

EDITED by LLOYD SHEARER

KHRUSHCHEV AND CASTRO The late Nikita Khrushchev was a proud and vain man who believed he had done much for Soviet Russia. When the dumpy, little Russian Premier was ousted from power in 1964 after 10 years as First Secretary of the Communist Party, he was understandably bitter and recriminatory. He disliked intensely being transformed into an unperson.

He retired to his dacha in Petrova-Dalneye outside Moscow, and there, encouraged by friends and family, he began to tape-record his memoirs, ostensibly as a heritage for his grandchildren.

Three years later the tapes were smuggled out of the Soviet Union through channels still unknown, but possibly through the paid connivance of individual officials acting in their own interests.

The tape recordings were offered to Time-Life, Inc., for a large sum of money. After thoroughly and repeatedly authenticating the tapes through voice prints, Time-Life purchased the tapes, then turned them over to one of its correspondents, Strobe Talbott, for translation and editing, no small feat, since Khrushchev was not an organized man who structured his reminiscences in any time or sub-



KHRUSHCHEV AND CASTRO IN 1960.

ject frame. He recorded by whim, mood, and when the moment of inspiration struck.

The second and final volume of the Khrushchev memoirs, "Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament," will be published by Little, Brown & Co., a Time subsidiary, on June 14.

One of its most fascinating chapters concerns Khrushchev's relationship with Fidel Castro. Khrushchev recalls that he experienced a really tough

time persuading Castro to permit the Russian installation of missiles in Cuba in 1962.

According to Khrushchev, the only reason the Soviets wanted to position missiles there was "to give the new progressive system created in Cuba by Fidel Castro a chance to work. Without our missiles on Cuba," he explains, "the island would have been in a position of a weak man threatened by a strong man. I'm not saying we have any documen-

tary proof the Americans were preparing for a second invasion. We didn't need documentary proof. We knew the class affiliations, the class blindness of the U.S., and that was enough to make us expect the worst.

"When Castro and I talked about the problem," he continues, "we argued and argued. Our argument was very heated, but at the end. Fidel agreed with me. Later on he began to supply me with certain data that had come to his attention. 'Apparently what you told me was right,' he said. That in itself justified what we did."

Khrushchev's memoirs are the first indication we have had of Castro's reluctance to allow Cuba to be used as a pawn by the Soviet Union in its attempt to secure a nuclear missile emplacement in this hemisphere. Castro was afraid that it would surely stimulate an immediate attack by the Americans.

Khrushchev held, however, that he would remove the missiles if President Kennedy agreed not to invade Cuba; and that was the deal he successfully negotiated.

The result: Cuba today is Communist and Fidel Castro remains its Communist leader. Khrushchev pulled it off as he promised he would.