

Robert Kennedy in 'Memoirs'

Nikita on Cuba Missile Crisis

New York

An exhausted Robert Kennedy told the Soviet ambassador in Washington during the Cuban missile crisis that "the American army could get out of control," according to the purported memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev in this week's Life magazine.

The final excerpt from the former Soviet leaders memoirs — which have been branded as false by Moscow — gives details of Khrushchev's thoughts and strategy during the missile crisis.

Life commented that the remarks attributed to the late Senator Kennedy are "extremely unlikely."

The excerpt said that the climax to the missile crisis came when Soviet Ambassador Anatoli Dobrynin reported that President Kennedy's brother — then U.S. Attorney General — called on an unofficial visit.

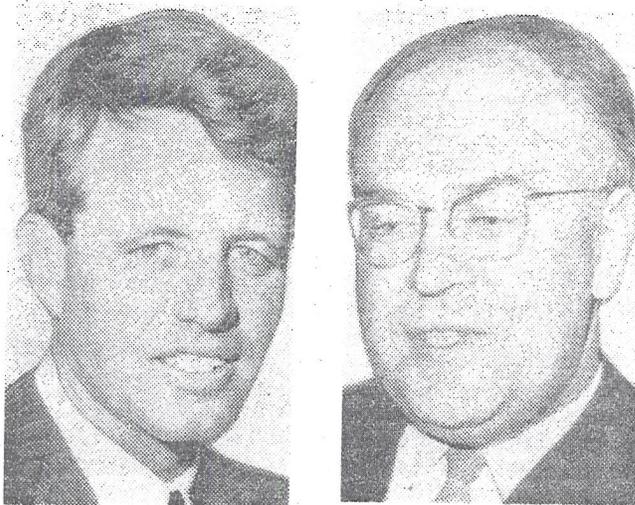
It was obvious Kennedy had not slept for days, Khrushchev said.

REPORT

The ambassador's report, according to Khrushchev, said Kennedy told him something like this: "We are under pressure from our military to use force against Cuba . . . Even though the President himself is very much against starting a war over Cuba, an irreversible chain of events could occur against his will . . . If the situation continues much longer, the President is not sure that the military will not overthrow him and seize power. The American army could get out of control."

On another occasion, according to Khrushchev, Kennedy, "almost crying," told the ambassador, "I don't know how much longer we can hold out against our generals."

Khrushchev commented, "We could see we had to re-orient our position swiftly. Comrades, I said, we have to look for a dignified way out of this conflict. At the same time, of course, we must make sure that we don't compromise Cuba."



UPI Telephotos

ROBERT KENNEDY

ANATOLI DOBRYNIN

A warning about the 'U.S. military'

SOLUTION

The crisis was resolved by an American assurance that there would be no invasion of Cuba, and the Russians withdrew their missiles.

"The Caribbean crisis was a triumph of Soviet foreign policy and a personal triumph in my own career as statesman and as a member of the collective leadership," Khrushchev said.

"We achieved, I would say, a spectacular success without having to fire a single shot."

However, Khrushchev admitted that Cuban Premier Fidel Castro "didn't see it that way. He was angry."

Concerning the Cuba missiles plan Khrushchev said, "I knew that the United States could knock out some of our installations, but not all of them."

"If a quarter or even a

tenths of our missiles survived — even if only one or two big ones were left — we could still hit New York, and an awful lot of people would be wiped out."

But, Khrushchev said, "Our principal aim was to deter America from starting a war . . . This goal we achieved. . . ."

Other points made in the

excerpt:

● President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles at the big power meeting in Geneva — "I watched Dulles making notes with a pencil, folding them up and sliding them under Eisenhower's hand."

● Eisenhower would then pick up these sheets of paper and read them before mak-

ing a decision. He followed this routine like a dutiful schoolboy taking his lead from the teacher . . . we hoped that Eisenhower and (Marshal Georgi) Zhukov might have a chance to talk alone together. But that vicious cur Dulles was always prowling around Eisenhower, snapping at him if he got out of line."

● "Mao Tse-tung is a petty bourgeois whose interests are alien . . . to those of the working class."

● "President Kennedy impressed me as a better statesman than Eisenhower." In Vienna he joked with Kennedy that the Russians had cast the deciding vote in the presidential election over "that

son of a bitch Richard Nixon" by delaying the release of U-2 spy plane pilot Gary Powers so that Nixon could not claim he could deal with the Russians."

● Arms: "I keep coming back to my own feeling that we should go ahead and sharply reduce our own expenditures, unilaterally."

● Svetlana Alliluyeva (Stalin's daughter, who defected to the U.S.) should have been given a visa to remain outside the Soviet Union for as long as three years and then allowed to return. "We should have showed her that she was trusted."

"I still feel very sorry for her."

Reuters