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## For the Record

### General Taylor's View Of the Right to Know

From questioning of Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, former Ambassador to South Vietnam, by Bill Downs on the ABC television program "Issues and Answers" on July 4.

Mr. Downs: General, I am still concerned about these Pentagon Papers and the government and your reaction to them and on the whole question of secrecy and the people's right to know. On another network the other day you said: "A citizen should know the things he needs to know to be a good citizen and to discharge his function."

Could you elaborate on that? Where does frankness in government and operation begin and where does secrecy end?

General Taylor: Well, I would say that as a general principle the public has a right to know those things it is interested in, needs to know and wants to know, but not those things which, if revealed, would work against the public interest and the public unfortunately has frequently discovered many times those things which really should be held back.

Mr. Downs: Well, Americans are curious. They are fascinated by these papers and what went on.

General Taylor: I would wonder I would wonder. I am afraid the very mass of this output is not helpful to those who really take time to study this thing. Most citizens won't, they can't possibly. They simply see a mass of print and then see headlines that suggest indeed something has been seriously wrong, and the overall impression, I fear is that indeed, that the belief will be that the government was caught doing things which no one ever knew about, but this is old stuff.

This is nothing but what the language was that went on in the huddle between the plays. What was important was the play and the game and the outcome. But here we are seeing nothing but what the coaches talked about in the dressing rooms, that kind of thing.