

Mr. KORNEGAY. The subcommittee is now back in session.

Colonel Temple, it is a pleasure to welcome you before the Subcommittee on Communications and Power, and you may at this time proceed in making the statement that you desire.

STATEMENT OF COL. WILLIAM A. TEMPLE, OFFICE OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS), DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Colonel TEMPLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

May I say that the statement I have to make to you is that of Brig. Gen. William W. Berg, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy, who regrets he could not appear. I work in his office as an assistant director for personnel management.

I will read this statement and then answer any questions you have.

Mr. KORNEGAY. You may proceed.

Colonel TEMPLE. The Department of Defense appreciates this opportunity to present its views on S. 375, which would make obscene or harassing telephone calls in interstate or foreign commerce a Federal offense.

The Department of Defense is concerned about the adverse effect on the morale and welfare of our servicemen and their families of obscene and harassing communications, particularly as they relate to our military operations in Vietnam and elsewhere. We welcome and support any legislation which promises our servicemen and their families a measure of protection from these vicious and despicable acts.

In the year preceding May of 1966 we had identified some 87 known incidents of harassment of military families related to our military operations overseas, mostly in connection with service in Vietnam. In the period between May of 1966 and February of 1967 we identified an additional 48 such incidents; and in the approximate year that has elapsed since that time we have had reports of approximately 70 additional incidents.

Here I should point out that while the bills under consideration address themselves to telephone communications, the reported incidents that we have of harassment of service families have included harassment by letters, post cards, telegrams and even face-to-face visits.

The nature of these harassments has included everything from false reports of death or injury to threats, demands for money for the Vietcong, and gloating comment on the actual death in combat of servicemen. For example, a bereaved widow of an Army sergeant killed by enemy fire in Vietnam received an anonymous call advising her that her husband had "got what was coming to him. A phone call to the wife of an Air Force sergeant stationed in Vietnam said: "I know your husband is in Vietnam and he deserves everything he gets. Before he can come home you will be a widow."

You will note that the volume of these incidents of harassment is not large and it has tended to drop somewhat since we first became concerned with them. We believe that two factors have contributed to the reduced incidence of harassment of our service families: One is the publicity given to the Nation's outrage at these acts by congressional