

MEMORANDUM FROM MIKE MANSFIELD, M.C.



In my conference with President Truman I told him some of the impressions I had received as a Member of the joint Senate-House Committee which had just returned from Europe. I pointed out the need of a greatly amplified information program to counteract the attacks, the distortions, and outright falsehoods being dispensed daily against us by the Communist press throughout all of Europe. In my opinion it is absolutely necessary that greater appropriations be made to carry out the information program so that the truth can be told about the United States and the good we have been able to accomplish recognized.

In every country visited there was evidences of malnutrition, tuberculosis, and disease. Germany and Rumania presented the biggest starvation areas; Poland the most devastated; and Switzerland, Sweden, Belgium, and Denmark the best off economically. The severe drouth this past summer and fall has affected every country in Western Europe outside of Russia and the satellite countries. In the latter areas rains have been good and on the whole crops will be sufficient to see the people through this year. The products most lacked this winter will be wheat and coal. If wheat is not forthcoming to take care of Western Europe, the bread ration will be reduced to such an extent that many people will find it difficult to live. Even at the present time the greater part of the Italian population is subsisting on a bread ration from 75 to 125 grams a day or from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ ounces. When one realizes that bread is the stable diet in practically every European country and that very little in addition is eaten, one can begin to comprehend the seriousness of the situation. In addition to wheat, coal is very scarce; and the result is that the European countries now importing coal from the United States pay anywhere from \$17. to \$22. a ton, and, as they have no other goods to send into the United States in exchange, they have to pay for what they buy from us in dollars. The dollar situation is extremely serious in every European country at this time.

The key to Europe's economic revival in my opinion is to increase coal and steel production in the Ruhr. This is necessary to give Germany a modicum of self sufficiency (not to build up her war potentiality) and to revive Europe economically.

If this is done it will take the dollar dependency drain off the U. S., because if Europe does not use its resources to help rehabilitate itself the burden will continue to fall on us indefinitely with results which will be unpleasant both at home and abroad. I urged the President to call a special session of Congress to consider the Marshall proposal and any necessary stop-gap aid in the meantime.

I stated that democracy is stronger in Western Europe today than it was two years ago but that temporary assistance is needed. I took exception to Congressman Taber's remarks that there were no underfed children in Europe, because they are there by the millions for anyone with two good eyes to see, to wonder and to worry about. In any plan agreed to by the Congress I believe that procedure as to its application and distribution should be so outlined as to make sure that any assistance we might give goes towards rehabilitation of the people and not into official or party pockets through graft and corruption. I further

MEMORANDUM FROM MIKE MANSFIELD, M.C.

reported to the President that in my opinion the countries of Western Europe should form an economic union to bring about a freer exchange of goods to stabilize their currency and to consider and work through towards the idea of a political union -- a United States of Europe. While these goals will take time they would in my opinion do much towards alleviating the hatred, fear, and discontent so prevalent on that Continent.

