

[November 10, 1993]

Embassy of Ukraine in the USA,  
Washington  
From the diary of O. Bilorus

RECORD OF CONVERSATION  
with Ambassador-at-large,  
special advisor to the US Secretary of State  
S. Talbott

On November 9 of this year [1993], I met with Ambassador-at-large and special advisor to Secretary of State S. Talbott at the US State Department. In the conversation that took place, his deputies took part – S. Pifer and V. Nuland, an employee of the Ukrainian department E. Salazar. From the Ukrainian side – Minister-Counselor V. Kuchinsky.

S. Talbott was interested in how Kiev assesses the results of the Odessa meeting of Foreign Ministers of Ukraine and Russia. Judging by the result of the tennis match, Ukraine was the winner. However, there can be no winners in diplomacy, he added.

I replied that in the Ukrainian capital, the Odessa negotiations were assessed positively. Although the comments were quite different on both sides.

S. Talbott said that October was a fruitful month in US-Ukraine bilateral relations: a working group began to work, which made progress in contacts between the military; an economic dialogue began; and exchanges in the political sphere deepened. We are awaiting the arrival of a group of Ukrainian specialists to Washington. We are working on a “diplomatic” calendar for the future.

However, S. Talbott noted, we could not achieve sufficient progress at the talks in Kiev in order to initiate the visit of President L.M. Kravchuk to the United States because two of the three questions that were posed in a letter from President B. Clinton – the method for deactivating SS-24 missiles, the number, and timing – remained unanswered, although we insisted on a willingness to adhere to full confidentiality in this matter.

In addition, he added, President B. Clinton, who is very interested in meeting with President L. M. Kravchuk, would like to focus during this meeting not on the problems of the past, but on the development of our relations in the future.

On our part, in this regard, it was stated that, firstly, the letter of President L. M. Kravchuk dated October 28 contains answers to the questions posed, and secondly, the next meeting

of the presidents will be useful for both sides, and therefore we do not see any grounds for any preconditions, let alone pressure.

Further, S. Talbott noted that the American side was surprised by the statement of the Foreign Ministry spokesman at a press conference in Kiev after the completion of negotiations between Zlenko and Christopher. Yesterday's statement by the head of the disarmament department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine concerning the inexpediency of early deactivation of SS-24 missiles caused even more surprise. How can statements of state officials differ from the course of the president, S. Talbott asked.

We promised to clarify the circumstances of these statements, as well as the accuracy of their transmission by the media.

The circumstances related to the signing of the "framework" agreement, according to S. Talbott, also raise some doubts. If not for the personal intervention of President L. M. Kravchuk, this document might not have been signed, although the conclusion of this agreement is absolutely in the interests of Ukraine, the American ambassador stressed.

S. Talbott handed over the text of a letter from US Secretary of State W. Christopher to Minister A. Zlenko and noted that the United States is very interested in "a signal of confidence from Ukraine." Such a signal should be a decision on the early deactivation of SS-24 missiles. The time for statements, even commitments, has already passed, concrete actions are needed now. President B. Clinton instructed the Secretary of State to prepare this letter. The letter again raises questions about the number and timing of the deactivation of SS-24 missiles. S. Talbott stressed that concrete answers to these questions will give the necessary impetus to the further development of relations between our countries.

S. Talbott added that the American administration and President B. Clinton highly appreciate the personality of L. M. Kravchuk, they understand the complexity of the situation in Ukraine and wish President L. M. Kravchuk every success. However, at this stage of our relationship, concrete actions are needed, in particular in matters of early deactivation, the American ambassador stressed.

In turn, we noted that the number and timing of the deactivation of SS-24 missiles depend not only on Ukraine, but also on the Russians, to which S. Talbott replied: the United States will continue to "pressure" Russia on these issues, as well as on compensation issues to Ukraine for the tactical nuclear warheads transferred to Russia.

The American side would like to receive more specific answers to the questions that were posed in the letter of B. Clinton. Ambassador J. Goodby's next visit, scheduled for this month, can be used to discuss next steps for deactivation, as well as American assistance that can facilitate this process. Of course, you need to conclude an implementation

agreement to start such assistance. The Americans are counting on the fact that the visit of Ambassador J. Goodby will take place in time [....]

The Americans would also like to know whether the agenda of the current session of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine includes issues on the START Treaty and the NPT. At the same time, they emphasize that they are looking forward to the actions of the Ukrainian parliament. However, confidential information regarding the timing and number of SS-24 missiles that fall under early deactivation would be enough for a positive solution to the questions about the meeting of presidents in the very near future in Washington, and later in Kiev.

For our part, we expressed serious concern about Russia's adoption of a new military doctrine and bellicose statements by military leaders. S. Talbott said that the United States also realistically assesses the statements of the Russians and the situation that is developing.

The conversation sometimes took place in rigid forms, but in a frank and trusting atmosphere.

Ambassador

O. Bilorus

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