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## Thurmond vs. Fulbright

Superficially, at least, Senator Strom Thurmond won a victory when the Senate Armed Services Committee voted to conduct the investigation he has demanded into alleged intimidation of generals and admirals who want to speak their minds about communism.

But the terms of reference adopted by the committee are such that a properly conducted "study and appraisal" would necessarily have to include also the charges raised by Senator J. W. Fulbright in his now famous memorandum to the Secretary of Defense. Such a balanced investigation could be useful and might lead to results quite other than those anticipated by Senator Thurmond and the extreme right wingers who support him.

Senator Fulbright's principal recommendation was that a 1958 National Security Council directive be revised. That directive had ordered the use of military personnel and facilities to arouse the public "to the menace of the cold war." Senator Fulbright argued that this was a basic error since "there is little in the education, training or experience" of most military officers to equip them for discussions that would unavoidably touch on internal American politics. Even if they were so equipped, military officers by the very

nature of their position should rigorously refrain from such discussions.

Senator Fulbright charged that the implementation of the 1958 directive had resulted in military sponsorship and aid for programs that were essentially forums for right-wing radicalism, for efforts aimed at indoctrinating the American people with ideas quite contrary to national policy during either the Eisenhower Administration or the Kennedy Administration.

If the Senate inquiry looks into the Fulbright charges as well as those of Senator Thurmond, and if it does so in a dispassionate manner, some considerable good may yet come out of this affair. For it is certain that the spirit of American political institutions is much more in consonance with Mr. Fulbright's reasoned criticisms than with Mr. Thurmond's flamboyant bombast.