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Kyle A. Kordon
Chapman University

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Khrushchev Comes to America: The Advent of Mutual Understanding

Kyle A. Kordon

In September 1959 the Soviet Premier, Nikita S. Khrushchev, visited the United States for about two weeks. This was the first visit by a Soviet head of state to America and for that reason alone it was a momentous occasion;¹ however, the purpose and timing of the visit escalated the visit's importance exponentially. Dr. Sergei Khrushchev² - the son of the late Soviet Premier - believed that this visit "had a different nature and different purpose because it was the beginning of the mutual interaction of the two worlds."³ While Khrushchev's fundamental purpose was to gain a better understanding of what America was, U.S. officials at the time were worried that he came to the U.S. solely to discuss foreign policy with President Eisenhower. Khrushchev did, in fact, want to talk about politics⁴: the need for a peace treaty between East Germany and the United States,⁵ the necessity of complete and universal disarmament, and the mutual advantages that would result from the establishment of trade relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁶ Obtaining peaceful coexistence had been a Soviet priority since the 20th Party Congress in 1956, but ultimately Khrushchev came to the America in September 1959 to develop a mutual understanding between the Soviet Union and the United States, and although his success has been debated, he was able to accomplish his goal. Khrushchev hoped that mutual understanding would eventually lead to the acquisition of peaceful coexistence, but he understood that smaller steps needed to be taken first. Even though the U-2 spy-plane incident in May 1960 was a setback for mutual understanding, Khrushchev's trip the United States resulted in a better mutual understanding of the core Cold War positions, which, was a major reason that the Cold War did not turn hot in the next decade.

Even though Khrushchev's son Sergei, and some others, have argued that the 1959 visit to the United States had a significant immediate impact on the Cold War, most have ignored the impact of the visit on Soviet-American relations altogether. Some asserted that the trip had a significant impact on Khrushchev and Soviet-American relations but failed to explain adequately how and why. While most historians acknowledged that the trip took place in their respective writings, the majority did not believe that any substantial steps were made toward any Soviet-American diplomatic agreements, and for that reason they have declared the trip a diplomatic failure.

For the most part scholars have failed to acknowledge that Khrushchev hoped to establish a mutual understanding with the United States on this visit. This idea was embodied by the simple exchange of views on certain issues so that the two sides understood not only the position of the other, but also understood the reasons each had for their perspectives. This mutual understanding also went beyond diplomatic comprehension and extended to seeing America's people, to becoming familiar with American culture, and to experiencing what the United States had to offer. This is the success that most scholars have failed to

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recognize, and the reason that the majority of scholars believed that nothing was accomplished on Khrushchev's trip to America.

In his article in *Khrushchev and Khrushchevism*, Harry Hanak⁷ discussed Soviet foreign policy in the post-Stalin era through 1975. In regard to the exchange of visits between Eisenhower and Khrushchev, Hanak noted that "one of the purposes of the visits was to establish this personal contact with (Eisenhower) that Khrushchev regarded as vital."⁸ Hanak also notes that America held a special position in Khrushchev's mind:

I'll admit I was curious to have a look at America, although it wouldn't be my first trip abroad. After all, I'd been to England, Switzerland, France, India, Indonesia, Burma and so on. These were all foreign countries, but they weren't America: America occupied a special position in our thinking and our view of the world. And why shouldn't it? It was our strongest opponent among capitalist countries, the leader that called the tune of anti-Sovietism and the rest.⁹

Hanak seems aware of the implications that this visit could have had on Soviet foreign policy and Soviet-American relations. However, aside from this, Hanak made no reference to the visit's impact on the Cold War in this era. He was more interested in the Soviet Union's diplomacy regarding the Third World and East Asia rather than the state visit. Even in Hanak's larger work, *Soviet Foreign Policy since the Death of Stalin*, he makes only a small entry in regard to the 1959 state visit, even though he discusses other events at great length.¹⁰ Hanak's examination of the state visit, and its impact on Soviet-American relations, regrettably has been the norm for the majority of historians and political scientists alike.

Christoph Bluth, a professor of international studies at the University of Leeds, is another scholar who does not acknowledge the importance of the 1959 state visit.¹¹ In his contribution to *Khrushchev and Khrushchevism*, Bluth omitted the visit entirely from his discussion on Khrushchev's military policy from 1953 to 1964.¹² Bluth noted that Khrushchev declared in January 1960 that the production of "nuclear weapons and missiles" was of primary importance, and that "the traditional armed forces were becoming obsolete."¹³ He goes on to remark that in that same speech Khrushchev "announced a reduction in manpower in the Soviet armed forces from 3.6 million to 2.4 million men,"¹⁴ and that "he emphasized that nuclear firepower would more than make up for the reduction in manpower."¹⁵ However, Bluth neglects to inform his readers that Khrushchev was acting to alleviate tensions in Western Europe by reducing the physical presence of troops, and that developments in nuclear technology¹⁶ could accomplish this.¹⁷

Vladislav M. Zubok, an associate professor of history at Temple University, in his work *A Failed Empire: the Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, hardly discusses the state visit. In this lengthy work Zubok covers a period spanning five decades, but simply acknowledges that "the results of the Khrushchev-Eisenhower talks at Camp David, from Khrushchev's viewpoint were promising,"¹⁸ but does not thoroughly examine the visit. Zubok further claims that Khrushchev presented his ideas for disarmament, while giving a speech to the United Nations, merely for propaganda purposes.¹⁹ He further claims that Khrushchev "could not elicit from Eisenhower any specific concessions on West Berlin."²⁰ In regard to this point, Zubok is correct. No immediate policy breakthroughs on any front were attained during this trip. However, Khrushchev's main goal of attaining a mutual understanding with the United States was achieved, and that is the success that Zubok has overlooked.

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Erik P. Hoffman, in the anthology *Classic Issues in Soviet Foreign Policy: from Lenin to Brezhnev*, also fails to grasp the importance of Khrushchev's visit to the United States.²¹ Hoffman²², in his article *Soviet Foreign Policy Aims and Accomplishments from Lenin to Brezhnev*, acknowledged that "Khrushchev thought that the East and the West had a mutual interest and responsibility to avert a nuclear exchange and to end the cold war,"²³ but failed to mention Khrushchev's state visit as a key episode in the development of this policy. Hoffman did discuss some historical events and crises in the history of Soviet-American relations during the Cold War, but only briefly mentioned the trip. He stated that the "triumphant trip to the United States in 1959 gave promise of reduced East-West tensions and greater commercial ties,"²⁴ but that is as far as his analysis of the trip goes.²⁵ Hoffman did offer some insight into the U-2 spy plane incident and how it might have influenced Khrushchev's idea to place missiles in Cuba. He mentioned that Khrushchev was "frustrated by the apparent deceitfulness of President Dwight D. Eisenhower and embarrassed by the demonstrable weakness of the Soviet strategic defense forces."²⁶ Overall, Hoffman's analysis and commentary on Soviet-American relations during the Khrushchev era are meager at best. However, his lack of interest in the topic is the norm for many of the historians and political scientists that have contributed to the history of Soviet-American relations in general, and the state visit in particular.

Aleksandr Fursenko²⁷ and Timothy Naftali²⁸ in their work, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, also provide little examination of the visit, though certainly more than the norm. They credit Khrushchev for initiating the visit through a conversation in a meeting with American governors on July 7.²⁹ When Eisenhower heard about the conversation he was intrigued.³⁰ However Fursenko and Naftali are particularly strong in their analysis of the aftermath of the trip. They argued that the winter that followed it was "one of the great pivots in the (Cold War)," comparable in fact to Soviet-American détente in 1972.³¹ They further claimed that "the change in Khrushchev's statements was a matter neither of propaganda nor of good manners," but that "something profound had happened to the Soviet leader's assessment of the struggle with the United States."³² However, while they acknowledge the friendly rhetoric of Khrushchev immediately after his trip, they further claim that the trip had "[stirred] his competitive spirit."³³ Fursenko and Naftali explain that Khrushchev began to reevaluate the organization of basic Soviet infrastructure and urban planning³⁴ after his trip by comparing it to what he saw in America.³⁵ They further explain that Khrushchev had for a long time wished to institute a form of democracy³⁶ in the Soviet Union, but he thought that a higher level of economic output was first necessary.³⁷

Luba Racanska, a professor of political science at St. John's University, in *Initiatives and Cooperation in Soviet Foreign Policy toward the United States*, spent little time on the topic of the 1959 state visit, but did make some assertions that put her outside of the general line within the historiography. She identified "three cooperative periods during the Khrushchev leadership: 1953 to 1956, 1959 and 1963 to 1964," and claims that "each of these cooperative periods (was) followed by resurgence of conflict in Soviet-American relations."³⁸ Furthermore Racanska is one of few scholars thus far that acknowledged that "the second period, peaking in 1959, is crowned by Khrushchev's visit to the United States and his meeting with President Eisenhower at Camp David."³⁹ Racanska also contrasted Bluth, in his discussion on military expenditures and budget cuts, when she explained that "Khrushchev was drastically cutting Soviet ground forces to save money necessary for his domestic economic policy and, in 1959, he recommended further cuts in the armed forces....despite the opposition the Supreme Soviet sanctioned the cuts in January 1960."⁴⁰ Regarding the visit Racanska made note that "Khrushchev's policy of Soviet-American détente was crowned by his dramatic trip to the United States in September 1959," but also made it clear that "the

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benefits of his visit to the United States was short-lived as the internal Kremlin debate was cut short by the adverse effects of the downing of an American U-2 spy plane in May 1960 that reversed the movement toward détente with the United States."⁴¹ And unlike most of her colleagues, Racanska acknowledged the success of the trip when she recognized that "before the [U-2 spy plane] incident, Khrushchev successfully pushed through the cuts in the armed forces over the opposition by citing a 'warmer' international climate."⁴² While she did not discuss the visit at any great length, Racanska was at least willing to acknowledge that the visit in 1959 signaled a period of warming between the two powers, whereas most other scholars do not.

Even William Taubman, professor of political science at Amherst College, does not believe that the trip was a great success. Taubman, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his biography *Khrushchev: the Man and His Era*, correctly asserted that the short-term successes of the visit were minor.⁴³ However, Taubman did not believe that the visit had a substantial long term affect either. Taubman's breadth of research on Khrushchev is astounding.⁴⁴ His biography extends from Khrushchev's early years as a metalworker, through his contribution in the Second World War, past Brezhnev's usurpation of power from Khrushchev, and concludes with the last seven years of Khrushchev's life in forced retirement. It is of little wonder why Taubman has received such praise. Taubman not only has a firm grasp of the political facts and nuances of Soviet foreign relations and domestic policies in the Khrushchev era, but his research demonstrates a serious effort to unveil Khrushchev's purposes and intents behind his actions.

Taubman also presents an extensive overview of Khrushchev's 1959 trip to the United States. However, he asserted that the trip was an empty success. Taubman claimed:

In many ways Khrushchev's trip was a success: his very presence in the citadel of capitalism; the way many ordinary Americans received him; 'progress' enough on Berlin to justify the president's endorsing the summit Khrushchev had so long been seeking. But the glass was also half empty. The progress in Berlin was more image than substance. Khrushchev's personal failings undermined his diplomacy. From his being unsure if he would measure up, it was a short step to his assuming his hosts were showing him up, and in the process of putting the Americans in their place, he overreacted as usual.⁴⁵

While Taubman might be the foremost scholarly authority on Khrushchev, he missed his opportunity to make a unique analysis regarding the state visit. Even though he did acknowledge that the state visit was successful to some degree, Taubman conformed to what most other scholars have ascribed to regarding the visit: that nothing great was accomplished by it.

Of all the authorities on Khrushchev none have a more unique perspective than that of his son, Sergei Khrushchev, who is a Senior Fellow in the Watson Institute at Brown University. Not only has Dr. Khrushchev written a great number of works on his father, many of the events that he has written about concerning his father are ones that he experienced himself. He was part of the Soviet delegation that accompanied Khrushchev on his visit to the United States in 1959, and also became a United States citizen in 1999.

Dr. Khrushchev's contribution to the historical scholarship on his father is astounding. In his work, *Nikita Khrushchev and the Creation of a Superpower*, Dr. Khrushchev chronicled his father's efforts after the death of Stalin to not only place the Soviet Union on an equal footing with the United States, but also to avoid the

outbreak of a catastrophic nuclear war.⁴⁶ Within the context of the visit Dr. Khrushchev claimed that a serious breakthrough was reached - which starkly contrasts what his academic colleagues have claimed. He asserted that as a result of the visit "the 'Spirit of Geneva' was resurrected, although for only a short time. However, now it was called the 'Spirit of Camp David,'" and went on to say that "these two old men, without resolving a single specific question, made a lot of progress in the most important area, the sphere of human understanding of each other. The first glimmers of trust became visible."⁴⁷ Dr. Khrushchev also responds to most scholars' claims that because no tangible policy breakthrough was reached in the talks between Khrushchev and Eisenhower, the visit was a diplomatic failure: "I don't believe there were any lost opportunities for achieving agreement in those years. Objectively speaking, our countries were not yet ready."⁴⁸ Dr. Khrushchev went on to say:

We had to move away from the 'image of an enemy.' It seems that this first attempt succeeded. Father produced a rather good impression on Americans. He personally believed in the American president's desire to achieve peace and a good-neighborly relationship. The image of Eisenhower as an evil instigator of war was finally dissipated and what remained was a clever, kind, somewhat tired person who had seen a great deal in his life.⁴⁹

As he does have a unique perspective of the visit, his father's purpose and desire for mutual understanding was not lost on Dr. Khrushchev.

As for the cities Khrushchev visited on his state visit, his son chronicled some of the less-known aspects such as Khrushchev's actual lack of displeasure about not being able to go to Disneyland.⁵⁰ His description of the negotiations between his father and Eisenhower at Camp David are of notable interest because he not only discloses the official negotiations, but also the unofficial discussions that the two had - ranging from golf, cowboy movies, and their children.⁵¹ This effectively demonstrates the desire of both Khrushchev and Eisenhower to get to know one another - to develop mutual understanding. While the account is not exhaustive, Dr. Khrushchev's contribution to the scholarship on his father's state visit is invaluable.

Not only has Dr. Khrushchev contributed greatly to the historical scholarship of his father, he also has been incredibly open to interviews. In an interview on February 20, 2009, Dr. Khrushchev discussed the Berlin Crisis of 1958, the purpose of the deadline ultimatum, his father's goals regarding the German question, Khrushchev's desire for a summit with Eisenhower in 1959, the invitation to come to the United States, his father's preparations for the state visit, Khrushchev's concerns about the trip, what he wished to accomplish on the visit, the theoretical foundation for peaceful coexistence, and his father's reaction to America after the trip. Dr. Khrushchev maintained that within the context of the Cold War the trip had a positive influence on Soviet-American relations, and he characterized the entire period as a series of highs and lows, in which the trip in 1959 was certainly a high point.⁵²

While few scholars have focused on Khrushchev's 1959 state visit, the consensus seems to be that Soviet-American relations were for the most part unaffected by it. Most historians and political scientists remark that this failure is marked by the lack of a substantive diplomatic agreement between the two nations. However, they fail to grasp the importance that mutual understanding had. Mutual understanding was the first component necessary in order to obtain peaceful coexistence, and even though scholars overlook this, it was exactly what Khrushchev wished to accomplish on his visit to the United States.

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When the announcement of Khrushchev's visit to the United States was made on August 3, 1959 the major media outlets in Europe were astounded. While a Gallup Poll the month earlier found that the American public was slightly in favor of a possible state visit, U.S. policy makers maintained a level of skepticism about the trip, even though many wanted to believe Khrushchev's intent was pacific.⁵³ That sentiment also extended beyond American borders, as similar polls taken around Europe revealed similar, or even more positive, results.⁵⁴ While the American people seemed open to Khrushchev's impending visit, many top-ranking government officials were worried that Khrushchev would want to talk to President Eisenhower about the situation in Berlin. They were concerned because the United States stood by a strict non-negotiation policy in this regard. The question of the status of Berlin substantially influenced Soviet-American relations in the period immediately following World War II through the Cuban Missile Crisis toward the end of 1962, and was of prime concern to both American and Soviet officials at the time of Khrushchev's visit to the United States.

While there have been a number of "Berlin crises," the origin of the one in 1958 can be traced back to the Nine Power Conference in September-October 1954 and the haphazard separation of East and West Germany following World War II.⁵⁵ Concerning the German Question, there was one provision at the Conference in 1954 that the United States, Great Britain, and France demanded that particularly irked the Soviet delegation: Bonn, the capital of West Germany, was given the right to speak for all of Germany.⁵⁶ From this point, Soviet leaders suggested that both East and West Germany be recognized as sovereign entities⁵⁷ in 1955 - rather than just West Germany.⁵⁸ However, relations between Moscow and Bonn remained cold that December as Adenauer, Premier Bulganin, and Secretary Khrushchev could not come to terms over Berlin, and East German recognition.⁵⁹ According to Jack Schick, author of *The Berlin Crisis: 1958-1962*, the only diplomatic achievement of that meeting was that the official rhetoric had been exchanged. This was the situation that persisted into 1958: Bonn claimed that it spoke for all Germany - both East and West - and at the same time Moscow claimed that both were sovereign.⁶⁰

The Berlin situation remained unchanged until the fall of 1957, when Berlin and East Germany became a Soviet priority once again. Up until this point, the only lingering Soviet demand was that Berlin, as well as East and West Germany, be demilitarized, and made into nuclear free zones. This openly clashed with Bonn's request that the United States ship nuclear IRBMs (Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missiles) to West Germany.⁶¹ American justification for placing IRBM's in West Germany was predicated on the apparent "missile gap" in Europe between the United States and the Soviet Union as well as the hostile rhetoric of Bulganin's December 1957 letter to President Eisenhower. In that letter, Bulganin stressed that the "forward deployment of United States missiles would not lessen the vulnerability of the United States itself" as mentioned Soviet ballistic missile development would continue.⁶² According to Schick, "the development of long-range missiles by the Soviet Union and repeated use of this development by the Soviet leaders for political purposes created a chain of events," which in turn led to the creation of a major crisis over Berlin.⁶³

In the fall of 1958 the Berlin situation suddenly escalated. On November 10, Khrushchev warned the West that if they "didn't recognize East Germany, Moscow would give Walter Ulbricht (leader of the German Democratic Republic) control over access to Berlin," which would in effect violate Western rights in the city as established in the Potsdam agreement between the major powers.⁶⁴ While this statement by the Soviet Premier initiated fervent consultations in Western European capitals, the U.S. Ambassador to the USSR

Llewellyn Thompson felt that Khrushchev was only attempting to force a summit conference on the Berlin issue.⁶⁵ However, Khrushchev's statement went unanswered by the United States, at least in the short term.

The Berlin situation became a fully fledged crisis on November 27 when Khrushchev issued an ultimatum in the form of a twenty-eight page document that essentially said that "either the Western powers sign an [East] German peace treaty and agree to turn West Berlin into a demilitarized 'free city' within six months, or the Soviets would turn control of access over to East Germany." ⁶⁶ Khrushchev's son clarified that his "Father tried to do everything to push Western countries for the recognition of East Germany, and he did everything....he imposed this ultimatum [because] he thought that...if we recognize East Germany, then the West will recognize it, or some similar rationale."⁶⁷ Part of what turned this situation in Berlin into a crisis was the American perception that the Soviets were not willing to negotiate their terms.⁶⁸ In order to clarify that he wished to negotiate the situation, Khrushchev held a press conference that same evening on November 27 to inform the United States that his intention was to start negotiations to resolve the abnormal Berlin situation so that the two powers could allow the city a sense of normalcy that had been absent since the conclusion of the war.⁶⁹ Khrushchev further clarified this point on November 29 when he reiterated that he "would take no unilateral action if the West were willing to begin negotiations within six months."⁷⁰ Even though the situation frustrated him, Khrushchev was not willing to throw all of Europe into a war because of it.⁷¹

In response to the crisis, newspapers in New York and Washington claimed that Khrushchev's "note was not directed at a Berlin solution as much as at negotiations on German reunification."⁷² The Soviet government responded that they would not use the issue of reunification as a prerequisite for a major summit conference. Regardless of the Soviet stance on the issue, the two sides were not able to reconcile this misunderstanding immediately. At this point "the state department treated Soviet diplomatic communications as mere propaganda," and "freely substituted its own version of Soviet objectives for the objectives the Soviets actually had in mind."⁷³ This further illustrates how little the two countries knew about each other, and how little they trusted each other, in 1958.

Was Khrushchev's Berlin Ultimatum a bluff? The consensus seems to affirm that it was. However, Taubman gives the whole situation a slightly different slant. Taubman stated that while the deadline ultimatum was a bluff by Khrushchev, it was used more as a method to get Eisenhower to sit down and talk about the situation in Berlin. It was apparent that Khrushchev never intended to go to war over Berlin. Khrushchev's son said about it, "Father laughed at my fears (of a war breaking out because of the apparent ultimatum). He said that nobody would start a war over Berlin."⁷⁴ Khrushchev's reasoning behind placing a "deadline" on negotiations was simply to get the ball rolling, to get Eisenhower to sit down with him and discuss the abnormal situation that Berlin had been in since the end of the war.⁷⁵ Khrushchev knew that if the Americans refused to budge, then he would in fact have to, and that was the nature of the bluff.

In the short-run, Khrushchev's move paid off. It led to diplomatic negotiations on the Berlin question with the United States and Western Europe. Also, the success was a tangible one, as Khrushchev's colleague, Anastas Mikoyan visited the United States in January 1959, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan visited the Soviet Union that February, and American Vice President Nixon also made a trip to the Soviet Union in late July. While Nixon's trip was not a warm meeting between the United States and the Soviet Union, one

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day after that visit concluded on August 3 the announcement of Khrushchev's visit to the United States was made.

Even though relations between the United States and the Soviet Union remained cool after Khrushchev clarified his position on November 29, his son believed that the "deadline crisis" was a beneficial episode in Soviet-American relations during the Khrushchev period of the Cold War. He believed that mutual understanding became possible because of the crisis, and, as a result "the position [of the Soviet Union] became more transparent, more clear, and maybe [the crisis] had more of a positive impact than a negative one because the west understood the Soviet position [afterward]."76 The crisis that evolved out of the Berlin situation in 1958 turned out to be just what was necessary to get Eisenhower and Khrushchev together for talks. It allowed Khrushchev the opportunity to develop a mutual understanding with the United States so that the diplomatic confusion that characterized Soviet-American relations in the post-war era (especially after the death of Stalin) could be reduced. Now the Soviet Premier needed to capitalize on the opportunity, and melt some of the ice between the two powers.

When the foreign minister conference in Geneva stalled in July 1959 Eisenhower took his first serious steps toward extending an invitation to Khrushchev.77 He ordered the state department to "prepare a 'very secret' study of the possibility of inviting Khrushchev to the United States."78 When Eisenhower finally decided to issue an invitation, there were significant caveats. However, in early July when Eisenhower ordered Undersecretary of State Robert Murphy to extend an invitation, Murphy invited Khrushchev with no conditions at all.79 When Eisenhower found out, he was enraged, but could do little to change it by this time.

While the announcement of Khrushchev's visit to the United States was not made until August 3, 1959, he received the invitation weeks early in mid-July. The invitation shocked him:

At first I did not believe it. It was all so unexpected. We were not at all prepared for something like that. Our relations then were so strained that an invitation for a friendship visit by the head of the Soviet government and first secretary of the CPSU Central Committee seemed simply unbelievable....! This was our country's most powerful opponent, the leader of the capitalist countries, and the one that set the tone for the entire anti-Soviet crowd in the outside world.80

Khrushchev had desired an invitation for a state visit since 1957. When asked about his Father's reaction to the invitation, Khrushchev's son said that he believed that his Father "was satisfied because for him it was the de facto recognition from the United States of his position, and the positive response that they were ready to deal with the Soviet Union as equals....so he looked at this as the victory of his policy."81

Initially, Khrushchev questioned whether this signified a change in American foreign policy toward the Soviet Union, but quickly dismissed the idea.82 His son, however, was not so quick to dismiss the idea:

I don't think that my Father thought that it was a dramatic change. He did not believe in changes like, 'today we use this policy, tomorrow it will turn 180 degrees,' but of course it was a change of the policy. It was some step toward negotiation, and it was one more step on the very long road toward mutual understanding. You show respect and have negotiations on an equal basis. So he didn't look at this as some big victory, but it was a good signal.83

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Even if the invitation did not represent a significant change in policy on the part of the United States toward the Soviet Union, it allowed the two nations an opportunity to travel further down the path toward mutual understanding.

While Khrushchev's preparations for the trip were not unlike those for other trips,⁸⁴ Khrushchev admitted that he "had an extremely poor knowledge of the United States then," and that there was confusion as to what a number of things on the proposed itinerary - such as Camp David, and Disneyland - were.⁸⁵ It was only later that he realized that the invitation to Camp David was in fact an honor.⁸⁶ Upon receiving the invitation there was one issue that Khrushchev toiled over, "On what level were we actually being invited - on the level of head of government or chief of state?"⁸⁷ He stressed that he should be received as Eisenhower's equal, which in this case would be as the head of state. Khrushchev's son explained that "in many cases it was a possibility that the other side would not give you all the respect that you deserved, so [father] insisted that he was received as head of state, not a prime minister. He received what he wanted."⁸⁸

Khrushchev was also pessimistic about how the American people would receive him, as a Communist. He worried that the American people and public officials meant to humiliate him. He thought that Americans "viewed him, a former worker, as an inferior, and condescended to sit down with him at the same table only because of extreme necessity."⁸⁹ For this reason, Khrushchev spent many hours every day in preparation for his visit working on different possible contingencies.⁹⁰ During the rest of his preparations, Khrushchev spent his time writing speeches, working on his negotiating strategies, and going over the itinerary for his trip.

Khrushchev also puzzled over the method of transportation he should use to get to the United States. He ruled out a ship because that would take far too long, but was initially unsure as to which plane to take. He settled on the brand new Tupolev 114 because it could reach Washington from Moscow without stopping. Accordingly to Taubman, Khrushchev chose the TU 114 because the Americans did not have a ramp high enough to reach the door in the side of the plane.⁹¹ Khrushchev seemed determined to assert Soviet superiority whenever he could, and this extended from the smallest trifles - such as the height of the TU 114 - to major decisions in foreign policy.⁹² However, the TU-114 had not completed all of the testing necessary in order for it to carry passengers - let alone the Soviet Premier. On its first long-distance flight that May, microscopic cracks were found in the fuselage of the TU-114 after the flight.⁹³ Taking every necessary precaution, the KGB had the flight route across the Atlantic Ocean lined with Soviet vessels,⁹⁴ and the son of the TU 114's designer was asked to accompany the Khrushchev party on the plane!⁹⁵

One of the last decisions that Khrushchev made in his preparations was whether to bring his family. He initially was only going to bring his wife, Nina Petrovna, but Mikoyan advised him to include some other members of his family - including his oldest son Sergei, along with his other children, Yulia, Rada, Yelena, and his granddaughter, also named Yulia.⁹⁶ Dr. Khrushchev remembered the day when his Father told him that he would be going to America. "It was not just going abroad; it was going to America, in our imaginations a fantastic country which had gripped our curiosity all through the preceding years. Now I was to see everything with my own eyes."⁹⁷

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While the circumstances surrounding the invitation to the United States were controversial, there is nothing controversial about what Khrushchev wished to accomplish while in the United States. Aside from negotiating with Eisenhower over Berlin, East Germany, military spending, disarmament, and nuclear weapons testing, Khrushchev wished to experience America at the ground level so as to move further down the path toward mutual understanding that, according to his son, was initially opened up at the Geneva conference in 1955.⁹⁸ On the eve of his departure for the United States, Khrushchev drafted a reply letter for the letters and telegrams that he had received from both Soviet citizens and foreign citizens alike in the month prior concerning his trip to America. In that letter he reasserted the Soviet position, and noted that he believed that "these letters and telegrams express the hope that my visit will serve to improve relations between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., and that the exchange of views with Mr. Eisenhower, the President of the United States, will be a good start in improving the international situation."⁹⁹ Khrushchev further promised "that for my part I shall make every effort to justify your hopes."¹⁰⁰ Even the American newspapers believed that Khrushchev wished to ease tensions between the two countries as a result of his visit.¹⁰¹ While scholars argue over Khrushchev's desires and agenda for the visit, one thing was clear: Khrushchev did not want to let this opportunity to develop mutual understanding to slip by.

Khrushchev and his party left Moscow for the United States on September 15 at seven in the morning, and arrived in Washington at Andrews Air Force Base that afternoon. While their plane commenced landing procedures Khrushchev was anxiously anticipating how he would be received, and how Americans would react to him. As the TU-114 taxied along the runway Khrushchev observed:

The weather was marvelous. Nature over there gave us a very affectionate welcome. It was warm and the sun was shining brightly. When I looked out the airplane window I saw a lot of people gathered. A speaker's platform had been erected, soldiers were lined up to give a ceremonial welcome, a welcome mat had been rolled out, but what caught my eye was the crowd of people in their bright summer clothing, very elegant. It was one solid multicolored array, like a carpet of flowers.¹⁰²

When Khrushchev got off the plane he was greeted by a large crowd, a group of journalists, and Eisenhower himself. After Eisenhower gave a short welcoming speech, Khrushchev made his own. He thanked Eisenhower for the invitation, and the "presidential" welcome, and remarked on the historic nature of the visit: "We have always held that mutual visits and meetings of government representatives are useful. Meetings and talks between statesmen of our two great countries - the Soviet Union and the United States - are of special importance."¹⁰³ Khrushchev went on to explain his own hopes: "We have come to you with an open heart and with good intentions. The Soviet people want to live in peace and friendship with the American people. There is nothing to prevent the relations between our countries from being built up as relations between good neighbors."¹⁰⁴ Khrushchev wanted to make his intentions to foster mutual understanding between the Soviet Union and the United States known from the outset.

After the ceremony the Khrushchev party left the airfield by presidential escort to Blair House where he stayed during his stay in Washington. That evening Khrushchev was invited to a dinner party at the White House. After Eisenhower gave a speech, Khrushchev again gave his own. Once again Khrushchev outlined his hopes for mutual understanding and the need for peaceful coexistence:

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We have come to the United States with the best of intentions....We want to reach an understanding on improving our relations. Our countries are very strong. They must not quarrel with each other. If small countries quarrel, they can do little more, to put it figuratively, than scratch each other....But if strong countries were to quarrel, such as the United States and the Soviet Union, it would not be our countries alone that would suffer enormous damage, but other countries as well would inevitably be drawn into a worldwide fray.105

The next day and a half included similar dinners, and speeches by Khrushchev that exuded the same sentiment. As for the city of Washington, Khrushchev was quite impressed,106 and he later compared it to one of the Soviet Union's own provincial towns.107 He was well received in Washington, but he would receive mixed receptions by both citizens and diplomats alike as he continued his visit. New York was the first major stop for Khrushchev, and it was by far the most important as his actions and speeches there set the tone for the rest of his trip.

The first major city that Khrushchev visited was New York, from September 17 to 19. Of all of the major cities that Khrushchev visited, New York was probably the most diplomatically important. The reason that New York was so important for the trip was because that was where Khrushchev made a number of speeches in which he first discussed a possible end to the Cold War. The most famous of these speeches was delivered at the United Nations General Assembly on September 18. This speech cohesively described his views on the Cold War, and possible solutions to issues such as the Berlin Crisis.

Khrushchev left Washington by train at 8:22 A.M. and when he arrived in New York he was greeted at the train station by Mayor Wagner at a restrained and formal reception. Khrushchev recalled that the welcome was "in the usual manner and style: polite greetings, flowers, and so forth."108 He also remembered that New York was "a huge, noisy city with an enormous number of neon signs and automobiles, and hence vast quantities of exhaust fumes that were choking people."109 That evening Khrushchev gave a speech at the Economic Club of New York for an event that became more of an interactive question and answer forum as his speech progressed.110 Some of the questions that were asked of Khrushchev elicited angry responses,111 but for the most part those in attendance asked friendly questions and his responses reciprocated the same spirit. The most significant aspect of this session was Khrushchev's pledge to pursue more competition between the Soviet Union and the United States in peaceful arenas - to compete economically rather than militarily.112 But even while Khrushchev made these overtures, including calls for trade agreements with the United States, American businessmen asked Khrushchev, "Why should we trade with you? What do you have to sell us?"113 After his trip, Khrushchev admitted that the economic hopes he had before he came to America were in the end unjustified. Khrushchev understood that first political steps must be taken at the top before economic ties could develop.

On September 18 Khrushchev made his speech to the United Nations General Assembly.114 In this speech, scarcely mentioned in standard histories of this period, Khrushchev discussed his views on the Cold War and possible solutions to issues such as the Berlin Crisis. As he unveiled his ideas, Khrushchev demanded that belligerent appeals for war be ended, for more official state visits between nations, that a peace treaty with East Germany be signed by the United States,115 that the People's Republic of China be admitted into the United Nations, and that a non-discriminatory trade policy be established among nations.116

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He began his speech by praising the creation of the United Nations as an entity to resolve international issues, but felt that the purpose on which had been founded had not been achieved. Khrushchev pointed out that "people still live in constant anxiety about peace, about their future. And how can they not feel this anxiety when, now in one part of the world, now in another, military conflicts flare up and human blood is shed?"¹¹⁷ Khrushchev understood that there could only be one of two outcomes to the present situation: war, or peace - which had to be developed step by step. He believed that this could be accomplished through the United Nations, and added that "in international affairs success in solving controversial problems is possible provided the states concentrate on what brings states closer together rather than on what divides the present-day world,"¹¹⁸ and went on to say that "the United Nations is itself an embodiment of the idea of peaceful cooperation between states."¹¹⁹

In the case of ending appeals for war, Khrushchev made specific reference to "belligerent speeches" that propagate the desire for hostile acts toward a foreign government.¹²⁰ Khrushchev questioned the necessity for such speeches to the General Assembly, and felt that such rhetoric was directly contributing to Cold War escalation.¹²¹ Khrushchev further believed that "the clouds of a new war danger, at times thickening into storm clouds, loom over a world which has not yet forgotten the horrors of the Second World War."¹²² Khrushchev's point here is to remove hyper-nationalism as a means to provoke international conflicts¹²³ which he felt could enhance the prospect of mutual understanding.

The second major point that Khrushchev made in his speech was over the Berlin Crisis, which he was blamed for initiating in November 1958. Khrushchev proposed that the situation could be "ameliorated by signing a peace treaty with [East] Germany and by removing the occupation troops from West Berlin."¹²⁴ Khrushchev proposed that "the elimination of this sort of tension in the center of Europe, in the potentially most dangerous area of the globe, where major armed forces of opposing military alignments are stationed in close contiguity, would furnish the key to normalizing the climate in the world."¹²⁵ However, Khrushchev failed to mention anything about the presence of Soviet troops in East Germany.¹²⁶ This remained a major sticking point with American officials on the issue of Berlin.¹²⁷

Khrushchev went on in his address to make an overture that would move the major powers toward mutual understanding - and hopefully toward peaceful coexistence. Khrushchev suggested that there should be more official state visits between the major powers and used his own visit as an example. He hoped that such visits by world leaders would lead to a better understanding between nations. Khrushchev pledged that "the Soviet Union favors further economic, cultural, scientific, and technical cooperation," and that "if two countries can reach agreement on these levels they should be able to reach agreement on the greater problems of war and peace."¹²⁸ Khrushchev was a living example of his idea. Throughout his tenure as Soviet Premier Khrushchev visited China, Great Britain, the United States, Yugoslavia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Germany, among other nations.

Khrushchev then transitioned into his next point, which was the admission of the People's Republic of China into the United Nations. Khrushchev did not hesitate to assert that the mistake of not including China in the United Nations directly contributed to the creation of the Cold War.¹²⁹ Khrushchev also made a strong case for China's future inclusion:

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China is the Chinese People's Republic which for ten years now has been developing at a swift pace; which has its own strong government recognized by the entire Chinese people; governmental and legislative bodies elected by the entire people of China....The restoration of the lawful rights of People's China will not only enormously enhance the prestige and authority of the United Nations, but will also be a notable contribution to improving the international climate generally.130

By allowing the admission of China into the United Nations, Khrushchev felt that the United Nations could help reduce Cold War tensions. However, Theodore Windt¹³¹ asserted that Khrushchev "ignore[d] the morality of how a government comes into power. This exclusion from his criteria is one of the major reasons that the United States [refused] to recognize Red China and officially [opposed] its admission to the United Nations."¹³² This American policy was similar to the one that was instituted after the Bolshevik takeover in 1917 when the United States refused to recognize the regime as sovereign.¹³³ It appears that the United States executed a similar policy in regard to China.

After his discussion of China, Khrushchev made his final point concerning the relief of Cold War tensions. Khrushchev believed that "the major problem facing the new nations is...an economic problem"¹³⁴ and advocated a non-discriminatory trade policy to address it. He proposed that it should be the duty of the United Nations to provide economic assistance to developing nations without attaching political conditions:

Is it not the duty of the United Nations to contribute to the utmost to the economic advancement of the new states which are rising from the ruins of the colonial system to help them speedily to develop their national economies? This can only be achieved by the provision of large scale economic assistance without any political or other strings attached. And that is the position taken by the Soviet Union on the question of economic aid which we are rendering and intend to render in the future to many countries. This position, we feel, fully accords with the principles of the United Nations Charter.135

This was a direct challenge to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank - which offered economic assistance to nations, but with significant strings attached. Khrushchev believed that a solid economic base provided a significant foundation for peaceful coexistence.

Khrushchev concluded his speech with a plea for universal disarmament:

In contrast to the "let us arm!" slogan, still current in some quarters, we put forward the slogan "let us completely disarm!" Let us compete in who builds more homes, schools and hospitals for the people; produces more grain, milk, meat, clothing and other consumer goods; and not in who has more hydrogen bombs and rockets. This will be welcomed by all the peoples of the world.136

He firmly believed that the United Nations was the medium through which such a dream was possible.

After he addressed the United Nations, Khrushchev was invited to a dinner at the home of William Harriman - former United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union during World War II. While the dinner itself was ordinary, Khrushchev was impressed with the reception. He remembered later that "during this reception we were not seated at a table; people walked around freely in the large room or sat where they wished and talked with one another. This format for a reception was introduced later in our country as well."¹³⁷

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On September 19 before Khrushchev flew to California he gave a statement to the people of New York. In that speech he thanked the people for a warm reception, but regretted that he "had no opportunity of coming into contact with the ordinary people - the workers, who are the backbone of the life of the city, the producers of its wealth."¹³⁸ Of course this was because officials were worried that Khrushchev might be the target of physical violence, and thus took every precaution to avoid the possibility of it. He ended his speech by thanking the United Nations for allowing him to address the assembly, and thanking the people of New York for their hospitality. Even though Khrushchev was unimpressed with New York overall, the good news was that there were no hostile protests directed at him¹³⁹ while he was in the city; and while he was there he effectively presented the position of the Soviet Union on a variety of issues. This, he thought, was key to the development of mutual understanding.

From New York Khrushchev flew across the country to visit Los Angeles on September 19. Years later it was apparent that his stop in California had made a lasting impression on him. Khrushchev recalled, "What I remember most about Los Angeles was how many flowers there were, how warm it was, and how high the humidity was."¹⁴⁰ However, Khrushchev's trip to Los Angeles also produced the highest level of drama of the entire visit. Even before Khrushchev was en route to California extra security measures were already in place to ensure his safety as the day of his arrival in Los Angeles drew near. As early as September 17 a large protest against Khrushchev formed at the Rose Bowl by the American Council of Churches in California.¹⁴¹ Generally most of the more vocal opposition came from the Roman Catholic Church, conservative columnists, and multiple veterans' groups.¹⁴² When he heard about these protesting groups Khrushchev remarked, "I knew of course that in the United States and other countries there was another custom - people would come out with placards on which harsh statements were printed in large letters, protesting against one or another guest or caricaturing the person who had arrived."¹⁴³ Khrushchev had heard of American protests before, but was fortunate to not have to see any of the ones that formed in the days before his visit.

Later that day Khrushchev toured and had lunch at Twentieth Century-Fox Studios. He got there just as a scene was being filmed from the movie *Can-Can*. Khrushchev did not like what he saw. He observed that "there are moments in this dance that cannot be considered quite decent, scenes that would not be taken well by everyone."¹⁴⁴ Even though cultural exchange was a provision of the mutual understanding that Khrushchev was trying to foster, it was apparent that he was not pleased with this demeaning display of the female body. At lunch Khrushchev had a much better time as he dined side by side with Kirk Douglas, Frank Sinatra, Gary Cooper, Marylyn Monroe, and Elizabeth Taylor.¹⁴⁵ During lunch the owner of Twentieth Century-Fox Studios, Spyros P. Skouras, gave a speech, to which Khrushchev gave his own reply that was light-hearted and produced laughter from his audience. His speech began as more of a biography on how he rose to be the leader of the Soviet Union than anything else. He informed the crowd, "I began working when I learned to walk. Till the age of 15 I tended calves, then sheep, and then the landlord's cows....Then I worked at a factory owned by Germans and later in coal pits owned by Frenchmen. I worked at Belgian-owned chemical plants, and now I am Prime Minister of the great Soviet state."¹⁴⁶ Regardless if he was trying to show up Mr. Skouras, Khrushchev was giving people a basis for mutual understanding. He wanted people to know more about him than simply that he was the leader of America's adversary.

As part of his California experience, Khrushchev was also scheduled to take a tour of Disneyland. This part of the trip had to be cut, however, because of security issues at the famous theme park. It was reported

that a protester threw a tomato at a patrolling police officer, and as a result officials did not feel that they could ensure Khrushchev's safety if he were to go to Disneyland.¹⁴⁷ At the time Khrushchev sarcastically remarked, "What is it? Has cholera or plague broken out there that I might catch? Or has Disneyland been seized by bandits who might destroy me?"¹⁴⁸ Even though most scholars believe that Khrushchev was furious about this cancellation, it actually had only a limited effect on him.¹⁴⁹ His son recalled that his father "had only a very vague idea of what a 'Disney country' consisted of and what made it so famous."¹⁵⁰

While the canceled trip to Disneyland had little or no real affect on Khrushchev, the reception that he was given at the banquet by Mayor Poulson nearly caused the Soviet Premier to end his visit prematurely. Some 7,000 tickets¹⁵¹ were requested from private citizens as well as representatives from labor, industry, business and other professionals for the public banquet - although only 800 were ultimately handed out.¹⁵² American citizens were just as eager to see Khrushchev as he was to meet them. At that banquet the mayor gave what Khrushchev thought was an undignified and hostile speech.¹⁵³ Khrushchev, well known for his own boisterous speeches, asked for the floor and responded vigorously to the mayor. He retorted, "We will not tolerate anything that might insult or belittle our country or its representatives. If my visit here...does not suit you, I can always summon (our plane) and fly back to the Soviet Union."¹⁵⁴ Khrushchev then reminded his audience that on his visit "we are for exchanging cultural values, provided these exchanges serve to improve our relations, not to worsen them."¹⁵⁵ Khrushchev later revealed that he in fact had no intention of cutting his trip short, but he felt that "it was necessary to let this anti-Soviet person have it in the teeth, even though he held a high post."¹⁵⁶ Khrushchev did not tolerate American officials talking down to the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁷ Later that evening Henry Cabot Lodge¹⁵⁸ apologized to Khrushchev for Poulson's remarks, and implored the Soviet Premier to continue his trip. He promised that no such incidents would occur again, and that Khrushchev would "be very pleased by the atmosphere in San Francisco."¹⁵⁹ Fortunately, there were no more incidents of this nature on Khrushchev's visit, and American officials had to be thankful for that.

From Los Angeles, Khrushchev traveled to San Francisco by train on the morning of September 20. At one of the train's stops, in San Luis Obispo, Khrushchev convinced Lodge to allow him to leave the train and interact with the crowd that had gathered at the platform.¹⁶⁰ Khrushchev relished this interaction; one purpose of the trip was to see and experience America and its people after all. After Khrushchev returned to his seat Lodge returned from the platform and handed Khrushchev a gold medal that had an emblem of Lenin on it. Khrushchev explained that he "had received it from the Society for Peaceful Coexistence," in the Soviet Union.¹⁶¹ Apparently it fell off of Khrushchev's suit while he was on the platform, and a man picked it up and gave it back to Lodge. Khrushchev recalled that "I was very glad to have it back; a feeling of respect for this unknown person welled up in me. After all, someone else might have just kept what they found as a souvenir."¹⁶² When both Lodge and Khrushchev settled back onto the train they continued toward San Francisco.

The reception that Khrushchev received from San Francisco Mayor Christopher that evening was decidedly more polite and jovial than that which had been extended to him in Los Angeles.¹⁶³ According to Khrushchev's son this was because Eisenhower had asked Christopher to do some damage control when Khrushchev arrived to make up for Poulson's blunder.¹⁶⁴ Khrushchev recalled that "the mayor was very polite and left a very good impression."¹⁶⁵ Accordingly, Khrushchev described the reception in San Francisco as "the most marvelous we have received."¹⁶⁶

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Later that night Khrushchev met with a group of trade-union leaders that was organized by the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations. This was the most heated encounter that Khrushchev was part of on his state visit, but he seemed to enjoy it.¹⁶⁷ In particular Walter P. Reuther¹⁶⁸ argued with Khrushchev one-on-one. Topics ranged from economic aid, disarmament, Germany, censorship, workers, strikes, and the role of unions, amongst others.¹⁶⁹ Khrushchev remembered that "the conversation left a bad taste in my mouth. Usually there is mutual understanding that gets expressed right away. In this case it didn't happen, because our viewpoints were so utterly opposed."¹⁷⁰

The most controversial portion of the trip came during Khrushchev's September 21 visit to the headquarters of the Longshoremen's Union of the Pacific Coast, a group with known Communist affiliations. Khrushchev later described the visit as the "warmest meeting" of the trip.¹⁷¹ This visit was later distorted in the press as an attempt to "stir up union trouble."¹⁷² The biggest reason for this was that the leader of the union, Harry Bridges, had been regularly denounced as a communist. Khrushchev defended Bridges, "He was not a Communist, but he held left-wing views and had a very positive attitude toward the Soviet Union."¹⁷³ Khrushchev actually spent little time with the Longshoremen. After a few workers spoke, Khrushchev gave a short speech where he thanked Bridges for the invitation and the warm welcome.¹⁷⁴ Afterward, Khrushchev posed for pictures with the workers and at one point one of the workers took off his cap and placed it on Khrushchev's head.¹⁷⁵ This was greatly publicized in the press. In the Los Angeles Times, it was reported that "Khrushchev made it clear that he regards men like Bridges, rather than the leaders of the AFL-CIO, as the real spokesmen of the working class in this country."¹⁷⁶

Later that day Khrushchev was given a tour of the IBM facility in San Jose. Khrushchev's son remarked, "Father, and Soviet specialists as well, had only the vaguest idea of what IBM was," and that "Father did not pay any particular attention to the computers during his visit," but that "Father was staggered by the IBM cafeteria."¹⁷⁷ The efficiency of the cafeteria astounded Khrushchev. He described the layout of the cafeteria as a "democratic arrangement," and added that "the management was deliberately trying to make a demonstration of democracy."¹⁷⁸ Regardless of what the cafeteria and its management attempted to propagate, Khrushchev apparently liked the set up as he attempted to create something similar upon his return to Moscow as he "ordered that food service be organized on the IBM model."¹⁷⁹

When he toured the IBM facility, Khrushchev had been in the United States for a full week. He had effectively presented his programs that embodied mutual understanding, and while some stops up to this point were more successful than others, Khrushchev's visit had gone relatively smoothly. He was able to meet with representatives of the world's governments, and had the opportunity to meet ordinary Americans. Even though the trip was half over, Khrushchev had a lot left to do. He had three major stops remaining along with the long-anticipated discussion with Eisenhower. The next stop however, was of a different nature than all the others, but it remained of high importance to the Soviet Premier.

Of the individual visits that Nikita Khrushchev had on his 1959 state visit to the United States, arguably none had a more profound influence on him, on a personal level, than the trip to the farm of Roswell Garst in Iowa on September 22 and 23. Garst was a farmer who had been a personal friend of Khrushchev since 1955. As for visits by dignitaries from other countries, Des Moines, Iowa was not a usual location to visit. However, an exception was made for the Soviet Premier on his state visit in 1959. Coming from an agricultural background himself, Khrushchev always reserved a place in his heart for growing crops - most

notably corn. In fact, according to Dr. Khrushchev, even to this day when the name Khrushchev is brought up in Russia, two things almost always come to mind: corn, and the state of Iowa.¹⁸⁰

Khrushchev arrived in Des Moines on September 22, and was greeted at a reception by Governor Herschel Loveless, Mayor Iles, and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce.¹⁸¹ Khrushchev was pleased with the greeting he received. He remarked, "(I) saw an interesting poster in English in Des Moines....'we don't agree with you on many questions, but we welcome you.' This is a sensible slogan. We also don't agree with you on many matters, but we also greet you."¹⁸² This sentiment was the essence of mutual understanding. Agreement on any one issue was never the purpose, but understanding the purpose and reasons behind differing opinions was.

Khrushchev first met Roswell Garst in October 1955 when Garst visited the Crimea at his invitation. The previous year an Iowa newspaper - the *Des Moines Register* - had challenged the Soviet Union to compete with the United States by agricultural means rather than try to outspend America in an arms race.¹⁸³ Khrushchev's son recalled that his father "responded to the newspaper's challenge eagerly,"¹⁸⁴ and a few months later a Soviet delegation was sent to study the Iowa farms. Upon their return, the delegation gave Khrushchev a report on their findings - on how the American farms were so successful and, "how we could catch up with the United States in the output of food products."¹⁸⁵ One of the immediate innovations that the Soviets attempted to copy was the square-cluster method for planting corn and potatoes. This venture failed miserably as the Soviet tractors skewed the squares into rhombus-like forms. The scheme was abandoned, but the exchange of agricultural ideas initiated a strong friendship between Garst and Khrushchev.

As for Garst, Khrushchev was interested in the farmer from Iowa immediately as "he was a very interesting conversationalist who knew agriculture well."¹⁸⁶ On that visit to the Soviet Union in 1955, Garst was an avid promoter of corn production, and wished to assist Khrushchev in improving Soviet corn cultivation and harvest techniques. Years after the visit, Khrushchev reminisced about an incident between Garst and one of the farmers on a Soviet collective farm where Garst verbally chastised a collective farmer for not fertilizing the corn as it was sown - even though the farmer assured the fiery Iowan that the ground had previously been fertilized.¹⁸⁷ That visit in 1955 concluded with Garst offering Khrushchev his thoughts on agriculture that included a lengthy monologue on the use of herbicides and chemical-fertilizer - rather than the use of crop rotation and manure-fertilization - in order to increase agricultural yield for the lowest cost to the farmer. Khrushchev knew that even though this was a common capitalist technique, that it could improve Soviet agriculture, and in effect the Soviet economy.¹⁸⁸

On his visit to Garst's farm at Coon Rapids, Khrushchev was astounded by the mechanized method of feeding cattle, and by the use of silos to store excess grain. Khrushchev noted that while the American grain - that is used to feed cattle - is properly balanced with nutrients to increase the size of the animal, the Soviet version is "unsuitable, half-rotted grain, or remnants, grain mixed with garbage and dirt."¹⁸⁹ Khrushchev also criticized the Soviet feed for not including mineral additives - as is done through laboratory testing in the United States.¹⁹⁰ Another American innovation that was particularly noteworthy to the Soviet Premier was the method of irrigation that was employed - the use of steel pipes which had water pumped through them, and dispersed by a network of sprinklers - an all too common feature on the American farm.¹⁹¹ Khrushchev also noted that even though he had learned the square-cluster method of agricultural

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cultivation from Garst, the Iowan had returned to the wide-row method. Garst explained that this was because of his use of herbicides to control the weeds from around the corn stalks.192

The entire day while he tried to entertain his Soviet friend, Garst combated the pesky American journalists.193 Khrushchev referred to the reporters as "an enormous army of journalists, photographers, and movie camera operators."194 He recalled how at one point Garst took up a corn stalk and threw it at one journalist that had perturbed him. Another journalist, Harrison Salisbury,195 was given a boot to his rear from the angry farmer, leaving an imprint that was the butt of jokes that later was printed in the press.196 Garst went beyond throwing fodder at the journalists, and at one point even threatened to "loose a fierce bull on them."197 After the visit to the farm, Khrushchev later commented that the "atmosphere there was the most relaxed of the entire visit to America."198 Khrushchev expanded on this to say that "[Garst's] meeting with us had a warm human quality to it despite the fact that people of different political views...were encountering one another."199

Upon returning to the Soviet Union, Khrushchev promoted the farming methods that he had witnessed on Garst's farm.200 However, he ran into a problem concerning the location of the universities in regards to the collective farms. Even the economic institutions were located in big cities such as Moscow - far removed from the farms. After graduation, agricultural students - although they might be brilliant - would refuse to take up jobs on the collective farms because of the drastically low wages they would earn there.201 Khrushchev once heard a story about a man who had graduated from one of such agricultural academies, and upon graduating took a job as a floor polisher because it paid better wages than he might earn at one of the farms. Khrushchev had an idea to combat this. His notion was to place the agricultural institutions at, or near, the collective farms. Khrushchev once brought this idea up in a meeting, and for the most part no one was able to refute the logic of his argument, although none were enthusiastic about placing a university near collective farming institutions.202

From an early point in his career, Khrushchev maintained a keen interest in agricultural production. This was allowed to blossom during his tenure as party boss in the Soviet province of Ukraine, and increased during his feud with Georgy Malenkov after Stalin gave Khrushchev control of Soviet domestic agricultural interests in 1949 - even though Malenkov was the secretary for agriculture at the time.203 This interest increased throughout Khrushchev's tenure as Soviet Premier, and lasted through his retirement until his death in 1971.

Roswell Garst was great influence in the agricultural efforts of Khrushchev. Khrushchev was able to understand that even though Garst's methods in agricultural production were used to further capitalist means, that they could just as easily fit a socialist mold in the Soviet Union. After the visit Garst was applauded for "cutting the diplomatic fog, for presenting 'the real America,' and for demonstrating American hospitality."204 At the farewell reception from Des Moines on September 24, before Khrushchev flew to Pittsburgh, the Soviet Premier remarked at how wonderful he was treated on his visit to Iowa.205 Even though Garst's methods proved to be ineffective on the Soviet collective farms, and while the visit to Iowa did not produce any economic or political agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union,206 it certainly did not hurt the prospect of mutual understanding.

From Iowa, Khrushchev flew to Pittsburgh on the night of September 23 and arrived at about midnight on September 24 before he left for Washington later that day.207 However, Khrushchev's plans to visit a

number of factories had to be altered because of various strikes at the time. In regard to the steelworker's union strike, Khrushchev remarked that "the trade-union leaders issued a warning that I should not expect to meet with them, because they didn't want to meet me."208 Regardless, Khrushchev still wanted to see the city so the trip to Pittsburgh was not canceled.

The night that Khrushchev arrived in the city he was met at the airfield by Mayor Thomas Gallagher a small crowd, and some of the local officials. The only unique aspect of this reception was that Khrushchev received a symbolic key to the city from Mayor Gallagher.209 After he received the key Khrushchev thanked the mayor, "I highly value your confidence expressed in the fact that you presented me with a symbolic key of your city. I thank you and assure you that I want to be your friend and will never abuse your trust, and with this key I will only open those doors which you allow me to open; I shall not make a single step without your permission."210

That morning Khrushchev went on a tour of Pittsburgh. While he was unable to go to the steel factory, Khrushchev enjoyed his tour of the city. He was most intrigued by how the women dressed, "The clothes they wore made a vivid impression on me: they wore elegant, brightly colored cotton print dresses that looked very attractive. But I was surprised at how freely they were dressed....these women were walking around in shorts, blue jeans, and very lightweight dresses. I personally think that that's practical."211

Later that afternoon Khrushchev attended a lunch, and gave a short salutary speech. In that speech Khrushchev outlined some of the positive characteristics of the Soviet Union and the United States:

We Russians and all Soviet people have long admired American efficiency, enterprise and the ability to value time. Of course these, are only a few of the qualities of Americans. We Soviet people also have our specific traits - revolutionary scope, courage and initiative. And so, if the efforts of both peoples were united on some common ground - in the struggle for peace and human progress, for example, the results would be good.212

From here Khrushchev discussed the possibility of economic, cultural and scientific exchanges between the Soviet Union and the United States, and their likely positive influence on Soviet-American relations.213

As this was the last public stop of the trip, Khrushchev took the opportunity to thank Lodge for accompanying his party along the way, to which Lodge replied, "You have been a good guest. I regret that your trip to the U.S.A. is coming to an end."214 At this point all that was left was for Khrushchev to meet and discuss the immediate course of the Cold War with Eisenhower. One part of mutual understanding had ended, and another was about to begin.

After Khrushchev finished his tour of Pittsburgh, he made the final stop of his visit in Washington late on September 24. The next day he and Eisenhower traveled to Camp David215 where discussions on the immediate course of the Cold War took place.216

Eisenhower elected to go to Camp David by helicopter so that the Soviet Premier could get a good view of Washington from above. Khrushchev recalled that the helicopter "was a good machine...The glass was solid and clear. It was as though we were out in the open, with a splendid view."217 After they arrived Eisenhower and Khrushchev ate dinner and watched some "cowboy movies."218 They put off political

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discussions as long as they could. Eisenhower also gave Khrushchev a few gifts: a heifer and an assortment of saplings to take back to Moscow. For the most part Khrushchev was impressed with Eisenhower outside of politics.²¹⁹ This meeting - just like the entire trip itself - was just as much about learning the other's likes and dislikes as it was about understanding the political position of the other.

In the early talks at Camp David, it was apparent that Eisenhower and Khrushchev were deadlocked over the issue of Berlin. Khrushchev's position on Berlin was "that eventually the western allies must withdraw their troops from West Berlin and permit the city to operate under some form of international guarantees."²²⁰ Eisenhower was just as steadfast as Khrushchev. He reasserted that the "occupation of Berlin must continue until there is a peace treaty with a united Germany, and that meanwhile Russia must respect the rights in West Berlin."²²¹ Eisenhower's demand had also been a pre-requisite for summit negotiations between the Big Four. Eisenhower had previously stated that he would refuse to attend a summit conference if Khrushchev did not withdraw his threat of war over the issue of West Berlin. Secretary of State Herter called the issue "a major sticking point" in East-West relations.²²² On the issue of Berlin, Khrushchev did in fact publicly agree with Eisenhower that negotiations on Berlin were essential to breaking the ice of the Cold War.²²³ However, U.S. officials at the time believed that Khrushchev had made the public concession in order to further his own purposes.²²⁴

The lend-lease issue produced a similar stalemate as it was a major sticking point between the two leaders. The United States repeatedly demanded that the Soviet Union repay the loans that they had received from America, in the form of lend-lease, before any line of credit was extended.²²⁵ Khrushchev made the argument that the casualties that the Soviet Union sustained in the struggle against Hitler had more than paid the debt that they owed because of lend-lease. He explained, "we have paid with our blood. You delivered material goods to us. We expressed our gratitude to you for that, and we repeat that now. But what can be more valuable than human life?"²²⁶ He went on further to point out that the United States was not demanding that any other countries that were given aid by lend-lease pay their respective debts.²²⁷ The Soviet Union was not going to budge on this point.

Of the many things that were discussed at Camp David in late September 1959 the one topic that the President and Khrushchev agreed on was the mutual desire and need for disarmament. Khrushchev called such an act "his dream," and added that "we have always wanted this kind of thing, and if we can agree on this question, all the nations and peoples will breathe more easily."²²⁸ Eisenhower agreed with Khrushchev full-heartedly, saying, "I fear war very much and would like to do everything possible to avoid it. Above all, we need to come to an agreement with you. That is the main thing. If we don't want a war, then we have to come to agreement with the Soviet Union!"²²⁹ At this point in the talks at Camp David all other topics became secondary, and Khrushchev believed that they would be cleared up in time. While certain disarmament issues were not yet amenable to negotiations - such as international monitoring - the two did agree that nuclear-weapons testing should be halted, and that that was possible without international monitoring.²³⁰

While the rest of the talks centered on economic rapprochement and the establishment of trade, no agreements were actually reached. However, if these talks accomplished one thing, it was that honest diplomatic relations between the two nations were re-opened. Both sides understood the core positions of the other - even if agreements were not immediately reached, or were even foreseeable in the immediate future. Even so, both Khrushchev and Eisenhower were slightly depressed that no tangible agreements had

been established as a result of the talks.²³¹ However, even though he didn't think it was a great victory at the time, Khrushchev did note, "we had simply made contact [and that was all],"²³² and that that was the immediate result and goal of the talks and the trip as a whole.

Even though the discussions between Eisenhower and Khrushchev were not immediately and tangibly fruitful, the success here, and one that many scholars have not credited them with heretofore, was that both sides were finally willing to at least listen to the other. This previously had not been the case. Khrushchev son acknowledged that his Father did not "think that he thought that he could reach some agreement from A-Z, but he wanted to present his position one more time to the American President on the obvious issues about Berlin, and about Disarmament."²³³ To this end, Khrushchev accomplished what he hoped for in his talks with Eisenhower. He had explained the Soviet position and his hopes for the future of Soviet-American relations. Mutual understanding was openly on the table.

On September 27, the day before Khrushchev returned to Moscow, he appeared on television to address the American people.²³⁴ He thanked the people for their hospitality, and commented on the beautiful cities he was able to see. He discussed his hopes to end the years of hostility between the United States and the Soviet Union, and remarked that "you will realize that it is not so easy to overcome all that has piled up in the many years of cold war," and added that "the process of improving relations between our countries will require great effort and patience, but above all else a mutual desire to create conditions that will facilitate a shift from the present state of tension to normal relations, and then to friendship in the interests of durable peace throughout the world."²³⁵ He went on to say:

There can be no stability or peace in the world as long as the two mightiest powers are at odds. Picture two neighbors. Each disapproves of the way the other lives and runs his household. So they fence themselves off from each other. And together with their families, they revile each other day and night. Is that a happy life to live? Anyone will say that it is not; sooner or later the two neighbors may come to blows.²³⁶

Khrushchev continued to discuss his ideas and programs that would foster this peaceful coexistence plainly to the American people, just as he had done in his speeches in various cities across the nation. He finished his speech by expressing his hope that his trip, and Eisenhower's upcoming visit to the Soviet Union, would foster good relations between the two nations, and that mutual understanding be obtained.²³⁷ The prospect of mutual understanding was now completely out in the open for the American people.

Later that day Khrushchev made his way to Andrews Air Force Base. There was a ceremony similar to that which he received when he arrived in Washington two weeks earlier. While Khrushchev was able to tour the U.S. mostly free of hostile encounters, there was one episode just before he left that marred this otherwise relatively clean slate. A few hours prior to his departure there was an anonymous bomb threat aimed at Khrushchev's TU-114.²³⁸ It was an empty threat and no bomb was discovered on Khrushchev's plane.²³⁹

Khrushchev gave his final speech of his visit on the runway at Andrew's Air Force Base. Eisenhower was unable to attend, so Nixon saw Khrushchev off. Khrushchev first thanked Eisenhower for the invitation and went on to say that he and Eisenhower had "reached a mutual agreement that all outstanding international issues should be settled, not through use of force, but by peaceful means through negotiation."²⁴⁰ Khrushchev knew that the past relations between the Soviet Union and the United States had been quite rocky, but he implored his audience to "not return to the past, but look to the future, and do all we can for

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that future."241 He went on to say, "let us join efforts to consolidate peace, to improve mutual understanding among all nations of the world."242 He finished his speech by thanking the American people for their hospitality and left with the wish that relations between the United States and the Soviet Union be normalized in the future.243 Khrushchev had successfully planted the seeds of mutual understanding in American soil. Only time would tell if it would bloom into the flower of peaceful coexistence.

When he left the United States on the evening of September 27, Khrushchev felt confident in the sincerity of Eisenhower's desire to make strides to end the Cold War.244 Shortly after his TU-114 left American soil, Khrushchev sent Eisenhower a radiogram in which he once again thanked Eisenhower for the hospitality that he had been shown.245 Khrushchev believed that "the exchange of opinions on most important international problems and on questions of Soviet-American relations has shown that the trend toward undertaking the efforts needed to end the Cold War and to create a climate of confidence and mutual understanding between our countries is on the ascendancy."246 Eisenhower replied that it was "gratifying to know that you feel our discussions may constitute some small step in the promotion of mutual understanding and the reduction of the causes of those international tensions which have brought us great difficulty in the past."247 Eisenhower and Khrushchev confirmed each other's desire for a mutual understanding, and both seemed to believe that it was in fact attainable.

In the United States Khrushchev's trip was hailed as a tremendous success in at least breaking the ice with the Soviet Union. 248 Understandably, the next six months were some of the "warmest" of the Cold War. When he arrived in Moscow on September 28, Khrushchev was greeted at a triumphant reception. After a number of congratulatory speeches he took the podium himself. Khrushchev reiterated what he had said earlier in the United States:

We must show human reason, we must have faith in the human intellect, faith in the possibility of achieving agreement with statesmen of different countries and in combining efforts to mobilize people for the task of averting the threat of war. We must have the courage and determination to act in defiance of those who persist in continuing the Cold War. We must stop it from spreading, melt the ice and normalize international relations.249

Khrushchev told the citizens of Moscow that his talks with Eisenhower had gone well, though he admitted that few of the difficulties separating the United States and the Soviet Union had been eliminated.250 Khrushchev also gave an abridged recount of his trip and ended his speech by saying that he believed that Eisenhower was "prepared to exert his efforts and his will to bring about agreement between our countries, to create friendly relations between our two people and to settle pressing problems in the interest of a durable peace."251 With that Khrushchev proclaimed that there was a newly forming friendship between the Soviet Union and the United States, which was met with prolonged applause.252 Mutual understanding was occurring, and peaceful coexistence seemed like a real possibility.

Even though the visit did not result in an immediate, tangible policy breakthrough on the issue of East Germany and the Berlin Situation, as scholars have pointed out, it was far from inconsequential.253 As Khrushchev's son has pointed out, his father's state visit in 1959 "set the stage for long term negotiations."254 He added that "the Soviet Union started to feel safer, that an American attack [was] not imminent and [that] we could negotiate with the opposite side."255 This is what Khrushchev's visit to the United States accomplished in September 1959.

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For the most part, experts believed that Khrushchev was sincere in his desire for peace with the United States. They were, however, cynical as to the grounds which he was willing to pursue those desires.²⁵⁶ Regardless of what these experts believed Khrushchev's intentions were, they overlooked what was accomplished by this visit: the advent of mutual understanding between the two nations. To his credit, Khrushchev understood the delicate nature of the situation that faced the Soviet Union and the United States, and that results of the talks would not immediately be apparent. ²⁵⁷

The next few months that followed can be characterized as some of the warmest of the Cold War. Khrushchev's son remarked that "categorical statements, threats, and accusations disappeared from newspaper pages," but added that "the skirmishing over Berlin continued, but without its former ardor and malice."²⁵⁸ For the time the citizens of Moscow were eagerly anticipating Eisenhower's visit that was to occur in June 1960. Even though Khrushchev normally refused to spend money on government buildings and urban beautification he allowed special villas to be constructed around the country to receive Eisenhower.²⁵⁹ Khrushchev even had a golf course built to prepare for Eisenhower's arrival.²⁶⁰ Even though Eisenhower was reaching the end of his term in office it was apparent that Khrushchev wanted to receive the outgoing American president well so as to build a solid foundation for future relations. During this time Khrushchev also visited other countries on official visits such as Indonesia, Burma, Afghanistan, France and India. On these trips Khrushchev reiterated his hopes for disarmament and peaceful coexistence. ²⁶¹ These policy changes, and Khrushchev's friendly rhetoric toward America, had an effect on Soviet citizens as well. After Khrushchev returned from his trip, Soviet citizens, for the first time in decades, felt comfortable enough to call their American friends to organize gatherings, and the excitement for Eisenhower's trip swelled as each day passed.²⁶²

As a move of good faith on the discussions he had with Eisenhower at Camp David, Khrushchev announced his plan of to reduce the number of Soviet troops. When the announcement was made on January 14, Eisenhower was impressed, while some of his advisers were a little surprised. Eisenhower viewed this as a "constructive first step" and Director of Central Intelligence, Allen Dulles, believed that it could signal a "sea change in the Cold War."²⁶³ Dulles further asserted that Khrushchev's military cuts "seem[ed] to exclude general war as a deliberate Soviet policy."²⁶⁴ It is apparent in the wake of Khrushchev's visit and Khrushchev's policy changes regarding military spending, that both sides sincerely wanted to believe each other about the possibility for peaceful coexistence as all parties seemed to understand the intent of each other to a greater degree.

Unfortunately all of this progress was nullified by the U-2 spy plane incident on May 1, 1960. Prior to the over-flight, Eisenhower attempted to devise an inspection plan that was acceptable to both American and Soviet officials.²⁶⁵ He reluctantly approved a series of U-2 reconnaissance missions in early 1960, and approved one last mission at the end of April 9.²⁶⁶ He urged his advisers to cautiously complete this mission and warned them, "[I] have one tremendous asset in a summit meeting....That is my reputation for honesty. If one of these aircraft were lost when we engaged in apparently sincere deliberations, it could be put on display in Moscow and ruin [my] effectiveness."²⁶⁷ Eisenhower further clarified that this over-flight be "carried out prior to May 1," and that "no operation is to be carried out after May 1."²⁶⁸ Eisenhower apparently did not make his point clear enough, though, because intelligence authorities took this to say that May 1 was the last possible day that a U-2 operation could be carried out.²⁶⁹

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The day after the spy-plane was shot down a session of the Supreme Soviet was called to discuss what measures should be taken. Khrushchev proposed the issuance of "a statement that the sovereignty of the USSR had been violated," and that was exactly what was adopted.²⁷⁰ After Eisenhower explained that he knew about the over-flights, and had approved them, Khrushchev's hands were tied. He remarked, "we now had no choice, and we spoke out sharply condemning what had happened, expressing our disagreement with this kind of policy and with the fact that there was an attempt in the United States to justify such flights."²⁷¹ The prospect of trust and friendship that had been built by Khrushchev's trip to America was nearly terminated, and would not be patched up for more than a decade.

While the U-2 incident was a set-back for mutual understanding, Khrushchev's trip to America in 1959 proved that it was possible to achieve it. Even though Soviet-American relations became increasingly hostile after the incident until the conclusion of the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962, Khrushchev's trip signaled that both sides ultimately desired peace and understanding. It is most likely that if the incident had not occurred, then a solid and tangible agreement would have been reached at the Geneva Summit on May 16, 1960. Mutual understanding would have to wait for the time being, but its possibility became real in the wake of Khrushchev's visit to America. Even though mutual understanding was delayed by the U-2 incident it is accurate to say that without those initial steps that were taken during Khrushchev's trip to America later breakthroughs might not have been possible.

¹ Stalin had received an invitation years earlier, but declined to visit the United States. Anastas Mikoyan - a colleague, and political subordinate of Khrushchev visited the United States in early 1959 to determine if a visit for Khrushchev was a possibility.

² Dr. Khrushchev is Senior Fellow at the Watson Institute at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

³ Sergei N. Khrushchev, interview by Kyle Kordon, Providence, April 18, 2008.

⁴ Sergei N. Khrushchev, interview by Kyle Kordon, Providence, February 20, 2009. Khrushchev's son explained that as a politician and leader of a country of course the visit had "a political purpose because that is part of your job." But furthermore that "from the other side you must understand that after the isolationism of Stalin, (father) wanted to discover what the opposite side looked like."

⁵ At this point the United States did not recognize East Germany as a sovereign power, and would not do so until the 1970s. The Soviet Union recognized East Germany as a sovereign state in 1955.

⁶ Theodore Otto Windt Jr., *the Rhetoric of Peaceful Coexistence: A Criticism of Selected American Speeches By Nikita Khrushchev* (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1965), Columbus: UMI, 2008, 15.

⁷ Harry Hanak has authored several books and articles on Soviet Foreign Policy, and is a "Reader in International Relations at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London." Notes on the Contributors in *Khrushchev and Khrushchevism*, ed. Martin McCauley, xi (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987).

⁸ Harry Hanak, "Foreign Policy," in *Khrushchev and Khrushchevism*, ed. Martin McCauley, 183 (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987).

⁹ Hanak, *Foreign Policy*, 182.

¹⁰ Hanak only acknowledges that the visit took place, "In any case, with Khrushchev's visit to the United States and his talks with President Eisenhower at Camp David, the situation improved." Harry Hanak, *Soviet Foreign Policy since the Death of Stalin* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), 32.

11 Bluth does not take the 1959 state visit to the United States into consideration when he discusses Khrushchev's desire to curtail government spending and enlistment of mass Soviet forces in favor of the development of nuclear missile technology.

12 Christoph Bluth, "Defence and Security," in *Khrushchev and Khrushchevism*, ed. Martin McCauley, 200-201 (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987).

13 Bluth, *Defence and Security*, 200.

14 Military spending was a concern for both Eisenhower and Khrushchev in their discussions at Camp David at the end of Khrushchev's trip. Early in those discussions Eisenhower informed Khrushchev that sometimes his generals come to him to request a certain number of billions of dollars in order to develop a certain type of weapon so that they do not fall behind the USSR that he feels that he has to give them what they ask. Khrushchev responded that he has to do the same. Eisenhower proposed "let's agree that in the future neither you nor I will give any more money to such projects." To which Khrushchev replied "That is our dream. We have always wanted this kind of thing." Nikita Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev: Volume III - Statesman*, ed. Sergei N. Khrushchev, trans George Shriver (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 170.

15 Bluth, *Defence and Security*, 200.

16 Bluth seems wary that Khrushchev was sincere in his desire to rollback the physical presence of troops in order to establish warmer relations. He states that "many aspects of Soviet foreign policy during the Khrushchev period starkly contradicted Khrushchev's emphasis on peaceful coexistence and détente." Bluth, *Defence and Security*, 202.

17 Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War: the inside Story of an American Adversary* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006) 242-43. Khrushchev's incentive was to reduce overall military spending in order to spend more money on the economy and the improvement of public works.

18 Vladislav M. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007) 133.

19 Ibid., 134.

20 Ibid., 135.

21 Hoffman only acknowledged that the visit took place, but offered no analysis as to its impact as he only used a sentence and a half to say that the visit occurred and that it was a bright spot in Soviet-American relations during the Cold War.

22 Erik P. Hoffmann is a professor of Political Science at the State University of New York at Albany

23 Erik P. Hoffman, "Soviet Foreign Policy Aims and Accomplishments from Lenin to Brezhnev," in *Classic Issues in Soviet Foreign Policy: from Lenin to Brezhnev*, ed. Frederic J. Fleron, Jr., 60 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, Inc., 1991).

24 Ibid., 63.

25 Hoffman declared that the U-2 spy plane incident had the greatest affect on Soviet-American relations before the Vietnam War.

26 Ibid.

27 Aleksandr Fursenko is a Russian historian, and a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

28 Timothy Naftali is a historian and is the director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum.

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29 Most scholars feel that it is enough to say that Eisenhower invited Khrushchev by mistake - that the invitation was supposed to have significant strings attached, and that it did not. This is one of the only works that acknowledges that Eisenhower was more than curious about the possibility of a trip. Fursenko and Naftali do point out that Eisenhower was reluctant about extending the invitation, but this is the first time that Eisenhower's thought process about the invitation has been disclosed.

30 Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, 225.

31 Ibid., 241.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., 242.

34 Khrushchev reexamined Soviet agricultural production, and the implementation of urban attributes such as lampposts, and greenhouses in comparison to the United States.

35 Ibid., 242-43.

36 They do not assert that Khrushchev wished to have a multiple party system by any means, but that the people should be able to elect different Communist leaders on a generational basis in order to pump "fresh blood into the system, not to replace Communist party members by Western liberals or conservatives." Ibid., 245.

37 Ibid.

38 Luba Racanska, *Initiates and cooperation in Soviet foreign policy toward the United States: From Khrushchev to Gorbachev* (PhD diss., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1991), Ann Arbor: UMI, 2009, 217.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid., 57.

41 Ibid., 58.

42 Ibid., 59.

43 William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003), 425.

44 The Notes section of Taubman's biography on Khrushchev itself is nearly 150 pages.

45 Ibid., 425.

46 Khrushchev notes that "the period from 1953 to 1964 was a critical one in the history of our country, a period that witnessed the turn from preparations for a third world war to peaceful coexistence," and further says that "it was also the time when the United States officially, in the words of its president, John F. Kennedy, acknowledged that the United States and the Soviet Union were equal in military might and were equally capable of destroying each other." Sergei N. Khrushchev, *Nikita Khrushchev and the Creation of a Superpower*, 3rd ed. (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), xi.

47 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 345.

48 Ibid., 345.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid., 333.

51 Ibid., 344.

52 S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

53 Polyzoides, "Khrushchev Visit Deal Astounds All," *Los Angeles Times*, August 4, 1959.

54 Windt, *Peaceful Coexistence*, 14-15.

55 This one is commonly referred to as the "Deadline Crisis."

56 Jack M. Schick, *the Berlin Crisis: 1958-1962* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 3-4.

57 Khrushchev's son explained that "for the Soviet Union, East Germany was part of the Soviet Bloc, and it was an independent country. For the United States, and the Western part of the world it was the zone of the Soviet Occupation, and it was only one Germany: West Germany." S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

58 Schick, *Berlin Crisis*, 4.

59 Ibid., 5.

60 Ibid., 6-7.

61 Ibid., 8-9.

62 Ibid., 10.

63 Ibid.

64 Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 397.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 S. Khrushchev Interview, Feb 20, 2009.

68 According to Khrushchev's son, his father wanted to negotiate the German Question and the Berlin Situations with Eisenhower, and that he hoped that this ultimatum would push Eisenhower to get the ball rolling on such talks. Ibid.

69 Schick, *Berlin Crisis*, 16.

70 Ibid., 16-17.

71 Khrushchev's son confirmed this sentiment. He mentioned that because his father was "facing the strong opposition of the West, (so) he changed his mind, and decided that it would be too high a price to bring the confrontation to such a level, and so it was better to try to bring Americans - because it was mostly an American position, the Europeans were ready to recognize East Germany de facto - to bring them to negotiations." S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

72 Schick, *Berlin Crisis*, 17.

73 Ibid., 18.

74 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 305.

75 Ibid.

76 S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

77 In the New York Times Sydney Gruson wrote that "the deadlock over Berlin is as firm now, after nine weeks of negotiations, as we the ministers first gathered here." Sydney Gruson, "Geneva Failure Stirs No Alarm," *New York Times*, August 3, 1959.

78 Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 415.

79 When Frol Kozlov, one of the secretaries within the Central Committee, relayed the invitation to Khrushchev, the Soviet Premier did not feel that any such strings were attached - as Eisenhower had wished. N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 93.

80 Ibid.

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81 Dr. Khrushchev went on to say that, "My father tried to do everything to push Western countries for the recognition of East Germany. Because of the endless negotiations before that, he imposed this ultimatum that maybe he thought he would be able to declare that in the beginning he thought that now if we recognize East Germany, then the West will recognize it, or some similar rationale." S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

82 Khrushchev recalled, "How were we to understand it? Was it a policy change? An about-face in foreign policy? No, it would be hard to imagine that." N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 93.

83 S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

84 Khrushchev's son stated that, "I cannot say that this preparation was different than preparation for any visit for any head of state. You are meeting with your experts, and reading all their memos about the personalities of the people. I would not say about the position, because the position was well known to my Father, so he didn't want to refresh what he already knew. [He wanted to know] what was the people like, what were their relations like, what were their tastes?" S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

85 Khrushchev recalled, "I was unable to get any explanation from our people as to what Camp David was. That seems ridiculous now, but back then it was an important question for us. What exactly was this Camp David...? Perhaps it was a place people were invited to if you didn't trust them. Some sort of quarantine facility....Today all of this seems funny to me; I feel a little bit ashamed." N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 97.

86 Ibid., 98.

87 Ibid., 94.

88 Sergei N. Khrushchev, interview by Kyle Kordon, Providence, February 20, 2009.

89 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 326-27.

90 Dr. Khrushchev revealed that his Father spent more than 12 hours a day going over details with different people in the days leading up to the visit, but that that was not uncommon for a state visit to the new country. S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

91 Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 422.

92 Dr. Khrushchev agreed that, "if you are a superpower, you have to be recognized as equal, and your allies have to be recognized." S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

93 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 328.

94 Dr. Khrushchev confirmed that "fishing boats did stop working and lined up with cargo ships and tankers to form a chain from Iceland to New York." S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 330.

95 Khrushchev admitted that he did not want this fact publicized as "to do so would have meant giving explanations, and these might have been damaging to our image." Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 422.

96 Ibid.

97 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 329.

98 S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

99 *Khrushchev In America: Full Texts of Speeches Made By N. S. Khrushchev Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR On His Tour of the United States, September 15-27, 1959* (New York: Crosscurrents Press, 1960), 10.

100 Ibid., 12.

101 "Red Press Hailing Visit as Victory for Premier." *Los Angeles Times*, August 18, 2009.

102 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 102.

103 *Khrushchev in America*, 13.

104 *Ibid.*, 14.

105 *Ibid.*, 16.

106 Khrushchev genuinely liked Washington. He said in his memoirs that "the city is wealthy, clean, beautiful, and green. It is like one of our provincial towns but more wealthy. It is not New York; and it does not have that constant noise of a big city. I liked very much the way Washington was laid out, and I liked its architecture. It has fewer skyscrapers; its buildings are solid and of good quality." N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 180.

107 *Ibid.*

108 *Ibid.*, 130.

109 Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 428.

110 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 131.

111 *Khrushchev in America*, 62-3. Khrushchev was questioned how peaceful coexistence between capitalist and communist nations was possible during the question and answer forum, and he rebuked the question and the man that asked it.

112 *Ibid.*, 66.

113 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 135.

114 This speech is often confused with the episode with Khrushchev and "the shoe." That event occurred in 1960 - a full year after he gave this speech.

115 This would further require that Allied troops be evacuated from West Berlin - which was in East German territory.

116 Windt, *Peaceful Coexistence*, 169.

117 *Khrushchev in America*, 68.

118 *Ibid.*, 69.

119 *Ibid.*

120 The best way to describe these belligerent appeals is to classify them as "soap-box" speeches. The person historically best-known for such speeches is Lenin in the pre World War I era before he was exiled.

121 Windt, *Peaceful Coexistence*, 157.

122 *Khrushchev in America* 68.

123 Khrushchev's proposal would make it illegal to propagate hostile rhetoric toward another nation with the purpose to provoke a conflict.

124 Windt, *Peaceful Coexistence*, 158.

125 *Khrushchev in America*, 70.

126 Windt, *Peaceful Coexistence*, 159.

127 According to Khrushchev's son, this was because American officials considered the region the zone of the Soviet occupation, and not sovereign from Western Germany. S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

128 Windt, *Peaceful Coexistence*, 160.

129 *Ibid.*, 161.

130 *Khrushchev in America*, 71.

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131 Windt is the author of *The Rhetoric of Peaceful Coexistence: a Criticism of Selected American Speeches by Nikita Khrushchev*, and is a professor of political rhetoric at the University of Pittsburgh.

132 Windt, *Peaceful Coexistence*, 162.

133 The United States did not recognize the Soviet Union as a sovereign governing body until 1933. *Ibid.*, 162.

134 *Ibid.*, 166.

135 *Khrushchev in America*, 74-75.

136 *Ibid.*, 84-85.

137 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 134.

138 *Khrushchev in America*, 102.

139 This was not the case as Khrushchev continued his visit in California which was becoming a hot bed for protest as his arrival drew near.

140 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 108.

141 "Khrushchev Banquet Here All Set as Protests Increase," *Los Angeles Times*, September 17, 1959.

142 Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, 227.

143 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 105.

144 *Ibid.*, 109.

145 Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 430.

146 *Khrushchev in America*, 105.

147 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 333.

148 *Khrushchev in America*, 113.

149 In his memoirs Khrushchev reveals that he was visibly angry about not being able to go to Disneyland because he felt that that's what was expected of him - even though he hadn't the faintest idea what Disneyland was. N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 108.

150 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 333.

151 These Tickets went for an average of \$1250.

152 "Stage Set for Khrushchev Visit to L.A. Tomorrow," *Los Angeles Times*, September 18, 1959.

153 Poulson made a remark about Khrushchev's "We will bury you" line that was coined during the Suez-Crisis - which has been misinterpreted ever since. Khrushchev nonetheless explained what he meant once again, "What I had in mind was the outlook for the development of human society. Socialism will inevitably succeed capitalism. According to our doctrine, it will be so and according to yours it won't. History will decide which is right and which is wrong." *Khrushchev in America*, 120.

154 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 112.

155 *Khrushchev in America*, 121.

156 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 112.

157 Khrushchev's son explained in an interview that "at the reception in Los Angeles he responded in an equal way. It was not easy to treat him in the rude way because he was a person who would not tolerate that." S. Khrushchev, interview, February 20, 2009.

158 Lodge was Eisenhower's representative to Khrushchev on his state visit.

159 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 112-13.

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- 160 Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, 235.
- 161 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 114.
- 162 Ibid., 115.
- 163 Khrushchev later invited Christopher to visit the Soviet Union, and the Mayor took Khrushchev up on this offer. Ibid., 116-17.
- 164 S. Khrushchev, interview, February 20, 2009.
- 165 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 115.
- 166 Ibid., 119.
- 167 Taubman explained that "the fact that the meeting was private (although the Americans later distributed its transcript) allowed (Khrushchev) to let off steam without worrying about the public reaction." Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 435.
- 168 Reuther was a Vice President of the AFL-CIO, and the President of the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers. *Khrushchev in America*, 125.
- 169 Ibid., 125-40.
- 170 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 120.
- 171 Ibid., 119.
- 172 "Attempts to Stir Up Union Trouble on San Francisco Visit," *Los Angeles Times*, September 22, 1959.
- 173 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 118.
- 174 Khrushchev in America 140.
- 175 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 118.
- 176 "Attempts to Stir Up Union Trouble on San Francisco Visit," *Los Angeles Times*, September 22, 1959.
- 177 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 334.
- 178 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 126.
- 179 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 334.
- 180 Ibid., 337.
- 181 *Khrushchev in America*, 152.
- 182 Ibid.
- 183 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 335.
- 184 Ibid.
- 185 Ibid.
- 186 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 137.
- 187 Ibid., 144.
- 188 Ibid., 148.
- 189 Ibid., 140.
- 190 Ibid.
- 191 Ibid., 141.
- 192 Ibid., 143-44.

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193 A month earlier on August 28, the State Department had already received 471 accreditation requests from American journalists to cover the story of Khrushchev on Garst's farm. Harold Lee, *Roswell Garst: A Biography* (Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State University Press, 1984), 223.

194 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 142.

195 Salisbury and Garst were relatively close friends actually, and they were able to laugh about the incident after it happened. Lee, *Garst*, 225.

196 Ibid.

197 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 338.

198 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 151.

199 Ibid.

200 Garst eagerly wanted to help Khrushchev on his agricultural ventures, but for years was agitated at the lack of action on the part of the Soviet government. He pledged to Khrushchev in a letter, "I am perfectly willing to contribute my time and energy and my thoughts to the helping of you in your promotion of greater agricultural productivity in the Soviet Union if you are going to accept that advice and act upon it." Lee, *Garst*, 220.

201 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 154.

202 Ibid., 155.

203 Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 13-14.

204 Lee, *Garst*, 226.

205 *Khrushchev in America*, 163.

206 Garst actually commented to Khrushchev at one point that "we two farmers" referring to he and Khrushchev, "could soon settle the problems of the world faster than the diplomats," with the full knowledge that Henry Cabot Lodge was standing right behind them. Lee, *Garst*, 226.

207 *Khrushchev in America*, 164.

208 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 122.

209 *Khrushchev in America*, 164.

210 Ibid.

211 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 122.

212 *Khrushchev in America*, 165.

213 Ibid., 167-68.

214 Ibid., 172.

215 When Khrushchev received the itinerary for his visit to America he could get no explanation as to what Camp David was. He thought that it was some quarantine facility where he was to be isolated and interrogated. When he was informed that it was something of a Presidential resort in Washington, he was understandably embarrassed. N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 97.

216 Camp David was created during the Roosevelt Administration so that the President could relax while still being in Washington. It is also named "Camp David" after Eisenhower's grandson David Eisenhower (who actually married Nixon's daughter Julie). Ibid., 166.

217 Ibid., 164-65.

218 These apparently were a favorite of both Eisenhower and Khrushchev. Ibid., 167.

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219 Khrushchev described Eisenhower as "a very good-hearted man and a good conversationalist." Ibid., 169.

220 Don Shannon, "Eisenhower, Khrushchev in Deadlock over Berlin," *Los Angeles Times*, September 27, 1959.

221 Ibid.

222 *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 23, 1959: "President Insists Mr. K Withdraw Berlin Threat."

223 Khrushchev felt as the talks progressed that it was going to be difficult to come to any agreement with Eisenhower on the issues at this point. He did believe "that Eisenhower was sincere when he said that he wanted to come to an agreement. And I was sincere in my reply to him. But the positions of our two countries stood in such extreme opposition to each other that the conditions were simply unfavorable for coming to an agreement." N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 170.

224 "Khrushchev Confirms Eisenhower on Berlin," *Los Angeles Times*, September 30, 1959.

225 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 160.

226 Ibid., 161.

227 Ibid.

228 Ibid., 170.

229 Ibid., 171.

230 Ibid.

231 Khrushchev remarked that at the last meal that he shared with Eisenhower at Camp David there was this "atmosphere at the table...like being in a house where someone is deathly ill. The same kind of feeling prevailed on both sides, but the president seemed to feel it to an even greater extent. It was like a funeral dinner, not a wedding banquet." Ibid., 177.

232 Ibid.

233 S. Khrushchev, interview, Feb 20, 2009.

234 This was the first time in Khrushchev's life that he spoke on television. S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 340.

235 *Khrushchev in America*, 199.

236 Ibid.

237 Ibid., 206-207.

238 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 185.

239 Khrushchev said that his security chief reassured him that there was no bomb on the plane, and convinced him of that. There had been no unauthorized persons near the plane, and there was no possible way for a bomb to slip in amongst the luggage. Ibid.

240 *Khrushchev in America*, 207.

241 Ibid.

242 Ibid.

243 In an interview with Khrushchev's son, he confirmed his Father's sentiment that "he thought that he was treated in a fair way," while he toured the country. S. Khrushchev, interview, February 20, 2009.

244 Osgood Caruthers, "Khrushchev, At Home, Hails Him," *New York Times*, September 29, 1959.

245 *Khrushchev in America*, 208.

246 Ibid.

247 Ibid., 209.

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248 "Mr. K Due in Moscow Today; Trip Praised," *Los Angeles Times*, September 28, 1959.

249 *Khrushchev in America*, 218-19.

250 *Ibid.*, 220.

251 *Ibid.*, 230.

252 *Ibid.*, 231.

253 Khrushchev's son called the trip a serious breakthrough "because afterward they talked about the spirit of Camp David, and more or less mutual understanding of both countries, so it was some feeling that we can find mutual understanding and maybe go forward in different aspects, especially over Europe and Germany." S. Khrushchev, interview, February 20, 2009.

254 *Ibid.*

255 *Ibid.*

256 "Khrushchev after His U.S. Tour," *New York Times*, September 27, 1959.

257 *Ibid.*

258 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 351.

259 *Ibid.*, 352.

260 Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 441.

261 S. Khrushchev, *Superpower*, 353.

262 Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 441

263 Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, 252.

264 *Ibid.*

265 U-2 over flights were not acceptable to Soviet authorities as it was considered a violation of the sovereignty of the Soviet Union. N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 238.

266 Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 444.

267 Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, 261.

268 *Ibid.*

269 Taubman clarifies that "along with the November 7 anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, May Day was the most important Soviet holiday of the year," and that an over-flight on this day would be even less acceptable than any other day of the year. Taubman, *Khrushchev Era*, 442.

270 N. Khrushchev, *Memoirs - Statesman*, 239.

271 *Ibid.*, 242.