

FULBRIGHT SEES PENTAGON TAKING TOP POLICY ROLE

Senator Also Asserts Laird Misrepresented the Facts on Bombing Attacks

by Terence Smith  
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Washington, Nov. 29 - Senator J.W. Fulbright charged today that the Defense Department had displaced the State Department as the primary formulator of American foreign policy, particularly in Southeast Asia.

The Arkansas Democrat, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, described the allied incursion into Cambodia last May as "essentially a Defense Department decision," said that the Secretary of State had played a secondary role at best in that and other major decisions.

[In Saigon, the Associated Press reported the United States command had said that an American bomber attacked a radar-controlled anti-aircraft position in North Vietnam Monday. The command said that the site was five-and-a-half miles north of the demilitarized zone, near the Laotian border. It termed the raid "protective reaction."]

In a fast-moving interview on the Columbia Broadcasting System's program "Face the Nation," Mr. Fulbright accused Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird [of] misrepresenting the facts when he testified before the Foreign Relations Committee last week on the extent of the United States bombing in North Vietnam.

"They misrepresent the facts," the Senator said. "Obviously he did and they do it all the time."

No Mention of Attacks

Mr. Laird testified for two and a half hours before the committee last Tuesday on the attempt to free United States prisoners from North Vietnam without mentioning the air strike that was carried out near Hanoi in connection with the raid.

The details of that air attack - the Pentagon initially had said that United States warplanes had stayed below the 19th parallel - were disclosed only on Friday after President Nixon reportedly let word of it slip at a White House dinner for wounded Vietnam veterans

on Thanksgiving.  
The Defense Secretary was not available for comment today on the Senator's remarks.  
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but the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Daniel Z. Henkin, noted that Mr. Laird had responded to all of the Senators' questions. "He gave a factual report of what happened," Mr. Henkin said.

Discussing the Defense Department's role in foreign policy, Mr. Fulbright said its huge budget and vast manpower gave it sweeping influence over most of the Administration's important decisions. Secretary Laird and Henry Kissinger, the President's special adviser on national security, he said, far outweighed Secretary of State William P. Rogers in the formulation of foreign policy.

Asked if this might be the result of a difference in style among the three men, Mr. Fulbright shot back: "I don't think \$80-billion a year [the defense budget] is a matter of style. In our kind of economy this is muscle, this is influence, this is power. It controls everything that goes in our Government to a great extent. It's the primary control."

As a result of this, the Senator said, Mr. Rogers's role in making foreign policy has become "subsidiary," and the diplomatic complications involved in a raid such as the one on the prisoner-of-war camp last weekend are seldom considered.

To correct this situation, Mr. Fulbright said, a Secretary of State would have to be a "genius" to overcome "20 years of steady growth of the military establishment" and "their extremely complex and far-reaching propaganda machine."

On another point, the Senator took issue with Mr. Rogers on the question whether, as the Secretary of State testified last

week, the Nixon Administration is winding down the war in Vietnam.

"It seems to me it's more intense," Mr. Fulbright said. Later he added that President Nixon probably wanted a negotiated solution to the war as much as anyone else, but that the steps he is taking, such as the Cambodian incursion, are "simply not calculated to bring it about."

The Senator's remarks were broadcast shortly before Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky of South Vietnam answered questions on the National Broadcasting Company's "Meet the Press."

Mr. Ky predicted that in the dry season just beginning throughout most of Indochina the North Vietnamese will launch major military campaigns in both Cambodia and the northern provinces of South Vietnam.

In answer to a political question, the Vice President indi-

cated that he would be willing to step aside in the coming national elections in South Vietnam if such a gesture would contribute to the "unity of the anti-Communist forces" in Saigon.