

STATEMENT OF U.S. SENATOR BOB DOLE
ON THE SENATE FLOOR
MAY 7, 1970

431

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY

Mr. President:

One wonders sometimes what the outer limits of freedom of the press might be. Surely they are there, just as there are boundaries of freedom of speech. I remind you that one cannot cry "fire" in a crowded theater.

My question now is, does freedom of the press include the right to incite mutiny?

I, for one, do not think so. Yet I believe a Columbia Broadcasting System Reporter has come perilously close to attempting to incite mutiny by playing on the emotions of soldiers just before they were to go into battle. The Reporter's interview was broadcast last night.

I can think of no other war in our history where this sort of thing would have been permitted.

Mr. President, I want the Members of this Chamber to read the dialogue of that Reporter's interviews with troops so they can judge for themselves the validity of what I say. (I insert it as this point in the Record).

Mr. President, it is a rare man indeed who is not filled with fear and apprehension before the battle. Bravery is not a lack of fear; it is the ability to overcome fear.

And yet this Reporter deliberately attempted to incite and increase those fears.

Mr. President, it appears to me that in some cases a concentrated effort is being made to destroy our National will and character by playing first on the emotions of our battlefield soldiers and then by feeding the results back home to play on the emotions of the American people.

I do not believe we can long let this sort of effort go unchallenged lest it succeed in dividing us permanently. A Nation of doubters in the rightness of their own National causes cannot long survive either a threat from within or a threat from without. Those in the media who deliberately set out to fill the people with mistrust and anger at their own duly elected leaders do our country no service.

In closing, Mr. President, I would like to say that CBS is not alone.

David Brinkley, whose forte is not reporting but playing on emotions, told us last night that a playground in an enemy village was a casualty of the war. He said "there is something infinitely sad, also about the killing of American soldiers by an enemy who until now was allowed to kill with impunity from a protected sanctuary.

And there is something infinitely twisted about Mr. Brinkley's effort to make the American people think America's leaders and America's soldiers are in the business of fighting little children.