

FULBRIGHT

The Wedding of Arkansas and the World

by Sidney Hyman

STATINTL

Until the deadline for filing on May 2, there was a chance that the warm rain of Texas oil money in its seasonal drift toward Arkansas would draw somebody out of the mud to battle J. William Fulbright for the Democratic Senatorial nomination this year. Several local creatures – combining the worst features of the Birchers, delirious segregationists, bleak fundamentalists, and Poor Richard's Almanac economists – did in fact announce that they were considering a race against Fulbright. But only one finally put his name on the books as a candidate. He is Winston Chandler, a dissident segregationist member of the Pulaski County Rural School Board, and a man who makes a living by hauling trailers. Fulbright will certainly squash him like a bug.

Arkansas politics have few of the institutional features found in the politics of Northern states, and especially those lying East of the Mississippi River. There is no "structured" party hierarchy. As in some other Southern states where the Democrats are all that count, politics is highly personal. The individual politician forms himself into a party *pro tem* and seeks to build around his own person the kind of support he needs to win the Democratic nomination. Whether he succeeds or fails depends in large degree on the value local opinion assigns to his personal "style." (In Arkansas, for example, if a politician speaks from a written text, he arouses the suspicion that somebody not visible is doing the talking through his lips.)

The central problem of the Arkansas politician with a statewide constituency is defined for him by two facts: One is the need to diversify and improve agriculture, while speeding industrialization. The other is the "race problem."

In February of 1957, when the school desegregation crisis broke on the streets outside Central High School in Little Rock, Fulbright was in Europe. He was stunned by everything about the event. Not that he was an "integrationist." Far from it. He had always followed the lead of Senator Russell of Georgia, and had always

voted the Southern viewpoint on civil rights issues. He was among the Southern Senators who signed the Southern Manifesto protesting the Supreme Court's school desegregation decision. He seemed genuinely convinced that locally generated forces were producing a *controlled* revolution in race relations, and that the Court's decision, in the absence of any agreed upon plan of procedure, would do far more harm locally than good. On the eve of his departure for Europe, he was told that the Little Rock School Board and other local authorities had prepared the psychological climate which would permit token integration of Central High School in the fall. Neither then nor at any previous time did Fulbright have the slightest hint that Governor Faubus would intervene to tear apart the delicate fibres which had been woven to support local assent in the token integration being scheduled. Faubus, in Arkansas terms, was a "liberal" who owed his office to his political patron, Sid McGrath, himself one of the most progressive Governors in Arkansas history.

From his observation point in Europe, Fulbright saw how the affair in Little Rock made for garish headlines in the European press. He was sickened by the extravaganza of violence being reported and by Faubus's seemingly run-away intention of giving encouragement to the very violence he said he meant to control. Fulbright had often spoken about the importance of national style and character as a determinant of America's capacity to win and hold the loyalty of free men. Now, everything he stood for was brought into serious question by Little Rock. By the time he returned to the United States, the moves and countermoves which brought federal troops (under Gen. Edwin A. Walker) to Little Rock had so inflamed local opinion that he felt nothing he could say publicly would do any good. He told a friend that he knew he had to fight Faubus, but it couldn't be done from Washington; it couldn't be done by public speeches; it had to be done at home – and quietly.

Bill Fulbright is not by nature a timid man. Nor would retirement from politics be the end of everything for him. He has from time to time been approached by representatives of major universities, Columbia included, with offers of a Presidency or Chancellorship. In a pinch he could always return to his native city of

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Fayetteville to take over the direction of diversified family interests that include the local newspaper. In any case, his upbringing as the scion of the "first family" of Fayetteville has given him the coolness of the aristocrat confronting the mob—a quality he showed best when the hysteria of McCarthyism was at its height. He was then among the handful of Senators who had the courage to defy Senator McCarthy to his face. Apart from his role in pressing the McCarthy censure vote to a successful conclusion, on an earlier occasion when the Senate had a chance to cripple McCarthy by denying him funds with which to operate, 88 Senators including all the liberals on the scene played it safe by voting to continue his funds; Fulbright cast the only vote to cut them off.

Nonetheless, his public silence at the time of the school desegregation crisis at Little Rock brought him bitter criticism. His liberal friends accused him of cowardice and of being wedded to office; inflamed segregationists in Arkansas damned him as an enemy alien for having failed to acclaim what Faubus had done.

On the liberal side, the criticism continued to run its course despite what had happened to Brooks Hayes. Hayes was a progressive-minded Congressman who had faithfully served his Little Rock constituency for a number of years and was known to Arkansas and the whole South as a lay leader of the Baptist Church. He had tried to put a cooling hand to feverish foreheads, to mediate an agreement between Faubus and President Eisenhower. For his moderation, Hayes lost his seat in the House in 1958 to the tricky write-in candidacy of Dale Alford, a Stone Age man in all things, beginning with segregation and extending from there to economic matters and world affairs. Fulbright's critics in the liberal camp were not of a mind to draw the moral of the Brooks Hayes story.

Fulbright versus Faubus

On the other side, the inflamed segregationists were not satisfied when Fulbright filed a legal brief of his own with the Supreme Court asking for a cooling off period before any further attempt was made to integrate Central High School. By channeling the resistance to integration back into a legal framework, he appeared bent on frustrating those who were calling for a stand to arms and for resistance by direct physical action. These same segregationists were further aroused when they learned that Fulbright, in unpublicized low-key talks around Arkansas to the leaders of agriculture and business, reaffirmed his personal belief in segregation as a current need and reality, but went on to ask a practical question: Did the manner of Faubus' resistance to school desegregation in fact attain the object for which it was framed? He pointed to the way other

Southern states like North Carolina had satisfied the federal courts with a formula for token integration, and with virtually no public disturbance.

Despite all the compromises Fulbright made to keep himself in right with local opinion on race relations, his political future was overcast by the mounting prospect that Governor Faubus would challenge his Senate seat and more likely than not win it. If that prospect ultimately vanished, one reason is a certain fatigue in Arkansas with the whole question of school desegregation. (In his most recent trips around the state, Fulbright was never once confronted with a question of where he stood on the matter of school desegregation.) But another reason why the prospect of his defeat vanished lay in the way Fulbright had identified himself as a servant of the urgently felt need to raise the standard of living in Arkansas as a whole.

He had associated himself with the Federal Water Shed Program that leads to flood control dams, small in themselves, but important to communities as a source of electric power. He associated himself with the Federal Water Lands Bill which by helping to preserve the breeding grounds for ducks, has given the Arkansas duck hunting industry a powerful boost. He used his standing with various foreign embassies in Washington to find markets for the "broilers" of the Arkansas poultry industry. He sponsored legislation for the creation of experimental fish farms. He persuaded the federal government to establish two experimental forestry stations on the lands it owns in Arkansas; the improved quality of timber has benefited not only the whole forestry industry but also its satellites like the paper industry. He supported federal measures to stimulate the export of Arkansas crops with the result that Arkansas agriculture is in a healthy condition for the first time in years. In cotton, the "carryover" of 14 million bales in 1958 has been reduced to a "normal" six to seven million bales. There is no substantial carryover of soy beans, a crop sold largely to Japan on a cash basis outside the framework of any US Government export program. Nor is there any substantial carryover for rice, thanks in great measure to Fulbright's part in helping (with his former administrative assistant John Erickson) to negotiate a long-term agreement for the export to India of one million tons of rice.

Nor could Faubus turn to his personal account any Fulbright tactical blunder in the disputed matter of public versus private power. Fulbright covered both flanks in that fight. Though his friends deny that he has "looked after the interests of the Arkansas Power and Light Company," it is difficult to see why they should be so vehement. Of course he has. He endorsed the Dixon-Yates contract on the ground that as an agreement, it was "not too bad a deal" for the federal gov-

MAY 14, 1962

ernment, and on the privately understood ground that it would mean a huge new power plant for Arkansas. That is called "permissible politics"—a means by which captives of constituencies remain leaders of constituencies. His vote did not differ in any way from the vote of the saintliest of Senators for their own special kind of local interest. In any case, there was the offsetting fact that Fulbright led the fight which thwarted an attempt in the Senate to raise interest rates on loans to cooperatives formed under the Rural Electrification Administration. This did not sit well with the Arkansas Power and Light Company. But as he had served Arkansas Power where their paramount interests were involved, he foreclosed their right to mount a punitive expedition against him because he proceeded to serve the interests of the REA cooperatives.

The Foreign Agenda

The one change in Fulbright that has been noticeable of late has nothing to do with Arkansas, for it involves his personal relations with other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. When he first assumed the Chairmanship back in 1959, there was scarcely a meeting that was free of personal acrimony. (On one occasion, Fulbright shattered the gavel in his hand while pounding the table to quiet a committee room tumult.) Senator Wiley, a former Republican Chairman of the Committee, resented the presence of any man sitting in the chair he once occupied. Senator Long had taken it in his mind to make war on C. Douglas Dillon, the then Undersecretary of State, and this brought him into conflict with Fulbright, Dillon's close personal friend. With virtually the entire leadership of the Senate being members of the Committee—and this included three known candidates for the Democratic Presidential nomination, Kennedy, Humphrey and Symington, feelings ran high.

All this is a thing of the past. Russell Long has begun to smile again. Presidential aspirants who may be on the Committee know there is no point in trying to bend their Committee position to the 1968 War of Succession. And on top of all these blessings there is the fact that while Senator Wiley is still the ranking Republican from the standpoint of seniority, the power of effective command among the Republicans has passed to Senator Hickenlooper, a Committee member and a newly-elected Chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee.

As between the two men, Hickenlooper and Fulbright, there is an *entente cordiale* which began early in the Kennedy Administration when Hickenlooper submitted a number of amendments to tighten the Administration's loosely drawn bill creating the Peace Corps. Fulbright could have beaten them. Instead he

joined Hickenlooper. The decision has paid off. In a number of critical matters where Hickenlooper's support has been indispensable to the Administration, he has braved an attack from the Radical Right in his own party and has swung enough Republican votes to decide the case in the Administration's favor.

"Fulbright has never once lost his temper in the last year," says a junior Committee member who keeps a record of such matters. "He will never be reconciled fully to human nonsense. But he is more understanding and more forgiving of human crochets than ever before. In most matters, he could now lead the Committee wherever he wanted to go—which is saying something, considering that its membership represents the greatest collection of prima donnas this side of the Metropolitan Opera House."

Fulbright is unlike any of his five predecessors as Chairman. The first of the five, Sen. Tom Connally of Texas, was a prewar relic—comical, imperious, with no coherent grasp of the world born on V-J day. His main energies were spent in defending his personal prestige and prerogatives.

Sen. Arthur Vandenberg, Connally's successor in the two year period of 1947-49, had been on the wrong side of virtually every foreign policy issue before and even during the war. The reputation for sagacity he later came to enjoy was partly due to the Democratic Administration which propagandized Vandenberg's conversion to internationalism as an example to foot-dragging Republican isolationists, and as a shield against them.

Senator Wiley, who held the Chairmanship between 1953-55, was caught in a cross-pull between a desire to be helpful to a President of his own party, and the hostility directed by the junior Senator from Wisconsin, Joseph McCarthy, toward every facet of Eisenhower diplomacy. Harrassed from the rear in Wisconsin, and with no distinctive moral and intellectual force, Wiley's contribution to American foreign policy was largely confined to prayer meetings.

In 1955 the Chairmanship passed to Walter George, a leader of the Southern conservatives and a powerhouse in the Senate in his former capacity as Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. Sitting at the head of the Foreign Relations Committee, he had a tendency to look over his shoulder at the gathering threat to his Senate seat posed by Georgia's Governor Herman Talmadge. And he had a parallel tendency to look toward President Eisenhower in the hope, perhaps, that their mutual Georgia friends could do something to check that threat.

By the time Sen. Theodore Green became the Chairman, he was well into his eighties and showed it. He would doze off in the middle of testimony, then awake with a start to ask a witness the same question he had

just put to him before dozing off. Even when he stayed awake, his hearing was so poor that his reactions to things he imagined were being said caused his devoted friends to suffer. Until Lyndon Johnson managed in a most delicate and humane way to bring about Green's retirement from the Chairmanship, the *ex officio* Chairman was the Committee's professional staff.

To succeed Green, Fulbright had to resign his own Chairmanship of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee. Yet this went unnoticed in most editorial comment of the time; the whole of Fulbright's career seemed so closely identified with the course of American foreign policy that it was hard to realize that he had served as a member of any Committee except Foreign Relations.

For example, the 55-word "Fulbright Resolution of 1943" started the chain reaction by which Congress reversed its post World War I isolationism and committed itself to US membership in a world organization that was to become the United Nations.

Thereafter, as a freshman Senator, he came up with the idea of using funds from the sale of surplus US war property abroad to support a student exchange program that came to be known as the Fulbright Scholarships. And when that source of funds dried up, Fulbright year in and year out led the struggle to extract from Congress the modest appropriations that kept the program alive. At the time of the Marshall Plan, he repeatedly urged that the US use economic assistance as a lever to bring about the economic and political integration of European nations.

His is an unusual record of prescience – and of independence. Fulbright had been among the earliest advocates of rebuilding US conventional forces as an alternative to a reliance on nuclear "massive retaliation." Long ago, he was urging a shift in emphasis from military to economic assistance to underdeveloped nations. He has wanted to put financing of economic assistance on a long-term basis to allow for the rational planning of developmental projects. He saw the connection between the rate of US economic growth and our capacity to act effectively and simultaneously on the home and foreign sectors. He has spoken often of exploring all possibilities for a settlement of Cold War issues through negotiation instead of bluster. When the House and much of the Senate in the name of bipartisanship was stampeded into uncritically supporting the Eisenhower Administration, Fulbright was among the few who demurred: who warned against the consequences of sending arms to Pakistan; who exposed the fatuousness of the Eisenhower Doctrine; who resisted the panic that found expression in the Lebanon landings; and who repeatedly called the Administration to account for the erratic turns of policy in the management of American interests in the Middle

East, the Far East, and above all, in its relations with our NATO allies.

By background, then, Fulbright was unique in the personal history he brought to his Committee Chairmanship. He was also unique in venturing, soon after he assumed the chairmanship, to redefine the line between the power of the Executive and the Senate.

The President and the Chairman

Unlike most of his predecessors, Fulbright is convinced that the Senate is not structurally equipped to play any major role in the day-to-day management of foreign affairs. When it tries to do that, it multiplies disarray at home and confusion abroad. The management function, he feels, is by its very nature Executive in character. The Senate therefore must not only place itself under a self-denying ordinance when it comes to the mechanics of diplomacy, but must help arm the Executive with competent means and authority to bargain, to maneuver, and to seize any fugitive opportunity cast up by the shifting tides of world events.

But by keeping its distance from the Executive, the Senate can be an effective instrument of public education; it can define and clarify the zones of the feasible, the areas of the negotiable, thereby assuring that the Executive, when it decides to act, has the fullest support of public opinion.

When the Kennedy Administration came to power, there were those who predicted a troubled relationship between the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the new President. For one thing – so the theorizing went – Fulbright had good reason for harboring a grudge. He had seemed a logical choice as Secretary of State if experience, talent, and a proven record of sound judgment were to decide the matter. He was reported to be a front running possibility in Kennedy's own mind, only to be passed over in favor of Dean Rusk. Since Rusk came from "segregationist" Georgia, Fulbright would gag on the argument that the incoming President could not afford to face the world with a Secretary from Arkansas. For another thing – so the theorizing continued – Kennedy, as a Senator, was the lowest ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee under Fulbright's Chairmanship; and in the structure of Congressional power, the distance between the lowest member and the Chairman of a major committee is roughly equal to the distance between the earth and the sun.

It was a plausible theory, but it was wrong. Fulbright actively discouraged his friends who offered to press his merits on the President-elect. His only other move came when he learned, to his surprise, that there was something substantial behind the press reports that he stood very high on Mr. Kennedy's list. He then got in

MAY 14, 1962

touch with Senator Russell – who he knew was about to call on the President-elect for a general review of political matters – and asked Russell to convey a message: If the President-elect was actually weighing the idea of having Fulbright as Secretary of State, then Fulbright wished to rule himself out of further consideration on the ground that he felt temperamentally better suited to his work as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

With this message on the way, Fulbright left Washington and returned to Arkansas. He was swinging back toward his Little Rock office and had reached a point some eight miles out of the city when he received word the President-elect had been trying to reach him. When contact was established, Fulbright learned of Kennedy's intention to appoint Dean Rusk, but along with this came an invitation, which Fulbright accepted, to join the President-elect for a talk in Palm Beach. The meeting, cordial in personal tone, was devoted mainly to a discussion of foreign problems the President-elect would soon inherit.

No one other than President Kennedy himself knows the full story of how he came to decide on Dean Rusk, but there are enough shreds of evidence to suggest some considerations in Kennedy's mind.

Take Chester Bowles. Even if Bowles' personal talents for diplomacy had no equal, he could not expect an appointment as Secretary of State in the Kennedy Administration. Nor did he look for such an appointment. He knew that Governor Ribicoff, a Connecticut man like himself, had a first claim on a Cabinet seat in reward for indispensable services performed on Kennedy's behalf in the drive for the 1960 Democratic Presidential nomination. The realistic limit to Bowles' wishes was an appointment to the second or third ranking post in the Department.

Averill Harriman was widely experienced. Yet an incoming Administration, with a hairline election victory behind it, might not wish to risk a "rerun" of all the battles of the past, by thrusting into the first position on the Cabinet a man like Harriman who had been so prominently identified with those past battles. (The White House these days, however, sounds with a different tune. Harriman's performance on behalf of the President in Far Eastern matters particularly, led a White House Special Assistant close to Mr. Kennedy to say: "Don't tell me anymore that age and experience don't count. I wish we had a hundred Harrimans.")

Where Adlai Stevenson was concerned, the case appears to have been much more complex; and Fulbright figured in it somewhat. All the other likely possibilities at one time or another expressed the view that Stevenson had the strongest claim to the post. The opinion evidently was shared by Mr. Kennedy – up to the West Virginia primary and a bit afterward.

The story goes that when it seemed that Kennedy would be knocked out of the fight for the Presidential nomination, he had gone to Stevenson with an offer of his own delegate votes if Stevenson was going to bid for a third nomination. But he wanted to know what Stevenson actually meant to do. The story continues that after Kennedy won the West Virginia primary, he again returned to Stevenson, with the argument that the most helpful thing he could do would be to make it plain that he was not a candidate for a third nomination, and that this would clear the air. On neither occasion did Stevenson speak in what Kennedy considered to be an unequivocal way. Kennedy's resentment on this account – reinforced by the last minute confused drive to get the nomination for Stevenson – is said to have decided the matter.

Nonetheless, after the Kennedy victory Stevenson appeared to feel that by experience and by the record of valiant service on behalf of the Democratic Party, he had won the right to the appointment. And when he gathered that this was not to be, he is reported to have said to Kennedy, "If it is Fulbright as Secretary of State, I'll take it" – meaning he would accept that Kennedy decision without protest – "but I won't take it if it's anyone else." He took it, nonetheless.

Respect Tempered with Dissent

No matter how the Rusk appointment came about, once it was made, Fulbright, who shared Kennedy's concept of a strong Presidential role in the conduct of foreign policy, never questioned the decision. And in the months that followed his own relations with Mr. Kennedy went forward in a spirit of mutual respect, though he did not always agree with the President. A case in point occurred early this year when the Senate was to vote on the confirmation of John McCone as the new CIA director. Fulbright decided to vote against the appointment, and in preparation for doing so drafted a brief statement he meant to read in the Senate. His stand was based on the assumption that a CIA Director ranks next in importance to the President in the conduct of foreign policy – since the Director has his hand on the main switch controlling the flow of facts that enter into Presidential judgments. He would have to oppose the appointment, he said, since among other things he didn't know enough about McCone's attitude toward foreign policy to know whether he was a preventive war man.

When the draft statement was ready, Fulbright showed the text to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's staff director, Carl Marcy, and asked if he could see in it anything that might hurt the Committee itself. "No," said Marcy, "and what's more, I agree with what you say in the statement. But somebody

THE NEW REPUBLIC

could be hurt by it – namely you. . . .” Fulbright subsequently read the statement on the floor of the Senate. He had shown comparable independence months earlier in the “Cuban Affair.”

The Cuban Memorandum

During the few remaining weeks that were left to the Eisenhower Administration, Fulbright had been reading news accounts of camps in which Cuban refugees from the Castro regime were undergoing military training. Beyond these, he had no confidential information. Nor was he ever told anything by any member of the new Administration. Nonetheless, by the spring of 1961, the rumors were flying thick and fast that the Cuban refugees, supported by the United States, would presently attempt an invasion.

Toward the end of March, Fulbright received a telephone call from President Kennedy that was wholly social and personal. In the course of the conversation, the President learned that Fulbright and his wife were to leave on March 30 to spend Easter with a relation who lived in Del Ray, Florida. Since Mr. Kennedy planned on leaving for Palm Beach the same day, he invited Fulbright to come along.

It occurred to Fulbright that the trip would give him a chance to speak to the President about the invasion stories. So he called in Pat Holt, a staff member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and proceeded to outline the reasons why the US should have no part in such an invasion, if the rumors about it were true. The reworked version of the memorandum, dated March 29, 1961, was in Fulbright's pocket when he boarded the Presidential plane the next day.

In flight, Fulbright produced the memorandum for the President to read. The line of argument – though the text has yet to be released – can be reconstructed with some degree of accuracy as follows:

The problem in Latin America was not with governments. It was with people, particularly with workers, peasants and students. If so, the argument that Castro must go in order to keep his influence from spreading further among these groups failed to take into account the fact that Castro's influence had already gone far beyond the personal appeal of Castro the individual. It would persist as a doctrine of radical social reform with anti-Yanqui overtones long after Fidel Castro.

Furthermore, on the provisional assumption that an attempt would be made by Cuban refugees to overthrow him, and on the further provisional assumption that the attempt succeeded, it was worth asking whether the successor government would be equal to the task facing it. The evidence about the leaders of the Democratic Revolutionary Front who presumably would constitute that government pointed to a discouraging con-

clusion. As an uncomfortable coalition of dissident interests, it had no men in it who could provide vigorous, progressive government. If they came to power, and failed on the social and political front, the US would be blamed; if they were partly successful, the US would be blamed, not only in Cuba but elsewhere, for their shortcomings.

Finally, the political question to one side, what should the US do if the Cuban exiles failed? Should the US let the enterprise fail, in the probably futile hope of concealing the US role in it? Should it respond openly with whatever assistance might be necessary to insure the success of the invasion? Overt assistance would undo the work of 30 years in trying to live down earlier US interventions in Latin American affairs. Even covert support of a Castro overthrow would be in violation of the spirit, and probably the letter as well, of domestic legislation and of treaties to which the US was a party. Besides, covert support would be of a piece with the hypocrisy and cynicism for which the United States was constantly denouncing the Soviet Union. And the point would not be lost on the world.

Provided that the Soviet Union used Cuba only as a political and not as a military base, the Castro regime should be viewed as a thorn in our flesh, not a dagger in our heart. If so, the real question was whether Castro could in fact succeed in providing a better life for the Cuban people; and whether he could do a better job in this respect in Cuba than the US and its friends could do elsewhere in Latin America. It would be a fatal confession of failure in ourselves and our values if we decreed that Castro must go because he might succeed.

What the US had to do immediately, Fulbright suggested, was to address itself to the sadly neglected political orientation of its economic aid program. Insofar as they had political content at all, these programs had usually been keyed to support a given government in power, and too often this had been a traditional, oligarchical government on its way out.

We must sometime stop supporting governments which paid lip service to social reforms, but which did not really have it in their hearts. We must perforce deal with these governments, but if they could not be corrected in their ways, they were going to be overthrown. We must make it clear to them that the time for conversion was growing short; that if they were converted to the cause of genuine social reform, we would help them; but that if they were not, we did not propose to be overthrown with them.

So much for the main lines of the memorandum.

When President Kennedy finished reading it, there was some general talk about its contents, and that was that. Only not quite. Days later, at four o'clock in the afternoon, the homebound Presidential plane was taxiing to a stop on its Washington runway when the

MAY 14, 1962

President turned to Fulbright and remarked that there was going to be a meeting about the Cuban business at 5:30 in the State Department and that he would like Fulbright to be present and repeat his arguments.

At the meeting, Allen Dulles for the CIA spoke as though the Cuban invasion had already been agreed to. The generals pronounced the project militarily feasible. And so it went down the line with all voices expressing particular kinds of support – or indifference – until it came Fulbright's turn. He was the only man in the room who didn't owe President Kennedy anything, or didn't depend on his sufferance. He was opposed, and when he was through speaking there was dead silence.

After the Cuban fiasco, Fulbright was present at a meeting in the White House to consider how the mess could be cleaned up. He argued for the line of action expressed in the latter portions of his March 29 memorandum – a line which seemed later on to find an echo in President Kennedy's speeches to Latin American diplomats. As the meeting broke up, the President turned to the Senator and said within earshot of other persons present: "You are the only person in this room who has a right to say, 'I told you so'."

Scapegoat for the Right

Fulbright has not hesitated to forward ideas to the White House. Last year, he submitted a memorandum arguing against any military involvement in Laos. Another communication, which had a bearing on the Berlin crisis, provided the President with precise information about the status of the Vatican City and how it was created. In another, he promoted the idea that the Dominican government could be made the gem of the Caribbean – this, by encouraging the new government to take over all the Trujillo family holdings and operate them as a trust for the Dominican people under a quasi-governmental agency like the TVA or the Port of New York Authority.

Meanwhile, Fulbright, who had struggled for years to get foreign aid put on a long-term financing basis, achieved a legislative breakthrough when he managed the Senate fight for the Administration's aid bill of last year. He carried the bill through the Foreign Relations Committee in substantially the form he wanted. He was only slightly less successful with the Senate as a whole. The difficulty was with the House. Nonetheless, enough margin was left in the Senate version of the bill when the Conference Committee got through with it, so that a precedent to build on was established for use in this year's fight.

All this to no one's very great surprise, attracted the fire of the Radical Right. And it was in the course of meeting that fire that Fulbright provided the Congress, the Administration, and the nation with a vision

of where America stood and what was expected of it. He arose in the Senate on June 29, 1961, to voice "Some Reflections Upon Recent Events and Continuing Problems." Certain people, he said, felt that the lesson to be drawn from Laos was that the US should be prepared to commit its military strength to the active defense of its policies anywhere outside the Communist empire. The real lesson, however, was that "nothing would please the Communist leaders more than to draw the US into costly commitments of its resources to peripheral struggles." Nor, as in the case of Cuba, would we gain anything if we tried to beat the Communists at their own game.

To do this, said Fulbright, would be to miss the point of the struggle. Ours is not a system to be imposed by force after the Communist manner. It is a permissive system; its values "imply our adherence not only to liberty and individual freedom, but also to international peace, law and order, and constructive social purpose." We seek only to "help others remain independent and safe from foreign domination." It is to our credit that the world judges the US and the Soviet Union according to a double standard, demanding of us a higher order of conduct.

The line of reasoning did not end with this speech. In amplifying his theme not long after, he observed that in a world piled high with explosive thermonuclear weapons, the danger of a head-on collision between the US and Russia could be avoided only on two conditions. First: we must make crystal clear that we possess both the power and the will to defend our vital interests; secondly, we must distinguish clearly, in our minds, between interests that *are* vital, on which we can make no concessions, and those that are merely desirable, on which we can afford to be flexible. "I firmly believe," he said, "that we have vital interests for which we would have to go to war if there were no alternative but surrender. I also believe that thermonuclear war, which, as the Secretary of Defense has said, could cause the deaths of 50 million Americans, should not be undertaken in blind frustration or passion, or in response to provocations that are marginal, or for any purpose as long as there is a reasonable possibility of successful negotiations."

If these were fighting words to the wild men on the Right they were mild compared to what he later said about "political" Generals.

All last year he had been collecting evidence of the way military men like General Edwin A. Walker were using "alerts" and "seminars" to indoctrinate the civil population on the virtues of blind passion as the way to solve all problems. Soon he had a mass of material in hand – naming names, places, subjects, and textual content. These he attached to a memorandum addressed privately to the Secretary of Defense,

along with recommended changes in the National Security Council Directive of 1958 on the use of military personnel for propaganda work.

"Perhaps it is far-fetched," wrote Fulbright, "to call forth the revolt of the French generals as an example of the ultimate danger" in our right-wing radicalism. "Nevertheless, military officers, French and American, have some common characteristics rising from their profession and there are numerous military 'fingers on the trigger' throughout the world." The real need is for a deeper understanding of what the struggle is all about. "There is no reason to believe that military personnel generally can contribute to this need, beyond their specific, technical competence to explain their own role. On the contrary, there are many reasons, and some evidence, for believing that an effort by the military, beyond this limitation, involves considerable danger."

Fulbright therefore recommended that the National Security Council Directive of 1958, authorizing military personnel to reinforce the cold war effort by their own propaganda activities, should be reconsidered from the standpoint of "a basic error—that military personnel have the necessarily broad background which enable them to relate the various aspects of the cold war effort one to the other." He proposed a re-examination of the organization, mission, and operation of the National War College; a similar re-examination of the relationship between the Foreign Policy Research Institute, the Richardson Foundation, the National War College and the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and long-range studies that could develop a program for educating promising military officers more broadly.

Then, when the news of his memorandum's existence led to a Senate row where Fulbright produced the whole text, he went before the National War College on August 21 to speak about "Public Policy and Military Responsibility." It was not his purpose, he said, "to silence military officers who choose to express their own views in public and who are subject to the discipline of their superiors and their own sense of duty and propriety." His purpose was to check the improper action of officers of the armed services "who permitted their prestige and official status to be exploited by persons with extreme views on highly controversial political issues."

"In most democratic societies," said Fulbright, "there are differences in spirit and mood between the professional soldier and the politician or statesman. The politician must move tentatively in an atmosphere in which goals and means often become mixed. Only in the most general terms does he have predefined objectives, and excessive precision will only make movement difficult. . . . In military arrangements flexibility is a necessary evil and ambiguity may easily cost lives; in politics

flexibility is the first rule and ambiguity an essential instrument. In considerations such as these lie the wisdom and justification for civilian supremacy and military professionalism."

Senators Barry Goldwater and Strom Thurmond were aghast. They accused him of advocating "inaction on all major cold war fronts," trying to make the "policy of nonintervention under any circumstances a national policy," timidly shying away from "total victory," foolishly paying attention to "an ephemeral something called world opinion," and making "a clandestine assault on the fundamental foundations of our republic" by seeking to "muzzle" military officers critical of the Administration's foreign and domestic policies." The shouts were re-echoed in Arkansas.

"Not Since Adlai Stevenson . . ."

But as Fulbright had drawn on his strength in Arkansas to say what he felt in Washington, he drew on his strength in Washington to say what he felt the people of his state had a right to hear about how their interests were bound up with positions he had taken on international questions.

"It seems to me," he told the Arkansas Chamber of Commerce, "that it is the extremists who are 'soft'—not on Communism, but 'soft' in judgment and 'soft' in their prescriptions for what we must do to meet the Communist challenge. Their oversimplifications and their baseless generalizations reflect the 'softness' of those who cannot bear to face the burdens of a continuing struggle against a powerful and resourceful enemy. . . . These extremists call themselves 'conservative.' In my judgment their views are not conservative, they are simply unrealistic. The true conservative is one who wishes to conserve the historic traditional values of our society. He recognizes that the world does not stand still and that, because it does not, we must at times modify and reform traditional practices through orderly constitutional processes of change, in order to adapt them to new conditions. Social and economic progress is thus seen to be the indispensable means of preserving traditional values in a changing world."

When he had finished one of his recent electioneering tours through the Southeastern part of the state, talking in this vein, the *Pine Bluff Commercial* had an editorial judgment to pass: "Not at least since Adlai Stevenson in 1952 has anybody gone to the voters with so few apparent reservations, so little condescension to the popular taste in political issues and so strong an addiction to the realities of American policy, foreign and domestic." And, said the editorial, the most remarkable part about it all is—his audiences "were listening and being convinced."