

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHARTER ACT

The Senate resumed the consideration of the bill (S. 1846) to provide for the District of Columbia an appointed Governor and Lieutenant Governor, and an elected Legislative Assembly and non-voting Delegate to the House of Representatives.

ON THE BRINK OF DISASTER

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, in accordance with the unanimous-consent agreement previously entered into, I believe this is an appropriate time for the clerk to read the speech prepared for delivery today by the distinguished Senator from Arkansas [Mr. FULBRIGHT].

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the speech prepared by the Senator from Arkansas.

The legislative clerk read Mr. FULBRIGHT's speech, as follows:

Mr. President, at this moment no one knows whether the United States military forces in Lebanon will be plunged deeper into the Middle East or whether an opportunity will arise in the near future to withdraw them. Certainly, it is the expressed hope of the executive branch, and I am sure the unspoken hope of most Americans, that these forces will be able to leave the area promptly. While they are still there, they deserve our support. The decision which put them into the Middle East was not theirs to make, though they will bear the brunt of any drastic consequences which may stem from it.

The safety of the men in the Middle East is our primary concern at the moment; but if we limit our concern to considerations of the moment, we will not really solve anything. We must look at the basic causes of our troops being in Lebanon. When we do that, we find that our present trouble in the Middle East is merely symptomatic of a much more serious malady.

The truth is, Mr. President, that our foreign policy is inadequate, outmoded, and misdirected. It is based in part on a false conception of our real, long-term national interests and in part on an erroneous appraisal of the state of the world in which we live. Worse, it reflects a dangerous apathy and a quite incomprehensible unwillingness to look facts in the face.

We should put off no longer a complete reconsideration and reorientation of our foreign policy. We have already waited far too long.

Time and again we have put things off. Time and again we have drifted until circumstances reached an intolerable state, and then we have rushed to the brink. This time we have even put one foot over the brink. There we dangle, waiting and wondering what will come next. We are now looking squarely into the abyss of war, a war which we do not seek and which can only have the most catastrophic consequences for all humanity.

But the issue of peace or war is only one of our problems. Equally troublesome—and a good deal more complicated—are the questions of what our

long-term position in the world is going to be and of what specific kind of world we think would best serve our long-term interests. It is no answer to say we want to live at peace in a free, peaceful, and secure world. That is a hope which we all share, but it is only a hope: it is not a policy.

My fear, Mr. President, is that, if we continue as we have been and are, we will lose so much ground diplomatically, politically, and economically that the question of a shooting war will really become irrelevant.

Before our remaining toeholds go, it is time that we stop to look at where we are. Even more important, it is time to ask ourselves how we have gotten into this predicament. Only the blindest of optimism would interpret our international position as a secure one. The fact is that we are in trouble, very deep trouble, regardless of what happens next in the Middle East. The exposed position we now occupy in that area is only one reflection of that trouble.

A year ago we had another reflection of it, when the Soviet Union launched the first of the sputniks. That event told us what many already knew, but what this Government chose to ignore. It told us that there had grown up elsewhere in the world a capacity for scientific, intellectual, and technical achievements, which if it had not already done so would soon surpass our own. This had happened in a country and under a system which was hostile to our own and to the freedom which we cherish. It upset the basic assumption upon which our defense had rested since World War II, the assumption of our ability to maintain a substantial scientific and technical supremacy in this country. The launching of the first sputnik shocked us, Mr. President, into a momentary confrontation with reality. Some of us recognized that for years this Nation had wallowed in a kind of fool's paradise in jolly and supercilious complacency while elsewhere others of more serious bent of mind had worked. There was a realization that we had seriously neglected education. There was a realization that others had labored while we had loafed. The reformation was momentary. The smug and apathetic tendencies of our leadership soon spread to the rest of the Nation. On the one hand, there was a disposition to live with the fact that our scientific leadership was either gone or going fast; on the other hand, there was the delusion that perhaps the sputnik was not very important—a bauble, I believe somebody called it. After all, we still had the Strategic Air Command and intercontinental missiles and perhaps even a shot at the moon on the way. So we went back to business as usual and pleasure as usual.

Then a few weeks ago, events occurred in Latin America to remind us of the precariousness of our position in the world. There, in an area with which we had once enjoyed a most cordial, friendly, and intimate association; in this area regarded as safe, above all others, a symbolic explosion occurred, no less startling in its impact on the Nation than the first sputnik. A few years back, a

former Vice President had been greeted with almost hysterical approval in Latin America. The present Vice President was spat upon and stoned. This, too, was a measure of how far we had fallen. This, too, gave us cause to think. What had we done? After all, this outburst of resentment and fury was directed at something besides Mr. Nixon as a person. Once again, for a brief time, we turned our attention to the serious business of what had gone wrong. Once again, the soul-searching began and once again it did not last long. We found an easy reassurance in the smug belief that only a relative handful of Latin Americans participated in the riots and that they were either Communist or Communist sympathizers. Once again, the same apathetic inertia spread from the Government to the people. Once again, Latin America receded from the front pages of the press to the last pages.

Now it has happened again. We awaken one morning and find strange hands in control of what we believed to be the most reliable of the Middle Eastern nations, so reliable that we had encouraged it to join in a friendly military pact. Its King, whom we had been given to understand was a good and progressive chap, is no more. We are face to face with new rulers of Iraq, who despite the hundreds of millions we have spent on intelligence groups, are unknown factors to us. We scarcely knew whether to take them to our bosom or send them to the same mental oblivion to which we have consigned the Chinese Communists, in the naive belief that if we failed to acknowledge their existence, they would somehow go away. Next morning, we find that our marines have landed in Lebanon. It has taken this shock, Mr. President, to bring our errant attention once again to the highly dangerous conditions extant in the world in which we live. How long will our fleeting awareness last this time, Mr. President, before it disappears? Perhaps it would be well to ask ourselves, Where will the shock come next? One thing is certain, if we go on as we are, more shocks await us in the not too distant future and in many parts of the world. If we go on as we are, soon—in the fashion of the cat on the hot tin roof—we shall be skipping from one crisis to another all over the globe, unable to get our footing anywhere. We shall not even have time for another spell of apathy before we are face to face with unspeakable disaster. At worst, it will be the disaster of war, which, presumably, everything we have done in the past 10 years has been designed to prevent. At best, we shall be up against the disaster of an isolation of this country from reasonable and essential intercourse with great areas of the world. We may well be, as we already are in China and in the Soviet sphere, persona non grata in vast areas of Asia and Africa and Latin America, and even perhaps in Europe.

There is an irony in this, Mr. President. For decades, we sought to isolate ourselves from the rest of the world. We have abandoned that course, only