

P R E S C O N F E R E N C E

Tuesday, January 26, 1965

12: 20 p.m.

Participants:

SENATOR J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT (Chairman)

United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

and

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS

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OFFICIAL REPORTERS

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PRESS CONFERENCE

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Senator Fulbright: There isn't anything to unload.

Question: What did you do to us, Mr. Chairman?

Question: Can you say something innocuous?

Senator Fulbright: We had a very interesting briefing by
Mc. McCone and some of his colleagues.

Question: Along what lines, Mr. Chairman?

Senator Fulbright: Well, just the relative developments
in the various areas of the world ranging all the way from
Southeast Asia to Europe.

Question: What assessments did he give of the latest
Buddhist uprisings going on in South Vietnam?

Senator Fulbright: It is very distressing.

Question: He is or you are or both?

Senator Fulbright: The uprising is very distressing.

Question: Is this Senator Fulbright's observation or Mr.

McCone's observation?

Senator Fulbright: It is my observation. Why didn't you ask Mr. McCone when he left?

Question: He referred us to you.

Question: He said you had all the state secrets.

Question: He doesn't hardly tell you hello.

Senator Fulbright: You know very well.

I don't know why you wait around here. You know I can't tell you. You are just wasting your own time.

Question: Did you get into the subject of the budget, CIA budget, the changes in personnel?

Senator Fulbright: No, sir, nobody asked him about that.

Question: Did the question of a separate watchdog committee come up?

Senator Fulbright: No, it did not come up. It was purely a briefing on developments, military, political, as a source of information.

Question: Economic?

Senator Fulbright: Economic, but I can't tell you what he said.

Question: And, of course, that included South Vietnam and you say the latest Buddhist uprising is distressing, that is your view?

Senator Fulbright: We talked about it. As you can imagine, the Congo.

Question: Did he have an opinion about the possibility of sabotage in the destruction of the Laotian Air Force.

Senator Fulbright: There wasn't any discussion. No one asked about that.

Question: Would you say, Mr. Chairman, in general whether or not you believe pressures of the Communist complex against the free world are increasing or diminishing?

Senator Fulbright: My own view?

Question: Yes, sir.

Senator Fulbright: As of what time?

Question: Right now.

Senator Fulbright: I mean compared to what time? Three years ago.

Question: A year ago.

Senator Fulbright: I don't see much change. I don't think they are increasing outside of Viet Nam. That's the most difficult of all places. I don't know whether you say the pressure is increasing or the situation is deteriorating. It may be a combination of increased pressure and deterioration of the political situation, in particular in South Vietnam. The inability to get a stable government, this is not news, you know that.

Question: Is another coup in the works?

Senator Fulbright: No. I don't think there is.

Question: In the non-secret area did he tell you when he was

going to resign and who was going to be his successor?

Senator Fulbright: Nobody asked him. There is nothing personal about him.

Question: Did he discuss the nuclear fallout discovered last Tuesday in Japan?

Senator Fulbright: Yes. Yes.

Question: Did he discuss the new regime in Russia at all? Is there anything you can tell us about it?

Senator Fulbright: Well, yes, he referred to it. There wasn't anything new in it. We had it thoroughly the other day with Ambassador Thompson almost exclusively on that aspect of it. It was just in passing about the regime. He had nothing to do with that.

Question: As a result of this discussion do you propose to make any proposals for Congressional investigation of the situation?

Senator Fulbright: No, I have no present idea of doing that. We had quite a discussion about the Russian's foreign aid program, that was interesting.

Question: Well, actually you are making a study of the Vietnam situation?

Senator Fulbright: We already have been having hearings ever since we met. We have had practically four or five already.

Question: You had three hearings with Rusk alone?

Senator Fulbright: We have had some others.

Question: Mr. Chairman, you are going to England this week. Will you also be attending the Churchill funeral when you go over there?

Senator Fulbright: I am not going for that purpose.

Question: I know you are not going for that but do you plan to attend?

Senator Fulbright: I don't know whether that will be feasible or not. I doubt it. It is too big a crowd to take and accommodate in the Cathedral. I would doubt there would be any place for anyone other than the President or whoever goes, the Vice President, I don't know who is going but the official representative. I don't expect to attend.

Question: You have not been invited?

Senator Fulbright: No, and I wouldn't expect it.

Question: Senator, there has been considerable criticism of the reporting that is coming out of Vietnam. What is your own view on that, are we getting a good job over there?

Senator Fulbright: You mean from the newspapers?

Question: Yes.

Senator Fulbright: Well, I have no way to -- I have read of the criticism but I have heard it said it is inadequate or erroneous. The critics may have had some experiences of their own, I have no basis to criticize it.

Question: Would that basis include the CIA?

Senator Fulbright: I had no reason to criticize CIA reporting

because I don't have anything to compare it with. They say nothing inconsistent with what little I know about it.

Question: When are you leaving for London?

Senator Fulbright: Supposed to leave Thursday night.

Question: And that is for what?

Senator Fulbright: That is the so-called Ditchley Conference. The ^{nearest} Near-East comparison to that I know is the Arden House in this country, purely private. It isn't governmental. We don't go at Government expense. They are invited individually not as a delegation, just invited individually by the trustees or managers, provost, they call it of the Ditchley Foundation, which is a private foundation, and it is purely for discussion purposes and exchange of views, has no Governmental or official standing whatever.

Question: Who pays the bills?

Senator Fulbright: They do. That is when they ask you, they say they are prepared to supply economy class round-trip ticket. That is the nature of the provision.

Question: You never have been?

Senator Fulbright: I have never been. Some of our colleagues have been, Senator Muskie has been.

Question: Are you the only one going from the Senate?

Senator Fulbright: Oh, no, seven going.

Question: Seven Senators?

Senator Fulbright: Big delegation.

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Question: I thought there were four?

Senator Fulbright: I think it is seven, isn't it, six or seven?

Question: Hickenlooper and yourself, Jackson, Dominick, who else?

Senator Fulbright: McCarthy.

Question: McCarthy going?

Senator Fulbright: Muskie, Talmadge.

Question: That is seven.

Senator Fulbright: I think that is it. Scott I believe, I am not sure. Scott was on the list, I am not sure whether he is on it or not. That is just from memory.

Question: Why don't you get us up a little something, Carl?

Senator Fulbright: He has nothing to do with it. He wasn't invited. He doesn't know anything about it.

Question: Johnson made the announcement yesterday, he didn't have all the names.

Senator Fulbright: I think there are six or seven Congressmen.

Question: Yes, sir, he named several of them.

Question: They can get it from the British Embassy?

Senator Fulbright: McCall Judson is the coordinator of it. He can tell you all about it. This is a foundation that I understand that Wills, someone like that, makes cigarettes endowed.

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Anyway, it is purely private. The British Government has nothing to do with it.

Question: How long will you be there?

Senator Fulbright: Until Tuesday, I think it is.

(Whereupon, at 12:30 p.m., the press conference was concluded.)

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