

Nixon's Deadly Boast 'A Little Too Forceful'

Chelsea, Okla.

A former Oklahoma congressman said yesterday former President Nixon's controversial statement that he could "kill 70 million Russians" with a phone call was perhaps "a little too forceful."

Clem McSpadden was one of the first Democrats to visit the White House during Mr. Nixon's "Operation Candor," just before Mr. Nixon resigned. (?)

"I had occasion to visit President Nixon on other occasions and this was not one of his best nights," McSpadden said in a telephone interview.

California Senator Alan Cranston disclosed the former President's statement last week, saying he is concerned about a President having so much power. Cranston, a Democrat, said Mr. Nixon had made the statement to two other Democratic congressmen, whom

he didn't name.

According to Cranston's version, Mr. Nixon told the congressmen he could kill "60 million people" by pushing a button.

McSpadden said he asked Mr. Nixon about the threat of Communism and the then-President answered, "I can pick up the phone and kill 70 million Russians in ten minutes."

McSpadden said he was concerned because of the way Mr. Nixon answered the question by saying "I (Nixon) can" rather than saying the United States had such a capability. He said Mr. Nixon appeared to be "putting himself ahead of the country."

McSpadden said the White House visit occurred during a period when Mr. Nixon was under great stress.

United Press

See footnotes, KPFA Evening News, 9 Feb 76

See KCBS Radio News 6 Feb 76

See Rolling Stone 26 Feb 76 - filed 12 Feb 76