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OLC 69-0451

21 May 1969

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD**

**SUBJECT: Conversation with Dorothy Fosdick, Staff Director of the Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations, on the Impact of the Cuban Missile Crisis on Soviet Weapons Development Programs**

1. I saw Dorothy Fosdick today in an effort to put to rest the question we have been discussing in the last few days on the impact which the Cuban missile crisis had on the development of the Soviet weapons program. Miss Fosdick contacted us on this subject several days ago when she asked if we could provide classified and unclassified papers for their use which would buttress the position that, following the Cuban crisis, the Soviets were determined that they would never again let themselves be put in a position of having to back down in a similar situation and, therefore, engaged in a major weapons buildup.

2. I had previously told Miss Fosdick that, although the missile crisis certainly had an impact in a number of areas, the effect which it had on the Soviet weapons program was not of major significance; it was more a question of increased emphasis and reduced timing than it was a matter of a determination to engage in specific new programs. I added that once this had been said this was about all that could be said on the subject.

3. When I entered Miss Fosdick's office today, she asked if we had a paper for her. When I indicated we did not, she said "I think you people are taking this position because you feel that anything you give us in support of this thesis will buttress Secretary Laird's office on the ABM issue and you are opposed to the Secretary's position." She then said, "incidentally, I understand some of your people have been talking to the Press." I asked if she was needling me about statements in the press regarding the Director's remarks to the Business Council. She said she was not, she was referring to the fact that "some of your people at the working level have been telling members of the Press that Secretary Laird's position on the ABM is not supported by intelligence data." At this point she had to leave the office to see Senator Jackson briefly.

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4. When she returned, I told Miss Fosdick I had originally thought she was needling me but I now had the impression she was serious and, if she were, we should go back and straighten this situation out. I told her she certainly knew that we had been cooperating with Senator Jackson and her to the utmost, providing them with a considerable amount of material in response to their requests. I pointed out that in the present situation we did not feel there was much which could be said in support of her thesis over and above that which I had given her. I went on to say that, as she also knew, the Director is very meticulous in not taking sides in matters of this sort and he has been especially careful in the ABM issue. I said that we were trying to be totally objective and factual and where we could, in good conscience, provide her with material which she requested, we would do so. I also said Agency personnel were not authorized to discuss intelligence information outside authorized channels and I asked her who was involved in the situation, which she had mentioned regarding the press. She said she could not name names but the person who had received the information had appeared on nationwide television.

5. In discussing the ramifications of the ABM issue I used the statements which had been made by various individuals on FOBs. As an example, I referred to John Foster's testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee in response to Senator Symington's interrogation on the "20 questions". I pointed out that, although Foster subscribed to the intelligence position on the "20 questions" including FOBs, his stated answer gave one an impression which could be construed as partially contrary to the agreed intelligence position--which was that we have no evidence to indicate the Soviets have deployed FOBs. (I used the FOBs example deliberately, since on two occasions--in public statements-- Senator Jackson has said that the Soviets have deployed the FOBs.)

6. Miss Fosdick picked this point up and said Jackson's position had been derived from information provided by the Department of Defense. She went on to say that Senator Symington had been criticizing Senator Jackson for his position on this. She said that Jackson had rechecked this with DOD. She then stated the DOD position in somewhat stronger terms than Foster's testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee. She said on the basis of this, Jackson decided not to back down from his earlier statement and he has repeated it since.

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7. Miss Fosdick retreated considerably from the almost hostile posture which she had assumed in the beginning of our conversation and I am inclined to think that her actions were created by the tension of the present situation. I think she feels that the Senator has relied too strongly on information given him by DOD and she is becoming rather irritated and defensive as a result.

8. We concluded our conversation on the usual friendly basis. Miss Fosdick asked if I would have our people prepare a paper saying essentially what I had told her at the outset of our conversation or "whatever you feel that you can say on the subject." She said she had been very persuaded by the testimony of Professor Phillip Mosley on the Soviet posture since the Cuban crisis and gave me a copy of his testimony before the Military Applications Subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. She asked that I show this to our people who would be preparing the paper for her. I told her I would be happy to do so.

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Deputy Legislative Counsel

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