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Senator Dirksen, an able practitioner of the political parlay, suffered no pain from the temporary suspension of the Foreign-Relations hearings his ploy arranged. It also just happened that the witness was Secretary of State Rusk who, for the first time in his placid career of throwing ~~uttering~~ pious platitudes on a world in flames, was undergoing a new experience, embarrassing questioning by Senators who, politely, were telling him they didn't believe him. Pressed for the first time about U.S. policy, he departed from the norms of diplomacy long enough to pointedly ask the Senators why they gave the President a blank check (as he interpreted the 1964 Vietnam resolution approving additional funds for that war to mean) if they didn't expect the President to cash it. Immediately Senators took steps to cancel the check, Senator Wayne Morse by introducing a resolution to formally deny payment; Senator George Aiken by drafting the legislation for price and wage controls, always unpopular, that a real war would require; and Senator Fulbright by a low-keyed, understated TV appearance in which his self-effacing, modest eloquence so quietly disarmed his interrogators they asked him practically no questions - not a single nasty one - and told millions listening in there was more to Vietnam than they were being told and some of what they were told was false. Then the entire Committee decided on an almost unheard of procedure: they

let their other responsibilities slide - abandoned their office chores, left the mail to their staffs, worked late and got up early and held their hearings in the difficult times of the day unDirksened. The first was televised nationally beginning wfx at the quite unSenatorial hour of 8:30 a.m. on February 4, 1966.