

Mr. MEADER. I am thinking of the kind of a situation where they say that at such and such a place there was a battle and so many Vietcong were killed or wounded, and there wasn't any battle at all. I mean, have they done things like that?

Mr. HILSMAN. * * * You know it is difficult for us to go out and check on something that has already happened where maybe—

Mr. MEADER. We have people right with their troops, don't we?

Mr. HILSMAN. Yes, sir. * * *

Mr. MOSS. Mr. Hardy.

Mr. HARDY. No, thank you.

Mr. MOSS. Mr. Griffin? Mr. Reuss?

Mr. REUSS. Mr. Chairman.

In your testimony, Mr. Hilsman, you referred to a cable sent last year to the Embassy in Saigon. Is that the cable which is contained in a classified document?

Mr. HILSMAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. REUSS. Which has been distributed here?

Mr. HILSMAN. Yes. This is the cable I referred to in my statement.

Mr. REUSS. Yes. I would like to ask you some questions suggested by that cable. Incidentally, I first saw the cable about 5 minutes ago this morning.

I say that because I note that there was a Washington Post news story of May 5, 1963, containing some references to this classified document. The news story I also saw 5 minutes ago. I mention this for obvious reasons.

Mr. HILSMAN. Let me interject that the news story was grossly inaccurate and distorted.

Mr. MOSS. The news story referred to will be printed in the hearing. (The article referred to follows:)

[Washington Post, May 5, 1963]

VIETNAM NEWS GUIDE REPORTED

(By Geoffrey Gould)

A potentially explosive document in the hands of a House subcommittee is reported to contain administration guidelines for restricting the movements of American correspondents in South Vietnam.

Sources familiar with the document, which though a year old is still in effect, said it is a message to the American Ambassador in Saigon. They said it contains two main points on how to deal with U.S. newsmen trying to cover the Vietnamese war:

Keep American reporters away from areas where fighting is being done entirely or almost entirely by U.S. troops.

Keep American reporters away from any area which will show the extent of President Ngo Dinh Diem's failure to attract the full allegiance of the South Vietnamese people.

[While the State Department had no immediate comment last night about the alleged document, a spokesman strongly disputed the implication that the United States is impeding reporting from South Vietnam.

[On the contrary, he said, "Our people have been out there working hard to liberalize the Diem government's treatment of American correspondents for the last 8 or 10 months."

[The spokesman noted that Secretary of State Dean Rusk has reproached South Vietnam publicly for inhibiting reporting by American newsmen, and has called for corrective action.]

CLOSED HEARINGS SLATED

Pledged to secrecy, the House Subcommittee on Foreign Operations and Government Information plans to hold closed hearings on the directive later this