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SENATOR J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT'S ATTEMPTED SUPPRESSION OF RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY

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ABSTRACT

SENATOR J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT'S
ATTEMPTED SUPPRESSION OF
RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY

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Senator J. William Fulbright played the dissenter's role after 1965 with regard to foreign policy until he lost his attempt for a sixth term in the Senate in 1974. His biographers have paid little attention to his attempt, from 1971 to 1973, to shut down Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. The issue of bringing these operations under regular governmental funding was raised in 1971, although for several years many in Washington might have guessed that they were receiving funding throgh the CIA. To create legislation to deal with these entities, Congressional discussion in committee was required, and these got underway first in the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Already during the Johnson presidency Fulbright considered that the executive branch had been conducting foreign policy by itself, largely circumventing Congress. Fulbright was unyielding in his opposition in committee for three years before the Radios got a solid legislative basis, and the delay was in large part due to Fulbright's campaign to end them. Finally, though, he failed to keep the SCFR with him on the issue. His failure points up the decrease in his powers of political brokering late in his career.

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Part I. Introduction

On January 25, 1971, Senator Clifford Case (R-NJ), speaking on the floor of the Senate, made official what many in Washington had long had reason to believe: Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, the "freedom radios" that originated in the 1950s and broadcast to Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and the U.S.S.R., had been covertly funded through the CIA. He maintained that, if they were doing work beneficial to the U.S. national interest, it was time for them to emerge from the shadows and get their funding through normal Congressional authorization and appropriations processes, thereby becoming subject to Congressional oversight. Inclined to believe the Radios were deserving, he proposed in a bill, Senate Resolution 18, that the State Department administer their funding for the next year (FY 72).[1]

J. William Fulbright (D-AK), as Chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (SCFR), was responsible for determining the details of the necessary first step, SCFR hearings, on the proposed legislation. His opposition to Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty was linked both to long-standing principles he espoused and to more recent views. It derived from his complex set of beliefs about international affairs, U.S. foreign policy, executive branch powers, and the U.S. intelligence agencies. The political purpose of his opposition was in part to generate the Congressional will to send a message to the executive branch regarding trespasses against the legislative branch in its exercise of power. His challenge was to convert general Congressional awareness of the Radios' CIA-dependent past, and the known antipathy of the Soviet-bloc regimes to them in a period in which East-West détente was advancing, into a Senate mandate to discontinue them completely.

Fulbright, by 1971 sixty-six and considering retirement at the end of his term in

1974, saw a chance to leave his mark on U.S. handling of foreign policy and on the prospects for workable peace. That mark would comprise a number of elements: restoring to Congress an effective role in the foreign policy decision-making process; educating Congress and the public more about the world and the United States role within the world; restoring the United States to its fundamental domestic base and being an example of a functioning democracy, while at the same time acknowledging that the U.S. had a role to play nearly everywhere in the world. Fulbright endorsed East-West detente, policies that would limit the threat of nuclear holocaust, meaningful disarmament, and extensive trade along with cultural and scientific exchange with the Communist countries. He promoted the importance of differentiating among Communist regimes and engaging positively with those that were more favorable to links with the West.

Fulbright made foreign affairs his particular area of expertise and had made his counsel on them essential to Presidents Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson. He was never a rubber-stamp for administrations. In the mid-1960s, however, he became a consistent dissenter, as his views on the nature of the Communist threat and the dangers to world peace of U.S. foreign interventions clashed with those of the Johnson administration. His foreign policy dissent initially was a minority position, but gradually, as the Vietnam War escalated, he found allies in his committee in the second half of the 1960s. The SCFR became a key platform of dissent from the administration. In this political context he judged, once Case raised the matter of public funding for the Radios, that it was an auspicious moment to mount opposition to them.

The Radios were an issue that Fulbright took up with vigor. Fearing American imperial-tinged conduct abroad, he also saw dangers to democracy at home. He felt that

the long-standing Cold War served to concentrate the powers of the executive branch, acting increasingly in a secretive manner, which Congress seemed impotent to stop. The intelligence agencies, in particular, played a key role in the conduct of the U.S. foreign policy, yet eluded scrutiny by Congress.[2] His assault on the Radios was considered: selection of a target that was attainable would result in a jolt for the executive branch on a matter that it was considerably interested in. By denying funding, Congress would be asserting its prerogatives to influence foreign policy, in effect telling the executive that Congress must be made a participant if the executive expected to have its cooperation, and that it must be dealt with openly and honestly.

The Radios drew the SCFR chair's attention for several reasons. First, the executive branch had been responsible for their initial creation and subsequent covert funding without notifying Congress. Second, their executives had lied about their governmental nature, claiming to be private. Third, even when their cover was blown, nobody in the administration, neither President Richard Nixon nor other principals, was willing to acknowledge publicly a CIA connection with them. The administration sought the needed funding from Congress as if the matter did not need airing.[3]

Fulbright spent thirty months trying to kill the Radios between 1971 and 1973, taking the main opposition role in a contest decided during Senate and House committee hearings and debates in full session and influenced by outside studies that both he and Nixon ordered. He lost his SCFR bloc in his struggle to convince the committee of the wisdom of denying funding for them, failing even to keep the support of fellow Democrats. He persisted in contesting support for them, losing contact with his committee in the process.

Ending governmental support for the Radios was not a touchstone issue for Fulbright's career. His biographers do not even mention it. However, it occupied him during three different sessions of Congress. He presided over three sets of hearings during which the committee decisions reached progressively moved away from what he desired. During this period, he seemed determined to shape the outcome, regardless of what it did to his prestige. The unfolding of what was ultimately a defeat marks a waning in his political powers. His tenacity, despite the political risks involved in insisting on a minority position, was typical of him, but also reveals some loss of judgment. At least some of his determination not to yield must be attributed to other issues that bore on this one. Through a years-long process, he had developed and clarified his positions that all now pointed towards ending government funding.

Part II. Taking on the Radios

In 1967, Undersecretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach stated during SCFR hearings that Article 1 of the Constitution, insofar as it limited executive power in conducting foreign policy, was obsolete.[4] Executive branch handling of matters surrounding the Radios was part of a pattern, which Fulbright deplored, of secrecy, invocation of executive privilege, and skirting of Congress.[5] Both Johnson and Nixon were involved in allowing the Radios to receive covert funding even after Johnson had publicly forsworn funding for private organizations through the CIA. Fulbright in 1971 was angered by five administrations' deception, and that of the Radios themselves, about their connection to the United States government.

Fulbright's irritation with the issue of continuing executive secrecy with respect to the Radios is illustrated by an interchange at the 1972 SCFR hearings he began with Undersecretary for Political Affairs of the Department of State U. Alexis Johnson. "I have requested studies that have been made by the Executive on both Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty and also the country programs of USIA [United States Information Agency]. My requests have all been refused." Parrying the accusation, Johnson replied: "Now, as far as the documents that have not been made available to you thus far, they are not State Department documents." Fulbright irritably answered, "...Assistant Secretary [David] Abshire stated that the executive branch has conducted various studies on the radios, but since they were done under the auspices of the National Security Council, they are not available to the committee."[6] His answer revealed his frustration at the way in which the executive branch resorted to legal and semantic technicalities. It claimed it was cooperating with Congress with full candor, then made exceptions for matters relating to

the National Security Council, the intelligence agencies, and other executive bodies involved in foreign relations.

The views that inspired Fulbright's opposition in 1971 were not altogether ones of long standing. He had reversed his positions completely on some issues between his participation in the cold war consensus in the late 1950s and his increasingly frequent dissent starting in late 1964. To a large degree, his attitude towards the Radios was conditioned by his support for détente, and the terms under which he held détente would be viable. By the mid-1960s, he felt it was wisest to accept the hold of the world's Communist regimes on their peoples. He had come to consider Eastern Europe within the Soviets' legitimate sphere of interest, though he still used the term "the unhappy peoples of Eastern Europe" in 1963,[7] and though as recently as 1959 he had seen as unacceptable "'any proposition designed to formalize the subjugation of the once free satellite peoples.'"[8]

Fulbright felt the U.S. government had made insufficient use of social science expertise in framing its foreign policy. As a result, he believed the U.S. government lacked a proper understanding of the psychology and changing nature of foreign peoples and their regimes and of the effect its policy was having on attitudes of Communist regimes, particularly towards detente. The U.S. government was insufficiently taking into account that continuation of the Radios, clearly perceived by Soviet bloc regimes as a threat, was counter-productive to any viable basis for mutual understanding between East and West. He had been probing the limitation in governmental awareness of the findings of social science in hearings for several years prior to 1971. The implication was that, in a changing world, a Cold War mentality in the 1940s inspired by suspicion of Josef Stalin

was insufficiently nuanced to guide policy decades later. The United States government was not in touch with current motivations of the Soviet and Eastern European regimes.

Related to the lack of nuance in a Cold War mentality was what Fulbright considered undue willingness by the executive branch to endorse or cooperate with repressive regimes which supported the U.S. against the Communist bloc. He brought this up in the 1973 hearings, asking Kenneth Rush, Acting Secretary of State, to justify agreements made by the Radios with Spain and Taiwan to locate relay sites there for broadcasts to Eastern Europe and the USSR, when their own governments placed strict controls on internal media.[9] Fulbright saw that demands arising from nationalism bred by colonialism and including "the demand for human dignity, material and moral, and for an approach to equality with the privileged community of the West," were being made by groups around the world, often "with little possibility of achieving this transformation through the methods of Western political democracy."[10] The United States should be ready to pay them heed, rather than turn away from them on the presumption that any Communist participation in them was tantamount to Communist control.[11]

A long-standing sticking point for Fulbright was his dislike of propaganda, as well as of covert activities. He was unhappy with any official use of propaganda in the United States. He had cast the sole Senate vote in early 1954 in opposition to funds for Senator Joseph McCarthy's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, and consistently opposed the later propagandistic conduct of McCarthy-like ideologues.[12] He had actively made an issue of the inherent dangers to civilian control of the military in the U.S. from political activism by the military in the early 1960s and again in the late 1960s, both in regards to propaganda activities in military training and in appearance of active military

personnel at events on political issues.[13]

Fulbright disapproved of attempts to make other countries' systems over in the image of the United States. He considered that, whatever the Radios claimed about working for constructive change, since they received funds from the U.S. government, they were not sufficiently detached to truly represent the interests of the Soviet-bloc peoples. In 1963, he considered that "it is neither possible nor desirable under the conditions of our time to impose by direct action the ideas and values of Western democracy on the Communist world or even on the turbulent emerging societies of Asia, Africa, and Latin America."[14] He further queried, "are we really certain that we have the incalculable qualitative resources of wisdom, vision, and compassion with which to reconstruct the world according to the absolute specifications of morality?"[15]

Fulbright was convinced in the early 1970s that Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty would remain instruments of propaganda, in keeping with their covert origins and persisting Cold War attitudes. In the 1973 Hearings, he revisited the prior years' hearings and the Radios' broadcasting policy, made poignant by revelations about Watergate. "(I)n our hearings, in questioning some of the people who operate these radios, one of the principle [sic] items which they broadcast are official government statements. There seemed to be a tendency to equate whatever is...offered to the public by the government as the truth..."[16] He considered propaganda, especially in an era of detente, to be inconsistent with American values. He felt democracy, working at its optimum, without granting favors to special interests such as the military-industrial complex or engaging in subterfuge, would attract the world by example. In 1963 he wrote, "If the issue [between the systems of the East and West] is ultimately resolved in favor of the democratic values

of the West, it will be because we, more successfully than our adversaries, have created an economic system that provides material abundance, a political system based on justice and freedom and human dignity, and an educational system that cultivates individual excellence and spiritual fulfillment."[17]

Fulbright was echoing a point of view that Gaylord Harnwell, representing the American Council of Education and Related Organizations, had expressed two years earlier at SCFR hearings on the "Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act" which Fulbright had written and introduced before the Senate. Harnwell had said, "We in the United States have much to learn about other countries, not only those of Western Europe...(I)t is...important to provide as broad channels as possible through which Americans can learn about other countries..."[18] Fulbright's long-standing belief in the importance of exchange was as much about learning from other countries as it was teaching other countries about the United States. The importance he gave to reciprocity reflected his sense that the truest American national interest would be achieved through whatever created optimal international conditions.

Fulbright's position was consistently that, with regard to the rest of the world, the United States must be prepared to let peoples make their choices independent of what the United States thought was good for them. With reference to South Africa, he wrote in a letter in 1964, "(W)e should be guided in the main by the practices of foreign countries in which we have embassies..."[19] In 1965, on the floor of the Senate, he said, "The first step toward stronger ties between Latin America and the United States would be the creation of a situation in which Latin American countries would be free...to establish new arrangements...in which the United States would not participate."[20]

Fulbright's dislike of the Radios was partially founded on what he saw as their nature as unilateral instruments of United States foreign policy. Harking back to his hopes in 1943 for the establishment of an international organization to which all nations would entrust peace-keeping, he was a long-time proponent of multilateralism. Even during the period in which he saw the United States as the world's necessary defender against Soviet imperialism, he had supported multilateral mechanisms for giving aid to developing nations for whom social problems might make Communism attractive. The unilateral alternative, he had concluded, tended to involve the United States in other nations' internal affairs more than it should.[21] He had written in 1963, "The unification of Western aid programs [to underdeveloped nations] will have meaning and effect only if every member of the Atlantic community accepts its fair share of the burden."[22]

However, his sponsorship of multilateralism was not only premised on sharing of financial burdens. Since his earliest days in Congress, he had believed that the ultimate key to non-lethal international relationships lay in establishing checks to unilateral actions, framed by political interests, undertaken by nations. In the 1970s, Fulbright made the appeal to multilateralism in his rejection of the U.S. government's continued funding for the Radios. In his view, their sole support by the United States was undesirable because it allowed one government, that of the U.S., to control their intervention in internal affairs elsewhere. This was a scenario for U.S. irresponsibility on the international scene. The fact that Radio Free Europe had established a Western European Advisory Committee (WEAC) made up of European dignitaries which met yearly was, he implied, more of a boondoggle to keep Europeans acquiescent in the continued presence of the Radios' facilities in their countries than real multilateralism.[23] He felt the

acid test of multilateralism was whether one country alone was paying for them, and so in a position to determine their policies.

Fulbright listened to the Radios' executives and administration figures maintain in the SCFR hearings that their operation was consistent with the U.S. national interest, while at the same time autonomous. Having come to feel that the United States, in pursuing its policies in Indochina, was behaving in an imperialistic fashion, he would have welcomed the Radios' autonomy, but he distrusted that the executive branch would keep its hands off. He could reflect on concerns about government propaganda that had surfaced in the 1967 Informational Media Guaranty Program hearings. Executive branch representatives' language then seemed almost a dress rehearsal for the language used four years later by the administration.

The Guaranty Program, administered under the United States Information Agency (USIA), converted to dollars the receipts of U.S. businesses selling informational and educational media like books and films abroad to countries which would pay for them in local currency. Richard Schmidt of the USIA advanced the "importance of the vast cultural and educational riches contained in the output of American private enterprise publishers and producers of other media in advancing U.S. interests in many areas of the world."[24] Schmidt cited as eligibility requirements for firms to participate in the program that their "publications and films must make a positive contribution to U.S. policy objectives and reflect favorably upon the United States."[25] Another USIA official speaking on behalf of the guaranty program stated that beneficiaries must show that they "make a positive contribution in support of some U.S. objective [abroad and]...to eliminate anything which would be patently harmful to the United States."[26] Fulbright

was suspicious that the businesses USIA would approve would be those generating propagandistic educational materials. He believed that the abstract language used by the USIA in these hearings very likely had been adopted for that reason.

Fulbright had a basis for these misgivings. He had heard about three books commissioned by the USIA in late 1965. Actually, it came out during the hearings that the USIA had subsidized the publication of eight books in 1965 and 1966, including one book about the U.S. participation in the Dominican Republic and three others on Vietnam and the U.S. involvement there. These books were produced and distributed in the U.S. by commercial firms without the USIA commission for them being identified. He said, "...(T)o...conceal the fact that this was not a product, as you say, of our private enterprise system seems to me to be doubly subversive of our system."[27] While in one sense the competitive marketplace was involved in eligible firms' business activities in countries where the guaranty program operated, the U.S. government's influence in the fate of seeming private enterprise products was outrageous. He also contested the USIA's payment of travel costs of foreign journalists going to Vietnam, implying that this was an additional form of inappropriate government propagandizing.[28]

Fulbright, just as later at the hearings on the Radios, was not alone at this juncture within the SCFR in speaking out strongly against U.S. government deceit. Wayne Morse (D-OR) also showed his contempt for the USIA's commissioning books for domestic distribution: "I think USIA is approaching being as dangerous to the dissemination of truth in this country as the CIA...(S)ome obvious public activites of the USIA have to be brought under most stringent control, in the interest of truth getting to the American people rather than USIA propaganda."[29] However, prefiguring Fulbright's failure to

sustain an SCFR majority in his opposition to the Radios in the 1970s, two Democratic SCFR members, Claiborne Pell (RI) and Joseph Clark (PA), went on record during the hearings as supporting the guaranty program.[30]

Within Communist Europe, USIA officials indicated that they currently were guaranteeing U.S. dollars for approved U.S. businesses supplying media to Poland and Yugoslavia. Despite Fulbright's opposition, he could not have had one objection to the guaranty program that was applicable to the Radios: only those foreign governments, among them Poland and Yugoslavia, that chose to participate allowed materials into their country under these guaranty agreements. He had consistently taken the position that cultural and educational exchange was a superior instrument in the pursuit of international understanding. Reciprocity was a key aspect of such exchange, going back to the Fulbright Exchange Program set up in 1946. As his statements at the 1960 Florence treaty hearings on lowered tariffs for educational materials showed, when reciprocity was included, he readily lent his support to measures that, as the administration claimed then, "demonstrated to the world U.S. support for international collaboration and for the principle of free flow of information and ideas."[31]

Fulbright's antipathy to the Radios, based in part on their misrepresentation of themselves as products of the United States' free enterprise system, was reminiscent of his condemnation at the Media Guaranty Program hearings of USIA conduct. For twenty years Radio Free Europe had made the false claim, stated by such public luminaries as General Lucius Clay, former Governor-General of the U.S. occupation forces in Germany, that it was the enterprise of civic-minded, non-governmental Americans. Fulbright also had financial reasons for his opposition to the Radios. He realized that the

worsening economic position of the United States arising after several years of supporting a large military effort in Indochina might be useful in making a case against them. After the mid-1960s, Fulbright saw America as sorely needing to attend to matters at home.[32]

Publication of the *Pentagon Papers* in 1971 added credence to Fulbright's allegations of deception by the Johnson administration of Congress and the public with regard to Vietnam. Revelations in 1973 about Watergate indicated further problems at home. With its own domestic crises, for the United States-sponsored Radios to seek to cast doubt on Communist regimes' handling of their people's needs seemed to him hypocritical. The issue of supporting the Radios always seemed to hearken back to his rift with the Executive branch. "It seems to me a little ironic that in view of the current revelations of our own Executive Government branch's concept or [sic] the truth and veracity that we should presume to broadcast what this same executive branch is pleased to call the truth to foreign countries."[33]

An important aspect of the discrediting of the Radios in Fulbright's eyes was the history of covert CIA ties to and financial support for them. This was particularly objectionable to him because the CIA's covert activities resembled the practices of certain Communist regimes the United States deplored. The CIA and the executive branch had acted in a way that Fulbright considered made dupes of the American people and Congress. As far back as 1966, he had probed for information about CIA infiltration of the exchange program, which especially enraged him.[34]

The CIA's activities, like those of the other intelligence communities, were not readily scrutinized by Congress. Under the shield of "national security", the CIA reported

only to the President, and had no direct responsibility to the Department of State. Since the CIA received "black" funding (taken from funds ostensibly to be used for non-CIA purposes), Congress' authority to make authorizations and allocations of funds were not effective mechanisms of CIA oversight.

Fulbright was tired of the sham engaged in by five administrations, as Radio Free Europe had led private citizens to believe their donations were vital simply to provide a cover for its covert, government-sponsored nature. Most of the problems he had with the Radios came back to a single source in 1971: an Executive branch that considered itself accountable to no outside power. These radio operations were obsolete institutions that the Nixon administration clung to at the same time it countenanced greater ties with the East. They were tainted with their history of Executive branch duplicity and high-handedness toward Congress and the public.

Fulbright's objective for a greater Congressional role in foreign policy that was internationalist in character predicated educating Congress on the kind of linkages that led to a responsible U.S. role in the world. To some extent, this brought him into line with what the executive branch was initiating with the Soviets and then China, but he wished to encourage Congress to push for a meaningful role together with the executive branch in its overtures to normalize relations with the Communist powers. President Johnson and then Nixon and National Security Adviser (later Secretary of State) Henry Kissinger were bolder than Congress itself in establishing linkages with Communist regimes.

Foreign policy expert and former ambassador in Moscow George Kennan had already implied in 1967 SCFR hearings that outworn Cold War attitudes were responsible

for Congress's reluctance to let Johnson extend more normal trade terms to the USSR. Fulbright sensed the truth of Kennan's testimony: "Our policies toward the communist bloc today are full of contradictions and hesitancies."[35] With regard to the Radios in the early 1970s, Fulbright thought that the executive branch wish to extend them exhibited such contradictions, and he tried to encourage Congress to shed its Cold War attitudes and legislate to end them.

The SCFR hearings on the Radios came several years after Fulbright had opened up SCFR hearings far more than had previously been the case, both in their scope and by arranging that some key hearings be televised. When he became chair of the Committee in 1959, he declared the importance of its educative function,[36] a function that he implemented in full measure starting in 1965. He felt the public was not well informed on foreign policy matters of great importance, but it should be. In hearings, the SCFR solicited opinions from a range of knowledgeable people, in accord with his 1959 enunciation of his desire for more connection between the SCFR and university experts[37] and a restatement emphasizing the importance of such connections in 1967.[38] Setting up more hearings, he hoped, would lead to an expansion in the amount of important business emerging from the SCFR, and perhaps bring informed public opinion to bear on official foreign-policy decision-making.[39] Not all hearings bore a direct relationship to any pending legislation, as with 1966 hearings on China's relationship with the West.

In December 1966, Fulbright had spoken for a reshaping of the role of the SCFR, making clear that there was in his mind a tie between its hearings and its ability to play an adequate role in foreign policy decisions. "For many years...(u)nquestioningly, the Committee accepted Executive Branch judgments on what should be kept secret...The

inquiring attitude was lacking...(M)any of our current [national] difficulties might have been avoided if we had taken time to stop, look, and listen..." He spoke of again making "...the Senate...an institution in which the judgements of nonelected foreign policy and military leaders have been tested in free debate..."[40]

Fulbright's arguments against the Radios at SCFR hearings in the 1970s were intended, in part, as a means to do a thorough, publicly educative, examination of these enterprises whose activities had been misrepresented to the public from the start. Hearings, though standard committee procedure after Case's introduction of his bill in the Senate in January 1971, were also a convenient way for Fulbright to continue to explore issues that the SCFR had been delving into in the past several years. SCFR hearings had become fora for challenging some "received truths" guiding contemporary foreign policy: America was obligated to be freedom's bulwark in the whole world; Communism was essentially monolithic; use of power by America was by itself a convincing means to gain desired international goals. He was eager to explore the contributions the social sciences, including psychology, could make to the conduct of foreign policy. Seeking to foster within the government more recognition of the truths of cultural relativism, he underlined the importance of the United States' taking into account the psychological impact its actions have on international opinion. Hearings such as "The Communist World in 1967" (1967) and "Psychological Aspects of Foreign Policy" (1969) were aimed at changing mind-sets rather than specific policies or legislation.

Fulbright's task in hearings on Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty in 1971-1973 was multi-faceted. He sought to rally a majority of SCFR members behind him, which he had been quite successful in doing on some issues in the late 1960s. If he

succeeded in preventing a favorable vote on legislation to preserve these operations, it would not be reported out to the full Senate, and they would be effectively ended. If he failed to block reporting out of some measure, perhaps he could be persuasive enough that the SCFR would limit its authorization of funding to a single year. This would at least render the Radios subject to yearly scrutiny and perhaps future termination. Further, he opposed giving them a separate institutional standing, as this would tend to work toward their permanency.

The Radios were first publicly challenged in 1957-58 by a critic from the right, Fulton Lewis, Jr.[41] A 1963 book, while in full support of them, again raised the question: "(T)he [Free Europe] Committee managed to receive initial financing (it is not exactly clear how and from whom)...(W)hether these [Crusade for Freedom public fund-raising campaign] contributions actually pay most of the bills for the massive enterprise... remains anyone's guess."[42]

Further allegations of CIA involvement in private and educational organizations surfaced again in 1964, 1966, and 1967.[43] In January, 1966 Senator Eugene McCarthy (D-MN) introduced legislation that would have funded an SCFR probe of the degree to which the CIA was influencing U.S. foreign policy. By April, this had been amended to a resolution, proposed by Fulbright, for establishment of more effective Congressional oversight of the CIA. The defeat of this resolution in the Senate foreshadowed Fulbright's difficulty in marshalling support several years later to shackle the administration in its desire for open government funding for the Radios.

In 1967 allegations against the CIA's infiltration of educational and private organizations appeared involving the Radios, among other groups and institutions. The

revelation developed in the greatest detail came when senior officers of the National Student Association indicated CIA penetration since the early 1950s. The *New York Times* and *Washington Post* reported that a number of other private, voluntary, or educational organizations had also received CIA funding, including labor unions, press organizations, and teachers' organizations.[44] As part of these revelations, CIA sponsorship of the Radios was alleged in a 1967 CBS documentary "In the Pay of the CIA: An American Dilemma."[45]

Such was the public uproar at home and abroad in the wake of the 1967 revelations that, in the interests of quieting the issue, President Johnson publicly appointed a three-man commission, including Katzenbach, Health and Welfare Secretary John Gardner, and CIA Director Richard Helms, to study the situation and make recommendations.[46] For Fulbright, who in an April 23 *New York Times* article, written after the Katzenbach Committee had completed its recommendations, asserted that if "the President is restrained only by those whom he appoints...there is no check at all,"[47] the make-up of the Katzenbach Committee, all of them members of the executive branch, was not reassuring. In the House, John Monagan (D-CT) and in the Senate, Ralph Yarborough (D-TX) introduced bills that provided machinery for getting funds to the types of organizations the CIA had been funding.Yarborough stated the inappropriateness of the prior CIA activity, and the need for Congressional oversight of the CIA.[48]

The Katzenbach Committee's recommendation to the President to discontinue any government financing of voluntary organizations through the CIA, except where urgent matters of national security were concerned,[49] was fairly straightforward, and the President stated in March that the Government would implement it. Nevertheless, a

disclaimer clause in the recommendation that pertained to matters of urgent national security, along with the claim that the Radios had, because of their government funding, never properly been private organizations, provided the loopholes for the Johnson and later, Nixon administrations to fund them through the CIA as before.[50] Helms discussed things with Senators Richard Russell (D-GA) and Milton Young (R-ND) and recommended to the President continuation of their covert funding.[51] Some former CIA fund recipients obtained alternate means of funding, others found none.

Fulbright saw these exposures of CIA covert funding as evidence of the CIA's central but hidden role in enactment of foreign policy. Acting behind the scenes, the agency further concentrated the executive branch's independence from and lack of accountability to Congress, and specifically to the SCFR and the Senate.[52] The result was bound to be some degree of executive branch duplicity, deception, and outright lying.

Fulbright's April 1967 *New York Times* essay emphasized the threat to democratic values that occurred when government penetrated purportedly free institutions, and the greater likelihood of this occurring in a period of international crisis. "The tremendous pressures imposed upon our policy-makers by the cold war, by the worldwide commitments of the United States and by the permanent, terrifying possibility of the destruction of our country by nuclear weapons have had a corrosive...effect on the very values we are trying to defend."[53] He also mentioned his dislike for assuming that intervention, now thrust on America because of its global reach, is inherently good. "...American isolationism was a very wise policy in its time [prior to World War I]...Indeed, the term 'isolationism', insofar as it connotes minding one's own business, still makes a good deal of sense in a good many places."[54]

Fulbright considered problems of CIA manipulation of private organizations to be a serious instance of unchecked executive power, inconsistent with traditional American values. He hoped that this larger issue could be brought out in connection with the Radios' genesis. CIA sponsorship was part of a pattern of U.S. governmental conduct he had deplored in 1967. Then, he had spoken of "certain practices associated with a police state - secret policy making, unchecked executive power, subversion of foreign governments...All this...for the express purpose of defending ourselves against an enemy who is our enemy precisely because he engages in all of these practices..." [55] Lack of effective Congressional restraints on the executive branch's conduct of foreign policy led to its insupportable resort to expediency. Further evidence that, prior to the early 1970s, he was intent on investigating the U.S. government's use of information dissemination was his 1968 call for appointment of a commission to devise organizational changes that would improve the conduct of U.S. foreign policy.[56]

In 1968 the prominent *Washington Post* columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak indicated that, in the case of the Radios, the recommendations of the Katzenbach Committee had not been followed.[57] At the 1971 SCFR hearings, Fulbright implied that he knew of their getting CIA funds even before the 1967 revelations. "I did not know about it really until 5, 6, or 7 years ago...We just found it out by some mysterious process of osmosis."[58] Whatever doubts he had in general concerning Lyndon Johnson's veracity, he did not choose, from 1967 to 1970, to follow up with SCFR hearings the revelations of CIA infiltrations of private organizations to ensure that all the CIA-supported voluntary organizations had been turned loose. His prior knowledge of CIA funding of the Radios, and inactivity before 1971, support the contention that in 1971 he was seizing on the

issue of ending them to make a larger point about curbing Executive branch power. With the unpopularity of the Nixon policy in Vietnam, and disregard of Congress in constructing that policy, there was some prospect for gaining support for a pointed Congressional reprisal of the executive branch.

Part of the prelude, for Fulbright in 1971, to the issue of "unchecked executive power" was the SCFR's difficulties, in 1966 and 1967, in getting Secretary of State Dean Rusk to appear before it in public session with regard to policy in Vietnam. Rusk appeared in executive (secret) session but refused to meet the SCFR's request to appear in public session. Fulbright, and others on the SCFR such as Albert Gore (D-TN) and Morse, assessed this response as typical of the pattern of conduct by which the Executive branch inhibited the SCFR from performing its proper educative role and eluded real accountability to the public. At last, Rusk agreed to public hearings, which lasted two days, before the SCFR in early 1968.

The SCFR's questioning of Rusk was disbelieving and unsympathetic. A spirit of support for the Secretary of State and the Johnson administration's purposes in Vietnam erupted within the House. Fulbright, leading the charge against Rusk, encountered a wave of hostility in the House. Not only was Rusk defended and praised by numerous Congressmen, Fulbright was castigated as being close to dishonorable and defeatist, and certainly as manipulative in his handling of the hearings.[59] This hostility, primarily concerned with his attitude, came out in the House again in 1972, focusing on his alleged procedural misdeeds with regard to distribution of reports on the Radios.[60] His name, as in the earlier case, was spoken there with bitterness.

After Case's Senate speech in January 1971, Fulbright's general orientation on the

matter of excessive executive power found a specific target. In his January, 1971 speech on the floor of the Senate proposing Senate Resolution 18, Case said that it was regrettable that secret funding had gone on for so long. Noting that they had received some $200 million during their lifetimes without the knowledge of the public or Congress, Case called for Congressional consideration of open funding. He proposed a year's grant of $30 million, to be administered by the State Department.[61] Fulbright, setting in motion the process leading up to SCFR hearings, wrote the State Department within a week asking for "coordinated Executive branch comments" on the proposed legislation.[62] He acted quickly, clearly believing he would succeed in bringing the SCFR around to his position.

Nothing was forthcoming from the executive branch for some weeks. Fulbright again contacted the administration, in early March, to suggest that hearings be held in late April. Finally, an official got back to Fulbright, almost on the eve of his suggested hearings date, to request a delay of a month on their commencement.[63] Evidently the administration was considering its options before deciding on any cooperation with Case's effort to put the Radios on a new institutional footing.

Between Case's speech and the late May date requested by the administration for hearings, he had been in touch with the Nixon administration, to whom he had "made it clear that my purpose was to find any suitable mechanism which would bring the stations out from under CIA."[64] Case next came back to the administration with a modification that would establish a public corporation in charge of the Radios. The administration countered with its own proposal, for a non-governmental corporation, an American Council for International Broadcasting, to oversee them. Case agreed, with provisos, and

introduced the bill as S. 1936 to the Senate on May 24, the same day that the SCFR hearings began. He gave the Nixon administration credit for agreeing to let the Radios become publicly funded.[65]

Other aspects of Case's agreement to support S. 1936 did not bode well for Fulbright's rapid success in ending Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. S. 1936 made their operations an autonomous governmental institution, not under the State Department, and hence, more permanent and less subject to the Congressional vagaries in its annual authorizations and appropriations for the State Department. Evidently, he was not going to hold the Radios' CIA past against them or the Executive Branch, which would make more difficult Fulbright's attempt to discredit them and achieve an SCFR mandate to end them.

Fulbright, hoping that he would be able to bring the whole Committee around to his views, did not attempt to put off hearings on the issue in 1971 until so late that getting legislation on them would have to wait another year. He would attempt to be persuasive once hearings got underway. If he could get the Committee and the Senate to write a restrictive bill, that alone would demoralize the Radios' personnel during the current year. Evidently understanding during the 1971 SCFR public hearings and subsequent hearings in executive session that shutting the operations down was not going to be done in a single session, he got the SCFR to agree on a bill that gave only a year's funding, and did not attempt to use his position to put off a vote. He would take advantage of the Committee Report on the Hearings to cast some aspersions on the Radios and on the executive branch's conduct regarding them. There would be other chances to woo the SCFR to his position against them.

In terms of legislative procedure, consideration of authorizing open governmental funding for the Radios had to begin within the appropriate committees, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. The SCFR in 1971 consisted of nine Democrats and seven Republicans. In addition to Fulbright, Pell, and Case, its members were John Sparkman (D-AL), Mike Mansfield (D-MT), Frank Church (D-ID), Stuart Symington (D-MO), Gale W. McGee (D-WY), Edmund Muskie (D-ME), William Spong (D-VA), George Aiken (R-VT), Karl Mundt (R-SD), John Sherman Cooper (R-KY), Jacob Javits (R-NY), Hugh Scott (R-PA), and James Pearson (R-KS).

Fulbright conducted the hearings during 1971, 1972, and 1973 according to dual strategies previously developed in his conduct of SCFR hearings on foreign policy with which he disagreed: to invite certain establishment figures who could be probed and whose position could be contested, and to treat the proceedings as a forum for advancing his own set of ideas. The Committee entertained testimony from only three witnesses during its 1971 public hearings, which were held on a single day. This appears to be due to an effort by Fulbright to limit the amount of favorable testimony.

Paul Bartlett, one of the witnesses and formerly president of one of the only privately owned international broadcasting operations in the U.S., was quite dubious about the likelihood that the Radios could conduct themselves free of direction by the administration under any form of operation that relied on government money. Thus, with Fulbright casting doubt on the suitability of government funding, and Bartlett reinforcing this view, the limited scope of the SCFR Hearings did not showcase favorable expert opinion. In particular, no émigrés from East Europe or the USSR, who could have spoken

on the impact of the Radios in their homelands, were invited as witnesses. Only the administration representative Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Martin Hillenbrand, along with various testimonial letters submitted by the Radios' executives, showed unequivocal support. The same executives submitted documents in support of their operations for the full Senate and House debates as well. Fulbright could no doubt have obtained many of the same favorable witnesses who appeared in the House Committee hearings shortly afterwards, but he did not choose to.

Showing interest in keeping an executive branch role in the Radios' future, the Nixon administration let Rep. Ogden Reid (R-NY), who had sponsored the House version of S. 18, know that "it did not want to move totally away from the government area" in the future administration of the Radios.[66] Hillenbrand, during his testimony, when questioned by both Fulbright and Aiken, repeatedly stated that he would disclose some information in executive session but not in the public hearings. Given Fulbright's problems earlier in getting Rusk to appear in public hearings, Hillenbrand's attitude understandably antagonized the Senator, who felt that the administration was not even being candid about matters concerning the Radios' past whose general outline was already common knowledge.[67] He took Hillenbrand's posture as yet another instance in which the Executive branch adopted secrecy irrespective of necessity. The administration's refusal to be forthcoming undermined, as Rusk had earlier, the ability of the SCFR to fulfill its educative function. Fulbright's testy interactions with Hillenbrand at the 1971 Hearings were to typify the way he responded to a number of advocates for the Radios for the next three years of hearings.

At the SCFR May hearings, Case agreed with Fulbright's caveat that the Radios'

continued existence needed to be subjected to SCFR scrutiny. In addition, at the SCFR Hearings, Case, though he was submitting for consideration the administration's S. 1936, mentioned aspects of it that he considered would be better if amended. His provisos included consideration of a more open process of appointment of the corporation's board, rather than the President appointing them all, as in S. 1936. In particular, he suggested that there might be two appointments made by Congressional authority (specifically by the Speaker of the House and the President *pro tempore* of the Senate,) and possibly one each by the directors of the Smithsonian and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. He also recommended that the legislation require the Council to make a yearly request to Congress for authorizations in addition to appropriations; in S. 1936, the Council would only be required to request appropriations annually. He also commented, "The Council should not be used as a means of expanding Government participation in the dissemination of information overseas."[68]

Fulbright was inclined to accept the testimony at the hearings by Bartlett, who said,"...(T)he Soviet Union is following the policy of the czars, which is that Russians ought to hear what the government thinks they ought to hear..."[69] The chairman felt the Soviets were reacting understandably in their anger about RFE and RL broadcasting. For him, the Radios' attempt to function as a surrogate domestic broadcasting operation, modeled on Western broadcasting, constituted internal interference.

At the 1971 hearings, Fulbright questioned the justification of international broadcasting of news about internal affairs into countries whose regimes had not themselves asked for it. He felt such broadcasting, instead of deserving praise for increasing the free flow of information, constituted a failure to recognize the right of

various nations to have their own system. "If it has been good for the Russians, why have they spent six times as much as Radio Liberty's annual budget to jam the broadcasts?"[70] He made the point again a year later. "Do the countries of Eastern Europe agree to receive Radio Free Europe information?...(T)hese people do not quite agree to receive this information, which you say is so useful to them."[71] He bridled at what he saw as interference. It fit into the overall pattern of U.S. behavior he had described in *The Arrogance of Power*.

In the 1971 SCFR hearings, Fulbright expressed disapproval of the recently-reported broadcasting practice by Radio Free Europe of "cuddling," or transmission, in what amounted to jamming, on a closely adjacent frequency to that used by Radio Moscow for broadcasts to Eastern Europe. Such jamming, Bartlett contended, was more negative than the Soviets' own jamming of the Radios, since the Radio Free Europe cuddling was jamming the Soviets' attempt to communicate within their own bloc. The proper path under détente, for Fulbright, was expansion of trade and various forms of exchange that would serve to increase familiarity of the great powers with one another and lessen tensions. The Radios were having precisely the opposite effect. Bartlett reported that when he had visited Moscow Radio and met with one of the committee members who controlled broadcasting in the Soviet Union, he heard that "they hoped to drive them [the Radios] out of Germany."[72]

Fulbright was not inclined to take the administration at its word regarding the "new system" without a CIA link that governed the Radios. He made it clear that he believed the executive branch would continue its supervision and in some measure direction of their programming, if the proposal for public funding together with creation

of a supervisory board was enacted.[73] His animus had some personal, as well as principled, roots. Jousting with Hillenbrand, he cited committee records that showed the most ambassadors considered that the cultural exchange program made no contribution to cold war animosities, while he implied that the broadcasting operations certainly did.[74]

Beginning in the 1971 hearings, Fulbright considered different means that, even should some broadcasting like that currently done by the Radios continue, would deprive them of their identity. He raised the possibility that the work they did could be handled by the equipment currently operated by the Voice of America (VOA) international broadcasting operation, pointing to the savings that could be realized. He asked Bartlett whether this was feasible.[75] Another option he brought up for consideration was merging RFE and RL's operations. He expected their resistance to such proposals. In 1972, in response to documentation by Radio executives intended to prove their useful purpose, he countered with the argument that bureaucracies inevitably act to perpetuate themselves.[76] In the 1971 hearings, Bartlett had prefigured Fulbright's point: "...using any corporation or foundation or any other device as a funnel through which to pour millions of dollars into something which may or may not need to exist...automatically concerns me a very great deal."[77]

The lines were clearly drawn between the basis for Fulbright's opposition and the justification for the Radios by many of its supporters: the latter maintained that the people of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were being denied information by their regimes for reasons that were good for them but bad for the people. For many of the Radios' supporters, the Soviet bloc regimes were more dangerous to the West when they were free to enhance their peoples' suspicion of the West by the slanted and filtered

information that they received from their regimes. While from the outset the majority of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs held this position, it took new developments for it to emerge as the clear majority view in the SCFR.

On May 14, the Senate Appropriations Committee reported out to both Houses House Joint Resolution 742,[78] a general continuing appropriations bill which stipulated, among other things, that the Radios would receive interim funding at the current rate without mentioning that their funds were coming through the CIA. The resolution noted the expectation that both houses of Congress would enact legislation authorizing funds for them as soon as possible for FY 72.

Testimony at the public SCFR hearings suggested that the broadcasting operations would not survive if Congress, influenced by the argument that maybe they could gather sufficient funds through contributions, did not vote to provide funding for the current year. There was evidence that starting the same operations up again in the future would be far more costly. Had Fulbright been able to block any authorization whatever, as he wished, they would likely have been doomed in a short period. Even a one-year period of non-funding would essentially have knocked them out of operation at least until a great deal more money was allocated to cover new start-up costs.

Notwithstanding these arguments, the Committee, heeding Fulbright's misgivings, did not want to commit itself to a long-term future for the Radios without studies, and was not moved by testimony at the hearings that morale at the Radios would suffer if the Radios' future was kept on an uncertain basis. The Committee, meeting in Executive Session on June 7, adopted a wait-and-see approach, far different from the mood in the Committee on Foreign Affairs hearings which were held several months

later. The SCFR Executive Session was the occasion for the marking up of legislation on the Radios that would be forwarded to the full Senate.

Fulbright was successful in convincing his fellow members that the merits of the Radios in the current climate between the West and the Soviet bloc had not been conclusively demonstrated, and thus that, at the least, more information was needed before authorizing permanent funding. Though he clearly showed himself during the public hearings to be against any further state support, he was unable to convince his committee during the 1971 hearings that they should be terminated. Rather, the Committee as a whole believed that they should be supported on a minimal basis (just for the current fiscal year), pending commissioned studies by the General Accounting Office (GAO) and the Congressional Research Service (CRS) of the Library of Congress that would help it decide if support was justified.

The legislation reported out by the SCFR held the Radios' long-term future in limbo. While the legislation raised the sum authorized by H.J. Res. 742 for FY72 through continuing appropriations from $30 million to $35 million, the SCFR had rejected by voice vote on July 21 a slightly modified version of the administration-sponsored S. 1936 that would have created a permanent new administrative basis. Making its recommendations to the Senate, the SCFR Report had stated that it "views Senate bill 18 as stopgap legislation - designed primarily to bring into the open the Government's role in financing both Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty."[79] This was Fulbright's view. The amended S. 18 that was reported out, which put them under the State Department's supervision and authorized funds for only one year, was clearly a temporary arrangement.

The SCFR Report, which Fulbright submitted to the Senate, stated that the

majority of the SCFR wished to give the Radios the benefit of the doubt. He incorporated several of his objections to the Radios and the larger issue of executive branch conduct: the way the executive branch secrecy seemed to be implicit in the Radios' operation; the amount of funds they soaked up; U.S. governmental hypocrisy; the question of whether they were doing meaningful work.

> ...Executive Branch officials refuse publicly to acknowledge the Agency's [CIA's] participation or role in maintaining the two radios...The Department declined to supply additional financial data for this report on Government funding of RFE and RL...RFE's and RL's combined budget of $36.2 million may be compared to the Voice of America's budget of $41 million...For further comparison, an estimated $37 million was spent in FY 71 on official educational and cultural exchange programs...[80]

> ...It is regrettable that the Executive Branch of Government under five administrations deceived the taxpayers with respect to the expenditure of these public funds. The connivance of both public and private officials to lead the American public to believe this fantasy is to be regretted...How ironical...it is that such practices have been used in the name of getting 'the truth through to the peoples behind the Iron Curtain!...[81]

Fulbright mentioned that there was "serious doubt [of the Radios' worth] in view of the public's repeated reluctance..." to contribute the bulk of their needs. Pell, in a

supplemental view printed in the report, while stating he was himself in favor of Radio Free Europe, was unenthusiastic about Radio Liberty, "questionable as its basic objective is the removal of an indigenous, stabile [sic] and apparently fairly permanent regime."[82] In the Report's Appendix, the text of Case's remarks to the Senate May 24 introducing S. 1936, an asterisked comment indicates that "Senator Javits wishes to associate himself with these remarks in support of S. 1936."[83]

On June 8, the day after the Committee's hearings in Executive Session, Fulbright sent letters to the Comptroller General and the Head of the Congressional Research Service requesting studies on the Radios. While the intention to do this was noted in the SCFR Report, it is not clear whether the origins of the request lay with other, more neutral, SCFR members, or with Fulbright himself. His initial request to the Comptroller General for action by early fall suggests that he thought the GAO report, in particular, might help him build a case during the current session. He called upon the GAO to report back on the degree to which the Radios were making effective use of funds. The CRS reports were to be more broad-based investigations of their performance, and assessments of their relevance in the current atmosphere of détente.

Fulbright had reason to be hopeful that the reports commissioned from GAO and CRS would be helpful to his cause. In fact, earlier in 1971, he had had the SCFR staff produce, and then publish as a Committee print, *United States Economic and Military Foreign Assistance Programs. A Compilation of General Accounting Office Report Findings and Recommendations*. In the Foreword, he showed both his disenchantment with administration foreign policy and his sense that the GAO was cooperating in his requests that it investigate, and report on, sensitive information damaging to the

administration. He said, "In recent years, the Committee on Foreign Relations has become increasingtly skeptical of the manner and methods used to implement this country's foreign aid program...Taken together,...[the GAO compilation report's] findings and recommendations tell a tale of bureauratic woe, mismanagement, and inefficiency...More than this, the GAO's compilation tells a tale of disregard for congressional intent..."[84] A GAO accounting of the Radios' past finances, presumably, would at the least specify the CIA channel by which funds were made available as well as the amount of the funds, never approved by Congress.

Fulbright would also have anticipated some assistance to his cause from whatever was brought to light by the CRS reports. During the early 1970s the SCFR, sometimes along with the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, commissioned a number of reports from the Congressional Research Service. In 1971 the SCFR commissioned the CRS to investigate two other topics that reflected a concern with executive branch infringements on Congress or failure to facilitate its appropriate oversight. The CRS reports for both of these inquiries appeared as Committee Prints, titled "Senate Role in Foreign Affairs Appointments" and "Security Classification as a Problem in the Congressional Role in Foreign Policy."[85] When Fulbright contacted the director of CRS in June, 1971, he did not make any recommendation on who he would prefer to write the reports.

Who on his committee might Fulbright have hoped to side with him against the Radios? Despite Case's proposal for a funding mechanism for the Radios, there was apparently at least a possibility that he would conclude, as Fulbright hoped to convince all the Committee, that they were invalid government operations. At the 1971 hearings, Case said, "...(W)e are moving in the direction of getting a handle on the RFE-RL

question, so that if they are undesirable they can be altered or terminated."[86] In July, 1971 Case introduced a bill, passed into law in December, which would forbid funds for U.S. paramilitary activity in Cambodia, an indication that he was no stooge for the Nixon administration.[87] In SCFR hearings in early March, 1972, Case, like Fulbright, challenged the USIA program for its dissemination of propaganda. Another SCFR member who had a personal motivation to question government subsidies for the Radios was Frank Church. Church had served as a fund-raiser in Idaho for the Crusade for Freedom under the illusion that Radio Free Europe relied on donations, and he was outraged at being manipulated.[88]

The Senate and House approved House Joint Resolution 742 in July. Meanwhile, the Senate had before it the SCFR's amended S. 18, which was specific legislation for allocating funds for the Radios for FY 72. On August 2, 1971, it conducted a discussion of S. 18, and with no debate about the wisdom of continuing funding for a year, it simply followed along after the SCFR's recommendation, not inclined to push for a more comprehensive plan. It voted on August 2, 1971 in favor of S. 18 (no vote count given).[89] On August 5, since authorization of the Radios' FY 72 budget had already been approved by the full Senate, Fulbright again contacted the Comptroller General, stating that haste was no longer necessary and thoroughness should be given priority.[90]

Concurrently with the start of the SCFR hearings, Reid introduced H.R.9330, which had been put before the Senate as S. 1936. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs held its public hearings on the Radios on two days in September 1971. The Chairman of the Committee, Thomas Morgan (D-PA), introduced a bill, H.R. 9637, that Reid called a "companion" to his H.R. 9330. Morgan said that he was introducing H.R.

9637 "at the Executive's request...based entirely on the request made by the State Department."[91] The House also gave consideration to S. 18 as approved by the Senate, and to another bill by John Monagan (D-CT), H.R. 10590.

Saying he thought it was appropriate to defer a final decision on the Radios, Dante Fascell (D-FL) proposed a study commission, which had already been floated as a possibility by the Nixon administration. His proposal, after revision by the Committee, emerged in an amended S. 18 as a Commission on International Broadcasting. Composed of nine members, it would include four members of Congress appointed by the Speaker of the House and Senate President and three eminent private persons in fields such as mass publications. The commission would administer funds for the Radios through the end of its existence on June 30, 1973. It would comprehensively study them to try to determine whether they were meritorious and serving the national interest, and what level of government funding they should have. The commission would provide two fiscal years (FY 72 and FY 73) of funding.

Support for the Radios, and cooperation with the Nixon administration's desire to keep them going, was robust and, as was evident since committee chair Morgan proposed supportive legislation, bipartisan in the House Committee. Morgan's cooperation with the administration is an indication of the degree to which the House tended to concur with executive branch initiatives, and was, unlike the Senate, no breeding ground for reassertion of Congressional powers. The mood in the House Committee was that the Radios' covert past was no reason to deny them a means to continue their essential work. Peter Freylinghuysen (R-NJ) said, "I hope it [the mechanism for overt funding and administration] does not lead to meddling on the part of Congress in what has been done

in a responsible way."[92]

Democrats as well as Republicans who spoke during the public hearings favored legislation that would set up a permanent basis for governmental funding. They alluded to the different reception given the Radios in the Senate, and debated how to formulate a FY 72 bill that could ultimately achieve their purpose without antagonizing the Senate. Rep. J. Herbert Burke (R-FL) was the lone voice questioning, like Fulbright, "why it is the responsibility of the American taxpayer now [in a time of relaxation of East-West tensions] to continue to inform...Communist countries, what the truth is?"[93]

Seven witnesses (one of whom, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Columbia University Professor and Polish émigré, was unable to attend and sent a statement) testified. Of these seven, not a single one cast doubt on the purpose of the Radios or on the wisdom of government funding. Three witnesses at the House Hearings were émigrés from the Soviet bloc, and an additional witness represented the Polish-American Congress. Further, Morgan, as chair of the House Committee, included in the record "a representative sampling" of correspondence received from scholars, journalists, and Soviet and East European specialists uniformly supporting the Radios.

The House Committee knew that legislation securing funding, whatever the institutional framework, would be a sign to personnel at the Radios that they had some security, at least for the present. Understanding that it would be better to preserve a semblance of identity with the Senate's amended S. 18, the House Committee chose not to couch its substantially different provisions as wholly separate legislation, retaining the Senate bill's designation as it reported out to the full House its version of S. 18, 23-1.[94]

On the day of the full House vote, November 19, 1971, sixteen members of both

parties, including several from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, spoke in behalf of the bill. Morgan explained to the House that his committee had "amended the Senate bill to provide for a far-ranging study by a body that included Members of Congress as well as outside experts."[95] Fascell noted: "Our committee has considered the possibility of using the State Department route [for making grants to the Radios prior to the completion of a commission study]...This is no time to shove them on the Department of State. The administration does not want it; the State Department does not want it..."[96] The tone of all testimony was markedly supportive of the Radios, and no one questioned that they were doing an important service. The amended S. 18 passed in the House 271-12.

Because of the two differing forms of S. 18 approved by Senate and House, the matter was referred to a conference committee, composed of representatives of the SCFR and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs selected by the presiding officer in each house. Standard practice was that only persons recommended by the two committee chairs would be included.[97] This sign-off gave Fulbright substantial leverage in influencing the bill coming out of the conference committee. He used his influence to have Symington, Church, Case and Aiken, members of the SCFR with some doubts about the Radios, appointed to the Conference Committee. The House Committee's delegation was Frelinghuysen, Morgan, Fascell, Clement Zablocki (D-WI), Wayne Hays (D-OH), William Mailliard (R-CA), , and William Broomfield (R-MI).

The Conference Committee became a battleground. The closest Fulbright came to his goal was these protracted deliberations. Though he had hoped to enlist members of the SCFR against the Radios from the outset, he was aware that his ends would be served as effectively if the conference committee was unable to agree on legislation, since even

temporary suspension of funding would lead to fragmentation of the employee apparatus. Because private and corporate donations had never accounted for the bulk of RFE's operating costs (below 10% as the GAO report would reveal), and virtually none of RL's costs, even one year without funding would essentially have knocked them out of operation. The employee termination costs and reversion of its equipment in Spain to the government there would have been devastating.

Disagreement between the SCFR and House Committee members delayed writing of compromise legislation that could be reported out to the Senate and House for approval until March, 1972. As the Senate Report No. 691 on the conference committee, submitted by Aiken, stated, "the House conferees were insistent that the radios be authorized for 2 years during which time their utility could be studied...The Senate conferees were adamant in their belief that the radios should be continued only for the balance of the current fiscal year...Some felt that the future of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty should be considered within the context of periodic State Department or USIA authorization legislation."[98] The latter provision was in line with the idea that their broadcasting operations could be merged with VOA, and that policy making for all three should originate in a single source. Though apparently neither side wanted to give, ultimately the SCFR delegation won its purpose of limiting the authorization. If the House Committee delegation would not agree to limitations specified by the SCFR delegation, they would get nothing at all.

The conference committee reported out legislation on March 15, 1972, that stipulated funding limited to FY 72. So the new round of legislation required for FY 73 would need to commence within two and-a-half months. The Conference Committee,

held hostage by its SCFR members, had discomfited the Radios by delaying funding an additional period of five months. The whole idea of a year-long study commission had to be thrown over, since its mandate would extend beyond the current fiscal year. Given that hearings for the following year's funding for the Radios would need to begin within a few months, the Radios and their State Department managers would soon need to summarize their FY 72 operation and show reason for continued funding. In the bipartisan SCFR conference committee delegation's adamant stand against giving the Radios more than a limited purchase on the future, things appeared to bode quite well for Fulbright's chances to erode the Senate's support for government funding for the Radios in deliberations, soon to begin, for FY 73.

When Fulbright received the GAO report, its thumbnail histories of the Radios did not mention the CIA's connection to them, and rather stated that "Free Europe was established...as a nonprofit organization" and "RLC [Radio Liberty Committee] was incorporated...as...a nonstock, nonprofit organization."[99] Further, the GAO report, in citing in some detail a study done by Free Europe on the need for modernization and its estimated costs, along with estimates of enhancements RLC sought, was giving the Radios a platform to justify these requests. The GAO report, concluding the sections for each of the Radios, stated identically "that the public monies have been reasonably accounted for, that the administration of expenditures has been reasonably effective, and that the expenditures have been applied for the stated purposes..."[100] Overall, it seemed to be an endorsement of the Radios.

The GAO report did give figures for the overall government contributions to the committees operating the Radios from their inception: for RFE, $306 million (plus $16

million for the fund-raising Crusades for Freedom), and for RL, $158 million.[101] Fulbright saw these as major outlays showing that the scope of the deception of the American taxpayers was that much greater.

Fulbright excerpted several findings from the GAO report in the 1972 Hearings. One was Radio Liberty Committee's statement on its aims: to "influence...internal trends in the U.S.S.R. in directions favorable to the interests of the U.S. and the free world." He considered this an open admission of intent to interfere in another nation's internal affairs.[102] The report showed that the Radios had "extensive plans" to modernize, which clearly would make their future budget requests go up dramatically.[103] Radio Free Europe was conducting extensive distribution of its research to scholars, an activity which was remote from the U.S. national interest.[104]

The GAO report's analysis showed that expenses for a Western European Advisor Council (WEAC) annual conference were paid by RFE. Fulbright implied that, instead of Europeans anteing up to help support the Radios, prominent Europeans were being treated to a boondoggle.[105] One GAO recommendation was that the Radios could be consolidated and "some or all of their activities...merged." Its report "did not consider the possibility of merging the radio activities of Radio Free Europe and RLC with the Voice of America because of the stated differences in their basic reporting objectives,"[106] but Fulbright considered this a better option than funding them all separately.[107]

Other information in the GAO report was counter-productive for Fulbright. It stated that, according to the committees, liquidation of Free Europe, Inc., would cost $59.8 million and that of Radio Liberty Committee, $21.5 million.[108] That information indirectly aided the Radios' cause by undermining the argument that the U.S. should

attend to its domestic concerns since the Radios, if really necessary, could be readily re-started later. The GAO report "concentrated our evaluation of the administrative effectiveness of the Radios in terms of expenditures...as distinguished from evaluation of their effectiveness in accomplishing their objectives. Our efforts were coordinated with the Library of Congress so that the respective reports would complement, rather than duplicate, each other."[109] Fulbright, once the inoffensive nature of all the reports became clear, could not have been pleased by this coordination between CRS and GAO. The GAO indicated it "discussed the factual contents of this report with principal officials of Free Europe and RLC," and evidently fell in with the Radios' ongoing refusal to confirm the past CIA connection. With such sanitizing, the chairman did not gain the destructive ammunition he had sought through the GAO.

Individual details in the report were maddening to Fulbright. Hefty fees were being paid Portugal for RFE's use of a site there for retransmission, along with reversion of ownership of all installations to the Portuguese government in 1973. Radio Liberty Committee was making large payments to the Spanish government for the use of Spain as a relay site. Radio Liberty Committee's agreement with Spain had already led to reversion of ownership to Spain of property installed there. The benefit to the Spanish government would have been especially offensive to Fulbright, who was not sympathetic to Spanish dictator Francisco Franco and had raised contentious public debate in 1969 about U.S. military bases in Spain while the Nixon administration was keeping the agreement secret from Congress.[110] Fulbright bore these details in mind when he challenged the lack of European contribution to the Radios in the 1972 hearings.

Notably missing from the GAO report was a breakdown of expenditures on

activities of the Radios in a way that allowed teasing out a figure for the substantial research and publication activities of the Radios. Also missing was any mention of the community facilities built in the interest of public relations by Radio Liberty Committee in Gloria, Portugal, where its relay equipment was sited, which Fulbright might have seized on to question Radio expenditures.[111]

While the GAO report revealed the substantial extent that the Free Europe Committee, and to a lesser degree Radio Liberty Committee, had financially supported individual émigrés and émigré group activities,[112] Fulbright did not seize on this as evidence of the extent to which government monies had been spent for dubious ends. Emigré groups had been known to be contentious among themselves and, in some cases, in favor of return to monarchical rule or linked to former Nazi participation, and he missed a chance to question the wisdom of exile-related expenditures. In fact, after Congress had approved legislation that set the Radios on a new institutional footing, some partisan émigré programming on Radio Liberty became an issue. Though "Radio Liberty's regulations would seem to rule out such broadcasts [because they are]...committed to the principles of democracy,"[113] the Russian-language broadcasting of Radio Liberty during the Carter years suffered from partisan programming by Russian nationalists.[114]

Two different authors wrote the separate CRS reports on Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. Joseph Whelan, the sole person listed as a specialist on Russian and East European studies in the *Congressional Directory* for 1971 or 1972, wrote the report on Radio Liberty. James Price, who was not listed as a CRS specialist in any subject area in the *Congressional Directory* for those years, was stated in an annex to the CRS report he

wrote to have been appointed an analyst in National Defense at CRS in 1971.[115] As Fulbright learned from the annex to the CRS report, Price had at one time been a CIA employee.

Both CRS reports failed to present any negative assessments, though the CIA connection was specified in the RFE Report.[116] The authors quoted liberally from internal documents and statements supplied by executives of the Radios. In addition, they referred to the operations collectively, for example in the statement, "RL believes that its listeners will be interested in hearing..." its broadcasts of songs by Soviet artists not played by the state radio.[117] Such passages revealed that, to a considerable degree, the reports' authors were simply incorporating written statements supplied by executives of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty into their narratives. In places statements issued by them were included as quotations, always furthering the general impression that they were well run and doing a valuable service that was appreciated by both the peoples of their target countries and by the Western European leaderships.[118] The CRS reports, though skillfully written, considered no arguments against the Radios. CRS research was considered impartial, and the approbation given by the researchers involved was decisive in securing support among both Senate and House Committees in 1972.

The report on RL by Whelan particularly stressed the contribution of the Radio Liberty in broadcasting *samizdat* (mimeographed opposition materials initially passed hand-to-hand to avoid detection) back to the Soviet Union, in effect serving as a sounding board for dissent that originated within the Soviet Union.[119] Congress also interested itself in the role of RL in *samizdat*. A statement by prominent Soviet human rights activist Alexander Solzhenitsyn, that whatever Soviet citizens knew of their country was

through Radio Liberty, became a kind of rallying cry for Congressional advocates of the Radios.

Though many statements in the CRS reports contributed to painting a favorable, detailed portrait of the Radios, Price made sure it was clear he was not explicitly endorsing passage by the Congress of continued funding. While this degree of objectivity was only to be expected in a report commissioned from CRS, the wording he used was carefully considered. "It could be argued," he wrote in his report's summary, "that even if RFE were extraordinarily well-managed, efficient and accurate in its research, balanced in its commentaries, and well-received by its audience, the U.S. national interest might yet require a change in control or the liquidation of the Radio...This study does not reach any conclusions as to what role, if any, RFE might play within the broad context of foreign policy."[120] Such a disavowal undermined the power of Fulbright's argument that the report was essentially a product of the executive branch.

Having sought the CRS reports, Fulbright acted strangely once they were received by his office. He let them sit, neither distributing them nor notifying the Congress at large that they had been completed. In February, 1972, House members, knowing that the reports had been ordered, learned they had been sent to Fulbright some time before. Reacting to the ensuing uproar, especially in the House and taken up by the press, Fulbright defended his conduct, maintaining that he had not tried to withhold the reports and stating that members of Congress were free to come by his staff's offices to examine them. But this non-standard way of handling the reports showed his reluctance to acknowledge their contents. In any event, critics in the House were not satisfied. They felt that Fulbright was slighting the House in its role in foreign affairs, preferring to keep

prerogatives with the SCFR as much as he could. House members demanded open distribution of the Reports. Fulbright finally had them inserted in their entirety in the *Congressional Record*. Unlike other CRS commissioned reports, he never had those on the Radios issued publicly as committee prints. Feeling they were written to support the administration's position, he implied that the CIA had at some point sent Price, author of the Radio Free Europe Report, to work at the CRS.[121] He had his biography, including information about his former employment in the CIA, introduced into the record of the 1972 Hearings.[122]

Events were shaping to put Fulbright's back to the wall regarding the Radios, though the gravity of his situation was not immediately apparent. His uncharacteristic high-handedness in sitting on the CRS reports, though they were not outright endorsements for open government funding, bore witness to their highly favorable tone. His conduct also suggests that he sensed widespread receptivity in Congress to the kinds of arguments supplied by the Radios that were contained in the reports: they allowed internal dissidents a voice; there was effective supervision and monitoring of program content; they did not broadcast strident calls for uprisings; they called for evolution within Soviet bloc societies. Additionally, the fact that the reports carried the imprimatur of the CRS lent them authority within the SCFR. Fulbright failed in the 1972 hearings to develop a point that he had himself made before, and that was notably absent in the CRS reports. Borrowing phrasing supplied by the Radios themselves, the CRS reports skirted whether the United States had a right to busy itself in the internal affairs of other nations, in the sense of a constant stream of detailed reporting on, and critical analysis of, regime practices and decisions to their populations.

In February, 1972, President Nixon made a historic visit to Peking. In May, he visited Moscow and concluded agreements on Anti-Ballistic Missiles Systems and certain offensive weapons. In Moscow, Nixon stated that "'We believe in the right of each nation to chart its own course, to choose its own system, to go its own way without interference from other nations.'"[123]

On May 10, 1972, Nixon issued a statement in support of the Radios that stole the ground from under Fulbright. Skirting the antagonism to the Radios by regimes within the Soviet-bloc, the issue of the Radios' clandestine past, and of the rancorous political debate that had taken place on them earlier in the year within the conference committee, he stated that the Radios "'are expressions of our profound conviction that a...free press plays an indispensable part in the social and political processes...'" The thrust of his remarks was that the Radios were ensuring the free flow of information, a principle of long-standing within the United States and consistent with the national interest.

Nixon stated that he was appointing a Commission on International Broadcasting to study the viability of government support for the Radios and to make recommendations on long-term provisions for them by the following February. This requested submission date would make the report available as Congress considered legislation for FY 1974. The commission, headed by Milton Eisenhower, would assess the Radios' value in the context of current international political realities. As was true earlier with the Katzenbach Committee, the Presidential Commission was made up of people who were in one way or another affiliated with the executive branch: besides the former President's brother, it included Edward Barrett, who had served as an Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, John Gronouski, former ambassador to Poland,

Edward Gullion, a former Foreign Service Career Minister, and John Roche, a former special consultant to the President. Gronouski had been a witness in favor of the Radios at the 1971 House Hearings.

While, unlike the Commission specified in 1971 in the House version of S. 18, this one would have no funding authority, it was charged with the same study responsibilities. However, the President's board would not include such features of that measure as a tripartite board, consisting of administration officials, members of Congress, and experts in the field of telecommunications, and as such left the initiative entirely in the hands of the executive branch. Further, because Nixon asked the commission to make its report by February 1973, it would only have nine months to gather its information, instead of the twelve months the earlier proposal had allowed. The shortened time frame would make for a more cursory report.

By allowing further deliberation, Nixon avoided prejudicing Congress before it had adequate information. By appointing a commission, he could ensure that its members would be respected in Congress and yet, from his perspective, "safe" in their views that international broadcasting was consistent with the U.S. national interest. By asking the Commission to make its report by February, 1973, Nixon was demonstrating patience, accepting that the current session of Congress would again give the Radios temporary funding, in its expectation that a more conclusive decision should await the Commission's findings. The wait would raise their profile when they became available. It was almost certain that the report would recommend, as Nixon wished, long-term government funding with an institutional basis outside the State Department.[124] He would gain from the agreement of the new report with the positive tenor of the GAO and

Congressional Research Service reports.

The SCFR chairman brought up Nixon's May 10 statement at the 1972 SCFR Hearings. He implied that the President was, by supporting the Radios, contradicting the very diplomatic achievements just made with the Soviet Union and China. Fulbright alleged inconsistency between Nixon's statement in Moscow in February, 1972, "We believe in the right of each nation to chart its own course, to choose its own system, to go its own way without interference from other nations,"[125] and his support for the Radios. Fulbright questioned the convergence of Nixon's statements: "I don't quite see how it [Radio Free Europe's and Radio Liberty's broadcasting] is consistent with the President's statement of principles of what he is apparently trying to achieve in both Russia [sic] and China. It seems to me inconsistent with it, even if it isn't propaganda, if for no other reason than the assumption that we are dealing with benighted people who are so ignorant and backward we have to enlighten them even on daily news events..."[126] In the 1971 hearings Fulbright had already drawn the same conclusion: "I think to continue to try to stir up trouble in Eastern Europe and in Russia is contrary to the President's own policy." He then referred to the "daily insults" issuing from the Radios.[127]

In 1972 both the House and the Senate forestalled a repetition of the prior year's delays that jeopardized passage of the necessary legislation to keep the Radios afloat for the coming year by passing bills making appropriations for them. The normal sequence of legislation, which starts with authorizations, was not adhered to.[128] The makeup of the SCFR in 1972 was the same as in 1971, except that Charles Percy (R-IL) had replaced fellow Republican Scott. Percy immediately made his presence felt, arguing for U.S. governmental support of the Radios. In the June 6 and 7 hearings U. Alexis Johnson

appeared as an administration witness. Fulbright's attitude had not improved. His perception of the Radios as contaminated by past administrations' duplicity was only reinforced by the Nixon administration's continuing silence on the CIA's prior funding of the Radios. Past duplicity convinced him that more of the same was at work. He had already negatively impressed the Undersecretary during the latter's confirmation hearings in 1969, in which Johnson "sat, feeling rather like a criminal defendant...I have never felt...under more unfriendly pressure."[129] Fulbright no doubt had some disapproval of Johnson as the former deputy ambassador in Vietnam and participant in the "nation-building" project there from 1964.

The Undersecretary, at the hearings on the Radios, again felt under attack by the "perpetually hostile Chairman Fulbright,"[130] though Johnson held his composure. Responding to the question whether "there are no Government people...present in the operations of these Radios today?", he answered: "(A)s of today, as of the present time, there are no U.S. Government employees, and that includes employees of the CIA employed or engaged in the operations..." Fulbright considered that this must be parsing words and pressed further: "Well, does this mean that there are no employees presently there who were in the CIA but have been transferred--their pay--to Radio Free Europe?...I don't see why we get bogged down in this kind of a controversy because you know very well that other reports that we have had clearly state that there are such people giving guidance."[131]

Fulbright did not feel that there was a valid human rights role for the Radios, despite their dissemination of *samizdat*. It is not clear whether he would have been in favor of private individuals in the West publicizing *samizdat* materials both in the West

and back to the East, but he did not favor a U.S. government mission to do so. He was convinced that détente was threatened by what he perceived as the Radios' interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Because of what he had come to see as the immorality of U.S. arrogance of power, he was determined in the early 1970s to look critically on how the U.S. implemented its human rights' goals elsewhere in the world.

Facing Fulbright, who had not budged in his opposition to the Radios, Percy emerged in the 1972 hearings as the dominant advocate within the SCFR. Fulbright labored, at times disjointedly, and not in the methodical, rhetorically adept style that characterized his writing. The Illinois Senator was able to parry Fulbright's objections and mount a cohesive argument. He was not tangled emotionally, while Fulbright saw the administration about to have its way yet again, despite the Radios' clandestine past and the overall tendency of Nixon, like past Presidents of both parties, to skirt Congress on foreign policy.

After the 1972 public hearings and mark-up session, the SCFR voted 10-3 to approve legislation that provided an additional year's funding for the Radios. This decision appeared in the Committee report, written this time not by Fulbright but by Percy.The bill again placed them under the aegis of the State Department, pending the delivery by February 1973 of the report of the Presidential Study Commission to help determine if they merited permanent continuation, and if so, what form of long-term administrative apparatus for them was best. The three SCFR members who voted against the bill were Fulbright, Mansfield and Symington.[132]

The Presidential Commission on International Broadcasting delivered its long-awaited report in February 1973. It was the decisive blow to Fulbright's cause. Its

recommendations carried considerable weight, despite their predictability, due to the authority conferred by the President's appointments to it. Also, the idea that such a study by a commission was needed before Congress could make an informed decision on the long-term future of the Radios had been considered (though rejected) in the 1971 hearings. To a great extent, the President's appointment of his Commission in May 1972 allowed the argument in 1972 hearings, as in the previous year, that no permanent step should be taken until receipt of its report. Such reasoning led to Congress' again limiting the Radios to funding for one additional year, again under the State Department's administration as a temporary measure. Now that the report was in, it was as if the logjam had been broken. The two-year period of disagreement and temporizing could yield as Congress let a supposedly objective body give its supposedly authoritative judgments.

The report fulfilled Nixon's expectations that the Commission would recommend establishing a long-term governmental funding mechanism. The great majority of the Commission's recommendations would simply be carried over to Senate Resolution 1914, administration-generated legislation introduced into the 1973 hearings. It was negative regarding options that had been proposed during the past two years that would have limited the broadcasting operations' autonomy, including continuation of supervision by the State Department. It contended that "(t)he Commission does not believe the stations could maintain their professional independence if directly linked to the Department of State or USIA. A merger with the Voice of America would practically eliminate the stations; and an agency status would likewise endanger their independence while eradicating their corporate identity and thus threatening their license agreements" in the countries where they had broadcast and transmission facilities.[133] The report

recommended the establishment of a Board for International Broadcasting to take over supervision and detach the Radios, strictly speaking, from the government. The language justifying elimination of other options was reminiscent of that already employed by their executives themselves in written and in-person testimony to Congress, and suggested that, just as in earlier reports, the Commission's report incorporated statements supplied to it. Surely intended to bolster the case for support, the report made no mention of the former CIA involvement.

As the administration had proposed in 1971, the Commission recommended that the President select all members of the board. The U.S. should continue, it maintained, to be the sole source for the Radios' operating funds. This assertion stemmed from its determination that politics would likely interfere if various nations, having contributed funds, sought to influence programming. The Commission's unwillingness to push burden-sharing for the Radios upon Western European nations was a major blow for Fulbright's case. He had been arguing that if these were worthy operations, the West European nations, themselves pursuing détente with the East, could and should be major contributors. He judged that if the Western European nations would not make major contributions, a likelihood at least in the near term, it would reinforce his contention that the Radios were in no way essential to achievement of viable détente, and in fact very likely would obstruct it. The report indicated that in the Commission's view, the world situation would not be such as to reduce East-West tensions for some while into the future. The Commission wrote that it considered broadcasting to the Soviet Union would be necessary for the foreseeable future, while operations to Eastern Europe were less predictable.

In arguing the desirability of the Radios, the Commission's report drew on conclusions from all the prior reports. In this way the SCFR, with Fulbright at its head, had, by ordering the earlier reports, provided valuable evidence for supporters of the Radios' continuation. It must have been particularly galling to him that the new report, to reinforce its conclusions, cited in support statements made at one time or another by one Republican SCFR member and two Democrats, including Fulbright himself, from his 1963 book *Prospects for the West*.[134] On May 7, 1973, Nixon issued a statement that his administration was adopting the Commission's recommendations and sponsoring legislation incorporating them. The administration sought full endorsement of a long-range future for the Radios.

The makeup of the 1973 SCFR included former vice-president Hubert Humphrey (D-MN), who proceeded to draft, along with Percy, S. 1914, to execute the administration's wishes for the Radios. Humphrey thus showed himself ready to contest their future with Fulbright, despite the closeness of their positions on other matters. The first witness was Acting Secretary of State Kenneth Rush, who gave a strong endorsement to the Commission's report. Supporting its conclusions as definitive and disinterested allowed the administration to remain immune to potential charges that it was attempting to dictate to Congress. Rush echoed the Commission's conclusion that the U.S. should continue paying by itself for the Radios' operating costs, as soliciting other governments' contributions for any operations outside of their research reports would likely entail participation in the management of the stations.[135] He cited the Commission's report that, given the situation within the USSR and Eastern Europe, for the near term there was no expectation that the need for broadcasting services promoting

the free flow of information within the Soviet bloc would end. This estimate in particular lent credence to the administration's position that legislation for a long-term institutional basis for the Radios was needed.

Percy emerged as the most engaged Committee member at the hearings, interacting often with the witnesses. Summing up at the close of the hearings' first day, he spoke of how, the prior year, "(w)e did get 67 colleagues to join in support of the stations...I am determined to see that the radios...receive their fair allocation, because of the tremendous importance I place upon their work."[136] He gave obeisance to the scholarship and convictions of the chairman, "whose views in many areas I have such a high regard for..."[137] By adopting such a tone, he astutely managed things so that while Fulbright might vote against the Radios, he was partially mollified and, facing legislation that would give them a permanent lease on life, made no desperate attempt to block it. Percy was confident enough to state, in passing, "We will be putting about $30 million into Radio Free Europe..." even while the Hearings were still ongoing.[138]

Fulbright had entered the hearings in a foul mood, having seen copies of purportedly official RFE correspondence from the RFE Polish desk chief to Polish publication editors in the U.S., which portrayed Fulbright, and to a lesser extent Case, in a very derogatory light. He was not readily placated by State Department officials and, at least on the first day of the hearings, was less the master of the proceedings than in either of the prior two years' hearings.

The extent to which Fulbright had yielded to the inevitability of the bill getting out of the SCFR is apparent. He left it to Percy to sum up the first day's hearings with a statement of support for the Radios. On the second day, immediately after the chairman's

introductory statement, Percy congratulated him in a way that suggested his near-docility. "I would like to state that the chairman has been extremely fair in conducting the hearings, and all sides and points of view are being brought forward. I was very pleased yesterday that, though he disagreed with the outcome, through his persuasive powers we managed to get a quorum to adopt authorizing legislation for a supplemental for the radios to ameliorate the impact of the unforeseen devaluation in fiscal year 1973...on time."[139] Percy then continued with yet another statement of support for the Radios, speaking of their producing a "steady flow of objective reporting for the people of these countries whose own media is so restricted and censored."[140] Later, when Fulbright had to leave the session, he turned it over to Percy, as co-author of S. 1914, to chair.

Milton Eisenhower was the second witness at the hearings. Reinforcing his strong support for the Radios, he gave the Commission's findings the added authority of the appearance before the SCFR of a distinguished non-governmental person. Interchanges with the committee, especially Percy, allowed Eisenhower and other commission members who accompanied him ample opportunity to give an account of the process through which they had reached their conclusions. From the commissioners and radio executives, the Committee heard testimony on behalf of the Commission's impartiality, the nature of Soviet broadcasting, and the objectivity of the Radios' reports. Typical of Percy's encouraging phrasing is the following, directed to RFE President William Durkee: "I would like...to be as sure as I can be that what we are doing is in accord with American foreign policy...Do you think that by your reporting accurately and fully...that you are exerting a certain amount of pressure on the official radio of Poland [for example] to catch up somehow?[141]

The hearings allowed the commissioners a forum to assert the importance of the Radios' role in percolating *samizdat* materials back into the U.S.S.R. as well as into Eastern Europe. A point that dealt with the specific U.S. national interest appeared in Eisenhower's written statement, included in the record. "(W)e would fear a situation in which the peoples of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe knew only what their rigidly-controlled mass media permitted them to know. A misinformed or partially-informed people could be pawns in the hands of party and governmental leaders."[142]

At the hearings, Eisenhower took up the issue of burden-sharing, which he noted was a major concern raised by Congressmen that the commission had met. The "failure of the European nations to meet fully their obligations in support of Western security" was at issue. He felt it was unfortunate that because of this larger issue, Congressmen inevitably linked their thinking about financing the Radios with the desire to get European help in paying the costs of security-related enterprises whose benefits were general. His conviction was that the Radios served the U.S. national interest and the United States should continue to pay for them, so that their timely reporting would not suffer from multiple masters. "(I)t would...practically kill the stations if they had to seek consensus on everything they were going to say."[143]

Fulbright raised the issue of the unanimity of the State Department and Presidential Commission views. He pointed out that Barrett had been Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and head of the USIA. "He was sort of brought up on the idea that government propaganda is a good thing. Mr. Gronouski...was former Ambassador to Poland..."[144] He asked Rush if there was "anything in the Commission report with which you disagree?" Rush replying negatively, he continued, "It is purely a coincidence, of

course."[145]

The chairman raised questions about duplication of U.S. information dissemination efforts to the Soviet bloc. Referring to VOA, RFE and RL, he asked, "Do they have to have three times the repetition solely from America...?" He said he would probably agree that RFE and RL were needed if they were the only broadcasters giving the U.S. point of view. He cited the number of European countries whose broadcasts were also available to Eastern Europeans. "Are we to assume that the Germans, French, Italians, and British broadcasts are not reasonably consistent with ours in the presence [sic] of the truth?" He was concerned that the Commission's support of the Radios in their plans for modernization and increased transmission power indicated a resurgence of East-West competition, which Fulbright hoped recent developments with the Communist regimes would have lessened. He said to Eisenhower: "You yourself pointed out the tremendous growth [of the number and power of international broadcasts of all sorts]...Competing, you say. Therefore, you say, give us better facilities so we can outcompete them."[146]

On the second day of hearings, Fulbright came back to the purported uniqueness of the Radios, and whether they threatened détente. He claimed that "about 90 percent...whose main objective is to return to the old form of government" comprised the Radios' broadcasting staffs.[147] In the past, they could "make statements that we wouldn't want to be responsible for officially in the State Department, because they are offensive to the respective government...It was all a fraud, but, nevertheless, that is the excuse...If it is going to be now an official fully funded government operation, it is certainly going to be responsible to the guidance and restraints of the government..."[148] That meant the

Radios' operation would not provide anything different from VOA broadcasts. He also felt that the nature of Radio Liberty's broadcasting "raises the question of sincerity of our Government in these gestures of reconciliation with Russia."[149] Fulbright continued to wrangle with supporters, using arguments that were not always consistent with one another.

Javits applauded during the Hearings the work the Radios were doing by giving Soviet bloc citizens information on the taxes levied on Soviet emigrants as an "expression of our humanitarian interest."[150] He did not conceal the United States' own "troubles about openness...secrecy, Watergates, and other things...", but he felt that the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were far behind the United States in governmental transparency.[151] In the second day of hearings, the Watergate troubles at home came up again, but Javits saw no inconsistency between knowing that government lies were occurring at home and believing that the Radios were doing responsible reporting.[152]

Aiken was perhaps the best hope Fulbright had to gain an additional negative vote on the SCFR. He was still making up his mind on whether the U.S. should continue the Radios, if it meant it would foot the great majority of the costs. He recollected that during the previous year's hearings, the SCFR had stated that its future continuation of support for the Radios would rely on their soliciting some of its funds elsewhere. But, he fumed, "They have not done one thing that the committee asked to have done during that time."[153] Nor had RFE been willing to make publicly available information about which U.S. corporations had made contributions. He also wanted to see exploration of getting contributions from European companies with American subsidiary plants.

Arthur Goldberg, a former U.N. Commissioner on Human Rights, testified that in

his view the Radios no longer served their purpose, since the truth could as adequately be gotten out by the Voice of America. Paul Bartlett, again a witness as he had been at the 1971 SCFR hearings, argued against retaining the Radios as they now existed. He considered that the Presidential Commission's members did not have the background to appraise the Radios, and that its report had rubber-stamped previous executive branch wishes. He brought a comprehensive plan to the hearings.[154] Citing a remark of Humphrey's, that commercials outdid blatant propaganda, he proposed folding all the U.S. overseas broadcasting operations into one corporation, which would have a requirement to continue service to the same countries, and would be required to move toward functioning on a commercial basis.

For the first time in the three years of SCFR hearings, émigrés were present to give testimony in behalf of the Radios, a further sign that Fulbright was yielding in the use of his influence to try to affect their fate. One of two émigré witnesses, Roman Karst, had also testified at the 1971 House Committee hearings. The émigré witnesses painted a picture of the extent to which the intellectual elite in the USSR and the general population in Eastern Europe relied on Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe for encouragement.

Percy submitted the SCFR's report after its 10-3 vote in favor of S. 1914. The three negative votes were the same members who had cast negative votes in 1972: Fulbright, Mansfield, and Symington.[155] The Board for International Broadcasting's members, selected for staggered six year terms, would be Presidential appointees from civilian life. The SCFR report authorized $50 million for FY 74 for the Radios. The third set of hearings gave them 67% more than they had received after the first year's hearings.

In addition, as recommended by the Presidential Commission's report, there was to be sole U.S. government-based support for the Radios' operations, without any attempt to procure contributions for operations from Western European sources. Again, Fulbright's principle of multilateralism and burden-sharing had been overridden by Congressional agreement to the executive branch's interest in an undiluted radio message. In the last two years of the hearings, Fulbright was only able to get two other Democratic members, and no Republicans, to agree that the Radios had outlived their purpose, or that there was too great a hazard that they would not serve the national interest. Most fundamentally, his attempt to make them an issue over which to curb Presidential power had been unsuccessful.

Fulbright articulated his points of opposition to U.S. government support, especially sole support, for the Radios one last time in the "Additional Views" section of the SCFR report. Much more masterfully than during the public hearings, he went over the ground that he had been working to establish in the Senate since 1971.

In Fulbright's last full year in the Senate, 1974, the SCFR again held hearings on Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, now as the Board for International Broadcasting. Fulbright did not attend. The Radios' continued existence was no longer in doubt. With the prior year's SCFR, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Senate, and House confirmation of the desirability of a Board for International Broadcasting, the 1974 SCFR hearings had a less contentious quality. They mapped out the financial needs of the Radios for the coming year, provided the Board the opportunity to catalog their activities in the past year, and considered the possible merger of some of their functions. The latter is likely a legacy of the process through which Fulbright required justification for the

Radios' continuation and looked for duplication within the U.S. international broadcasting effort. It was the only success Fulbright's quest against them achieved.

Why, during the period 1971-1973, was Fulbright unable to convert the base for limiting executive power he enjoyed on the SCFR to a consensus to discontinue U.S. governmental funding of the Radios? The administration's representatives who appeared before the Senate and House hearings made a case that the new institutional basis for these broadcasting operations would be non-governmental, and would include prominent private persons "chosen for their knowledge of foreign affairs, their experience in the news media field, and their ability to insure that the grants are disbursed in the national interest...(M)embers that were appointed to the [Radios' administrative board]...would be nongovernmental personnel."[156] This argument, seemingly guaranteeing the independent voice of the Radios, lulled members of the SCFR into authorizing a future for them.

The favorable contents of the GAO and CRS reports also limited the opposition Fulbright could garner. The deliberative process, by which Nixon appointed his Presidential Study Commission which then reported favorably, was designed to show that enough patient consideration had been given to verify the Radios would not go off half-cocked in ways detrimental to U.S. interests or détente. The lengthy process he accepted in gaining the desired international broadcasting board to oversee them was also an instance of the President engaging the Senate fully in its "advice and consent" role. Thus, executive branch secrecy and its tendency to act without informing Congress, so prominent in the history of the Radios, which brought Fulbright to oppose them, had given way to a different approach by the executive branch. The President, who was a canny politician, chose this way to solicit approval for them, while at the same time

continuing to act independently in a number of other areas. Particularly in light of the past concealment of the broadcasting operations' covert past by administrations of both parties, Congress was more grateful for the collaborative approach of the President than critical of him for his participation, until forced to proceed openly, in the deception.

The authority of the Presidential Commission report's conclusions played a considerable role. Taking its cue from that report, the 1973 SCFR Committee Report recommended that the U.S. continue as the sole supporter of the Radios' operations, despite the previous concern among a number of SCFR members that there should be burden-sharing. The furor in the press and House about Fulbright's tactics to suppress the CRS reports dampened SCFR members' willingness to take any political risk to help block funding when there appeared to be considerable Senatorial, House and public support for them.

Emigré advocates argued effectively at various hearings. Speaking of their own experience and that of people they knew well, they described the impact the Radios had on keeping hope for change alive in the Soviet bloc. They were effective in suggesting that it would be poor economizing to sacrifice the prestige the United States, as the sponsor, had among the peoples of Eastern Europe and among Russian dissident elites. They emphasized the plight of people hungry for accurate news of their own nation and the broader world, but restricted to a highly filtered presentation of events. The reasonable tone of the émigré witnesses served to disarm Fulbright's contention that the émigré broadcasters would inevitably serve their own aims.

The Radios spoke effectively on their own behalf. Their presidents went before the Committees. Accounts they collected internally and submitted for the record were

proof that their staffs had the capability to comprehensively dissect an issue and consider it fully. That strategy was effective in gaining the respect of, and support from, Congress.

Unlike Fulbright, most members of the SCFR and the Senate did not view the Radios as a legitimate or necessary platform on which to challenge the executive branch. For Fulbright the issue of support was a matter of principle, maintaining curbs on the executive branch, and an emotional issue, since beginning during the Johnson administration he had challenged the Presidents about acts of duplicity. Other members of the SCFR were not emotionally involved in the outcome of the struggle over the Radios. There were other concurrent issues on which the SCFR could register its intention to insist on more of its advice and consent role and oversight function in U.S. foreign policy, many of which the SCFR reported out to the Senate. Other members of the SCFR saw the dissemination of information to the Soviet bloc peoples about their internal affairs as a justifiable precaution against regimes stirring up hatred against the West. Fulbright saw it as a failure to move toward greater respect between East and West that could improve the prospects for peace in the world.

Congress, though during these years it had been roused to challenge executive branch conduct on specific issues, did not find the history of the covert governmental relationship with the Radios a compelling reason for abandoning them. The 1973 draft legislation stated that their funding was now to be done through Congressional approval, the Senate would have to confirm the Presidential appointees to the BIB, and the BIB would come to Congress to report annually. The general mood of Congress was that these provisions ensured it would have a desirable amount of input into the Radios' conduct.

Fulbright differed from many Senators in the lesser importance he gave to

continuing to go on record against Soviet bloc human rights abuses. He was deaf to arguments on behalf of the Radios that ascribed to them a significant role in guaranteeing human rights internationally, while this was a matter that registered strongly among fellow Committee members, Democratic or Republican. The majority of the SCFR, and of the Senate as a whole, valued the part the Radios had assumed in giving activities and statements of Soviet human rights activists greater circulation in the Soviet bloc. The majority of the SCFR believed that the Radios could play a pragmatic role in moving the Soviet bloc regimes towards greater accountability to their own people.

Fulbright spoke to Milton Eisenhower at the 1973 hearings of what he considered the very great potential for détente in 1960 that foundered due to the U-2 incident.[157] His remark demonstrated that he felt a considerable degree of accommodation to Soviet power was in the U.S. national interest. Due to his long-standing combative posture against right-wing propaganda in the United States, it seemed to him important to oppose the Radios as a means to block U.S. dissemination of propaganda abroad. Other SCFR members appeared less suspicious, and accepted their claims that they were there to convey objective information to peoples who were deprived of it, at little true cost to the West's ability to conduct détente with the Soviet bloc. While Fulbright maintained that the Radios sought to shake Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R. free of Communism, there were many Senators who felt that information about the conditions in Communist countries supplied to the Soviet and Eastern European peoples by international broadcasting served the U.S. national interest. Fulbright equated the true U.S. national interest with respect for differences in how other nations conducted their affairs, a posture which he judged conducive to peace in the world.

While Fulbright was not successful in getting Congress to follow him on the issue of the Radios, concerns that motivated him in his opposition to them absorbed the SCFR around the same time. SCFR Committee Reports during the early 1970s show that a very considerable proportion of bills reported out of the SCFR involved assertion of Congressional authority, suggesting that he was influential in rousing the Committee to act. The assertion of Congress' authority in tandem with the executive branch in foreign affairs extended far beyond the specifics of the war in Indochina. A bill to repeal the Formosa Resolution was reported out favorably in 1971, marking a retrospective limitation on a specific authority previously granted by Congress to the President.[158] The SCFR, in its report "Providing Foreign Military and Related Assistance Authorization for 1972," required "that the President submit a country-by-country list of foreign aid allocations and notify Congress in advance of any increases beyond 10 per cent...(p)rohibition of waiving by President of the ceilings on military aid and sales to Latin America and Africa [and] (r)equirement of advance notice to Congress before Presidential use of transfer, waiver, and certain other special authorities."[159]

The SCFR report "Providing Foreign Economic and Humanitarian Assistance Authorization, 1972," also recommended a check on Presidential prerogatives to impound funds appropriated for domestic programs by mandating that, in order for foreign aid and military sales funds to be released, the impounded funds should be released.[160] This report's call for restriction of authorizations of the USIA (and thus of its VOA international broadcasting operation) to a year-by-year basis ran parallel with Fulbright's strategy of restricting the Radios to a single year of funds for FY 72 and FY 73. Besides indicating there would be no carte blanche for future expenditures, the SCFR

implied, through its 1972 hearings, that it would be looking closely, in the next round of funding, at the viability of international broadcasting in the current world political climate. The report further stipulated shifting economic aid to a multilateral basis, [and] phasing out [of the] bilateral loan program."[161] A call for a multilateral basis for economic aid was reminiscent of Fulbright's insistence on gaining substantial contributions from Western European allies for the Radios if they were to continue.

In another curb to the executive branch, the War Powers Act, first considered in the SCFR in 1971, and passed by Congress in 1973, served to define the extent to which the President had the authority, independent of Congress, to commit U.S. troops to military action. Legislation to curb Nixon's ability to bomb Cambodia was being considered concurrently with the 1973 SCFR hearings on the Radios, and in fact at the hearings SCFR members made clear their wish to brake the President on the matter. The issue of executive branch accountability, though not one that the SCFR majority viewed as fundamental to their decision on supporting the Radios, would be taken up by the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities (Church Committee) of the United States Senate in 1975.[162] Fulbright shared the concern with other members of Congress about a reassertion of its role, and Congress as a whole proved ready to act on it.

Fulbright got away from his SCFR consensus with regard to the Radios because he painted with too broad a brush when assigning them the full weight of executive branch dishonesty and its heedlessness of Congress. In the face of close collaboration, beginning in 1971, between their executives and the State Department as they sought to gain Congressional support for public funding, Fulbright in general struggled with how to

provide SCFR leadership in foreign affairs while unable to believe in the honesty of the executive branch.

Of the nine Democrats and seven Republicans on the SCFR in 1971, only Democrats Fulbright, Sparkman, and Spong, and Republicans Aiken and Case, attended the public hearings on the Radios. The low turnout continued for the 1972 and 1973 hearings when, combining Democratic and Republican members, only seven and six SCFR members, respectively, attended. In 1972, the new attendees were Symington, Javits, McGee and Percy (himself a new member of the SCFR.) In 1973, the only member attending who had not also been present at the 1972 Hearings was Humphrey. The low numbers attending were characteristic of SCFR hearings.

There were six Democrats and four Republicans who attended at least one of the public hearings, though in 1971 and 1972 there were two more Democrats than Republicans on the SCFR, and in 1973 three more. Some SCFR members failed to attend the public hearings on the Radios consistently all three years (Democrats Mansfield, Church, Pell, and Muskie; Republicans Scott and Pearson) and of other members for any of the hearings during which they were SCFR members (Democrats George McGovern-1 (D-SD); Republicans Mundt-1, Cooper-2, and Robert Griffin-1 (R-MI)). In 1971, there were three Democrats attending the public hearings compared to two Republicans. In 1972, the number of attendees were four Democrats and three Republicans. In 1973, the decisive year for the Radios when the hearings considered, and reported out, a bill that gave the Radios a new, permanent institutional basis, three Democrats and three Republicans attended.

Mansfield and Symington, the only members who voted with Fulbright against

funding for the Radios in 1972 and 1973, differed in that Symington attended in 1972, while Mansfield did not attend any of the public hearings. A number of Democrats who did not attend any of the public hearings voted to fund the Radios in both 1972 and 1973: Church, Pell, McGee, and Muskie. Sparkman attended all three years and voted in each year to give funding to the Radios. Besides Fulbright and Sparkman, the only member to attend all three public hearings was Aiken, the senior Republican on the SCFR, while Percy attended public hearings in 1972, the year he became a member of the Committee, and 1973. Democrats Humphrey and McGovern became members of the Committee in 1973, but only the former attended that year's public hearings. The record of attendance, while difficult to interpret, shows that there was not any clear demarcation between Democrats and Republicans. This was reflected by the bipartisan support for continued funding for the Radios that emerged after 1971.

Part III. Postscript

Events showed that Fulbright's concerns about future U.S. government (especially executive branch) influence on the Radios were not entirely without foundation. He was convinced throughout the hearings that, despite claims to the contrary, the executive branch was not going to keep its hands off them if they were continued. He considered that their autonomy would continue to be an illusion as long as the government paid their expenses. There is no evidence that he knew what was later revealed, that even at the time covert CIA funds were denied to the Radios, the CIA's contact person with the Radios since 1950, Cord Meyer, was generating together with the State Department legislation that the administration would submit to Congress as a substitute for Case's proposal.[163] But he would not have been surprised.

Part of the rationale for Congress' supporting the Radios was that Nixon, at the time S. 1914 was introduced by Percy and Humphrey, indicated he would select the members of the Board for International Broadcasting (BIB), which would supervise the Radios, from fields related to foreign policy and mass communications.[164] The BIB, as it emerged, was neither representative of the cross-section of people prominent in the various realms of civic and professional life, as the administration's 1971 S. 1936 provision for a American Council for International Broadcasting had set forth, nor chosen from specialists in mass communications, but showed an unmistakeable executive branch complexion.

Fulbright had maintained from the 1971 hearings that the executive branch would be unwilling to let the Radios be autonomous, and the personnel of the BIB certainly allowed for persisting executive branch influence. Its first president was David Abshire,

Nixon's former Assistant Secretary of State and Special Assistant for Congressional Relations. Serving as another of its initial three board members was Foy Kohler, former ambassador to the Soviet Union and former director of the VOA, the official U.S. government radio mouthpiece. By the Reagan years, Frank Shakespeare, former head of the U.S.I.A., the parent organization for the VOA under Nixon, became head of the BIB. Further cementing the ongoing linkage between the executive branch and the Radios was the continuing tenure as president of Radio Liberty Committee for two years after 1973 of Howland Sargeant, who was assistant secretary of state during the Truman administration, and who as RL president had been working under direct CIA supervision for years.[165]

Fulbright was in the political vanguard in his dissent to the Vietnam War, overweening executive branch power, and overextension of American capabilities in the world. On each of these issues, Congress, in general with public support, in time adopted a position resembling his and in so doing, vindicated him. In the early 1970s, any curbs set in motion by Congress to the Executive's hegemony would have had to originate in the Senate. Using the Radios as a test case, he saw the opportunity to get the SCFR and the Senate as a whole to act to restrict the Executive's overweening influence. The House during the second half of the 1960s had remained tractable to executive branch wishes regarding foreign policy. Even with a Republican President in 1969, the House remained largely pliant.

Fulbright, better informed about the nature of a communist threat than many other officials, and feeling by 1971 that U.S. foreign policy was discredited, was against U.S. participation in any form of propaganda and suspicious when told that institutions that

had been employed for propaganda purposes in the past might be reformed. He felt that the U.S.'s misuse of its power dictated that the balance must be swung hard in the opposite direction, abjuring involvements that might tempt further misuse by the U.S. The Radios, even if they were given formal autonomy, would surely continue to be responsive to the wishes of the U.S. government. The same fervor that prompted him to look beneath the professed intent of U.S. actions such as giving military aid to governments that were opposed to Communism, even when they themselves were dictatorial, led him to be wary of being misled into support for any venture that could be construed as emanating from a wish by the U.S. to better its position relative to the Communist regimes. The issue of the Radios represents a case in which Congressional action in keeping with his position was not belatedly taken.

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