**Text of Fulbright's Statement and Excerpts From Morse's on Tonkin Incidents**

**Fulbright Statement**

Secretary of Defense McNamara charged yesterday that any suggestion that the United States induced the incident of 4 August as an excuse to attack North Vietnam was "monstrous." I agree with the Secretary that any suggestion would be monstrous, but it is equally monstrous to insinuate that any member of the committee holds such an opinion.

What Mr. McNamara has done is to impugn the integrity of the committee by suggesting that it believes there was a deliberate, planned conspiracy on his part to create the Gulf of Tonkin incident.

I want to make it perfectly clear that to the best of my knowledge no member of the Foreign Relations Committee either in statement, or suggestion, or by implication has indicated a belief there was a deliberate conspiracy to create the Gulf of Tonkin crisis. I want also to make it clear that the staff study prepared for this committee contains no suggestion that there was a planned conspiracy involved.

Mr. McNamara does a disservice to this committee and to the truth to suggest that any member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee holds such an opinion. He suggests a straw man in order to knock it down.

In time, the committee will respond in full to the statement given to the press by Secretary McNamara. This statement was released, in spite of my request that he withhold it at least until the committee had an opportunity to consider it. I regret that Mr. McNamara saw fit to disclose only one side of the story.

The Secretary has not seen fit to declassify information relating to sonar on the Maddox; he has kept secret important communications from the task force that indicated doubt about the reported attack on Aug. 4, but released communications that served his purpose. He refers to highly classified information but omits that which serves his purposes.

**Deception Charged**

Secretary McNamara's statement is a classic example of selective declassification of security material. Everything related to the Tonkin incidents is "secret" except that which the Pentagon deems should be made public. This, I believe, deceives the American public.

Security classification is intended to protect the nation from an enemy, not to protect one branch of Government against another or the public, not to protect the American people from knowledge of mistakes.

I do not accept as valid the view of Mr. Arthur Sylvester, the former press officer of the Pentagon, that the Government has a right to lie to the people of this country.

**Morse Remarks**

I want to say in general comment first, Mr. President, that the Secretary of Defense's testimony before the committee on Aug. 6, 1964, was inaccurate in many respects and it was inaccurate yesterday in many respects. I do not question his dedication to the policies of the Administration. In that respect, he is one of the most dedicated public servants we have. But he has been dedicated in carrying out wrong policies, and policies that are going to rise to the discredit of the history of the Republic.

Mr. President, on Aug. 6, 1964, the Secretary of Defense said before the Committee on Foreign Relations: "Our Navy played absolutely no part in, was not associated with, was not aware of, any South Vietnam actions, if there were any.

I digress to ask, did he mean to imply there that the Secretary of Defense was not aware of them? He was aware of them and had been aware of them days before he testified on Aug. 6, 1964, and the record of his own department convicts him of that awareness.

He went on with his testimony, as follows: "The Maddox was operating in international waters, was carrying out a routine patrol."
May I say under the facts and circumstances that existed, as I said in speeches on Aug. 5, and repeat today, the United States was a provocateur in the incident with the North Vietnamese, we were in a position where, as I know today, there is no knowledge of any South Vietnamese action in connection with the two islands that Senator Morse referred to. He cannot explain it either on the basis of lack of knowledge, the records of his own Department of Defense, or on the contrary evidence. What do the facts show?

Shoddy Performance

History will record in regard to our involvement in the shoddy performance in the Gulf of Tonkin, where our ships in the Pentagon building apparently think it was proper to wave that flag and to surround the presiding officer’s desk into tatters and give the impression that we were out on the high seas but had a right to do what we want to do.

Do not forget that we can commit an act of aggression on the high seas. Do not forget that we can be provocateurs on the high seas. Being on the high seas does not justify a course of action which is contrary to the principle of the Gulf of Tonkin incident, which led to the unfortunate resolution voted for by the Senate. I would have to “go for broke.” As for the second incident itself, Mr. McNamara told the committee that there was no doubt that the attack on the Maddox and the Turner Joy had taken place as described. He even told the committee that two North Vietnamese PT boats had been destroyed. His testimony gave no indication that there was any doubt as to what had occurred. The reports, however, show that as the hours went on after the second incident that the increasing concern that the attack may not have taken place.

Within a few hours after the attack, and contrary to what had been reported that the contacts did not stop but to grow to the incident. The first reaction of skepticism about the incidents came from the naval communications center in the Philippines. Subsequently, doubts came from the ships themselves. The operational commander of the two ships aboard the Maddox cabled that “““‘The above patrol will: (A) declared our position as international waters by the United States base upon a 12-mile limit from time to time during the operation of the so-called routine patrol of the destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin. Generally, I was at the time, consisting of both the National Guard and trained crews, bombarding the islands of North Vietnam by North Vietnamese, it might possibly assist by drawing patrol vessels of the North Vietnamese forces away from the South Vietnamese operations. This again shows that the attack on the Maddox was contrary to the testimony of Secretary McNamara. Patrol instructions issued in January, 1964, in part were: ‘The closest approach to the coast of North Vietnam is 15 nautical miles. The closest point of approach of North Vietnam coast is 8 miles, CPA (Closest Point of Approach) to the North Vietnamese islands is 4 miles.’ If we hold to the point of view that we were bound only by a 3-mile limit, our ships were always in international waters. But do not forget that there is another point of view—of the enemy, namely. They do not, they do not, they take the position—the Secretary of Defense is correct. I do not think I have said anything that has not been published, with this kind of activity on the part of our destroyers, which was not a routine patrol, that constituted an act of aggressive action on the part of the United States, that constituted a hostile action, that it constituted an action on the part of the United States seeking to try to get the North Vietnamese to involve themselves in a dispute with us, entirely uncalled for, if peace was what we wanted, entirely uncalled for, if, what we were trying to do was to find some way to bring an end the very unfortunate holocaust we got ourselves involved in.

Beginning of Escalation

That was really the beginning of the incident. I have the Americans people remember that prior to the Gulf of Tonkin incident the Administration did not produce witnesses before the Committee on Foreign Relations.

On Aug. 15, 1964, and henceforth, we were in a position where, as I know today, there is no knowledge of any South Vietnamese action in connection with the two islands that Senator Morse referred to. He cannot explain it either on the basis of lack of knowledge, the records of his own Department of Defense, or on the contrary evidence. What do the facts show?

Not Informed

It was not informed of, was not aware of, had no evidence that as far as I know today there is no knowledge of any South Vietnamese action in connection with the two islands that Senator Morse referred to. He cannot explain it either on the basis of lack of knowledge, the records of his own Department of Defense, or on the contrary evidence. What do the facts show?

Dr. Morse referred to.

Mr. President, not with destroyers, and the Secretary knows it. With respect to the Navy’s knowledge of South Vietnam’s operation against North Vietnam, first, on July 15, 1964, in approving the patrol of the type we carry out all over the world at all times.

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