

Nixon's Big Problem Now: Russia

By Drew Pearson
and Jack Anderson

Biggest problem facing Richard Nixon when he becomes President will be relations with the only other nation which has a nuclear stockpile — Soviet Russia.

It is also the nation with the biggest arsenal of missiles—next to ours — the second biggest Navy in the world, and a standing army bigger than ours.

One week after he became President, Lyndon Johnson decided that if the two most powerful nations in the world — the USA and USSR — could cooperate, there could be world peace.

Since then he has worked hard at this policy, and on the whole it has paid off. The Russians have curbed their plutonium stockpile, lived up to the Test-Ban Treaty, signed the very important Non-Proliferation Pact, signed a consular pact which we wanted more than they, opened a direct airline between Moscow and New York, and expressed their willingness last spring to discuss a limitation of missiles and of anti-ballistic missile networks.

Incidentally, we have found the Russians scrupulous in living up to treaty agreements. Satellite observation is such that our intelligence services have an excellent idea what Soviet missile strength is and what tests are being made. Ever since the Cuban missile

crisis, we have found that the Russians have been careful about their statements. In the recent Vietnam truce talks they did not promise too much, but made good on what they did.

Nixon, however, will approach Soviet-American relations with some handicaps. He has urged postponement of Senate action on the vitally important Non-Proliferation Pact. He has said during the recent campaign that he favored going ahead with the \$50 billion anti-ballistic missile network; also wants to increase the missile stockpile. This is just the opposite of the Johnson policy.

Nixon's Kitchen Debate

Previously Nixon had visited Russia, engaged in the so-called kitchen debate with Nikita Khrushchev which he used in his subsequent election campaign to put Khrushchev in a bad light. The Russians had gone out of their way to give Nixon a rousing welcome and remember vividly how Nixon turned a gesture of Russian hospitality into a matter of political expediency.

They also remember how he climbed to political power by falsely claiming that such non-Communists as Rep. Jerry Voorhis and Rep. Helen Gahagan Douglas of California were pro-Communist. All of this gives the new President a

reputation for insincerity and political expediency with the government with which he must now do business if he is to continue the present policy of Soviet-American peacekeeping for the world.

However, the Russians are pragmatic people. They also recognize pragmatism when they see it, and they see it in Mr. Nixon.

Shortly before he was nominated at Miami Beach, he approached the State Department with a view to visiting Moscow. The Russians agreed. This is not hearsay, but fact. Then, following the Czech invasion, Nixon decided it would not be smart politics for him to go to Russia, and the trip was called off.

However, you can be pretty sure the Russians will still talk to Nixon. They'll probably keep their fingers crossed and be more wary than with LBJ whom they had come to trust. But the basic point is that the Russians, even including most of the hardliners, believe that the future of world peace depends on cooperation between the two super-powers.

They recognize that the United States and the Soviet now have very similar problems, even down to students. In Prague the Czech students have been rioting against Moscow very much as Mexican students are rioting against the United States. The Russians will also deftly remind

you — when you criticize their armed invasion of Czechoslovakia — that the United States put 20,000 troops into the tiny Dominican Republic only a short time ago for exactly the same reason the Russians went into Czechoslovakia: namely refusal to let a foreign ideology get planted in a country very close to one's own.

Special Senate Session

The question of Nixon's cooperation with Russia will first come to a head if President Johnson calls a special session of the Senate to ratify the nuclear Non-Proliferation Pact. He has been seriously considering such a move.

The Non-Proliferation Pact was negotiated with great difficulty. While the United States and the Soviet Union had little trouble reaching an agreement, they had great trouble with smaller countries.

West Germany, Italy, and Brazil, all good friends and allies of the United States, were extremely reluctant about giving up their right to nuclear production.

The Soviet also had trouble with some of its allies such as Romania, though Romania in the end signed the pact.

President Johnson feels that time is of the essence.

LBJ is hoping that now that Nixon is elected he will change his mind about the pact.

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