1955

Foreign Policy

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/1610

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.
The end result is: our foreign policy is a policy without drive, a policy stricken with a poverty of ideas.

You have just heard me criticize the Administration's foreign policy. Perhaps you are asking yourselves what ideas do I have as an alternative to the Administration's policy. I must admit that I have very few ideas because while I have devoted as much time as I could to these possibilities, I have of course had other duties to perform, as well as other legislation to consider; however, I do have some ideas which I offer to you for your consideration and which I hope the Administration would consider seriously.

I do not think that we have recognized the importance of the Bandung Conference and the emergency of the Arab-Asian bloc. I think we have glossed over the results of that conference in a too optimistic manner, and I feel further that we have failed to recognize the significance of the emergence of the continent of Africa in this respect.

I feel also that an economic conference should be called in the Far Eastern area so that the question of Japan -- an area smaller in size than the State of Montana, with 89 million people, an increase of three million people every year, and not more than 16 percent of its land arable -- could be considered. Japan, to my way of thinking, is the most important area in the whole of the Far East. Unless something is done,
it is quite likely that Japan may be lost to the West. At the present time Japan is faced with one question and three choices. The question is, "Where is the next meal coming from?" The choices are: (1) the free world will open its markets to the importations of Japanese goods, or (2) Japan will continue to be subsidized, in part at least, by the United States, or (3) Japan will go communist. If she goes communist, it will not be because of sympathy for that ideology, but because of economic necessity.

I think also that this country should take the lead in calling an economic conference to deal with Western Europe. I believe the idea of economic rationalism is once again taking over from the policy of "devil take the hindmost", now in operation as far as nearly all our western allies are concerned.

I believe also that we should face up to the very real problem of German unification and recognize that the Soviet Union today alone holds the key to that matter. The Soviet Union can bring about the restoration of the lands east of the Oder-Neisse now occupied by Poland, a settlement of the Sudeten question, greater freedom in the satellites and the Soviet Union, and German unification in return for a treaty of neutrality and a breaking away of West Germany from the NATO alliance. I am quite sure that if this proposal were made to Mr. Adenauer today, he would turn it down, but I am not sure that the German people would.
I foresee the distinct possibility of West Germany becoming more friendly with the Soviet Union and the emergence of a bloc strong enough to advocate German neutrality and a breaking away from NATO. I think we should face up to this possibility and do what we can to help Germany achieve unification along the lines she may well have to follow, if need be, rather than see the Soviet Union maintain the initiative all the way.

I think also that there ought to be a new assessment of our foreign aid program and a recognition of the fact that dollars alone are not the answer. I would like to see a doubling or a tripling of the Point IV program on the basis of helping underdeveloped nations to help themselves and with no imposition of American ideas or conditions which would hamper the effect of this program.

I think also that we ought to recognize the fact that unless the United States and its western allies regain their old strength and their old feeling of common purpose, that the days of NATO may well be numbered and that it, as an organization, may well disintegrate in a period of three to five years. In that respect, I believe that we are, in part at least, to blame for the decline of NATO because we have reduced our army, navy and Marine Corps. We have not built up our Air Force sufficiently, and we have reduced our military expenditures year by year. Can one blame our allies if they do the same then, and in addition consider
seriously the shortening of conscription as they are in France at the present time from an 18-month period down to a 15-month period and eventually to a 12-month period?

I feel that we should not fear to discuss foreign policy in the coming political campaign. We should give credit to the Administration where credit is due, as in the case of the Summit Meeting and the President's "partnership" policy. I believe we should criticize when necessary but that it should be done constructively and wherever possible alternatives should be offered. We should under no circumstances become personal because the welfare of our country must always come before victory for either political party. I think, too, that the present Administration should recognize that many old ideas such as the Democratic policy of containment, which they attacked during the last campaign, have outlived their usefulness and that other ideas should be considered in their place. We should recognize the fact that as far as containment is concerned, it has become now the diplomatic counterpart of the Maginot Line.

We should also recognize that communism feeds on poverty, ignorance and disease, and we should recognize that among our allies, some, such as Korea, fear Japan more than it does communism, and on the same basis, Pakistan fears India, Israel fears Egypt, France fears Germany, Greece fears Turkey, and nationalism fears colonialism in any shape or form.
These are some of the ideas which I have been thinking about and which may to some extent at least contain possibilities for future consideration in the continual assessment of our foreign policy. The challenge to all of us as Americans is to restore the drive and to end the poverty which marks our foreign relations at the present time.