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# NOMINATION OF ELVIS J. STAHR

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## HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES UNITED STATES SENATE EIGHTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION


ON

NOMINATION OF ELVIS J. STAHR, SECRETARY  
OF THE ARMY-DESIGNATE

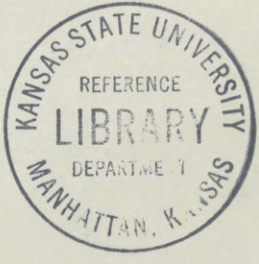
JANUARY 17, 1961

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NOMINATION OF ELVIS A. STARR

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

EIGHTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

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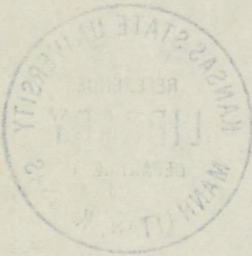
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ELVIS J. STAHR, NOMINEE-DESIGNATE FOR  
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 1961

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,  
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in the caucus room, Old Senate Office Building, Senator Richard B. Russell (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Russell, Byrd of Virginia, Stennis, Symington, Jackson, Thurmond, Engle, Bartlett, Cannon, Byrd of West Virginia, Bridges, Saltonstall, Smith, and Beall.

Also present: Senator Long of Hawaii and Senator Moss of Utah.

William H. Darden, of the committee staff; Harry L. Wingate, Jr., chief clerk; T. Edward Braswell, Gordon Nease, of the committee staff; and Herbert S. Atkinson, assistant chief clerk.

Chairman RUSSELL. The committee will come to order.

This committee has traditionally received testimony from the several military departments by beginning with the Army, since it is the oldest.

That brings us to the designation of Dr. Elvis J. Stahr of West Virginia to be Secretary of the Army.

Dr. Stahr, we are pleased to have you with us this morning. Have a seat, please.

We would like to have you give us a statement of your background and experience.

STATEMENT OF ELVIS J. STAHR, NOMINEE-DESIGNATE FOR  
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

Mr. STAHR. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, you have before you a rather detailed biographical sketch.

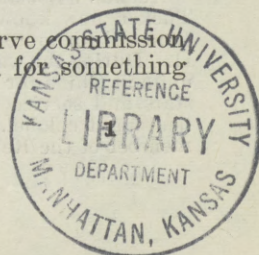
With your permission, I will simply review it in rather summary form.

I was born in a small town on the Mississippi called Hickman on March 9, 1916. I am, therefore, getting close to 45, but I am still 44.

I graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1936. I was awarded a Rhodes scholarship and spent 3 years in England at Oxford reading law.

In 1939, I became associated with a law firm in New York as an associate and obviously a rather junior associate.

In 1941, I was called to active duty under my Reserve commission as a second lieutenant in the Infantry, and I served for something better than 4 years on active duty in World War II.



I finally made the rank of lieutenant colonel about the time the thing was over.

I went back to New York for a year or so, and then I was asked to come back to Kentucky to join the law faculty. This I did and, a year later, I was appointed dean of the law school at the University of Kentucky.

In 1951-52, for about 16 months I was in Washington in a job called Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. At that time Mr. Frank Pace was the Secretary of the Army, and I also was in Washington for 3 or 4 months in 1953 as a consultant when Mr. James P. Mitchell was Assistant Secretary of the Army, as a consultant to him.

In 1954, I was made provost to the University of Kentucky.

In 1956, I left Kentucky to become Executive Director of the President's Committee on Education Beyond the High School.

I was here in Washington in that capacity for about 9 months and left it when the committee's work was essentially concluded.

I went to the University of Pittsburgh as vice chancellor for the professional schools of that university.

February 1, 1959, I became president of West Virginia University, which is the position I now hold.

I am married.

I have three children, the oldest being eight, and the youngest two.

I did not seek this position in any way, but I felt I could not turn down an invitation to serve, if the President-elect and the Secretary-of-Defense-designate felt that I could do a job for my country.

I am, frankly, accepting it at a good deal of personal financial sacrifice, but, assuming that this committee and the Senate confirm the appointment, I can assure you I shall enter upon it wholeheartedly and to the best of my ability.

(The biographical sketch of Mr. Stahr is as follows:)

#### A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE HONORABLE ELVIS J. STAHR, JR.

Elvis J. Stahr, Jr., became the 14th president of West Virginia University on February 1, 1959. He was appointed to the position on August 2, 1958, by the university board of governors.

President Stahr came to West Virginia from the University of Pittsburgh, where he was vice chancellor, the professions, from July 1, 1957 to February 1, 1959.

Prior to going to Pittsburgh in 1957, Mr. Stahr spent about 9 months in Washington as Executive Director of the President's Committee on Education Beyond the High School. He previously had served as both law dean and university provost at the University of Kentucky, his alma mater.

Born in Hickman, Ky, March 9, 1916, Mr. Stahr was graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1936 with grades of straight A for 4 years. He was also cadet colonel of the ROTC unit at Kentucky, president of the senior class, co-captain of varsity tennis and debate, winner of the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Medallion of the New York Southern Society, member of Pershing Rifles and of Scabbard and Blade and several honorary societies. He won a Rhodes scholarship and spent 3 years at Oxford University, where he earned three additional degrees (B.A. in jurisprudence, M.A., and bachelor of civil law). In 1943 he was awarded a diploma in Chinese language by Yale University.

He was associated with the New York law firm of Mudge, Stern, Williams & Tucker, now known as Mudge, Stern, Baldwin & Todd, from 1939 to 1947, with time out for more than 4 years' active duty as an Infantry officer in World War II. During the war, he served overseas for more than 2 years, was with combat units in China for many months, and received five decorations and several battle stars and service ribbons, meanwhile rising in rank from second lieutenant to lieutenant colonel. His efficiency ratings were all "superior." He is presently a member of the Retired Reserve.

In June 1947, Mr. Stahr was appointed associate professor of law at the University of Kentucky, and in 1948, at the age of 32, was promoted to professor and made dean of the college of law. In that same year, he was named one of the "Ten Outstanding Young Men of America" by the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce.

During the Korean conflict he took leave from Kentucky for 16 months in 1951-52 to serve as Special Assistant to Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, Jr. He was awarded the Certificate of Meritorious Civilian Service. He also served as a consultant for several months in 1953 to then Assistant Secretary of the Army James P. Mitchell. In 1954 Dean Stahr was made provost of the University of Kentucky, serving as both provost and law dean until 1956. During his years at Kentucky, he also served as counsel to the president of the university, and as vice chairman of the State's constitution review commission. In 1955 he was chairman of the Governor's committee on rehabilitation of handicapped people.

President Stahr is a member of the bars of New York, Kentucky, and the U.S. Supreme Court. He holds membership in a number of national organizations, including Phi Beta Kappa, the Order of the Coif, Phi Delta Phi, Omicron Delta Kappa, the Association for Higher Education, Sons of the Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, the American Legion, and Sigma Chi Fraternity. As a Kentucky undergraduate, he was winner of the Balfour National Award of Sigma Chi in 1936. Mr. Stahr is a member of the boards of directors of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the First National Bank of Morgantown, and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation of Pittsburgh, and a member of the Board of Visitors of the Air University, Maxwell AFB, Ala. He is also a member of the Southern Regional Education Board and the West Virginia Centennial Commission. He was chairman in 1960 of the Committee on National Defense of the American Association of Land Grant Colleges and State Universities, and recently was appointed to a 4-year term on the American Council on Education's Committee on the Relations of Higher Education to the Federal Government.

He is an elder in the First Christian Church of Morgantown.

He holds honorary degrees from Waynesburg, W. Va., Wesleyan, and Concord Colleges. His father is a Kentucky circuit judge.

Mr. Stahr married Dorothy Howland Berkfield of New York in 1946, and they have three children, a daughter 8, and sons 3 and 2.

Former member:

- American Bar Association
- Association of Bar of City of New York
- American Law Institute
- American Judicature Society
- Institute for Judicial Administration
- Reserve Officers Association of the United States (Keynote speaker, silver anniversary national convention, 1951)
- Various committees, Association of American Law Schools
- AIME (associate member)
- Grand Council, Sigma Chi Fraternity
- DEA
- Kentucky Council on the Handicapped
- Oxford Carlton Club<sup>1</sup>
- Chatham Club<sup>1</sup>
- Connaught Club<sup>1</sup>
- Halsbury Law Society<sup>1</sup>

Additional current memberships:

- Association of American Rhodes Scholars
- Cosmos Club
- Various country and social clubs
- WVEA
- Executive Committee, West Virginia Association College and University Presidents
- Board of directors, Morgantown Chamber of Commerce
- SREB Finance Committee
- Merton Society
- University of Kentucky Alumni Association

<sup>1</sup> While in England.

Chairman RUSSELL. I certainly commend that spirit, Dr. Stahr.

You are ideally qualified by experience and by education to fill this position. I am glad to hear the State of West Virginia is able to pay their college professors so well.

Mr. STAHR. They treated me very well, indeed, sir.

Chairman RUSSELL. Yes, sir.

I congratulate the State and the Government on your willingness to forgo such a large compensation in order to be able to serve.

Mr. STAHR. Thank you, sir.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Bridges?

Senator BRIDGES. No questions.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Stennis?

Senator STENNIS. I have no questions, Mr. Chairman. This is certainly an impressive record you have, Doctor. You will find plenty to do over there at the Pentagon.

Mr. STAHR. Sir, I have no doubt of that.

Senator STENNIS. You heard my remarks to the Secretary of Defense about Army modernization and so-called conventional warfare.

I know that you will give these matters major attention, and I look forward to our contacts with you about it.

Mr. STAHR. Thank you, sir.

Chairman RUSSELL. I would not ask you this, Mr. Secretary, but for the fact that you have had some experience in the Department of Defense.

Have you formed any opinion as to the importance of the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve as components of our national defense?

Mr. STAHR. I have a general opinion on that subject, Mr. Chairman.

I am not, myself, a member of either of those components, except that I am very proud to be a member of the Retired Reserve.

I have been out of touch except just from following things as any citizen would in the press—

Chairman RUSSELL. I don't want to press you on this.

Mr. STAHR. I have been out of touch since 1953, but I am frank to say that I enter upon the job with the idea of doing it as objectively as possible.

But my present feeling is that these components are important to the security of the country.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Saltonstall?

Senator SALTONSTALL. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I have no questions of Dr. Stahr.

I agree with what Senator Stennis has stated, and I hope that as time moves along we will have some recommendations from you and some thoughts on the question of modernization of Army weapons particularly.

It seems to me from my experience last year that that is one of the most fundamental questions before us.

Mr. STAHR. It strikes me as a problem of major importance, sir, and I shall give it major attention, if I am appointed and confirmed.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Symington?

Senator SYMINGTON. Mr. Stahr, based on your record, I would like to congratulate the President-elect and the Secretary of Defense in being able to obtain you for this job.

In my opinion, in many ways the Army has been the forgotten service in recent years. I remember when the present Secretary of the Army came up before this committee, first I think he defended 24 divisions.

I believe the last time he came up, he defended 14; so I would hope that that progress in retrogression is not characteristic of your presentations before this committee because I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the Senator from Mississippi.

I believe that it is very important that we recognize the importance of the Army being properly outfitted for conventional hostilities in case they come, although we hope they do not, but insofar as our Army is concerned, we are scattered around the world already, and I would hope that we can obtain the capacity, number of people, in modernity and mobility to have an Army which more truly represents the current dangers, as I see them.

I look forward to working with you in the promotion of the best interests of the Army.

Mr. STAHR. Thank you, Senator Symington.

I am delighted to hear a statement like that from a man of your own record, sir, with regard to the armed services.

Senator SYMINGTON. I have no further questions, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Smith?

Senator SMITH. Dr. Stahr, will you please tell the committee what your reaction is to the Symington proposal for reorganization of the Department of Defense?

Mr. STAHR. Incredible as it may seem, Senator, I simply have not read it. I have not avoided reading it. This whole thing only came up last Tuesday, and I have been so busy this past week trying to leave things in some kind of order at the university and get up here for this hearing that you would just be surprised how many things I have neglected to do right lately.

Senator SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Jackson?

Senator JACKSON. Mr. Chairman, all I want to say is that I am certainly impressed by Dr. Stahr's record. I am sure he will do an outstanding job.

No questions.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Beall?

Senator BEALL. I have no questions, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Thurmond?

Senator THURMOND. Dr. Stahr, you have a brilliant record and I am sure you will make an able Secretary of the Army. I wish you good luck in your work.

Mr. STAHR. Thank you, sir.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Cannon?

Senator CANNON. Dr. Stahr, I do not believe you have stated whether or not it was your intention to remain as Secretary, if you are appointed, so long as the President desires you in that position.

Would that be your intention?

Mr. STAHR. It is my intention to remain on the job as long as the President and the Secretary of Defense wish me to, and as long as I feel in the depths of my own conscience that I am doing an effective job.

Senator CANNON. Thank you very much.

No further questions.

Chairman RUSSELL. Senator Byrd?

Senator BYRD of West Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I am deeply grateful, first of all, for the opportunity to serve on your distinguished committee.

I am very pleased and grateful, too, that upon the occasion of my first attendance at a committee meeting we have before us the nomination of Dr. Elvis Stahr, president of the West Virginia University, for the position of Secretary of the Army.

My colleague, Senator Randolph, joins me in congratulating Dr. Stahr, and in commending his nomination for the very worthy consideration of the committee. I would like to insert in the record at this point a telegram I received from Senator Randolph.

(The telegram is as follows:)

CHARLESTON, W. VA., January 16, 1961.

HON. ROBERT C BYRD,  
Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C.:

It is a genuine privilege to commend the Honorable Elvis J. Stahr, Jr., to the members of the Armed Services Committee. You and I have agreed that the president of our State university possesses those qualities of creative genius and courage and good conscience which will be his personal strength and the Nation's gain as the Secretary of the Army. I am gratified that you are now a member of the important committee chaired by our distinguished colleague, Senator Richard Russell. I trust it is appropriate for you to express to him and the other committee members my confidence in and my esteem for the man selected by President-elect John F. Kennedy.

JENNINGS RANDOLPH.

Senator BYRD of West Virginia. I think it should be stated, inasmuch as the people in the audience do not have the biographical sketch of Dr. Elvis Stahr, that he was the youngest president ever appointed to that position at West Virginia University.

He is a graduate of the University of Kentucky, where he attained the highest scholastic record ever attained at the undergraduate school.

He is a Rhodes scholar, and he holds three degrees from the University of Oxford in England.

He returned to the University of Kentucky, where he became associate professor of law, and later became professor of law and dean of the college of law.

He has served as a member of a New York law firm, and he has also served, as he has stated, as special assistant to the former Secretary of the Army.

He also served in the Infantry in the Army during World War II, and attained the rank of lieutenant colonel.

We are very proud of Dr. Elvis Stahr in West Virginia. While we regret losing him at the university, we are very happy to receive this recognition which, we think, is deserved from President-elect Kennedy, and we feel that the university's loss will be West Virginia's gain and the Nation's gain and ultimately the university's gain.

Mr. Chairman, we people in West Virginia feel that this selection is meritorious, it is wise, and I commend Dr. Stahr to the committee for its very careful and, I hope, favorable consideration of Dr. Stahr.

I wish to congratulate you and to wish you a very successful and interesting and illustrious tenure in the office of Secretary of the Army.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. STAHR. Thank you, sir.

Chairman RUSSELL. Dr. Stahr, one or two of your stockholdings, though small in quantity, would appear to come in conflict with some of our precedents, and I am sure you would not object to divesting yourself of those.

Mr. STAHR. Sir, despite the fact that those two small holdings in two steel companies—actually, they really belong to my daughter.

Chairman RUSSELL. I had no reference to the Bethlehem Steel, because the sheet shows that that is custodian for your daughter.

Mr. STAHR. The difference is the Bethlehem shares say on their face that I am the custodian and the other one does not, but it is still hers.

I mean her grandfather bought it for her, but it is in my name.

But, despite that, I propose to divest her, frankly, of both of those for so long as I am in the office.

Chairman RUSSELL. You will have to do that on your own responsibility. This committee is not going to take unfair advantage of your daughter.

These stocks are in your name here. I had reference not only to steel, but to the other few shares of oil stocks.

Is that your wife's or yours?

Mr. STAHR. That is entirely my wife's. I did not have anything to do with it. She did not even get the money from me. Her mother gave her the money to buy it.

Chairman RUSSELL. It was not clear from this paper. We will have no difficulty about that.

Mr. STAHR. Yes, sir.

Chairman RUSSELL. I am sure you will render great service to the Nation, Dr. Stahr.

Any further question?

If not, I believe that exhausts our witnesses for the morning, and tomorrow morning we will proceed with the hearing of the Secretaries-designate of the Navy and of the Air Force.

The committee has received letters from Senator Cooper and Congressman Stubblefield regarding Dr. Stahr's nomination that should be made a part of this hearing. I will ask the reporter to insert them at this point:

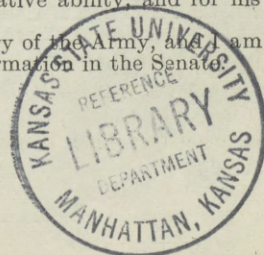
**STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN SHERMAN COOPER IN SUPPORT OF  
THE NOMINATION OF ELVIS J. STAHR, JR., AS SECRETARY OF THE  
ARMY**

Senate Armed Services Committee, January 17, 1961

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I have known the Honorable Elvis J. Stahr, Jr., Secretary of the Army-designate, personally for over 10 years, and before that time was acquainted with his outstanding record as an educator and in various posts in the service of the United States. His brilliant record is before this committee and speaks for itself.

I do want to say that he is held in the highest respect in his native State of Kentucky, for his fine qualities of mind, his administrative ability, and for his integrity.

I am very glad that he has been named to be Secretary of the Army, and I am happy that I shall have the chance to vote for his confirmation in the Senate.



**STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN FRANK A. STUBBLEFIELD IN SUPPORT  
OF THE NOMINATION OF ELVIS J. STAHR, JR., AS SECRETARY OF  
THE ARMY**

**Senate Armed Services Committee, January 17, 1961**

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I have the honor to represent the first district of Kentucky in which is located Hickman, the birthplace and home of the distinguished Secretary of the Army-designate, the Honorable Elvis J. Stahr, Jr.

For me to comment on his brilliance, superior ability, and outstanding record of service to date would be superfluous.

I would like to note for the record, however, that I have followed his career with intense interest and have shared with his father and mother, Judge Elvis J. Stahr of the first judicial district of Kentucky and Mrs. Stahr, the pride that they and everyone who knows Dr. Stahr have in him.

We are supremely confident that he will acquit himself in this assignment as he has in all previous endeavors in a manner to do credit to his country, to President Kennedy for selecting him, and to this committee and the Senate for confirming his appointment.

(Whereupon, at 11:55 a.m., the hearing was adjourned, to reconvene on Wednesday, January 18, 1961, at 10 a.m.)

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