

**J. William Fulbright Oral History Interview—JFK#2, 7/8/1964**  
Administrative Information

**Creator:** J. William Fulbright  
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**Biographical Note**

Fulbright was a senator from Arkansas (1945-1975), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (1959-1975), and namesake of the Fulbright Program. In this interview, he discusses the 1961 “Muzzling the Military” memorandum limiting political activity by members of the military, several Foreign Agents Registration Act cases, U.S. relations with the Soviet Union, and an October 1963 trip to Arkansas that Fulbright took with John F. Kennedy, among other issues.

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J. William Fulbright—JFK#2

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Second of Two Oral History Interviews

with

J. William Fulbright

July 8, 1964  
Washington D.C.

By Pat Holt

For the Kennedy Presidential Library

HOLT: Senator, in the summer of 1961 you sent a memorandum to Secretary McNamara [Robert S. McNamara] concerning the policy of clearing and editing speeches made by high-ranking military officers. This came to be known as the “muzzling the military” memorandum, and it led, as I recall, to a reversal of a National Security Council order which had been issued during the Eisenhower Administration [Dwight D. Eisenhower]. Do you recall ever discussing this with President Kennedy [John F. Kennedy]?

FULBRIGHT: Yes. Of course, the principal person concerned was Secretary McNamara. The origin of that memorandum was certain speeches that had been made in my state, specifically at Fayetteville and at Fort Smith and Little Rock, Arkansas. The one that was especially offensive was one at Fort Smith. The speech was not

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made by the military—the general in command of Port Chaffee there—but he was present and on the platform, and it was sponsored, as I recall it, by a subcommittee of the Chamber of Commerce involved in national affairs, and the General in charge of the Port (which was a very important installation at that time; it has since been cut down a bit) lent his presence and

prestige to the meeting. There were two or three highly inflammatory speeches there, as I recall it; one of them by a Mr. Morris [Robert J. Morris] who used to be on the staff of the Internal Security Subcommittee of the Committee in the Senate and later ran for office in New Jersey and was at that time president of Dallas University; and also by a man from Harding College. They took a very extreme view about many things, but particularly

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the Congressman, Congressman Trimble [James W. Trimble], of that district, who is a highly respected citizen and has been representing that congressional district—the Third Congressional District in Arkansas—for nearly twenty years. And the purport of this speech was that he was, if not a communist, very close to being one, and I think the statements were made that his voting record was on all fours with the Communist program, which they equate to socialism. I believe they put it, “his socialist program which helps the communists.” Such statements as that. I can’t recall exact statements but they are in the record, and I quoted this incident along with many others in the memorandum. This was the beginning of the memorandum. One of my aides, Mr. Yingling, had then made some research and found that this type of activity was going on in many parts of the

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United States. I recall that some rather startling statements had been made in meetings in Pensacola, Florida, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and out on the West Coast. Often they were made by retired military officers and sometimes by active military officers. Sometimes the military officers were part of the sponsoring committees in these cases. This was supposed to be in accordance with the directive, as you mentioned, of the Defense Department to educate the people of this country about communism and how to fight communism and its nature, et cetera. It struck me, and I believe the record showed, that they were extremely right-wing, if you like, or very, very critical of our own national policies, and I thought it was a role which was not appropriate for the military to be involved

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in. And the memorandum is a rather long one. I won’t repeat it here. It’s a matter of record. It was put in the Congressional Record and was discussed by many people, specifically Senator Thurmond [Strom Thurmond], who took offense at this, and made a number of speeches attacking me and the memorandum on the floor of the Senate. All of this is in the public domain. And I, of course, followed that up with a speech to the National War College, outlining as best I could the justification for it, and making primarily the point that this type of activity, I thought, was quite inappropriate for military authorities. I did discuss this with President Kennedy. Of course, I sent a copy of it to President Kennedy, and he was aware of it, and it is my distinct impression that he felt the point that I made with regard to the memorandum was a correct one. I don’t

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recall if they formally—in any formal manner—reversed the directive. Most of the activities, as you know, of the National Security Council are not public. They're not given to the press. But in any case, this kind of activity certainly (it didn't cease altogether) stopped with regard to the active military. Now such people as General Walker [Edwin A. Walker] and others who were completely retired and no longer under any kind of control or influence with the Defense Department continued to make, and are still making, speeches of this kind, and they often refer to this memorandum, as you say, as a "muzzling memorandum." I don't think that's the correct way to describe it. We weren't seeking to muzzle the military in any field in which it's appropriate for them to enlighten the American people, but I believed, and still believe, that they were going far afield from their proper role.

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HOLT: On August the 11th of that year, President Kennedy told his press conference that you had performed a public service in preparing and sending this memorandum. Did he ever say anything of that nature to you personally that you recall? Or was there any other conversation with him on this subject?

FULBRIGHT: Well, as I have indicated, I discussed it with him and he expressed approval. He thought, also, that the military should not become engaged (active military people) in this kind of highly controversial political matters. I am sure he did approve of it. I don't recall the specific words or the exact date. During that period, I used to see him fairly often. I don't identify the precise date. I'd have to consult with the record as to when I saw him.

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HOLT: You did not see him very much during this period. You saw him on August the first, but this was for ten minutes during a ceremony in the Cabinet Room on the 15th anniversary of the Fulbright Act and I doubt if it would have come up then. You saw him again on August the 19th when there was a ceremony welcoming Secretary Dillon [C. Douglas Dillon] back from the Punta del Este Conference and a reception following. Well, let's turn now to the Foreign Relations Committee's investigation of the Foreign Agents Registration Act. There were two registered foreign agents that the committee concerned itself with that have particular relevance here. Or rather, there were two foreign agents; one registered and one not. The one who was not registered was Mr. Cassini [Igor Cassini] who, as you know, was subsequently indicted.

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He had very close connections with the Kennedy family. Did his case ever come up in any conversations you had with the President?

FULBRIGHT: Yes, I went to see the President specifically about that case at one point.

I don't suppose that it is necessary to repeat the circumstances because, as you have already stated, he was indicted, he had failed to register, and we had had hearings—executive hearings—at some length in the committee about his case, and we had rather thorough documentary evidence as to some of his activities in the Dominican Republic. I told the President about some aspects of it. I might, for the record, state that Mr. Cassini's wife [Charlene Wrightsman Cassini], who was the daughter of the neighbor of President Kennedy's father's [Joseph P. Kennedy, Sr.] place—I mean, their places adjoined in Palm Beach—she was the

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daughter of a Mr. Wrightsman [Charles B. Wrightsman], who owned the place next to Mr. Kennedy (President Kennedy's father, in other words, who was Joseph Kennedy). It was through this social connection, friendly connection, that Cassini came into the picture and was, of course, well known to the Kennedys. We believed that he would seek to, possibly seek to, embarrass the President and his family in the course of a trial. And I thought the President ought to be aware of what we knew about the case. And I told him what we knew about it. That was the extent of it. And, of course, he knew very little about it. He, I think, was quite unaware of the activities—many of the activities, at least—of Mr. Cassini with regard to his representation of Mr. Trujillo [Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina]. I don't know that he was unaware of *any* connection with

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him, but I think he was unaware of the major part of the activities. He was unaware that he was, in effect, in the employ of—that Cassini was in the employ of—Trujillo. I think he thought he was a friend of his, because Cassini, as you know, was Cholly Knickerbocker of the *New York Herald Tribune* syndicate, and was a...

HOLT: *New York American*, wasn't it? *Journal-American*, I think.

FULBRIGHT: Perhaps it is the *New York Journal-American*. But he was a well known figure in what's called "cafe society." This is, of course, Igor Cassini, I believe—the one who has a brother named Oleg Cassini who is a dress designer. And I thought it was proper that the President be aware of some of the background material, and I took the occasion to tell him about

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it, and that was it. I spent quite a while filling him in on the information that had been developed.

HOLT: What was his reaction?

ULBRIGHT: Well, he was disturbed about it. But so far as I know, he made no—I

mean, he certainly didn't say so, nor did anything subsequently develop, to indicate that he sought to protect Cassini in any way. And as you know, Cassini finally, for practical purposes, pled guilty. He pled it, I believe, *nolo contendere* which is "no defense." He didn't contest it. That was the way it was disposed of. But he showed no disposition to want to protect Cassini at all in the course of these conversations.

HOLT: When you say, "he was disturbed about it," do you remember anything in particular that he said or did that would indicate...?

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FULBRIGHT: Well, he was disturbed. He was surprised and disturbed that this man whom he had known primarily, as I say, in a social way because his wife (Cassini's wife) was a friend, and his wife's father and mother were friends of the family, and he was obviously very disturbed that he would be involved in this kind of criminal activity.

HOLT: The other foreign agent that we were concerned with that brought the White House into the picture was General Julius Klein, and the connection there was through his connections in Germany and the relationship which he had, or purported to have, with the German Government of Chancellor Adenauer [Konrad Adenauer]. To refresh your recollection, there's a memorandum that Carl Marcy [Carl M. Marcy] wrote of a conversation he had with Secretary Rusk [Dean Rusk] and Undersecretary George Ball [George W. Ball] about the matter. I wondered if this Klein case ever came

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up in any conversations you had with the President?

FULBRIGHT: I do not recall that I spoke to the President personally about this. I remember discussing it with Secretary Rusk, but I don't believe that I discussed it personally with President Kennedy. He had, as far as I know, no direct personal knowledge or interest in Julius Klein's activities.

HOLT: Did you have any other discussion with the President about the foreign agents investigation generally?

FULBRIGHT: Well, I recall discussing with him the case of Mr. O'Donnell, and outlined to him what was involved in that, and told him—it was a very difficult case to handle because it involved so many members of the Congress. And, of course, this all, as you know, later became public. But I—just as you well know—I discussed it with the leadership of the Congress

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itself before making anything public about that case. And I remember distinctly discussing that with him, so that he wouldn't be caught by surprise. I thought that this involved so many different people that it ought to be put in perspective, and I told him about it. He never at any point ever suggested that we drop the investigation or stop it. He thought it was a good thing, that it was a very healthy thing.

HOLT: Did he have any other reaction to the O'Donnell case?

FULBRIGHT: Well, other than that he wasn't quite as surprised as I had thought he'd be. He was very experienced about politicians.

HOLT: Let's turn now to the question of foreign aid and specifically the matter of the reorganization of the foreign aid program which President Kennedy proposed shortly after he came into office. This involved,

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as you will recall (aside from the bureaucratic reshuffling of changing ICA [International Cooperation Administration] to AID [Agency for International Development], and this sort of thing)—the main change was an attempt on the part of the Administration to secure long-term borrowing authority from Treasury for foreign development lending. And as I recall, that did pass—was approved—by the Senate and was finally lost in conference with the House. During all of this procedure, including the executive branch preparation of its proposals of AID reorganization, did you have any particular contacts or conversations with the President about this?

FULBRIGHT: I don't recall any specific conversation. But this question of long-term financing, I know that I did discuss with him and he was in favor of it, if we could get it. And we did, as you know, approve it in the Senate. The real obstacle there came in the

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House of Representatives and, more specifically, the Committee on Appropriations, which has taken the view that this type of long-term financing deprives them of their control—their annual review and annual power to limit this program. As I needn't tell you, it's a controversial program. All I can say is I know that he favored the proposals that the Senate passed, but he was unable to—we were unable to—get the House to go along. In discussing foreign aid, he was quite aware of the difficulties of it. He had been in the Senate, as you know. My principal function in this connection was to discuss it with him, and sometimes he could discuss the matter with people who were difficult and he helped in his own way in obtaining favorable action on it. But this type of conversation is not very dramatic and I don't remember specifically—it's sort of

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in the course of... Every time you'd see him, if you'd go there either formally or informally, or off the record, you'd discuss whatever was pending at the time. And I know that I discussed foreign aid with him as I did even with President Eisenhower on one or two occasions, because he took the same view. He was very favorable to foreign aid but had great difficulty with the House of Representatives, as we have every year. I don't recall any specific thing. I would advise him from time to time that perhaps a word to either a senator or member of the House committee who was concerned about it might be helpful, and I know that he went to considerable trouble on various occasions to invite members of the committee, and tried to help in getting the legislation through. This was the kind

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of thing that happened on various occasions, but I can't pinpoint the exact date.

HOLT: Did he ever make any comment to you about the result of a conversation he might have had with another senator at your suggestion, or even not at your suggestion, on this sort of thing? As for example, "Senator so and so is being difficult," or, "I've talked to Senator 'X' and he's going to be all right," or...

FULBRIGHT: Well, yes. I remember, of course, as you know, Senator Symington [Stuart Symington, II] was very difficult, particularly with regard to India which was a country that the President was deeply interested in. And after we'd talk about couldn't he influence Senator Symington, I can recall his saying, well, he talked to Stuart but he wasn't sure whether he had any effect or not.

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This was the kind of thing that would happen. He was a very close friend—knew Senator Symington well. I imagine that I can properly say a close friend. He was also a close friend of Senator Smathers [George A. Smathers] on the committee. The man who caused us the most trouble, as you well know—it's a matter of record—was Congressman Passman [Otto Ernest Passman] in the House. The President, I don't think, ever did have much influence on him, although he tried.

HOLT: Did he ever comment to you on the results of his efforts with Congressman Passman?

FULBRIGHT: Well, it was hopeless—fruitless. That's a mild way of putting it. I don't know how much further you want me to go on it because, as you know, he was a pain in the neck.

HOLT: I want you to go as far as you can remember what the President said.

This is all going to be impounded, if you want it impounded.

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FULBRIGHT: Well, it's a little difficult to trust your memory for the precise words of what he said that long ago. I know that he and I discussed this measure—it's the most difficult measure to come before the Foreign Relations Committee. I used to—on the phone very often—tell the President that such-and-such had developed, and that if he or one of his aides could find the time to talk to someone, perhaps it would straighten him out, or help straighten him out. That occurred quite often, just on the telephone. Because it was a difficult—as you well know, we had some difficult times.

HOLT: Well, let's turn now to the question of relations with the Soviet Union, nuclear testing, disarmament, et cetera. And unless you remember something prior to this occasion, I think probably the place to start is—  
on the

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first of September of 1961, the Soviets announced that they were resuming nuclear testing after the moratorium of two or three years. On the 31st of August, you and Senators Mansfield [Mike Mansfield], Dirksen [Everett M. Dirksen], Hickenlooper [Bourke B. Hickenlooper], Gore [Albert Gore, Sr.], Symington and the Vice President [Lyndon B. Johnson] spent an hour with President Kennedy. The subject of that meeting is not disclosed by the President's appointment record but since it came the day before the Soviet resumption of testing, or the announcing of the resumption of testing, that is a pretty good guess as to what the subject matter was. Do you remember anything about this?

FULBRIGHT: Well, I'm sorry I cannot recall that specific meeting. We had a number of these meetings, you know. The President would call down about the same group you mention, which they call the leadership group,

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and he would often advise us of what was about to break, or what was going on. And quite often it was just a briefing session. I don't recall anything that was said there. We had many of these meetings; we'd be told many developments by the Secretary of State—he was often there—and/or John McCone [John A. McCone], people like that. But few of them stand out unless there was something quite startling and unusual such as the meeting in October on the missile crisis—what was said there stands out, because it was very dramatic. So many of the other meetings were, I would call them routine briefing sessions and they weren't terribly dramatic. The resumption of nuclear testing is the type of thing that—why, all I can vaguely remember is that when we first heard of it, we thought, well, this is too bad, and we'll have to resume testing, and so on. And that's about what

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what it is. I don't recall any specific thing about it.

HOLT: Without going into specific meetings or that sort of thing, the Soviets resumed testing in September of '61, and there followed a period of several months during which there was great public discussion and debate in this country as to whether we should resume, which we finally did. Do you remember any conversations with the President during this period about the general problem of the resumption of nuclear testing and what our reaction ought to be?

FULBRIGHT: No, I don't think I had any conversations about that particularly. In this nuclear field, until the test ban treaty finally was developed, I didn't normally talk to him about this. This, as you know, is a subject matter that largely concerned the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. They took specific interest in it, and I don't recall having any conversation with him about it.

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HOLT: Well, going beyond the period of nuclear testing, and coming now to the negotiation and signing and ratification of the Test Ban Treaty, are there any conversations or contacts you had with him during this period and, specifically, with respect to the Treaty? Do you recall?

FULBRIGHT: Well, I can't recall whether I saw him before or after going to Moscow and the signing of that, but I remember that we discussed that—the Treaty—and I was very much for it as he was, of course. There was a difference of opinion, as you know, about it within the government in the military. The President was very keen for it. I'm not sure whether I saw him before—I think we went over in August of—was that August?

HOLT: You went to Moscow in early August of 1963.

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FULBRIGHT: That was just a—yes, my goodness, it's nearly a year ago. And I remember having a discussion with him and I can't place it—whether it was before or after, but I was very strong for that treaty. I thought it was an excellent step forward, just as I was strong for the Antarctic Treaty. You remember the controversy we had about that some time before. And the opposition to the Antarctic Treaty was quite similar to the Test Ban Treaty. It was more vigorous to the Test Ban Treaty; it attracted much more attention.

HOLT: That conversation you mentioned that you can't place as to whether it

was before or after you went to Moscow—regardless of the time, do you remember the substance of the conversation, or any details about it?

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FULBRIGHT: Well, I wouldn't say details, but the substance was that he considered this treaty an important step toward reaching a less tense, or a more relaxed, posture with regard to the Russians, and he considered it an important step forward in this direction. As you remember, when he first met Khrushchev [Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev] in Vienna when he came back from that meeting—I believe we discussed that.

HOLT: We did, in the last interview.

FULBRIGHT: He was *really* upset about that. He was extremely grim, and felt that Khrushchev was much tougher than he had expected him to be. And then, through intervening time there, when it came to the Test Ban Treaty, I distinctly recall that he was very pleased with this as a step toward changing their attitude.

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HOLT: Well, let's move now to the question of most favored nation treatment for Yugoslavia, which first came up in connection with the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, and was subsequently considered further in connection with the Foreign Aid Act of 1963. You felt very strongly about that and so did the Administration. Did you ever have any contacts with the President on this?

FULBRIGHT: Yes, I think I proposed to him (I believe I did in a conversation)—that the repeal of this provision that was put in the Trade Expansion Act, be added to the Foreign Aid Act and I would undertake to pass it that way. I was away, you'll recall it was my election year—and I was away when that Trade Expansion Act came up for action in the Senate.

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I was not here to oppose the provision withdrawing most-favored-nation treatment from Poland and Yugoslavia or to even vote against it. I believe I proposed to the President that the best way—the only way I had any opportunity to do anything about it—would be to put this on as an amendment to the Foreign Aid Act, because that original action, as you know, came through the tax committees, and would go to Finance, if you introduced a specific bill. In effect, it's a form of a rider, and I believe I proposed it to the President and he agreed this was a proper procedure, and that's the way it was done. And he recommended it, and supported it, as you know.

HOLT: Did you discuss with him—this is on another

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subject—the question of wheat sales to the Soviet Union, which first arose very shortly before his death?

FULBRIGHT: I'm not sure...

HOLT: There is, incidentally, a note in the record here that on October 9, 1963, from four to five o'clock in the afternoon, there was a bipartisan, legislative leaders off-the-record meeting with the President, with respect to wheat. This included you, Mansfield, Aiken [George D. Aiken] and others.

FULBRIGHT: I know that I was very strong for the wheat sale, you know that. The record shows it, and I testified before the Banking and Currency Committee and we did all we could to get the prohibition off of the Foreign Aid bill, and the Mundt [Karl Earl Mundt] bill resulted. I can vaguely remember discussing

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this at the White House. Of course, there's not much to discuss when you say, "I'm for it" and the President was in accord with it; he was for it too, and that was that. And there wasn't much we could pursue beyond that. There were several who were opposed, as you know, led by Senator Mundt. I don't remember the details other than that I know his position on it. I don't think any record was made. I used to make notes of these hearings—I mean these meetings—but I never did keep them. I'd bring them here and use them to refresh my memory until the disposal of that particular measure then I'd usually throw them away. Unfortunately, I've never kept a diary. One thing crowds the next out, and I can't remember exactly what was said, but I know his position on it.

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HOLT: One of his proposals—this is another subject—was for a Foreign Affairs Academy, and the Foreign Relations Committee held some hearings on this in 1963. Did you ever discuss this with him?

FULBRIGHT: Yes, I did. As I recall, ahead of that there was a proposal a year or two before that by Senator Mundt and others called the Freedom Academy, to teach people to fight communism. That was brought up at the very last minute, as I recall it, the last day or two of the session of whatever year it was—'61 maybe, or maybe even prior to that—brought up on the calendar. And I was opposed to it but prevailed upon not to object; that it couldn't possibly pass the House; it was too late. And it

passed on, as I recall it, on the call of the calendar. Well, then it was revived later. Senator Symington introduced a bill for the—it wasn't

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called the Freedom Academy, it was called the...

HOLT: The original Symington bill was for a Foreign Service Academy.

FULBRIGHT: Foreign Service Academy. There was a great deal of discussion. I discussed it with the President and told him why I was opposed to the setup—that is, the organization of the Board of Trustees, which I didn't agree with. Broadly speaking, it provided for what was called an independent board—that is, independent of the State Department and of the government, and yet it was to be a government organization. This was the particular area which we never were able to resolve. I told the President that if he could get Senator Symington to agree to the proposal which we suggested, that is, to put the Academy directly under the State Department;

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the Secretary of State, as I recall, was the—he wasn't the chancellor, but he was the chairman of the board of trustees, I guess was the office, wasn't it?

HOLT: He was ex-officio a member of the board, I believe, the chairman...

FULBRIGHT: In other words, I was trying to make the relationship of this academy to the Department very much the same that now exists with the PSI, and that exists with regard to the National War College. I said I would be willing to go along on that basis. And both the Secretary and the President undertook to discuss this with Senator Symington, and Senator Symington, if my memory serves me right, was not willing to go along that way and the matter never was acted upon. That was the starting point.

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HOLT: I take it the President was willing to go along.

FULBRIGHT: He was willing. Well, I'm under the impression that he, in the beginning, was willing to go either way. That is, the Administration, under Senator Symington's urging, and the State Department had sent up a bill which was very much along the line of an independent academy. I objected to that one aspect of it. And I was afraid then, and still am, that it would be distorted into a—what you call a Freedom Academy; that it was not designed, in my opinion, to improve the quality of the Foreign Service but would merely be an agency for what they call fighting communism

which is very much the same function as the CIA and other intelligence activities that we have now.

HOLT: Did the President accept this point of view in the end, or do you know?

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FULBRIGHT: It's my belief that the President was willing to accept my point of view if the Congress was willing, that is, if Senator Symington and the others interested in it were willing to do so. But we never could resolve the difference between Senator Symington and myself.

HOLT: Both you and the President were very much interested in the arts and culture and you were both interested in the construction of a cultural center in Washington and you both took an interest in the design of embassy chanceries abroad and this kind of thing. In this general field of culture and the arts, do you remember any conversations or contacts you had with the President?

FULBRIGHT: I know that I discussed the thing called the Cultural Center, which is now the Kennedy Center,

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with him and urged that he use his influence to help get that underway. We had, you know, made a commitment in a sense that when I introduced in the Senate the original bill to give the land for the site, we said we weren't going to ask for federal funds to build the building; that was to be raised privately. There was a lot of negotiation about the site. I tried to get the site which has been allocated to the Air Museum. There was a great deal of conversation back and forth, particularly, this was with Senator Anderson [Clinton P. Anderson]—not the President. This was before he was President; this started back in 1958. But when we got that through and when he became President, I talked to him about helping inspire

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private gifts for the furtherance of this project. He was very much interested in promoting the project. He was for the project very well, and as I recall it, he had meetings—well, in the first place, he's the one who got Roger Stevens [Roger L. Stevens], I think, who's a man of considerable energy and ability from New York, and with experience in this field, to be chairman of the board of trustees. And he strengthened it. He made some other appointments on that board, and he participated in appeals for funds for this project. Endorsed it, I think, on numerous occasions, I mean publicly as well as privately. But he was thoroughly in accord with it as being an important project and he was strongly for it. I can't remember the occasion but I'm almost certain that he had a gathering of

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people at the White House in support of this. I don't believe I was there at the one that I have in mind, but I think he had a big dinner of artists and so on, of people in this field; maybe it was a reception, I don't know which. Anyway, he was outspoken in his support of the Cultural Center.

HOLT: On the matter of the design of American embassies abroad, did you ever talk to him about that?

FULBRIGHT: I told him about Ed Stone [Edward Durrell Stone]. I told him about my growing up with Ed Stone, and that I thought that he was a very fine architect. He was, as you know, the architect for the Cultural Center. Ed Stone and I grew up in the same town, Fayetteville, Arkansas, and I've known him all my life. And still see him every now and then. I told him about the New Delhi Embassy which I had seen and hoped that someone like Stone could be brought in, not only

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for foreign embassies but particularly for government buildings here in this country. I remember telling about the Post Office in Fayetteville, my hometown, which is a terrible example of the most inappropriate and ungracious kind of public building you can think of. I complained to him about this and, well, he was sympathetic but I don't recall he offered any solution to it.

HOLT: Did he ever have any comment about the architecture or the design of public buildings in the United States?

FULBRIGHT: Well, I gathered that he was sympathetic to the point that many of them looked like prisons and that they were not very attractive in their appearance. They're functional, I guess. But the President, I don't remember that he did anything other than agree with the point that they ought to be improved.

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HOLT: Just one or two things more. You voted against the confirmation of Mr. McCone to be the director of the CIA in January of 1962. Did the President ever say anything about that?

FULBRIGHT: No, he never mentioned it to me.

HOLT: In October of 1963, I believe, you went with the President to Arkansas to dedicate the Greers Ferry Dam. Do you remember anything about that trip?

FULBRIGHT: Yes. We went down on his plane to the Air Force Base in Little Rock. Of course, the whole delegation was present, and, as is usual, we discussed all manner of subjects in general conversation. I remember a few things specifically. When we got off the plane at the air base, we were to get immediately on some helicopters to go to Greers Ferry, which is about sixty, seventy miles north of Little

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Rock. He got out of the plane; there was quite a crowd of people along the fence which fences off the runway from the rest of the grounds. And the President and the rest of us were going over toward the helicopters as we were directed to do, because there was no ceremony scheduled for that other than a very brief welcoming committee of about fifteen or twenty prominent citizens. We all went and shook hands with them; most of them I knew. That was very brief—no speeches or anything, just greetings, very brief statements, no formal ceremony. As we left there to go over toward the helicopter, the President went over toward the fence and started shaking hands with people all along the edge of the fence. And most of them, I think, were employees of the air base and their wives; that is, they were the technicians

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and other people. And I remember his calling to me—I was about half way over to the helicopter—calling to me and saying, “Come here. I’ve found a Fulbright over here.” You know these technicians have their names on their uniforms, and one of them he ran into was named Fulbright. I went over and, of course, shook hands with him and asked who he was. He was—well, if he was a relation, it was a very distant one. But the President in his usual way was extremely cordial and gracious to all these people, and shook hands with them. He was quite a few minutes, you know, going down the line. That was one little incident.

We got in the helicopters and went up to Greers Ferry. And on the way we talked a great deal about the development taking place there—

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Greers Ferry Dam—and I made an effort, and I succeeded in selling him on the idea of having the Army Engineers draw up plans and estimates for a water garden below Greers Ferry Dam. This has never been done, to my knowledge, on any government project, and I had a brochure that I had had prepared with the assistance of some of the students at the University of Arkansas. I showed it to the President and to Ken O’Donnell [Kenneth P. O’Donnell], I believe, who was with us, and General Wilson [Walter K. Wilson, Jr.], who was head of the Army Engineers. I had spoken to General Wilson before and he—the Army Engineers—took a dim view of this sort of thing. They didn’t think it had any utilitarian purpose, and so on. But the President spoke to him about it. He told him to go ahead and

make an estimate, see what it cost, and see if we could do it. And he did do it, and it is in the mill

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now. But this was one of my main selling jobs, specifically, on that trip. And then, of course, we talked a lot about the general conditions in Arkansas, how they'd improved, and so on.

We got up there and it was a beautiful day, and there was a big crowd. This is a small town—the town of Heber Springs is quite a small town. And this dam was some miles away from that, right out in the Ozark mountains. And it was all prepared, and the President made a very fine speech. The Governor, Faubus [Orval E. Faubus], in introducing him, made comments which were generally regarded as inappropriate and rude to a visiting guest, particularly with reference to civil rights—he called them civil wrongs—and so on. It was quite offensive to me and to nearly everyone else of the President's friends. And even to those who were very close to the Governor

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because they thought it was inappropriate and rude to a visitor, particularly the President of the United States. Strangely enough, the Governor's father was there. His name is Sam Faubus [John Samuel Faubus], who is quite a character from over at Greasy Creek, Arkansas. And he's a great fan of the President's. He made a point to come up and was introduced to the President. He complimented him very, very highly. There was a little bit of drama having the Governor there, and his father there, and I think practically nobody agreed with the Governor's comments under these circumstances. Whether or not they agreed with the substance of his comments, with what he said, they didn't agree with that. Anyway, after the delegates' speeches, which went off very well other than that incident, we adjourned to a big tent where they served fried

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chicken, which is a staple of that area. The President sort of fiddled with it and, I think, drank the tomato juice or something, then got up from the table in the tent and the next thing I knew I looked up and he was right out in the middle of the crowd. I mean, in the middle! Just right in the middle with no protection whatever. I've often thought of this in view of the assassination in Dallas, because anyone, I mean any one of a thousand or two thousand, could easily have done him harm right there without anyone possibly doing anything, because the poor Secret Service were lost in the crowd. They were trying to tag along, but that's what he wanted to do. And he was just out there shaking hands and talking with all these people, most of whom were mountaineer people from out of the

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mountains, local people there, I think—the major part of them. That's what he was out there for. And he spent the next—he never did eat his lunch. He just stayed out there until it was

time to go. Then we got back in cars and then we took a tour back across the dam and over to the field where we got in the helicopters and we went back to Little Rock. But he certainly—he was not concerned with any such thing as personal safety, in that respect. They were all gathered around, greeting him, shaking hands, joking, talking. We got back to Little Rock, which is only about a 20 minute, I guess, 20 or 30 minute flight. He made another speech. We landed at the air base—no, we didn't. We landed at the fairgrounds, that is, it was called the Livestock Show. We landed right

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there; they had a base for it. We landed there, and proceeded immediately to a prepared platform. He made another speech to a large crowd—I guess four or five thousand, it's hard for me to estimate; it may have been ten. And there were no incidents there. He was introduced and everything went on very well. And he took the helicopter back from there to the air base. I stayed on in Arkansas for the remainder of—I guess it was a weekend, at least for several days. I didn't come back to Washington. I last saw him on that trip when he left at the Livestock Show grounds. But he had a very good reception, excellent reception. He had big crowds, that is, big for our area. And he was pleased with it. It was a beautiful day, as I said, and he was extremely pleased with his reception,

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other than the comments of the Governor. And even that, I think, actually redounded to his own benefit because I remember one man, a very close associate of the Governor's, expressed his disapproval of this kind of action. Actually, I expect the President probably benefited from it rather than otherwise, because it aroused their sympathy and interest more than it might otherwise have been aroused. But as you know, he made excellent speeches on both occasions, on building the South, and his determination to help the Southern states to improve their economy, and their living conditions. Those speeches, of course, are all a matter of record, but he did very well indeed.

HOLT:                   Turning to another subject, is there anything you could say that's not on the public record and how, if at all, he used the Vice President in his relations with Congress?

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FULBRIGHT:           Well, I don't know. Of course, I knew the Vice President very well and I used to see him and talk to him about it. I don't know that the President was using him. I have no way of telling whether or not you could put it in that term that he "used" him. I mean, I knew the Vice President longer and better than I did the President, of course. So I wouldn't have any way of knowing that. I can remember being invited to those Tuesday morning leadership breakfasts on specific issues. Now that I think of it, when a bill like foreign aid or one of these matters that I speak of before, I now

recall that on three or four different occasions I was asked to breakfast. And at the time he discussed those things, the Vice President was usually there.

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HOLT: One thing more. Did you ever play golf with him?

FULBRIGHT: I played golf with him down in Florida. When he asked me down there—didn't we go all over that business about my...?

HOLT: ...The Bay of Pigs. Oh, the Secretary of State thing. We went over that in the earlier interview but we didn't talk about him as a golfer.

FULBRIGHT: I played golf with him, as I recall it, twice. Once at Seminole and once at Tequesta—that's a new golf course—T-E-Q-U-E-S-T-A—Dow Finsterwald used to be the pro there, maybe he still is. I think he was then. And the President was a good golfer. And there's a fellow named Chris Dunphy who was a friend of his. The President was a good golfer. We played about the same. And he liked to

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bet. I don't mean big sums, but he liked to bet, you know, a couple of dollars, or five dollars. I think he bet more than that with Dunphy; they had been betting a long time. But he liked to play for something. He was very competitive. And he liked to win. He had good form. He was a very strongly built fellow—had tremendously strong arms and legs. He was very well built. Surprisingly enough, he looked much stronger and better built undressed, while he was changing his clothes in the locker room. I remember I was quite surprised that he looked much more powerful without any clothes on than he did with his clothes. His clothes had the effect of making him look a little bit slim and kind of a slight build. Much, much more so than when he didn't have any clothes on. He looked much more powerful—particularly his arms

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and legs were very well developed, and were very powerful looking, and he was strong. He had very good form and he played a good game of golf. He was the kind of golfer that you could think, well, with a week's practice on his short game, would play a good game. He's like all of us who lay off and don't play very often; you're ragged with the delicate shots—I mean, around the green. He'd hit a good drive. He obviously was well-coordinated physically, extremely well coordinated.

HOLT: You said he liked to bet. Did he generally win or lose?

FULBRIGHT: As I recall it, he lost to Dunphy and I think he won from me. Not very

much, but as I recall, he won five dollars. And it seemed to please him very much.

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HOLT: I guess that does it unless you think of something.

FULBRIGHT: Well, it's hard to think of these things out of the clear. These things come to you, I mean, as you know, in a kind of—if you could bring them back. It's extremely difficult. So many things have, you know, crowded out your memories, unless there's some way to go back and bring it back by association it's very hard to recall it. Did I say where I was, what I was doing, when I heard of his assassination?

HOLT: No, and I wanted to ask you also about the last time you saw him.

FULBRIGHT: Well, the last time I really had a, you know, what I call a visit—with him, was that trip to Arkansas where we really, we talked about all sorts

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of things. On a trip like that you can discuss personalities, everybody, and the measures and all sorts of things. It's a, you know, all-embracing conversation. You see, you know, we'd see him maybe in a meeting, one of these leadership meetings—the leadership meetings, frankly, you don't get much of a personal relationship with the President. You have this crowd here and it's a very impersonal kind of briefing. It's like taking testimony before the Committee. You can't recall what somebody testified to; it all goes together.

What I was going to say, I was having luncheon at the F Street Club with Gene Black [Eugene Robert Black], you know, former president of the International Bank, and he was discussing going to the President to talk about, I think the importance of the IDA, and other matters such as that, but particularly IDA. We had had (just the two of us)—had had lunch there, and we had finished

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and were sitting out in the living room having a cup of coffee when the waiter came through and said, "The President's been shot." And that's the way—I remember that very well. And at first you couldn't—well, you're shocked, we weren't sure—it was very sketchy—weren't sure whether he was shot at or whether he'd been hit, or whether it was serious or not. And we sat there, and went in to look at the television in the other room. Of course, in just a few minutes it was all confirmed, but that's where I was. I remember it very well indeed. We were discussing then, I think Gene was planning to go see him about this matter the next day. Of course, that was that. And it was a terrible shock.

[END OF INTERVIEW #2]

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