

November 6, 1962

Telegram from Soviet envoys in New York V.V. Kuznetsov and V.A. Zorin to USSR Foreign Ministry

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Summary:

Kuznetsov and Zorin relays the results of a meeting with McCloy and Stevenson where the four discuss issues such as the dismantling of weapons and the definition of "offensive weaponry."

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Russian

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TOP SECRET

On 5 November we had a meeting with Stevenson and McCloy at the American initiative. The Americans came to the meeting with the clear intention of exerting pressure to get further concessions from the Soviets. Throughout the duration of the whole discussion, which lasted more than three hours, they tried to represent the affair as if the Soviets had still not displayed any willingness to fulfill the obligations stipulated in the correspondence between Comrade N.S. Khrushchev and President Kennedy, notably with regard to IL-28 planes and nuclear warheads and bombs. At the same time the Americans kept shying away from a discussion of the issues concerning the Americans' fulfillment of their own obligations. The discussion at times became pointed, and this was an effect created largely by Stevenson and McCloy.

1. More than half the discussion was devoted to an exchange of opinions on the issue of the IL-28 planes located in Cuba. Stevenson and McCloy stated that the agreement between Comrade N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy stipulated the removal of all these planes from Cuba, and their return to the Soviet Union. The essence of Stevenson's and McCloy's argument on this issue can be reduced to the following:

Kennedy's statement of 22 October and his proclamation of 23 October placed jet bombers in the category of the so-called "offensive" Soviet weaponry in Cuba. Kennedy's message of 27 October referred to the "offensive missile bases," as well as to "all armament systems that can be used for offensive purposes," apparently including jet bombers in this category. Comrade N.S. Khrushchev indicated in his message of 28 October that the Soviet government had issued instructions to dismantle and return to the Soviet Union the arms that "you call offensive." The Americans call both missiles as well as jet bombers offensive weaponry.

McCloy and Stevenson came back many times in the course of the talks to these arguments, interpreting them in such a way as to make it seem as though the Soviet Union had committed itself to dismantle and return to the Soviet Union from Cuba not only missiles, but also bombers.

We explained our position in detail to McCloy and Stevenson, in accordance with your instructions. We emphasized in particular that at the present time there is only one basis for an agreement, the one established by the exchange of messages between Comrades N.S. Khrushchev and Kennedy. As far as Soviet obligations are concerned, that agreement stipulates that the Soviet Union will remove from Cuba the missile weaponry that the President of the USA has called "offensive," and that it will never in the future supply such weaponry to Cuba. The USA in its turn committed itself not to invade Cuba, and not to allow any invasion by the other states of the Western hemisphere. The Soviets are fulfilling to the letter this agreement, which is the result of compromise and mutual concessions. On 28 October the dismantling of the missiles was begun, this dismantling was completed on 2 November, and the dismantled missiles have been brought to the ports for shipping, and will be removed no later than 10 November.

We directed the attention of the Americans to the fact that, if they want to raise new issues, then we have many issues that we will want to raise too, for example concerning the American military bases on foreign territories, but that we are not doing this because we do not want to complicate the negotiations.

We adduced concrete facts concerning the IL-28 bombers, showing that this bomber is a purely defensive weapon, long ago outmoded, and that it can be used only for coastal defense when escorted by anti-aircraft units. We said with regard to this that if the USA representatives insist on their own demands concerning the IL-28 planes, then in doing so they will only place the USA in a position in which the whole world

will see that the United States are reneging on their promise, and imposing unacceptable conditions that create the possibility of a continuation of the conflict.

We said that Stevenson's assertion in his letter of 3 November, that according to the reports of American intelligence there was evidence that IL-28 bombers are still being assembled in Cuba, is a fabrication by American intelligence that clearly aims to avoid the settlement of the conflict and the normalization of our relations, and that indeed tightens the tensions. If the United States take as their goal a return to the incendiary situation of earlier, then this is scarcely in the interests of the USA or the USSR, or in the interests of peace. We propose to select reasonable positions, and to proceed in our negotiations from the agreement that has already been reached.

The Americans contested our views of the purely defensive character of the IL-28 bombers. McCloy and Stevenson asserted that "in Castro's hands" these bombers could be offensive weapons, and that for the Latin American region they represent a threatening weapon which the other Latin American countries do not possess.

In response to our statement, in accordance with your instructions, that one cannot always rely on the facts produced by intelligence reconnaissance and that, with regard to the IL-28 bombers, the American intelligence information on the continuing assembly in Cuba of these planes is incorrect, McCloy asserted that in the photos taken by an American reconnaissance plane over the area where IL-28 planes were being stored, it was obvious that there were more of them in recent days, and that new containers of parts for these planes were being unpacked. In a half-joking tone McCloy stated that once Soviet representatives had also denied even the American intelligence photos of missile bases in Cuba. McCloy said that he himself had seen the photos of recent days in which IL-28 bombers were visible, and that he believed these photos.

We answered McCloy and Stevenson by saying that their formulation of the issue of IL-28 bombers, which were outmoded and which have been removed from the arsenal of our army, is clearly aimed at complicating the whole affair, at slowing the completion of the negotiation work, and at putting into doubt everything positive that had already been achieved at these negotiations. We returned to these opinions many times in the course of the talks. Stevenson and McCloy stated that without resolving the issue of removing the IL-28 bombers from Cuba, it would be impossible to reach any agreement.

At the end of this part of the talks, Stevenson asked whether it should be understood that the Soviets are refusing to remove the IL-28 planes from Cuba. If so, he said, then our position in the negotiations has reached "a very serious impasse." We repeated that these planes are not offensive, and that the Soviets will proceed from this fact in their actions. Isn't Mr. Stevenson already thinking of presenting us with an ultimatum on this issue and blaming the Soviets for the situation created at these negotiations?, we asked in response. He immediately said no, there was no ultimatum at all.

Stevenson said that perhaps the Soviets would think over this issue again, and that the next day or the day after that they could discuss it again. We said that we were willing to discuss any issue in these negotiations, but that as far as the issue of the IL-28 bombers was concerned, it is the Americans who should think it over, since their position on it was complicating the negotiations.

2. Then Stevenson and McCloy asked one more question-- about the nuclear warheads on the missiles, and about nuclear bombs. They asked how we proposed to give the Americans the possibility of ascertaining that our nuclear warheads and bombs had been removed from Cuba in conditions in which ground-based inspection in Cuba was impossible. We stated that the Americans' formulation of still another issue could only complicate the situation. We emphasized that the Soviets would

fulfill to the letter all the obligations, stipulated in Comrade N.S. Khrushchev's messages, for returning from Cuba to the Soviet Union the whole complex of weaponry that the Americans have called "offensive." McCloy stated in response to this that the USA did not want to allow "nuclear warheads to be found in Castro's hands," and wanted to be sure that there was no such weaponry in Cuba.

McCloy said moreover that, since ground-based inspection in Cuba was impossible, the Americans would want to be allowed the same possibility for checking on the removal from Cuba of the nuclear warheads that they had been allowed for checking on the removal of the missiles. "Tell us how many nuclear warheads you have in Cuba," McCloy said, "and allow us the possibility to ascertain that they have all been loaded onto your vessels."

We repeated that none of this was being put forth by the Americans in order successfully to complete the negotiations, and that the Soviets would fully and precisely fulfill their obligation to remove from Cuba the "offensive" missiles, along with everything associated with them. We have every right to expect a similarly sincere fulfillment of the American's obligations, instead of the advancement of more and more issues that complicate and delay the resolution of this urgent problem.

3. We have informed the Americans with regard to your instruction No. 2389 on the schedule of departures from Cuba of the ships carrying the missiles on 6 and 7 November. They have made no comment on this information, and have asked no questions.

4. We informed Stevenson and McCloy of our progress with regard to the establishing of inspections on the Soviet vessels bound for Cuba by representatives of the International Red Cross, about which we also informed Narasimhan today. In spite of the fact that McCloy, in talks at his country house yesterday, was still talking about the USA's lack of objections to the use of Soviet ships for the Red Cross inspections, he stated today that he had doubts about the acceptability for the USA government of our proposal to use the Soviet freight vessel "Amata" for carrying out this inspection by the Red Cross representatives.

At this time McCloy asserted that, since the Soviets had refused to approve the use of American ships for this purpose, the Americans could scarcely agree to the use of a Soviet ship, and that it would be better to charter vessels from neutral states, such as Sweden, for example, for this purpose. Answering our questions, McCloy said that this still did not constitute a definitive response from the Americans, and that he would inform his government of our proposal.

We expressed our surprise with regard to such a change of the USA position on the issue of using Soviet vessels for the Red Cross inspections. McCloy was somewhat embarrassed by this, and repeated several times that yesterday, in talking about the likelihood of American approval for that proposal, he had been expressing only his own personal assumptions.

5. In the course of the talks, we tried several times to lead the Americans toward the issues of guarantees of Cuban security and the lifting of the "quarantine." McCloy and Stevenson did not enter into any real discussion of these issues, even less than they had before at the earlier meetings.

6. At the end of the talks, Stevenson said, as if summing things up, that for them there were still several questions, in his view, which remained either undecided or open-ended; these included questions about the removal from Cuba of the IL-28 bombers, about the granting of the possibility for the USA to be sure of the removal from Cuba of nuclear warheads and nuclear bombs, and about the search for vessels

of neutral countries that would be acceptable to both parties for the Red Cross inspection of Soviet ships bound for Cuba.

McCloy told me that the day before he had told President Kennedy by telephone about our talks at McCloy's country house, that the President had given a positive evaluation of the results of the talks, and that this evaluation had been confirmed the next morning by a telegram from Washington. In McCloy's words, President Kennedy was counting on continued progress at the negotiating table. And he added that they hoped that the Soviets would make an attentive examination of the issues that had been put forth at today's talks.

In response to McCloy and Stevenson, we said that we did not think that the questions referred to by Stevenson were open-ended any longer. Those issues are perfectly clear, and it is only the USA position that is hindering forward movement. We appealed to the Americans to operate in future negotiations on the basis of the spirit of compromise and the desire to guarantee the strengthening of peace that was displayed in the correspondence between N. S. Khrushchev and Kennedy, and to be guided by precisely that spirit when attentively reviewing the considerations we had expressed.

We ask that you inform us on the issue of the warheads.

6.XI.62 V. KUZNETSOV

V. ZORIN