

# Khrushchev's Last Testament: Power and Peace

Former Soviet Leader Nikita Khrushchev, who died in 1971 at the age of 77, once warned a Kremlin colleague that he might some day rise from the grave and tell his tale, despite the silence imposed on him by the men who had forced him into retirement. This week TIME presents the first of two sets of excerpts from a forthcoming volume of memoirs in which Khrushchev makes good on his prophecy. He emerges as a candid, pungent and uniquely qualified commentator on recent Soviet history.

During the last four years of his life, Khrushchev dictated his reminiscences into a tape recorder. Transcriptions of the tapes, translated and edited by TIME Correspondent Strobe Talbott, formed the basis of *Khrushchev Remembers*, which was published by Little, Brown & Co. in 1970. TIME's new excerpts, from a sequel called *Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament*, a Little, Brown book that will go on sale in June, are also taken from tape recordings made by Khrushchev.

*The Last Testament* deals primarily with the period from Stalin's death in 1953, when Khrushchev became First Secretary of the Communist Party, until his own ouster from power in 1964. Although an important record of the past, the former Soviet leader's freewheeling reminiscences bear directly on many contemporary issues. He discusses hitherto unknown incidents that contributed to the present Moscow-Peking conflict. He provides insights into the Soviet missile buildup, and the mutual suspicions that prevented any Russian-U.S. arms limitations accord. Khrushchev also presents typically blunt assessments of contemporary world political figures he dealt with, including Mao Tse-tung, Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy and Richard Nixon.

Khrushchev resented his role in retirement as a "special pensioner"—or, as he put it, "a free cossack." One of the few compensations left to him was the freedom to talk about his years in power. This he did at great length and with obvious relish when anyone asked his views on past and present events. His family and friends did more than just listen; they prodded him with questions, and in 1967 urged him to begin tape-recording his stories.

Throughout the 180 hours of tapes that he is known to have made, Khrushchev stressed his concern that his version of events be told, so that future generations of Soviet historians, Communist theoreticians and ordinary Russian citizens would treat his memory with respect. Khrushchev and his family hoped that the memoirs might some day be published in the U.S.S.R., but they also feared that if the reminiscences did not reach the West before he died they might never appear anywhere. They would be impounded after his death by the authorities, and either locked up in party archives or destroyed.

Khrushchev was too shrewd and too proud to accept such a fate for what he called "the substance of my viewpoint." Though publicly powerless, he believed that as a loyal Soviet citizen he could dictate his reminiscences without provoking direct interference from the regime. His family, associates and friends screened the tapes for details of security matters and potentially compromising material. These they removed.

Khrushchev did all the dictating at his dacha in the village of Petrovo-Dalneye, 20 miles west of Moscow. His country villa was under the surveillance of secret police stationed in a separate guardhouse at the entrance to the fenced-in compound. The police kept a watchful eye on Khrushchev, but stayed out of the house where he lived with his wife Nina Petrovna. When the weather was good, Khrushchev took his tape recorder out-

doors. On many of the tapes there are sounds in the background of birds singing, children playing, and planes coming in to land at a nearby airport. Sometimes Khrushchev worked from rough notes, and he can be heard shuffling papers on the tapes.

He was seldom disciplined or methodical in his approach. Usually he rambled, telescoping years, people, and ideas. News, such as the deaths of North Viet Nam's Ho Chi Minh or Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin, would set him off on reminiscences that covered many subjects and years. But his comments on the details of events in which he participated were always graphic and sharp. Early in the project he worked with a primitive Russian tape recorder, which he had trouble operating. Later he used superior West German machines.

In 1970, three years after the taping began, Khrushchev's associates in the memoir project decided that it was time to act. Little, Brown and Time Inc. acquired the right to publish the first portion of the memoirs. In an introduction written for *Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament*, TIME Diplomatic Editor Jerrold L. Schecter, who was chief of the TIME-LIFE bureau in Moscow from 1968 until 1970, notes that: "Because these were the unsanctioned words of a deposed leader, the transcripts of the tapes were handled in much the same way as novels, poetry, and other 'underground' Soviet texts that reach the West unofficially are handled. We undertook not to disclose any specifics of how, by whom and when the material was transcribed or delivered. These restrictions are still in force today."

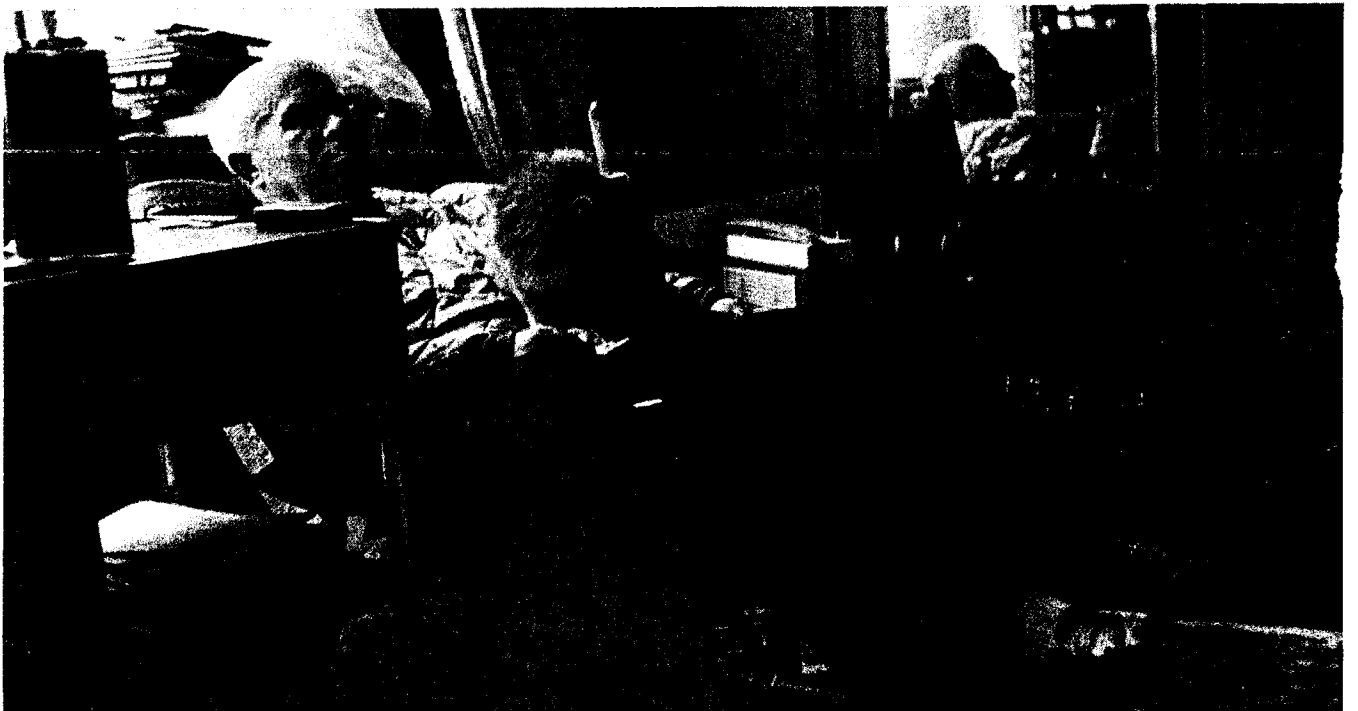
Time Inc. authenticated the tapes by voiceprint analysis—an electronic method of matching the voice patterns on the tapes with recorded Khrushchev speeches—and published *Khrushchev Remembers*, first as a series of four articles in LIFE, and subsequently as a Little, Brown book. Khrushchev himself was never involved directly with Little, Brown or Time Inc. Therefore, when the first volume of his memoirs was published in the West, he could truthfully tell an irate Arvid Pelshe, chairman of the Party Control Commission, that he had never "turned over" his memoirs to anyone. Under pressure from Pelshe, Khrushchev made a statement to that effect, which was issued by Tass, the official Soviet news agency, in November 1970. Ironically, it was the first time since his downfall that the former leader's name had appeared in public print in the U.S.S.R.

Later that month Khrushchev went to a hospital in the Kremlin for treatment of a heart condition. Almost four months passed before he was able to return to his dacha and his tape recorder. In the meantime, he saw a copy of *Khrushchev Remembers* and had the edited text translated back to him in Russian. He was pleased and decided to continue dictating his memoirs.

A few months after his death, additional tapes came into the hands of Time Inc. Like the tapes that were the basis for *Khrushchev Remembers*, these were also authenticated by voiceprint analysis; transcripts of the recordings were again translated and edited by Correspondent Talbott. British Kremlinologist and Khrushchev Biographer Edward Crankshaw, who introduced and annotated the first volume of his memoirs, has provided a preface for the sequel. He writes: "The chief value of the memoirs (and they have, it seems to me, a very great historical value) lies not in the facts they offer but in the state of mind they reveal, more often than not unconsciously, and the attitude not only of Khrushchev himself but also of the whole Soviet leadership to the world. In this respect I found the present volume even more fascinating than the first, though in a different way."

In March, Time Inc. gave all 180 hours of tape recordings and nearly 800,000 words of transcripts to the Oral History Collection of Columbia University. In announcing the acquisition of the material, Director Louis Starr said that the Khrushchev archive "is the most voluminous body of material by a foreign memoirist" in the collection. A team of experts at Columbia is now cataloguing the tapes and indexing the transcripts, which will be available for scholarly research.

FORMER SOVIET LEADER NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV IN REPOSE  
AT HIS DACHA IN PETROVO-DALNEYE OUTSIDE MOSCOW





## Memories of a Free Cossack

I'm a free cossack. A pensioner's lot is simply to exist from one day to the next—and to wait for the end. An idle old age isn't easy for anyone. It's especially difficult for someone who's lived through as tumultuous a career as mine. Now, after a lifetime of weathering countless storms, I've run aground. But I'm not grumbling. There comes a time when every man, no matter how important, gets old and feeble; his faculties begin to break down. I realize that I'm luckier than many people of my age. I haven't seen them, but I hear they just sit around opening and shutting their mouths like fish out of water; their eyes have dimmed; their memories have completely deserted them; they mumble incoherently.

I'm grateful my own memory is still intact. I'm thankful that I have an opportunity to look back and speak out, to express my views openly, to point out our deficiencies, to suggest how we could organize our society in a more harmonious way. I'm glad that I have a chance to make a few observations which might make it possible for people younger than I to enjoy their lives a bit more than people of my generation have been able to enjoy theirs.

Now that I'm back dictating my reminiscences, I should explain that for almost half a year I've been in the hospital. During that time many people asked me if it were true that I was writing my memoirs. When I answered, "No," they would look at me with surprise and disappointment and say, "That's too bad because it would be in-

teresting if you were to leave your memoirs to posterity." I agree.

I know that my recollections won't be of any use to those scholars who are covering up the true history of our party and whitewashing Stalin. Perhaps the people for whom I'm recording my memories aren't even born yet. Then again, maybe they are. Maybe they're the generation that's just coming into bloom. I hope so. I'm convinced that if this record of my long life and considerable political experience comes into the hands of objective, courageous scholars, they will find more than a few grains of truth in what I have to say.

I'm not denying that progress has been made. After Stalin's death and [Police Chief Lavrenty] Beria's arrest, our people began to feel freer. For the first time they received an opportunity to exercise their right to express their desires and their dissatisfactions. It is essential that people enjoy their inalienable rights here in the Soviet Union as in every other state. It was for these rights that ten million or more of our citizens paid with their lives in Stalin's jails and camps.

But the progress we achieved after Stalin's death has been slowed down, and my viewpoint runs counter to the line being pushed by our historians at the moment. I don't care. As they say, I'm no longer on my way to the fair; I started my journey home a long time ago. Who knows how many years my ticker has left to run.

Everything I've said in my memoirs I say as a Communist who wants a more enlightened Communist society—not for myself, because my time has already come and gone, but for my friends and for my people in the future.

## On Soviet Missile Development

In the 1950s we had become increasingly concerned about our navy, which consisted mostly of surface ships armed with outmoded artillery. Our military arranged for members of the leadership to inspect the Black Sea Fleet. I attended staff maneuvers on board a cruiser. One of our commanders gave a report on how "our" fleet had met and routed "the enemy" in the map exercises. He started rattling off how "our" fleet was sinking "enemy" ships right and left. He was terribly cocky. It made me sad to listen to him. Finally, I couldn't restrain myself any longer. I interrupted him and said: "Stop! Wait! You keep talking with such certainty about how you've made short work of the enemy, and now you're telling me there's nothing left to do but polish off the enemy. Have you really assessed the situation correctly? If this were a real war and not just a map exercise, your ships would all be lying on the bottom of the sea by now."

He looked at me with complete surprise.

I went on: "You haven't taken into account the missiles which the enemy would certainly be using against you from his shore defenses and from missile-launching planes. We have such a system ourselves, so surely the other side has it too. It's terribly dangerous to underestimate your enemy's capabilities."

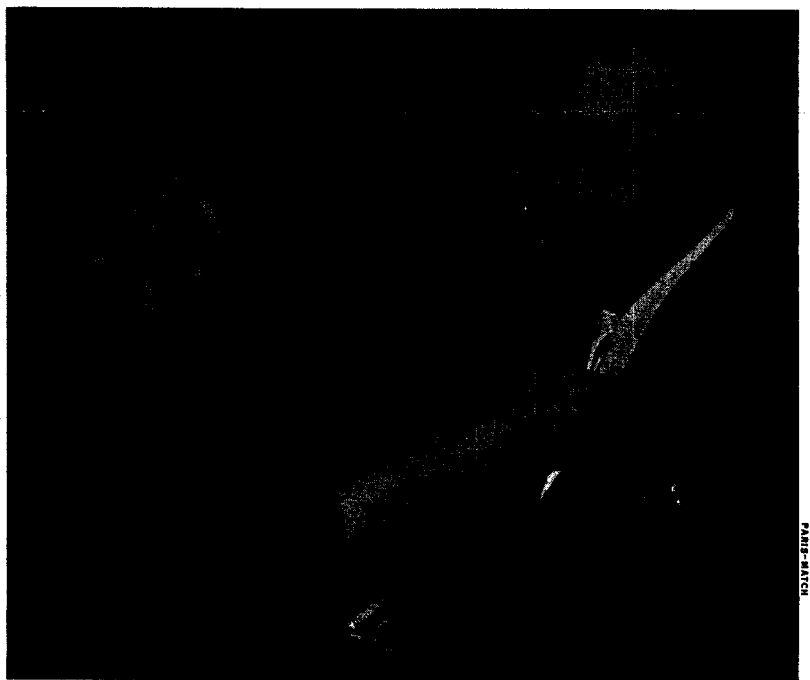
The commander was obviously perplexed. "Comrade Khrushchev," he said, "I've never heard of missile-launching planes before. You're telling me something entirely new."

"Then it's our own fault," I told him. "All this information must be classified." I turned to the other members of the Presidium and suggested, "Comrades, let's interrupt our conference and take our naval officers ashore so that they can familiarize themselves with our missile system. It's important that our commanders know both what we have and what the enemy has. Otherwise, in the event of war, they'll make crude miscalculations and get into big trouble." Either then and there, or later when we returned to Moscow, we decided to stop keeping everything secret from our military commanders.

*Khrushchev goes on to describe how the Russians developed their first rocket after Stalin's death in 1953. The project was supervised by Sergei Pavlovich Korolyov—"probably our most prominent and brilliant missile designer." Once, Khrushchev recalls, Korolyov reported to the leadership on his work.*

I don't want to exaggerate, but I'd say we gawked at what he showed us as if we were a bunch of sheep seeing through a gate for the first time. When he showed us one of his rockets, we thought it looked like nothing but a huge cigar-shaped tube, and we didn't believe it could fly. Korolyov took us on a tour

ON COLOR PAGE: KHRUSHCHEV PLAYING WITH GRANDCHILDREN OUTSIDE HIS DACHA & RELAXING IN HIS STUDY A FEW MONTHS BEFORE HIS DEATH. BELOW: WITH WIFE NINA PETROVNA IN 1959



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of a launching pad and tried to explain how the rocket worked. We were like peasants in a marketplace. We walked around and around the rocket, touching it, tapping it to see if it was sturdy enough. We did everything but lick it. Some people might say that we were technological ignoramuses.

*Several models of Korolyov's first test rocket, called Semyorka (Number 7) exploded. Khrushchev reveals that in one such incident in October 1960, Mikhail Yangel, a colleague of Korolyov's, survived only because he stepped into a special insulated smoking room to have a cigarette. Dozens of other witnesses, including Marshal Mitrofan Nedelin, then commander in chief of Soviet missile forces, were burned to death. Despite these early failures, Khrushchev notes that "thanks to Comrade Korolyov and his associates, we now had a rocket that could carry a nuclear warhead." The Semyorka, Khrushchev adds, paved the Soviet road into outer space.*

Some of my conversations with Comrade Korolyov made me worry that if war ever came, our enemy might be able to destroy our *Semyorka* before we could get it into the air. The rocket was fired from a launching pad which looked like a huge tabletop and could easily be detected by reconnaissance planes or satellites in orbit around the earth.

So what could we do to avoid detection? My experience early in life as a coal miner and later as a supervisor during the building of the Moscow Metro came in handy when I began trying to think of ways we could hide our missile sites from enemy reconnaissance. It

occurred to me that since missiles are cylindrical, we could put them into sunken covered shafts.

I told some engineers about my idea and asked them their views on the feasibility. They hemmed and hawed and finally told me they thought the idea wouldn't work. I was flabbergasted, but —always mindful of my political status —I realized I had no right to force the idea down their throats. I assumed these people knew their own professions, so I let the matter drop.

A year or more passed. My son Sergei, who's an engineer himself, had something to do with missiles and kept me informed on how the testing program was going. He also followed American publications closely. One day, to my surprise and delight, he told me that he'd read in some American journal that the U.S. had begun to replace launching pads with silos.

Look at this, Father," he said. "The Americans have introduced the plan which you thought up a year or so ago but which our people turned down." Now I felt justified in giving some orders. I summoned the people responsible and said, "Now look what's happened! The Americans have begun to dig the ballistic missile shafts which I proposed a long time ago. Let's get started on this program right away."

I don't think it was until after my retirement that we completely converted our missile system from launching pads to sunken silos, but I was proud of my role in originating the idea and later seeing that the conversion was begun.

## Troubles with Intellectuals

*In 1949, after the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb, there was speculation in the Western press that famed Nuclear Scientist Pyotr Kapitsa had played a crucial role in the bomb's development. But Kapitsa, according to Khrushchev, refused to get involved in military research. Here is Khrushchev's version of their relationship.*

I asked him, "Comrade Kapitsa, why won't you work on something of military significance? We badly need you to work on our defense program." To the best of my recollection, he answered, "I'm a scientist, and scientists are like artists. They want other people to talk about their work, to make movies about it, to write articles about it in the newspapers. The trouble with military topics is that they're all secret. If a scientist does research in defense problems, he has to bury himself behind the walls of an institute and never be heard of again. His name disappears from print. I don't want that to happen to me. I want to be famous. I want other people to write and talk about my work."

I must admit that this line of reasoning made a strange impression on me —one not at all favorable to Academician Kapitsa.

"Comrade Kapitsa," I said, "what choice do we have? We're forced to concentrate on military matters. As long as there are antagonistic classes and antagonistic states with armies, we simply must push ahead with defense research. Otherwise we'll be choked to death, smashed to pieces, trampled in the dirt."

"Not I, I refuse to have anything to do with military matters."

How could a Soviet citizen say such a thing? A man who'd lived through World War II and seen what our people had suffered at the hands of Hitler. If he had made the same speech to Stalin, you can be sure Stalin would have drawn a very different conclusion, although I admit I was upset.

Then Kapitsa expressed a desire to go abroad. I could tell he wanted the press to raise a lot of hoopla about his traveling to other countries. We deliberated the matter in the leadership. Even though we had let [Atomic Physicist Igor] Kurchatov go to England [in 1956], we decided to wait a while before sending Kapitsa abroad. We still hadn't accumulated enough atomic weapons. Therefore it was essential that we keep secret from our enemies any and all information which might tip them off about how little we had.

We knew Kapitsa had many friends and colleagues in the West, and we were afraid that if we let him make his trip, he might drop a few words here, a few words there. I have to admit that [one] reason I refused Kapitsa permission was possibly that Stalin was still belching inside me. Keep in mind, I'd worked under

ATOMIC PHYSICIST KURCHATOV & KHRUSHCHEV ABOARD A SOVIET CRUISER IN 1956



THE LIFE PICTURE ARCHIVE

Stalin for years and years, and you don't free yourself from [Stalinist] habits so easily. It takes time to become conscious of your shortcomings and free yourself.

Now that I've told the story, I feel I've done penance. Kapitsa, too, is only human, and he made a mistake by refusing to work on military problems. My mistake was in refusing to let him go abroad. So, as people used to say when I was a child, we can call it quits. I now ask Academician Kapitsa, whom I've always respected as a great scientist, to forgive me.

I would like to compare Kapitsa with another of our most brilliant nuclear physicists, Academician [Andrei] Sakharov.\* He, too, had misgivings about military research. I used to meet frequently with Sakharov, and I considered him an extremely talented man.

Literally a day or two before the resumption of our [hydrogen] bomb testing program, I got a telephone call from Sakharov. He addressed me in my capacity as the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and said he had a petition to present. The petition called on our government to cancel the scheduled explosion and not to engage in any further testing, at least not of the hydrogen bomb. "As a scientist and as the designer of the hydrogen bomb, I know what harm these explosions can bring down on the head of mankind."

"Comrade Sakharov," I said, "you must understand my position. My responsibilities do not allow me to cancel the tests. Our party and government have already made abundantly clear that we would like nothing better than to suspend nuclear testing forever. Our leadership has already unilaterally discontinued nuclear testing and called on the United States and other countries to follow our example for the good of all mankind. The Americans wouldn't listen to our proposals. As a scientist, surely you know that they've gone right on conducting their tests. If we don't test our own bombs, how will we know whether they work or not?"

He wasn't satisfied. He still insisted that we not resume our own testing.

I wanted to be absolutely frank with him: "Comrade Sakharov, believe me, I deeply sympathize with your point of view. But as the man responsible for the security of our country, I have no right to do what you're asking. For me to cancel the tests would be a crime against our state. Can't you understand that?"

My arguments didn't change his mind, and his didn't change mine; but that was to be expected. The scientist in him saw his patriotic duty and performed it well, while the pacifist in him made him hesitate. I have nothing against pacifists—or at least I won't have anything against them if and when we create conditions which make war impossible. But as long as we live in a

\*Sakharov's account of this conversation appears in his book *Sakharov Speaks*, which is being published May 31 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.



BORIS PASTERNAK OUTSIDE HIS DACHA IN PEREDELKINO (1955)

world in which we have to keep both eyes open lest the imperialists gobble us up, then pacifism is a dangerous sentiment.

This conflict between Sakharov and me left a lasting imprint on us both. I took it as evidence that he didn't fully understand what was in the best interests of the state, and therefore from that moment on I was somewhat on my guard with him. I hope that the time will come when Comrade Sakharov will see the correctness of my position—if not now, then some time in the future.

Despite such disagreements with some scientists, I believe that by the very nature of their activity the technological intelligentsia do not interfere in the more complicated spheres of social life, namely in ideology. A more difficult and slippery problem is posed by the creative intelligentsia. Our creative intelligentsia suffer more than any other category of people in our society. Materially, they're better off than other categories, but spiritually, members of the creative intelligentsia are troubled.

Creative work, especially by writers, has a tendency to interfere in the political sphere. Writers are forever delving into questions of philosophy and ideology—questions on which any ruling party, including the Communist Party, would like to have a monopoly.

After Stalin's death [Boris] Pasternak wrote *Doctor Zhivago* and tried to get it published. There was a terrific commotion about this novel and how to handle it. I was informed and had an opportunity to influence the decision of whether or not to publish it—which boiled down to a question of whether or not to accept the advice of someone who was reporting to us—but I failed to act. I have firm grounds for saying that if I had influenced the decision [by coming out in favor of publication], I would have been supported. But I did nothing, and now I regret it.

Pasternak worked hard on *Doctor Zhivago*. The manuscript found its way abroad, where it was published and caused a stir. It obtained recognition and was awarded the Nobel Prize, though I can't say to what extent his work deserved it. Anyway, Pasternak was chosen to be a Nobel Prize laureate, while here [in the Soviet Union] there were administrative and police measures. When dealing with creative minds, administrative measures are always most destructive and nonprogressive. His book was put into cold storage; it was banned. The decision to use police methods put a whole different coloration on the affair and left a bad aftertaste for a long time to come. People raised a storm of protest against the Soviet Union for not allowing Pasternak to go abroad to receive the prize. I said, "Let's go ahead



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and publish the book so that Pasternak will be able to go abroad and pick up his award. We'll give him a passport and some hard currency to make the trip."

Then quite unexpectedly Pasternak let it be known through a statement in the newspapers that he had no intention of going abroad, and that he wasn't even going to raise the question.

**T**o this day I haven't read his book and therefore can't judge it. People who've spoken to me about it say they don't have any special admiration for the artistic aspect of the work, but that's beside the point. To judge an author and to judge his work are two different matters. If the book was really of low artistic quality, then that judgment should be left up to the reader.

In connection with *Doctor Zhivago*, some might say it's too late for me to say that I regret the book wasn't published. Yes, maybe it is too late. But better late than never.

In general, I think we should be more tolerant and extend wider opportunities to our creative intelligentsia. While personally I'm against the new schools of painting, sculpture and music, that doesn't mean I see any need for resorting to administrative and police measures.

## Dealing with a "Matsadoon"

You might say that China is both close to us and far from us. It's close in that it's our next-door neighbor and shares a long border with our country. At the same time, China is far away in that the Chinese have little in common with our people.

[I remember when] Mao Tse-tung was in Moscow for Stalin's 70th birthday on Dec. 21, 1949. I came up from Kiev and ran into a secretary of the Moscow District party.

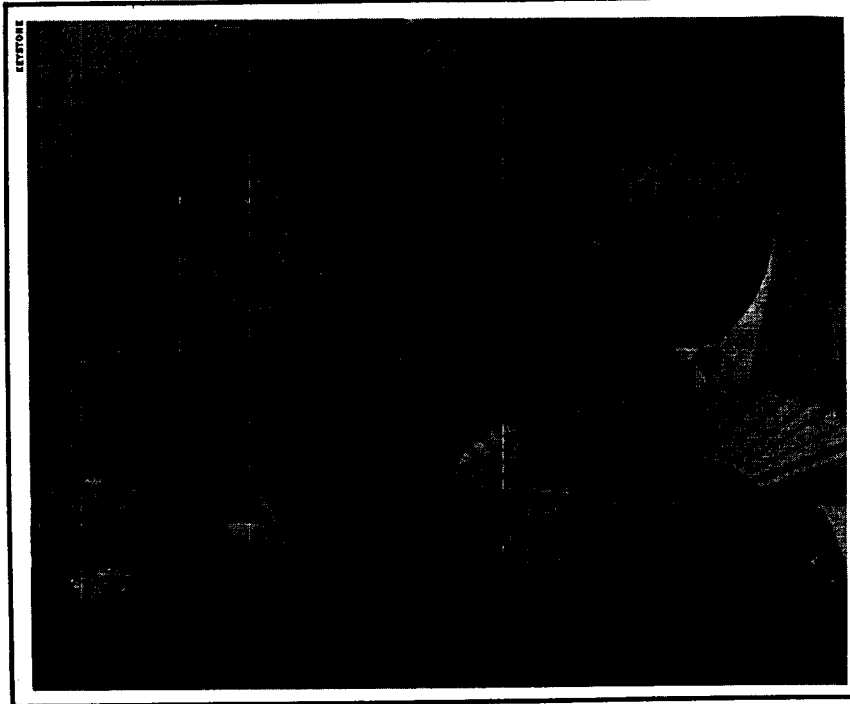
"Anything new?" I asked him.

"Yeah," he said, "we've got this Matsadoon in town."

"What the hell is a Matsadoon? You must mean Mao Tse-tung, don't you?"

"You know," he said, "that Chinaman."

During Mao's stay, Stalin would sometimes not lay eyes on him for days at a time, and since Stalin neither saw Mao nor ordered anyone else to entertain him, no one dared go see him. Rumors began reaching our ears that Mao was not at all happy, that he was under lock and key, and that everyone was ignoring him. Mao let it be known that if the situation continued, he would leave. When Stalin heard about Mao's complaints, I think he had another dinner for him. Stalin was anxious to create the impression that we were on the best of terms with Mao and firmly on the side of the Chinese people. Finally, the Chinese delegation returned to Peking.



CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG & KHRUSHCHEV IN PEKING (AUGUST 1958)

*During that period, much of the Kremlin's information about the Chinese came from Kao Kang, who was then the representative of the Chinese Politburo and the strongman in Manchuria. To win Mao's trust and friendship, Khrushchev says, Stalin gave Mao reports by the Soviet ambassador in Manchuria about his conversations with Kao, saying, "Here, you might be interested in these."*

*Kao Kang was put under house arrest, and later died. Khrushchev's opinion is that "most probably, Mao had him strangled or poisoned. Mao was capable of such things, just as Stalin was." Why did Stalin betray Kao Kang? Khrushchev's judgment is that the Soviet dictator figured that sooner or later Mao would have learned on his own that Kao Kang had been informing on him and, if that had happened, Mao could have accused Stalin of fomenting opposition to the Chinese government. "Stalin wanted to win Mao's trust and friendship, so he took reports about conversations with Kao Kang and handed them to Mao... Stalin decided to sacrifice Kao Kang and thereby earn Mao's trust."*

*During a 1954 visit to Peking, Khrushchev and his colleagues proposed that Chinese workers be sent to Siberia to help exploit its vast timber resources.*

Mao's response to our proposal was typical of him—and indicative of what was to come. He really knew how to put us down. First, you have to imagine what Mao was like in person. He moved as calmly and slowly as a bear, swaying from side to side. He would look at you for a long time, then lower his eyes and begin talking in a relaxed, quiet voice:

"You know, Comrade Khrushchev, for years it's been a widely held view that because China is an underdeveloped and overpopulated country with widespread unemployment, it represents a good source of cheap labor. But you know, we Chinese find this attitude very offensive. Coming from you, it's rather embarrassing."

Obviously, Mao wanted to make us sorry we'd raised the question. At our next meeting I said, "Comrade Mao, we certainly had no intention of creating difficulties for you. We certainly don't insist on our proposition. If you feel it would damage China's national pride, then by all means forget we mentioned it. We'll make do with our workers."

[Later] the Chinese came back with a message to the effect that Mao was now willing to help us by accepting our original proposal.

**W**e were sorry we'd ever suggested the idea, but since we'd been the first to propose the plan, we couldn't very well back down now that the Chinese had agreed. So, reluctantly, we decided to go through with a treaty and let the first batch of about 200,000 Chinese laborers come to work in Siberia. As soon as their time was up, we deliberately avoided initiating negotiations for any further treaties. However, the Chinese began pressing us to import more workers into Siberia, despite what Mao had said about resenting China's being used as a cheap labor pool.

At a later meeting with Mao, I apologized for having overestimated our need to import labor. We made sure that

once the contracts for the Chinese in Siberia had expired, they weren't renewed; and the workers went home.

What had the Chinese been up to? I'll tell you: they wanted to occupy Siberia without war. They wanted to penetrate and take over the Siberian economy. They wanted to make sure the Chinese settlers in Siberia outnumbered Russians and people of other nationalities who lived there. In short, they wanted to make Siberia Chinese rather than Russian. It was a clever maneuver, but it didn't work.

Like Stalin, Mao never recognized his comrades as his equals. He treated the people around him like pieces of furniture, useful for the time being but expendable. When, in his opinion, a piece of furniture—or a comrade—became worn out, he would just throw it away and replace it.

As the preachers used to say, no one under the sun is immortal, and the hour will come when Mao Tse-tung will also have to depart from the political arena. A ray of sunshine will break through the clouds and show the Chinese people the way back to the path set for us by Marx and Lenin. Mao is too old to see that ray of sunshine himself, but no one lives forever. In the end, the time will come when China will return to a correct policy toward the U.S.S.R. and the other Socialist countries.

## Questions in a Kitchen

Not long before President Eisenhower invited me to visit the United States, the Americans organized an exhibition in Sokolniki Park. Mr. Nixon, the Vice President of the United States, came to Moscow for the opening. He and I went together to see a display supposedly showing a typical American kitchen. I began to inspect the appliances. There were some interesting things, but there were also a number of things which seemed purely for show and of no use. Once I'd commented on this I had swallowed the hook and was caught in a lengthy conversation with Nixon which newsmen would refer to for years to come as characterizing Soviet-American relations.

The conversation began like this: I picked up an automatic device for squeezing lemon juice for tea and said, "What a silly thing for your people to exhibit in the Soviet Union, Mr. Nixon. All you need for tea is a couple of drops of lemon juice. I think it would take a housewife longer to use this gadget than it would for her to do what our housewives do: slice a piece of lemon, drop it into a glass of tea, then squeeze a few drops out with a spoon. I don't think this appliance of yours is an improvement in any way. In fact, you can squeeze a lemon faster by hand. This kind of nonsense is an insult to our intelligence."

Well, Nixon disagreed, and he tried to bring me around to his way of thinking, arguing in that very exuberant way of his. I responded in kind. The debate began to flare up and went on and on. The newsmen pressed around us with their tape recorders going and their microphones shoved into our faces.

After a while I put a direct question to him: "Mr. Nixon, you've brought all this wonderful equipment here to show us, but have you really put it into widespread use? Do American housewives have it in their kitchens?" To be fair, Nixon answered honestly that what they were showing us hadn't yet come onto the market. At that point people burst out laughing. I said, "Hah! So you're showing off to us

a representative of the world's largest capitalist country. I'm not saying that America doesn't have great riches, as well as technological skills. Of course it does; what's true is true. I'm just talking about the exhibit, which consisted mostly of a bunch of photographs, some household products you won't find in any household,\* and some pieces of sculpture which were good for nothing but laughing and spitting at.

So much for my first introduction to Richard Nixon. I'd known of him from the press since long before because he'd occupied a special position among American political leaders. We considered him a man of reactionary views, a man hostile to the Soviet Union. In a word, he was a McCarthyite.

However, I'd like to add a final word

HOWARD SOCHUREK—LIFE



KHRUSHCHEV & RICHARD NIXON DURING THE FAMOUS "KITCHEN DEBATE" IN 1959

a lot of stuff which you haven't even introduced in your own country! You thought you'd get us to ooh and ahh over all this junk you've brought here!"

Of course, what we were really debating was a question of two opposing systems: capitalism and socialism. The Americans wanted to impress Russians with a lot of fancy gadgets. They were sure that Russians wouldn't know the difference if the exhibit included some things which most American housewives have never laid eyes on. To a certain extent the organizers of the exhibit may have been right about this. They wanted the Russians to think, "So this is the sort of equipment they have in capitalist countries! Why don't we have such things under socialism?" That was the idea, anyway, unrealistic as it may have been. As for Nixon, he was behaving as

about Nixon. When I was in retirement, Nixon came to the Soviet Union [in April 1965]. After he'd already flown away, I learned that he had found out where my apartment was and had tried to come see me. He thought I was living in the city and wanted to call on me. He was told I wasn't there. To be honest, I very much regretted missing him. I was touched that he would take the trouble in view of the fact that our relations had always been tense. On the occasions we met we rarely exchanged kind words. More often than not we bickered. But he showed genuine human courtesy when he tried to see me after my retirement. I'm very sorry I didn't have an opportunity to thank him and to shake hands with him.

\*Actually, the kitchen was typical of what could be found in a \$15,000 American house in 1959.