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DEFENSE

SEN. LEVERETT SALTONSTALL (R-MASS.) CRITICIZED SEN. STUART SYMINGTON TODAY FOR EXPRESSING "PARTISAN OPINION" ON VITAL DEFENSE MATTERS.

SALTONSTALL, RANKING GOP MEMBER OF THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE, IN A SENATE SPEECH NEVER MENTIONED THE MISSOURI DEMOCRAT BY NAME.

BUT SYMINGTON'S CHARGE YESTERDAY THAT THE ADMINISTRATION MANIPULATED INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION ABOUT SOVIET MILITARY MIGHT TO CONFORM TO U.S. BUDGET NEEDS WAS OBVIOUSLY HIS TARGET.

"I REALIZE THIS IS AN ELECTION YEAR," BUT DISCUSSIONS OF THE DEFENSE PROGRAM SHOULD BE "CAREFULLY JUDGED" AND NOT BASED ON PARTISAN OPINIONS, SALTONSTALL SAID.

HE CRITICIZED "UNDOCUMENTED STATEMENTS" THAT INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION HAS BEEN "JUGGLED" SO THAT BUDGET BOOKS WOULD BALANCE.

SALTONSTALL QUOTED ALLEN W. DULLES, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, TO REFUTE SYMINGTON'S CHARGE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS NOW BASING ITS DEFENSE PLANNING ON SOVIET CAPABILITIES.

"IT IS IMPORTANT TO POINT OUT," SALTONSTALL SAID, "THAT THAT IS NOT TRUE."

HE SAID DULLES AND OTHERS HAVE SAID THAT U.S. PLANNING IS "BALANCED" BETWEEN SOVIET CAPABILITIES AND SOVIET INTENTIONS.

SYMINGTON, WHO WAS ON THE FLOOR WHEN SALTONSTALL DELIVERED HIS BRIEF STATEMENT, BROKE IN AT ONE POINT TO QUOTE A RECENT STATEMENT BY DEFENSE SECRETARY THOMAS S. GATES.

HE SAID GATES SAID THAT WHILE "HEREFORE" INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES HAD BEEN BASED ON SOVIET CAPABILITY, "PRESENT INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES" WERE