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Def 1 Russia

Frank B. SYMINGTON

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'Hoodwink,' Or Pitch For Funds?

Sen. Stuart Symington, former secretary of the Air Force, declared indignantly this week that the Russians have 'hoodwinked' the United States.

He said a recent military fly-over in Moscow disclosed the Soviets have some combat planes the world knows nothing about — planes that were developed while Nikita Khrushchev was saying the Russians had gone into the missile field and were no longer relying on manned aircraft.

And this, the Senator laments, means that the U. S. has been "hoodwinked" into neglecting the development of more modern aircraft.

If Symington's statements are true, they reveal a situation in Washington that makes the handling of the Cuban fiasco look like a triumph in international diplomacy.

In the first place, a hoodwink of such proportions would indicate that the Central Intelligence Agency is getting its information on Russian military preparations from the nearest book stall in Moscow.

Secondly, it seems almost inconceivable that a power such as the United States bases its own military weapons development solely on what it hears the Soviets are doing.

If this line of thought were carried to

its logical extreme, we would sink all our aircraft carriers and slow production of Polaris submarines, because the Soviets have no carriers and apparently have had difficulty developing a submarine similar to the Polaris model.

We have a sneaking suspicion, however, that we are worrying about a non-existent problem. Sen. Symington finished his lament with a thinly-disguised pitch for more money for the Air Force's B70 bomber project, a program which has been cut back by the Kennedy Administration.

Perhaps the B70 project should be given more impetus; we don't really know at this point.

But we do know that any increase in funds should be given because the potential of the bomber merits it, not because the Reds are building a plane that looks like it.

