

military advisers may have disagreed, but as advisers they do not have command authority.

Mr. MEADER. You say "may have disagreed." Did they disagree?

Mr. HILSMAN. Let me check on this, sir, about this. I think in a public statement we ought to leave it—

Mr. MEADER. This is not a public statement.

Mr. MOSS. You are in an executive session.

Mr. HILSMAN. Right, sir. This is an unclassified statement, which as I understood, Mr. Archibald, wanted to be able to publish freely.

Mr. MOSS. Yes. However, any response to questions based on the statement would not be released because the transcript here, Mr. Hilsman, is an executive transcript, and it will not be released at all until we have gone over it with you folks.

Mr. HILSMAN. I will have to check on that, sir, to be absolutely sure; neither Heavner or myself.

Mr. MEADER. This statement is more or less meaningless to say they may have disagreed. I could have said that and not know anything about it.

Mr. HILSMAN. Right, sir. The subcommittee can rest assured that the U.S. Government does not favor such restrictions in Vietnam any more than anywhere else.

I can say, for the record, that our policy certainly is the other way. That is our policy.

Now, in this particular instance, one of the reasons that I don't know is they may have never had a chance to, but this I will have to check on. I mean, our people may not have had a chance to disagree. But our policy is exactly the opposite. But where the United States is in the position of supporting an ally on the ally's home territory, it cannot presume to make command decisions. We can, and do, and will continue to urge the Government of Vietnam to understand the needs of the American press, and to be helpful to them.

Now I would like to speak, just for a moment, about a telegram to Saigon, of a year ago, on press and information matters which has figured recently in the news. The intent, the chief direction, and the result of that cable was to implement a policy of maximum feasible cooperation with the press. This policy is still in effect. Since that cable was sent, several ways to improve the implementation of this policy have been undertaken, and, as better ways are found in the future, they, too, will be instituted.

We feel that both Ambassador Nolting and General Harkins have fulfilled the purpose of this instruction to the greatest extent possible under the fast-moving wartime conditions with which they deal. Possibly, in some cases, they have not been able to make available, to newsmen, complete and accurate information in time to satisfy deadline requirements. Such occasions may and probably will occur in the future in spite of the best efforts of those in the field.

I would like to call attention again to the fact that the United States has urged the Government of Vietnam to provide better press facilities and to give the U.S. press better access to what is going on. On February 1, Secretary Rusk said in his news conference:

But let me say quite frankly that we have not been satisfied with the opportunities given to the press in Vietnam for full and candid coverage of the situation there, and we are discussing this matter from time to time and most urgently