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LETTER DATED 8 JULY 1960 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ADDRESSED  
TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

New York, 8 July 1960

I have the honour to transmit the attached text of a note delivered to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 2 July 1960, regretting the arbitrary action of the Soviet Government and its Allies in precipitously breaking off negotiations in the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament without prior consultation, contrary to the accepted rules of procedure and for reasons which remain unclear, and expressing the hope that the Soviet Government will reconsider its decision and resume these negotiations on disarmament in the Ten Nation Committee.

I would appreciate it if you would arrange to circulate the text of this note of 2 July as a General Assembly document and as a document of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

(Signed) Henry Cabot LODGE

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and, in response to the letter of June 27, 1960 from the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR to the President of the United States, has the honor to state the following.

The Government of the United States deeply regrets the arbitrary action of the Soviet Government and its Allies in precipitously breaking off negotiations in the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament without prior consultation, contrary to the accepted rules of procedure and for reasons which remain unclear. The United States Government hopes that the Soviet Government will reconsider its decision and resume these negotiations on disarmament in the Ten Nation Committee.

The Government of the United States rejects as wholly inaccurate the Soviet version of events within the Ten Nation Disarmament Committee. Nor can it fail to reject the Soviet Government's unfounded allegations referring to the aborted Summit Conference.

The United States Government was profoundly disappointed when the Soviet Government refused to participate in the meeting of the Heads of State and Heads of Government in Paris last month. The hopes of the world that the government leaders assembled there would be able to take constructive steps toward settlement of their differences and toward the strengthening of the peace were dashed by the arbitrary action of the Soviet Government.

The Government of the United States, nevertheless, retained the hope that the Soviet Government might be willing to continue the search for meaningful agreements in the negotiations already in progress in the areas of disarmament and nuclear testing. When the Soviet Delegation tabled its disarmament proposals on June 7, the United States Government undertook to give them the most thoughtful and serious consideration. In view of the complex character of arms limitation and the long history of disarmament negotiations, it was obvious that the process of negotiating agreements would of necessity be long and arduous and would require serious effort, great patience and abundant forbearance. The Soviet allegation that the disarmament negotiations were proving fruitless and had reached a state of deadlock, only three weeks after the revised Soviet proposals had been tabled, cannot but give rise to question as to the Soviet Government's true motivation in torpedoing the Conference.

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The withdrawal of the Soviet delegation stands in sharp contrast to the repeated Soviet official declarations of intent to settle by peaceful means through negotiation all outstanding international issues, among which, it would have been expected, would be the question of disarmament, acknowledged by the Soviet Government to be the most important question facing the world today.

The decision of the Soviet Government to break off the disarmament negotiations was particularly surprising and regrettable because it occurred at the very time the Western delegations were preparing to submit new disarmament proposals. The Soviet Government was aware that the United States had undertaken a review of its position on disarmament in the hope of finding helpful and practical revisions which would further the work of the Ten Nation Committee. This review was announced by the United States Secretary of State on June 24 and, indeed, was acknowledged in Pravda the following day. Moreover, the Head of the United States Disarmament Delegation informed his Soviet counterpart prior to the meeting at Geneva on June 27, at which the Soviet delegation broke off negotiations, that new proposals were being worked out for early submission. These proposals were designed to take into account all views advanced during the course of the discussions and would have provided an adequate basis for substantive negotiations.

The abrupt termination of these negotiations is additionally disturbing in the light of the adoption by the Security Council of the UN on May 27 of the resolution submitted by Ceylon, Tunisia, Argentina and Ecuador, which specifically "requests the Governments concerned to continue their efforts to achieve a constructive solution of the question of general and complete disarmament under effective international control in accordance with Resolution 1378 (XIV) of the General Assembly and the discontinuance of all nuclear weapons tests under an appropriate international control system as well as their negotiations on measures to prevent surprise attack, including technical measures, as recommended by the General Assembly."

The urgent need to begin a program of disarmament demands that no opportunities for negotiations be lost. In this spirit, the delegation of the United States and those of its Allies have remained at Geneva in the hope that the Government of the Soviet Union and its Allies will see fit to return to the task of serious negotiation.

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The goal of disarmament is an aspiration common to all mankind and an objective which all Governments must relentlessly strive to achieve. For its part, the United States Government remains determined to spare no effort to arrive at mutually acceptable agreements on concrete measures, the implementation of which would represent a solid advance toward the goal of complete and general disarmament under reliable and effective international control.

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