

How Khrushchev Rated Presidents

NEW YORK — (UPI) — Former Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev respected John F. Kennedy more than any other U.S. leader mentioned in "Khrushchev Remembers," published in Life magazine.

Of others, he said Richard M. Nixon was "unprincipled," Dwight D. Eisenhower "soft" in character and John Foster Dulles "a vicious cur."

Khrushchev said that when he met with Kennedy in 1961 in Vienna he joked that Russia was responsible for his 1960 presidential victory over Nixon, whom he called a "son of a bitch."

"I explained that by waiting to release the U-2 pilot Gary Power until after the American election, we kept Nixon from being able to claim that he could deal with the Russians; our ploy made a difference of at least half a million votes, which gave Kennedy the edge he needed," Khrushchev wrote.

"As for Nixon, I had been all too familiar with him in the past. He had been a puppet of (Sen. Joseph) McCarthy until McCarthy's star began to fade, at which point Nixon turned on him. So he was an unprincipled puppet, which is the most dangerous kind."

At the Geneva meeting of 1955, Khrushchev said

Dulles, Eisenhower's secretary of state, would hand Eisenhower notes which the president read before making a decision. Khrushchev had hoped that Eisenhower and Marshal Georgi Zhukov, wartime friends, would get a chance to talk together.

"But that vicious cur Dulles was always prowling around Eisenhower, snapping at him if he got out of line," Khrushchev said.