

Mr. HILSMAN. There have been several cables to date, the culmination of which supersede all this. As a matter of fact, we are off the record, it is a classified hearing, this is one, as a matter of fact—

Mr. FASCELL. You are not off the record, but it is a closed hearing.

Mr. HILSMAN. I am sorry, it is an executive hearing. We have sent instructions on a number of occasions to the Ambassador, which I think not only supersede this but clarify it.

Mr. MOSS. On this particular cable, I think we ought to take a look at what we actually have in the language here, this instruction or guideline. On my first reading of them, I did not feel that they were restrictive, nor intended that way.

Mr. FASCELL. I didn't either, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MOSS. * * *

But this goes directly to light or imprudent criticism and I don't think any of us would urge a policy that encouraged such criticism.

Mr. REUSS. Mr. Chairman, on that I certainly am not in favor of such criticism, but here in this paragraph we do have a statement of what I assume is set up as an article of faith; namely, that critical articles will impede our war effort.

Mr. HILSMAN. But that is just a statement of fact, sir.

Mr. REUSS. Well, I am not sure that is so. I am not sure that our task is not made more difficult by the suspicion on the part of the American public that it isn't getting the true facts, good and bad.

Mr. HILSMAN. I quite agree with that.

Mr. MOSS. It is clearly stated that no effort should be made to forbid.

Mr. HILSMAN. Exactly. Notice that the policy directive as opposed to the explanation and discussion of contacts, is contained in the sentence to the effect that no effort should be made to forbid articles. That is the policy directive.

Mr. REUSS. Well, as I read it, the word "forbid" is in quotes, and this is a hint to the Ambassador that while he shouldn't "forbid" them—

Mr. HILSMAN. He can't forbid them.

Mr. REUSS. He should do everything short of "forbid" then.

Mr. HILSMAN. I think the point here is that the "forbid" is in quotes, that we all know that he has no power, no authority to forbid them.

What it means by that is that the pressman should not feel that he is trying to forbid. That is the meaning of the quotes there.

Mr. REUSS. Having said this, I don't mean to suggest that this entire cable is not in a proper direction of giving more access to the press than it has before, but I am disturbed by this particular reference which it would seem to me would stifle political reporting. I think political reporting is quite important; I hope it would not be frivolous or thoughtless, but sometimes frivolity and thoughtlessness is the price of a free press. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MOSS. Is the letter from General Harkins of December 1962 a more precise spelling out of policy?

Mr. HILSMAN. I think it is, sir, and this was a directive that went to every individual in the mission.

This cable went to the Ambassador, but the directive you saw, which is a statement of our policy to the individuals at the working