

Mr. HILSMAN. I meant that the policy guidelines in it were not precisely stated, but fuzzily stated.

Mr. MEADER. I think it is clear enough. I, having read the cable through hastily, think it is pretty clear this was an instruction to manage the news.

Mr. HILSMAN. I don't think so. May I call your attention to this paragraph? I don't know what that means. I can't find anybody who knows what it means. I can't find anybody who can give me a specific example.

Mr. GRIFFIN. This is the catchall.

Mr. HILSMAN. That I would say is lousy drafting.

Mr. HARDY. It is pretty clear to me.

Mr. REUSS. If I may reclaim the floor now, I would summarize as my own curbstone opinion that the cable is indeed a model of ambiguous draftsmanship on a matter that ought to be very clear. So often the fuzzy words mask the fuzzy thoughts.

Mr. HILSMAN. I quite agree.

Mr. REUSS. And I suggest that whoever wrote this cable for Dean Rusk hadn't thought through some of the problems. In addition, there may be, to those who can read this language more clearly than I, some of the things that Mr. Meader was mentioning.

All I am saying is that it seems to me very ambiguous indeed. When you are setting forth what amounts to a policy of something less than full and free press communication, I think you have to state the areas where the press is going to be denied complete freedom with precision and language that anybody can understand.

Mr. HILSMAN. Let me try to be a little more precise on this particular point. I think that our press policy should be that we do not attempt to guide what the American press says about the Vietnamese. I think it should also be our policy that members of the American mission there should not criticize the Vietnamese Government to anyone. After all, we are there in a foreign country.

Mr. REUSS. Yes, that of course is true, and they would be instantly persona non grata.

Mr. HILSMAN. Exactly.

Mr. REUSS. And put on a ship home, in accordance with immemorial diplomatic practice.

But what this implies is that if American correspondents find President Diem dragging his feet on land reform—as we found him to be dragging his feet on land reform back in 1957, Mr. Meader, when we visited with him—if American correspondents find that favoritism in the Government is destroying its mass base among the people, I think it is constructive to let those things be written in the hope that the light of truth will cause them to be corrected. Whatever may be said about a counter guerrilla operation such as that we are jointly conducting with the Vietnamese today, I think everyone would agree that an important ingredient in success is the confidence of the people that they have something to fight for. And if they are fighting for something that is corrupt and reactionary, they are not going to fight very hard. They are simply going to be a conduit for giving their rifles to the Communists.

Mr. HILSMAN. On such an example, first of all, we have no control over information about such things. We have no control over the articles written, and I think this is just a fuzzily written cable. I don't think this was the intention of it.