

# Soviet Views of U.S. Show A Frightening 'Mind Gap'

By Chalmers M. Roberts  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Nikita Khrushchev's memoirs, one of the most sensational of modern times, are a compendium of self-serving accounts by the former Kremlin boss and an insight into the nature of Soviet leadership and attitudes toward the United States.

They should not be taken as the verbatim truth. There is too much evidence to the contrary on many of the stories he recounts. This is especially so of his ac-

## News Analysis

count, in the final *Life* installment out today, of what Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin reported that the then Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy, had said to Dobrynin.

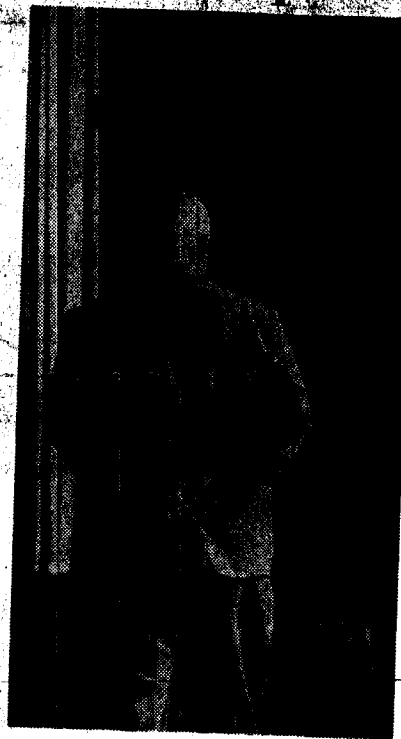
Nonetheless, Khrushchev's account is invaluable as an insight into the working of the mind of the man who ran the Soviet Union, an insight that in many ways can be applied to Khrushchev's successors in the Kremlin today.

Above all what Khrushchev shows us is the terrible and often frightening gap between the American and the Soviet mind, between the way Washington and Moscow view any given international event in this nuclear age. The ideological blinders are all too evident.

It is now accepted beyond doubt by the Washington Kremlinologists that the Khrushchev memoirs are genuine. They were verbal, spoken into a recording machine over a period of time and assembled by *Life* during the past year into a more coherent whole. The 1967 NBC television tape by Khrushchev appears to form a part of the *Life* memoirs.

It is understood that *Life*, in seeking to authenticate the tapes that came into its hands by means still secret, made voice prints which matched with prints of tapes of Khrushchev's speeches in the West.

Just why the memoirs have surfaced



Magnum Photo

now cannot be determined. Some theorize that Khrushchev simply wanted to tell his story; others that he feared his country was moving back toward the Stalinism he had denounced. From this some deduce that the tapes were brought to the West by parties within the current Soviet regime who are involved in a power struggle, hoping to enhance their own position by publication abroad.

See MEMOIRS, A17, Col. 1

# U.S. and Soviet Views Reveal a 'Mind Gap'

## MEMOIRS, From A1

The first three Life installments, all from what is said to be a huge book to be published this month, center on life with Stalin, before, during and after World War II. The amazing thing is that so much of what Khrushchev tells us is a confirmation of what was known, in bits and pieces, in the West but which so many refused to believe, especially during the wartime alliance, about the Soviet dictator.

The many details Khrushchev adds, even taken as self-justification and with an eye at his enemies, form a Byzantine picture of how a great nation was run at the whim of an absolute dictator who was ignorant of so much that went on within his own country.

The final installment, the most fascinating in terms of current Soviet-American problems, tells much about the backdrop, in the Soviet mind, to current problems over Berlin, Cuba and the arms race—and, in the larger sense, about the problem of how the two nuclear superpowers must coexist, and with China too, if they are not to unleash a war that will destroy all.

Khrushchev's account of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, even with plentiful allowances for his self-serving contentions, is final proof of what a disaster the Bay of Pigs was for the United States, a disaster ranging so far beyond the immediate fiasco. Here was planted the seed in Khrushchev's mind that there would be

"the inevitable second invasion" that would crush the Castro regime.

One can accept as at least partial truth Khrushchev's putting missiles into Cuba to deter the United States, missiles that could destroy New York, Chicago and "a little village like Washington," as he puts it. Only cool nerves on both sides prevented disaster.

One cannot believe Khrushchev's account of Robert Kennedy's words. But one wonders whether what Khrushchev reports Kennedy told the Soviet ambassador might have been the ambassador's own view as reported to Moscow. After all, Khrushchev was taping his memoirs without benefit of the files of what Dobrynin actually sent him. Certainly Dobrynin is not going to tell us.

The history of Soviet-American affairs is the familiar one of action-reaction. Khrushchev adds to the proof, much as many American memoirs, such as Dean Acheson's, have on this side.

It would be wrong to read Khrushchev's memoirs as simply proving the bloody-mindedness of the Kremlin. Rather, the correct epitaph, for Americans, to these remarkable memoirs is President Kennedy's admonition in his 1963 American University speech.

"We must examine our own attitude, as individuals and as a nation, for our attitude is as essential as theirs" if disaster is to be avoided.