

ОТ ШТАБА ЛЕНИНГРАДСКОГО ВОЕННОГО ОКРУГА

4 марта 1940 года

Штаб Ленинградского Военного Округа, ознакомившись с только что опубликованной в иностранной печати "нотой" так называемого финляндского правительства, направленной в Лигу Наций и осуждающей "методы войны, применяемые СССР", констатирует, что вся эта "нота" состоит из лживых, фантастических утверждений, шитых белыми нитками.

1. Указанная "нота" утверждает, что "воздушные советские рейды против финского гражданского населения производятся почти ежедневно", что "сотни самолетов, иногда свыше 500, участвуют в этих атаках", что "с советских самолетов было сброшено около 20 тысяч бомб", что "часто с самолетов производилась пулеметная стрельба", причем "нота" не останавливается даже перед таким ни с чем несообразным враньем, что будто бы все это направлено главным образом против гражданского населения. Однако из самой же "ноты" видно, насколько неуклюжи финские сочинители. Так, даже по явно преувеличенным финским данным, на которые ссылается "нота", "во время воздушных бомбардировок было убито 392 человека из числа гражданского населения". Таким образом, за целые три месяца в результате "почти ежедневных" бомбардировок, в которых участвовали сотни самолетов, а иногда и "свыше 500", число убитых, даже по явно раздутым финским данным, достигает, оказывается, всего 392 человека. Один этот факт начисто опровергает фантастические выдумки, приписываемые советским войскам и советской авиации в "ноте" обанкротившихся финских правителей. Один этот факт полностью подтверждает, что в действительности советская авиация в своих многочисленных и успешных боевых действиях обстреливала финские войска, укрепления, аэродромы и другие военные объекты на территории Финляндии, а вовсе не гражданское население, среди которого, как видно из финских же данных, имеются лишь небольшие жертвы. Таким образом, клеветнический характер всей этой "ноты" в отношении Красной Армии совершенно очевиден, что лишь подчеркивает беспомощность и лживость ее сочинителей.

2. Разнузданная фантазия сочинителей "ноты" доходит до таких нелепых утверждений, как заявления, что "советские наземные части неоднократно применяли пленных и гражданских лиц в качестве щита во время своих атак против финляндской армии", что советские войска будто бы применяли какой-то "коматозный газ, вследствие чего 11 финских артиллеристов заболели", что будто бы "методы войны на море, применявшиеся СССР, также противоречат международному праву". Все эти голословные заявления, а также утверждения "ноты", что СССР будто бы нарушил гаагскую конвенцию 1907 года и женеvскую конвенцию от 27 июля 1929 года о правилах ведения войны, ни на чем не основаны и полностью являются фальшивыми измышлениями запутавшихся в своих преступных делах финских правителей. Красная Армия достаточно сильна, чтобы не нуждаться в применении каких-либо отравляющих газов, не говоря уже о том, что Красная Армия считает применение таких газов антиморальным и преступным, подлежащим безоговорочному и всеобщему осуждению.

Все эти клеветнические измышления против Красной Армии не могут отдалить приближающегося конца авантюры финских правителей против Советского Союза, как не могут этому помочь и такие действия финских офицеров, когда перед вынужденной сдачей советским войскам военных укреплений на Карельском перешейке они привязывают к стене и расстреливают на месте финских солдат, не желающих воевать за безнадежное дело.

3. Указанная "нота", пытаясь приукрасить сложившееся для финской белогвардейщины безнадежное положение, заявляет также, что "советским войскам удалось занять лишь

территории, не имеющие большого значения".

Штаб Ленинградского Военного Округа не считает нужным опровергать такие неумные заявления. Эти утверждения стоят на уровне недавних победных реляций финляндской белогвардейщины, нелепость которых очевидна.

"Правда" № 63 (8109) от 4 марта 1940 г.

Источник: [Высш. парт. школы при ЦК ВКП(б).] Внешняя политика СССР. Сборник документов. Т. IV. № 406. Москва — 1946.

FROM THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE LENINGRAD MILITARY DISTRICT

March 4, 1940

The headquarters of the Leningrad Military District, having familiarized itself with the just published in the foreign press "note" of the so-called Finnish government, sent to the League of Nations and condemning "the methods of war used by the USSR", states that this whole "note" consists of false, fancyful see-through statements.

1. The said "note" asserts that "Soviet air raids against the Finnish civilian population are carried out almost daily", that "hundreds of aircraft, sometimes over 500, participate in these attacks", that "about 20 thousand bombs were dropped from Soviet aircraft", that "machine-gun fire was often opened from airplanes," and the "note" does not stop even in front of such absurd lies, as if all this was directed mainly against the civilian population. However, from the very same "note" you can see how clumsy the Finnish storytellers are. Thus, even according to the clearly exaggerated Finnish data, referred to by the "note", "392 civilians were killed during the aerial bombardment." Thus, for three whole months as a result of "almost daily" bombing, in which hundreds of aircraft, and sometimes "over 500", took part, the number of killed, even according to the obviously inflated Finnish data, reaches only 392 people.

This fact alone completely refutes the fancyful inventions attributed to the Soviet troops and Soviet aviation in the "note" of the bankrupt Finnish rulers. This fact alone fully confirms that in reality, Soviet aviation in its numerous and successful military operations fired at Finnish troops, fortifications, airfields and other military facilities in the territory of Finland, and not at all the civilian population, among which, as can be seen from the Finnish data, there are only small number of victims.

Thus, the slanderous nature of this entire "note" in relation to the Red Army is quite obvious, which only underlines the helplessness and deceit of its authors.

2. The unbridled imagination of the composers of the "note" reaches such ridiculous statements as statements that "Soviet ground units have repeatedly used prisoners and civilians as a shield during their attacks against the Finnish army," that the Soviet troops allegedly used some kind of "comatose gas, as a result of which 11 Finnish artillerymen fell ill, "that supposedly" the methods of war at sea used by the USSR also contradict international law. " All these unfounded statements, as well as the assertions of the "note" that the USSR allegedly violated the Hague Convention of 1907 and the Geneva Convention of July 27, 1929 on the rules of warfare, are not based on anything and are completely false fabrications of Finnish rulers. The Red Army is strong enough not to need the use of any poisonous gases, not to mention the fact that the Red Army considers the use of such gases to be anti-moral and criminal, subject to unconditional and universal condemnation.

All these slanderous fabrications against the Red Army cannot postpone the approaching end of the Finnish rulers' adventure against the Soviet Union, just as such actions of Finnish officers cannot help this, when, before the forced surrender of military fortifications on the Karelian Isthmus to Soviet troops, they tie to the wall and shoot Finnish soldiers who do not want to fight for a hopeless cause.

3. The specified "note", trying to gloss over the hopeless situation that has developed for the Finnish White Guards, also declares that "the Soviet troops managed to occupy only territories of no great importance."

The headquarters of the Leningrad Military District does not consider it necessary to refute such stupid statements. These statements are on the level of the recent victorious reports of the Finnish White Guards, the absurdity of which is obvious.

Source: [Higher party schools under the Central Committee of the CPSU (b).] Foreign policy of the USSR. Collection of documents. Vol. IV. No. 406. Moscow - 1946.

LENINGRADIN SOTILASPIIRIN ESIKUNNASTA

4. maaliskuuta 1940

Leningradin sotilaspiirin esikunta lähetti tutustuttuaan Suomen ns. hallituksen ulkomaisessa lehdistössä juuri julkaistuun ja Kansainliitolle lähetettyyn "SNTL:n sodankäyntitavat" tuomitsevaan "noottiin" todeten, että koko "nootti" sisältää valheellisia, mielikuvituksellisia laadultaan läpinäkyviä lausumia.

1. Sanottu "nootti" väittää, että "Neuvostoliiton ilmahyökkäyksiä Suomen siviiliväestöä vastaan toteutettiin melkein päivittäin" ja että "sadat lentokoneet, joskus yli 500, osallistui näihin hyökkäyksiin" ja että "noin 20 tuhatta tonnia pommeja on pudotettu neuvostokoneista," ja että "lentokoneista avattiin usein konekivääritulit" eikä "nootti" pysähdy edes sellaisten mielettömien valheiden edessä, että tämä kaikki oli ikäänkuin pääosin tarkoitettu siviiliväestöä vastaan. Kuitenkin, tästä samasta "nootista" voi nähdä, kuinka kömpelöitä suomalaiset tarinankertojat ovat. Niinpä, vieläpä sen selvästi liioitellun suomalaisen tiedon mukaan, johonka "nootti" viittaa, "392 siviiliä kuoli ilmapommituksen aikana". Niinpä kokonaisen kolmen kuukauden aikana "melkein" päivittäisistä pommituksista johtuen, joihin osallistui satoja lentokoneita ja joskus "yli 500" surmansa saaneiden luku aivan selkeästi liioitellun suomalaisen tiedon mukaan nousi vain 392 henkilöön.

Yksinomaan tämä tosiseikka kumoaa täysin nootin vararikkoisten Suomen hallitsijoiden neuvostojoukoille ja neuvostoilmavoimille kohdistamat mielikuvitukselliset keksityt tarinat. Tämä seikka yksinään vahvistaa, että todellisuudessa neuvostoilmavoimien lukuisat ja menestykselliset sotilasoperaatiot suomalaisia joukkoja, linnoituksia, lentokenttiä ja muista sotilaslaitteita vastaan Suomen alueella, eikä lainkaan siviiliväestöä vastaan, johtivat vain pieneen siviiliuhrien määrään kuten suomalaisten tiedoista näkyy, .

Siten koko "nootin" herjaava luonne puna-armeijaan nähden on ilmeinen, mikä vain vahvistaa sen tekijöiden avuttomuutta ja petosta.

2. "Nootin" laatijoiden hillitön mielikuvitus nousee sellaisiin naurettaviin lausumiin kuten, että "Neuvostoliiton maavoimat käyttivät toistuvasti vankeja ja siviilejä kilpenä hyökkäyksissään Suomen armeijaa vastaan" ja että neuvostojoukkojen väitettiin käyttäneen jonkinlaista tainnuttavaa kaasua, minkä seurauksena 11 suomalaista tykkimiestä sairastui "luultavasti" sellaisista SNTL:n merisodankäyntitavoista, jotka ovat kansainvälisen lain vastaisia." Nämä kaikki perusteettomat lausunnot yhtä hyvin kuin "nootin" ne väitteet, että SNTL:n väitettiin rikkoneen Haagin vuoden 1907 sopimusta ja 27. kesäkuun 1929 Geneven sopimusta sodankäyntisäännöistä, eivät perustu mihinkään ja ovat täysin valheellisia Suomen hallitsijoiden sepitelmiä. Puna-armeija on kyllin vahva niin, ettei se tarvitse minkäänlaisten myrkkyykaasujen käyttöä, erityisesti sikäli, että puna-armeija pitää sellaisten kaasujen käyttöä moraalittomana ja rikollisena, ehdottoman ja kaikenkattavan tuomion ansaitsevina.

Kaikki nämä herjaavat sepitelmät puna-armeijaa vastaan eivät voi lykätä Suomen hallitsijoiden neuvostovastaisen seikkailun päättymistä, niinkuin eivät myöskään sellaiset suomalaisten upseerien toimet voi olla siinä apuna, kun he ennen Karjalan Kannaksen linnoitusten pakkoantautumista sitovat seinään ja ampuvat niitä suomalaisia sotilaita, jotka eivät halua taistella toivottoman asian puolesta.

3. Mainittu "nootti", joka yrittää silotella sitä toivotonta tilannetta, joka Suomen valkokaartille on syntynyt, julistaa myös, että "neuvostojoukkojen on onnistunut vallata vain merkityksettömiä maa-alueita".

Leningradin sotilaspiirin esikunta ei pidä välttämättömänä kumota sellaisia typeriä lausumia. Nämä lausumat ovat samaa laatua kuin Suomen valkokaartin viimeaikaiset voitolliset raportit, joiden älyttömyys on ilmeinen.

Lähde: [NKPK:n keskuskomitean korkeimmat puoluekoulut.] SNTL:n ulkopoliittika.
Dokumenttikokoelma. Osa IV. No. 406. Moskova - 1946.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Communicated to the Council
and Members of the League.

C.31.M.28.1940.VII.

Geneva, February 29th, 1940.

APPEAL BY THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT.

Letter from the Delegate of Finland to the Secretary-General.

(Translation).

Geneva, February 27th, 1940.

On behalf of the Government of Finland, I have the honour to inform you as follows:

In its publication on "The Development of Finno-Soviet Relations", the Government of Finland has pointed out, in the light of official documents, that, by the invasion of Finland, the U.S.S.R. has unilaterally violated international undertakings arising out of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Pact of Paris, and the Pact of Non-Aggression and the Treaties supplementary thereto which that country concluded with Finland. The manner in which the U.S.S.R. has thus acted was severely condemned by the States Members of the League of Nations and also by non-member States.

During the hostilities, moreover, the U.S.S.R. has in several ways infringed the rules of war, which are habitually observed even in a conflict of this kind. The Government of Finland desires by the present note to inform the League of Nations of these reprehensible methods, which have been employed by the U.S.S.R. during the first two months of the conflict (from November 30th, 1939 to January 31st, 1940). All the facts mentioned have been officially verified.

It is obvious that the U.S.S.R. had hoped to break Finnish resistance by a surprise attack. On the morning of November 30th, 1939, without any declaration of war, and even without any ultimatum, Soviet land forces crossed the frontiers of Finland at several places in the Isthmus of Karelia and between the Lake Ladoga region and Petsamo, whilst the air forces were sent to bomb towns and other centres of population. This attack was carried out so suddenly that there had not been time even to evacuate the civilian populations to the countryside.

During the hostilities, Soviet air-raids on the civilian population of Finland have continued almost every day. Hundreds of aircraft, sometimes more than 500, have taken part in these attacks. During the period in question, these aircraft carried out 643 air attacks on 207 places behind the front; 20,780 bombs were dropped by the aircraft, which, in addition, frequently made use of machine-guns. The Soviet aircraft bombed several towns and other localities which were not defended and in which there were no armed forces and no military buildings or depôts or other military objectives. For military reasons, it is impossible to mention the names. In other towns

and localities there have been bombardments of hospitals and sanatoria visibly marked with the sign of the Red Cross. For instance:

In December 1939, at Helsinki on the 21st, at Sortavala on the 20th and 21st, at Hanko on the 30th, at Hyvinkää on the 25th and 30th, at Kemijärvi on the 26th, and at Viipuri on many occasions.

In January 1940, at Tammisaari on the 10th, at Turku on the 12th and 20th, at Tampere on the 13th, at Sortavala on the 21st, at Hyrynsalmi on the 22nd, at Taivalkoski on the 22nd, at Nurmes on the 23rd, at Sotkamo on the 25th. On the 28th eight hospitals in different places were bombed.

Furthermore, Soviet aircraft bombed trains carrying civilians and an ambulance train at Rovaniemi on December 20th, 1939, ambulances and churches, schools and private houses.

Finally, flying very low, they have machine-gunned isolated persons moving about in the open air, women and children hurrying to shelter, and even funeral processions and people going to church. In these air bombardments 392 civilians were killed, 346 severely wounded, and 623 slightly wounded. The material damage, too, is considerable. On the other hand, few members of the military forces were wounded.

The damage inflicted on civilians and their property by bombs dropped from aircraft might perhaps be considered as the result of chance. But the large number of such instances, the widespread use of incendiary bombs, and, above, all, the fact that machine-gun fire was directed at civilian objectives, prove that the chief aim of these air raids was indeed to terrorise the civilian population. Consequently, the U.S.S.R. has flatly infringed the fundamental principle of warfare, according to which hostilities must be directed solely against armed forces and military objectives. The U.S.S.R. has expressly violated Article 25 of the Regulations annexed to the Fourth Hague Convention of 1907 concerning laws and customs of war and relating also to air bombardments, which prohibits attacks on towns and other localities which are undefended. The U.S.S.R. has also infringed Article 27 of the same Regulations, according to which buildings dedicated to religion, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals, and places where the sick and wounded are collected, are to enjoy special protection. Finally, the U.S.S.R. has also violated the Geneva Convention of July 27th, 1929, for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded and sick, according to which hospitals, vehicles and aircraft used as means of medical transport, and also medical personnel are to be protected. The provisions of this Convention, which has been ratified by the U.S.S.R. also, should be respected in all armed action, independently of any declaration of war.

The land forces of the U.S.S.R. have also shown proof of a total lack of scruple in their military operations. They have, for instance, on many occasions used prisoners and civilians as shields for their attacks against the Finnish army, thus resorting to a means of warfare long since abandoned and universally condemned. Furthermore, the Soviet soldiers have often made use of a ruse of war, which is also prohibited, by pretending to be dead or by making signals of surrender, for the purpose of thereby interrupting the enemy's attack, only to resume fighting suddenly thereafter. In these cases improper use has often been made of the flag of truce, a practice which is prohibited specifically in Article 23, paragraph f, of the above-mentioned Regulations concerning war on land.

Although the U.S.S.R. acceded to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 for the prohibition of the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous, or other gases, and of bacteriological methods of warfare, it was found that on December 6th, 1939, the Soviet troops in a sector of the front to the north of Lake Ladoga employed gas which they spread by means of a gun over a Finnish battery, with the result that eleven Finnish gunners were gassed. In anticipation of this intended act, the U.S.S.R. hastened, by way of defence, to launch beforehand a charge against the Finnish troops of having resorted to this method of warfare, though that allegation was entirely false.

The Soviet armed forces have also, both in air combats and in fighting on land, employed explosive projectiles weighing less than 400 grammes, the use of which was prohibited as long ago as 1868 in the Declaration of St. Petersburg. Amongst the war booty captured by the Finns there have been found cartridge-belts for machine-guns for the use of the air forces - and also for the use of the land forces - in which these explosive projectiles are placed at regular intervals. Further, one case has been noted in which a projectile of this explosive type struck the foot of a woman belonging to the civilian population.

At sea, the methods of the U.S.S.R. are equally in contradiction with international law. When, at the beginning of the war, the Soviet soldiers took possession of a few of the outer islands in the Gulf of Finland which were undefended, and when they attacked the naval guards and other inhabitants of the islands who were escaping in boats, they fired even on persons who had fallen into the water.

At the very outset of the aggression, on December 8th last, the U.S.S.R. declared a blockade of the whole Finnish coast of the gulf of Bothnia and part of the coast of the gulf of Finland. But she can have no justification for such a measure, having previously declared that she was not in a state of war with Finland, and still maintaining the same attitude. The blockade must also be regarded as illicit because the U.S.S.R. is not in a position to impose it and keep it effective as provided in the Declaration of Paris of 1856. This must be attributed to the wide extent of the blockaded region, and to the fact that Finland is able, thanks to her coastal batteries, her warships, her air force, and her defensive mines, to hamper - as she has already done in many cases - the effective action of the naval forces of the U.S.S.R. along the coast of Finland.

The Soviet naval forces have time and again attacked and even destroyed Finnish and foreign merchant vessels in the open sea. No formalities, not to speak of the rules consecrated by usage, have been observed on these occasions as regards warnings to stop, searches, etc. The following examples may be quoted. On December 5th, 1939, the steamer "Oliva", of German nationality, bound from Helsinki to Mäntyluoto, was machine-gunned without warning off Utö. Some days later, the same ship was again attacked on its return journey. On both occasions it was damaged. On December 10th, an unknown submarine sank the Hamburg steamer "Bohlheim", of 2,217 tons, without warning in the gulf of Bothnia off Öregrund. The captain and the wireless operator were killed, the remainder of the crew were saved. According to the sailors, the submarine in question, which fired 15 times at the steamer, was of Russian nationality. In the night of December 28th-29th, a Soviet warship fired at the Finnish tanker "Sigrid" to the west of the islet of Norrskär in the Merenkurkku (the narrowest part of the gulf of Bothnia), but did not succeed in hitting her. On the same night, the Finnish steamer "Vilpas", on being attacked by two Soviet submarines, struck a reef to the south of Norrskär, and having run aground was machine-gunned by the submarines until she became a total wreck. The crew were able to escape. On January 4th, 1940, a Soviet submarine sank the merchant vessel "Fennis", of Swedish nationality, on the Swedish side of the Merenkurkku, but the crew were saved. On January 24th and 28th, Soviet aeroplanes machine-gunned the German merchant vessel "Aegir", which a few days previously had struck a rock to the south of Eckerö in the Aaland Islands. The vessel suffered some damage. On January 12th, the naval forces of the U.S.S.R. stopped the Estonian merchant vessel "Vega" in the gulf of Finland and took her to Paldiski, where she suffered some damage owing to the ice. On January 13th, Soviet aeroplanes bombed the Finnish vessel "Notung", in the Aaland Islands, to the east of Sottunga, and sank her; later they fired with machine-guns on the persons escaping in the lifeboats.

The U.S.S.R. did not, however, content herself with resorting to purely military means of combat, but endeavoured to achieve her aims by other methods also. The day after the outbreak of hostilities - on December 1st, 1939 - the Finnish troops having withdrawn to a certain distance from the frontier on the Carelian isthmus in order to occupy their defensive positions, and the Soviet armed forces having occupied this frontier strip, the U.S.S.R. announced that in the "town of Terijoki" (meaning the village of Terijoki in the vicinity of the said frontier) a so-called "People's Government", invested with supreme power in Finland, had been set up through the U.S.S.R. on behalf of Finland, because the members of the former Government, according to the Russians, had abandoned their duties and left for an unknown destination. The U.S.S.R. at the same time announced that she could only entertain relations with the Terijoki "Government". A few days later, the U.S.S.R. concluded with this "Government" a detailed treaty in which all the points at issue between the U.S.S.R. and Finland were settled at a stroke, including those which had arisen during the political negotiations at Moscow before the invasion of Finland by the U.S.S.R.

The U.S.S.R. also used the above-mentioned "People's Government" as a pretext to prevent a State not involved in the conflict from protecting Finland's interests and those of her citizens in the U.S.S.R. according to international custom and established usage. The Finnish Government had requested the Swedish Government to take charge of those interests, but when the Swedish Minister at Moscow visited the U.S.S.R. Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to inform it of this mission, he was told that the U.S.S.R. only wished to have dealings with the representatives of the "People's Government". The same reply was given to the diplomatic representative of the United States when he enquired, at the Finnish Government's request, as to the possibility of arranging for the protection of Finland's interests in the U.S.S.R. through his agency.

It is obvious, however, that such a puppet Government set up by a foreign and indeed a hostile Power, composed of Finnish Communists guilty of high treason and rebellion - a certain number of them had indeed been sentenced for those crimes - cannot have any authority in Finland or represent her. Finland cannot pay the least attention to it, and so far there has been no question of the recognition of this "Government" by any foreign Power. The only legitimate Government of Finland, as everyone knows, is still in the capital of the country despite the Soviet allegations, and continues to direct the country's affairs. When, on the occasion of the examination by the League of Nations of the Soviet aggression in Finland - placed on the League's agenda at the request of the legitimate Government of Finland - the U.S.S.R. declared that she had nothing to do with that Government and pointed to the existence of the other "Government" mentioned above, the League of Nations paid no attention to these subterfuges, but proceeded with the study of the case and condemned the action of the U.S.S.R.

Unlike the U.S.S.R., Finland, in repelling aggression, resorted only to legal means of warfare. She acted in this way for humanitarian reasons, and despite the fact that, as victim of an unprovoked aggression, she might have been justified in using, in her fight for a just cause, means more effective than those allowed by the laws and usages established regarding the conduct of war. Although the U.S.S.R. has committed many infringements of the fundamental rules of warfare, Finland has not taken any of those reprisals which might have been considered fully justified. Finland has acted in this way in order not to make the restoration of peace more difficult. Animated as always by a pacific spirit, the Finnish Government has once already proposed the opening of peace negotiations, but this offer was arrogantly rejected by the U.S.S.R.

Finland has successfully defended herself for over two months against the aggression of the U.S.S.R. The latter has so far succeeded only in conquering territory of minor importance in the frontier areas, some of which had indeed been given up

for strategical reasons without fighting. Defence against the aggressor involves heavy sacrifices, however, for a small country like Finland, and in the long run her power to resist the attacks of an enemy superior in numbers and material may be put to a severe test.

The Finnish Government hopes that this description of the brutal methods of the aggressor State, which are incompatible with normal warfare, will be given as wide publicity as possible, and that public opinion throughout the world will react against these methods of war. In its unequal struggle, my Government hopes that, as hitherto, it will have the sympathy of the League of Nations, and that the latter will give it every possible assistance.

(Signed) RUDOLF HOLSTI.
