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Woes of the Arkansas Internationalist: J. William Fulbright, the Middle East, and the Death of American Liberalism

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WOES OF THE ARKANSAS INTERNATIONALIST: J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT, THE
MIDDLE EAST, AND THE DEATH OF AMERICAN LIBERALISM

WOES OF THE ARKANSAS INTERNATIONALIST: J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT, THE
MIDDLE EAST, AND THE DEATH OF AMERICAN LIBERALISM

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in History

By

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University of Arkansas
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and American Studies, 2010

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary scholarship has shown that J. William Fulbright's defeat in 1974 was due to a plethora of reasons including his opposition to America's involvement in Vietnam, lackadaisical attitude towards the monolithic threat of Communism, connection to the Washington establishment amidst the Watergate scandal, and old age. Scholars, however, have not paid enough attention to the role Fulbright's Middle Eastern stances played in his final election campaign. I seek to place the voice of Arkansans in the national and international political discussions and show that, despite their relatively unfocused interest in Middle Eastern affairs (and perhaps because of that lack of interest or willingness to learn) their political choices were considerably determined by their perception of a liberal internationalist candidate as Senator Fulbright. Arkansas voters successfully placed themselves in the international and national conversations, showing that local politics influenced the larger global narrative during the Cold War.

**This thesis is approved for recommendation
to the Graduate Council.**

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this to my mother and father—the best parents, mentors, and friends anyone could ever have.

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Introduction

In 1974, J. William Fulbright, the junior Senator from Arkansas, found himself embroiled in one of the most difficult campaigns of his career. The challenge came in the person of Arkansas's sitting governor, Dale Bumpers. The two men had seemingly few differences in their positions, having aligned on most state and national issues, but disagreed on the direction of American foreign policy in the Middle East. Whereas Governor Bumpers' position of unquestioning support for Israel was widely popular in Arkansas, Senator Fulbright famously (or infamously) advocated a more balanced approach in policy, which was often interpreted by voters as being pro-Arab. Contemporary scholars have established several reasons for Fulbright's defeat in the 1974 primary, but none have given enough weight to his Middle Eastern policy.¹ Senator Fulbright's stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and America's foreign policy in the Middle East emerged as one of the leading causes for his defeat in the Arkansas Democratic Primary in May 1974; however, the assertion that Fulbright's defeat was directly caused by his unpopular stances toward Israel and the wider Arab world must be put into national and regional political context. This study draws from newspaper coverage, constituent letters, and secondary source material to identify the attitudes of typical Arkansas voters in order to ascertain the motives that drove them to overwhelmingly cast their votes in favor of Governor

¹ Randall B. Woods, *Fulbright: a Biography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Woods, "Dixie's Dove: J William Fulbright, the Vietnam War and the American South," *Journal of Southern History* 60 no. 3 (August 1994): 533-552; Harold T. Smith, "J. William Fulbright and the Arkansas 1974 Senatorial Election," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 44 (1985). The studies by Woods and Smith provide the foundation for this study. For other information on Senator Fulbright, see also: Lee Riley Powell, *J. William Fulbright and His Time* (Memphis, Tennessee: Guild Bindery Press, 1996), which covers the same material as Woods's (I have opted to rely on Woods out of preference for style and presentation); Eugene Brown, *J. William Fulbright: Advice and Dissent* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1985); Tristram Coffin, *Senator Fulbright: Portrait of a Public Philosopher* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1966).

Bumpers in this election, and places the results within larger regional and national political developments of the early 1970s.²

Americans have always had a deep-seated interest in the Middle East rooted in biblical lore. Their interest is most adamantly expressed by an attachment to Jewish people, especially after the turn of the twentieth century. The growth of Zionism in the early 1900s and establishment of the Israeli state in 1948 were welcomed by most Americans, especially in evangelical southern states like Arkansas. Since that time, American policy has inched ever-closer toward an unquestioned alliance with the Jewish state. The “special relationship” between the United States and Israel and American Middle East foreign policy were criticized by J. William Fulbright during the 1960s and early 1970s. Because of his public outcry of the power wielded by the American “Israel lobby,” Fulbright too came under fire from his constituents and regional and national detractors. The backlash to Fulbright’s dissent became one of the causes for his defeat in the 1974 primary.

For all the importance of the Arab-Israeli issue in the 1974 Arkansas debate, there were also other regional and national developments that contributed to the outcome of the election. My main point, thus, is not to highlight Fulbright’s position on Israel as a single or even main cause for his defeat; it was rather a theme through which Arkansas voters identified Fulbright’s brand of liberalism on many other domestic and international issues. My goal is to illustrate, through the lenses of the political debate over the Arab-Israeli conflict, how the Democratic Party became deeply divided, particularly in the South, on issues of foreign policy; I, more

² The primary sources for this study are almost exclusively drawn from the massive Fulbright Collection at the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville. At the time of this study, Dale Bumpers’s papers were being processed and were unavailable for use. The incorporation of his collection would further strengthen an examination of the 1974 primary election.

specifically, focus my attention to those issues' correlation with themes of American nationalism, multiculturalism, religion, and to public perceptions of the role and size of the U.S. government. My work, in sum, is one of contextualization of a particular case study that may help illuminate broader trends in American politics and U.S. foreign policy.

I am in part inspired by the works that have argued that the early 1970s witnessed the shattering of American liberalism due to Americans losing faith in their government in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the leaking of the Pentagon Papers, and the Watergate Scandal.³ Public faith in the U.S. government's role has been traditionally conditional on the government's strong performance in matters of security. There has been little public confidence in the government's task as a steward of welfare and social justice. The liberal era starting with the New Deal, therefore, gained credit, and helped expand the power of the executive, primarily thanks to the successful way in which the government confronted the security emergencies of World War II and the Cold War – a performance that came crushing down during the Vietnam conflict. The shortcomings of Cold War liberalism gave way to resurgent conservatism that aimed to dismantle the social progress of the New Deal and Great Society and curb big government. The resurgence of conservatism had grown from regional efforts in Southern California and the South into a cohesive national movement that culminated in Ronald Reagan's election in 1980.⁴ Fulbright's defeat in 1974 is a telling case, since he was replaced by Dale

³ See especially H.W. Brands, *The Strange Death of American Liberalism* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2001); Seymour M. Lipset, *American Exceptionalism: a Double-Edged Sword* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996); Joseph A. Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad: the South and U.S. Foreign Relations, 1789-1973* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 2002).

⁴ H.W. Brands, *The Strange Death of American Liberalism*, ix-xi; Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: the Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001);

Bumpers who was seen as a conservative internationalist Democrat unassociated with governmental failures of the 1960s, or the senator's dissentious nature.

Fulbright's political tendencies are constantly referred to as "liberal" throughout the study, but the definition of such policies must be clarified. The senator's policies are complicated by his differentiation between the domestic and the international spheres. His views of the national government on domestic issues are decidedly "conservative" in the modern-sense of the word. He, like President Woodrow Wilson, favorably looked to the British Parliamentary system for guidance on the appropriate actions of government from the English. As noted historian and Fulbright biographer Randall Woods has observed, the American South had always had a stronger dislike for interventionist, progressive governmental action and adhered more to a strict interpretation of the United States Constitution. Fulbright's "conservatism," however, stopped at the water's edge, so to speak. Liberalism, as employed throughout the study, defines Fulbright's international policies. He, unlike many of his congressional colleagues, especially southerners, believed in a multilateral, multicultural approach to foreign affairs. The distinction between "liberal" and "conservative" internationalism is paramount to understanding not only the argument of this study, but also to comprehending H.W. Brands's book. The "death of liberalism" refers to the breaking of trust in multilateral internationalism that officials like Fulbright espoused.

The failure of Vietnam broke the faith in liberal internationalism, but it also gave rise to cynicism and mistrust in governmental figures, or the "elites." Fulbright, who many identified as an independent, was victim to being associated with the progressive liberal establishment.

Murray Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution: Jewish Intellectuals and the Shaping of Public Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 100-137.

Arkansans, like the rest of the country, internalized their distrust of establishment figures and made “elite” figures like Fulbright vulnerable to attack from “common-man” appeals from Dale Bumpers. Arkansas voters made that choice in 1974.

Southern political traditions also affected the outcome of the 1974 Arkansas primary election. The South had developed a unique political culture since the earliest days of the American republic. Its governing institutions had been developed prior to the colonies’ declaration of war against Great Britain and embraced ‘liberty’ as the central tenet of the South; such was the case in the Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II.⁵ After the Second World War, the majority of southerners bought wholesale into the idea of containment and derided dissent against American activities abroad, especially in Vietnam. Enter J. William Fulbright who was seen as the most prominent critic of American foreign policy. His public dissent was seen as a direct affront not only to Arkansans’ wishes but the Southern political tradition, as well. The study will trace the progression of these strains from their origins in American political and religious culture. Showing how these elements were fused together, I intend to illustrate their contributions to Senator Fulbright’s defeat in the 1974 Arkansas Democratic primaries.

Chapter one provides a brief overview of the United States’ involvement in the Middle East and explains how negative orientalist perspectives were developed and became engrained in the American psyche. Using general academic resources, the chapter interweaves American popular perceptions of Palestine since the formation of the United States with the growing interest by the U.S. government through two centuries of foreign policy. Applying a thematic

⁵ Joseph A. Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad*, 9.

approach similar to Michael Oren's *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*, this chapter analyzes how events in the Middle East were perceived and interpreted by the American public. Just as important is the emergence of Zionism in American politics during and immediately after World War I. It is by outlining this mixture of popular perceptions with the origins of the Zionist movement in the United States that we can best describe the political trajectory that ultimately led to the United States' favorable attitude toward the creation of Israel in 1948. The purpose of this chapter is to inform readers how distinctions between the Jewish and Arab communities of Palestine both informed the views of the American public and determined the strategies of U.S. political representatives. By showing those connections, we can ascertain how Arkansas voters eventually came to view developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In addition to an examination of America's ties to the Middle East, the first chapter also traces the foundations of the American South in national politics and international affairs. Historians such as C. Vann Woodward, Dewey Grantham, and Alfred Hero have published works on the American South in world affairs following World War II. Their works underline that the former Confederacy embraces unique perspectives when debating America's role in the international community. Southerners believed themselves to be embracing Wilsonian internationalism by supporting the creation of the United Nations and World Bank. Other authors, however, believe that the majority of white Southerners interpreted Wilsonianism as a view primarily championing America's unparalleled values and divine responsibility to lead. Furthermore, the specters of racism and bigotry appeared in southern support of America's involvement in the international community. A multicultural, multilateral approach to international affairs for southerners was unfathomable in the Middle East, and J. William

Fulbright learned this much to his dismay.⁶

Therefore, tracing the South's projection into American foreign policy debates is essential to understanding the senator's defeat.

Chapter two traces J. William Fulbright's career within the United States Senate and his role in American foreign policy as it led up to the Arab-Israeli conflicts in 1967 and 1973. It discusses the formation of the Arkansas senator's internationalist views with two particular aspects in mind: his evolving perceptions of conflicts in the Middle East and his faith in the United Nations to handle international disputes. The section also documents Fulbright's rise to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairmanship, an experience that helped corroborate his faith in the potential ability of the United Nations to deal with all international disputes, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict. As with chapter one, this narrative, too, is done within a broader context providing a general overview of Middle Eastern events, to clarify the interplay between regional and international tensions prior to June 1967. The chapter ends with an analysis of how the public in Arkansas and, broadly, in the United States, responded to the multicultural philosophy of Senator Fulbright amid the outbreak of violence in the Middle East.

⁶ For more on the American South in US policymaking, see Joseph A. Fry, "Place Matters: Domestic Regionalism and the Formation of American Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 36 no. 3 (June 2012): 451-482; Alan K. Henrikson, "The Southern Mind in American Diplomacy," *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 13 no. 2 (1989): 375-387; George C. Herring and Gary R. Hess, "Regionalism and Foreign Policy: the Dying Myth of Southern Internationalism," *Southern Studies* 20 (Fall 1981): 247-277; James C. Cobb, *Redefining Southern Culture: Mind and Identity in the Modern South* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1999); Dewey Grantham, *The Life and Death of the Solid South: A Political History* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1988); Alfred O. Hero, *The Southerner and World Affairs* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1965); Paul Seabury, *The Waning of Southern Internationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957); C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History, 3rd Edition* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2008).

Despite having no direct interest in Israel, Fulbright's constituents wrote to him and urged that he stand with Israel against its Arab aggressors. Fulbright's local detractors, mainly comprised of ultra-conservative Evangelicals, were relentless in their attempts to portray him as soft on Communism and as disdainful of the Israeli people; they also disparaged his pacifist views, which allegedly included his willingness to place the already committed troops in Vietnam in danger. Fulbright's national detractors also attempted to show potential voters his close ties with Communist leaders and Arab terrorists. The senator's replies were unvarying in their message. He constantly proclaimed that the United Nations was fully capable of enacting a settlement and should be allowed to do so if there was to be a lasting peace. Arkansans saw this as an abandonment of Israel, a disavowal of American values, and a virtual surrender to Communism. They were sure to remember his responses to the crises when the 1974 primary season arrived.

Chapter three draws on Arkansas's two statewide newspapers, the *Arkansas Gazette* and the *Arkansas Democrat*, to illustrate the campaign coverage of Senator J. William Fulbright and of his contender, Governor Dale Bumpers. Aside from the positions taken in the Middle Eastern conflict, the other differences between the two campaign platforms were negligible. Whereas Senator Fulbright's Middle East policy was a balanced approach without favoritism to either Israel or Palestine, Governor Bumpers took the much more popular stance of outright and unquestioned support for the Jewish state. Bumpers, whether knowingly or not, propounded a message of unilateral American action abroad. He embraced the positive view the Arkansas (and, in general, Southern) public held toward Jewish culture and people; in doing so, he also confirmed the Millennialist views that married American exceptionalism with a considerable dose of provincialism. Bumpers's practice of Wilsonianism, much like the interpretation of the

same by his constituents, turned out to be attuned to the prejudicial views held by the twenty-eighth president: it favored little or no understanding of the political and cultural realities in areas such as the Middle East. Fulbright, a leader who had interpreted Wilsonian internationalism along the multicultural vision developed by liberals through the Cold War years ended up on the wrong “side” of American history; the South punished him for favoring the backward, pro-communist Arab culture. For Arkansans participating in the 1974 primary, the choice became apparent.

Contemporary scholarship has shown that J. William Fulbright’s defeat in 1974 was due to a plethora of reasons including his opposition to America’s involvement in Vietnam, lackadaisical attitude towards the monolithic threat of Communism, connection to the Washington establishment amidst the Watergate scandal, and old age. Scholars, however, have not paid enough attention to the role Fulbright’s Middle Eastern stances played in his final election campaign. I seek to place the voice of Arkansans in the national and international political discussions and show that, despite their relatively unfocused interest in Middle Eastern affairs (and perhaps because of that lack of interest or willingness to learn) their political choices were considerably determined by their perception of a liberal internationalist candidate as Senator Fulbright. Arkansas voters successfully placed themselves in the international and national conversations, showing that local politics influenced the larger global narrative during the Cold War.

In addition to emphasizing the role of Fulbright’s Middle East policy in his defeat, this study examines national and regional influences on the 1974 Arkansas primary election. The primary results cannot be fully understood without taking into account the simultaneous collapse

of American liberalism and the resurgence of conservatism across the nation, both of which derived from the growing public distrust in the liberal connection between welfare and Cold War politics. Through this case study, I intend to illustrate important aspects of the Southern political traditions, as well as the South's particular style of nationalism. By showing the connections between themes that at first sight may appear unrelated, my goal is to explain not only why and how Fulbright lost, but also where that primary election fits into national and regional politics.

Chapter 1

America's Transition to World Power and the Rise of Israel

Prior to the end of World War II, the United States' involvement in the Middle East was peripheral and relied heavily upon the more involved British control of the area to protect its limited interests in the region.¹ The American public, on the other hand, has always been fascinated with the Middle East, garnering its popular perceptions of the Holy Land from the Bible, literature, plays, and art. Throughout the nineteenth century, America's involvement in the Middle East was limited almost entirely to religious connections of the Bible and literary and artistic endeavors; however, its interests became more pronounced at the end of World War I with the emergence of the Zionist movement in Europe and the United States.

Following America's entry into World War I in April 1917, the British hoped to further influence the United States' involvement in international affairs. The release of the Balfour Declaration in November 1917 announced the British Empire's intent to aid in the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Prior to the announcement of this policy, the British sought Woodrow Wilson's assent to their policy in the area; the president gave a tacit approval. The small uptick in America's involvement in Middle Eastern affairs was short-lived and ended with the return to the pre-war status quo of deferring to British hegemony in the region. It took World War II to push the United States toward a more involved policy in the Middle East. Toward the end of the war, the horrors of the Holocaust became increasingly evident. The necessity to find an acceptable answer to the problem of displaced European Jewish communities became

¹ Bernard, Reich, *The United States and Israel: Influence in the Special Relationship* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 1; Mohammed K. Shadid, *The United States and the Palestinians* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 11; Peter L. Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East: U.S. Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1945-1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 15.

paramount in American and international politics. The pursuit of a solution resulted in the United Nations drafting a resolution to partition Palestine in 1947, with one side reserved for the Jewish people and the other for Palestinians. From this point on, strained tensions between the Israeli and the Arab people resulted in several wars over the decades. Drawing from general academic sources, this chapter delivers an overview of the United States' development of a foreign policy for the Middle East from since the times of American decoupling from Britain up to the 1973 Yom-Kippur War. The establishment of prevailing regional and national attitudes regarding Zionism and Arabism will aid readers in understanding the political trends and attitudes in the American South toward the Arab-Israeli conflict, providing further clarification of how those attitudes affected the climate of opinion near the time of the Arkansas 1974 primary election.

Michael Oren, the current Israeli ambassador to the United States and noted Middle Eastern historian, documents the chronology of America's Middle Eastern experience in *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*, asserting three themes that he believes have guided American policy in Palestine: power, in terms of the pursuit of America's interests militarily and economically; faith, in terms of the impact of religion shaping American attitudes; and fantasy, in terms of America's fascination with mysticism surrounding Arab culture.² This chapter will trace the influence of these themes in the United States' Middle Eastern foreign policy. It also draws upon the concepts advanced by historian Douglas Little in his book *American Orientalism*. As Little notes, the notion of an American distorted perception of Arab culture is originally derive from Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Orientalist perspectives, according to Said, are "self-serving views

² Michael Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: American in the Middle East 1776 to Present* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2007), 13.

of Asians, Africans, and Arabs as decadent, alien, and inferior.” Little posits that this perspective was ever-present in American culture and media reports toward the Middle East.³ Using both Oren’s and Little’s thematic approaches, this study applies these themes in analyzing how American (and Arkansas) voters responded to events in the Middle East.

This chapter also examines the emergence of the American South’s role in domestic and foreign policy making. During Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, southerners remained economically, politically, and culturally detached from their northern counterparts. This began to change in the 1890s when economic considerations began taking precedence over sectional politics.⁴ Southerners also looked to destroy the stigma of disloyalty that accompanied the former-Confederate identity. The chance to do so came with the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898. Since that conflict, southerners have asserted themselves in making and executing American foreign policy; their involvement has had lasting repercussions on America and the world ever since.

Nineteenth Century American Attitudes toward the Middle East

A prominent feature of American culture since colonial times has been Protestant Christianity, giving it a firm connection to the Middle East in primarily biblical terms. Through applications of faith, early Americans drew heavily on knowledge from the Bible to form their

³ Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 10.

⁴ Natalie J. Ring, *The Problem South: Religion, Empire, and the New Liberal State, 1880-1930* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 3-6; Joseph A. Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad: the South and U.S. Foreign Relations, 1789-1973* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 138.

worldview, or what Lawrence Davidson terms, a “theocratized view.”⁵ The biblical perspective shared by American Protestants automatically led to closer alignments not only with the Jewish populations living in the United States, but also with those residing in Palestine. Furthermore, Americans were aware that the Holy Land was occupied by a largely Muslim population. This reality prompted American missionaries to spread their proselytizing fervor to the region, in an effort to convert the Muslim “infidels” to Christianity. Christian missionaries became the principle source of American involvement in the region for much of the nineteenth century.⁶ These missions, the earliest arriving in the area in 1819, soon fostered the Millennialist movement in America, which called for the return of the Jewish people to the Holy Land in order to fulfill biblical prophecy and usher in the return of Christ.⁷ From the eighteenth century to the present-day, Americans have never failed to apply biblical perspectives when dealing with the peoples, cultures, and events in the Middle East.⁸

Early Americans obtained orientalist perspectives on the Middle East not only from biblical sources, but from fictional and non-fictional literary works, as well. The most prominent examples of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were *Thousand and One Arabian Nights* and various biographies of the prophet Mohammed. Each depicted Arab culture as blood thirsty and barbarous. More orientalist works followed America’s wars against the Barbary

⁵ Lawrence Davidson, *America’s Palestine: Popular and Official Perceptions from Balfour to Israeli Statehood* (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 2001), 6.

⁶ Michael Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*, 13.

⁷ The call to return the Jews to Palestine came despite there being slightly more than 50,000 Jews residing in the United States. Seymour M. Lipset, *American Exceptionalism: a Double-Edged Sword* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 157.

⁸ Zev Chafets, *A Match Made in Heaven: American Jews, Christian Zionists, and One Man’s Exploration of the Weird and Wonderful Judeo-Evangelical Alliance* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007.) While not academic, the book still provides ample anecdotal evidence of Americans’ affirmation of an alliance with Israel through Biblical millennial connections, especially those from the South.

States of Tripoli and Algiers. Caleb Bingham's *Slaves in Barbary* and Susanna Rowson's *Slaves in Algiers* depicted the alleged backward anti-intellectualism of the Arabs that ran contrary to American values. In this sense, Douglas Little's recycled term of "orientalism" is an apt definition for this early American prejudice, which was the harbinger of a hegemonic design in modern times.

The latter half of the nineteenth century produced a greater quantity of "information" that further reinforced American orientalist attitudes toward the people that "wrongfully" inhabited the Holy Land. Washington Irving's *Mahomet and His Successor* offered the notion that the Koran enslaved the Muslim world to theocratic rule and made Arab countries unfit to govern themselves. Artists produced landscapes that portrayed desolate environments synonymous with Muslim desecration of the Holy Land. These orientalist depictions were commonplace, but the most prominent example arrived in Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* in 1869. Twain's account of his Holy Land tour featured disparaging depictions of his travel companions, as well as the indigenous people. Little believes that the American readers did not understand the imagery found throughout the account as Twain's usual wit, but interpreted it as a first-hand experience that reinforced already substantial orientalist perspectives found in American society.⁹

American missionaries continued to set up schools, hospitals, and colleges in the Middle East throughout the end of the nineteenth century. Despite the good, albeit naïve, intentions of Protestant missionaries, Muslim inhabitants interpreted these initiatives as attacks not just on their religious beliefs, but their society as a whole. The missionaries believed their work increased

⁹ Little, *American Orientalism*, 12-13.

goodwill between America and the peoples of the Middle East; instead, it created further disdain and anti-Americanism in Arab intellectual and public discourse.¹⁰ The attitudes and perspectives developed in the minds of Americans and became mainstays that continue to exist today.

Millennialism and the Emergence of Zionism

Meanwhile, the American Civil War had brought Millennialism to the forefront of theological discussions. Since the Revolution War Americans had held the Postmillennialist view, or the assumption that spiritual and cultural domination of the Church for a millennium would result in Christ's second coming. The Civil War destroyed this consensus and caused a schism between liberal and fundamentalist theologians. Premillennialism, or the belief that Christ would return only after biblical preconditions had been met, emerged as Postmillennialism's antithesis. Premillennialism (Millennialism) was the minority view before the 1860s, but soon became the majority opinion.¹¹ It had originally been fostered in the North, but by the end of the 1870s, it became clear that the South would be beholden to the fundamentalist interpretation.¹²

One of the central tenets of Millennialism is the return of the Jewish people to Palestine, and proponents of the movement began pursuing this goal toward the end of the nineteenth

¹⁰ Erez Manela, "Is This Not the Ugliest of Treacheries?!: Diplomacy, Culture and the Origins of Anti-Americanism in Egypt," in Abbas Amanat and Magnus Bernhardsson, ed., *U.S.-Middle East Historical Encounters: a Critical Survey* (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 2007), 114-115. On nationalism, see: Ernest Gellner, *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994).

¹¹ George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism, 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 49-51; Mearsheimer, John J. and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (London: Penguin Press, 2007), 132-133.

¹² Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 103-105.

century. In 1891, William E. Blackstone drafted a petition addressed to President Benjamin Harrison that asked the president to use his office's influence with European nations to organize a conference to discuss the Israelites' claim to Palestine. The petition was endorsed by 413 prominent Americans, including J.P. Morgan and John D. Rockefeller. The immense support garnered from American elites was indicative of the popularity and power the Millennialist movement had gained since the Civil War. The outbreak of World War I and the subsequent collapse of the Ottoman Empire was then seen by many proponents of Millennialism as the pivotal event that would aid American Protestants and Zionists in realizing the dream of the Holy Land.¹³

The Zionist movement began approximately at the same time as Millennialism was gaining prominence. Late-nineteenth century European Jewish leaders felt that their community was losing its distinct religious and cultural identity and began pushing for the formation of a state in Palestine. The return to Palestine would allow the simultaneous revival of homogenous Jewish cultural and religious identities. By 1897, the European movement grew into an international effort and led to the establishment of the World Zionist Organization (WZO). The headquarters for the group were established in Munich and London. From these locations, the WZO would be able to lobby for changes in Great Power attitudes toward the Palestine area. Zionist influence in America was minimal at first, but under the leadership of Chaim Weizmann, a prominent British chemist, and Louis Brandeis, the first Jewish-American Supreme Court Justice and friend of Woodrow Wilson, the movement saw considerable growth in the decade

¹³ Ibid., 52; Steven L. Spiegel, *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making America's Middle East Policy, from Truman to Reagan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 1.

leading up to World War I.¹⁴ The Great War heralded a promising future for Zionism and the creation of a Jewish state, but leaders of the movement would not see significant developments in their aspirations for another thirty years.

Dixie Rises in American Politics

C. Vann Woodward has argued that the American South had long resided outside the “normal” experience enjoyed by the rest of the nation; the divergence arose from Dixie’s collective experiences with the Civil War and Reconstruction of the 1860s and 1870s. The collective suffering of the region’s people in the latter-nineteenth century comprised of bitter memories of defeat, poverty, and cultural short-comings. Furthermore, Reconstruction transformed the South into a dependent—a quasi-colony—of the North.¹⁵ These “inadequacies” left an indelible mark and formed a regional culture distinct from any other in the United States. The Southern experience created a distinct brand of politician and political party.¹⁶

The bitter legacy of Republican rule allowed the Democratic Party to flourish in the former Confederate states in the late-nineteenth century. The “Solid South,” as it became known, could always be counted upon to vote for the Democratic Party in national elections. The unity of Democrats achieved by disfranchisement under their shared experiences lasted well into the twentieth century; however, excluding Grover Cleveland’s brief occupation of the White House in the late 1800s, Dixie’s only political party did not enjoy the power it had had prior to

¹⁴ For more on Chaim Weizmann, see Norman Rose, *Chaim Weizmann: a Biography* (New York: Biking Press, 1986). For more on Louis Brandeis, see Melvin Urofsky, *Louis D. Brandeis: a Life* (New York: Pantheon, 2009).

¹⁵ Joseph A. Fry, “Place Matters: Domestic Regionalism and the Formation of American Foreign Policy,” *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 36, no. 3, (June 2012): 469.

¹⁶ C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History, 3rd Edition* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 16-19;

the Civil War.¹⁷ The years of subjugation under the Grand Old Party seemed to be dissipating in 1912 when Woodrow Wilson, then governor of New Jersey, was nominated as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate. Dixie embraced the governor and voted overwhelmingly in his favor.

Woodrow Wilson's victory in 1912 brought the first southern Democratic president to the White House since before the Civil War. Born in the South and descendant from a line of Southern Presbyterian ministers, Dixie's citizens embraced Wilson as one of their own.¹⁸ The election also marked a watershed moment for Dixie's involvement in the federal government. Wilson placed Southerners in powerful positions within his administration and cemented the region's support for his agenda, especially in foreign affairs; whereas the South had previously embraced some elements of anti-imperialism, given their unique experience with Reconstruction, under Wilson's guidance Dixieland soon supported interventionist policies based on a strong military, an assertive executive, and an exceptionalist worldview that justified the country's global mission in reshaping the international order. Wilson's administration and legacy established the foundation of twentieth-century American foreign policy with strong and consistent support from the former Confederacy.¹⁹

¹⁷ Dewey W. Grantham, *The Life and Death of the Solid South* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1988), xi-xii.

¹⁸ Charles O. Lerche, Jr., *The Uncertain South: its Changing Patterns of Politics in Foreign Policy* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964), 44-45.

¹⁹ Grantham, *The Life and Death of the Solid South*, 63; Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad*, 139-140; Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Wilsonianism: Woodrow Wilson and His Legacy in American Foreign Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 23. See also: Jeremi Suri, *Liberty's Surest Guardian: American Nation-Building from the Founders to Obama* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011).

Origins of Israel and the Paris Peace Conference

The United States' participation in World War I, while belated, contributed both to cement Anglo-American relations and to awaken America's interest in the fate of the Arab lands emancipating from the Ottoman Empire.

Following the U.S. entry into the conflict in April 1917, the British attempted to influence American policy in the Middle East by appealing to the Zionist lobbies in London and Washington. This campaign culminated with the famous Balfour Declaration. Publicly announced by the British on November 2, 1917, the Declaration stated the British government's intent to support the creation of a Jewish "national home" in Palestine. The British would actively pursue this policy by any means necessary and claimed its execution would not intrude upon the rights and property of residents (Arab Palestinians) in the area. Privately, Wilson supported the policies laid out in the Balfour Declaration due to his Presbyterian upbringing, as well as his political ideas as they were affected by theological assumptions.²⁰ His public stance, on the other hand, was ambivalent. Wilson knew that supporting the Declaration could potentially commit American troops to fight a country (the Ottoman Empire) that the United States was not at war with, a position that would undoubtedly be unpopular at home. He was so conflicted that he did not publicly support the Declaration until almost a year after the British announcement; however, the positive reaction from the American Jewish community could not be ignored. The potential political gain from obtaining the backing of the American Jewish

²⁰ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 104; for more on Wilson, see, John Milton Cooper, *Woodrow Wilson: a Biography* (New York: Knopf, 2009).

community proved too tempting, and the president gave tacit support of the Balfour Declaration.²¹

The American public's reaction to the Balfour Declaration and Wilson's approval of the doctrine is nearly impossible to ascertain; Lawrence Davidson, however, believes that the reporting biases in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Los Angeles Times* reveal the popular opinions of the day. The views in this mainstream press were negative toward Turks and Arabs. According to Davidson, these attitudes originated from a worldview comprising of two parallel perspectives. First, the commentators reflected the American vision of contemporary Palestine as the same as the biblical Palestine; the only difference between the two, in their opinion, was that Arabs had forcefully taken the land from the Judeo-Christian people and now simply wrongly occupied the territory. Second, it was now the job of the expelled "biblical peoples" (Christians and Jews) to take the land back through a modern Crusade. Davidson believes that this worldview was prevalent in the American psyche and allowed both reporters and readers to blindly digest biased reports on events in the Middle East. Davidson also points out that the skewed reports favored the Jewish and Christian populations in the region, allowing atrocities committed against Arabs to go largely unknown to the American public. This oversight, in his opinion, became the "journalistic equivalent of ethnic cleansing."²²

²¹ There is a volume of scholarship on Wilson and his administration's reaction to the Balfour Declaration. Richard N. Lebow, "Woodrow Wilson and the Balfour Declaration," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Dec., 1968): 501-523. This article gives the most concise synopsis of works on this controversial topic. For the most recent work on the Balfour Declaration, see also: Jonathon Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration: the Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (New York; Random House, 2010).

²² Davidson, *America's Palestine*, 22-23.

Following the Entente's victory, with the American contribution, in World War I, the next event affecting the fate of the former Ottoman areas was the Paris Peace Conference. President Wilson championed the ideas of a future nation-state system based on self-determination for all people; however, when the time came to decide the future of Palestine and the former Ottoman Empire, conflict erupted over how to implement policies that had been laid out in the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration.²³ Wilson faced a dilemma: how to simultaneously support the establishment of a Jewish homeland while also pursuing his ideals of self-determination and democracy in newly formed nation-states.

Historian Lloyd Ambrosius believes that despite self-determination being the key component of Wilson's peace plan, the president failed to understand the complexities of pluralism within emerging polities. Instead, Ambrosius argues, Wilson saw the world through a hierarchy of race. He recognized the formation of new nations in Europe based on "historicism," or the organic historical development and maturity of a people; this did not apply to emerging states from the former Ottoman Empire or those that remained under colonial rule, such as Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. Wilson respected the power of nationalism, but he did not believe that people in former or existing colonies with no prior experience as cohesive ethnic communities with reference to a modern structure equivalent or approximating a nation-state were expressing genuine "nationalism." "You cannot call a miscellaneous people, unknit, scatter, diverse of race and speech and habit, a nation, a community..."²⁴ Those "unknit

²³ The Sykes-Picot Agreement was one of several secret accords between the British and French that had been agreed upon early in the War. The agreement carved up the soon-to-be-former Ottoman Empire and placed large swaths of the region under British and French protectorates.

²⁴ Ray Stannard Baker and William E. Dodd, eds., *The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1925-1927), 1: 437.

peoples,” Wilson believed, needed to develop their own distinctive community and national consciousness before they could be qualified as nation.²⁵

Wilson’s historicist approach to the emerging nation-states and disbelief in their nationalism was incorrect, according to Ernest Gellner. Gellner defines nationalism as a “political principle which maintains that similarity of culture is the basic social bond.” This social bond depends on whatever cultural element people define as their legitimate linkage, whether it be language, religion, ethnicity, or history. Furthermore, the unit must believe its leadership, whether institutional or concentrated in an individual, is comprised by members of the “national” culture.²⁶ Wilson did not understand these ideas and instead believed groups within existing borders would embrace assimilation like Americans had. Sadly, Wilson’s misunderstanding of pluralism has been a basic feature of American foreign policy ever since.²⁷ Nonetheless, the Paris Peace Conference ended with most pre-war colonies remaining intact.

Wilson brought the Treaty of Versailles back to America for the ratification process but met stiff opposition and ultimate defeat. This prevented the United States from joining the League of Nations, thus leaving more discretion to the French and British governments to decide the fate of the Middle East. The British were now free to implement the policies of the Balfour Declaration and oversee the immigration of Jewish settlers into the Holy Land.

Wilson still received ardent support from the South, despite the failure to get the Treaty of Versailles ratified. Joseph Fry argues that a large portion of Dixie’s support for Wilson’s

²⁵ Ambrosius, *Wilsonianism*, 126-128.

²⁶ Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (Washington Square, New York: New York University Press, 1997), 4-6.

²⁷ Ambrosius, *Wilsonianism*, 3.

dream came from southern nationalism and membership in the Democratic Party, rather than a devotion to internationalist ideals. This did not stop it from adopting Wilson's ideals as a "lost cause" that guided southern international perspectives for the next twenty-five years; nor did it stop some aspect of "Wilsonianism" from manifesting in the formulation of American foreign policy. Furthermore, Republican blockage of the treaty guaranteed few inroads into the South for their party and enhanced Wilson's legacy in the region's memory.²⁸ Fry credits Dixie's future support of the World Court and United Nations directly to Wilson's "lost cause."; J. William Fulbright became one of the most ardent supporters for both of these measures.²⁹

Reinforcing Orientalist Perspectives in the Inter-War Period

American newspapers, films, and periodical continued reinforcing Orientalist public attitudes toward the Middle East in the 1920s and 1930s. Films such as *The Sheik* (1921) and *The Thief of Baghdad* (1924) were Hollywood blockbusters that depicted and strengthened the popular stereotypes of Arabs as culturally backwards, violent people. Magazines such as *National Geographic* published reports and images that portrayed the Arab culture and its inhabitants negatively depicted Arabs as "fatalistic and irresponsible camel jockey wanderers of the Sinai Desert, shunning Western technology and embracing Mohammedan superstition."³⁰ American newspapers continued pushing a pro-Jewish/Zionist slant on Middle Eastern events and falsified the aspects of daily life in Palestine. The new Jewish immigrants to the land were celebrated and legitimized as the people solely responsible for attempts to cultivate the arid landscape and create a "California of the East." This parallel with the pioneers of the American

²⁸ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 54; Grantham, *The Life and Death of the Solid South*, 70-71.

²⁹ Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad*, 220-221;

³⁰ Little, *American Orientalism*, 17-19.

West invoked another crucial similarity: the Jewish work ethic was on par with that of the Puritans.³¹ *National Geographic* also insisted that the Jewish community brought progress and modernism to the Holy Land. In these images, too, the fertilization of Palestine was on par with the American experience in California. Juxtaposed against Jewish modernism was the Arab population. This imagery persisted through the 1920s and 1930s, affecting American public opinion.

By the mid-1920s, American public opinion had bought into the bipolar worldview that British and Jewish deliverance of modernity and progress to Palestine was altruistic imperialism. Popular images of the American West continued to be alluded to in reports of Jewish settlements in the Holy Land. The *New York Times* published reports of Zionists living in technological and political modern settlements with machine gun nests set up to ward off the Arabs, evoking imagery of pioneers defending against Amerindians in the early days of the American republic. *National Geographic* continued its report of Jewish progress in Palestine, carefully showing how the dynamics of the region were changing in the face of increased modernity. The dichotomy between the modernizing Jews and Arab barbarity became fully formed in America's "orientalist" mindset.³²

Tensions between the Jewish and Arab populations in Palestine reached critical mass by the end of the 1920s and led to outbreaks of violence. The American media was quick to lay the blame on the Arabs. Spikes in Jewish immigration caused Arabs to be pushed into lower positions of citizenry. There was little or no coverage in American newspapers of the subjugation of the Arabs in Palestine; the media only focused on the Arabs' violent opposition.

³¹ Davidson, *America's Palestine*, 45-46; Lipset, *American Exceptionalism*, 151-154.

³² Davidson, *America's Palestine*, 64-66.

The outbreak of violence between Jews and Arabs in 1929 caught Americans by surprise. Up to this point, the American public was operating under the perception that Jews were lifting Arabs out of poverty and had fostered a peace between the two cultures that was growing daily.³³

Violence in Palestine seemed to destroy the narrative of peace that Zionists in the media had been portraying. Little to no contextualization for the violence in the subsequent reports shaped American public opinion into believing that little fault could be found in the Jewish population. The Arabs, in these portrayals, acted unprovoked and fanatically.

Global Crises, the Looming War, and the Aftermath

While the American media provided coverage of the Middle East in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the United States government was concerned with ending the greatest economic recession in its history. H.W. Brands argues that Americans have never liked intrusive government; however, times of war have been one of the few instances when federal power has been allowed to grow. This allowance came with the understanding that the government would shrink back to normal after the threat had been eliminated. Franklin D. Roosevelt's election and "First Hundred Days" brought the New Deal and growth of statist involvement in the American economy. Despite the New Deal's success, the popularity of many of its programs faded as the 1930s ended, especially in the American South.³⁴ Nonetheless, the policies of expanding

³³ This can be seen as a manifestation of Wilson's belief that assimilation would take place within pre-existing borders regardless of cultural differences.

³⁴ Charles O. Lerche, Jr., *The Uncertain South: its Changing Patterns of Politics in Foreign* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964), 45; Lipset, *American Exceptionalism*, 38. Lipset argues that statist intervention in the American economy receded even further after World War II due to an "economic miracle" that lasted until the mid-1970s.

governmental power during crisis times that created New Deal programs became the foundation of Cold War liberalism at the end of World War II.³⁵

The New Deal reforms focused Americans' attentions on domestic issues; across the Atlantic, the depression had brought fascism to several European states. Fascist leaders began enacting programs and movements that would have serious implications for the international community for the remainder of the twentieth century. The gears of war had begun to move again.

In the 1930s, waves of anti-Semitism characterized not only the emerging Nazi regime in Germany, but the rest of Europe as well. The British government felt compelled to alleviate the problems by maintaining or increasing immigration quotas to Palestine. As more European Jews arrived in Palestine, more native Arabs were displaced. The British became increasingly aware of the growing strife in the region but were either unsure or unable to develop policies suitable to both Jews and Arabs. Across the Atlantic, American newspapers reported the mounting tensions and observed that Arab opposition to Jewish immigration came from the religious fanaticism and anti-Semitism ingrained in Muslim culture. After further surges in violence the British released the document known as the White Paper in 1939. The document established that Jewish immigration to Palestine was to be curbed to only 15,000 per year for five years and would only be allowed to continue at express consent of the Arab community. Zionists interpreted the new policy as British abandonment of Balfour Doctrine principles.³⁶ By the end of the 1930s, the strife in Palestine became an afterthought as the world prepared for the outbreak of another

³⁵ H.W. Brands, *The Strange Death of American Liberalism* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001), 20-49.

³⁶ Charles Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 4th Edition* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 169-170.

global conflict. Still, President Roosevelt saw the importance of positive relations with Arab countries and employed a somewhat balanced Middle Eastern policy during the war.

The United States realized the strategic importance of Middle Eastern oil reserves and access to the Suez Canal after its entry into World War II. President Roosevelt acknowledged the importance of good relations with Arab states and handled diplomacy in the region with greater subtlety than his predecessors. Prior to discovering Hitler's "Final Solution," Roosevelt was reserved in advocating Zionist aspirations; by the end of 1942, the mounting evidence of the Holocaust increased the urgency of the matter.³⁷ The president was cautious in his response to congressional, public, and Zionists pressures to act on behalf of European Jews. He made public pro-Zionist statements but made private assurances to Middle East leaders that he intended to act according to Arab wishes.³⁸

The World Zionist Organization (WZO) continued pursuing its agenda despite Roosevelt's ambivalent stance on the future of a Jewish Palestine. The WZO moved their offices to New York City in hopes of generating greater American support for creating a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Its leaders concentrated their lobbying efforts on the United States Congress.³⁹ Support for Zionism in the United States Congress and other governmental agencies was reflected in the membership of the American Palestine Committee, which boasted seventy senators, one hundred and twenty congressmen, twenty-one governors, and numerous high

³⁷ Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 172.

³⁸ Spiegel, *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 12-14; Peter Hahn, *Crisis and Crossfire: the United States and the Middle East Since 1945* (Dulles, Virginia: Potomac Books, Inc., 2005), 1-5.

³⁹ John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007). Mearsheimer and Walt document the rise of the Israel Lobby in this study, but they believe that its power did not fully manifest until the 1970s. Nonetheless, the modern Lobby had its roots in the 1940s.

ranking bureaucrats. In 1942, about the time rumors of the Holocaust began to reach America, the WZO announced the Biltmore Program; it called for the re-establishment of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine with complete control of immigration. American public support for Zionist objectives increased during the war, especially as the extent of the Holocaust became more evident. American leadership also showed increased support for the Jewish plight after President Roosevelt's death and Harry Truman's ascension. The United States extended diplomatic recognition of Israeli independence due to feelings of guilt for inaction during the Holocaust, as well as the domestic political benefits of supporting the Zionist cause.⁴⁰

Truman's extension of Israeli diplomatic recognition came in the midst of an inter-governmental battle between pro-Zionists forces in the Democratic Party and presidential administration and anti-Zionist forces in the State Department. The two sides had been locked in disagreement over Jewish refugee solutions since the close of World War II. Pro-Zionist forces, which were comprised of the strong support of the general American public, the WZO, and

⁴⁰ Some authors argue that Roosevelt showed little sympathy to European Jews, if any. See for example: David Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941-1945* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984). Wyman points to the lack of action from the United States to stop the genocide happening in Europe. For example, he criticizes FDR for not mounting a large offensive to shut down the known concentration camps in Europe in 1942-1943. He fails to acknowledge that this was tactically and strategically impossible. Wyman also criticizes the immigration policies of the Roosevelt administration, stating that had America simply opened its doors, thousands more Jew could have been saved. Robert Rosen dismisses arguments from authors like Wyman; he makes the point that Roosevelt's immigration policy saved as many Jews as realistically possible. Robert Rosen, *Saving the Jews: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Holocaust* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2006). See also: Theodore Hamerow, *Why We Watched: Europe, America, and the Holocaust* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 389-419; J.J. Goldberg, *Jewish Power: Inside the American Jewish Establishment* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1996), 115-116. For more on Truman's response to Israel's declaration of independence, see Hamerow, *Why We Watched*, xviii-xix; Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy*, 486-487; Joe Stork and Sharon Rose, "Zionism and American Jewry," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Spring 1974): 48-50; John Snetsinger, *Truman, the Jewish Vote, and the Creation of Israel* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1974).

others who sympathized with the Jews out of humanitarian concern, championed the argument based on moral and political considerations favoring the support of the formation of a Jewish state. State Department officials, on the other hand, were already immersed in Cold War mentalities by 1948 and believed that American support for Israel would push the Arab world toward the Soviet Union. This mentality became the standard position of the State Department for the next twenty years.⁴¹ It is also was the stance that J. William Fulbright would take when confronted with calls for increased Israeli support in the 1960s and 1970s. Despite the opposition of nearly every high-ranking official in the State Department and intelligence agencies, Truman extended diplomatic recognition to Israel the same day it declared its independence.

Steven Spiegel has argued that Truman's support for Israel's independence is typical of American foreign policy: all final decisions on the United States' official position are proclaimed by the president, despite contrasting positions from other officials and departments. The president, unlike bureaucrats, must weigh political considerations when deciding America's way forward. The State Department, on the other hand, generally looks at the overall geostrategic importance of the region; for example, access to Arab oil and the Suez Canal took precedence over aiding Israel.⁴² Political considerations weighed heavily in American-Israeli relations, especially for Democrats due to Jews' prominence in the New Deal coalition. Jewish identification with and loyalty to the Democratic Party (largely because of Roosevelt and Truman's support) lasted well into the latter-half of the twentieth century. Jewish voters did not give substantive support to Eisenhower's presidential campaigns; therefore, Ike was decidedly

⁴¹ Spiegel, *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 16-25; Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East*, 29

⁴² Spiegel, *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 48-49.

more “pro-Arab” than Presidents Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson. Still, the State Department-Truman disagreement highlights how strategic and political thinking became somewhat divorced in the Democratic Party, less so for the Republicans, at least until the 1980s.

Simultaneous with the ascension of Harry Truman to the presidency, Americans experienced the continuance of expanded federal power. Whereas the state had always receded at the cessation of hostilities, the rise of the Cold War caused the United States government to maintain and later increase its prerogatives as America emerged as the sole Western hegemon. Historian Seymour Lipset has argued that Americans accepted the enlarged role of the government at this time due to the economic and militaristic upheavals of the Great Depression and World War II. Reliance on the government and social planning became mainstays in American culture in the 1940s and 1950s. But as prosperity returned, Lipset argues, Americans gradually reverted to their distrust of a strong government and increasingly rejected social welfare policies. H.W. Brands complements Lipset’s more domestically-oriented argument, by linking the faith in government with developments in Eastern Europe at the close of World War II. Stalin’s disavowal of the Yalta Accords and perceived intent to foment revolution pushed American policymakers to respond in kind. The ideological conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union caused the federal expansion of power in America. The large majority of U.S. citizens allowed this expansion, Brands argues, because of the burgeoning Cold War. Or as he puts it, “By the early 1950s it [The United States] was fighting one war in Asia and girding for another in Europe. Under the circumstances, opponents of an active foreign policy had about as much credibility as opponents of World War II after Pearl Harbor; not surprisingly, they were

almost as rare.”⁴³ The Truman and, to a lesser extent, the Roosevelt administrations were the primary cultivators of the shift in faith in the prerogatives of the federal government, which continued into the 1960s.

Despite the allowance of the expansion of federal power and America’s global involvement, most U.S. officials, following the public mood, remained skeptical about the value of multilateral institutions. Not even Franklin D. Roosevelt ever intended his notion of “collective security” to impinge on U.S. hegemonic designs; if anything, historian David Reynolds reminds us, FDR’s project for a renewed world organization was a means to reinforce that hegemony, and to transform even the most loyal allies.⁴⁴ Public faith in the expanded role of the federal government in foreign policy (or even altogether) never entailed their faith in international institutions. And that discrepancy had to do with the country’s persistent exceptionalist tenets. As Lipset best illustrates, Americans believed their brand of classical liberalism as superior to European models because of its embrace of individualism, moralism, and merit-based style of politics, a proverbial “city upon a hill.” Exceptionalist thinking led Americans to believe that their role was to direct international affairs in a style that reflected the United States’ unique republican and religious moral identity. Andrew Preston has argued that this interpretation of American values has produced a “strong libertarian ethos” that has dominated U.S. foreign policy, which was expressed in “isolationism, unilateralism, and a suspicion of international organizations such as the United Nations.” American trepidation toward the UN is especially important in understanding why Arkansans and southerners in

⁴³ Lipset, *American Exceptionalism*, 20-22; Brands, *The Strange Death of American Liberalism*, 49-62.

⁴⁴ David Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor: Roosevelt’s American and the Origins of the Second World War* (Chicago: Evan R. Dee, 2001), 34-40, 178-189.

general did not heed J. William Fulbright's calls for faith in the international body; the United Nations could single-handedly hamstring unilateral American attempts to project moralism into international conflicts. Fulbright's support of United Nations resolutions would later be heavily criticized for allegedly empowering the international body that sided against Israel, a country that Americans had close religious and cultural ties with.⁴⁵

Conclusion

Separately, the topics of Orientalism, the American South, and Middle East foreign policy may have had little effect on Senator J. William Fulbright's bid in the 1974 Arkansas primary election; however, the separate strains culminated in the perfect storm. The problem did not manifest immediately. It took several decades of unpopular stances on foreign policies for the people of Arkansas to recall their prominent internationalist from Washington and send a man that more closely resemble their views. As the second chapter will show, the people of Arkansas were not so much disappointed with Fulbright's stances on domestic issues as they were with his multilateralist, multiculturalist approach to foreign affairs. His dissent on American missions abroad and alleged "embrace" of pro-Communist forces ran counter to southern traditions of unilateralism, ethnocentrism, and super-patriotism. Fulbright believed he was embracing the true spirit of international cooperation; his constituents would disagree.

⁴⁵ Lipset, *American Exceptionalism*, 151-175. Lipset has argued that by the 1950s, Jews had fully assimilated into the middle-class mentality that dominated Americans' values.

Chapter 2

The Multiculturalism of Senator J. William Fulbright

The onset of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union precipitated several trends that spanned the next twenty-five years. Policymakers and many in the American public believed that the United States' failure to join the League of Nations and become an active member in the international community was a direct cause of World War II. It also became apparent that Britain was no longer the leading Western hegemon; the United States became the de facto replacement. American leaders realized the traditional reduction of federal authority following wartime expansion could not happen if the United States was to maintain superpower status and project American values abroad. Cold War liberalism emerged from this realization and containing communism became the guiding principle of American foreign policy for the next twenty-five years. American citizens put their faith in this liberalism, with foreign policy being the glue that held the coalition together.¹

The United States also recognized the Middle East as an integral part of European geopolitical security. American leaders formulated policy that reflected the realization they must engage and befriend Arab countries to ensure access to Middle East oil for the West while simultaneously blocking Soviet inroads to the region. These became the guiding principles of American Middle Eastern policymaking from Truman through Nixon; however, each administration pursued these objectives through their own means. The greatest variance in policy came in U.S.-Israeli relations. The Truman administration recognized Israel's independence immediately and remained friendly to the new country through the end of its term.

¹ H.W. Brands, *The Strange Death of American Liberalism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 51-53.

The Eisenhower administration marked a lull in friendly American-Israeli relations, but the inauguration of John F. Kennedy reversed this trend. Since that time, Israel has gradually become the United States' strongest ally in the Middle East; pro-Israeli sentiment has become absolute in the minds of America's governmental leaders and even more so in its citizens' attitudes.² This was especially true in the American South, which began asserting itself in the national discourse more than it had since before the Civil War.

Southern nationalism had fully manifested by the outset of the Cold War, and Dixie began reasserting itself in American foreign affairs as it between in the 1840s and the 1850s. The American South's support for internationalism originated from an ideological point that dated back to Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations. Southerners blamed the Republican Party for blocking America's inclusion in the international community and adopted Wilson's ideals as a "lost cause." The desire for America to lead the international community became a primary component of Dixie's foreign policy perspective in the years following World War I.³ The World Bank and United Nations initiatives were seen as a continuation of Wilsonian principles and strongly supported by the South. America must fully interject its values and be the leader of the free world. Only then could the world know peace. No southern congressman supported the principles of international cooperation more so than Senator J. William Fulbright; however, his views on the process differed from those of President Wilson.

² Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, "The United States and Israel since 1948: a 'Special Relationship'?" *Diplomatic History* 22, no. 2 (Spring 1998):232. Bar-Siman-Tov has argued that the growth of the "special relationship" between the United States and Israel is a direct result of shared values with Americans, or "soft" factors. The "soft" factors were not enough to maintain the patron-client relationship, but they were instrumental in helping to reconcile disputes over policy.

³ Joseph A. Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad: the South and U.S. Foreign Relations* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 188-189.

Historians such as C. Vann Woodward and Charles O. Lerche, Jr. have noted that due to its historical experiences the American South has the potential to bring unique perspectives into foreign policy discussions; for a time, it seemed as if the region did just that. Southerners, both politicians and citizens, were instrumental in the creation and inclusion of America into the United Nations and World Bank. Lerche argues that Dixie's involvement in creating global organizations gives the false impression of the region embracing true internationalism. In fact, the South's support was for nationalistic policies complemented by an active American military, unilateral interventionist tendencies, and hostility toward the United Nations.⁴ Southerners did not support Wilsonian ideals because Dixie believed in internationalism; rather, their backing had roots in sectional politics and southern nationalism. Dixie's nationalism emerged from its distinct identity and history. Southerners shared concern for national honor, professed a fundamentalist faith, and suspected centralized power.⁵ These perspectives manifested in domestic and international politics and impacted America's role in world affairs.

Writing in 1964, Lerche argued that "Today, all Americans are and have been for years 'internationalists' in one real sense: everyone admits and recognized the inevitability of the extensive participation of the United States in the ongoing course of world events," and the South was no exception. This recognition, however, was as far as the region's overall

⁴ Lerche, Jr., *The Uncertain South*, 262-264.

⁵ Jeff Woods, *Red Struggle, Black Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-68* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 3-4; Charles O. Lerche, Jr., *The Uncertain South: its Changing Patterns of Politics in Foreign Policy* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964), 14-16; C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History*, 3rd Edition (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2008), 16-19. Lerche and Woodward point to the South's economic dependence upon the North and the crippling poverty that lasted until World War II. Woodward especially points out that these experiences should have developed a mentality that would guide American foreign policy toward positions that were more altruistic and less imperial.

internationalist spirit extended. But this was not the case for J. William Fulbright, Dixie's true internationalist.⁶ He was elected first to the House of Representatives in 1942 and then the Senate in 1944 and became the leading internationalist voice in the United States Congress for three decades. Over this period, he voiced internationalist opinions founded by multilateral, multicultural arguments. His foreign policy stances were not always supported by his constituents in Arkansas, nor the American public. Other scholars have given ample attention to Fulbright's internationalist stances on American involvement in Vietnam, but his dissent on United States policies in the Middle East has not been examined closely enough.⁷ Fulbright's evolving position toward American Middle East foreign policy during the 1950s and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts of the late 1960s and early 1970s are central examples of his multicultural, multilateral attitude in international relations, and provide further evidence of the break between the Rhodes Scholar and his constituents. Fulbright's dissent eventually caused his defeat in 1974. Nonetheless, by that time he had already decried numerous unilateral American policies he believed were detrimental to American progress and international prestige.

Becoming Dixie's Internationalist Voice

Fulbright's stances developed over his many years in the Senate but had their roots in his days as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford. While studying in Britain, Fulbright became acquainted with a great variety of cultures and peoples. Upon graduating, the young Rhodes Scholar opted to travel across Europe, stopping at desirable cultural crossroads. He returned to the United

⁶ Lerche, Jr., *The Uncertain South*, 19-23.

⁷ Randall B. Woods, "Dixie's Dove: J. William Fulbright, the Vietnam War and the American South," *The Journal of Southern History* Vol. 60, no. 3 (Aug., 1994): 533-552; Randall B. Woods, *J. William Fulbright, Vietnam, and the Search for a Cold War Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

States and enrolled in law school at George Washington University. After graduation, he moved back to Fayetteville, Arkansas, and began teaching at the University. Fulbright soon became president of the institution in 1939. This was short-lived, however, with his tenure ending after only two years. Fulbright's stint as President piqued his interest in politics, and in 1942 he began campaigning for the United States House of Representatives.

Fulbright emerged victorious from the rigorous campaign and became Arkansas' Third Congressional District representative. He wasted little time in making a name for himself in foreign policy circles, first challenging freshman conservative Republican Congresswoman Clare Luce. After she delivered a scathing critique of Vice President Henry Wallace's plans for the postwar world, Fulbright derided the nonsense of her arguments while advocating the international aspirations of the Roosevelt administration.⁸ For the remainder of his term in the House of Representatives, Fulbright continued to gain notoriety for his positions on foreign policy.

The young congressman had always been an admirer of Wilsonian internationalism; however, Fulbright's notion of internationalism and self-determination did take into account nationalist ideals and did not have the former President's historicist component. His faith in the system was fostered by Ronald McCallum, an Oxford don and Fulbright's mentor. The two men felt that none of the Western powers had given a full commitment to the principles of the League set forth in the peace settlement at Versailles. Furthermore, Fulbright felt that there was a common set of ideals found in the minds of Western countries, namely the distrust of tyrannical

⁸ Haynes Johnson and Bernard M. Gwertzman, *Fulbright: the Dissenter* (New York, Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1968), 64; Woods, *Fulbright: a Biography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 78.

and oppressive governments. He also believed that it was the duty of those who already enjoyed the fortune of sovereignty, like the U.S. and Great Britain, to foster and defend democracy in countries that did not yet benefit from the gifts of Western political philosophy.⁹ Fulbright also knew that helping peoples to realize self-determination would not lead to the cessation of conflict. Rather, an international organization with the power to prevent future aggression and maintain lasting peace was needed. Fulbright introduced this idea in H.R. 200 during April 1943; the bill put the House of Representatives on record of favoring the creation and American inclusion of an international organization.¹⁰ The Fulbright-Connally resolution was passed after intense resistance from former isolationists in the Senate and set the foundations for the United Nations. Two more years would pass before the international body came into existence.

The up and coming congressman from Arkansas was not content with his position in the lower house of Congress, and in 1944, he turned his sights on running for the United States Senate. His campaign centered on his aid and support in the formation of the Roosevelt administration's foreign policy, as well as the legislative accomplishment of the Fulbright-Connally resolution. He felt that the prestige and influence garnered from his political undertakings could be a "great benefit to the people of Arkansas." Fulbright's national renown was further aided when he was named chairman of the American delegation to a conference of Allied ministers of education in London in 1944, and upon his arrival, he was elected chairman of the entire meeting. At the conclusion of the meeting Fulbright was asked to dine with Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Over dinner, Fulbright was asked to speak to the British people in a BBC radio address. He appealed to the British to also support the creation of an

⁹ Randall B. Woods, *Fulbright*, 74-75.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 80.

international machine that would hopefully quell the old world system of conflict. At the end of his month stay in Britain, Fulbright returned to Arkansas to finish his Senate campaign.¹¹ After the dust settled and the votes tallied, Fulbright had won a seat in the Senate.

Pushing for American Internationalism

Fulbright arrived in the United States Senate in 1945 and found to his dismay that the seniority system prevented him from becoming a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC). This did not keep him from speaking his mind on foreign policy matters, as he, among other things, criticized the Roosevelt administration for their dealings at the Yalta Conference. To Fulbright, the settlements agreed upon by the Allied powers represented the old world politics that led to the global conflicts of the past half century. He argued that there should be two anchors in American foreign policy: the Atlantic community and a collective international security organization. Furthermore, Fulbright expressed the belief that the United States Congress, especially the Senate, should have more influence in the peacemaking process. His appeal for a stronger legislative branch was well received by his colleagues who felt that they were largely bypassed by the administration.¹² The untimely death of President Roosevelt took the country by surprise, temporarily pushing Fulbright's calls for new policy into the background.

Harry Truman, a man whom many believed had little competency in foreign affairs, succeeded Roosevelt. His exclusion from any discussion pertaining to international strategy during his brief stint as vice-president compounded his initial lack of interest in foreign policy

¹¹ Ibid., 90-92.

¹² Ibid., 101-102.

matters. Truman's exclusion at Yalta did not delay the start of the conference on the United Nations; but doubts about foreign relations experience persisted, particularly in the Senate. As a rising internationalist, Fulbright hoped to be named a delegate to aid in the formation of the United Nations; he was disappointed. This did not weaken his resolve. He embarked on a nationwide speaking tour to help garner support for an organization that he hoped would help ensure lasting global peace. The charter's allowance of regional collective security organizations to exist separately from the United Nations discouraged the young senator; however, the international organization was a promising step in the right direction. The charter was sent to the United States Senate for ratification, and, after a difficult battle, passed in July 1945.

Later in his Congressional career Fulbright wrote about the United Nations charter debate and argued any and all moral, ethical, or political problems abroad could be solved without the need to raise vast armies across the globe had the United States fully bought into the organization's ideals. Multilateral action from a sanctioned peacekeeping force comprising of many nations would relieve United States of the burdens of a large defense budget and free up vast capital resources. The reduction in defense spending would not only greatly reduce the federal budget, but also allow the United States to invest in infrastructure projects, improvements in education, and, in short, maintain a New Deal approach to domestic issues. Fulbright cited American history, stating that the United States' prominence came first not by interfering abroad, but by developing its economy and society.¹³ Despite the initial refusal by United States policymakers to embrace his internationalist ideals, Fulbright continued advocating these prerogatives for the remainder of his time in Congress.

¹³ J. William Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power* (New York: Random House, 1966), 20-21.

But the contrast between Roosevelt's collective security vision and the reality of emerging spheres of interest did not bode well for Fulbright's internationalist views. The ideological conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union followed shortly after the ratification of the United Nations charter; for the next four decades, the superpowers vied for prestige and influence in regions across the globe. The Middle East was no exception.

America in the Cold War Middle East

The Middle East remained relatively calm through the mid-1950s after the establishment of Israel in 1948, and American policy in the region fluctuated with the succession of presidents. The Truman administration had been friendly with Israel but remained uninvolved due to the geopolitical considerations of the Cold War. Dwight Eisenhower's administration was colder toward Israel than its predecessor, which reflected domestic developments and international Cold War policy.¹⁴ In 1956, the newly installed Egyptian president Gamal Abd al-Nasser broke the timid peace by nationalizing the Suez Canal. The nationalization of the canal arose from the United States reneging on the promise of millions of dollars in grants to help Egypt build a dam on the Nile River. With no American aid for the project, Nasser hoped to use profits from the nationalized canal to finance the dam project. In response to outraged stockholders, the British and French governments began to coordinate in secret with Israeli army officials. British and French paratroopers dropped into the Canal Zone and warned both the Israelis and Egyptians to

¹⁴ Abraham Ben-Zvi, *John F. Kennedy and the Politics of Arms Sales to Israel* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2002), 7-9; Steven Spiegel, *the Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: making America's Middle East Policy, from Truman to Reagan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 50-56; Bernard Reich, *The United States and Israel: influence in the Special Relationship* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 8-9.

stay clear of the area.¹⁵ President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles then appealed to the United Nations to intervene and order a withdrawal of all forces.

Fulbright was critical of Dulles' handling of the situation. Not only had Dulles withdrawn the offer for aid on a Suez project, but he also failed to convince the British and French not to use military force.¹⁶ Furthermore, Fulbright criticized Dulles for being unable to differentiate between Egyptian nationalism and communism, a common mistake amidst the Cold War. The result of the conflict pushed the Arab world into a closer relationship with the Soviet Union and soured the already tumultuous relationship between Egypt and Israel.¹⁷ This exchange was the only major conflict in the 1950s, and the region remained relatively calm until the late 1960s.

Fulbright continued to be a constant critic of the administration's foreign policy for the remainder of Eisenhower's tenure. The senator and the administration most often disagreed on the nature of foreign aid, which Fulbright denounced as being overwhelmingly militaristic. He argued that sending advanced military equipment elevated local tensions into exponentially larger, more deadly conflicts. Furthermore, the Arkansan believed that military aid was selective in the developing world, favoring governments with an anti-communist agenda, while ignoring their internal undemocratic repressive nature. Fulbright pushed for alternative aid packages that would promise to alleviate the economic and social problems that plagued so many Third World

¹⁵ Warren Bass, *Support Any Friend: Kennedy's Middle East and the Making of the U.S.-Israel Alliance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 28.

¹⁶ For more on the Suez Crisis, see Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: the United States and the Middle East since 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 172-181; David Schoenbaum, *The United States and the State of Israel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 113-123; Cole C. Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Crisis of 1956* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1995).

¹⁷ Woods, *Fulbright*, 223-224.

countries. Alleviating or solving those problems, he contended, would not only help to quell the violence, but also to stem the tide of extremist political movements.¹⁸ Challenging the Eisenhower administration on the appropriation of aid packages spoke to Senator Fulbright's larger views on the role of the US government in international affairs. Unlike Eisenhower and Dulles, who embraced a more unilateral-style of internationalism, Fulbright opined on the benefits of economic, educational, and cultural reforms, or "nation building." These elements spoke the senator's "liberal," multicultural internationalism—a feature of his world view that had always been prevalent. Debates on the virtues of liberal v. conservative internationalism persisted between the Arkansas senator and the Eisenhower administration throughout the 1950s. Fulbright's insistence on challenging the executive, however, did not end with the former general. Events would soon create the opportunity for the southern internationalist to wield more power in foreign policy debates.

In 1959, Fulbright ascended to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairmanship. At that same time, he sensed another Red Scare on the horizon in American domestic politics. Soon, right-wing groups like the John Birch Society or the National Education Program began publishing materials intended to inform the American public on the growing global Communist threat. The threat, they insisted, did not stop with simply the Soviet Union and their satellites, but extended to include liberalism in countries such as France and Norway.¹⁹ Fulbright, too, fell victim to attacks from the ultra conservatives, who criticized his leadership of the SFRC as favorable to Communist regimes. The resurgence of communist baiting in American politics

¹⁸ Ibid., 237-238.

¹⁹ Ben Johnson, *Arkansas in Modern America, 1930-1999* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2000), 173-175.

poisoned the perceptions of citizens and continued to do so well into the 1970s, ultimately having a profound effect on Fulbright's 1974 re-election campaign.

As he fought off the onslaught of Right-wing smear campaigns, Fulbright began to use his position as SFRC Chairman to push American domestic policy in the direction he deemed correct. The senator had always been wary of the power of special interests in American politics and began probing the activities of unregistered foreign agents in 1960. By 1963, the investigators were preparing to call on the Jewish Agency-American Section to testify before the committee. Walter Pincus, the investigator Fulbright had chosen, revealed that agents of the Jewish Agency had violated the provisions of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, which stated that any nondiplomatic agents of foreign governments must register with the Justice Department and report their earnings, expenses, and activities on a regular basis. The investigations caught the eye of the Kennedy administration, prompting the president and his vice president to intervene and pressure Fulbright and the SFRC to stop the findings from becoming public.²⁰ The chairman yielded, but the whole affair reinforced his already notable disdain for the considerable power that the Zionist lobby enjoyed in the United States government. Still, it was not until the Johnson presidency that Israel truly began to flex its political muscle.²¹

²⁰ Paul Findley, *They Dare to Speak Out: people and Institutions confront Israel's Lobby* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1989), 94.

²¹ John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 118; Bass, *Support Any Friend*, 59-60. The Israeli government and American domestic pressures from the American Israel Public Affairs (AIPAC) remained relatively quiet in U.S. political affairs for most of the 1950s and early 1960s and preferred to get behind legislation, rather than in front of it. Events in the late 1960s galvanized American public opinion for supporting Israel in conflicts against its Arab neighbors. These

Following Kennedy's assassination, Fulbright's former Senate colleague, Lyndon Johnson, was sworn in as president and signaled a new era in American Cold War foreign policy.²² Prior to Johnson's ascent to the presidency, it had been sufficient to send military advisers into the small country of Vietnam to aid nationalist forces in the Saigon in the hopes of preventing the spread of Communism from Hanoi. But the situation quickly escalated to full American involvement. After an exchange of arms in the Gulf of Tonkin, the United States Congress passed a joint resolution in August 1964 allowing the use of military force by the president without a formal declaration of war. With Fulbright's support, the United States began to send military forces in 1965. The senator went on to change his position and later admitted to Dale Bumpers that his initial support of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was one of the biggest regrets of his career.²³ The damage had been done, however, and for the next decade America's attention was focused on events in Southeast Asia.

Tensions continued to mount in the Middle East, while the administration's attention rested mainly on Southeast Asia. Throughout the 1960s, Israel's Arab neighbors offered their territory as staging grounds for Palestinian guerilla attacks; Gamal Nasser was especially adamant in fostering the idea of pan-Arabism in the hopes of persuading Israel to accept the

events also allowed for the domestic and international pro-Israel groups to command more supportive American policies.

²² The shift was not immediately seen in the Middle East. The change was most apparent in Southeast Asia where America was already heavily involved in Vietnamese conflict between the Communist North and non-Communist South. The earliest example of the shift in American policy toward Israel comes from the United States opening of direct military supply sales. The transition was small under Kennedy and was highlighted by the sale of Hawk short-range, anti-aircraft missiles in August 1962. This laid the foundation for future administrations, such as Johnson's, which began to sell larger numbers and varieties of military equipment to the Israelis. For more on the Kennedy arms sale to Israel see: Ben-Zvi, *JFK and the Politics of Arms Sales to Israel*.

²³ Dale Bumpers, *Best Lawyer in a One Lawyer Town* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2003), 232.

claims of Palestinian refugees. Egypt then took the initiative of closing the Straits of Tiran in May 1967, effectively cutting off Israel's only opening to the south. President Johnson urged Egypt to reopen the Straits and pressured Israel not to retaliate with a military strike. His pleas proved futile and on June 5th, the Israelis launched a pre-emptive air strike against Egypt. Air strikes were also launched against Jordan and Syria, which, like Egypt, also suffered stinging defeats. The conflict lasted a mere six days, but ended with total Israeli military dominance. By the end of the Six Day War, the Israelis controlled the Suez Canal, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights leading to calls for a United Nations resolution in order to reach a peace settlement that would be agreeable to both parties. In November 1967, the United Nations released Resolution 242 (UNR 242) which called upon Israel to return the Arab lands captured in the Six Day War. In return for Israeli land concessions, the Arab world would be required to agree to mutual security agreements and border guarantees.²⁴ For the next decade, UNR 242 became the blueprint for peace in the Middle East but was continually rejected by the Israelis.

J. William Fulbright was one of the greatest American proponents of UNR 242 and fervently pushed the two parties toward peace terms for the remainder of his term in the Senate as SFRC Chairman. He later wrote in *The Crippled Giant* that there was a small chance for Arabs, Jews, Americans, and Russians to “transcend the tribal xenophobias that afflict mankind: by attempting something unprecedented in international affairs: the settlement of a major international controversy through the procedures of the United Nations.”²⁵ Fulbright's strong and public support of UNR 242 reaffirmed his disposition toward liberal internationalism. But,

²⁴ For more on the Six Day War, see: Michael Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

²⁵ J. William Fulbright, *The Crippled Giant: American Foreign Policy and Its Domestic Consequences* (New York: Random House, 1972), 108.

his advocacy for “land for peace” settlements, however, struck many Americans as an abandonment of support for Israel and further proof of his staunch favoritism to the Arabs. Furthermore, due to the Muslim world’s subsequent alignment with the Soviet Union, Senator Fulbright was seen as soft on Communism. This was no less true in Arkansas where his constituents began to flood his senate office with requests to support Israel in its time of need.²⁶ Fulbright, notorious for his independence from consensus, continued his advocacy of a multilateralist peace settlement through the United Nations.

Fulbright, Arkansans, and the June 1967 War Aftermath

The Six Day War brought the ongoing strife in the Middle East back to the forefront of the national conversation in American politics and reinvigorated emotions, perceptions, and ideologies that existed since the earliest days of the Republic. Arkansas voters were presented with stories from national and regional media sources such as the *New York Times*, *The Times of Israel*, and the *Christian Crusader Weekly*. Each brought its unique perspective on Senator Fulbright’s public statements of policy and elicited responses from constituents, themselves. Whether the onslaught of national media and propaganda coming into the state had a measurable effect on Arkansans’ opinions is impossible to say, but the language used by Fulbright’s constituents is incredibly similar to that of media sources’ critiques of the senator.

Initially, Americans, Arkansans included, were largely unaware of growing tensions in the Middle East. At the outset of the Six Day War in June 1967, only fifty-nine percent of those

²⁶ Carl Marcy to J. William Fulbright, June 1, 1967. Memo, J. William Fulbright Papers, Series 48, Subseries 15, Box 40, Folder 1. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. From here on, J. William Fulbright Papers, will be condensed to “Fulbright Papers.”

polled were aware of the conflict. By January 1969, this number had increased to eighty-five percent and peaked at ninety-five in October 1973.²⁷ In addition to becoming increasingly aware of strife in the Holy Land, Americans' overwhelmingly sympathized with the Israeli people. The Arab world, on the other hand, consistently garnered little sympathy in the United States since the Suez crisis in 1956. The June War was no exception, and American policy remained unchanged.

It is clear that, in the weeks leading to the outbreak of hostilities, Arkansans were no different than their fellow Americans in showing where their sympathies lay. Hundreds of letters poured into Fulbright's office, with one of his aides estimating that ninety-five percent of them called for the outright support of Israel.²⁸ Despite the number of opinions on *how* to support Israel, Arkansas voters were explicit in their unquestioned backing of the Jewish country. For example, Rabbi H. Richard White of Fort Smith wrote the senator to remind him of the long history of Arab hostility towards the Jewish state, as well as Israel's importance as the only democracy and ally of America in that area of the world.²⁹ Arkansans were not the only Americans writing to Fulbright, either, with letters arriving from Maryland to California, as well. Maurice Spitzberg of Bethesda, Maryland and Anna Tanzman of New York City wrote the

²⁷ Gallup Poll, *Gallup Poll Public Opinion, 1959-1971 vol. 3* (New York, Random House: 1972), 2068-2181.; Gallup Poll, *Gallup Poll Public Opinion, 1972-1975 vol. 1 & 2* (Wilmington, DE, American Institute of Public Opinion: 1978). 204-206.

²⁸ Carl Marcy to J. William Fulbright, June 1, 1967. Memo, Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 40:1.

²⁹ Rabbi H. Richard White to J. William Fulbright, May 31, 1967. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Ibid.

senator urging that he use his position as Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman to do all that he could to ensure Israel's survival.³⁰

Arkansas constituents were unrelenting in their correspondence with Senator Fulbright throughout the duration of the Six Day War and the days following the cease-fire. The letters maintained the same tone and requests as they had in the lead up to the war: support Israel any way possible. Dave Shapiro, an Arkansas voter, called upon Fulbright to support unilateral military intervention of the United States in order to help the Israelis.³¹ Some Arkansans insisted that the Israeli people were under siege much as they had been in the Holocaust, embattled by an enemy that swore to drive them into the sea. Several letters were explicit in likening Egyptian President Nasser to Hitler.³²

Despite the Fulbright's long standing hopes for a more balanced approach, the United States backed the state of Israel with military aid and unquestioned moral support. This alignment, in turn, pushed the Arabs to join with the Soviets; the alliance was something that the State Department and the senator had long feared. With little to no reception from the United States, the Arabs took their grievances to the opposing superpower. Looking to extend its power and prestige in the Middle East, the Soviet Union welcomed the opportunity to aid the Arab

³⁰ Maurice Spitzberg to J. William Fulbright, May 25, 1967. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Series 48: 15, Box 40: 1. Anna Tanzman to J. William Fulbright, May 31, 1967. Ibid.

³¹ David Shapiro to J. William Fulbright, June 6, 1967. Fulbright Papers, Ibid.

³² P. Gray to J. William Fulbright, June 9, 1967. Postcard, Fulbright Papers, Ibid. The likening of Nasser to Hitler had been present in the national rhetoric since former British Prime Minister Anthony Eden had labeled the Egyptian president that amid the Suez Crisis in 1956. For more on Eden and the Suez Crisis, see Jonathon Pearson, *Sir Anthony Eden and the Suez Crisis: Reluctant Gamble* (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2003).

countries.³³ Despite the developments in the Middle East, the SFRC Chairman remained apprehensive about America's policy in the hostile region.

Senator Fulbright expressed little alarm at the perceived Arab aggression, making note of it in his template response to those asking for him to vote for the sending of military aid to Israel in the days following the June 10th cease-fire. He remarked, "I am sympathetic to Israel, though they do not need it as much as the Arabs, seeing the outcome of the conflict." His opinions were his own, but the main officials in the State Department had been making this argument for years, as well.³⁴ Those arguments also favored the role of the United Nations and, in general, of the international community to institute a peace that was agreeable to all parties.³⁵ Time and again, J. William Fulbright recommended that his constituents lobby for a United Nations peace; most southerners, however, had by now fully displayed their distrust of the international body.³⁶

Nearly five months passed before the United Nations drafted a peace plan; the resulting settlement was the one documented in UN Resolution 242 in early November 1967. The terms of peace were less than desirable from the point of view of both parties, though many in America felt the Arab world had received the majority of benefits in the plan. Resolution 242 stated that territorial concessions be given to the Arab countries in return for a guaranteed, secure border for Israel. Furthermore, Jerusalem was to become an internationally governed city.³⁷ The resolution

³³ Cheryl Rubenberg, *Israel and the American National Interest: a Critical Examination* (Urbana, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 2-7.

³⁴ Talbot memo to Rusk, Nov. 22, 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-63*, Vol. 17, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1994), 342-44.

³⁵ J. William Fulbright to David Shapiro, June 13, 1967. Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 40:1.

³⁶ Lerche, *The Uncertain South*, 262-264.

³⁷ United Nations Security Council Resolutions, 1967. Resolution 242, The Question of Ongoing Strife in the Middle East. In *Security Council Resolutions – 1967* [Online]. Available

was whole-heartedly supported by Senator Fulbright, a stance that many interpreted as being heavily pro-Arab and an abandonment of the Israeli people. In the end, the plan was ultimately rejected by Israel, claiming the land conquered in the conflict was a necessary security buffer due to the belligerence of the surrounding nations. Negotiations continued in the years following the 1967 conflict, but terrorist acts being perpetrated by both sides hindered any possibility of peaceful settlement.

It should be noted that in nearly every instance when negotiations took place, it was the Israelis that stalled the talks due to their demands; they were loath to concede anything to the defeated Arab countries. Aware of the prowess of the Israeli army, Arab countries slowly began to change their previous positions of hostility and wanton annihilation of the Jewish state. During a trip to Washington, D.C. in November 1967, King Hussein of Jordan was the first to publicly announce that he simply wanted back the lands lost in the Six Day War in return for diplomatic recognition of Israel's existence and mutual security agreements. President Nasser of Egypt followed suit in February 1970, proclaiming that "it would be possible to institute a durable peace between Israel and the Arab states, not excluding economic and diplomatic relations, if Israel evacuates the occupied territories and accepts a settlement of the problem of Palestinian refugees." Nasser died soon after this statement, but his policy did not end with his death. His successor, Anwar Sadat, also came to the Israelis with a full peace proposal based on the internationally recognized borders. Each of these outreaches by Arab leaders was spurned by the Israeli government, garnering little interest from Washington as well.³⁸ Knowledge of the

<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/240/94/IMG/NR024094.pdf?OpenElement> (last accessed January 30, 2012).

³⁸ As quoted in Rubenberg, *Israel and the American National Interest*, 133-134.

Arab overtures did not seem to reach Arkansas citizens who continued writing under the assumption that it was the Arab nations' solemn mission to drive Israel into the sea.³⁹

Negotiations stagnated in 1968, with a noticeable chill falling between Israel and the Johnson administration for the remainder of the year.

Richard Nixon became president in 1969, and he selected William Rogers as Secretary of State. This choice marked a slight, but promising shift in American foreign policy in the Middle East. Fulbright, who saw Rogers' trust in the United Nations and UNR 242 as a positive development, was most encouraged by Nixon's appointment. Fulbright's enthusiasm was further bolstered when the secretary of state voiced his plan for peace in the Middle East during a speech on December 9th, 1969. Dubbed the "Rogers Plan," it affirmed the direction the State Department wished to take in pursuing the ever-elusive Middle East peace. The plan was much akin to UNR 242, but also called for both sides to maintain a 100 mile buffer zone. Senator Fulbright enthusiastically endorsed Rogers's plan and placed the secretary's speech in the Congressional Record more than once. Sadly, Nixon did not embrace Rogers's peace plan; rather, he shunned it.⁴⁰

Nixon's dismissal of the peace plan infuriated the SFRC Chairman. In an open letter to President Nixon, he stated that the lack of the administration's support for Secretary Rogers was "deafening." Fulbright wanted it publicly known that he wholeheartedly endorsed the secretary's initiative. The senator also predicted that his support of Secretary Rogers would open

³⁹ S.D. Nichol to J. William Fulbright, February 19, 1970. Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 40:2;

⁴⁰ J. William Fulbright to Richard Nixon, December 17, 1969. Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 40:1.

him up to political attacks and criticisms from Jewish interest groups and Arkansas voters.⁴¹

Though audacious in nature, the Rogers Plan was defeated by a highly effective special interest campaign, as well as by the Israelis' and Arabs' refusals to adhere to its proposals.⁴²

As Fulbright predicted, letters began to arrive criticizing him for his support of the secretary of state and his allegedly "atrocious" position against the people of Israel. Arkansans recognized the divide between Nixon and Rogers and wrote to Fulbright urging him to at least withdraw his support for Rogers' plan, if not to side with the president.⁴³ Lionel Silverfield, a Fulbright constituent, expressed his concern, believing the shift in United States Middle East policy would encourage more Arab hostility and further weaken America in the face of international Communism.⁴⁴ Furthermore, shifting strong American support away from Israel would place the embattled Jewish state in greater danger of being driven into the sea by its Arab aggressors. The "little state of Israel finds themselves [sic] in a war that they neither want, nor brought through no fault of their own," wrote L.R. Harwag, another Arkansas voter, when asking the senator to continue voting to send military aid to Israel.⁴⁵ Many more letters arrived at the Fulbright's office, each attempting to call the senator's attention to the defenseless country of Israel, alone in a sea of hatred and in dire need of more military equipment from the United States if it were to survive.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Mohammed K. Shadid, *The United States and the Palestinians* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 45.

⁴³ Mrs. Roy C. Skipper to J. William Fulbright, February 16, 1970, Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 40:2.; Mrs. K.B. Levine to J. William Fulbright, February 14, 1970, Ibid.; Edwin Rhein to , February 16, 1970, Ibid.; Mr. and Mrs. Martin Fish to J. William Fulbright, February 19, 1970, Ibid.; Mrs. Sidney Rosenberg to J. William Fulbright, February 22, 1970, Ibid.

⁴⁴ Lionel Silverfield to J. William Fulbright, January 10, 1970. Fulbright Papers, Ibid.

⁴⁵ L.R. Harwag to J. William Fulbright, January 20, 1970. Fulbright Papers, Ibid.

As American foreign policy inched evermore towards absolute favoritism of Israel, so too did the Arab gravitation toward the Soviets. Reports of arms deals between the Soviet Union and Arab countries led Arkansans to continue calling on Fulbright to support the sale of more American jets to Israel so as to maintain the existing power dynamic. Fulbright responded to his voters' calls for support with a template letter explaining his criticism of the American policy of maintaining the current power structure. He wrote, "It has long been my view that supplying arms to Israel, through sale or otherwise, neither assures Israel's security nor serves American interests. Providing additional jet aircraft to the Israelis will lead to greater Egyptian dependence upon the Soviets and thus bring us one step closer to a dangerous and unnecessary confrontation with the Soviets."⁴⁶ Furthermore, Israel's military superiority was already established in the 1967 June War, and Fulbright believed that continually resupplying them with weapons of war minimized their incentive for negotiating a lasting peace with their Arab neighbors. Fulbright's opposition to supporting Israel, some charged, was a clear sign that the senator condoned Arab terrorism. References to the Holocaust abounded in the correspondence reaching his office, reminding the senator that many had remained quiet when Hitler was massacring Jews; some charged that it was Nasser who was now doing the exterminating.⁴⁷

Whether the letters from Fulbright's constituents had any effect in changing his position towards Israel is impossible to say, but in August 1970, the senator made his own proposal for lasting peace in the Middle East. Though he prided himself on advocating policies that reduced massive American military interventions abroad, Fulbright proposed a treaty that guaranteed Israel with American military support if its borders were ever compromised. Before the

⁴⁶ Template letter from J. William Fulbright, ca. July 1970. Series 48:15, Box 40:3.

⁴⁷ See for example, Philip Kaplan to J. William Fulbright, February 17, 1970. A.J. Goldman to J. William Fulbright, February 18, 1970. Series 48:15, Box 40:2.

proposed agreement could be considered by the United States Senate, Fulbright kept his tradition of first relying on the United Nations, seeking guarantees from the Security Council before advocating unilateral American action. In order for Israel to gain the guarantee of American intervention should its sovereign borders be broken, Fulbright asked Tel Aviv to withdraw its forces out of the occupied territories as a measure of “farsightedness and generosity.”⁴⁸

Fulbright’s uncharacteristic call for guarantees that might lead to American military intervention on behalf of Israeli security fell on deaf ears in Arkansas; only a few letters acknowledged his proposal. Many saw his calls for Palestinian refugee security as an affront to Israeli interests. Teanie Green, a voter from Little Rock, wrote to the senator that his continued objection to Israeli support was the last straw, stating, “Your remarks will have repercussions and you will find out come election time how you are regarded...”⁴⁹ The theme of equating favoritism for the Arab cause with support for Communism continued. Mrs. C.R. McHaney, another Arkansan, criticized Fulbright in a letter, writing, “The communists can do no wrong! The Jew is just as dead when killed by the Communists guns as he is when killed by the Nazis. Watch out Mr. Fulbright! Your communism is showing!”⁵⁰

Constituent response to Fulbright’s moderate stance on the Arab-Israeli conflict was indicative of the growing support for Israel in the wake of the Six Day War. American Jews and Christian Zionists across the country were invigorated by the surprise victory in 1967, especially since the Cold War ideological battle in Vietnam was going so poorly. Events in 1973 would

⁴⁸ *Congressional Record*, Senate, August 24, 1970, 29796-801.

⁴⁹ Teanie Green to J. William Fulbright, January 15, 1971. Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 40:4.

⁵⁰ Mrs. C.R. McHaney to J. William Fulbright, January 6, 1970, Fulbright Papers, Ibid.

further reinforce pro-Israeli sentiments in the United States, but in the interim, Senator Fulbright's opposition began to consolidate and move to unseat him in 1974.⁵¹

Conservatives Move on the Internationalist

As Arkansans were writing the senator to show their disapproval of his Middle East stance, ultra-conservative groups began to move against Fulbright, as well. Arkansas political historian Ben Johnson points to the emergence of the New Right in Arkansas politics in the early 1940s, a development that grew out of a funding dispute for Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas. In an attempt to raise money to keep his college afloat, George Benson, the college's president, traveled to New York in hopes of receiving funds from businesses there. After gaining favor with New York businessmen, Benson was asked to testify on their behalf in front of the House Ways and Means Committee in favor of dismantling New Deal programs that he felt were obstructive to American businesses. His testimony was well received and gained him generous funding for a speaking tour. The message of his tour was simple: Communism and Christian piety were diametrically opposed and laissez-faire economic policies were the true, moral approach to business. He cited his dealings with Marxists in China as a missionary, which he said solidified his belief that Communism was the ultimate evil.⁵² With this message and ample funding in hand, Benson founded the National Education Program and began producing

⁵¹ Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Knopf, 2012), 554-562.

⁵² This mentality became defining characteristics of the American conservative movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

large amounts of anti-Communist propaganda that reached an estimated nine million people by the 1960s.⁵³

Ultra-conservative groups were present in close proximity to Fulbright's home state; they also aimed to inform the people of the dangers that were ever-present in international Communism. Billy Hargis, a pastor from Bentonville, Arkansas, began publishing a monthly newspaper in the 1960s named the *Christian Crusader Weekly* and established the ultra-conservative American Christian College in Tulsa in 1971. The periodical and college both stressed the incredible threat posed by international Communism and articles updated readers on the activities of suspected Communist sympathizers in American politics. Senator Fulbright's stances on Communism and foreign policy appeared several times in this press coverage in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Each article on Fulbright presented readers with his stances on American foreign policy and portrayed them as favoring Communism or condoning Arab terrorism. These accusations, of course, were completely unfounded; however, the arguments found in his periodical were reflected in constituent letters throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s. Hargis's publication peaked at nearly 200,000 subscriptions in the early 1970s, and he remained a powerful voice on the Christian Right until a sex scandal forced his resignation in 1974.⁵⁴

Senator Fulbright was also a target of a Dallas, Texas-based anti-Communist organization, the Life-Line Foundation. Financed by billionaire Haroldson Lafayette Hunt, the

⁵³ Johnson, *Arkansas in Modern America*, 173-175.

⁵⁴ Ronald Lora and William H. Longton, ed., *The Conservative Press in Twentieth-Century America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 472-476

broadcasting company distributed its conservative message over 300 radio and T.V. stations.⁵⁵

In September 1973, Life-Line's *Freedom Talk* charged Senator Fulbright constitutional subversion and disregard for the American people; he was also criticized for his "free and easy relations with Communists" and opposition to American anti-Communist heroes. Furthermore, the program also reported that Fulbright's advocacy of limiting American military actions abroad effectively placed a muzzle on American servicemen.⁵⁶ Dallas's close proximity to Arkansas and prominence in the region leaves little doubt that reports from Life-Line Foundation also reached the people of Arkansas and influenced their conceptions of Senator Fulbright.

Shadow Over Israel

In August 1973, Secretary of State William Rogers resigned and was replaced by National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger. Most assumed Kissinger, a German-born Jew, would be a hardline supporter of Israel; however, he gravitated toward an even more balanced approach in the Middle East than his predecessor. Immediately, Kissinger began traveling to the Middle East and the Soviet Union to aid in peace negotiations between the Arab world and Israel. Progress was slow, but promising. Kissinger's approach to peace was well-received by Senator Fulbright and the two men began closely working together to shape American foreign policy.⁵⁷ The promise of peace in the Middle East, however, was a façade that soon crumbled as tensions spiked again in October 1973.

⁵⁵ Woods, *Fulbright*, 281.

⁵⁶ H.L. Hunt, *Life Line Freedom Talk*, No. 72 (Dallas, TX), September 23, 1973. Fulbright Papers, Series 61, Box 1, Folder 1. Hunt's messages on Fulbright largely centered around his positions on Vietnam, but rhetoric linking the senator to favoring communism in other regions were also present.

⁵⁷ Woods, *Fulbright*, 645-647.

On October 6, 1973, Egyptian and Syrian forces launched a surprise attack on Israel and began the Yom Kippur War. Although the Arab attack was technically an offensive action, the Egyptians notified the United States of its objectives; the military action was intended to simply regain the occupied territories lost in 1967. Several cease-fires were agreed to but broken by Israel time and again. Egypt's Anwar Sadat even agreed to the second cease-fire passed by the United Nations Security Council despite the fact it would leave his Third Army surrounded. The Israelis broke this agreement, leaving Sadat to ask America to aid in enforcing the cease-fire; his pleas fell on deaf ears in Washington.⁵⁸

Despite Israel's military superiority in the battle, the people of Arkansas still believed that the people of Israel were fighting for their existence. Even before Fulbright made a statement on the conflict some Arkansans knew he would favor the Arab cause over America's embattled Middle Eastern ally. Kate McHaney, a Fulbright constituent, wrote, "Before you even made any statement concerning the Arab-Israel conflict, I think most of us, I should say 'all of us' knew you would be on the side supported by the communists. You always are. The Arabs, for years, threatened to 'wipe Israel off the face of the earth' and that was long, long before the Six Day War, which you most certainly know. We here in Arkansas also know the real reason you are so anxious to pull our soldiers out of communist threated areas too. And that reason is not to save money as you so piously reiterate."⁵⁹ Soon, Senator Fulbright would fulfill Mrs. McHaney's prophecy.

⁵⁸ Rubenberg, *Israel and the American National Interest*, 161-170.

⁵⁹ Kate McHaney to J. William Fulbright, October 1973. Letter, Series 48:15, Box 40:5. Mr. and Mrs. Wes Smelley to J. William Fulbright, October 25, 1973. Letter, Ibid. William Walker to J. William Fulbright October 17, 1973. Letter, Ibid. Steve Flynt to J. William Fulbright, October 1973. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Ibid.

The day after the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, the senator appeared on *Face the Nation* to discuss the Middle East conflict. Fulbright accused the Israeli lobby of having the ear of up to eighty United States senators, as well as a large percentage of the House of Representatives. Because of the power and influence of the lobby, Israel enjoyed unparalleled and unquestioned American military and economic aid.⁶⁰ The following day, Fulbright addressed the Pacem in Terris III (Peace on Earth) and stressed the importance of reaching an enduring peace in the Middle East.⁶¹ The significance of establishing a lasting peace, Fulbright noted, grew out of the West's dependence on Arab world's vast oil reserves. Fulbright referenced the current rise in energy prices, a trend he directly attributed to America's unflinching support for Israel. Only through a balanced Middle East policy and good relations with oil producing countries could the United States lower energy prices and maintain its superpower status.

The Arkansas Jewish community reacted swiftly to Fulbright's statements on Middle Eastern affairs, many feeling that his comments were overly anti-Semitic and pro-Arab. Rabbi Elijah Palnick of Temple B'nai in Little Rock compared Fulbright's statements to Joseph Goebbels' Nazi propaganda.⁶² A scathing telegram from the Little Rock chapter of Hadassah was delivered shortly after Fulbright's public announcement that such a lobby existed, reminding the senator that, "The over 200 members of Little Rock Hadassah who are your constituents resent your implication on the face to face telecast which impugned the loyalty of 70 of your

⁶⁰ *Face the Nation*, October 7, 1973. Transcript, Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 41:1.

⁶¹ The Pacem in Terris III was a national convention on new opportunities for U.S. foreign policy that convened in Washington, D.C. from October 8-11, 1973. For more on the convocation, see "Pacem in Terris III: a National Convocation to Consider New Opportunities for United States foreign policy," (Santa Barbara, CA: Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1974).

⁶² Rabbi Elijah Palnick to J. William Fulbright, October 8, 1973. Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 41:1.

fellow senators for supporting the human intent of the Jackson Amendment and their fine record of support of the democratic state of Israel in their current fight for survival.”⁶³

It is curious to see that Americans, Arkansans included, overwhelmingly supported Israel in both the June 1967 War and the Yom Kippur War, given that anti-Semitism has always been prevalent in the United States. The explanation, as historian Randall Woods has noted, can be attributed to the failure of the Vietnam War. The American people were embarrassed by the U.S. action in Southeast Asia and projected their frustrations on the conflict in the Middle East. Arkansans and Americans in general, saw Israelis as a people totally committed to victory no matter the cost—unlike the United States in Vietnam. Support for Israel, therefore, was directly linked to their success in standing up to Arab aggression—communism—and defeating their enemy. The delineation between anti-Semitism and pro-Israel sentiment, though somewhat ironic, was another aspect of Fulbright’s defeat. He had challenged the wisdom of staying the course in Vietnam, much to the chagrin of his constituents, and, now, he was besmirching the military, economic, and moral support America was giving Israel.

Arkansas Christians were also appalled at the senator’s comments on *Face the Nation* and at the Pacem in Terris. Fulbright’s constituents attempted to appeal to him through faith and sent biblical references and petitions signed by whole congregations that begged for his reconsideration of Middle East policies.⁶⁴ Following their annual conference, the clerk of the Baptist Missionary Association of Arkansas was instructed to notify the senator of their support

⁶³ Little Rock Chapter of Hadassah to J. William Fulbright, October 8, 1973. Telegram, Fulbright Papers, Series 48: 15, Box 40:5.

⁶⁴ Little Rock Chapter of Hadassah to J. William Fulbright, October 8, 1973, telegram, Series 48:15, Box 41:1; Pastor A.L. Hollingsworth and First Baptist Church of Garfield to J. William Fulbright, November 29, 1973. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 41:2.

of the government backing the Israelis in the October War, noting that the association was over 300 churches strong.⁶⁵ The message Arkansans were sending was clear: support Israel or else. Fulbright, however, was unmoved by calls for him to change his stance.

The Arkansan also caught the ire of the *Times of Israel* in January 1974. He was not only the target of a scathing critique by M. Hirsch Goldberg, but also graced the cover of the magazine under the heading “Shadow Over Israel.” Even before opening the periodical, readers were given the message of the exposé. The words “ARAB TERROR” appear above the senator’s profile and suggests that he is either actively or passively engaged in terrorist activities, himself. The article does little to suggest otherwise and constantly misconstrues Fulbright’s lineage, family history, and stances on American Middle East foreign policy.⁶⁶ Publications such as the *Times of Israel* undoubtedly found a receptive audience in Arkansas synagogues and influenced perceptions about Fulbright.

Conclusion

Fulbright’s rise as the leading internationalist in the United States Senate and subsequent positions on American foreign policy could trace its roots to his days at Oxford. It was here that he was introduced to Wilsonian internationalism by Oxford don and mentor Ronald McCallum. Fulbright, unlike Woodrow Wilson, embraced a different internationalist perspective; his views dismissed the historicist interpretations accepted by the former president. The Arkansan instead looked for the United States to take the lead in forming a true international community in the

⁶⁵ Leon Carnical to J. William Fulbright, November 7, 1973. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 41:1.

⁶⁶ M. Hirsh Goldberg, “Fulbright: the Myth and the Reality,” *The Times of Israel* 1, no. 2 (1974): Cover Page & 31-37. The article is keen to make connections to Fulbright’s German heritage and relations with prominent Arab leaders, such as Gamal Nasser.

United Nations and suggested relinquishing some sovereignty to the organization. This suggestion ran counter to the traditional southern foreign policy in the Cold War. There was a common mistrust of the United Nations in the former Confederacy, not only because it “threatened” American sovereignty, but also because, by the late 1950s, it possessed a non-Western, non-white majority. Fulbright’s continued advocacy of United Nations initiatives and the organization’s ability to settle disputes put him at odds with his constituency, especially on the subject of the Middle East. The senator’s positions were based in a multicultural, multilateral understanding of internationalism, but, besides running counter to the southern nationalist, provincialist view of the world, it also contradicted deeply embedded religious traditions in the South.

Furthermore, Fulbright’s internationalism, for many of his critics, forebode the continuous reliance on a large role for the U.S. government in both domestic and international affairs. As H.W. Brands has argued, faith in the Democratic Party’s Cold War liberalism held America and the party together after World War II. Since Vietnam, the Pentagon Papers, and the Watergate Scandal had yet to break Americans faith in the Democratic Party’s internationalist approach to national security, Fulbright remained able to continuously dissent in foreign policy debates and not lose his seat in the Senate. America’s involvement in Southeast Asia, however, broke that consensus, and restored Americans’ traditional mistrust of large government. Based on the volume of letters and reports inundating Fulbright’s office, it was clear that the 1974 primary would be very difficult. Richard Nixon’s 1972 landslide victory in the South and in the whole country in general, reflected the shift in the nation’s political mood. The battle for the Arkansas’s Democratic Party nomination for the Senate would be an uphill battle for the aged internationalist.

Chapter 3

Placing the 1974 Arkansas Primary Election into the National Context

The late 1960s and early 1970s were the most tumultuous time for the United States since the Civil War. In *Nixonland*, Rick Perlstein encapsulates the rise of Richard Nixon and the “fracturing of America.” The rapid advancement of reform brought by Civil Rights and Great Society legislation produced a vehement backlash against the progressive agenda of Cold War liberalism.¹ Furthermore, as we have seen, America’s involvement in Southeast Asia shattered the faith in Cold War liberalism that had guided U.S. foreign policy since the end of World War II.² J. William Fulbright was a key personality in the liberal establishment; his association with the internationalist ideals embraced by Cold War Democrats opened him to attack his whole career. His defeat in the 1974 Arkansas primary election was a direct result of this association.

The Arkansas primary election also reflected larger movements within American politics. The resurgence of conservatism began in the Sunbelt states during President Eisenhower’s tenure and culminated with the Republican Party presidential nomination of Barry Goldwater in 1964.³

¹ Rick Perlstein, *Nixonland: the Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America* (New York: Scribner, 2009).

² H.W. Brands, *The Strange Death of American Liberalism* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2001).

³ The Sunbelt states constitute Southwestern states like Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas; historians also include the former Confederacy in this group. Dewey Grantham, *The South in Modern America: a Region at Odds* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 262. For more on the origins of the conservative movement see Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: the Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Gary Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind: Politics, Culture, and the War of Ideology*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); Jean-François Drolet, *American Neoconservatism: the Politics and Culture of Reactionary Idealism* (London: Hurst & Company, 2011); Mark Gerson, *The Neoconservative Vision: from the Cold War to the Culture Wars* (Lanham, MD: Madison Books, 1996).

Time first identified the resurgence of conservatism with the lunatic fringe in “The Ultras” in 1961. The initial movement reflected the growing paranoia of communist subversion, not abroad, but at home. The progressive agenda pushed by figures such as Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren and Presidents Kennedy and Johnson were, in the conservative view, subtle attempts to subvert the Constitution and the American way of life. Groups and people associated with the ultra-conservative movement were written off as fringe believers, but the foundation of the resurgent Republican Party was in this association.⁴

Goldwater’s loss did not end the conservative movement; it reinvigorated it. Johnson’s first elected term in office saw American troops officially enter combat in Vietnam. The conflict was soon engulfed in controversy as popular support of the American people began to sour; conservatives across the country, however, believed in keeping that commitment and winning the war. Fulbright, for his part, had begun to question America’s involvement in Vietnam in 1966, but did so without aligning himself with the lunatic fringe. Or as Randall Woods states, “He managed to convey the impression that he was genuinely interested in the welfare of all parties concerned, that he was a disinterested observer, a man of goodwill who did not have all the answers but who wanted nothing so much as to see the peoples of the world enjoy peace and self-determination....”⁵ Still, the senator was suspicious of the Johnson administration’s attempts to deceive the American public on the Vietnam War. His suspicions led to hearings that lasted through the end of Johnson’s administration, and targets ranged from the Central Intelligence Agency to United States Information Agency. The senator suffered political attacks from right-wing groups and the Johnson administration, itself, for questioning the actions and

⁴ “The Ultras,” *Time*, December 8, 1961, 24-29.

⁵ Quoted in Woods, *Fulbright*, 436.

statements by leaders such as General William Westmoreland, the Commander of Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.⁶ As the 1968 election approached, some Americans began to question U.S. motives, but most still favored staying the course in Vietnam.⁷

Enter Richard Nixon. His nomination and the 1968 Republican Party platform reflected the shifting mood of American voters. They saw the intervention of the federal government on Civil Rights issues as an overstepping of Constitutional power. The Republican candidate promised to return autonomy to state and local polities; several GOP leaders also championed the opposition to bussing for integration and a return to “law and order.”⁸ The platform struck a nerve with the American people who elected Richard Nixon with fifty-five percent of the national vote.

⁶ Ibid., 429-444. Fulbright’s suspicions of Americans being provided false information on the escalation of the war, see H.R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997); Clarence R. Wyatt, *Paper Soldiers: the American Press and the Vietnam War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993). For more on Fulbright’s role in American policymaking in Vietnam, see Randall B. Woods, *J. William Fulbright, Vietnam, and the Search for a Cold War Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Randall B. Woods, *Vietnam and the American Political Tradition: the Politics of Dissent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁷ America’s path forward in Vietnam was a hotly debated topic in the 1968 Presidential Election. Nixon later coined the term “Peace with Honor” in 1973, and his plan for the “Vietnamization” of the war were central to his plans of withdrawal. Americans were beginning to support gradual withdrawal of U.S. combat troops, but they also wanted to “win” the war. For more on America’s debate over staying the course in Vietnam and the program of Vietnamization, see James H. Willbanks, *Abandoning Vietnam: how America Left and South Vietnam Lost Its War* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004). For more on the Paris Peace Accords, see Pierre Asselin, *A Bitter Peace: Washington, Hanoi, and the Making of the Paris Agreement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002). The resulting defeat in Vietnam had lasting psychological effects on Americans, particularly when it came to supporting the combat troops. For more on the lasting effects, see Michael J. Allen, *Until the Last Man Comes Home: POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: how Americans are Seduced by War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁸ *Republican Party Platform of 1968*. August 5, 1968. [Online] <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=25841> Last accessed January 30, 2013.

The 1972 election platform saw much of the same rhetoric, but it also captured the zeal of George Wallace, the American Independent Party candidate. Wallace, the former Alabama governor, captured the discontent expressed in the white backlash to the Civil Rights movement. Though Jim Crow was the prerogative of the South, Wallace's politics had found popularity with blue collar workers around the country. He managed to capture five states, including Arkansas, in the 1968 election with his fiery rhetoric and anti-hippie, racist messages. Nixon took note and employed the same tactics, only more subtly. Furthermore, studies produced in the wake of the 1968 election were of great use to the Nixon reelection team.⁹ Wallace's challenge testified to popular opposition, spreading particularly in the South, to the multicultural trends that were emerging most notably among Democratic Party ranks, affected by the new liberal causes. This backlash was to have a profound impact on Fulbright's career. George Wallace ran again in 1972, but fate intervened when a gunman made an attempt on his life. The removal of the Alabama governor from the race delivered Nixon a landslide victory with sixty-two percent of the vote and 520 electoral votes.

The Republican Party grew in popularity in the wake of the turmoil of the 1960s and 1970s, but Democrats still maintained majorities in both the House of Representatives and Senate in all mid-term and general elections. The South still clung to the party of its forefathers, but the faith in liberalism had been broken by the Civil Rights agenda and failure to win in Southeast Asia. With no longer a "Solid South," Democrats and Republicans both competed for the voters in the former Confederacy.

⁹ Kevin Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1969).

Not since his initial election to the United States Senate had J. William Fulbright faced a substantive challenge; 1974 changed that. Dale Bumpers, a relative unknown at the time of Fulbright's 1968 election, emerged as Arkansas's governor in the 1970 election. He completed two consecutive terms as the state's chief executive and emerged with an impressive, moderate reform agenda. The voters were confronted with the tough choice of extending the Democratic nomination to their world-renowned Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman for a sixth time or replacing him with their young, but impressive governor. They chose the latter.

Speculating a Challenge

March 11th marked the official start of the 1974 primary campaign season for Senator Fulbright and Governor Bumpers. Both men had nearly identical platforms; however, there was one departure between the two campaigns in foreign policy: America's role in the Middle East. The two men blazed a trail across the state attempting to show Arkansas voters which of the candidates would best represent the state's interests in Washington. Senator Fulbright ran on his prestigious record in the United States Senate, citing that his near thirty years in Congress had awarded him valuable power that he in turn used to influence policies that benefitted Arkansans. Governor Bumpers, relatively inexperienced in national politics, ran on his short, yet impressive, four-year record as Arkansas' chief executive. The two men spent the spring months vying for voters' support, exchanging jabs at each other's positions. The Democratic primary campaign season, however, unofficially began before March.

Speculation for Fulbright's potential primary opponents began circulating in the final months of 1973. In October, a newspaper article reported that former Arkansas governor Sid McMath briefly considered opposing Fulbright, but instead opted to aid any politician interested

in defeating the senator. McMath traveled to New York City to meet with potential campaign financiers that would be interested in seeing the pro-Arab Fulbright replaced with someone more supportive of Israel. A newspaper confirmed McMath's New York visit and alleged he was seeking funding from wealthy Jewish citizens and organizations. He also met with the former president of the American Jewish Committee to discuss Arkansas politics and the Middle East, yet the topic of funding supposedly did not arise.¹⁰ The *Northwest Arkansas Times* later reported that had McMath decided to enter the primary, his campaign would have focused on attacking Fulbright's stances on American Middle East foreign policy, rather than his Vietnam stance because he believed the latter issue was largely out of Arkansans' minds.¹¹

The rumor of McMath's excursion to New York was not a surprise for Senator Fulbright as he had already heard of pro-Israeli forces attempting to funnel resources to defeat him; but, this was the first election where there was enough potential support for a candidate who might enter the race: current Arkansas Governor Dale Bumpers. Witt Stephens made Fulbright aware that Bumpers had been declared the "chosen man for the Christians and Jews." A word of caution was given to the senator, "this is smoke from a fire that is against you."¹² The *New York Times* even weighed in on the coming election season and published an article on Fulbright's strong primary challenge; the *Times* cited the potential funding from out-of-state interests critical of the junior senator's weak support for Israel.¹³ Furthermore, the *Times* reported that Bumpers

¹⁰ "McMath Meets with Jewish Leaders," Untitled Newspaper, Undated. Fulbright Papers, Series 61, Box 20:3. Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville.

¹¹ "McMath Floats a Balloon," *Northwest Arkansas Times* (Fayetteville, AR), October 22, 1973.

¹² Witt Stephens of Investment Bankers to J. William Fulbright, December 14, 1973. Fulbright Papers, Series 61, Box 18:2.

¹³ "Fulbright Facing Strong Contest," *New York Times* (New York, NY), February 4, 1974.

would provide the most substantial and legitimate challenge to Fulbright. The report was prior to the Arkansas governor giving any indication of his decision to enter the fray.

Arkansas newspapers also speculated on the upcoming primary; many predicted Governor Bumpers would be the man to provide the most legitimate challenge. The *Arkansas Gazette* began running speculative stories as early as November 1973. It published a report on a poll conducted by political science students at the University of Arkansas Little Rock. The students asked 136 Pulaski County residents an open question of who they would vote for in the upcoming primary and found that fifty-five percent would vote for Governor Bumpers, while Senator Fulbright garnered only twenty-five percent. The group also responded the questions of satisfaction with their elected representatives. Again, Bumpers's had a decisive advantage over Senator Fulbright, seventy-two to fifty-one percent. When asked for specific likes or dislikes in candidates, most had no comment; however, of those that did respond, twice as many "mentioned a specific dislike for Fulbright." In addition to Bumpers's popularity, Arkansas' state government was rated much more efficient and effective than the United States'; this was tied to the Watergate scandal, which penalized Nixon: only twenty-one percent of those polled thought the president was doing a positive job.¹⁴ Despite the limited sampling size, the findings of the poll are significant considering Bumpers had given virtually no indication of his plans to run for the Senate. The poll also came on the heels of the Yom Kippur War and Fulbright's unpopular support for the Arab countries. At the beginning of 1974, the *Arkansas Democrat* began speculating that this would be Fulbright's final campaign, and that Bumpers would

¹⁴ "UALR Poll Indicates Bumpers Could Win Race With Fulbright," *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock, AR), November 21, 1973.

probably be his primary challenger.¹⁵ Speculation over the contest gave way to growing certainty as the primary's March filing deadline approached.

Reports on the primaries coincided with increasing coverage of the Middle East conflict. News stories covering the Arab oil embargo were especially prominent in late 1973 and early 1974. The Organization of Arab Petrol Exporting Countries had announced an embargo on crude oil exports to Western countries during the October War, blaming the cuts in petroleum production on Israeli "aggression" and continued American support of the Jewish state.¹⁶ Senator Fulbright agreed with the premise and had argued since the announcement of production cuts that a change in American policy and a settlement favorable to all parties were crucial to ending the embargo.¹⁷ The embargo and subsequent increase in energy costs, however, were constant reminders to Arkansans of the effect the Arab-Israeli conflict had on their pocketbooks; with the average income of Arkansans at \$6,500, people were already struggling financially without the rise in gas and heating prices.¹⁸ Reports in Arkansas newspapers linked the skyrocketing prices and tremendous oil company profits to the obstructionist petroleum-producing Arab countries and blamed them for the continued decrease in production. Orientalist themes of Arab decadence and greed were tied to leaders such as King Faisal of Saudi Arabia and "Moammar Khadafy" [sic] of Libya in the wake of reports of their mounting oil wealth.¹⁹

¹⁵ "Bumpers-Fulbright Race Possible," *Arkansas Democrat* (Little Rock, AR), January 6, 1974.

¹⁶ Rüdiger Graf, "Making Use of the 'Oil Weapon': Western Industrialized Countries and Arab Petropolitics in 1973-1974," *Diplomatic History* 36, no. 1 (January 2012): 185-186.

¹⁷ "Middle East Solution Vital in Crisis, Fulbright Says," *Arkansas Gazette*, December 7, 1973; "Middle East Peace Critical to US Economy," *Arkansas Gazette*, February 3, 1974.

¹⁸ Jim Ranchino, *Faubus to Bumpers: Arkansas Votes, 1960-1970* (Arkadelphia, AR: Action Research, Inc., 1972), 9-10.

¹⁹ "Oil Cheating is Charged," *Arkansas Democrat*, January 21, 1974; "Profits Outrun Sales in Big Oil," *Arkansas Democrat*, January 23, 1974; "Israeli-US Relations & Big Oil Write Offs,"

But Orientalist messages did not stop with linkages to decadence and greed; they saturated reports of ongoing conflict in the Middle East and portrayed the Israelis and the Arabs very differently. Whether intentionally or not, Arkansas newspapers were mimicking the style of 1920s and 1930s national reports on Palestinian tensions. Again, Israelis were portrayed as a besieged, modern people constantly under attack by barbaric Arabs. This theme ran concurrent through the Yom Kippur War and the 1974 election cycle. Constant references to “Arab terrorism” and “guerilla raids” were juxtaposed against Israel’s “western society” merely protecting its borders. Arkansas news readers saw these references throughout the campaign season; they also saw their senator arguing for peace settlements with more “favorable” conditions for the Arab “aggressors.”²⁰ Despite the “barbarism” of the Arabs, America needed Middle East oil, and the only way to gain access, Fulbright argued, was through negotiated settlement.²¹

Secretary of State Kissinger’s negotiations with Arab, Israeli, and Russian ambassadors figured prominently in the Arkansas newspaper headlines. Senator Fulbright praised the Secretary’s attempts at negotiating peace; furthermore, he highlighted his personal involvement in the formation of American foreign policy. The cooperation between Kissinger and Fulbright was seemingly corroborated when, on February 15, the secretary of state visited the senator in Little Rock. The visit was received with mixed feelings by Arkansans; some suggested it was

Arkansas Democrat, January 31, 1974; “Arabs May Take Over US Oil Firm,” *Arkansas Democrat*, February 12, 1974; “Arabs Postpone Oil Talks,” *Arkansas Democrat*, February 13, 1974.

²⁰ “Arab Terrorism Taking Heavy Toll on Western Society,” *Arkansas Democrat*, March 18, 1974; “Arab Suicide Raid Kills 18,” *Arkansas Democrat*, April 11, 1974; “Syrian Patrol Crosses Lines,” *Arkansas Gazette*, February 16, 1974; “Arab Guerilla Raid Kills 16 Children,” *Arkansas Gazette*, May 16, 1974. The previous articles provide coverage for Orientalist messages.

²¹ “Fulbright Decries Middle East Policy,” *Arkansas Gazette*, February 11, 1973.

merely a politically motivated visit aimed at reminding voters of their junior senator's prominence in the upper echelons of American government.²² Kissinger's meeting may have had an adverse effect, subconsciously connecting Senator Fulbright with the current presidential administration's Watergate scandal and the Washington "Establishment." Still, others believed Kissinger's visit was more sinister in nature and alleged that the secretary had met in secret with Arkansas Jewish leaders and urged them to aid in the removal of Fulbright due to his continued criticism of United States Middle East policy.²³ Soon, Bumpers would announce his candidacy and officially begin the primary campaign season.

The 1974 Arkansas Primary Election

Bumpers' announcement to run for Fulbright's seat on March 11th was met with opinions of both criticism and praise. Senator Fulbright was one of the first to weigh in releasing a statement that voiced regret for the governor's decision but noted that it would be an especially difficult campaign. In the same release, the incumbent also pointed out that one of the biggest differences between the two campaigns was American Middle Eastern policy. Governor Bumpers was inexperienced in national affairs compared to Senator Fulbright's thirty years.²⁴ The governor cried foul at the senator's charges of inexperience and criticized Fulbright for focusing on foreign policy rather than domestic issues. Bumpers responded with the lamentation of the tradition of seniority in the United States Senate and argued that tenure should not

²² "Kissinger Makes Stop at LR, Meets Fulbright at Airport," *Arkansas Gazette*, February 16, 1974.

²³ Interview with Randall B. Woods, Fayetteville, AR, October 8, 2010. The information discussed in the interview is based on documentation that Randall Woods has done. The document resides with him.

²⁴ "Bumpers to Seek Seat of Fulbright, Cites State Service," *Arkansas Gazette*, March 12, 1974

guarantee a leadership position.²⁵ Furthermore, Bumpers pointed to Americans' disgruntled feelings towards their government and claimed that they were longing for someone to "rekindle their spirit" in their elected officials.²⁶ He wanted to regrow the trust between the people and their lawmakers that had been prevalent in the years immediately following World War II. Bumpers, aware or not, had touched on the very spirit of the national conservative movement. The racial, economic, and cultural problems facing Americans in the 1970s were detrimental to the liberal establishment; this did not bode well for Senator Fulbright.

Arkansas newspapers also found the governor's announcement surprising and were apprehensive about Bumpers's decision to challenge Senator Fulbright. The editors of the *Arkansas Gazette* believed Bumpers looked to unseat a man that had boosted the image and position of Arkansas in America and the world. The *Arkansas Democrat* also reported its surprise at Governor Bumpers's announcement and noted Senator Fulbright's legislative record of helping Arkansans. The *Democrat* further noted that Bumpers had no differences in platform aside from American foreign relations, an area in which Senator Fulbright was much more experienced. The two newspapers clearly saw Fulbright as the man with enough prestige and power to help Arkansans at home and abroad, and therefore the best candidate for the state.²⁷

A poll conducted in Northwest Arkansas prior to the primary season reported the top issues on voters' minds.²⁸ General distrust in government was the top return due to the Watergate scandal and the release of the Pentagon Papers. Fulbright's long-time membership in

²⁵ Article, *Rogers Daily News* (Rogers, AR), March 12, 1974.

²⁶ "Bumpers Cites Leadership Call," *Arkansas Gazette*, March 13, 1974.

²⁷ "Historic Challenge," *Arkansas Democrat*, March 12, 1974.

²⁸ Opinion Survey & Research Consultants, Inc. to J. William Fulbright, November, 13 1973. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Series 61, Box 1:1.

the Washington establishment hurt his image when compared to the young and untainted Dale Bumpers. Next on the list were problems that Fulbright believed he could help solve: the energy crisis, inflation, and the Middle East. In Fulbright's mind, all three issues were linked to United States Middle East foreign policy. His solutions were the same as they had always been: move toward a more balanced American Middle East policy and rely on the United Nations to enact peace in the world.²⁹ Fulbright believed a true internationalist approach in the Middle East relations would allow the United Nations to impose a lasting peace. Peace in the Middle East and stronger faith in the United Nations would have a domino effect in the United States: a reduced need for military aid, lower budget costs, access to energy supplies, smaller tax burdens, and improved living standards. Only through peace in the Middle East could these objectives be accomplished. His faith in multilateral internationalism had not waned, and it remained a staple in his platform.

The subsequent campaign season showed no stark contrasts between the candidates' platforms; they took the same position on nearly every issue. Both Senator Fulbright and Governor Bumpers were considered friends to labor, though neither gained a formal declaration of support.³⁰ Both supported general governmental aid to help Arkansas education systems and had overwhelming support from state educators.³¹ Both men talked about curbing growth in inflation and cost of living, citing that cuts to the federal budget would greatly reduce expenditures leveled on Arkansas tax payers. While Fulbright looked to cut the defense budget to lower economic pressures on Arkansas voters, Bumpers called for tax reform. Regardless of

²⁹ J. William Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power* (New York: Random House, 1966), 20-21; J. William Fulbright, *The Price of Empire* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), 177-184.

³⁰ Harold T. Smith, "J. William Fulbright and the Arkansas 1974 Senatorial Election," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 44, No. 2 (Summer 1985): 115.

³¹ "Both Bumpers, Fulbright Back Education Plan," *Arkansas Gazette*, April 13, 1974.

the route the candidate took to stem inflation, the end result of both was intended to help Arkansans by maintaining a strong connection between federal and local funds.³² The disagreement over the defense budget, however, reflected a difference between the two candidates over foreign policy, highlighting Bumpers's criticism of the internationalist approach championed by his opponent.

With virtually identical campaign platforms on domestic themes, the primary season quickly became mired in irrelevant talking points and non-issues. Bumpers continued calling for new leadership in Washington, balanced budgets, and the reorganization of the congressional seniority system; Fulbright labeled these issues as generally unimportant topics. Campaign finance became a small area of contention. Senator Fulbright accepted donations from all contributors. The persistent rumors of Jewish donations to aid Bumpers led the governor to announce limitations on contributions, taking only in-state funds of \$1,000 or less.³³ This limitation, however, did not stop the possibility of political special interest groups mounting their own campaigns. Bumpers acceptance of only local and limited contributions, however, did award him the image of being a man of the people and anti-elite. Fulbright's contributions, on the other hand, were taken as further evidence that his concerns were not those of every-day Americans. B'nai B'rith, an international organization committed to the security of the Jewish people, supposedly contributed heavily to unseat Senator Fulbright.³⁴ Jeannie Whayne has argued that even the Nixon administration donated funds to Arkansas groups to aid Governor

³² "Senatorial Candidates: Cut Spending," *Arkansas Democrat*, April 17, 1974.

³³ "All Donations to be Open by Fulbright," *Arkansas Gazette*, March 23, 1974; "Bumpers Wants Arkansas Money," *Arkansas Democrat*, March, 22, 1974.

³⁴ Paul Findley, *They Dare to Speak Out: people and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1989), 96. Findley cites a confidential memo from the national board of directors which claims the organization's support for Bumpers will result in the ousting of Mr. Fulbright.

Bumpers defeat Senator Fulbright simply because of his Middle East policy.³⁵ As the campaign season took shape, it became clear that Senator Fulbright's stance on the Palestinian conflict and faith in multilateral, multicultural internationalism was his predominant weakness.

In May, newspaper ads began to appear. Bumpers's ads took various stances on the oil lobby, defense spending, and Senator Fulbright's campaign platform. His first ad outlined a brief plan to curb the mounting inflation problem in the United States by balancing the budget. Another expressed concern for the power the oil lobby held in Congress. This was an obvious jab at Senator Fulbright who had often been accused of being in the oil lobby's pocket. The advertisement blamed the Arab sheiks for the current oil embargo, finding no fault in Israeli or the United States policies. Bumpers, against Fulbright's repeated appeals for lower military expenses, reiterated the need to maintain a strong defense budget, stating that America's military should never become second to any other country, another subtle jab at Fulbright who advocated reducing the defense budget.³⁶ Lastly, Bumpers raised the issue of supporting Israel in an ad that was featured in the *Northwest Arkansas Times* on May 24th. The governor believed it was America's moral duty to provide as much aid and support as Israel may need to protect itself. The governor thus fully cast his position on this issue in stark contrast to Fulbright's.³⁷ The senator's newspaper ads portrayed a different theme stressing the overall importance of the

³⁵ Jeannie M. Wayne, *Arkansas: a Narrative History* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2002), 386; Interview with Randall B. Woods, October 8, 2010. Wayne mentions in passing the connection between Nixon funding Arkansas groups to unseat Fulbright.

³⁶ Bumpers Campaign Ad, *Arkansas Gazette*, May 17-21, 1974. Bumpers support for a strong military is much more consistent with a southern political tradition during the 1970s. In this respect, he was echoing the military policies of Richard B. Russell (D-GA), a prominent southern senator. For more on Richard B. Russell, see Jeff Woods, *Richard B. Russell: Southern Nationalism and American Foreign Policy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007).

³⁷ Bumpers Campaign Ad, *Northwest Arkansas Times* (Fayetteville, AR), May 24, 1974.

election to voters. His full page advertisements often ran with the headline, “It’s more than just a popularity contest. It’s the most crucial election in America.” The senator’s message was consistent in every ad: only Fulbright could stand up for the people of Arkansas in Congress and achieve their legislative desires.

Despite Fulbright’s best efforts to put the governor on the defensive, Bumpers was able to avoid direct attacks on issues. Fulbright, in response, challenged the governor to a series of televised debates. Bumpers declined at first, enjoying a considerable lead in the polls. As his lead slipped, however, he consented to debate the senator, but their meeting was to be a one-time event. The debate aired on *Issues and Answers* the Sunday before the election. Bumpers maintained his strategy of speaking to non-issues; much to Fulbright’s chagrin, he was forced to do the same. When he attempted to incite discussion on substantive issues, Bumpers met him with generalities. Viewers who saw the debate interpreted the governor as calm and collected; Fulbright’s actions were more aggressive.³⁸ With the campaign reaching full steam and the reiteration of the respective platforms in the debate, speeches, and newspaper ads during the final days, the stage was set for the May 28th election.

Election Day arrived with polls showing Bumpers enjoying a slight advantage over the incumbent senator, although most of the state’s local and large newspapers predicted a close Fulbright victory. The only major difference in the two candidates’ platforms was the issue of American Middle East policy. Many Arkansans saw a connection between the oil-owning Arab sheiks and the “corrupt” American petroleum lobby as the causation for rising living costs,

³⁸ Smith, “J. William Fulbright and the 1974 Senatorial Election,” 115; Woods, *Fulbright*, 668-669.

inflation, and conflict in the Middle East.³⁹ The senator's continued backing of the Arabs and his attacks on the "Zionist lobby" confirmed popular perceptions that he opposed Israel's interests and, intentionally or not, he favored appeasement of international Communism.⁴⁰ Compounding these perceptions were the shattering of trust in Cold War internationalism and the efforts of pro-Israeli forces (both in and out of state) working to unseat the senator; the perfect political storm was taking shape in Arkansas. Governor Bumpers was free from identification with the Washington establishment and Arab lobby and was perceived as a friend of Israel (or at least friendlier than Fulbright).⁴¹ Now, the largely Democratic majority of Arkansas voters had a clear and suitable alternative to Senator Fulbright, a choice they did not pass up.

After the dust had settled in one of the greatest primary elections in Arkansas history, the voters made their dissatisfaction with Fulbright's divisive stances known. The senator suffered a crushing defeat, with over sixty-five percent of the vote going to the young governor from Charleston, Arkansas. With his victory, Bumpers had accomplished the near impossible skyrocketing from small town lawyer in 1970 to the Arkansas governorship for two terms and then defeated one of the most powerful senators in the United States Senate in the 1974 primary.

³⁹ Editorial on Arab Shrewdness, *Arkansas Gazette*, February 24, 1974.

⁴⁰ "Emotional Support for Israel Harmful, Fulbright Declares," *Arkansas Gazette*, May 22, 1974; "Bumpers Unaware of Position on Israel, Fulbright Declares," *Arkansas Gazette*, May 25, 1974; "Bumpers Campaigns Hard Against Fulbright," *Arkansas Gazette*, May 26, 1974; Elijah Palnick to J. William Fulbright, October 8, 1973. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 41:1; Cole Pryor to J. William Fulbright, December 14, 1973. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Series 48: 15, Box 41:2; Richard Schuster to J. William Fulbright, January 6, 1974. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 41:3; Ralph Cooksey to J. William Fulbright, March 1974. Letter, Ibid. See also: Steven L. Spiegel, *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: making America's Middle East Policy, from Truman to Reagan* (Chicago, University Press of Chicago, 1985), 8; Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Knopf, 2012), 539-562.

⁴¹ "Jewish Leaders Seek '74 Opponents for Fulbright," *Arkansas Democrat*, October 19, 1973. Woods, *Fulbright*, 665.

Fulbright's Defeat in Regional and National Contexts

Fulbright's defeat spoke to several national and regional political developments that had transpired in the previous ten years. The Vietnam War had done irreversible damage to American liberalism. The release of the Pentagon Papers in 1971 marked the death of the enterprise. Fulbright had been instrumental in the passage of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution; he was also one of the first Democrats to disown the Vietnam War. This spoke to the larger liberal movement to disassociate itself from fighting international communism, which the senator did as well. Nixon's initial desire for détente, for all its instrumentality, ostensibly fit with the liberal foreign policy ideals; for sure, for a short time, it restored public faith in U.S. foreign policy and the centralized way in which it was conducted. But the Watergate scandal soon broke all faith in the Nixon administration's international strategies. The result was a national shift toward a new brand of conservatism that opposed the realist and the liberal interpretations of détente and internationalism. Conservative candidates eventually filled the seats Democrats had once held; even among Democratic ranks, voters elected a majority of politicians who were not connected to Vietnam or Watergate, and who did not represent new liberal currents in domestic politics. Dale Bumpers fit this bill for Arkansans in 1974; Jimmy Carter would fit that bill for Americans in 1976.⁴²

The shattering of Cold War liberalism extended past the Vietnam War for J. William Fulbright's constituents. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman had argued time and again for a more balanced American Middle East policy and pushed for increased faith in the

⁴² Brands, *The Strange Death of American Liberalism*, 108-128; J. William Fulbright, *The Crippled Giant: American Foreign Policy and its Consequences* (New York: Random House, 1972), 132-133.

United Nations to settle international disputes, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict. To him, tensions in the region were exacerbated by the continued interference of Cold War power politics; however, trust in Fulbright's espousal of multilateral settlements ran counter to the American South's traditional support of unilateral intervention. Coupled with America's affection for Israel and the Jewish people, Fulbright's troubled stance on the Arab-Israeli conflict revealed broader problems about his general position on the staying Cold War, and about the style of foreign policy he advocated, with repercussions also on his domestic liberal vision. Fulbright thus stood little chance to persuade voters to follow his lead. The campaign did more than just identify his positions with multilateral, multiculturalist internationalism (which in themselves would have caused his campaign considerable trouble); in addition, his rhetoric was lost amid the inflammatory charges of anti-Semitism, anti-Americanism, and pro-Communism. The public's trust in Cold War liberalism was rapidly fading by the early 1970s, as was any faith in the Democratic politicians' foreign policy stances.

Andrew Preston has argued that Nixon inherited an America on the verge of a collective nervous breakdown; the resulting conservative surge led to the 1970s being referred to as the "Third Great Awakening." The liberal reforms of the Sixties gave way to conservative counter-reformations, of which fundamentalist religious revival was a major component. In the South, fundamentalist congregations grew nearly twenty-five percent, while more moderate and progressive churches shrunk by fifteen percent. The growth in ultra-conservative Baptists culminated in the fundamentalist capture of Southern Baptist Convention in 1979, and a reversal of the Social Gospel-oriented doctrines it had pursued since the 1940s. The growth of political and social fundamentalists brought new elements to foreign policy debates. They were vehemently opposed to multilateral actions, governmental interferences, and détente. When

blended together, Preston argued, the “Christian conservative worldview, patriotism, local autonomy, and anti-statism combined to produce an implacable hostility to international organizations and multilateral institutions.”⁴³ The stunning victories by Israel in 1967 and 1973 were seen as Premillennialist prophecies coming to fruition, and any attempts to interfere or stop the total fulfillment of biblical promise were met with vitriol, especially in the South.⁴⁴ As a result, Christian Zionism, anti-Islamism, and anti-Arabism became dominant themes in Americans’ views on conflict in the Middle East.⁴⁵

Fulbright suffered not only from America’s fading faith in multilateralism, but also from the nation’s religious transformation and growing attachment to Israel and its people. Arkansans, both Jewish and Christian, had been reminding the senator of their sympathy for the people of Israel since the eruption of hostilities in 1967, and persisted through 1974. The Little Rock Chapter of Hadassah had reminded him of their disdain for his statements on *Face the Nation* following the outbreak of the October War.⁴⁶ The Baptist Missionary Association of Arkansas had reminded him of the group’s affection for the Israel.⁴⁷ The senator had been

⁴³ Quoted in Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith*, 555. Soviet-backing of Arabs in the two Palestinian conflicts aligned the two in the eyes of Americans; therefore, denouncing Communism and Arabism in the Middle East were one in the same.

⁴⁴ Zev Chafets, *A Match Made in Heaven: American Jews, Christian Zionists, and One Man’s Exploration of the Weird and wonderful Judeo-Evangelical Alliance* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007). Chafets’s book is largely anecdotal and contemporary, but his interactions with Christian Zionists throughout his life provide a better understanding of the Orietnalist perspectives that still persisted through the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries.

⁴⁵ Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith*, 539-562.

⁴⁶ Little Rock Chapter of Hadassah to J. William Fulbright, October 8, 1973. Telegram, Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 40:5.

⁴⁷ Baptist Missionary Association to J. William Fulbright, November 7, 1973. Letter, Fulbright Papers, Series 48:15, Box 41:1. The letter was sent from Leon Carmical, the clerk of the Baptist Missionary Association. At the time of the letter, the Association was comprised of over 300 churches in the state. Jim Ranchino has noted that the average Arkansas voter in the early 1970s was predominantly Baptist. Ranchino, *Faubus to Bumpers*, 9.

warned by Witt Stephens, long-time Fulbright supporter and confidant, prior to the campaign season that Dale Bumpers was the “chosen man for Christians and Jews.”⁴⁸ And, as the primary season wore on, it seemed as if both in- and out-of-state pro-Israeli forces were gathering to help unseat the man espousing multilateral action that favored enemies of the Jews and America.

The national movement away from the liberal internationalist agenda also had an effect on Arkansas politics. Dale Bumpers, prior to running for the Senate, had been governor for four years. During this time, he compiled an impressive, moderate reform agenda. His predecessor, Winthrop Rockefeller, had attracted African-American voters to the Republican Party by naming them to state agencies and commissions. Bumpers had extended this policy further. He also streamlined the Arkansas bureaucracy and consolidated the agencies that reported to him. The governor reformed the income-tax structure to make it more progressive and increased the rates on the wealthiest Arkansans from five to seven percent. Overall, his reforms created a \$100 million surplus in the state budget. Bumpers then resisted pressure from various interest groups to redistribute the surplus. His political style spoke to his personal moral code. It granted him “common-man” appeal; this was exacerbated in the contest with the Rhodes Scholar and world-renown J. William Fulbright. Bumpers was concerned with the domestic issues facing Americans and did not harp on the virtues of international cooperation.⁴⁹ He instead spoke in favor of outfitting the American military with any requests to keep them as the best equipped force in the world, as much as he emphasized the need for new leadership in Washington. These

⁴⁸ Witt Stephens of Investment Bankers to J. William Fulbright, December 14, 1973. Fulbright Papers, Series 61, Box 18:2.

⁴⁹ Timothy P. Donovan, Willard B. Gatewood, and Jeannie M. Whayne, ed., *The Governors of Arkansas: essays in Political Biography* (Fayetteville, AR; University of Arkansas Press, 1995), 246-253; Ben F. Johnson, III, *Arkansas in Modern American, 1930-1999* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2000), 170-173.

accomplishments and positions toed a very thin, moderate line. Voters responded by awarding him the Democratic Party's nomination and an overwhelming victory in the general election.⁵⁰

At first glance, Bumpers victory seemingly destroys notion of the “death of liberalism,” but closer inspection reveals that the governor's election to the U.S. Senate aligns perfectly. The breaking of trust in liberal internationalism seeped into the American domestic political realm as well. Officials identified as part of the establishment were now viewed with skepticism as a direct result of the breaking of faith in liberalism. The American people, Arkansans included, welcomed those that were perceived as being outsiders, or non-elites. Dale Bumpers, despite being the more liberal in domestic politics than Senator Fulbright, was seen in this light. It undoubtedly aided Arkansas voters when deciding who to award the Democratic Party nomination to in May 1974.

Conclusion

The 1960s and early 1970s was an era of upheaval second only to the American Civil War. The United States saw the rejection of nearly thirty years of domestic and international progressive policy. The Civil Rights, the controversies (from the right and the left) over the Great Society, and the anti-Vietnam War movements had fractured the country and divided Americans on issues of race, economics, foreign policy, and culture. This was especially true in the American South, which had long been a Democratic Party stronghold, but the mid-1960s Civil Rights legislation started the irreversible erosion of support for the liberal internationalist agenda. Great Society programs were seen as overreaches of the American government and

⁵⁰ Dewey Grantham, *The Life and Death of the Solid South* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1988), 180-181.

counter to classical liberal ideals of laissez-faire and anti-statism. The Vietnam conflict and the eventual anti-war movement that followed found less reception in the South than in the other regions of the country. But if anything, failures in Vietnam compounded the traditional mistrust most southerners nurtured toward a strong executive and a pervasive federal government. For all these reasons, the once “Solid South” began to move away from the liberal agenda and toward the Republican Party.⁵¹

J. William Fulbright suffered defeat in the 1974 Arkansas primary as a direct result of the national political developments of the 1960s and 1970s. His Civil Rights voting record was not of concern since he had always been racist, but not to the extent of his congressional colleagues from the South.⁵² Voters were concerned, however, with his positions on foreign policy, and, more specifically in the immediate electoral context of 1973-74, with his views on American Middle East foreign policy. His support of the United Nations’ recommendations on settling the Arab-Israeli dispute was in direct violation of traditional southern unilateralist, ethnocentric, and religious perspectives in world affairs. Granting the United Nations power stripped some level of sovereignty from America and put it in the hands of a non-Western, non-white majority. This was also taken as an abandonment of Israel and support of the Communist-backed Arabs.

⁵¹ Joseph A. Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad: the South and U.S. Foreign Relations, 1789-1973* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 268-272; Dewey Grantham, *The South in Modern America: a Region at Odds* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 303.

⁵² Randall B. Woods, “Dixie’s Dove: J. William Fulbright, the Vietnam War and the American South,” *The Journal of Southern History* 60, no. 3 (Aug., 1994): 538-540. Woods argues that Fulbright was a racist in that he saw African-Americans as inferior to whites, and contended that no amount of legislation could remedy the situation. This is not to say that Fulbright harbored a visceral hatred toward African-Americans. The only remedy for the racial situation in America, in his opinion, was to provide education funding; integration, he suggested, would work itself out in the end.

Arkansans ignored Fulbright's appeals of true internationalist doctrine and unseated him in the primary election.

Conclusion

J. William Fulbright's defeat heralded the end of an era not just in Arkansas, but in the United States as well. The growth of Americans' trust in the state, the "success" of internationalism, and, to a lesser extent, reconciliation with the Soviet Union ebbed and flowed with J. William Fulbright's rise to power in the Senate. He served Arkansans, Americans, and world citizens for thirty years in the United States Senate. Over that time, he elevated the prestige of Arkansas and its citizens not only in the United States, but the world as well. His reputation as the most prominent internationalist in the U.S. Senate was cultivated by drafting legislation that would ensure the realization of Woodrow Wilson's dream of America leading an international peacekeeping organization. He fought for the assurance that peoples in developing countries might get the education they needed to choose their own way forward. When U.S. foreign policy seemed to be veering off track, in his opinion, he attempted to push it back on course. He challenged presidents, Democrats and Republicans alike, on a myriad of issues. Much to the chagrin of these presidents, Arkansans continued returning the Rhodes Scholar to the United States Senate. However, his greatest ideal (multilateral, multicultural internationalism) would also be his undoing.

Fulbright accomplished all these things because Arkansans trusted in his belief of liberal, multilateral internationalism. H. W. Brands and Seymour Lipset have argued that the New Deal and World War II inspired a trust in the federal government that, prior to these events, had never existed in the American political tradition. Following the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and World War I, the federal government had always receded to its traditional peacetime size. The embrace of New Deal programs, especially in the South, had preceded further federal expansion

during World War II. Fulbright had first come to Washington in 1943 as a member of the House of Representatives, and then as a Senator in 1945. He wasted little time in building his reputation when he derided fellow Representative Clare Booth Luce for her criticisms of Vice President Wallace's plans for America following World War II. He, like many southerners, believed that America's failure to involve itself in the League of Nations after World War I was a major cause of the then-ongoing Second World War. In Fulbright's opinion, only through international cooperation and the allowance of the peoples to freely develop their own systems of government would the chance for exponentially larger conflicts become negligible. Additionally, the United States must embrace an international organization, rather than turn away as it previously had.¹ To ensure past mistakes were not repeated, Fulbright oversaw the legislative process to put America on record as favoring the creation of such an organization.

Fulbright's early successes did not end with America's inclusion in the United Nations in 1945. A year later, he founded a scholarly exchange program that continues to this day. The senator believed the "exchange of students, the exchange of professors, the translation of books...can contribute as much to the preservation of peace as the control of violence."² Over the next two decades, thousands of scholars from the United States and abroad would engage in this cultural and educational exchange in the hope of bringing understanding both to America and to the numerous countries that participated in the program. In a matter of only three years, the young senator had become one of the leading internationalist voices in the United States.

¹ Randall B. Woods, *Fulbright: a Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 75-76.

² Quoted in Haynes Johnson and Bernard M. Gwetzman, *Fulbright: the Dissenter* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1968), 129.

Fulbright continued his pursuit of true internationalism throughout the 1940s and 1950s and challenged presidents and congressional colleagues alike. The Eisenhower administration was constantly under heavy criticism from Fulbright for various policies, including foreign aid and the Middle East. The 1956 Suez Crisis is of particular interest because it is one of the first instances since the creation of Israel that America became directly involved in the Middle East. However, the Eisenhower administration, unlike its predecessor and successors, remained relatively neutral in the region, placing America's geostrategic interests ahead of domestic political pressures.

The election of John F. Kennedy heralded a shift in American Middle East foreign policy. Whereas Eisenhower had been hesitant to align the United States too closely with Israel, the young Democrat was more receptive to requests from the Jewish state. Warren Bass and Abraham Ben-Zvi have traced the origins of this famous (or infamous) "special relationship" to this time period. Under the Kennedy administration, the United States directly sold weaponry to Israel for the first time. Though the initial sale was for defensive armaments only, it established a precedent of an American-supplied Israeli army. After the initial sale of Hawk missiles in 1962, the aid channel remained open, in part also because Washington tried to prevent Israel from opting for a nuclear armament program; the embattled Jewish state thus received increasing amounts of high-tech weaponry from the United States. The military partnership solidified the special relationship, which kept growing into its contemporary form.

J. William Fulbright was wary of the growing alliance between the United States and Israel. He believed that it would only hurt American interests in the region, namely access to oil

and prestige among the Arab states. But the Johnson administration did little to reverse the growth of the relationship between Israel and the United States.

Meanwhile, the American public's attention was almost solely fixed on the growing conflict in Southeast Asia. While seemingly unrelated to Fulbright's position on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the public reaction to the Vietnam War had a profound impact on the senator's international vision guided by enlightened government elite. For it was the very failure in Vietnam, as H. W. Brands has suggested, that eroded the public's trust in American liberalism altogether. Fulbright voiced his opposition to the Vietnam War in 1966 and began holding televised investigations in the Senator Foreign Relations Committee. Though many applauded his efforts to bring the truth about Vietnam to the American people, some still linked his dissent with pro-communism and anti-Americanism. When war broke out in the Middle East in 1967, it caught many Americans unawares. Upon hearing the news, the majority of Americans sympathized with Israel; such was the case with many Arkansans, who saw the Jewish country embattled and fighting for its life. The decisive victory of Israel did little to change the opinion of Fulbright's constituents, who kept urging him to support legislative efforts to aid the one democratic country in the Middle East. Arkansans referenced the orientalist rhetoric that had found its most popular expression in the United States some forty years prior. The cease-fire and subsequent UN peace resolution came as a shock to many Americans, and, of course, Arkansans were no exception. Senator Fulbright, on the other hand, welcomed the United Nations' call to trade "land for peace." His advocacy for a multilateral peace settlement negotiated through an international body comprised of non-Western, non-Christian countries, however, was widely interpreted as being soft on communism. This charge became common during Fulbright's final years in office.

The change in American presidential administrations did not draw Arkansans' attentions away from the strife in the Holy Land, nor did it fundamentally change U.S. Middle East foreign policy. President Richard Nixon named William Rogers as Secretary of State, an appointment gladly welcomed by Senator Fulbright. Early in his tenure, Secretary Rogers drafted his own plan for peace in the Middle East, which mirrored UN Resolution 242. Fulbright voiced his support for the Rogers Plan, but predicted that his stance would be received with disdain by his constituents. He was right. Correspondence poured into the senator's Washington office, lambasting his "absurd" position. He responded in his usual manner, promoting the need for a fair and just peace for Israelis and Arabs negotiated by the United Nations. Still, many of his constituents and other American citizens depicted his support of multilateral internationalism as anti-Semitic and pro-communist. Pressed by criticism, Fulbright drafted his own plan for peace in the Middle East. It promised unilateral action by the United States should Israel's sovereignty be broken. In order to obtain this guarantee, Israelis and Arabs must agree to his "land for peace" offers. They did not.

War again erupted in the Middle East in October 1973, and again Senator Fulbright differed from his constituents, arguing that the Israeli lobby now had the ear of up to eighty senators. His charge was met with derision and anger not just in Arkansas, but across America, as well. He had weathered the storm of his "anti-Israeli" sentiments following the June War of 1967 and won re-election in 1968. His victory amid scandal most likely had to do with the fact that the public's faith in American liberalism had not yet broken. The conflict in 1973 was a different story. The United States had been embarrassed by its involvement in Vietnam, and scandals such as the Pentagon Papers in 1971 and Watergate in 1973 had weakened Americans' faith in the state. Arkansans viewed these scandals as further proof of the inherent flaws of

centralized power; although a majority of them had supported Nixon, they may have seen the Republican president's détente with Russia and China with mixed feelings. Particularly relevant for them was the fact that their long-time senator supported these foreign policy initiatives, while he was also denouncing Israeli militarism. The rising political and religious conservatism of the South and of the U.S. in general rushed to fill the vacuum left by the collapse of American liberalism. J. William Fulbright's next election would have been a difficult one, regardless of the opponent he might have to face. The announcement of the popular, "outsider" governor Dale Bumpers put the final nail in J. William Fulbright's proverbial coffin.

The defeat of J. William Fulbright in 1974 signaled the beginning of a conservative resurgence in America's internationalist aspirations. For the rest of the decade, American politics still seemed in limbo. Americans elected Jimmy Carter in 1976 as an "outsider" to the Beltway. In the meantime, the conservative countermovement continued to gain power. The Moral Majority was founded in 1979, the same year the Southern Baptist Convention was overtaken by fundamentalists. The rise of fundamentalist evangelicalism, however, was not a purely southern development; rather, the Religious Right was a national and interdenominational movement. Prior to Dixie's industrial development in the 1950s, many southerners had left the region in search of new opportunities in the North and West. Andrew Preston, summarizing Darren Dochuk, has argued that "this white Southern diaspora then established smaller versions of Southern culture in the rest of the country, from Michigan to California. With the coming of the counterreformation, their values, now nationalized, suddenly became fashionable for Americans who had never lived in the South." And, along with religious faith, southerners

brought their strident anticommunism with them to other areas of the country.³ Jimmy Carter's diplomatic recognition of the People's Republic of China and continued détente with the Soviet Union were seen as fundamentally opposed to American Christian values. By 1980, Christians had had enough of the constant "rejection" of traditional American values.

Enter Ronald Reagan, the former governor of California. He had risen in politics during the early-1960s conservative movement in the Sunbelt and constructed his image as a strident anticommunist, anti-statist, and Christian; and, to top it off, he was an attractive former actor—everything the Religious Right and the Republican Party could hope for in a nominee. Reagan's rhetoric after his election played well with religious conservatives, but he seldom delivered on his cultural campaign promises. He did, however, deliver on his anticommunist promises. His disdain for reconciliation with the Soviet Union reignited the Cold War; furthermore, he framed his actions in religious rhetoric. This was how the Reagan administration mostly conducted its policymaking throughout its tenure. And, toward Israel, Ronald Reagan showed more support than any of his Republican predecessors, confirming a trend that strongly characterized the emerging neo-conservative outlook in foreign policy.

J. William Fulbright's decade-long pursuit for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East did not end after his exit from office. He continued to call attention to the Palestinian cause and Israeli influence in American politics in articles that appeared in the *Washington Post*, the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, and others. But his calls for a balanced approach to U.S. Middle

³ Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Knopf, 2012), 545-546. See also, Darren Dochuk, *From Bible to Sunbelt: Plain-folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2012).

East foreign policy went mostly unheeded.⁴ Fulbright passed away in 1995 never seeing his pursuit of peace in the Middle East realized. The region has remained on the verge of war since Fulbright's exit from the Senate, and it has erupted in conflict from time to time. And yet, America's Middle East backing of the Jewish state has been virtually unchanged. Its relationship with Israel remains as close as ever, and any perceived separation from the existing policies have been met with disdain, as was seen when President Barack Obama realized from public reactions to his suggestion that there needed to be "daylight" between the two countries. In the era of the so-called "war on terrorism," Orientalism, too, continues to pervade American culture. Negative and backward connotations of Arabism and Islam persist, while Israel continues to be cast as a beacon of modernism and Judeo-Christian unity. Only through an understanding of cultures can true peace be had. These changes must begin with education through an exchange of ideas and cultures. There is a program that is known to provide such an exchange. It seems Americans have learned nothing from the Arkansas internationalist since his retirement from the Senate.

⁴ President Bill Clinton attempted to oversee lasting peace in the Middle East with the 1993 Oslo Accords, but these talks were derailed throughout the 1990s.

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