(1) plan, direct, and conduct aeronautical and space activities;

(2) arrange for participation by the scientific community in planning scientific measurements and observations to be made through use of aeronautical and space vehicles, and conduct or arrange for the conduct of such measurements and observations; and

(3) provide for the widest practicable and appropriate dissemination of information concerning its activities and the results thereof. . . .

Civilian-Military Liaison Committee

Sec. 204 (a) There shall be a Civilian-Military Liaison Committee consisting of—

(1) a Chairman, who shall be the head thereof and who shall be appointed by the President, shall serve at the pleasure of the President, and shall receive compensation (in the manner provided in subsection (d)) at the rate of $20,000 per annum;

(2) one or more representatives from the Department of Defense, and one or more representatives from each of the Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, to be assigned by the Secretary of Defense to serve on the Committee without additional compensation; and

(3) representatives from the Administration, to be assigned by the Administrator to serve on the Committee without additional compensation; and

(b) The Administration and the Department of Defense, through the Liaison Committee, shall advise and consult with each other on all matters within their respective jurisdictions relating to aeronautical and space activities and shall keep each other fully and currently informed with respect to such activities.

(c) If the Secretary of Defense concludes that any request, action, proposed action, or failure to act on the part of the Administrator is adverse to the responsibilities of the Department of Defense, or the Administrator concludes that any request, action, or proposed action, or failure to act on the part of the Department of Defense is adverse to the responsibilities of the Administration, and the Administrator and the Secretary of Defense are unable to reach an agreement with respect thereto, either the Administrator or the Secretary of Defense may refer the matter to the President for his decision (which shall be final) as provided in section 201 (e). . . .

International Cooperation

Sec. 205. The Administration, under the foreign policy guidance of the President, may engage in a program of international cooperation in work done pursuant to the Act, and in the peaceful application of the results thereof, pursuant to agreements made by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Further Resources

BOOKS

WEBSITES

“The Kitchen Debate”

Debate

By: Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev

Date: July 25, 1959


Nikita Khrushchev (1894–1971) started out as a worker in heavy industry. He eventually rose through the ranks of the Communist Party to lead the Soviet Union in the 1950s and early 1960s. Proclaimed as Time magazine’s “Man of the Year” in 1957, he attained the premiership in March 1958, at the height of the space race with the United States. In 1964, conservatives in the Party removed him from office, frustrated by his desire for domestic reform and his perceived weakness towards the United States.

Introduction

Just as American politicians faced the difficult task of appearing forceful to constituents and political opponents at home during the Cold War, Nikita Khrushchev straddled a tenuous line between warm and cold relations with the United States. With this in mind, he permitted, in the summer of 1959, the establishment of a U.S. Trade and Cultural Fair that was designed to depict life in the United States to the people of Moscow. While touring the American National Exhibition, which featured a presentation of an American kitchen, Khrushchev met U.S. vice president Richard Nixon. The ensuing, unscripted exchange became a stunning, and often hilarious, battle of wills between two representatives of the most powerful nations on Earth.

With television and tape recorders rolling, Khrushchev and Nixon entered the kitchen exhibit and stood next to a washer-dryer. The off-the-cuff debate saw each leader present his view of capitalism, communism, and the societies these ideologies had spawned in the United States and the Soviet Union. Khrushchev and Nixon sparred for several minutes, as each offered startlingly blunt assessments of the other. Both leaders refused to concede any point, and both could agree only that the other should change.

Significance

“The Kitchen Debate,” as it became known, proved a fitting end to the 1950s. The decade had seen the emergence of the Cold War as the dominant force in international and domestic affairs in both the Soviet Union and the United States. In the United States, politicians such as Nixon manipulated anticommunist hysteria to advance their political careers. In Europe, East Asia, and elsewhere, the United States attempted to strengthen its allies to fend off the perceived Soviet menace. And finally, all of the decade’s investigations, treaties, and arguments culminated in this debate between representatives of the two superpowers. Far from providing future generations with an intellectual discussion of the Cold War, Nixon and Khrushchev bickered with one another like opponents in a high school debate.

Nixon, though, received enormous popular approval for what the press described as his taking Khrushchev to task on the merits of capitalism over communism. The man who made a name for himself with guile and prosecutorial zeal once again rode a public confrontation to national attention. Nixon’s anticommunism, however, was soon outmatched by the rhetorical flights of John F. Kennedy (served 1961–1963).

Kennedy’s anticommunism followed a fine line between comforting the public and preparing it for continued struggle in the Cold War. The best example of this was in his 1961 inaugural address, where he pledged on the one hand to “never fear to negotiate” and on the other to “pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty.” The Cuban missile crisis of 1962 tested the resolve of both Kennedy and Khrushchev as the superpowers approached the brink of nuclear war, only to stand down at the last possible moment.

Primary Source

“The Kitchen Debate”

SYNOPSIS: When Nixon and Khrushchev encountered one another while touring the American National Exhibition on July 25, 1959, none of the Russian or American observers expected what happened next. The two refused to back down from the other’s challenges, with the resulting debate providing another clear example of the continuing polarization between the superpowers. Yet, by agreeing to disagree at the meeting’s conclusion, the pair’s closing foreshadowed, in a certain respect, the détente policies later encouraged by President Nixon in the 1970s.

(Both men enter kitchen in the American exhibit.)

Nixon: I want to show you this kitchen. It is like those of our houses in California. (Nixon points to dishwasher.)

Khrushchev: We have such things.

Nixon: This is our newest model. This is the kind which is built in thousands of units for direct installations in the houses. In America, we like to make life easier for women....

Khrushchev: Your capitalistic attitude toward women does not occur under Communism.

Nixon: I think that this attitude towards women is universal. What we want to do is make life more easy for our housewives....

Nixon: This house can be bought for $14,000, and most American [veterans from World War II] can buy a home in the bracket of $10,000 to $15,000. Let me give you an example that you can appreciate. Our steel workers, as you
know, are now on strike. But any steel worker could buy this house. They earn $3 an hour. This house costs about $100 a month to buy on a contract running 25 to 30 years.

Khrushchev: We have steel workers and peasants who can afford to spend $14,000 for a house. Your American houses are built to last only 20 years so builders could sell new houses at the end. We build firmly. We build for our children and grandchildren.

Nixon: American houses last for more than 20 years, but, even so, after 20 years, many Americans want a new house or a new kitchen. Their kitchen is obsolete by that time. . . . The American system is designed to take advantage of new inventions and new techniques.

Khrushchev: This theory does not hold water. Some things never get out of date—houses, for instance, and furniture, furnishings—perhaps—but not houses.

I have read much about America and American houses, and I do not think that this exhibit and what you say is strictly accurate.

Nixon: Well, um. . . .

Khrushchev: I hope I have not insulted you.

Nixon: I have been insulted by experts. Everything we say [on the other hand] is in good humor. Always speak frankly.

Khrushchev: The Americans have created their own image of the Soviet man. But he is not as you think. You think the Russian people will be dumbfounded to see these things, but the fact is that newly built Russian houses have all this equipment right now.

Nixon: Yes, but. . . .

Khrushchev: In Russia, all you have to do to get a house is to be born in the Soviet Union. You are entitled to housing. . . . In America, if you don’t have a dollar you have a right to choose between sleeping in a house or on the pavement. Yet you say we are the slave to Communism.

Nixon: I appreciate that you are very articulate and energetic. . . .

Khrushchev: Energetic is not the same thing as wise.

Nixon: If you were in the Senate, we would call you a filibusterer! You—(Khrushchev
—do all the talking and don’t let anyone else talk.
This exhibit was not designed to astound but to interest.
Diversity, the right to choose, the fact that we have 1,000 builders building 1,000 different houses is the most important thing. We don’t have one decision made at the top by one government official. This is the difference.

Khrushchev: On politics, we will never agree with you. For instance, Mikoyan likes very peppery soup. I do not. But this does not mean that we do not get along.

Nixon: You can learn from us, and we can learn from you. There must be a free exchange. Let the people choose the kind of house, the kind of soup, the kind of ideas that they want.

(Translation lost as both men enter the television recording studio.)

Khrushchev: (in jest) You look very angry, as if you want to fight me. Are you still angry?
Nixon: (in jest) That’s right!
Khrushchev: . . . And Nixon was once a lawyer?
Nixon: Oh yes, (Nixon chuckling) he still is [a lawyer].

Other Russian speaker: Tell us, please, what are your general impressions of the exhibit?
Khrushchev: It’s clear to me that the construction workers didn’t manage to finish their work and the exhibit still is not put in order. . . . This is what America is capable of, and how long has she existed? 300 years? 150 years of independence and this is her level.
We haven’t quite reached 42 years, and in another 7 years, we’ll be at the level of America, and after that we’ll go farther. As we pass you by, we’ll wave “hi” to you, and then if you want, we’ll stop and say, “please come along behind us.”
. . . If you want to live under capitalism, go ahead, that’s your question, an internal matter, it doesn’t concern us. We can feel sorry for you, but really, you wouldn’t understand. We’ve already seen how you understand things.

Other U.S speaker: Mr. Vice President, from what you have seen of our exhibition, how do you think it’s going to impress the people of the Soviet Union?

Nixon: It’s a very effective exhibit, and it’s one that will cause a great deal of interest. I might say that this morning I, very early in the morning, went down to visit a market, where the farmers from various outskirts of the city bring in their items to sell.
I can only say that there was a great deal of interest among these people, who were workers and farmers, etc. . . . I would imagine that the exhibition from that standpoint would, therefore, be a considerable success.

As far as Mr Khrushchev’s comments just now, they are in the tradition we learned to expect from him of speaking extemporaneously and frankly whenever he has an opportunity.
I can only say that if this competition which you have described so effectively, in which you plan to outstrip us, particularly in the production of consumer goods. . . . If this competition is to do the best for both of our peoples and for people everywhere, there must be a free exchange of ideas.
There are some instances where you may be ahead of us—for example in the development of the thrust of your rockets for the investigation of outer space. There may be some instances, for example, color television, where we’re ahead of you. But in order for both of us benefit. . . .

Khrushchev: (interrupting) No, in rockets we’ve passed you by, and in the technology. . . .

Nixon: (continuing to talk) You see, you never concede anything.

Khrushchev: We always knew that Americans were smart people. Stupid people could not have risen to the economic level that they’ve reached. But as you know, “we don’t beat flies with our nostrils!” In 42 years we’ve made progress.

Nixon: You must not be afraid of ideas.

Khrushchev: We’re saying it is you who must not be afraid of ideas. We’re not afraid of anything. . . .

Nixon: Well, then, let’s have more exchange of them. We all agree on that, right?

Khrushchev: Good. (Khrushchev turns to translator and asks): Now, what did I agree on?

Nixon: (interrupts) Now, let’s go look at our pictures.
Khrushchev: Yes, I agree. But first I want to clarify what I’m agreeing on. Don’t I have that right? I know that I’m dealing with a very good lawyer. Therefore, I want to be unwavering in my miner’s girth, so our miners will say, “He’s ours and he doesn’t give in!”

Nixon: No question about that.

Khrushchev: You’re a lawyer of Capitalism, I’m a lawyer for Communism. Let’s kiss.

Nixon: All that I can say, from the way you talk and the way you dominate the conversation, you would have made a good lawyer yourself. What I mean is this: Here you can see the type of tape which will transmit this very conversation immediately, and this indicates the possibilities of increasing communication. And this increase in communication, will teach us some things, and you some things, too. Because, after all, you don’t know everything.

Khrushchev: If I don’t know everything, then you know absolutely nothing about Communism, except for fear!

But now the dispute will be on an unequal basis. The apparatus is yours, and you speak English, while I speak Russian. Your words are taped and will be shown and heard. What I say to you about science won’t be translated, and so your people won’t hear it. These aren’t equal conditions.

Nixon: There isn’t a day that goes by in the United States when we can’t read everything that you say in the Soviet Union. . . . And, I can assure you, never make a statement here that you don’t think we read in the United States.

Khrushchev: If that’s the way it is, I’m holding you to it. Give me your word. . . . I want you, the Vice President, to give me your word that my speech will also be taped in English. Will it be?

Nixon: Certainly it will be. And by the same token, everything that I say will be recorded and translated and will be carried all over the Soviet Union. That’s a fair bargain.

(Both men shake hands and walk off stage, still talking.)

Further Resources

BOOKS

WEBSITES