

Khrushchev Is Living Sad, Lonely Life--Interviewer

Ex-Leader Resides in Fenced Compound

NEW YORK (AP) — Former Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev is described in a magazine as living "a sad and relatively lonely life" with his wife, Nina, in a seven-acre fenced compound 15 miles southwest of Moscow.

The description is given in a Parade magazine article, "What the Russians Have Done to Nikita Khrushchev," by editor Jess Gorkin. He says Khrushchev's "old comrades, including his proteges, avoid him like a plague."

Gorkin says he made his contact for the story some time ago through a Russian newsman, whom he did not identify. He did say it is not Alexei Adzhubei, Khrushchev's son-in-law, as reported by some sources. Adzhubei is the former editor of Izvestia who now has a lesser job on the Soviet publication.

PARADE ARTICLE

The Parade article says the Khrushchevs' four-bedroom country home is one of 10 in the compound, which has a guardhouse protecting the entrance.

Gorkin supplies this description of what he calls the 73-year-old Khrushchev's "life in limbo":

"Nikita and his wife are attended by two maids, two cooks, a gardener, two chauffeurs, all paid for by the state. As a pensioner, he receives 550 rubles — \$600—a month.

SAD AND LONELY

"Khrushchev lives a sad and relatively lonely life. He sees few people outside his immediate family. Occasionally an old friend will make an appointment to chat, but his many ex-colleagues, even though they live nearby, stay away from this political leper.

"The result is that Khrushchev

spends much of his time taking long walks, a small transistor radio nestled comfortably in his left shoulder holster. To help fill his time, he has taken up photography. He does his own darkroom work, has developed into a fair amateur photographer.

"Khrushchev's precipitous descent from the power pinnacle in 1964 traumatized him badly. For six months he moped about the house, an abject figure. He lost 32 pounds and his sense of humor. His downfall was so psychologically painful to him that today his wife, under no circumstances, will permit the subject to be broached in his presence.

FAVORITE AMERICAN

"Khrushchev's favorite American is the late President John F. Kennedy. The American who irritated him most was Norris Poulson, a former mayor of Los Angeles. When Khrushchev describes how Poulson greeted him at the Los Angeles airport in 1959 and criticized him at a civic dinner, the old man scowls and his bullneck reddens.

"For the gregarious Khrushchev, life in limbo has been torment. Even his neighbors in the compound, all lesser lights in the Soviet hierarchy, keep aloof from him. They felt awkward over what to say to the man who once towered over them. At most, they may engage briefly in small talk about the weather or local agriculture.

"Except for an occasional 30-minute drive to Moscow, he doesn't venture beyond a 25-mile radius, though free to travel anywhere in Russia."

STORY GATHERED

The story information was garnered in conjunction with the National Broadcasting Co.

"On a typical day," Parade says, "Khrushchev will rise around 6:30 a. m., gulp down a glass of fruit juice or chew on an apple and begin to read the morning newspaper." After breakfast, "if the weather permits, he will later take a leisurely, reflective stroll. Usually he is accompanied by his dog."

STRICT DIET

Khrushchev is on a strict diet and is forbidden fried foods and alcohol except for an occasional sip of wine, the article continues. He was hospitalized with gall bladder trouble last year. "Otherwise he is in good health, but the doctor checks him over every fortnight.

"He settles down with a book after lunch. In the evenings, he may watch television or run a film on his own 16mm projector if his engineer son, Sergei, is around to operate it. He likes documentaries, particularly about the 1917-18 Revolution.

"Still an old Bolshevik, his fall from power has not budged him in the least from his stubborn conviction that communism is still the best way to the moon, the planets, and paradise on earth."