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Guest (s): Sen. Strom Thurmond (D-SC)

Title: Cold War and Fulbright Memorandum

Note: Questions were paraphrased and/or shortened by the transcriber. For the exact question, please consult the audiotapes.

Morphew: Introduction...for the past several weeks before the adjournment of congress there were several headlines regarding the Fulbright Memorandum...you played an important part in the developments of the events surrounding this document and the discussion and controversy that's developed...what is this document...just what does it contain?

Thurmond: Well, Dick, as soon as we found out that this memorandum had been issued, that it had been sent to the president of the United States and to the Secretary of Defense, we asked for a copy of it, but the senator from Arkansas refused to give it to us. At any rate, we managed to get a copy of this memorandum. Now, I will just read a section here to let you see what is in this memorandum. I hold in my hands a reprint from the Congressional Record which is the official publication of the Congress. It's the official proceedings of the Congress. Now, this memorandum says this, that fundamentally it is believed that the American people have little if any need to be alerted to the menace of the Cold War. I strongly disagree with that statement. The American people do need to be alerted to the dangers of the Cold War. This memorandum further says, 'The American people have never really been tested in such a struggle. In the long run, it is quite possible that the principle problem of leadership will be, if it is not already, to restrain the desire of the people to hit the communists with everything we've got, particularly if there are more Cubas and Laoses. Pride in victory and frustration in restraint during the Korean War led to MacArthur's revolt and McCarthyism.' Now, we can readily see from that that there's a question here as to whether the American people should govern themselves. This memorandum raises some very serious questions. Now, I might say also that it makes six recommendations. First, the memorandum recommends to repeal or modify the 1958 directive authorizing the seminars, that's a national security directive passed in 1958.

Morphew: What kind of seminars are these?

Thurmond: These are seminars held to indoctrinate reserve officers, editors, civilian leaders in general as to the dangers of communism, the aims and designs of communism. These seminars are held to point out to the people the insidious manner in which communism operates.

Morphew: And the Fulbright Memorandum would like to see these abolished?

Thurmond: The Fulbright Memorandum would like to see this directive repealed or modified that provides for these seminars. Now another recommendation is, it recommends to end connection with the Richardson and other foundations. Now the Richardson Foundation and some of the other foundations have rendered a splendid service in indoctrinating the people on how communism operates, the dangers of communism. We the American people must know that the aim of communism is to dominate the Earth. We go back to what the father of communism said in 1917, Lenin. Lenin said the aim of communism is to be the gravediggers, the heirs and successors to the governments of the world. They have never departed from that goal. Their aim today is to take over the world, and only a few days ago Mr. Khrushchev made the statement that he expects to accomplish this world domination by 1975. In other words, in fourteen years from now, he expects to have the entire world under communism and our people need to know that and they need to take every step possible to inform our people of the dangers of this particular ideology. Of course, we know that communism is a godless ideology. Communism does not believe in God. Communism does not believe in religion, and so it's a strange ideology to the American people. Now the third recommendation was to increase military censorship. Well already the censorship has been too much and I guess you are going to that in a few minutes, so I won't take time now. Now the fourth recommendation was to provide for civilian control over the National War College. Well, the military people understand how to operate the National War College, not civilians, and it's ridiculous to say, turn the operation of the National War College over to civilians and take it out from under the military, but that's what this Fulbright Memorandum recommended.

Morphew: That would be like taking the National Institute of Health away from the doctors and putting it in the hands of laymen, would it not?

Thurmond: Well, I think you've expressed it very well. The fifth recommendation would be that graduate study should be required of those who seek promotion before they are promoted in liberal arts. Members of the armed forces. I guess they presume that they ought to go to Harvard or Oxford maybe. The sixth recommendation is that the civilian control of unit-level training information education programs is provided. In other words, they want to take the troop training out from under the military and turn it over to civilians. Again, that's the same principle as I referred to under the National War College. Now those are the six recommendations. They are completely impractical and I think they can do great damage to this country.

Morphew: Is this the only attack on the anti-communist seminars or are they being attacked from other directions as well?

Thurmond: Well, of course the anti-anti communism fight that's going on is attacking these seminars. Mr. Gus Hall, when he came back from Russia, after attending a meeting of communist parties in December of last year, and if you remember, 81 communist parties were represented in Moscow, even the Communist Party of the United States was represented there and Mr. Gus Hall was the chief spokesman when he came back, and he's an officer in the Communist Party here today, and he made this statement, that the primary target is the military and its anti-communist statements and seminars. So this thing really goes back to the communist party. It comes right out of Russia. This fight today is being waged by the communists to stop these seminars. The fight being waged today on the military comes from Moscow, it comes from the Communist Party, and it's important, I think, for our people to know that.

Morphew: Have the communists been successful in stirring up this "anti-anti communism"...that is, have they been successful in getting people to come out and oppose anti-communist principles?

Thurmond: Yes, the communists and their sympathizers have taken every step possible to crystallize sentiment along that line, and it's very strange that as soon as Gus Hall announced in the communist publication in this country which was formerly the Daily Worker, it's now called The Worker, as soon as he announced this policy that the primary target was the military and its anti-communist statements and seminars, the New York Times picked it right up. The Washington Post picked it right up and a lot of other left wing newspapers and magazines picked it up and fell right in line. Now, I don't say these magazines are, and newspapers, are communists, but I do say that they're rendering this country a great disservice when they follow the communist line and assist the communist in attaining their goal as they're doing when they promote the anti-anti communist fight.

Morphew: How far has this sentiment penetrated into government...isn't it true that some anti-communist films have been deleted from military training programs?

Thurmond: That's correct. For instance, there is a film called operation abolition. It depicts exactly what happened when the House Un-American Activities Committee was holding its hearing in San Francisco last year. I happen to have been out there attending a military conference, and I left the conference and went around and actually witnessed what was occurring and this is a very splendid film that shows how the communists operate. It shows the infiltration and the subversive manner in which the communists operate, and the army encouraged the use of this film because they wanted the soldiers and troops to know just how the communists do operate. And on October the 11th, 1960, the army put out a directive urging that maximum use be made out of this film, but something happened after that. In April of this year, April the 10th to be exact, a directive was put out saying that the film will no longer be used for training purposes. It was no longer a prescribed training film and said it will only be used on call. And then in May of this year, May the 19th, they put out another directive and said, it will not only be used on call but for internal use only, which practically killed the use of the film. And then too, if the troops don't see the film when they are being trained, they're not to see it at night or

voluntarily. It ought to be shown to them during their training periods. That was a very effective film, it's a tough film, and it shows the communists at work. The communists didn't like it and the sympathizers with the communists didn't like it and they started a campaign to prevent the use of it. Now they tried to say that this film wasn't accurate and that it wasn't true. The film was correct. The FBI, I believe, has approved the film, and the House Un-American Activities Committee has approved this film. Every American ought to see this film, Operation Abolition.

Morphew: The same fate was encountered by a film strip called, "Communism on the Map," showing the growth of communism throughout the world in this century, and now it too has been proscribed, has it not?

Thurmond: Well, the military has banned use of this film. They did that April the 23rd, 1961. That's another good film that ought to be seen by every American, but no longer can the military show it to the troops.

Morphew: I'd like to continue this discussion next week, can you be with us then?

Thurmond: I wish you the best of luck...