

There is no reason to believe that, as President, Mr. Johnson has changed his view. It is a view that was shared by the late President Kennedy, who said:

Within the rather narrow limits of national security the people of the United States are entitled to the fullest possible information about their Government, and the President must see that they receive it.

Thus, gentlemen, in conclusion:

"No smokescreen of secrecy, the fullest possible information"—these are pledges to the people from our Nation's leaders. Congress can support the executive branch in keeping faith with the people by enacting an effective disclosure act to replace a "smokescreen of secrecy."

Mr. Moss. Mr. Rumsfeld.

Mr. RUMSFELD. I have no questions, Mr. Chairman, other than to say it was a very forceful statement.

Mr. Moss. I want to express my pleasure for your appearance and for your support. I would like to take the opportunity to restate something I have on many occasions tried to make very clear.

This committee—no member of this committee—has any desire to require information to be made available if it would be damaging to the security of this Nation. Over the years, in dealing with the press, I have seen no evidence of any movement in the press to require that type of disclosure. I think the record of the American press in cooperating with Government to protect very sensitive areas in times when such protection was necessary in the interests of our security has been an excellent one, one to which the press can point with pride. Their performance during World War II under voluntary conditions was outstanding.

Again, Mr. Colburn, we thank you for your statement and for your support.

Mr. COLBURN. Mr. Chairman, I would like to make just one footnote comment to that excellent point that you made, and that is, I think that in our work together over the years in tracking down some of these items that may have been borderline or even perhaps violated certain areas of security, it has been our finding that these have been leaked by Government people in both administrations, Democrat and Republican, for personal influence or to influence some act of Congress, and in that case these people were responsible and not the press.

Mr. Moss. I think the leak is a good bipartisan tool of propaganda effectively employed for many years.

Mr. COLBURN. Yes.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Moss. Our next witness is Mr. Richard Smyser, who is chairman of the Freedom of Information Committee of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association.

Mr. Smyser.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD D. SMYSER, CHAIRMAN, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS MANAGING EDITORS ASSOCIATION

Mr. SMYSER. Mr. Chairman, I have a statement.

Mr. Moss. You may proceed.