

Maureen and Mike

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Transcript of Radio Tape of Senator Mike Mansfield

Campaign Speech, Eagles Hall, Lewistown, Montana  
October 21, 1952

Mr. Chairman, it's good to be back in Lewistown again and to talk with my friends here and everywhere in Fergus County and vicinity. It's good to be on the same platform with my old friends, Frank Ballas, Jim McKenna, and my former student, and he was a good student, Charlie Perofsky.

I want to, at this time, publicly express my thanks for a great favor which was done to me yesterday in Fort Benton when, because I was down with stomach flu, I could not attend a rally there. It happened, that, the night previously, an individual from outside the state had been in Fort Benton and had attacked my integrity and my Americanism. I want to publicly at this time thank my fellow candidates on the Democratic ticket who talked about Mike Mansfield and what he stood for and forgot their own speeches and their own jobs. I want to thank Governor Bonner, Jack Toole, Arnold Olsen, Frank Murray, Horace Casey, Willard Fraser, Mary Condon, Stan Mitchell, John Holmes, and, most of all, I want to thank my wife, my help-mate of twenty years, who went up there and took my place at that meeting. It's a great thing to know that you have friends like that, and I think that one of the nice things about being a representative of the people of the state of Montana is that they are just, they are fair, they are kind. I owe a great deal to Montana because it has been very good to me throughout my entire lifetime.

I was raised in Great Falls, as many of you know, and my family still lives there. Montana has been awfully good to me and the people who live in Montana have always leaned over backwards

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to give me the breaks as they came along. If it wasn't for them, I wouldn't be where I am today. I am surprised so often that I still can't believe that I have been elected a representative of the people five times instead of just one. It's still hard to believe, but I want to say that I am proud, proud to be here tonight as a Democrat and as an American. I think our party exemplifies the highest ideals of Americanism and has done through the entire history. I am glad to be a Democrat because I think my party is the party closest to the people. I think the Democrats are a little more understanding, a little more tolerant, a little more kindly, a little more humane, a little closer to the good earth which feeds us all. I have no apologies to make to anyone for being a Democrat, and I think I am capable of carrying on my own campaign cleanly and on the issues. I will not degrade the office I hold nor the office I seek by engaging in personalities, nor by spreading inuendos, by bringing in foreigners or by telling falsehoods about my fellow man. I think too much of people for that.

I think in Montana we have a great state, a state with a wonderful future; the Treasure State in fact as well as in name; an empire in itself; 148,000 square miles; 590,000 people. In the Williston Basin we have the greatest large potential oil field in the entire United States. We have our agricultural economy. We have our huge timber resources in western Montana and we have our scarce minerals, like the copper in Butte, tungsten and manganese in Beaverhead and Granite and down in the waters country we have chrome in great quantities. These things are important. I recall when I worked in the mines in Butte in the 20's how it was said then, and

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the scare stories were plentiful, that Butte couldn't last long because it didn't have much of a future. Well, let me tell you this, twenty-five years from now every copper camp in the United States will be down and down tight with one exception, and that exception, Butte, will be going one-hundred years from now just as strongly as it is today. So you see, even there we have a great future. Then, in the northwestern part of our state, in the ten Columbia Basin counties of western Montana, ten of Montana's fifty-six counties, we have ten per cent of the potential hydroelectric power in the entire United States---roughly ten million kilowatts of power; power which must be developed and used by the people of Montana; power which means a great deal to us and to our future; power which means new industries, new jobs, more security, greater opportunities; and power which will furnish a chance for our children to stay with us and to develop this state as it should have been developed many, many years ago. Those things mean something. Speaking of power, let me tell you something about Hungry Horse, which the Mansfield Bill authorized; about Libby Dam, which I was successful in getting on the books; about Canyon Ferry; about Tiber, and the others. Everyone of those projects is fully repayable and the people of Montana are not getting something for nothing. Every dime put into the Hungry Horse has a repayable obligation within forty years at two per cent interest, and this applies to all of the others as well. After that, the money goes into the Treasury of the United States. Now, in my opinion, Hungry Horse will repay for itself in less than twenty-five years.

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What do we get out of the Hungry Horse, the Canyon Ferry, Libby and others? Well, Hungry Horse alone gives us 300,000 kilowatts of power, cheap power. Libby, when it comes in, will give us 620,000 kilowatts of power, power to be used in the state of Montana. Canyon Ferry next year will give us 50,000 more kilowatts of power and that power in western Montana can be used to build industries in central and eastern Montana as well. That, in part, is the answer to our future, but only in part.

I want to say something about the REA program, too. I am for the REA and there are no if's, and's, or but's attached to it, and I intend to push it all the way through. I wish that you people would ask my opponent where he stand on REA, on the record. He says in his advertisement that he is for REA, but what did he do to get the Havre-Shelby line? What did he do to block the lines in western Montana? Don't take my word for it, go by the record and judge for yourselves accordingly. He has been against REA and he knows it and you know it too. Republicans say the REA is a form of disguised socialism. Let's look at the record again. We have in Montana twenty-five REA's, twenty-five of them cooperatives, farmer-owned and farmer-operated. They borrow from the Federal government which must be paid back at two per cent interest within thirty-five years. At the present most all of the REA's are ahead in their repayment schedule and, to the best of my knowledge, only one is behind and that is to the extent of \$2,000. Now, how does this disguised socialism help private enterprise? Well, from whom

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do these farmer-owned, farmer-operated co-ops buy their poles, their lines, their conductors? From whom do the ranchers buy their milking machines, their refrigerators, and all of the other electrical appliances that have to come in when electricity is furnished? Why, they buy these appliances and other items from the fellow who operates the store on the main street of Lewistown, Roundup, Stanford, Winnett, and all of the other towns and cities in this state. In my opinion, the REA is one of the greatest things ever brought into existence by the government of the United States, by you for the benefit of private enterprise, and I am proud of what REA has been able to accomplish. In 1935 five per cent of Montana's farms were electrified. Today the average is 72.8 per cent, but the National average is 85 per cent. We have over 30,000 customers on the REA lines at the present time, and these people spent over 30 million dollars to help private enterprise along. We have more than 18,700 miles of line. I want to see the day, and I am going to see it, you can bet your life, when every ranch and every small town in Montana is electrified because I think that's the least we can do for the farmer. Where the farmer today has to feed four people, in 1975 he is going to have to feed five people. So you can see how dependent we are on the production, on the soil, and I think that the farmers are entitled to these necessities because that's what they are, more and more as time goes on, because our dependence is going to increase with the passage of the years.

Now there are other things I would like to talk about tonight. One is this matter of corruption. Of course, corruption

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is an issue. I think that one public official who is corrupt is one public official too many, and I think that corrupt officials should be found, punished severely and quickly. I think also that the government should be streamlined so that greater efficiency would be brought about and less opportunity for corruption offered. I have introduced bills in the last three Congresses, in the last six years, to take postmasters and rural mail carriers out of patronage. In the last session of the Congress, the President of the United States sent down three reorganization bills. One was to take postmasters out of patronage; another to take Internal Revenue collectors out of patronage; and another to take Customs collectors out of patronage, and put these all on a merit and fitness basis. I am in favor of these proposals and all of the other Hoover reorganization proposals except as it applies to Veteran hospitalization, and I am opposed to that. But, with that one exception, I favor the Hoover Reorganization Plan. Why did my opponent, who talked a good game about corruption and efficiency in government, vote against taking postmasters and Internal Revenue and Customs collectors out of patronage and putting them on a merit and fitness basis? You ask him. Don't take my word for it. Go by the record because that's all that counts.

Then, we come to the subject of Communism. My opponent talks a good game against Communism too. But in six years in Washington what has he done to stop it at home and abroad? except being responsible for bringing in ex-Communists who try to tell the people of Montana that a Montana representative is at fault. Look at the

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record and make up your own minds because that's what counts. What has he done? I'll tell you what he has done in six years. He has done nothing. And you know it as well as I do. I want to tell you something else. I have done something about Communism and it's in the record. I am the only Congressman that I know of who has introduced a bill to outlaw the Communist Party because I think the break should be clean, clear and complete because you can't be a Communist and an American. You can't be a Christian and a Communist either. Those things mean something. Then go back to the Nixon Bill which I voted for and I have no apologies to make for it. Go back to the McCarran Bill to keep subversives out of this country, and I voted for that bill too. Go back to the record and see just what has been done and then look at the program of ours abroad, a program to stop Communist aggression because, if we don't stop it with our defense, you know what is going to happen. Make no mistake about it. The aims of the Communists are of world conquest, world domination and world slavery regardless of race, color, or creed. Are we going to sit back and just wait our turn or are we going to let the Communists take the world piece by piece by piece? Of course we are not. We are the leader, the only nation capable of leading the peoples of the free world and we have got to assume that responsibility whether we like it or not. We have no choice in the matter because it's a question of survival and, as your representative, I have a responsibility and I am going to face up to that responsibility regardless of the cost to me personally. I want to see a strong and united America. I don't want to sow the seeds of hatred and disunity because I think we Americans

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need to forget party and think of the nation as a whole. That is the important thing. Let the Republicans say we are pouring money down a rathole in Europe. Let's look at that picture and see if we are. Did we pour 125 million dollars down a rathole when we put that much money into Mexico, a foreign country, to wipe out, to prevent the spread of hoof and mouth disease? Of course, we did not. I voted for it and I think it was money well spent because it saved American cattle and the American cattle industry. Do you think money is going down a rathole when we are investing it in the defense of western Europe, in the defense of Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, Greece and Turkey? And I want to see Germany and Spain included too. Of course, we are not. We are not interested primarily in the western Europeans but we are interested in the defense and the security of the United States of America first and foremost and don't you ever forget it. I recall when I was a boy in Great Falls those oceans really meant something and the air was free. But I'm not living in 1917 or 18. I'm not even living in 1932 in this campaign, though I have a long memory. I am living in the year of our Lord, 1952, and I don't intend to forget it.

Did you read last month of that great plane that flew from northern Ireland to Newfoundland in eight hours....that was over and back. Did you read of that flight of forty-four American jet fighters non-stop from Travis Air Force Base to Honolulu, 2,600 miles in four hours and ten minutes? Does that mean anything to you? It should because it indicates that the world is shrinking, the world is going to shrink still more as time and space both are

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conquered. We are living in an age of responsibility which has been thrust upon us and there is no way in which we can avoid it. It is a world in which reality must be faced. It is a world in which we must recognize the facts as they are and do something about them while we still have the chance. It is not a world in which we can talk about things and do nothing. Talk is cheap, but liberty and freedom come hard. We have got to pay for the good things in life. We think we have had a wonderful fall in Montana. It has been. The weather has been grand, but somebody is paying for it and, as an illustration, if the farmer doesn't get some rain soon, he is going to pay for the good weather which the rest of us are enjoying. Everything worthwhile in life costs something. Nothing good comes for nothing and here in this great country of ours we have a political meeting tonight of the Democratic Party and I hope, and I'm sure, that there are some Republicans here. The Republicans have the same kind of a meeting. It's a nice thing to discuss issues if we only will discuss the issues. It's a nice thing to go to the church of our choice; to read the newspaper that we want to; to say what we want and to vote secretly and as our conscience dictates.

Somebody had to fight, suffer, die and sacrifice that we could have these opportunities. We have to recognize how lucky we are and, speaking personally, as the first born son of immigrant parents, I appreciate what this state and this country has meant to me and mine. Do you think I would place anything above these? Do you think there's a higher loyalty than my love of my state and my country? Of course, there isn't and there never will be because

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I am indebted to this country and to the people, especially the people of the state of Montana, for what they have done for me down over the years. I could never begin to repay you for your kindness, your tolerance, and your understanding. And no matter what I am able to accomplish, I will be forever and forever in your debt. I owe you so much; I could never begin to repay you. But as a representative, I have responsibilities, and I take my oath to defend the Constitution of the United States with no mental reservations whatsoever. I mean what I say and when I come before the people of Montana, I tell you the truth, not to make you free because you are free men and women, but to keep you free and to tell you to the best of my knowledge just what is going on. I don't believe in personalities. I think that campaigns should be fought on the issues and I want to see good men and women go into politics but I don't want to see them scared out by false accusations and things of that sort.

This country of ours and this state of ours needs the best people it can get because we do live in troubled times and I want to tell you there is no easy way out, and there is no cheap way out. But freedom, these things that we enjoy, which so many of us, I'm afraid, do not appreciate, these freedoms are worth paying a good price for because they mean a great deal to us and we want to hand these freedoms down to the kids who are coming up and to the generations yet unborn. But we have got to face up to our responsibility, and I am going to tell you tonight, as I have told every other audience, I think, in the state of Montana because I don't

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change to suit a particular area or a particular town, I am going as long as I am in the Congress of the United States to vote for every measure which will insure the security and the defense of our country. And I think that we should keep in mind that, what your government---the government of you to whom I am speaking because you are the government---has done is to try everything in its power to make sure that America and its institutions are protected and protected at all costs. As for me, I will never, never in my life bow down to any Communist domination because I want to live, as I know everyone here tonight wants to live, I want to live as a free man. I want to live as a free American.

Thank you.