

Dick's Loyal Fan Club



Arthur Hoppe

“WELCOME to Russia, Dick. Again. And tell me, how do you like Yalta?”

“Just fine, Leonid. But I wish you wouldn't refer to it as Yalta. Yalta Conferences aren't too popular back home. That's why we insisted our conference be held here in Oreanda, which is definitely not Yalta, but a suburb of Yalta.”

“Oreanda? Anything you say, Dick. In fact, we'll even put Oreanda on our maps, if you'd like. I just hope the Mayor of Yalta won't mind.”

“Thank you, Leonid. And now let's get our business over with and sign those treaties.”

“Don't you think we should negotiate a little first, Dick?”

“Negotiate? What's to negotiate? We agreed on the phone that we'd sign two trade agreements, one partial test ban and a cultural exchange program under which we give you The Boston Pops in return for two utility woodwind players and an undisclosed sum of cash. I will then hole up in my room with my Guy Lombardo records while Henry issues daily bulletins about our 'friendly and fruitful' negotiations. And at the end of the week, we hold a beaming conference proclaiming 'a giant stride toward a generation of peace.'”

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“I KNOW that was the official agenda, Dick. But since then I thought you might want to sweeten the pot a little.”

“Since when?”

“Well, since the Judiciary Committee is about to make public its evidence, Colson is about to testify, the Supreme Court is about to rule on the tapes, and you are about to be in even more hot water.”

“Hmmm. What did you have in mind, Leonid?”

“Well, Dick, I can't tell you how much I admire your Air Force One.”

“Oh no you don't, Leonid! Sadat took my \$2 million helicopter. But how would it look if I came home this time without my airplane?”

“You're right, Dick. We certainly don't want to add to your troubles. How about New Jersey instead? Deliverable, of course, on or after January 1, 1977?”

“Not New Jersey, Leonid. During my last campaign I told Newark it was one of the most beautiful cities in the nation. And they really rolled out the vote. What about Massachusetts? According to the returns, they're nothing but a bunch of no-good Commies — no offense.”

“It's a deal, Dick. And in exchange, I'll give you a warm handshake in front of the cameras and a statement about what a tough, brilliant international bargainer you are.”

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“THAT'S white of you, Leonid. But why are you doing all these nice things for me?”

“Frankly, Dick, we've never enjoyed dealing with a capitalist leader more. And there's your popularity to consider too. In fact, a recent poll showed 100 per cent prayed you would serve out your full term of office.”

“Gosh, Leonid, that's great! Where was it taken?”

“In the Kremlin, Dick.”

“Gee, Leonid, it's heartwarming to know there's one place in the world where I'm always surrounded by dear, loyal fans who are universally worried about my future.”