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**November 4, 1962**

**Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister Gromyko to  
Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov and Ambassador  
to the UN Zorin in New York**

**Citation:**

"Telegram from USSR Foreign Minister Gromyko to Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov and Ambassador to the UN Zorin in New York", November 4, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, AVP RF; copy obtained by NHK, provided to CWIHP, and on file at National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by John Henriksen, Harvard University <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/110430>

**Summary:**

Gromyko sends instructions to Kuznetsov and Zorin to relay to Stevenson concerning the definition of "offensive weaponry."

**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

4 November 1962

Your thoughts on the statement that Stevenson should make in connection with his letter and memorandum do not provoke any objections

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In addition it is necessary for you to say the following:

Since when have the planes named by Stevenson [IL-28 bombers--ed.] become offensive weaponry[?] After all, these planes are of a type considered outmoded both in its altitude ceilings and in its speed. The putting forth of such a demand constitutes an intentional seeking out of issues that encourage discord and a continuation of the tense state of our relations.

The planes mentioned by Stevenson are associated with coastal defense weaponry. Such a plane cannot appear in conditions of war over enemy territory, since it does not possess the capacity for attaining the necessary altitude and speed. It can appear over such territory only with an air escort. Virtually any military expert would recognize that these planes cannot be placed in the category of offensive weaponry at the present time.

If the USA honestly gave assurances that it would not invade Cuba, then the possession of these planes by the Cubans should not elicit any concern.

We understood the concerns of the Americans when talk began to turn to a definite sort of missile weaponry. Missiles are indeed an uninterceptable and instantaneously effective sort of weapon. There is no reason to put outdated weaponry in the offensive category. Such weaponry will have a defensive, auxiliary function.

As far as photo reconnaissance and reconnaissance in general are concerned, used as they are by all countries, experience shows that it does not always reflect the actual situation.

All this provides the grounds for concluding that the most important issues here must be talked about. We must mutually fulfill the obligations assumed by all parties, and then the issue will be exhausted.

A. Gromyko