

to be "agreed that all possible governmental information should be made available to the people." I don't believe that anyone here would wish to quarrel with him on this proposition. In a democracy, the people's right to know about the government of their creation is so well-established as not to be questioned. We know that the public's right to know, as sacrosanct a general principle, as it is, is not an absolute right.

I do not believe any of us would contend that the public's right to know would extend to governmental information which if generally circulated would give comfort and shelter to enemies of our nation. In national defense information, I, of course, am using an extreme example. But we can think of examples on a lower plane, as, say the premature publication of plans for a public works project, the general knowledge of which would invite land speculation and thus adversely affect the public interest. On the level in which we operate in State government, there are not many of these, to be sure. And I, for one, acknowledge the danger in giving too great a recognition to the exceptions which do exist to this fundamental right.

I know that you people have complained from time to time of public officials concealing legitimate information under the guise of information adversely affecting the public interest. An intriguing and sometimes perplexing question is: Does the public have a right to know what a public official has on his mind? Well, I think we can say in general that it has a right to know how he stands on issues and matters of public interest. But again, it is a question of how far this right extends.

A reporter asked me the other day: Are you considering a woman for appointment to a judgeship. This wasn't too hard, for I was considering a woman, and, in fact, did appoint one. But I had not reached a final decision, and the unqualified statement that I was considering a woman just might possibly have resulted in misinformation.

Incompleted plans, tentative programs, policies not completely formulated in the minds of public officials in my opinion not only may, but should, remain undisclosed.

I was amused by an article I read in a newspaper the other day about an interview with Robert L. Gilruth, director of a space task group of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. He was asked if Grissom's flight into space would be the last preparatory exercise by this country before a man is put in orbit. He replied that