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Statement of Senator Edmund S. Muskie on Nixon's Decision to Release Pentagon Papers

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FOR RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

President Nixon's decision to release to the Congress the 47-volume Pentagon report on the Vietnam war is a welcome step which recognizes the role of Congress in foreign policy decision-making.

If this step is to be a meaningful precedent for the future, adequate information must be supplied to the Congress before, rather than after, major foreign policy decisions have been made. Only in this way can the checks and balances mandated in the Constitution, which have deteriorated in recent years, be fully restored.

As a second step, however, I again urge the Administration to withdraw its legal objections to publication of these documents in the public media.

Full disclosure of the contents of these documents is essential, not only to protect the public's right to know, but also to help erase any misconceptions in the public mind that might arise from the partial publication that already has occurred.

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