

Senate Wary to Put Hoover on Spot

By Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson

There was an important closed debate inside the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on whether to summon J. Edgar Hoover to testify regarding his fears that the Soviet-American consular treaty would increase espionage in the United States.

Hoover had written a letter to Secretary of State Rusk, which had the effect of withdrawing his objections to the treaty. But almost simultaneously he wrote a letter to his close friend, Sen. Karl Mundt (R-S.D.), listing many cases of Soviet espionage. This letter had the effect of knocking the props out from under the first letter and from under the treaty.

Senate members of the Committee, therefore, wanted to ascertain which letter represented Hoover's real view. Some of them were also concerned about the fact that American foreign policy was being set by the top policeman of the United States. Many Senators have been critical of the fact that foreign dictatorships have had their policies set by the secret police, not only in Nazi Germany, but more recently in Latin American governments.

Yet the United States was permitting the head of the FBI to knock down one of the most important foundation stones of President Johnson's new

policy of easing tensions with European Communist nations. The President has argued that if the world's two chief atomic powers—the U.S. and U.S.S.R.—can get along together, there will be no World War III. Yet the consular treaty, which the United States took the initiative in negotiating with Russia, has been stymied for two years because of Hoover's objection.

When Chairman Fulbright (D-Ark.) wrote Hoover recently asking him to testify before the Committee in order to straighten out his views, the FBI chief wrote back that his appearance was up to Acting Attorney General Ramsey Clark. Sen. Fulbright therefore proposed, in a closed session, that he be authorized to write Clark and ask him to send Hoover before the Senate Committee. One Senator, Frank Lauche (D-Ohio), seemed reluctant to have Hoover put on the spot at all, but finally went along with the proposed letter.

Other Senators, remembering that Hoover had ducked out of two previous invitations to testify, were eager to have the Committee to go on record that Hoover must be called, whether he wanted to go or not.

Note: When Sen. Ed Long (D-Mo.) "invited" Hoover to appear before the Senate Wiretapping Subcommittee in order to ascertain whether he or Bobby Kennedy had been re-

sponsible for wholesale wiretapping, Hoover declined.

Grissom No Trained Seal

Friends of the veteran space explorer, Gus Grissom, one of the three victims of the tragic flash fire aboard the Apollo spacecraft he was supposed to command, recall one sour episode in his career as an astronaut.

He was ordered on June 25, 1965, to attend a watermelon festival in Hampton, S. C., to honor Rep. L. Mendel Rivers (D-S.C.), the white-haired House Armed Services Chairman.

Reluctantly, Grissom agreed to attend, along with Astronauts John Glenn and John Young. The crew-cut Grissom was notified that he would be called upon to say a few words as spokesman for the trio and would be expected to praise Rep. Rivers.

The astronaut, an Air Force officer, did as he was commanded, putting in a good word for Rivers, then going on to extol the moon program. Afterward, he complained to friends that he didn't enjoy doing a trained-seal act for a politician. Grissom quietly served notice on his superiors that he never again wanted to be used for political purposes.

Those same superiors, impressed with Rivers' power over military legislation, have always hastened to do his bidding. In October 1965, the

Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretaries of the three services, and a host of other military dignitaries took time out from the Vietnam war to fly to Charleston, S.C., to help unveil a bust of Rivers. The previous year, the same glittering assemblage turned up in the tiny town of St. Stephen, S.C., to help celebrate "L. Mendel Rivers Day." On several other occasions, the Navy has discreetly loaded Rivers into an ambulance and whisked him off to the Bethesda Naval Hospital to sober up.

Ted Looks to 1972

Sen. Edward Kennedy, younger brother of the late President, has started wooing Southern leaders very much as JFK did before he got the presidential nomination. Last week the young Senator from Massachusetts paid his respects to Gov. John J. McKeithen when the Louisiana Governor arrived in Washington for the Mardi Gras ball.

The meeting was cordial but not without some sage advice.

"You and your brother ought to get behind the President and give him some help," said Gov. McKeithen. "Right now, thanks to this war in Vietnam, he needs it. But when the war is over, he won't need you any more than he needs a third leg."

Sen. Kennedy listened, but made no comment. At least he did not disagree.