

Sen. Keating Challenged On Missiles

United Press International

Sen. Kenneth B. Keating (R-N.Y.), and a former State Department official wrangled yesterday over Keating's role during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

Roger Hillsman, former Assistant Secretary of State, said in a magazine article that Keating had laid himself open to charges of putting politics above national security by his public statements on Soviet missile strength in the island.

Keating issued a statement saying that Hillsman's article was "one of a number of efforts that have been made to rewrite the history of the Cuban crisis."

Hillsman was director of the State Department's Intelligence Division during the 1962 showdown. He said Keating's account of how he obtained information on the missiles did not square with the facts.

The Senator said he did not intend to be drawn into a partisan dispute over the 1962 incident. Keating commented: "I hope Mr. Hillsman enjoys more success as a fiction writer than he did during his service as the State Department's Chief of Intelligence. He struck out on Cuba; he struck out on Viet-Nam, which ended his career at the State Department, and now this is his third strike. It is not surprising that he is no longer with the State Department."

Keating said Hillsman did not question the accuracy of his Cuban information.

Date Questioned

In a Look Magazine article to be published later this week, Hillsman said that U.S. intelligence did not learn until Oct. 14 that Russian arms shipments to Cuba included long-range nuclear missiles.

"Yet four days before that discovery," Hillsman said, Keating made a speech alleging that six missile bases were under construction in

Cuba.

But Hillsman said that since no one in the intelligence community knew about the missiles until Oct. 14, "it is hard to see how" Keating could have verified his information.

Hillsman said that when Keating made his first speech on the missiles a check was made with "the chief of every intelligence agency in Washington" to see if there were any reports similar to Keating's.

"The answers were uniformly negative," Hillsman said.

"The second mystery, which also still remains," Hillsman said, is "just what information Keating had, and where he got it."

In his article, Hillsman said Keating announced that there were six intermediate-range missile sites being built in Cuba, but he did not say where they were. This would have been "most vital information," Hillsman said.

Hillsman said later information showed the Soviets intended to build four intermediate range sites and six medium range sites. "But we now know that at the time Keating spoke, construction was not far enough along on some of the sites for a refugee or anyone else to recognize them as missile installations."

Hillsman admitted that Keating "could have gotten some refugee reports before Washington did," but there seemed to have been, in fact, only two such reports of any significance. Neither of these corresponded to Keating's charges, Hillsman said.

Recounts Scall's Role

Hillsman's article also recounts the role played by American newsmen John Scall of the American Broadcasting Company as a go-between in key U.S.-Soviet exchanges that helped to settle the 1962 crisis.

Scall was approached by a key Russian official here who outlined to Scall the Soviet Union's formula for ending the crisis. It was the first indication that Russians were thinking of ways to break the impasse.

Yesterday, the State Department said that Scall "performed a useful and responsible role."

Press Officer J. McCloskey would not confirm that through the newsmen's reports on his meetings with the Russian official the United States received information on four points which later became the basis for an agreement between Washington and Moscow.