

the information. The agency should do the explaining, and in Federal court if necessary, when it chooses to withhold. The public and the press should not have to apologize for or justify its asking.

The Tennessee Press Association has a slogan that I would quote here: "What the people don't know will hurt them."

Indeed, it is so very true. But what the people do not know about the Federal Government will ultimately hurt the Federal Government and its officials too, for of course, the two are inseparable. The Federal Government draws its powers from the governed. And the governed are only governed as well as they give.

The Associated Press Managing Editors Association, therefore, through its Freedom of Information Committee, wholeheartedly commends those Congressmen, such as Representative John Moss in particular, who are champions of the public's right to know. And APME commends them specifically for the drawing of H.R. 5012 and earnestly urges its passage.

Enactment of this bill, APME is convinced, will help guarantee maximum public awareness of its Government and, therefore, better government.

I have spoken here primarily of H.R. 5012. All that I have said, however, is equally applicable to the Senate bill of Senator Edward Long to establish a Federal public records law. APME was most active last year in working for passage of Senator Long's S. 1666.

I would close by quoting APME's current president, George Beebe, managing editor of the Miami Herald. In a recent letter to his fellow Floridian, Representative Dante Fascell, he wrote:

There has never been a period in our history when it is so vital that the people know what is going on in their country and the world. Disturbing indeed has been the trend to close more and more doors and records to the press, although there are few instances where this privilege has been abused. There is not a responsible editor in the Nation who does not willingly practice self-censorship in matters of national security. There is not an editor who would argue against suppression of news affecting national security. But news sources are drying up that have nothing to do with security, and to which you and I and everyone should have access. As president of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association, an organization made up of the leading editors of the country, I commend your courage and aggressiveness in introducing this important bill.

On behalf of the APME I thank you for this opportunity to express the organization's position on this important pending legislation.

Mr. Moss. Mr. Rumsfeld.

Mr. RUMSFELD. I would certainly like to thank the gentleman for his very fine statement, and concur in what he has said. I would also make this comment in passing, that we have just received your testimony, the Associated Press Managing Editors Association. We have heard from Mr. Colburn, American Newspaper Publishers Association. We have heard from representatives of the Press Photographers Association, and in each case what has been said about the need for the public to know in our system of government has been forceful and very appropriate and correct.

The thrust of the proposal coming before this committee, as the testimony has, has been toward the desirability of Government making available information.

There is a reverse thrust. There is a great burden also on your association, on the press throughout the country, and the press pho-