

ABC GOOD MORNING AMERICA
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|NICARAGUA/|HARTMAN: The White House says it is keeping its eye on a |USSR 5|cargo ship that arrived yesterday in Nicaragua. The United States suspects that the cargo might include MiG-21, Soviet-made jet fighters. Nicaragua has denied this. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Democrat senator from New York, he's vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, is with us this morning to talk about it. Good morning, Senator. DANIEL MOYNIHAN (D-N.Y.): Good morning.

HARTMAN: Do we know the cargo? MOYNIHAN: No. We have reason to think it might be. There were MiG crates, sort of containers, that they shipped them in on pier along side this freighter and the freighter moved out and the crates weren't there. David, I think this is in many

ways a drill. We have told the Nicaraguan government that we cannot allow MiG aircraft, or a Soviet strategic presence, in Central America.

HARTMAN: Formally, our government has formally told the Nicaraguan government? MOYNIHAN: We told them that and within our government we have told ourselves what it is we will do if they even so go ahead with this. The Soviets should know that. This is just not talk from the State Department. This is an agreed upon decision in the government.

HARTMAN: Has the Nicaraguan government and or the Soviet government been told what we have decided we will do if they put this strategic presence there? MOYNIHAN: No nor should they. Maybe we should be clear. Nicaraguans are building a world-class military airport, airfield at *Puntiwaita, about 20 miles out of Managua. They have had people training in Bulgaria to fly the MiG-23, which is somewhat an older MiG, as you well know, but still a permittable plane. They don't need these planes. Right now Nicaragua has 12 airplanes. Count 'em, 12. What do they need with a flight of MiGs? They don't.

HARTMAN: But, their government has said that they're responding, countering the fact that we are helping the Honduran air force on their border. What's our response to that? MOYNIHAN: The response is that this is, we're all in the same hemisphere. The Soviets, this is almost not an issue between us and Nicaragua, an issue between us and the Soviets. The Soviets would have no reason to do this, save to create a political crisis. It wouldn't give them any strategic advantage, really. In the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, they did not then have missiles or submarines that could reach the United States. If they got them on shore in Cuba, they would change the strategic balance all together. Today the Soviets have

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all the submarines they might want just lying off *Sandy *Hook for that purpose. So, they would have to do it to make a, change the political balance.

HARTMAN: Do you believe that's what they're doing right now? MOYNIHAN: I hope not. I hope what's going on is that the United States, having picked up some possibility here, is just kind of running a drill. Mr. D'Escoto, the foreign minister of Nicaragua, said there are no MiGs in that ship. This means one of two things. That there are no MiGs, or that they aren't going to unpack them.

HARTMAN: But, he also says that they have a right under international law to have those airplanes there if they so desire and so choose. MOYNIHAN: And, David, that is correct. They do have that right. The question is, does the Soviet Union want to enable them to exercise it in a mode that is going to create a political crisis? I hope not.

HARTMAN: All right. What's your message then, because clearly you seem to be sending a message right now to the Soviet government. MOYNIHAN: We have sent it from both sides of the aisle. There are things that are not acceptable because they can only be, they would be taken as a deliberate act, to use a Soviet word, of provocation. We don't need that in the world.

HARTMAN: Would you rule out, would you rule out the use of force by the United States? MOYNIHAN: I don't think that is possible, David.

HARTMAN: You don't think we can rule out the use of force? MOYNIHAN: I don't think that at this point it is possible to do that and be credible in our assertion. Don't do it. You don't need it. Nobody needs it. The Nicaraguans don't need it and the United States and Soviet Union do not need a political crisis.

HARTMAN: What's the next step in the process?

MOYNIHAN: If they have shipped 'em, send 'em home. If they are planning to ship them, don't. On the other hand, the United States should not be looking to humiliate anybody, say we scared you. Let's just not, there are two grown up powers with enormous nuclear arsenals. We don't have to play games with this kind.

HARTMAN: Have you been in touch with the White House? The president, is he being briefed on this and is he totally up on the situation and watching at the moment?

MOYNIHAN: I have to assume. That's what the military system is for, to keep the president briefed. I'm sure Mr. McFarlane is briefing the president.

HARTMAN: Sen. Moynihan, thank you.