxes again." Evidently Mr. Knutson had been reading the magazine, the United States News under date of October 22, 1948, which said that we face a possible deficit for this coming fiscal year of three billion dollars. There is no way under the laws of common sense, arithmetic or ordinary business enterprise whereby the government can increase its expenses, face a possible deficit, and at the same time reduce taxes without leaving the financial structure of the government in a very precarious position. I do not feel that we can shirk our responsibility of trying to maintain peace in the world and of trying to maintain a sound economy at home. To me it is not a question of politics in an election year. It is a question of doing the right thing in a time of great trouble. My opponent

according to his platform which he has had printed in all the newspapers in the state and which is very general in terminology, states that he stands for "reduced taxes." He also says in his platform that he is for the extension of Social Security. I have yet to hear him say one word about the action of the 80th Congress in overturning a decision of the United States Supreme Court in passing a bill over the President's veto which took 750,000 people off the Social Security rolls. He says in his platform that he is for more housing, but he doesn't tell you what he intends to do in this respect and he utters no word of criticism of the action taken by his colleagues in the House in refusing to do anything really worthwhile in behalf of our returned Veterans and low income groups in this respect. He also says that he is for new Montana industries. Who isn't? The people of Montana know that one of my interests in the development of our great hydro-electric potential is to produce cheap power so that we can attract industries to our state, overcome the freight rate structure which is such a detriment to our development, and to base on these industries and our development the security and the future of ourselves and our children. He also says that he is for lower living costs. I asked him what is his attitude on the average price rise of over 45 per cent covering the two-year period since his party was in control. They have refused to face up to their responsibilities as representatives of the people, and yet he says he stands on

the Republican platform and offers no specific remedy to this particular question which is so vitally affecting the lives of the American people. Candidates may evade the issue, by pledges to "cut costs of bureaucracy," "encourage the productive genius of the American people", "inculcate thrift," "promote consumer education" and they can follow the line of the party platform and pledge an attack on the specific causes of inflation. . . by reduction of the costs of government. . . stimulation of production...sound currency. . . reduction of public debt. . . fiscal policies to provide increased incentives for production and thrift." That what the Republican platform says, but the real jury on the question of the cost of living will be the voters who have flattening pocketbooks. You are now sitting in judgment and by your votes tomorrow you will make your wishes known.

The high cost of living is the most serious domestic question facing our country today. Big business can raise its prices. Big labor, organized, can demand or strike for better wages, but we have in our country a large unorganized group of people which includes school teachers, preachers, office workers, clerks, sales persons, G.I. students, and elderly persons, especially widows living on small pensions, annuities, savings and inheritances. This group--probably the largest in the country, is slowly being squeezed, and something must be done to protect them and to give them some degree of security and

assurance. The only good thing this Congress did in fighting inflation was to restore Regulation W which never should have been taken off the statute books in the first place. Inflation is a serious matter for those who buy as well as to the businessman who sells. Many businessmen will tell you, and I have talked to hundreds of them in this district in the last three months, that they have a higher volume of business in dollars this year but that their margin of profit is steadily decreasing. These businessmen know that the wage earner is gradually being restricted in his buying because prices are increasing faster than wages. We know that there is a large group of people who are living on fixed incomes, annuities pensions and the like, who are finding it more difficult each day to eke out a livelihood. According to the Federal Reserve Board 28% of the nation's families in 1947 spent more than they earned. We know that many families extended their credit, dipped into their savings accounts, cashed their bonds of six and eight years ago, and otherwise tapped their liquid assets. We know also that the profits of the giant corporations were the biggest in history in 1947 and that this year they are even greater. A situation like this unless stopped is bound to cause trouble and if something is not done to stop inflation the end result may well be to cause a depression far greater than that of the 1930's, and with consequences far more destructive to our way of life. I ~~do not know the answer to inflation, but I do want you to know~~

that I have tried to find at least a partial answer. In the thirteen days special session of last summer, which by the way was a waste of the taxpayers' money, Senator O'Mahoney of Wyoming and I introduced the only joint bill in both houses of the Congress. This bill called for a 30-day cooling off period for the giant monopolistic corporations during which time any proposed price increases would have to be justified before the Federal Trade Commission and its approval granted before they could go into effect. Our reason for introducing this bill was due to the fact that the week before the special session met, the steel industry had raised its price \$9.34 a ton. Our bill did not get a hearing, but you know what has happened to the price of every car and every article in which steel is used since that time. We wanted to attack what we thought was one of the causes of inflation because any thinking person could see what the ultimate effect of an unnecessary and severe price rise in steel would lead to. Somebody must protect the people of this country and I think it is the job of Congress to find ways and means to alleviate the inflationary spiral and to put our economy on an even keel.

Inflation today is, and has been, a major, and not a partisan issue. All one has to do is to ask the housewife if she can balance her own budget and ask her what she thinks of inflation. She knows the answer because she has to go to market every days and she knows how her dollar has decreased

in value as prices have risen. On the subject of inflation, I feel that partison politics has no more place in the discussion of this issue than it would in answering a four-alarm fire. It is time for Republicans to wake up to the facts of life and to recognize that their responsibility is to all the American people and not just the favored few for whom they cannot do favors enough, as attested in the 80th Congress which they have controlled completely. They should realize that the gap between wages and prices should be bridged. They should give more thought to the American family and less consideration to the great monopolistic corporations. They knew --but did nothing about it--that because of this gap caused by inflation that the American family's buying power has shrunk, that it is forced to draw on its savings and that it is going into debt, and they know also that the final ugly turn on this road brings the family to relief. Is that the answer to the great question of inflation? I say it is not and I say further that it is the duty of the government--the representatives of the people, if you please--to consider ways and means to alleviate this situation so that every American will be assured of the security which is his as a matter of right. Remember, the first line of defense in a Democracy is a people well fed and housed and well clothed. Remember folks, that excuses, party slogans, trumped of charges, whipping boys and accusations are not going to be accepted by the housewives of American, whether they

be Republican or Democrat. They want action. Generalities won't pay the rent and the butcher bill and preserve peace. The average citizen of Montana and the United States wants to know whether he can be guaranteed a wage that will pay what he produces. Sirloin steak at a dollar a pound and peaches at two pounds for 57¢ is beyond the average individual's purse. The average man wants our free enterprise system preserved, but he doesn't want it unbridled as in the case of the 80th Congress exempting the railroads from the provisions of the anti-trust laws insofar as the fixing of rates is concerned. The average man wants to know how adequate housing can be provided for the man who makes from \$40 to \$70 a week. The average man wants Congress to know that he and his family are the ones who need help the most. Thirteen per cent of our families earn less than \$1,000 a year; 18 per cent of our families earn between \$1,000 and \$2,000 a year and 20 per cent of our families earn between \$2,000 and \$3,000 a year--all before taxes. Something over half of our families live on less than \$3,000 a year. These families want to know that they will be assured of a decent housing; that their children will be educated; that labor laws will allow him freedom to organize and protest if he is dissatisfied. The big fellow wants, and is entitled to know that his investments will be secured and protected. These are some of the things the people of Montana and America are interested in, but before and beyond all else, the people want

to peace, just as firm action taken in time might have spared the world the agony of the last war. Our foreign policy must be single-minded and our aim should be the support and projection of Democracy everywhere. It must recognize that Communism is not merely an expansionist program of Soviet Russia, but a bid for doubting hearts and minds. While force may hold back Russia temporarily only a positive faith can hold men to Democracy. The United Nations is predicated on such a faith. It rests on the conviction that there is a common denominator among all men--however sharp their differences. It is the one best hope for peace in the world and it is my prayer that it will continue to function and that it will eventually be able to take on its full responsibilities so that men and women everywhere can work in peace and live in peace. That is the real goal of mankind and the achievement of that objective rests on the ground and security of the U.N. I pledge my full support to the U.N. because I desire peace for all mankind more than anything else in the world.

In presenting my views on these and other problems I have told you the truth as I know it and see it. My purpose in my years in Congress has been to look after the interests of my district, my state and my country. No matter affecting my district has been ignored; no matter affecting my state has been slighted and my country's interest have received my undivided attention at all times. I cannot promise you quick

a secure peace, and they want everything possible done to make wars memories and not prospects.

It is late--year--but it will never be earlier. It is too late now to worry about yesterday. We should worry about tomorrow because we can do something about that. While I have been discussing domestic matters and especially the high cost of living I want to present to your attention my thoughts on the foreign situation as I know it.

The smell of death has not yet disappeared from the earth. The shooting has hardly stopped and yet there is talk of another war. People up and down the district have asked me if there is going to be a war. In my opinion there is no possibility of war in the immediate future and I am hopeful that out of the discussions and differences now going on that we will be able to work out a meeting of minds whereby we can settle our differences and assure some degree of peace to all the people throughout the world. We are living in a critical period. As a matter of fact, conditions are far better today than they were a year ago.

We have won the cold war and the bi-partison system of the United States has proved itself. There should be no differences between us--as Americans--in the promulgating of our foreign policy, and I am delighted that any differences that we may have in this field have been held to a minimum in this campaign. Firm action on our part will not lead to war, but

and easy solutions to our problems. I do not know what "smart politics" is, but I do know that the people cannot be fooled by talk alone. The times call for legislators who will seek to find out as honestly and faithfully as possible what he thinks is in the national welfare and support it. This is not the time for legislators to find out as shrewdly and as expeditiously as possible what he thinks is in his own political welfare and support that view. A man's integrity--be it in politics, the mines or the classroom--is his greatest asset. The privilege of serving as your Congressman has been a satisfaction greater than any I have enjoyed in my life. I feel that the confidence of the people in their representatives whom they have freely chosen is in itself the greatest reward and cannot be measured by any material standards. That confidence on your part demands that I give to my job my heart, my mind and all my talents. You have given to me the greatest of all possible rewards--your trust and confidence in my ability to protect the liberty of the people and to fulfill your hopes and to make Democracy live. While there are differences of opinion among us there can be no differences of interest. We have one interest: The fulfillment of America's destiny, both at home and in a sorry, troubled world. The differences between us are far less important than the interests we have in common. We cannot be good citizens unless we are first of all devoted to and believe

in our country and in its form of government. We want to see opportunity given to all--not just the few. We do not believe in demagogues or tyrants, but we do believe in treating men as equals and as brothers. We believe not in the fiery cross of bigotry and intolerance and prejudice, but rather in the shining cross of love and understanding which since Calvary has been to all the world the symbol of the brotherhood of man. My only obligation is to the people and my only responsibility is to them. I know if you re-elect me that you will want me to exercise my own best judgment on all legislative matters. You may be absolutely certain that I will, if returned to Washington, continue to do my own thinking and that my decisions will, as always, be based not on the demands of any individual organization or corporation--no matter who he or it may be--but on whether in my own mind, after serious consideration, it is right or wrong. I should like to continue to be your Congressman; to carry on the battle for Montana's development; to fight for our state and country on the home front as I would on the battle front; to be a doer and not a promiser; and to do all in my power to help end war and achieve a permanent peace. It is up to you--all of you--to decide on my stewardship as your Congressman for the past six years, as to whether I have acted rightly or wrongly. I must leave the decision up to you whom I represent. You have the duty and the power to determine as you soon must do, whether in my votes on issues

before the Congress I speak for you and by your authority. If you approve of what I have done I will be deeply appreciative for your continued support and confidence. (X)

Tonight, following my usual custom, I want once again to pledge my full support to my state and my country. I owe allegiance to one country and one country only--the United States of America. I believe in one form of government, and one form of government only--and that is the Democracy under which we live.

#

None but the Lonely Heart

He wants to debate me? On what?

Loft-Hartley? - Here's what he said on May?

See his file + for other stuff too.

On MA + CVA.

Did you want H. H.? - We could have lost it 5 times

" " " Anacosta Amis? by note

" " " Canyon Ferry.

" " " to see Mont. grow?

Put ideas into his mouth -

bureaucracy
defection
appeasement
fence riding

Congress of the United States

Committee on Foreign Affairs

House of Representatives

If you vote against me, please do not do so just because I'm a Democrat; rather do so because you disagree with my political philosophy + feel that someone else can do the job better. Please, above all, do not vote for me on a sympathetic basis because I have a record of 6 yrs. service of which I am proud.

I do not want this job at any cost. I do want this job only on the basis of my record + my ideals + in the hope that the foundation first laid in the H of R will fit me for better service in the Senate.

I have no apologies to make; no promises to get votes. You have hired me for 3 two yrs periods; my contract approaches a close + now you've got to decide on my stewardship.