

Fulbright's View on War Funds

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Sen. J. William Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said he thinks a majority of the Senate is now opposed to the war in Vietnam and will vote to restrict funds for it.

The Arkansas Democrat said that even if the House fails to agree to it he believes such a Senate vote — which could come within 10 days — would persuade President Nixon "to go to a conference and settle the war."

"He would surely feel then it was time to re-evaluate his policy," Fulbright said.

Here are questions and answers in an interview with the Associated Press, conducted a few hours before President Nixon's news conference Friday night.

Q. What kind of a constitutional crisis do you think we are in?

A. It's the profound difference of view on policy between the executive and legislative branches of the government. It stems, I would say, from the previous Administration and from the 1964 Tomkin Gulf resolution which itself was a very questionable constitutional procedure.

I believe, and a number of us believe, it was obtained by deception. This embitters the



SENATOR FULBRIGHT
"Time to re-evaluate"

whole matter. If he (former President Johnson) had come in 1964 and had asked for a declaration of war and had received a declaration of war, this would have made a

tremendous difference to the constitutional relationship.

Not having received that, the procedure was not really proper under the Constitution — and I take a good deal of the responsibility for not having recognized this at the time. Quite obviously, in normal times, the Senate would never pass a resolution of that kind."

Q. Did Secretary of State Rogers promise to consult you on any new moves in Southeast Asia?

A. Without any equivocation, he promised to consult before action was taken and I think he said before decisions were made.

Q. But they didn't?

A. That's the way I interpret it. I don't consider it consultation when it wasn't a frank revelation of the decisions that had been made. It was something else. We discussed the question of the request for aid. We did not discuss the movement of our troops into Cambodia. In the meantime, of course, adding to the feeling that began with the Gulf of Tonkin, was the frustration of a . . . growing number of senators that they were not only not being consulted but their advice was not even welcome nor certainly respected.

Now in fairness . . . I

think it is clear that during that period the majority of the Congress of both houses did support the policy being followed. It is my feeling, judging by the vote just recently on the authorization for the military, that a majority of the House still supports the war in Vietnam. But I don't believe a majority of the Senate does. That's a belief; we haven't had an out-and-out test yet.

Q. What will happen in the country if the policy stays essentially the same?

A. I'm not a prophet. If the President persists in it and the war continues I think the protests may well continue. If order is preserved and there isn't too much violence this could go on a long time. If the violence mounts by the lawless elements there may of course be a necessity for martial law. This is what has happened in other countries.

Q. Has this entire matter shown that your power to influence events is even more limited than you had thought before?

A. No. I never have thought it was very great. Most senators that are interested in these fields of activities have been quite conscious of the limitations on their power to influence events.