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USSR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
UNITED STATES & CANADABOROVIK: REAGAN JOKE, PLATFORM INSPIRE FEAR

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[From the Vremya newscast]

[Text] Over to Genrikh Borovik, secretary of the Board of the USSR Union of Writers.

[Begin Borovik recording] Hello, comrades. Last week an astonished world learned how the President of the United States amuses himself in front of a radio microphone. That amusement, taking into account the power and speed of today's communications, could have cost mankind its life. Judge for yourselves: The President of the United States, announces on the radio that in 5 minutes he will start bombing Russia. It is just as well that these words did not resound immediately around the globe. If they had!

The world was horrified by the prank of the master of the White House. But he himself, does he know what he is doing? Yesterday in an interview to a newspaper he only said one thing: It would have been better if I had not said it. He said it was all the fault of journalists: If it were not for them, this story would not have grown to the scale of an international incident. The statement, to put it mildly, is strange, and sounds just like the words "it would be better if nobody knew that an American atom bomb was delivered on Hiroshima" would sound. The President creates the impression that we are dealing with a first-grader who happens to have been naughty, but the overgrown prankster holds in his hands not a tube from which you fire crumpled paper pellets at your neighbors, but the entire nuclear and other might of the United States of America. It has become known today that U.S. congressmen are collecting signatures to a letter to Reagan in which they demand that he should publicly dissociate himself from his provocative statement. The letter says: Your remark, which you obviously wish to wipe off the slate as an insignificant slip of the tongue, inspires fear in the hearts of our allies and, unfortunately, confirms their worst fears.

No, it was not a joke, and not a slip of the tongue either; just as the Republican Party platform, adopted in Dallas, where the party convention is taking place, is neither a joke nor a slip of the tongue. It was elaborated by none other than lunatics and those from the extreme right wing.

Madam Kirkpatrick, the U.S. representative at the United Nations, made a speech at the convention. She pronounced anathema on our country, raising questions -- What would happen to Europe if the United States left? What would happen to Asia if it fell under the influence of the Soviet Union? What would happen to Central America if it became a Soviet satellite? The energetic madam thought up these questions herself -- so let her look for answers to them. We, without any questions, know very well what happened to Asia when the American forces invaded Vietnam; we know what happened to Chile when the CIA carried out a fascist coup there; we know what took place in Nicaragua when the country was a satellite of the United States. There are no elderly there because the average lifespan is 51, and there were no youths because young people were killed with American submachine guns, as future revolutionaries. We know what has happened in the Near East, where Arab lands are occupied by Israel, and what happened to Beirut, when an American battleship fired directly at it. So let us leave the questions thought up by Madam Kirkpatrick to her -- I almost said, to her conscience -- but I remembered in time that that word is in no way suitable here.

The Republican Party platform has been adopted. In it, the President's wild jibe has been developed and translated into a systematic call for an imperialist course in foreign policy.

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There are demands that the United States should be stronger than anyone else in the world in military might; there is a proclamation of the United State's right to interfere in the affairs of any regions of the world, and so on. It is now mid-day in Dallas. Sessions are still underway in the hall where the convention is being held. That means they are singing pop songs; the sweating delegates are playing with balloons, dancing, eating hot dogs, drinking them down with beer, and behaving like schoolchildren on holiday: In other words an ordinary American party convention, the triumph of democracy!

It was in such an atmosphere that the platform was adopted -- a program fully in line with the provocative idea contained in the President's jibe, adopted to the enthusiastic roar of a crowd driven to a frenzy by free whiskey, bare-legged showgirls, and chauvinistic speeches.

The American press says that the convention was staged like a play in which every gesture of the actors was carefully rehearsed, down to the tiniest twitch of the muscles. That may be so, but it reminds me most of all of some bad and very dangerous show. Believe me: I have a professional knowledge of the theater.

ZORIN REVIEWS REACTION TO REAGAN BOMBING JOKE

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["Moscow Viewpoint" by Valentin Zorin]

[Text] Although several days have passed since President Reagan made his sinister remarks about outlawing the Soviet Union and starting to bomb the country, the subject still continues to disturb world public opinion and, as far as I can tell, American public opinion as well. Hundreds of commentaries, statements, and speculations have been made about the motives behind Ronald Reagan's so-called joke, a warped one at that. And yet people around the world are still discussing it.

I can judge the reaction of Soviet people to Reagan's remarks by the large number of letters I have received recently and that are continuing to come in from all over the Soviet Union. None of the people who have written view the President's tirade as a joke or even a bad joke. Common sense suggests that there are some things that just should not be joked about. For instance, could Reagan think of attending his daughter's wedding in a funeral suit, or offer a hearse for the wedding procession? If he did, well, we'd just have to question whether the person who was President of the United States is capable of sober thinking or whether he is responsible for his own actions. All those who have written me recently agree that President Reagan must have felt at ease at that moment outside the official framework of his post and therefore spoke in a way that was characteristic of his views and thought process.

When Ronald Reagan talks about his desire for peace, about wanting negotiations with the Soviet Union, about being ready at any time to meet with the leaders of the Soviet Union, that is when he is not the real Reagan but the creation of the current election campaign. Reagan's recorded hostile remark demonstrated to the world the real Ronald Reagan with his type of thinking and his level of thinking, not the Reagan conceived and designed for election publicity purposes. Reagan as a peace champion is an image that has nothing to do with the man who has broken all records in speeding up the arms race and developing programs to create more and more illegal weapon systems, threatening the existence of civilization.

When the organizers of the Republican election campaign got their candidate to speak words of peace they made him contradict himself, the Reagan who from the platform of the British Parliament declared a crusade against the Soviet Union, the Reagan who dared to threaten to dump the Soviet Union in the garbage heap of history.