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Consumerism and Communism: The American Exhibition in Moscow

by

Nordica Thea Nettleton 

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts

in

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ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the the American exhibition in Moscow in 1959. The focus is on understanding what happened to create the exhibition, why it was created and permitted as well as the Soviet reaction to the exhibition. It places the exhibition within the social, political and economic context of the 1950s. The contention is that the exhibition needs to be studied within the Soviet context as well as within the American.

The paper begins with a consideration of what constitutes cultural diplomacy, and an analysis of the history of Exhibitions. It then looks at the diplomatic measures which led to the American Exhibition, the planning and the execution of the exhibition. The final focus is on the Soviet interpretation of the event. The sources used include Soviet and American newspapers and magazines, American government documents, and numerous secondary sources.

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INTRODUCTION

There are several remarkable facts about Soviet - American relations. The two countries never entered into direct conflict despite two world wars and numerous crises such as those over Berlin, the U-2 incident, Korea, and Cuba. The citizens of both nations exhibited a general sense of interest in, respect for and appreciation of the other country's culture, be it in the arts, sciences, or sports. Much of this mutual appreciation stemmed from the fact that both nations shared the eighteenth century Enlightenment notion that reason, science and education could transform society. In the twentieth century the cumulative result of these three elements was technology. Technology, which promised to provide solutions to all of man's ills,[1] was central to both postwar Communism and capitalism. It was through technology both military and non-military that the two superpowers competed, including the quality of airplanes in which state leaders flew. In his memoirs, Khrushchev stated that the Soviet delegation at the Geneva conference of 1955 was at an instant disadvantage from the moment their plane arrived. The French, British and American leaders arrived in four engine planes, while the Soviets came in a two engine Ilyushin, II-14. As Khrushchev and others commented, "the comparison was somewhat embarrassing"[2] : a four-engine plane displayed technological advancement which could benefit both consumer and military interests. Technology in these forms was tangible evidence of the benefits of ideologies and systems of government. Both the United States and the Soviet Union used technology to convince developing nations of the

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1 Alvin Z Rubinstein, Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II: Imperial and Global (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers Inc., 1981), 264.

2 Nikita Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1970), 395.

merits of their respective systems. Technology was a fundamental aspect in how the citizens of a nation assessed their ideology and thus their culture.

The 1950s constituted a period of rapid technological development and competition between the two superpowers, as a result of which the production of goods increased both in volume and speed. Mass production requires mass markets, and technological advances in transportation allowed for markets to be increasingly international. The interdependence of economies was matched by concern over national interests and a "polarization of power relationships."[3] Advances in atomic and missile technology resulted in a shift in the conceptualization of war. When military conflicts did occur they were peripheral and typically in newly emerging states. The U.S. and the Soviet Union incorporated such states into their spheres of influence by offering them military, technical and economic assistance. However, dividing the world into spheres of interest was not going to ensure either peace or an ultimate victory. Without direct competition or conflict between the two systems, there could be neither victory nor defeat, and without defeat there could be no forced concessions. Denied direct military confrontation, the two powers turned to competition for technological superiority and battles for the minds of each other's citizens through techniques such as cultural events. Advances in transportation and communication had facilitated face to face relations such as cultural and summit diplomacy, which could be employed as a means of furthering cooperation or of promoting propaganda. Cultural diplomacy and trade between the USSR and the USA significantly increased after World War II, marking the beginning of an adversarial relationship in which competition dominated cooperation.[4] If cultural

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3 Elmer Plischke, "Summit Diplomacy - Diplomat in Chief" in Modern Diplomacy: the Art and the Artisans ed. Elmer Plischke (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1979), 178.

4 Rubinstein, Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II, 263.

activities are linked to foreign policy objectives and to foreign information, then they are subject to accusations of disseminating propaganda. What did the superpowers seek to gain by advancing and linking cultural diplomacy and trade? How did these agreements manifest themselves?

During the 1950s the governments of the Western Allies were more secure and their economies were stronger than that of the USSR. The political structures of the Western nations were generally considered legitimate by their populations and therefore had a high degree of institutional stability. Conversely, the stability of the Soviet system was continually threatened throughout the 1950s. In 1953 Stalin died, leaving an uneasy oligarchy to rule the state. From this group of men Khrushchev arose, temporarily solidifying his position through his Twentieth Congress speech denouncing the excesses of Stalin and restored the idea of the fallibility of the Party and its leader. This fallibility curbed the unlimited authority of the Party and called its very legitimacy to govern into question. Western European economies, largely buttressed by the American Lend Lease policy, had rapidly recovered from the war and were expanding modestly. Increases in international trade agreements were profitable and standards of living were improving. Western Europe's financial growth, while impressive, was outstripped by that of the United States of America, Canada and Australia, none of which had been occupied during the war, and all of which were experiencing rapid economic growth. The Soviet economy was also developing rapidly, although the devastation of the war and the vastly lower base points of the Soviet economy greatly increased their challenge.

After Stalin's death in 1953 the Kremlin was moderately more receptive to information about and comparisons between the standard of

Soviet living vis a vis the West.[5] The isolationism of the Stalinist era was gradually replaced with a desire to acquire information from abroad. The slogan "learning from abroad" symbolized the new attitude.[6] Clifton Daniel, the assistant foreign editor of the *New York Times* recalled that the changes occurring within the Soviet Union during these years were met with disbelief and uncertainty amongst Western leaders. A British friend of Daniel's commented that Khrushchev's foreign policy, which included a peace treaty with Austria, military reductions and increased communication between the West and the Soviet Union, appeared to trouble many Americans. It was as if American foreign policy had lost its "best enemy."[7] Along with the Soviet government's relaxing of foreign policy, developments in technology and the rapid rebuilding and high growth rate of the Soviet economy resulted in rising political and material expectations amongst the Soviets. There was a general sense of confidence amongst Soviets that their nation's new status as an international power would help to preserve peace and that rapid economic growth would benefit the population. Economically, the years of 1958 and 1959 were particularly impressive, representing a high point in Soviet economic progress. Economic Historian Alec Nove described the late 1950s as a period of increased consumer goods, improved housing and rising standards of living. Even taking into consideration the initially low levels of economic development, Nove's assessment was that the aforementioned improvements, coupled with social reforms, justified public optimism.[8] In the 1950s Alexander Werth conducted an informal poll of what he termed the Soviet middle class: well educated

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5 Frederick Barghoorn, The Soviet Cultural Offensive: the Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soviet Foreign Policy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), 62.

6 Wolfgang Leonhard, Three Faces of Marxism: The Political Concepts of Soviet Ideology, Maoism, and Humanist Marxism (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 140.

7 D. F. Fleming, The Cold War and its Origins: 1917-1960 Volume Two 1950-1960 (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1961), 784.

8 Alec Nove, "Industry," in Khrushchev and Khrushchevism, ed. Martin McCauley (Houndsmill: MacMillan Press, 1987), 68.

professionals with an average standard of living. The Soviet citizens who he interviewed exhibited a high level of optimism and a general sense of well being. In a similar interview of eighty-five fifth-year students at the University of Moscow, five of the students said that they expected to own a car within six years.[9] While many Soviets believed that as citizens of a world power they should live as such, the Soviet economy did not have the plethora of consumer goods necessary to match public demands. This lack of consumer goods had the potential to be a destabilizing force.

Throughout his leadership, Khrushchev stressed increased per capita production and rising living standards. Announced at the twenty-first congress of the CPSU in January, 1959, the goal for the seven-year plan for 1959-65 was to overtake the United States in per capita industrial and agricultural production. This was to be achieved by a per capita increase of eighty percent by 1965. Due to the relatively inefficient nature of Soviet industry, the Soviet Union faced an acute scarcity problem in trying to diversify its economy.[10] In order to create high levels of consumer, agricultural and health industries while maintaining high levels of military and heavy industrial output, the Soviets needed to create a far more efficient system then they had. Although Khrushchev spoke about the need to improve living standards and increase light industry, he consistently gave priority to heavy industry. Perhaps this was a result of his reliance on the support of the industrial managers in his struggle with Malenkov for the leadership of the Party.

Despite all his proclamations calling for industrial reform, Khrushchev consistently defined reform within the confines of the pre

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9 Alexander Werth, The Khrushchev Phase: The Soviet Union Enters the 'Decisive Sixties' (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1961).

10 Cyril E. Black, "Soviet Society: A Comparative View," in Prospects for Soviet Society, ed. Allen Kassof (London: Pall Mall Press, 1968), 26.

established centralized system and the inspirational power of communism. After a speech to a central committee meeting on the automation of industry, the assembled workers were asked what was needed to increase production. They called for increased worker freedom to allow for technical motivation and the removal of the system of high quotas that resulted in overworked and underpaid workers. Khrushchev's response was to increase the control of party organizations over industries and to create special party commissions within enterprises to propose ways of improving performance.[11] Inherent in his course of actions were severe dangers. Reforms encouraging increased productivity tended to encourage competitiveness, initiative and innovation and therefore threatened to undermine the stability of the regime.[12]

The Soviet Union emerged from the Second World War victorious, with extended borders, new satellite states, and significant military capacity albeit at the cost of a ravaged population and economy. Joseph Stalin began the post war period by maintaining a level of internal fear and obedience within the country. He also sought to reassert the image of the West as the enemy. A final resolution to the conflict between communism and capitalism by military means was increasingly unattainable, or at least not feasible, due to technological advances. With the demise of Stalin change was required. One of the intrinsic elements of dictatorships is that there is no provision for a successor: the result of total power centered in one man is that the training, naming or even the evidence of an alternative leader is unlikely, as it would jeopardize the totalitarian nature of the leader's rule. Upon Stalin's death, the stability of the government and perhaps even the legitimacy of those who wished to rule was tenuous. The new Soviet

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11 William J. Thompson, Khrushchev: a Political Life (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 200-206.

12 John Lewis Gaddis, We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 191.

leaders needed techniques and policies to maintain control and one of those adopted was peaceful coexistence. Khrushchev, in order to legitimize his role, redefined the earlier Marxist-Leninist policy of co-existence, making it applicable to a superpower during the atomic era.

Nikita Khrushchev soon became first among equals in the collective leadership that formed to assume control after Stalin's death. He lacked both Lenin's legitimacy and Stalin's brutal control. Unable or unwilling to maintain the state of fear and repression of the Stalinist era, Khrushchev needed an alternative method of coercing the Soviet masses and the *aparatchiki*. When Khrushchev began destalinization he "pulled down the whole structure of illusion about Stalin's Russia"[13] a process which served to destabilize the legitimacy of government and allowed for the introduction of the fallibility of the leader within Soviet society. It is a mistake to differentiate between Khrushchev's ideological and material objectives. For him they were part of a cyclical process constantly reinforcing and improving on each other. While the material is fundamental to Marxism, from 1917 to the early 1950s, it was largely overlooked. Khrushchev was an ardent Communist and upheld many of the central principles of Soviet ideology, particularly the party's exercise of control on behalf of the proletariat. His inclusion of popular participation never negated this principle since popular participation was to occur only in the execution and not in the planning of political, economic and social decisions. The difference was that public participation was to be a result of education and persuasion and not coercion.[14] Under Khrushchev's leadership there was a revitalization of the party and an attempt to

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13 Robert Tucker, "The Psychology of Soviet Foreign Policy," in Problems of Communism VI no.3 (May-June), 8.

14 Robert G. Wesson, Soviet Foreign Policy in Perspective (Homewood: The Dorsay Press, 1969), 217.

create a direct link between the leadership and the masses. While his period in power is associated with several years of instability at the top, there was a general trend towards the legitimization of the Party as the ruler of society without the need for incessant violence and terror. The solidification of his legitimacy was facilitated by his position as a moderate. He was a man capable of eliminating or at least alleviating the injustices of Stalinism, and relieving colonial countries from the abuses of capitalism and imperialism. While the Khrushchev era illustrated that the terror of Stalinism was not necessary to maintain control, the power that was needed to change Soviet society and to maintain that change over several decades required a phenomenal sense of purpose.[15]

According to historian Adam Ulam the leaders of the Soviet Union during the 1950s were intent on improving the wellbeing of their fellow citizens. They wanted to improve standards of living, increase freedoms, broaden cultural achievements and generally be remembered as the "emancipators of the Soviet people."[16] Why was the Party intent on improving standards of living? One reason was Khrushchev's ambition to establish his place in Communist history. Lenin was credited with bringing Communism to Russia; Stalin with saving Russia from fascism; and, Khrushchev wanted to be remembered as the man who brought prosperity, security and peace, who improved the lives of Soviet citizens, and brought "long term detente" to the citizens of the world.[17] If Khrushchev could maintain and enhance the international status of the Soviet Union by keeping it at the forefront of an expanding socialist camp, he would significantly improve the security of his domestic position. This meant maintaining ties with Communist

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15 Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Nature of the Soviet System" in The Khrushchev and Brezhnev Years ed. Alexander Dallin (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 11.

16 Adam Ulam, Expansion and coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy: 1917-1973 (Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1975), 627.

17 Ibid., 607.

countries such as China, and re-establishing ties with breakaway Communist nations such as Yugoslavia. It also included convincing the developed and developing world that Communism was simply better than capitalism. That it was theoretically superior was understood; that it offered a society complete with high standards of goods and services was as yet not proven. In order to establish the Soviet Union as an credible bastion of socialism, technology had to replace terror.

> Next to selected shreds of traditional local culture and folk art, the sputniks and spaceships are serviceable as vehicles for indoctrination notably of the masses. As for the intellectuals, they are subjected to persuasion that promotion of culture and advances in science, in which they are supposed to participate creatively, somehow "prove" the scientific character and moral superiority of the socialist system.[18]

In pluralistic democracies, the legitimacy of the competitive elective process with its built-in controls is generally accepted. The process by which the government is selected confirms its legitimacy. For a Communist government legitimacy is founded on its socioeconomic and military performance.[19] In exchange for limited civil liberties, the socialist states are expected to provide higher, more equitable levels of government services, health care, education, adequate housing, employment, stable prices, living standards, and career mobility.[20] Public ownership and central planning must provide an economic system in which steady economic growth occurs and from which everyone benefits. Historian Richard Lowenthal's view is that Communist regimes are perpetually striving towards short-term socioeconomic success in an attempt at legitimacy. As socioeconomic performance is based on constantly changing economic factors, it is not a stable long-term foundation, and the substitution of socioeconomic success for legitimate

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[18] George Liska, "The Politics of Cultural Diplomacy," in World Politics: A Quarterly Journal of International Relations XVI no. 3 (April 1962), 534.

[19] Stephen White, "Economic Performance and Communist Legitimacy," in World Politics: A Quarterly Journal of International Relations XXXVIII no.3 (April 1986), 463.

[20] Ibid., 464.

procedures is therefore a short-term solution at best.[21] Communism had to be sufficiently advanced in a technological sense to protect a nation against attack, while being responsible enough to ensure that the world remained a safe distance from atomic annihilation. As if this was not enough, it also had to be economically viable in order to provide a high standard of living. These expectations were not instantaneous with the inception of the Soviet Union. Due to its agrarian nature, wars and conflicts, and size,the Communist party had been granted by many a grace period which lasted until the end of the immediate post World War Two rebuilding period.

The arrival of Communism in Russia shifted "the epicenter of world revolutionary development" from the industrial West to agrarian Russia, and later to post colonial nations.[22] In its rapid modernization and victory over the Nazis, Communism as represented by the Soviet Union had proved its tenacity and viability, if not its superiority. In an article which ran in the London Economist in 1959 a Russian spokesman wrote: "We Russians, a backwards people ourselves less than a lifetime ago, can now do even more spectacular things than the rich and pompous West."[23] This miraculous progress was a result of communism. When socialism first arrived in non industrial Russia, most people accepted that the Soviet economy would lag behind those of Western capitalist nations. Later, after the revolutions, the Civil War, the purges and the Second World War, it was accepted that time was needed to rebuild. It was not until the 1950s that the Soviets expected no less than parity and possibly superiority not only over the West in

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21 Richard, Lowenthal, "The Ruling Party in a Mature Society," in Social Consequence of Modernization in Communist Societies, ed. Mark G. Field (Baltimore: the John Hopkins University Press, 1976), 107. For similar views see Marshall Goldman's Crisis in the Soviet Union: the Failure of an Economic System.

22 Robert Tucker, "Russia, the West and World Order," in World Politics: A Quarterly Journal of International Relations XII no. 1 (October 1959), 6.

23 Leonhard, The Three Faces, 425.

general but over the United States in particular. From the 1950s on, any slowdown in economic growth was a potential threat to the standard of living of the people and thus to the stability of the Communist regime. Allowing for the unreliable nature of Soviet statistics, the accepted annual rate of economic growth for the 1950s averaged 11.4 percent in the early 1950s and averaged 9.1 percent in the late 1950s.[24] This high rate of growth buttressed the legitimacy and stability of Khrushchev's regime. However, once the rate of growth declined before eliminating the margins between the Soviet and American economy, the historically inevitable process of Communism overtaking capitalism became increasingly less attainable.[25] The Gaither Report commissioned by President Eisenhower was released in November of 1957. It contained an assessment of the status of the Soviet economy. The general consensus was that while the Soviet GNP was only a third of the American GNP, it was growing twice as fast. However, the USSR and the USA spent approximately the same amount on gross military expenditures.[26] This meant that the Soviets were spending three times as much of their GNP on defense as were the Americans. The Soviet per capita consumption was a fifth of the American level.[27] The Soviet Union was in a position to catch up with its greatest rival, and even surpass it. Due to its totalitarian nature, the Soviet Union could allow this diversion of a higher level of its GNP to its military industrial complex for some time. The Gaither Report had the effect of maintaining if not increasing the American general state of fear regarding the Soviet menace.[28] One way to hinder Soviet development was

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24 White, "Economic Performance," 466.

25 David Dyker, "Soviet Industry in its International Cortex," in The Soviet State: The Domestic Roots of Soviet Foreign Policy ed. Curtis Keeble (England: the Gower Publishing Company for the Royal Institute of international Affairs, 1985), 76.

26 Leonhard, The Three Faces, 427.

27 Thomas B Larson, Soviet American Rivalry (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), 52.

28 Raymond Gartoff, Assessing the Adversary: Estimates by the Eisenhower Administration of Soviet Intentions and Capabilities (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991), 33.

to limit trade. Any item deemed strategic by the American government could not be sold to the Soviets. The Soviets accused the United States of placing any form of advanced technology from printing presses to plastic bowl assembly lines under the heading of strategic trade. In 1958, President Eisenhower asked a team of American capitalists headed by Harold Boeschenstein of the Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation to address the economic challenge the Soviets posed to the United States. The committee's recommendation was that there be a decided increase in nonstrategic trade with the Soviet bloc. The reasoning was that additional consumption would create a demand for even more consumer goods, which would cause the Soviet government to increase its production of such products thereby diverting resources away from the war industry.[29] It was in this atmosphere of suspicion and fear that Khrushchev would introduce peaceful coexistence.

In 1956 Khrushchev stated that the Soviets sought more amicable ties with the United States.[30] This involved diplomatic, economic and cultural cooperation and was based on peaceful coexistence. While peaceful coexistence sounded innovative, the basic concept was new neither to Marxism nor to Soviet ideology. One key aspect of peaceful coexistence was economic competition between Communist and capitalist states, a notion present in the writings of Marx, Bukharin, Lenin and Stalin. Economic competition provided evidence of the relative viability of the two systems. Nikolai Bukharin was an elite member of the Bolshevik party from before the October Revolution until 1929. He was a Politburo, and Central Committee member as well as being the editor of *Pravda*. From 1926 to 1928, he was the head of the Communist International. Lenin referred to him as the "biggest theoretician" of

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29 "Strategy for the West," Time Magazine (March 16, 1959), 76.

30 as quoted in: Richard W. Stevenson, The Rise and Fall of Detente: Relaxations of Tensions in US-Soviet Relations 1953-1984 (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1985), 44.

Soviet Marxism.[31] In *Economics of the Transition Period*, published in Moscow in 1920, Bukharin wrote that beneficial relationship could be established between the Soviet Union and countries with no proletariat class, but with large agrarian or colonial populations. The agrarian nations would benefit from the economic superiority and support given to them by the Soviets. This would result in their becoming part of the Socialist fold. The analogy given was that these nations would be like the Russian peasants, who were combined with the Communist proletarian masses. As these nations benefited from the alliance with the USSR, bourgeois resistance would decrease and finally collapse. Socialism would convert nonaligned nations based upon its ability to outperform the West and on its support for them.[32]

There is some dispute as to whether Lenin first coined the term "peaceful coexistence". What is known is that by the 1920s the term was part of Communist dialectic and referred to the hostile peace between the newly formed Communist state and the West. It was therefore under Lenin's leadership that the principle of coexistence became established policy. In 1925, Stalin gave a speech in which he declared that an "equilibrium of forces and a certain period of 'peaceful coexistence' between the bourgeois world and the proletarian world'" could exist.[33] Stalin's most succinct explanation of what he intended was made in an address to an American workers' delegation: "Two centers will be formed...The fight between these two centers for the conquest of world economy will decide the fate of capitalism and Communism throughout the whole world, for the final defeat of world capitalism means the victory of socialism in the arena of world economics."[34] Initially, economic

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31 Stephen F Cohen, Rethinking the Soviet Experience: Politics and History Since 1917 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 74.

32 Nikolai Bukharin, Economics of the Transition Period (Moscow, 1920), 153.

33 Robert Tucker, The Soviet Political Mind: Studies in Stalinism and Post Stalin Change (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1963), 201.

34 Tucker, "Russia, the West and World Order," 9.

competition was an important aspect of socialist development, but by 1930s the concept of economic competition was a mute point. Stalin had his statements on economic competition and conquest removed from later editions of his collected works, redefining all conflict between Communism and capitalism in political, social and militaristic terms.

Soviet theories on international Communism and competition were reexamined in the post war era. In 1952, Stalin published a series of papers under the title of *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*. The central concept was that during World War Two the international conflict between socialism and capitalism had entered a new phase which "embraced economy and politics on a global scale."[35] Stalin had returned to the idea of two centers or world camps which held that economic and political competition was essential between the two superpowers and that no nation could remain neutral midst this titanic struggle. Reintroduced after the invention of nuclear weapons, the battle over the alignment of other nations would be at least in part, an economic and political struggle. It was not until after Stalin's death that the policy of peaceful coexistence rose to prominence. Malenkov was the first to call for relaxed relations with the Americans, arguing that the Soviet drive for military parity with the USA significantly decreased the possibility of adjusting the economic policy towards more consumer goods.[36]

It should be remembered that the image of the Russians as inflexible and unchanging is simplistic. The Soviet Union, like all nations, was in a state of perpetual change from its inception. The assumption of rigidity present in many hawkish interpretations of history, fails to allow for the legitimate intellectual changes that each generation has produced. Each successive generation of Soviet

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[35] Ibid., 10.

[36] Robert Service, A History of Twentieth Century Russia (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998), 352.

leaders has added its own interpretations and theories to Marx's original concept of communism.[37] As Robert Daniels' wrote: "[T]hey cling to the rigid self-righteousness of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy, and they bend and twist the orthodoxy in innumerable practical applications to make it yield the interpretation that squares with prudence, challenge, or opportunity."[38] When Khrushchev started to redefine socialism within the Soviet Union he weakened the dogmatic nature of the system. Competitive ideas and the relativism of ideology threatened the strength of domestic ideology.[39]

The theoretical changes which occurred under Khrushchev's leadership neither contradicted nor negated the basic tenets of Marxism Leninism. Many of his tenets were adaptations of previous socialist thought. Khrushchev's foreign policy had two main components, the first being the belief that the Western countries were not on an imminent path to revolution, and that any direct interference on the part of the Soviets would be futile. This concept of Communism in one nation had long been accepted. Secondly, Khrushchev believed that nonaligned nations could exist, and that they, along with pro-Soviet nations, would eventually contain capitalism. Khrushchev's concept of peaceful co-existence and economic competition allowed for the temporary neutrality of nations not believed to be involved in any anti-Soviet policies, or alliances in hope that they would be persuaded of the benefits of the Soviet system. The Soviet goal was to have an international influence without causing conflicts which could destabilize the motherland. The doctrine of a "general crisis of capitalism" remained constant, as did the concept of two main camps.[40]

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37 Louis J. Halle, "How Much Can We Expect From Russia," in American Views of Soviet Russia 1917-1961 ed. Peter G. Filene (Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1968), 363-366.
38 Robert B. Daniels, "Doctrine and Foreign Policy," in The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy ed.s Erik Hoffmann and Frederic Fleron Jr. (New York: Aldine Publishing Company, 1980), 154.
39 Brzezinski, "The Nature of the Soviet System," 18.
40 Tucker, "Russia, the West and World Order," 10.

During Khrushchev's reign there were several ideological changes. One was the inclusion of culture in ideology and the eventual partial substitution of culture for ideology, "mobilized to make up for the eclipse of Marxist-Leninist ideology."[41] If culture was being used as a substitute for ideology, and technology was a fundamental component of culture, then ideology was linked to technology. This was a terrifying prospect in a state which was based on ideology and lagging in technology. Khrushchev's most significant contribution to Soviet thought was presented at the Twentieth Party Congress. There he announced that the concept of the inevitably of war had been true only during the interbellum period and had been replaced in the postwar era by the inevitability of non-military conflicts. Dubbed revisionist by other Communists, Khrushchev's coexistence doctrine is perhaps better described as competitive coexistence. Whether or not this concept was in fact a continuation of Leninist principles is academic. In a system where ideology is the foundation on which society, government and economics are based, any new policy must be an "imperative application of Marxism-Leninism".[42]

Under Khrushchev the concept of coexistence had grown to encompass most of Soviet international policy. He redefined the nature and duration of the doctrine's applicability. Whereas Lenin's coexistence doctrine applied to periods between wars, Khrushchev's allowed Communism to grow, flourish and 'bury' capitalism within the framework of peace or a perpetual state of coexistence. Coexistence was in fact a form of class struggle. In a speech given in 1959 Khrushchev explained that:

> [C]oexistence is the continuation of the struggle of the two social systems, but by peaceful means, without war, without interference of one state in the internal affairs of another state...We consider that it is an economic, political, and ideological struggle, but not a military one. It will be a

41 Liska, "The Politics of Cultural Diplomacy," 537.

42 Daniels, "Doctrine and Foreign Policy," 156.

competition of the two systems on a world scale.[43]

The Americans perceived this ideological shift as detrimental to, rather than reflective of, Soviet interests, and thus found it difficult to account for Moscow's conciliatory gestures as anything other than deliberate deception. Perhaps this mistrust was due to the fact that Khrushchev was making concessions at a time of unprecedented Communist power. Lenin and Stalin on the other hand, had made temporary agreements with the West, justified on the basis of the relative weakness of their nation. Coming at a period of Soviet strength the implication of Khrushchev's coexistence policy was that the two systems would exist together for a significant period of time.

The introduction of peaceful coexistence was a response to the destructive nature of nuclear war. However, the people's acceptance of this change to Marxism-Leninism was also indicative of a population wanting and expecting to increase their domestic standard of living. Perhaps the greatest challenge of the new approach to foreign policy was that with neutral nations, non violent roads to communism, and national communism, the need for an active vanguard of the people was diminished and the need to appeal directly to the masses increased. In addition, technology increased the mobility of people and information which increased the possibility of citizens comparing their standards of living with others. Khrushchev's policy was criticized for being too realistic and insufficiently idealistic by members of the government. However, he was also buying the Soviet Union time, as the country shifted from autarky to interdependence in an attempt to meet the demands of consumers and modernized technological production. Foreign trade facilitated the fulfilling of economic plans, saved time, potentially increased production and increased the rate of technological

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[43] Tucker, The Soviet Political Mind, 205. Quoting Pravda, October 14, 1959.

progress. In this manner foreign trade was critical to the fulfillment of domestic economic objectives.[44] One attempt to increase foreign trade was by increasing Soviet purchasing capabilities. Evidence of the Soviet desire to enhance trade came at the Geneva conference of 1955, when the Soviet delegation proposed to repay a portion of the money they had received from the Lend Lease program, if they could receive $6 billion in credit. Nothing ever came of these discussions. In any event, Khrushchev had committed his nation to a new course, that of peaceful coexistence with its attendant risks and challenges. In this new era it was natural that culture became one of the battle grounds.

In the study of international relations the role of culture is often described as the "sharing and transmitting of consciousness within and across national boundaries."[45] The study of culture or cultural interpretations of history often differentiate between culture, economics and politics. However, it is difficult to completely separate these three fields. For example, creating a sense of national security would involve political and economic issues as well as creating a national cultural perception and personae. International relations becomes an interplay of "national ideologies, traditions, emotions, and other cultural productions." [46]

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44 Robbin Laird and Erik Hoffmann, "The Scientific Technological Revolution and "Developed Socialism and Soviet International Behavior," in The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy ed. Erik Hoffmann and Frederic Fleron Jr. (New York: Aldine Publishing Company, 1980), 399.

45 Akira Iriye, "Cultural and International History," in Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations ed. Michael Hogan and Thomas Paterson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 215.

46 Ibid., 215

CHAPTER ONE

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

An agitator assures a meeting that after a few five year plans, not only will most Soviet citizens have their own cars, they'll have their own airplanes. A listener is so carried away with the idea that he whispers to his wife: "Won't that be the life, Manka, we can take the plane anytime we hear they're selling cabbage in Moscow."[47]

Foreign policy consists of the strategies by which a government attempts to ensure its survival as well as the protection of domestic core values, principles and institutional procedures. In essence it involves any means for nations to come into contact with each other including established political diplomatic means. Diplomacy can be defined as the political process in which nation states engage; it is the conducting of official relations and is distinguished as the medium of foreign policy. Cultural diplomacy includes the exchange of: fairs, exhibitions, students and experts, written works, radio broadcasts, artistic groups, technological products, and fine arts. It is most often employed when the objective is to influence and to persuade citizens and world leaders, and is accompanied by an increase in trade and other diplomatic communication. Cultural diplomacy can be an international unifying agent. The broadening realm of cultural diplomacy is a manifestation of post World War Two changes in science, leadership and political theory. Summit diplomacy is a closely connected term and was used popularly from the 1950s in conjunction with the rise of cultural diplomacy, although it was already a well-established practice of state. It is diplomacy between leaders of

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47 Richard Stites and James von Geldern, Mass Culture in Soviet Russia: Tales, Poems,Songs, Movies, Plays and Folklore (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 213.

state, usually conducted in face to face circumstances. The basic premise is that if the leaders would know each other and understand each others' position they could take decisive action. In the 1950s President Eisenhower noted that "[f]or centuries personal correspondence between Heads of Government and Heads of State has been an extremely valuable channel of communication when the diplomatic channels seemed unable to carry the full burden." [48]

Cultural and summit diplomacy have very similar roles and limitations in international politics. In fact, summit diplomacy is sometimes described as a broad category of which cultural diplomacy is a subset. However the reverse is the more widely accepted conceptualization. More often than not, cultural and summit diplomacy measures are conducted in conjunction with each other. This was the case with the American Exhibition in Moscow in 1959 in which the cultural aspect as represented by the exhibition was paired with the official state visit of Vice President Nixon to the Soviet Union. The argument put forth by proponents of cultural diplomacy was that in an era of nuclear warfare capabilities, the only viable means of destroying the enemy was to convert him. Cultural diplomacy which could act both a destructive and a humanizing strategy of the Cold War,[49] was generally conducted through short term agreements. Agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union defined culture as the fine arts as well as science, technology, and sports; in essence it was any field in which Americans and Soviets interact. As such both the American and Soviet exhibitions of 1959 were examples of cultural diplomacy. They were also prime examples of peaceful coexistence with both nations displaying positive images of their ideological system.[50] In order for cultural diplomatic activities to have a long term beneficial effect, they must

48 Plishcke, "Summit Diplomacy Diplomat in Chief," 173.
49 Liska, "The Politics of Cultural Diplomacy," 538.
50 Barghoorn, Soviet Foreign Propaganda, 92.

occur on a regular basis. Also, the manifestations of cultural and summit diplomacy must not "degenerate into a talking war, and such propaganda value or internal political advantage as may accrue should be a byproduct rather than a primary objective."[51] Cultural diplomacy provides nations with forms of communication not available through more conventional means. While not directly addressing sensitive issues, they maintain the appearance of dialogue and reinforce the rationality and humanity of the enemy."The Bolshoi Ballet might not have been expected to win battles, but it might have been used to help weaken the image of the less commendable aspects of Soviet life and to create a more favorable picture of Soviet culture."[52] Cultural diplomacy is based primarily on the dissemination of information, thus they can not be separated: "[t]he sending and receiving of information is always shaped by culture, while culture is changed by information."[53]

In the late 1940s, Professor Eugene Dupréel of the University of Brussels developed the theory that in prolonged conflict the distinction blurs between the aggressor and the defender, with both parties assuming similar means of maintaining the conflict. Both nations take on the personae of aggressor and defender which effectively neutralizes the roles. When applied to the Cold War the amassing of nuclear technology by both sides resulted in "mutual images of hardware symmetry." Having matched each other in military capabilities there was a shift to gaining advantages by non military means. Since the Soviet Union had generally accepted Western diplomatic systems and customs it was not surprising that they would enter into Western patterns of cultural and summit diplomacy. The increase in cultural diplomacy was primarily beneficial in so far as it included technological information, was linked with

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51 Plishcke, "Summit Diplomacy Diplomat in Chief," 175.

52 Michael P Gehlen, The Politics of Coexistence (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), 255.

53 Frank Ninkovich, US Information Policy and Cultural Diplomacy (Foreign Policy Association No. 306, Fall 1996), 4.

trade, and propaganda was limited. Summit or personal diplomacy was to the advantage of Soviet leaders. As Chairman of the Council of Ministers, a principal member of the Party Presidium, First Secretary of the Party, and Chairman of the Party's Special Bureau of the RSFSR, Khrushchev was the primary decision-maker within the Soviet Union. In any discussion with foreign leaders, Khrushchev could instantly commit the entire state.

The American leaders were not as fortunate since the system of checks and balances ensured that the Senate and Congress were involved in the decision-making process. They were also limited by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' definition of foreign policy which the American government adopted. In the post World War Two era, Dulles was accepted as the foreign affairs leader of the United States. Born in Washington, D.C., on February 25th 1888, Dulles specialized in international law, becoming an international adviser to President Wilson at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and later a member of the American delegation at the United Nations. Dulles had defined largely the conflict between the USSR and the USA as ideological, which limited the scope of any diplomatic agreements. Charles Bohlen, US ambassador to the Soviet Union felt that the impact of warmer relations was far more likely to have a destabilizing impact on the Soviet Union due to the closed nature of its political system. Dulles believed that Communism represented an "unintended benefit," for in battling it, Americans were protected against becoming too soft.[54] The vigilant struggle would in essence have a steeling effect. Khrushchev described Dulles as an "aggressive man who had a physical revulsion against the Soviet Union and an ideological hatred for everything new, everything Communist,

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54 Dwight Eisenhower, The White House Years: Waging Peace 1956-1961 (New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1965), 373.

everything socialist." [55] It was one of Khrushchev's greatest achievements that he was able to persuade Eisenhower to recognize publicly the need for a detente. The hawks interpreted detente as the West being encouraged to relinquish its superiority in strategic weapons, while the Soviet Union was not compelled to relinquish its strongest weapons: political and ideological warfare. This assessment of detente underestimates American capabilities in this field. It also fails to assess accurately the American advantage as the world leader in materialism.

Throughout the 1950s private and government initiatives in the area of cultural relations were proposed to encourage peace and provide a forum for propaganda. Through summit meetings leaders sought to convince respective state leaders of their power, prestige, parity, sincerity, and convictions. In 1959, two events were to occur which epitomized the new cultural relations. They were the U.S.-USSR exchange of national exhibitions; first the Russian State Exhibition in New York and then the reciprocal American Exhibition in Moscow. In both instances the target was ostensibly the masses, but included in these exchanges were informal top level meetings. The Americans viewed the chance to target the Soviet masses with the fantastic standard of living Americans enjoyed as a major battle in the Cold War. The Soviet government placed far less importance on its exhibit than the American deeming Khrushchev's visit to the United States in the fall of 1959 to be their opportunity to convince the Americans of their peacefulness, compatibility for trade and indestructibility. The exhibits lasting from May through September 1959, are representative of cultural diplomacy, the Cold War and modernization. The most infamous incident occurred in the model American kitchen when Vice President Nixon and

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55 Nikita Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers the Last Testament, ed. Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1990), 362.

Nikita Khrushchev debated the merits of capitalism and Communism and Nixon ended up poking Khrushchev.

The general acceptance of the importance of cultural diplomacy in recent years has led to its increased study with concomitant emphasis being placed on various cultural activities, including the American exhibition in Moscow. There have been scholars, among them Frank Ninkovich, who downplay the significance of these cultural exchanges. The reasoning is that the resulting exchanges and exhibitions were "too modest in scope to be anything more than symbolic."[56] Perhaps it is the knowledge of the importance of symbols and symbolism that makes this topic of interest to current historians who contend that symbolic events have been understudied in the past. This position serves as a warning not to overstate the historical importance of cultural relations; as they tend to involve society *en masse* and draw national media attention, which can have such a result.[57] This is not to say that they are insignificant, merely that a far more accurate interpretation is drawn when cultural diplomacy events are studied within the appropriate sociopolitical context.

Of the two 1959 exhibitions, the American exhibition in Moscow is of far more historical interest. Its Soviet counterpart in New York merits less attention because it was in many ways the same exhibit shown a year earlier in Brussels. The American exhibition on the other hand was mostly new and represented a huge investment of time and effort by private and public sectors in the U.S. It is interesting to examine why the United States was prepared to exert itself in this manner and why the USSR was prepared to accept such an intrusion into its culture. This study is an attempt to examine and accurately assess the impact of the American Exhibition within its historical context.

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56 Ninkovich, US Information Policy , 26.

57 Coomb, The Fourth Dimension , 117.

While at the Geneva Conference, both the American and Soviet parties used culture as a means of achieving very different goals. The American objective was the propagation of Western ideas, and the Soviet objective was the acquisition of new technology and acceptance of military parity. The Soviets linked trade relations to cultural relations, insisting that without trade negotiations there could be no cultural exchanges. Robert Tucker has noted that the Soviets tended to connect discussions on economic and cultural fields with "political implications."[58] In an American press conference, in 1962 Khrushchev said that:

> the absence of trade between the two countries was regrettable mainly for political rather than economic reasons...'[s]ince ancient times it has been accepted that if states trade with one another and try to develop commerce, they do not fight but live in peace...Cooperation in this sphere helps the peoples of different countries to know each other better, promotes mutual understanding, creates a good basis for political negotiations.'[59]

Before World War Two the Soviet Union ranked sixteenth in world trade with about 1 percent of international trade, but by 1959 it was ranked sixth at 4.5 percent.[60] Khrushchev sought to continue this increase as policy which was to manifest itself in the exhibits. While this obviously was a means of addressing issues and concerns that the Soviets had about their economic development, it was also connected with American self-perception. By the late 1950s, American culture was one of consurmerism. Thus, the connection between industrial and cultural trade so important to the Soviets, was in part already an accepted notion within the United States. Cultural diplomacy was the:

> continuing reminder that beneath the high question of national policies lie simple human goals; that on either side of the iron curtain millions of plain folks share an overwhelming bond of humanness - of hope for a more tranquil world. The friendly talk

58 Tucker, The Soviet Political Mind, 216.
59 as quoted in Tucker, The Soviet Political Mind, 216.
60 Wesson, Soviet Foreign Policy, 236.

> among ordinary people about ordinary problems, the American delegate playing with Russian children, the Russian expert rubbing oat kernels in his palm on an Iowa farm-all these can help create the climate of goodwill for the patient negotiations to come. They are the images of the aspirations of all men, the small coin that passes from hand to hand, from nation to nation. They are the pennies of peace, and pennies can add up sometimes.[61]

An early theory of cooperation postulated that antagonistic groups could be induced to cooperate if presented with a super-ordinate goal which neither group could ignore or achieve alone.[62]

Cultural diplomacy was not necessarily an expression of good will. Secretary of State Dulles referred to cultural diplomacy and more specifically to exhibitions as "people to people relationships."[63] The Soviets often engaged in activities like the American and Soviet Exhibitions, and Khrushchev's visit to America, during periods of intense international conflict. The exhibition occurred after the Berlin crisis, just before the U-2 crisis and almost concurrently with the launching of Sputnik. Cultural diplomacy was also potentially rife with propaganda. If citizens could be persuaded to accept the right of the party or government to rule then it could persuade citizens of other countries to support the policies of another nation.[64] Two of the main characteristics of Soviet propaganda were its inclusion of all forms of mass communication, including conventional forms such as radio, press and TV, as well as literature, music and film; and its acceptability. No attempt was made to veil the Soviet elite's interest in propaganda. Indeed, the Russian word propaganda has a different meaning as well as connotation from the English. The Section of Propaganda and Agitation was attached to the Secretariat and the Presidium sanctified as a

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61 J.D. Parks, Culture, Conflict and Coexistence: American Soviet Cultural Relations, 1917-1958 (Jefferson: McFarland, 1983), 145.

62 C Sheriff, M. Harvey, B. J. White and W.R. Hood, Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation: The Robber Slave Experiment (Norman: U.K. University Book Exchange, 1961).

63 Walter Hixson, Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture and the Cold War, 1945-1961 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 161.

64 Gehlen, The Politics of Coexistence, 240.

valuable governmental organization. The State Department would assess the propaganda level of groups slated to visit the USSR.[65]

One of the first scholars to examine cultural diplomacy in general and the American/Soviet Exhibitions in particular was Frederick Barghoorn. In his monographs Soviet Foreign Propaganda, and The Soviet Cultural Offensive, he places these events into an economic context.[66] Relative to other parts of the Western world, the Russian economy was developing quickly up to and after Stalin's death. This economic security led to a pride in and a desire to display the Soviet way of life, which involved technical advancements. One reason why the Soviets were willing to enter into cultural exchange was their desire for the West to acknowledge their respectability. They had been marginal members of the international community from the time of the October Revolution, and had become accepted only out of necessity during the Second World War. An effective cultural agreement would establish at least a veneer of respectability in a largely non-Communist international community.

The economic development of the Soviet Union was accompanied by rising expectations. However much the Soviet economy was expanding, it was failing to produce the plethora of consumer goods necessary to match the public demands. As early as October 1953 there was a government policy calling for the acceleration of the production of consumer goods coupled with a decrease in investment and prices. By February 1955, Malenkov's policy fell under criticism due to its excessively pro consumer goods objectives. The fuel behind the complaints was the industrial shortages caused by the policy. Khrushchev came to power during this confrontation and had the support

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65 Hixson, Parting the Curtain, 159.

66 Frederick Barghoorn, The Soviet Cultural Offensive (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).

of the heavy industry lobby. On October 16,1959 both *Pravda* and *Izvestia* ran articles about the Party Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers calling for increased production of consumer goods. *Pravda* ran with the header: "On Measures for Increasing the Production, Expanding the Assortment and Improving the Quality of Cultural, Everyday and Household Goods", while Izvestia ran the header "Add Good and Handsome Things to Our Lives!" Khrushchev was now supporting decrees calling for increases in cultural and economic standards. While there had been increases in the production and distribution of consumer goods, demand still outstripped production. The decree acknowledged that there existed areas in which it was "not always possible to buy the simplest household goods." It also stressed the comparative shortage of synthetic and plastic materials. The poor quality of many commodities was accepted and improvement was promised.[67]

In a published speech in *Pravda* on February 15,1959, Khrushchev spoke about the development and future of the Soviet economy.

> The socialist economy is developing toward increasingly greater satisfaction of the material and to the members of society, toward continuous expansion and improvement of production on the basis of better technology...The capitalist economy is developing in the direction of the greater enrichment of the monopolies, more intensive exploitation of the millions of working peoples and lowering of their living standards.[68]

The Soviet leaders' desire for technical and scientific information coupled with their willingness to present their way of life created a situation allowing for the establishment of reciprocal trade agreements. As early as the first half of the 1950s it was evident that cultural competition increasingly factored into Soviet foreign policy. The American economy was not to be dismissed through an oversimplification

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67 The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, XI no. 42. s. v. "Decree Calling for More and Better Consumer Goods," 3.

68 Nikita Khrushchev, "Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the Twentieth Party Congress," in Pravda (February 15, 1956) as cited in The Current Digest of the Post Soviet Press (July, 1992), 2.

of Leninist principles but was to be carefully studied: advances in Western technology could be used to further Socialism. It was generally accepted that the Soviets viewed American mobility in the fields of politics, economics and the military as the main obstacle to executing Russian foreign policy successfully. Khrushchev also believed that increased production was socialism's "guarantee" in economic competition with the West.

The intent of Soviet foreign policy was to create a strategy that would surpass the Americans in military, economic and political power. At the same congress of the Soviet Communist Party, Khrushchev outlined the two means by which this Soviet preeminence would be achieved. First, the Soviet Union was going to impress nonaligned countries with its high standard of living, its scientific achievements, and its mass of high quality consumer goods. As Khrushchev explained:the Soviets needed to let the world decide. The system that consistently provided a higher and more equitable standard of living would be the people's choice. And the "[p]eople everywhere will make the right choice."[69] This belief that the Soviet Union would soon outperform the U.S. can be attributed to several factors. There was a general state of optimism based on the rapid industrialization of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, as a Communist Khrushchev believed in the eventual victory of Communism over capitalism, while the idea of presenting oneself as being advanced to entice other nations to deal with the Soviet Union or to convince citizens of the inevitability of socialist rule was frequently employed by the Soviet hierarchy. A nation that was significantly behind its Western counterparts in 1917 had, through "harsh regimentation" achieved the first successes in space technology.[70] For the time being, however, the American system was

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[69] Ibid., 2.

[70] Walter Lafeber, America, Russia and the Cold War (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 195-196.

more advanced industrially and in a better economic shape. The second aspect of Khrushchev's plan was afflicted with the malaise of the grandiose that seems to affect Russian rulers from time to time. He equated grandeur, size and volume with success. According to his calculations, Soviet industrial output would be higher than American industrial output only five years after the fulfillment of the Seven Year Plan; the Soviet Union would be first in absolute volume of production, and in per person production. Through peaceful coexistence, socialism would be victorious.

There was no major diversification of resources called for within the Seven Year Plan. There is an argument that the plan was devised merely in order to maintain the appearance of Khrushchev's commitment to consumer goods for the public.[71] The general consensus is that while Khrushchev was sincere about diversifying the economy and increasing the quality and quantity of goods, he was unable to do so within the framework of the system he inherited. He once said:

> After all, our friends may say to us, "listen dear comrades, you are trying to teach us to build socialism but you don't know how to raise potatoes in your own country, you cannot provide for people. There is no cabbage in your capital.[72]

This march towards economic supremacy and ultimate victory would be aided by obtaining industrial technology, which the West, specifically the United States, had developed. The use of foreign innovation to increase the tempo of Soviet industrialization had been common since the October Revolution. The first step towards the objective of economic supremacy was the Seven-Year Plan for 1959 to 1965 introduced at the Twenty-First Congress of the Soviet Communist Party on January 27,1959 which set an objective of an 80 percent increase in total industrial

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71 Carl Linden, Khrushchev and the Soviet Leadership with an Epilogue on Gorbachev (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 70.

72 Thompson, Khrushchev: a Political Life, 123.

production. Interestingly, heavy industry was to increase by 85 percent while light industry, namely the production of consumer goods, was to increase by only 50 percent. When dealing with individually listed items such as radios or motor cars a projected range was given, thereby building in a degree of flexibility. The table listed below provides the increases broken down by product and illustrates the priority given to heavy industry [see table one].

Table One

USSR Seven-Year Plan 1959-1965

Production Targets in Physical Quantities

Commodity	1965 Plan	Percentage of Increment 59-65
Total industrial production	--------	80
Heavy industry	--------	85
Light industry	--------	50
Coal (million metric tons)	600-612	20
Crude steel (m. m. t.)	86-91	57/66
Rolled Steel (m.m.t.)	65-70	53/63
Pig iron (m.m.t.)	65-70	64/77
oil (m.m.t.)	230	100
Electric power (billion kW)	500	110
Cement (million metric tons)	75-81	127/145
Forging and stamping machines	--------	250
Locomotives	---------	150
Chemical equipment in billions of rubles	3.5	220
Timber (million cubic metres)	275	17
Cotton fabrics (billion metres)	77-78	33/38
Woolen fabrics (million metres)	500	65
Silk fabrics (billion metres)	1.5	76
Footwear (million pairs)	515	45
Sugar (million tons)	9.2-10	76/90
Meat (million tons)	6.1	114
Fish (million tons)	4.6	60
Motor cars('000)	750-856	46/67
Radio and Television sets ('000)	9302	90
Televisions only ('000)	4550	70
Washing machines ('000)	2570	378
Refrigerators ('000)	1.45	300
Domestic sewing machines ('000)	4.55	117[73]

[73] J. M. Mackintosh, Strategy and Tactics of Soviet Foreign Policy (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 293.

Most Western nations believed that the Soviet Union could achieve the targets of the Seven-Year Plan. American industrial production increased by seven percent between 1953 and 1957, but the Soviet rate of growth was an incredible fifty-four percent.[74] Success was contingent on the Communist government's ability to increase its labour force, notably by demobilizing soldiers, to modernize its equipment, and to raise generally the per capita production. Under the Stalinist system, the government had focused on heavy industry, while sectors such as agriculture, housing and consumer goods were deemed less important and modest plans for these areas could be readily sacrificed. This changed under Khrushchev; the government was now responsible for ensuring that all the aforementioned fields were given priority. As the standard of living improved the demand for more and higher quality consumer goods increased. However the Soviet system was not structured in such a way as to respond to consumers or enterprises.[75] There were vast shortages and equally large areas of overproduction. From 1958 on, Soviet growth slowed down to 5.3 percent per year and remained at this level until 1964 when Nikita Khrushchev was removed from office. Having reached its peak in 1958 at an annual growth rate of 7.1 percent as compared with the American rate of 2.9 percent, the Soviet economy began its decelerated growth.[76] The productivity of capital and labor diminished, and Khrushchev was unable to remove the inefficiency and lack of incentive which it now appears was inherent in the system.

A comparison between American actual production in 1957 and predicted Soviet production for 1965 shows that even these optimistic Soviet projections were consistently under existing American production rates in most areas, with the exception of woolen fabrics at 140

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74 Mackintosh, Strategy and Tactics, 295.

75 Alec Nove, An Economic History of the USSR (England: Penguin Books, 1982), 358.

76 Ronald Grigor Suny, The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR, and the Successor States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 409.

percent, butter at 115 percent and sugar, at 320 percent. The most glaring differences were in Soviet oil production, which in 1965, would produce only 50 percent of what America produced in 1957, and electric power, which was at the same ratio. Thus, even if the Soviets were to fulfill the ambitious Seven-Year Plan, they would not have reached parity with actual American production levels of 1957. In terms of consumer goods the Soviets were beginning from an even lower comparative level of production.

Table Two

Index of Durable Consumer Commodities Related to the Number of People in the USA and the USSR in 1957

Commodities	One Unit per Number of People	
	USA.	USSR
Passenger cars	27	1,900
Radio sets	10	55
TV sets	25	300
Refrigerators	53	55
Washing machines	43	370

For all of Khrushchev's claims that he intended to raise the standard of living of the average citizen, the Seven-Year Plan set modest objectives in light industry. There were to be improvements but no significant changes. However, the successful completion of the Seven-Year Plan would have put the Soviet Union in a far more advantageous position with reserves of raw materials, machines, and other manufactured goods for export. The Seven Year Plan made manifest the relationship between economic and industrial power. Could increased economic power

manifested in foreign aid programmes lead to pro-Soviet governments? Until the Soviet Union managed to increase its economic status, it was reliant on its scientific achievements, most importantly intercontinental ballistic missiles, and artificial satellites like Sputnik. In his autobiography, Khrushchev recalled that "[i]t always sounded good to say in public speeches that we could hit a fly at any distance with our missiles."[77] Khrushchev tended to use nuclear capabilities as a means both of altering the status quo and maintaining Soviet status vis-a-vis the United States.[78] Soviet foreign policy under Khrushchev fluctuated between the threat of attack and offers of alliances. Perhaps more important than Sputnik itself was the booster rocket that catapulted the satellite into space. The successful launching of Sputnik meant that the Soviets were capable of launching large items at very high speeds over a 4,000 mile radius, a testimony to Soviet missile capabilities. The Soviet advantage in missile capabilities was real, as was the fact that the Soviet economic growth rate was higher than that of the United States. Actual missile capacity was an entirely different story. In 1957, the Soviets decided not to build first generation ballistic missiles en masse, waiting instead for larger second generation models to evolve. The Russians effectively used scientific achievement as a smoke screen for actual military capacity. One way in which Khrushchev maintained the illusion of Soviet missile strength was to have the Soviet media report back American derived figures of Soviet capabilities.[79] These advances gave the Soviets a brief period of time in which to strengthen their economy and stabilize international relations. Khrushchev's speeches at home often implied that he would have liked to reduce military defense spending and increase domestic spending should international relations improve.

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77 Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, 225.

78 Gaddis, We Now Know, 207.

79 Lafeber, America, Russia and the Cold War, 195-196.

As a result of these developments, the Soviets created a new look in the 1950s: they were increasingly "foreigner friendly", advocated freer trade, and promoted contact between Communist and non-Communist countries and individuals. The twin policies of Communist expansionism and accommodation with the United States were both pursued. The late 1950s represented a period of improved relations between the superpowers. This is not to say that these were not volatile years. A particularly tense period arose in 1955 over Soviet involvement in the Middle East and endured for years. Differences between states are inevitable, but the networks for resolving these differences varies. During the 1950s, the theory was that cooperation was most attainable in functional areas. An example of this would be the creation and running of a world health organization, or the exchange of exhibitions, as opposed to political issues. Once cooperation in cultural and functional areas has become standardized, it can be applied to international political issues.[80] This is not to suggest that the new look included complete openness or that information was not managed. Barghoorn makes an interesting observation when he notes that the Soviets placed greater emphasis on African and Asian exchanges while minimizing the importance of exchanges with Western Europe and the United States. For example, between 1954 and 1957, 196 Indian delegations, 348 French, and 368 English delegations visited Russia. *Pravda* gave the Indian delegations twice as much mention as the French and significantly more than the British. The majority of Soviet press coverage for the American exhibition was critical. Instructions were published on how to interpret the American Exhibition in Moscow and on how to view and interpret the exhibition and ticket priority was given

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80 Manus I. Midlarsky, "Polarity, The Learning of Cooperation and the Stability of International Systems," in :American and Russian Prospectives on the Post Cold War Era , ed. Manus I Midlarsky, John A. Vasquez and Peter V. Gladkov (New York: Harper Collins College Publisher, 1994) , 29.

to party members and other reliable persons. It would take American pressure and perseverance for the masses to be reached. The result would be that:

> [p]erhaps the biggest breach in Soviet communications control took place in 1959 when some three million Soviet citizens visited the American National Exhibition in Moscow...At home, they posed the danger that the official image of America might be shaken as far as Soviet citizens were concerned. Abroad, they may perhaps have tended to blur somewhat the image traditionally disseminated by Moscow of a world struggle between two bitterly hostile and irreconcilable forces.[81]

The basics of Soviet objectives in employing culture changed little after Stalin. Communist leaders were creating and maintaining Potemkin villages, in which the citizens communicated through oration and conversation.[82] Even during periods of relative weakness the Soviet Union used cultural contact. Cultural diplomacy under Khrushchev was impressive, but "continued to seem a perversion of good means for dubious ends."[83] There was no real reciprocity occurring during these exchanges as the Soviet Union and the United States both maintained long established, and very divergent objectives. The term used to refer to Cold War cultural exchanges should not therefore not be reciprocity, but equivalency. This equivalency has been interpreted positively by Yale Richmond who argues that since both sides have different objectives for participating in cultural exchanges, both have the potential of achieving their goals.[84]

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81 Frederick C. Barghoorn, Soviet Foreign Propaganda (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 68-78.

82 Barghoorn, The Soviet Cultural Offensive, 377.

83 Ibid., 336.

84 Richmond, US Soviet Cultural Exchanges, 129.

CHAPTER TWO

AN ANALYSIS OF THE HISTORY OF EXHIBITIONS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AMERICAN EXHIBITION IN MOSCOW

It is often said that the Soviets do not really want an agreement, or cannot be trusted to keep one, on any major subject of international politics. This is incorrect...The sad fact is that while they want an agreement of specific issues, the Soviets do not want - or, to speak more precisely, the premises and the present position of their totalitarian system do not allow them- to reach a final settlement on the major sources of international tension.[85]

While the research on bilateral exhibits like the U.S.-USSR exhibits of 1959 is limited there is a growing field of research pertaining to world fairs and exhibitions both as independent events and as part of cultural diplomacy. Perhaps one of the most insightful works on international exhibitions is Paul Greenhalgh's monograph *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939.* It is unfortunate that the study is delineated so as to not include the exhibitions of the 1950s. However, it does describe the evolution and continuity between the earliest world exhibitions and modern exhibitions. Exhibitions and fairs are spectacular displays through which millions pass and where they are "taught, indoctrinated and mesmerized."[86] International fairs and exhibitions' purposes were to inspire and to teach the masses. Through the indoctrination of exhibitions wants become needs, theories become possibilities, and the mark of progress is linked with the superiority of a culture. This matched with the other purpose of exhibitions, to promote trade, has meant that international exhibitions have become a regular occurrence in

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85 Adam Ulam, "Expansion and Coexistence: Counter point in Soviet Foreign Policy," in Problems of Communism, VII no. 4 (July-August 1959), 6.

86 Paul Greenhalgh, Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs 1851-1939 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 1.

the 19th and 20th centuries. Exhibitions have evolved out of the industrial revolution. They are industrialized nations' attempts to address issues such as the need for trade, the incessant advancement and production of new technology, and the constantly rising education levels required by the workers and middle classes of the future. They were also a background for political agendas.

One of the first recorded exhibitions was in 1797 in France. The exhibition was designed to promote and to sell off a surplus of French goods. It was also held to create the illusion of a strong French economy in the post revolutionary period. This exhibition was soon followed by another French exhibition in 1798 organized both for the citizens of France and for the businesses of Europe. The goal was to convince people that the industrial revolution which was occurring in England could occur, and occur with greater success in France. The same reasoning would later motivate Khrushchev to permit the American Exhibition in Moscow in 1959.

The English soon followed the French, hosting slightly more modest exhibitions generally organized by the "Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce" under the guidance of William Shipley. The motivation behind the British exhibits differed in part from that of the French. Unlike the French who were trying to improve their industry and trade the English were displaying from a position of strength. British National exhibits tended to focus on great ideals, great discoveries and great nations. Then as now, exhibitions are exciting, big, prestigious and very expensive events. As early as 1834 the president of the Societé d'Emulation recommended that French Exhibits be international in nature, and illustrate not only material needs, "but brotherly" and "wholesome" exhibits."[87] In 1851, the British hosted the Great Exhibition in London, an immense exhibition

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[87] Ibid., 11.

focusing on technology and applied arts, but which included human exhibits of entire tribes brought to England to illustrate progress. Four years later the French would host their Paris Exhibition Universelles. Both these exhibitions were international in nature and the forbearers of modern fairs.

In Paris, in 1928, an international agreement was signed regulating international exhibitions, the "Convention Relating to International Exhibitions." This convention outlined the basic regulations for hosting an international exhibition. They were to be over three weeks but less than six months in duration. If the magnitude of the fair was such that foreign nations were to build pavilions then the host nation could host only once every fifteen years. If there was no need for visiting nations to build pavilions then a nation could host every ten years. Buyers and visitors were to be treated as equals. The focus of the exhibitions was to be on progress in areas of production. All attempts had to be made to prevent the exhibitions from "deteriorating into arenas for commercial or political propaganda."[88] One such measure was to have a unifying ideal for each exhibition. The most common themes were peace, education of the masses, trade, progress, and anniversaries such as American Independence and the centenary of the French Revolution.

Initially written as a description of the objectives of the Great Exhibition in London, the following list of objectives proved to be consistent with those of subsequent exhibitions. The main aims were:

1. to promote brotherhood amongst mankind.
2. to make all aware of what we can do for others.
3. To diminish human drudgery by mechanism.
4. To promote art of a higher kind.
5. To show how clothing may best be made by machines without hand

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[88] Ibid., 15-16.

crafts.

6. To show new preparations for human food.[89]

This list is essentially accurate for the American Exhibition in Moscow. The focus on clothing was on its synthetic nature and not the mechanization of sewing, but the American exhibition included the "Family of Man" display to promote brotherhood of man, and processed food as a new way of preparing human food. Omnipresent at the Great Exposition and at later fairs was the idea of brotherhood of man and the faith that increased exposure to other cultures would initiate a reduction of militaristic and imperialistic tendencies.

Education was another important objective of exhibitions and was staunchly if inaccurately deemed separate from propaganda and indoctrination. It was tangible and potentially had short and long term results. Workers were to be educated in the newest advances, the youth were to be enlightened to the possibilities, and both were to be indoctrinated with the ideal of progress. As important as brotherhood or education were to exhibitions, they were second to the idea of trade and technology. Trade and technology constituted the basis of Western power, and represented a means of controlling the present and creating the future. Technology was to "transform the world, bring plenty, peace, unity, all in the foreseeable future." This notion was still prominent during the 1950s. It also represented a quantifiable means of measuring 'progress' and thus of ranking states. Progress in the form of technology could be quantified as an indicator of improving standards of living and this same idea of quantifying would soon be applied to moral, cultural, and social progress. There was a profound belief in the "[u]universal advance of civilization via the achievement of science."[90]

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89 Helix, "The Industrial Exhibition of 1851," as quoted in Greenhalgh, Ephemeral Vistas, 18.
90 Ibid., 24.

Exhibitions were a means for governments and businesses to present their vision of the world and of progress to the masses. They could be used to illustrate the greatness of the host nation, or to entice the citizens of the host nation to work harder, aspire to greater things, ensuring the status and preservation of their nation. The official ideals behind the exhibitions were noble and all encompassing. That there were underlying motives is not in doubt. After World War Two, the undisputed masters of world exhibitions were the Americans. Their exhibits were big and bold, containing the newest in mass production, prefabrication, mass communication, and urbanization. The American trade fairs and exhibitions were perceived as a government responsibility. The government was to ensure that the exhibitions and the items displayed therein were indicative of the "quality and power" of the United States.[91] The successful completion of an international fair was of national interest. Thus, the government had to regulate and fund them in order to ensure that the "American voice" was able to "speak effectively."[92]

By the late 1950s, American culture was largely one of consumerism. This was the subject of a satirical essay, "the Nylon War," published in 1951. The publication bewildered some Americans who wanted to know when this 'war' had started. It was a response to the passivity of containment and the then disturbing levels of consumption, which seemed intrinsically linked with American supremacy. It proposed an alternative race to the arms race: the race of abundance. The essay tracks the war effort "operation abundance".

> Today - August 1, 1951- the Nylon War enters upon the third month since the United States began all - out bombing of the Soviet Union with consumers' goods, and it seems time to take a retrospective look... an idea of disarming simplicity; that if allowed to sample the riches of America, the Russian people would

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91 Charles A. Thomson and Walter H.C. Laves, Cultural Relations and US Foreign Policy (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963), 166.

92 Thompson, Cultural Relations, 166.

> not long tolerate a master who gave them tanks and spies instead of vacuum cleaners and beauty parlors. The Russian rulers would thereupon be forced to turn out consumers' goods, or face mass discontent on an increasing scale.[93]

Culture, like consumerism, could be a tool of indoctrination. Certainly some Americans assumed the Soviets to be involved in cultural indoctrination. In 1958, an American Senator told the art critic Frank Getlein that the Communists were deliberately supporting the development and exhibiting of modern art, defining modern art as anything nonrepresentational or abstract. This type of art work would "'addle the brains of decent, innocent Americans.'" Bemused and bewildered, the Americans would soon fall to the Communists.[94] This remark is particularly amusing when one considers the abject horror and disgust expressed by Soviets upon seeing modern American abstract art for the first time at the American Exhibition in Moscow. An alternative argument put forth by proponents of cultural diplomacy was that in an era of nuclear warfare capabilities, the only viable means of destroying the enemy was to convert it. The primary focus of the Soviets at the Geneva meeting in regards to cultural exchanges was in fact far more tied to the exchange of scientific information and trade negotiations than it was to the more conservative notion of cultural exchanges, music, literature, film, and art. The Soviets linked trade relations to cultural relations insisting that without trade negotiations there could be no cultural exchanges. This policy was to manifest itself in the exhibits. While this was a means of addressing issues and Soviet concerns about their economic development, it was also connected with the American perception of themselves.

The study of fairs, exhibitions, and exchanges under the auspice

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93 As quoted in Stephen J. Whitfield, The Culture of the Cold War (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1991), 72.

94 Frank Getlein, "Pictures at an Exhibition: Russia's reaction to the U.S. Show in Moscow," in The New Republic (August 24, 1959), 14.

of cultural diplomacy is a relatively new field. While Frederick Barghoorn conducted extensive studies of Soviet propaganda abroad and Soviet American cultural diplomacy during the 1960s, the majority of works have been written during the late 1980s and the 1990s. This could be due to several reasons. First is the change in the study of history, incorporating increasing numbers of cultural and social studies. Another reason for the increased interest in the topic could be increased access to archival materials. A recent publication, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture and the Cold War, 1945 -1961*, by Walter Hixson relies almost entirely on primary sources, in the form of government documents. The most notable primary source is the McClellan report named after the organizer of the American Exhibition, Harold Chadwick McClellan. American government documents are the major source of information, with some reference made to newspaper articles. There is also some official analysis of Soviet reaction to the exhibition. Harold McClellan was the chief executive of the Old Colony Paint and Chemical Co., which was based in Los Angeles. He was a World War Two veteran, a former president of the National Association of Manufacturers and the former assistant Secretary of Commerce. During his term in the latter position he promoted exhibitions in various Communist countries.

There are examples of Soviet-American post-war exchanges as early as 1955. The earliest post-war attempt at rapprochement was a post Stalin Soviet diplomatic initiative. Immediately following Stalin's death, the Soviets declared that their "new" flexibility would permit various activities from the cessation of the Korean war to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Austria, and better U.S-USSR relations.[95] In 1955, a second Soviet initiative took place, this time a cultural exchange. An agreement between the Soviet Ministry of

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95 Eugune Anschel, American Appraisals of Soviet Russia 1917-1977 (New Jersey: Scarecrow Press Inc., 1978), 10.

Culture and Robert Breen and Glevins Davis, the producers of Porgy and Bess brought that musical, already on a State Department tour of Europe, to Russia. The Soviets paid the company 16,000 dollars, half of the standard payment, and profited at the box office. This was a Soviet initiated appearance, and was conducted without the participation of the State Department. The year 1956 saw another cultural exchange in the form of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which extended its special international program by a week in order to perform in the Soviet Union. This time the State Department funded the extension. The Porgy and Bess and Boston Symphony tours were ad hoc occurrences. A more structured and more broadly based exchange programme required the formality of a signed agreement between the two countries. That agreement, the first between he USSR and the U.S., came about in 1958. It arose out of the failed discussions at the Geneva conference held three years earlier. At the Geneva conference, the major issues were disarmament, German reunification, and the possibility of increasing east-west contacts. Cultural agreements were, however, discussed as well. They were a means of achieving more subtle objectives than disarmament or unification. The United States, along with many of the Western powers wanted access to Soviet citizens while the Soviets wanted access to western trade and technology.

The Lacy-Zarubin agreement was the official agreement between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on exchanges in cultural, technical, and educational fields. The signing of the Lacy - Zarubin agreement represented a new departure for the United States. It involved or at least acknowledged an unprecedented level of government intrusion into activities normally preserved for the private sector. Now, the American government was committed to playing a significant role in representing and controlling science and technology, radio and television, motion pictures, publishing, youth activities,

education, culture, and tourism. In the Soviet Union these were state-controlled industries. Yale Richmond, a member of the U.S. foreign service, has postulated that "there was no precedent" for the United States to sign such an agreement and that it was signed because both sides saw potential net gains.[96] Haddow, Barghoorn, and Hixson have presented an alternative view, arguing that there were precedents for such agreements dating back to the time of the October Revolution.

The agreement represented an increased presence by the U.S. government in cultural diplomacy, and many of the exchanges and exhibitions were conducted under the auspices of the American governmental organization known as the United States Information Agency (USIA), it was never the intention that the government would be the only force in this battle. USIA was a semi-independent agency established under Eisenhower's first administration to increase the speed and freedom of overseas information activities. USIA was to handle literature, cultural centres, English as a second language, mass media programmes and exhibits.[97] However, private U.S initiatives were to be accepted and even encouraged. They were to become extremely important as the cost of cultural diplomacy rose. The government contributed $3.6 million for the creation of the American National Exhibition in Moscow, while most of the participating industries donated their own exhibits, samples, staff, and paid for their own shipping and transportation. In the final analysis these costs outstripped the cost to the government.

In seeking to understand why the agreement was ratified, Richmond has clearly delineated what he perceives to have been the Soviet objectives. The most significant motivation was to gain access to Western knowledge. It is cheaper and more efficient to acquire knowledge than to discover it, something which the Soviets had long

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96 Richmond, U.S Soviet Cultural Exchanges , 2.

97 Philip H. Coomb, The Fourth Dimension of Foreign Policy: Educational and Cultural Affairs (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1964), 38.

understood. Secondly, the Soviets were eager to maintain the appearance if not the reality of their political objective of peaceful coexistence. The third point, quite similar to the second, relates to the pride of the nation. It was "the desire to gain recognition for their efforts to change a backward agricultural country into a modern industrial state, and for their achievements in the arts, culture and science which they tout as achievements of a Communist society."[98] Fourth, the Soviet government was beginning to respond to the intelligentsia's requests for increased travel and conference attendance. Fifth, increased interaction by means of cultural venues provided the government with a source of revenue, paid in hard currency. The final point was the Soviet fascination with Americans, as evidenced for example by their interest in jazz. As former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union Charles Bohlen stated in his memoirs:

> There is no doubt that contacts with foreigners will over many years affect Soviet opinion. Soviet officials feel the need to learn of scientific and technical developments in the West. In the negotiations on exchanges [in which] I participated, the Soviets always concentrated on scientific and technical exchanges. They were willing, however, to have some cultural exchanges because of the considerable amount of money earned by the Bolshoi Ballet and other performing groups.[99]

The U.S. objectives were far fewer in number. Simply put, the United States wanted the Soviet Union to be inundated by Western/American ideas and influences. This policy was clearly set out in NSC 5607 "east-west Exchanges," a National Security Council statement of June 29,1956. In the document it is stated that the objectives of the American government are "to increase the Soviet bloc's knowledge of the outer world so that their judgments are based on fact rather than on 'Communist fiction,' to promote the freedom of thought; to ensure that

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98 Richmond, US Soviet Cultural Exchanges, 5.

99 As quoted in David J. Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin (London, Methuen and Company Ltd., 1962), 228.

the citizens of the bloc have a sense of personal security vis a vis the state; to develop the Soviet demand for consumer goods; and to heighten the sense of nationalism in the satellite countries."[100] Another reason Americans were willing to enter into reciprocal cultural agreements was a concern on the part of Eisenhower that the Soviet government was highly cultured while the United States was obtaining a reputation for being uncultured and interested only in money and consumer goods.[101]

Statements by the political leaders of the day confirm the objectives sought by their nations. In his opening address, to the Geneva Conference, Eisenhower called for friendship between the people of the United States and the USSR. Four days later, he listed the steps that the signing of a cultural agreement would permit. The first step was the lowering of the barriers that impeded the interchange of information and ideas between peoples. The second, the lowering of the barriers which hindered opportunities to travel anywhere in the world for peaceful, friendly purposes, so that all would have a chance to know each other face to face. The third step was to create conditions in which nations would be encouraged to increase the exchange of peaceful goods throughout the world. Nikolai Bulganin was responsible for the official Soviet response to Eisenhower's address. He stated that the Soviets had favoured for some time the development of relations between their two nations and that focus should be placed on strengthening economic and trade ties. He concluded by noting that the existing sales embargoes against the Soviet Union were a serious threat to international relations.

The basis for the 1958 agreement lay in the discussions that occurred at the Geneva Conference and Greenhaugh's assessment of the fundamental objective of the two sides. Secretary of State John Foster

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100 Richmond, US Soviet Cultural Exchanges, 26.

101 Coomb, The Fourth Dimension, 39.

Dulles stated both at the Geneva conference and after that while the Americans were as willing as the Soviets to discuss cultural contacts, their focus was in the field of ideas and information. This objective was presented by the French Foreign Minister Pinay, who proposed that east-west relations should be divided into separate categories with the issues clearly delineated and a solution to each issue being offered. For example, in the area of information exchange, so important to the American delegation, the problem was the Soviet jamming of radio broadcasts and their general censorship of press and radio.[102] It should be noted that Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty were under the CIA until 1971. The French delegation suggested that this issue could be addressed by writing in a point about the reciprocity of certain television and radio broadcasts. Molotov stated that the Soviet Union had never disguised the fact that it was adamantly against the:

> 'freedom in the exchange of ideas' which would consist of 'free war propaganda' or the misanthropic propaganda of atomic attack...nobody who is a supporter of democratic principles can...argue that radio stations, even though they are disguised by false slogans such as 'Free Europe' really serves the interests of peoples...[they serve that] black reaction which fans the flames of enmity between peoples, is harmful to peace and makes for war.'[103]

The primary objection on the part of the Soviets were the trade barriers that had been imposed upon them. Throughout the conference, Dulles distinguished between peaceful trade and strategic trade, with strategic trade being the goods that were placed under the embargo. Dulles noted that the items under strategic trade were matters of security concern and they represented a low level of trade goods. Thus, the low level of Soviet international trade was a result of Soviet politics and not American regulations. In an attempt to address all of the issues, on October 31, the French delegation drew up a seventeen-

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[102] Parks, Culture, Conflict and Coexistence, 147.

[103] as quoted in Ibid., 153.

point agreement. In general the points dealt with seven major issues in the cultural trade area:

1 the freer exchange of information between western nations and the Soviet Union;
2 the establishment of information centres in the capitals with no hindrance on the part of governments to public access to these centres;
3-5 the exchange of written materials "'available for general and unimpeded sale in the Soviet Union on one hand and the western countries on the other";
6-10 the cessation of jamming of radio frequencies and increased access of journalists to information.
11-15 cultural exchanges by means of individual contact at conferences, exchanges, exhibitions and tourism;
16 increased freedoms for diplomatic personnel; and,
17 an agreement in principle for the direct air transport between Soviet and western cities.[104]

While both sides had professed an interest in creating a cultural agreement, the conference soon deteriorated with both sides increasing their demands and refusing to accommodate each other. Parks has stated that both sides seemed more "interested in casting blame than in reaching an agreement." No agreement was reached at Geneva. The U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles left the conference accusing the Soviets of being "selfish" and pointing out that of the seventeen points, the Soviets had outright rejected numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 16 and 17, and effectually had rejected numbers 5 and 11. He summarized his accusations by stating that the Soviet delegation: "seems to have picked out of our proposals only four or five suggestions which

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[104] Ibid., 150.

it deems to its interest, and to have rejected all the others, without any spirit of give and take, and with a complete omission of anything of substance in the realm of the exchange of ideas." This overlooks the fact that of the 17 points, not one of them addressed the Soviet's main interest, and all were in effect subsets of the freedom of information and ideas concept, a concept towards which the Soviets had already voiced aversion. Molotov agreed that the Soviet delegation had in fact rejected many points in the Western proposal but stated that this was because many of the points were unacceptable violations of Soviet internal affairs.[105]

The conference concluded with the Soviets stating that they were willing to accept the original French proposal with its nine points, but not the latter proposal of 17 points, which appeared to the Soviets to be an attempt to ensure that the talks failed. Dulles lashed out, stating that if socialism was as entrenched as the Soviets professed "it would not topple perchance some contradictory ideas found their way into the Soviet Union." This was obviously not the case, and the position taken by Soviet delegation was indicative of a system close to collapse. "That nervousness on behalf of the Soviet Government for its own future," Dulles concluded, "was something which we will have to take into account and evaluate when we consider the possibility of other contacts."[106] The Soviet stance did not act as a revelation, but merely as a confirmation. The Americans went into the negotiations knowing that freedom on information and ideas in a dictatorial monolithic one-party country would be destabilizing. They were to focus on this, and use it to their full advantage in the 1958 agreement, and in subsequent agreements. The Americans were to use this as the main basis for their cultural relations policies towards the Soviet Union. The issue was not

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105 Ibid., 151-155.

106 as quoted in Ibid., 155.

interdependence but permeability. States were no longer able to completely seal their borders from the permeation of ideas and information.[107] Khrushchev was relatively pleased with the outcome of Geneva. The Soviet Union had been accepted as a world power able to hold its own, and were feared by the West as much as the Soviets feared the West. The Soviets left Geneva professing to have a new found certainty in their international position. Khrushchev believed that at Geneva he learnt that the West cautiously respected the Soviet Union. About the conference he wrote that the Soviets had finally established themselves as a strong and significant force in the international arena.

On June 2, 1957 Khrushchev, in an interview from Moscow broadcast on CBS, stated that increased cultural and economic ties were an integral aspect of east - west relations and that it was the Americans who were responsible for the continuation of the Iron Curtain. He emphasized Soviet desire for peaceful coexistence. The Soviet advocacy was tempered by the fact that as adherents to the tenets of communism, coexistence was coupled with calls for the eventual destruction of the bourgeois capitalist nations, and the liberation of the workers of the world. Soviet support for increased cultural relations and for peaceful coexistence was typically interpreted as an attempt to obtain access to technical information. There was little response to Khrushchev from the Eisenhower administration, but the Senate leader Lyndon Johnson advocated an "open curtain" which would allow western ideas to "cleanse" the USSR, and proposed an exchange of radio and television broadcasts.[108] In late July, the Soviets responded by saying that they would consider channels of broadcasting but only within the context of other cultural and scientific exchanges.

On October 5, 1957, Andrei Gromyko met with John Foster Dulles to

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107 Gaddis, "Great Illusions," 40.

108 Hixson, Parting the Curtain , 151.

discuss east-west contacts, as a means of normalizing and improving Soviet American relations. They reached agreement on points pertaining to the reciprocal exchange of broadcasts, films, academics, cultural representatives, athletes and scientific experts. Both sides agreed in principle to direct air connections and "the usefulness of exhibits as an effective means of developing mutual understanding."[109] The negotiations proceeded largely along the lines the Kremlin wanted. In theory, the Soviets achieved their aim of exchange programs in areas vital to economic development, while maintaining strict control over the exchange of information. For example, while the agreement called for the reciprocal broadcasting of radio stations, the content of the shows was to be limited to non political issues. Also, Soviet jamming was not prohibited. Despite the fact that far more of the Soviet than American demands were met, the agreement of 1958 is interpreted in Western scholastic work as the beginning of a series of cultural agreements signed over the following two years, and agreements which established the basis for the export of American culture to the Soviet Union. Cultural exchanges became one of the most stable forms of diplomacy between the two superpowers.[110] Philip Coomb believes during the 1950s the Americans surpassed other nations in their financial and political support of cultural diplomacy. The objective was to maintain a high level of cultural diplomacy, which would result in changes to Soviet external and internal policies.[111] The American and Soviet exhibits of 1959 led, in turn, to the high level visits by respective leaders and culminated in Khrushchev's tour of America and private meeting with President Eisenhower at Camp David. Taking into account that in 1953 Eisenhower had stated in a Cabinet Meeting that "'This idea of the President of the United States going personally abroad to negotiate ---

109 Hixson, Parting the Curtain, 153.

110 Ibid., 154.

111 Coomb, The Fourth Dimension, 87.

it's just damn stupid," the fact that he now agreed to a reciprocal visit is indicative of the progress being made in and increased importance of the field of cultural diplomacy.[112]

In *Pavilions of Plenty: Exhibiting American Culture Abroad in the 1950s*, Robert Haddow cautions against the interpretation that Khrushchev's policy towards cultural agreements was merely a continuation of Stalinist policy. Upon coming to power Khrushchev began advocating and instituting changes. Masses of people were released from the Gulags, and restrictions on speech, movement, and the press were relaxed. At the 21st Party Congress in 1959, Khrushchev intrinsically tied the success of Communism with its economic prowess. Socialism would prevail only if it provided a higher standard of living than the West. Economic competition allowed Khrushchev to maintain a balance between peace and competition, the basis of peaceful coexistence. At the 22nd Party Congress, in October 1961, Khrushchev denounced the excesses of Stalinism and the cult of the individual. Two other main themes for the congress were the non-inevitability of war, which allowed for the idea of peaceful coexistence between countries; and the idea that socialist revolutions could be peaceful. There was a also a promise of increased consumerism. Khrushchev is credited with having stated that, '[y]ou cannot put theory into your soup or Marxism into your clothes.'"[113]

There is a connection between Khrushchev's avocation of cultural exchanges and exhibitions and his desire to address the problem of consumer shortages. Exhibitions of foreign consumer goods were used to motivate the masses. Typical Soviet exhibitions would display an elitist representation of the successes of Socialism. The majority of the objects were either inaccessible to the Soviet public, or

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[112] as quoted in Gordon R. Weihmiller, US Soviet Summits: An Account of east-west Diplomacy at the Top, 1955-1985 (New York: University Press of America, 1986), 18.

[113] as quoted in Haddow, Pavilions of Plenty, 214.

industrial, including such items as nuclear icebreakers, radio telescopes, computing centers, etc. The Soviet Exhibition in New York was no exception to this. There were models of all of the above as well as Sputnik and cosmic rockets. The cosmic rockets displayed were described as being able to send weapons at high speeds to any point within 4000-mile radius. While there were aspects of the Soviet exhibition that focused on the average citizen - for example a modern apartment - or which focused on the fine arts, they were overshadowed by the technical aspects. What is interesting is that the American Exhibition had a similar content, minus the sputniks of course, but the presentation was totally different. For the Soviet exhibition the visitor entered a massive central room full of rockets, missiles and Sputniks, while the Soviet visitor was welcomed into a room with several large screens displaying America, American life, and abundance. Robert Haddow has made the argument that the American and Soviet exhibitions were very similar in their presentation in that both states were displaying a type of national socialist realism.[114] The use of national socialist realism would have had a significant impact on Soviet audiences.

The Americans were presenting an interpretation of a sound economy, which in turn constituted a good ideology. In the post war boom, a good economy was one in which there was a proliferation of consumer goods. The USSR, with its economy oriented towards military and heavy industry, was instantaneously disadvantaged in any event based on economic achievements aimed at pleasing the masses. However, if the Soviets established trade agreements in conjunction with the exhibitions, then their relative public disadvantage would be accepted as the price of progress. The motivation for the exchange of exhibitions was determined by the era. The exhibitions were forms of

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[114] Haddow, Pavilions of Plenty, 208-214.

propaganda and served as non-political backdrops for inter-ideological discussions, be those discussions between state leaders, visitors, or guides. The first major U.S-Soviet public diplomacy projects were successes.

The use of exhibitions as a diplomatic tool was not an innovative idea. As early as the nineteenth century exhibitions had been used as a major medium of public diplomacy. The American-Soviet exhibitions are heralded as being so significant because they represented the reestablishing of relations between the Soviet and the Americans, which had deteriorated in the post World War Two era. There had been almost no non-governmental contact between Americans and Soviets after World War Two. The exhibitions were also large, well covered by the media, and well attended. The American National Exhibition in Moscow was the largest and most comprehensive USIA exhibit in the 1950s. The first exposure to the United States for most Soviet citizens was an enjoyable outing. It began with a Circarama show in a large geodesic dome, flowed into several indoor displays and then fanned out into various outdoor displays, like the model home, the stage for the fashion show, the car and boat display and other displays housed in independent structures. Besides the dome, the most impressive structure was the plastics pavilion which housed the Family of Man exhibit. The American reaction to the Soviet exhibition was favorable but was overshadowed by the presence of model Sputniks. The exhibitions of 1959 did not represent a one-time occurrence in Soviet-American relations. They were merely the first of several traveling exhibits. The agreements which ensured their continuation were regularly renewed every two years, initially amid fairly acrimonious political situations. The Americans continued to produce what had achieved so much initial popular appeal. They combined a range of subjects, visual attractiveness, effective presentation, and Russian-speaking American guides, at every exhibition.

CHAPTER THREE

PLANNING AND POLITICIANS

An Armenian who was going to Moscow for the first time arranged that he would send a postcard to tell his friends at home what the city was really like. If he wrote in red ink, all that he said was to be believed. If in green, they were to believe the opposite. In due course the postcard arrived. It was written in red ink. "Moscow is a wonderful city. All you have heard about it is true. Everything you desire can be bought in its shops - except green ink.
Radio Armenia.[115]

Once the initial agreement was reached at Geneva the details remained to be fleshed out. Many of the problems were largely Soviet made, involved precise details, and seemed to occur concurrent with difficulties in east-west relations. While the Americans showed little concern over the content of the Soviet exhibition in New York, the Soviets went over every display and in areas like the book display, every object. The resulting Soviet objections to all films, performing art groups and slide shows were met by the American refusal to comply. However, the Soviets stood firm on their providing restrooms and the Americans were forced to back down. The United States had wanted to provide restroom facilities donated by the American Radiator and Standard Sanitary Corporation. There were to be 150 toilets, 50 urinals, 50 washbasins, numerous hot hand blowers and ultraviolet sanitation. All this and more was to be provided free of charge to those attending the exhibition. The Soviets refused and installed their own facilities. Originally, the Soviets had denied the distribution of all free cosmetics, Pepsi Cola, and toy models of GM cars. The argument for not having free cosmetics was the risk of a "stampede."[116] One

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115 Stites, Mass Culture, 486.
116 Hixson, Parting the Curtain, 189.

guide has written that the distribution of free samples and souvenirs, lapel buttons and descriptive brochures, "often created near riots."[117] The United States Information Agency, USIA, and participating industries distributed over twelve million pamphlets, of which there was a chronic shortage. One lecturer on plastics and synthetics had his podium broken into and his erasers, nylons, and tools stolen. He described the Russians as being like "locusts" and noted that even the children [little capitalists] would barter for pins and chewing gum.[118]

While the toy cars and cosmetics were not distributed, jazz bands were not permitted to perform, and many books were removed, the contents of the American exhibition were largely of American choosing, despite the fact that Soviet officials were not always cooperative. Customs inspectors opened what often seemed to be every box of the exhibition. In one instance a custom official who did not speak English opened a box with "57" written on it and proceeded to count the contents of the box. The content far exceeded the quantity of fifty seven and American officials were called in to explain that the box had been full of packets of Heinz 57 sauce. Fire inspectors would cut of slivers of wood with a penknife and if the slivers burnt they would declare the structure a fire hazard and threaten to withhold their approval. Another inspector protested that the corners on the buildings were far too sharp and that they would have to be padded before the opening.[119] The *New York Times* noted that while the Soviet officials were uncooperative, the workmen were "enthusiastic and friendly."[120]

An analysis of the planning process of any event is an insight into the intentions, limitations and focus of those doing the planning.

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[117] John R. Thomas, Report on Service with the American Exhibition in Moscow (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1960), 24.

[118] "Office of the American Exhibition in Moscow, Washington D.C." No. 65 (September 3, 1959) : 1.

[119] Lubin, "Report on the Trip to Moscow," 3-4.

[120] Max Frankel, "Pravda Reports Flaws in US Fair," in New York Times (July 27, 1959) : 6.

On January 8, 1959, USIA held a round table discussion about the Moscow Exhibition. Open to newspaper correspondents in New York City, the meeting was presided over by Harold C. McClellan, the general manager of the exhibition, and Abbott Washburn, the USIA's deputy director. The American ambassador to the Soviet Union Llewellyn Thompson, and representatives from the Columbia Broadcasting System were also present. The meeting began with by McClellan describing the contents of the exhibition, the general themes of which were to be science, technology and culture. The contents were to be displayed in buildings that reinforced the credibility and advancement of American economy and technology.[121] Both US ambassador Llewellyn Thompson and George Allen advocated that the exhibition be kept modest in size and cost not exceeding $5 million which included appropriate industrial contributions. Propaganda was to be keep to a minimum so as not to discredit the exhibition. However, the presentation of the United States of America as having a superior system was not considered to be real propaganda: "[i]t is propaganda in the sense that we are trying to tell about our system in contrast to their system. I wouldn't draw the contrast-just present the facts."[122] Economic realities were going to win a battle if not the war against Communism.

The discussion soon turned to how the exhibitions should be presented to the Russians. Due to the cost of many industrial items, the contents of the exhibition were largely at the discretion of the industrial enterprises donating them.

> Following a trip to Detroit McClellan and Washburn secured a complete underwriting of an automobile show in Moscow, including seven staff cars for their own use and transportation both ways for equipment and service personnel. RCA agreed to assume half the cost of installation and operation of 'a complete color television studio.' American Express underwrote a travel exhibit, General Mills, General Foods, Grand Union and other companies

[121] Daniel Clifton, "Experts of Round Table Discussion on Plans for Moscow Exhibition Held With Newspaper Correspondents in New York City," (January 8, 1959), 2.

[122] Clifton, "Experts of Round Table Discussion," 23.

signed on to provide food displays and demonstrations.[123] Dixie Cups donated seven million cups for Pepsi Cola products. The contents of the exhibition were further restricted by the American and Soviet trade barriers. Any items that could be perceived as applicable to military endeavors on the part of the American government or as propaganda on the part of the Soviet government could not be included. Writing in *Pravda* on September 4th, 1959, Anatoli Kriushkin wondered about the American refusal to permit technology which could further Soviet war efforts from being displayed and sold in Russia. He questioned why America was willing to purchase the Soviet turbo drill, but refused to sell bits, citing the State Department's explanation that "bits are strategic wares, capable of elevating the Soviet economy."[124]

However, the way in which items were to be displayed was largely controlled by the exhibition planners. Thus, these individuals could choose which exhibits were in focal high traffic locations and those that were in less central positions. They could also determine the labeling, and influence the presentation of guides and specialists. Using the example of one of many donated vehicles to the exhibition, a Chevrolet, the round table discussed the need for large informational placards. The placards would contain information describing the internal workings of the vehicle, the number of hours "the average man" would work in order to purchase the car, and would describe the waiting list for such an item. Russian speaking presenters who could answer questions and reaffirm what was written on placards were also desirable. Dan Schorr of the Columbia Broadcasting System pointed out that the Russians were accustomed to exhibits; and that the concept that fantastic items could be created was not foreign to them. The key difference was the availability of such goods in the U.S. One example of

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123 Hixson, Parting the Curtain , 169.

124 as cited in "Visitors' Reactions to the American Exhibit in Moscow: a Preliminary Report," (September 28, 1959) , 4.

this approach was the model home, and specifically the furnishings in it. The model American prefabricated home displayed at the exhibition was furnished by a donation of goods from Macy's department store. The goal was to impress the Russians with the elegance of the goods and then to illustrate their availability. Included in the items sent over were: cocktail tables, wall to wall carpeting, white pineapple base lamps with white silk lamp shades, enamel ashtrays, covered cigarette boxes, armchairs, sofas, and potted geraniums. The price of each item was to be listed, while the American guides were to reiterate the feasibility of purchasing the items. The Soviets were to be informed that "every seven seconds there is a new baby born and every twenty seconds a new car is turned off the production lines."[125] Talking about the supermarket display at the Brussels' world fair, Howard Callman, the commissioner general for the American pavilion, stated that its purpose was "not to sell merchandise but to show Russians and the Czechs, and the Poles and these people how many hours of work it would take to buy a pair of pants or shoes or lettuce or a bottle of catsup."

The Americans were not going to rely merely on their own sources for documentation. Credibility for their facts and figures was to be based whenever possible on articles written in *Pravda* and other official Soviet sources of information. One of the primary research activities was to be locating information on American production in Soviet sources. Part of being credible was the need to be extremely precise. In a shrewd assessment of Russian mentality, specifically towards exhibitions, Marvin Kalb of the Columbia Broadcasting System emphatically stated that:

> These Russians will be very precise; they will write down figures in notebooks. They like figures and we should give it to them. Tell them how many supermarkets we have; they'll jot it down. But be prepared for them to be critical and if you don't have the answer, they'll get mad... Don't count on them missing a trick. They may be regimented but they do have minds, they will have

[125] McClellan Report," 8.

> questions and they'll want answers. You have got to have the answers, no matter which field it is in, such as how many automobiles are owned by Americans- even if they don't necessarily believe it. But if you tell it to them, they'll write it down in their books. Soon you'll have them arguing about it, they will be at each other's throats and pretty soon the whole damn system will collapse.[126]

This sentiment was to prove accurate. As the American guide John Thomas observed, there was no minutiae beyond Soviet curiosity. He observed that a frequently asked question was the cost per kilowatt-hour of private electricity. Heated, frank and lengthy discussions were often put to an end by accusations of being anti socialist, pro capitalist or by realization that it was unwise to air dirty laundry in front of American guests.[127]

Perhaps the most important means of communicating with the Soviets was through the presence of numerous American guides. The outline of the requirements to be a guide included being between twenty and thirty-five years of age, fluent in Russian, well adjusted, well educated and possessing a "good" appearance. The guides were not paid but received free transportation and a daily stipend of $16 sixteen per day. Their uniforms were patriotic outfits of red, white and blue. Before going to Moscow they underwent training and had a personal audience with President Eisenhower.

The Russians were to be treated as a highly intelligent citizens of a fatally flawed political, economic, and social system. Their attention was to be drawn to the superiority of the American system: where industry provided superior consumer goods and employment and the government provided high levels of unemployment insurance, social mobility, and access to free education and medical care. The point was not only to show the Soviets what they did not have but to display American superiority in areas of Soviet pride, like universal education

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126 "Excerpts of Round Table Discussion," 10.

127 Rand, Report on Service, 16.

and Medicare. For all of the protestations that it was to be a modest affair, it soon became apparent that the exhibition was going to be grandiose, with the purpose of impressively depicting the "average" American life. The scale of the exhibition was colossal with the first shipment of goods including 300 tons of steel, aluminum, and construction equipment.[128] To put this in perspective, the average American trade fair for that period typically consisted of under 100 tons of goods in its entirety. The total figure for the American Exhibition in Moscow was over 3,000 tons.[129]

Getting numerous carloads of American supplies into Moscow and then having the items prepared and assembled by the Russian, American, and Finnish team of workers proved to be challenging. In his report McClellan reported an initial lack of Russian workers. They simply were not present. When they did arrive, they were often provided with substandard Soviet supplies, such as cement, which began to disintegrate after the first few days of the exhibition. The workers were also lacking many of the tools needed to assemble the exhibition sights quickly, and replacements or extra tools such as nuts and bolts were extremely scarce. In addition, there was the problem of freight being shipped without proper identification. Even if it ultimately made it through customs, it was often misdirected.[130]

The USIA document "Facts about the American National Exhibition in Moscow July 25-September 4, 1959" provides a broad outline of the exhibition, i.e. design and purpose which was to "strengthen the foundations of world peace by increasing understanding in the Soviet Union of the American people, the land in which they live, and the broad range of American life, including American science, technology and

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128 "Office of the American National Exhibition in Moscow," (March 26, 1959) no. 24, 1.
129 McClellan, "The McClellan Report," 44.
130 "McClellan Report," 35-36.

culture."[131] The site was to be open from 11 am until 10 pm seven days a week. Spread over a 400,000 square foot area in Sokolniki Park, it was expected to easily accommodate the 3.5 million anticipated visitors. Mr. Corn, the president of The Displayers Inc, an American exhibit organization, conducted a critique of the planning of the exhibition. Mr. Corn had overseen the organization and execution of American exhibits in Asia, Europe, and South America. He was in Moscow for a week during the Fair, and stated that one of the biggest flaws of the American exhibition was the failure on the part of organizers to adequately plan the flow of visitor traffic. To illustrate this point he noted the differences between the temporary American National Exhibition and the Soviet permanent exhibition. The Russian exhibit normally had between 70,000 and 80,000 visitors and was 640 acres in size. In contrast the American exhibition was to handle 65,000 to 70,000 visitors per day and was nine acres internally. The fact that the average attendance was actually between 75,000 and 80,000 people per day exacerbated the problems of inadequate space and floor planning.

The grounds of the exhibition were covered in more than 60,000 red begonia, white chrysanthemum and blue ageratum plants. The main centre was the geodesic dome which was to function as an information centre and held the IBM RAMAC 305 computer, or "electronic brain," which answered 4,000 questions in ten languages. The dome also contained eight other exhibits: American labour, agriculture, health, education, space research, atomic research for peaceful means, and other technological research, mainly in plastics. Other pavilions included the glass pavilion, which contained consumer goods, as well as pavilions containing books, art, voting machines, and cosmetics. There were numerous outdoor exhibits made up of vehicles, farm machinery, camping gear, a children's playground, garden and lawn equipment, and the Pepsi

131 "Facts about the American National Exhibition in Moscow July 25-September 4, 1959," 1.

Cola booths. Concurrent with the American Exhibition and funded by the President's Special International Programme, Leonard Bernstein was on a tour of the Soviet Union with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. There was also a very successful variety show directed by Ed Sullivan appearing in Russia during the time of the exhibition.

The major themes of the fair were how the average American worked, produced, consumed, learned, explored, created, traveled, and played. It is unlikely that the Americans could have presented many of the above themes without the inclusion of consumer or industrial items. There were industrial displays, but the focus was not on how items were made but on the final goods and their availability. As impressive as were the inside displays, such as the Family of Man, the book collection, or the supermarket with its own frozen food section, were the outside displays were perhaps the most phenomenal in size, quantity, and cost. This is even more impressive when one considers that almost the entire cost of the outside displays was borne by patriotic American industries. Hixson states that the degree of contribution by industry was indicative of the support for cultural initiatives in the United States. He also perceives that the exhibition represented the coming to fruition of the President's objective of having industry actively supporting the American government in its foreign cultural policies.[132]

The American government fully funded the renting of the land in Moscow, the attaining of the Family of Man display, the training and transportation of the guides, the RAMAC computer, etc. Initially $3.3 million of US mutual security funds were used, although figure increased by approximately 10 percent by the end of the exhibition. However, the government contribution was dwarfed by that of private industry. Approximately 800 American firms contributed products and funds, and even covered the costs of shipping and provided their own personnel

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[132] Hixson, Parting the Curtain, 168-169.

working for exhibition. An understanding of the industrial participation can be gleaned from a description of several of the displays, all of which were donated. The outdoor displays included: an American six room, ranch-style family home; twenty-two automobiles ranging from cars to station wagons; farm equipment such as tractors and combines; an entire children's play area complete with a concrete play house, sand lots, and an iron grid magic carpet. The play center included building blocks, bicycles, paint sets, construction kits, doll houses, stuffed animals, games, sleds, scooters, fire trucks, chemistry sets, electric trains with railroad stations, a cowboy ghost town, and a helical slide made out of fiberglass. There was also a Polaroid camera centre where 15,000 visitors could get souvenir photographs of themselves at the exhibition and numerous kiosks distributing free samples of Pepsi-Cola.[133] The cost of the plastics pavilions was borne completely by a group of plastics firms. The USIA report states that it would be "impossible to determine" the dollar amount of the contributions of industries, but indicated that the figure would be in the millions.[134]

One of the focal points of the exhibition was the prefabricated home similar to those found in Levittown. Levittown was the first standardized American suburban development containing 17,400 homes, each of which included appliances and a front yard. Designed for housewives and children, and government subsidized so that families would purchase them, these prefabricated homes became a fundamental image of the post war era. William Levitt, the entrepreneur behind this phenomenon, stated that every man should have his own house, as owning a home would occupy his time. Being busy and having material wealth would prevent

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133 "Facts about the American National Exhibition in Moscow July 25-September 4," 5.

134 "Facts about the American National Exhibition in Moscow July 25-September 4," 3.

men from becoming Communists;[135] put another way, suburbia was to be the bulwark against Communism. Suburbia as a product of mass consumerism and mass production created the scenario where the majority of people could have their own piece of the American dream. The inclusion of the home in exhibitions was not unique to the American Fair in Moscow. The Soviet exhibition in New York included an apartment with modern Soviet furniture. To the Soviets, the house represented a pride in how far they had come since the war: the exhibit was a statement of equality and an illustration of aspirations for the future. Meanwhile the home had become a symbol of the American dream during the 1950s. Consumerism, largely focused on the home, was intrinsically connected with the American systems of government, freedoms, and economics. When Nixon spoke on the superiority of the consumer oriented suburban home, which was affordable and available to all Americans, he was expressing a widely held American belief in the essence of their superiority: "[c]onsumerism was not an end in itself; it was the means for achieving individuality, leisure, and upward mobility." [136] Nixon went so far as to explain in a speech to the Soviet public that a steel worker earning three dollars an hour over twenty-five or thirty years could buy a house comparable to the one at the exhibition complete with a television, car, radio etc. By the 1950s his ideal of consumerism and its link to the American way of life was being exported.

In the postwar era the American government had institutionalized the system of presenting intangible ideas and beliefs through things. American goods were the products of the new world civilization, of new world beliefs. Often displayed around the world, they represented what the American system could give the individual. Intrinsic to the ideal of the suburban home was the notion of the male breadwinner, and the

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135 Elaine Tyler May, Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era (New York: Basic Books Inc. Publishers, 1988), 162.

136 May, Homeward Bound, 18.

homemaker wife. This structure of the family unit was extremely rare in the Soviet Union as most women worked and the male portion of society was depleted due to war, purges, unsafe work environments, and alcoholism. As one woman noted in the first August comment book, the model kitchen was nice, but did nothing to make a woman feel like an equal within her nation;[137] whereas there were apparently no instances of this in the States, it is implied that there were many women who worked and held high positions within the Soviet Union. In a discussion that occurred in the kitchen of the model house between Nixon and Khrushchev, the merits of the built-in panel controls on the washing machines were discussed. Nixon noted how the panel controls made life easier for housewives. Khrushchev rebutted by pointing out that Soviet women were not housewives but directly contributed to the prosperity of the Soviet Union. Neither understood fully the role of women within their respective societies. Nixon's beleive was that Soviet women worked due to inadequacies within the Soviet system, and Khrushchev perceived the prevalence of the American housewife as indicative of sexual discrimination within the United States. However, both Nixon and Khrushchev understood that if the Americans could put a push button control on a washing machine they could do the same with a nuclear missile. Khrushchev did not take the opportunity to point out that the same enterprises that were making washing machines were also making rocket components. By 1952, General Dynamics was the largest defense contractor in the United States.[138]

It was not, however, the only one. There were many others including Chrysler, General Electric, Goodyear and Westinghouse. During the 1950s these companies linked their defense and consumer goods, showing the symbiotic relationship between a strong military and strong

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137 "The Official Comment Book" book one (August 9, 1959).

138 Whitfield, The Culture of the Cold War, 74.

consumerism in their advertising. In its advertising Goodyear claimed that a larger defense budget would result in "more durable and safer tires for the family automobile;"[139] the home and the homeland would benefit. The link between government and industry was evident: the secretary of defense Neil McElroy was the former head of Procter and Gamble, Ronald Reagan was then a goodwill ambassador for General Electric, McClellan had been the president of the Manufacturers Association and Donald Kendall, of Pepsico, one of Nixon's old friends, went on to serve as co-chairman of the American Soviet Trade and Economic Council. When Nixon next went to Russia, Pepsi Cola was one of his clients and the Kendall-Nixon connection was to result in a very well publicized deal in which Pepsi was exchanged for Stolichnaya vodka.

Richard Nixon's own ties to industry were also interesting, as he was far more of a hawk than a dove. His main source of political strength was in Southern California. During the 1950s the majority of revenue generated in Southern California was from industries working in conjunction with the Ministry of Defense. Many of these industries including the likes of Dupont, were making innovative new materials and products designed initially for the military but which could later be turned into consumer goods. Nixon supported taking a strong stance against Communism and feared that if the United States failed to be diligent there would be an impending disaster. He asked: "[w]hat must the United States do to meet the challenge to our national survival which is presented by the world Communist movement?"[140] Nixon was chosen to be the official government representative of the United States during the American Exhibition. The timing of this is important to note, as he was gearing up for a presidential campaign during this period. His meetings with Khrushchev and the opportunity to have his speeches widely

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139 Whitfield, The Culture of the Cold War, 74-75.

140 Richard Nixon, The Challenges We Face: Edited and Compiled from the Speeches and Papers of Richard Nixon (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc., 1960), 23.

broadcast and reported on was an excellent means to educate the voters in America of where he stood regarding the Red Menace. He could illustrate that he was fair and sage but tough, that he was a leader who could 'handle' Khrushchev. Interestingly, he acknowledged that the Soviet leader was not to be underestimated. Since Khrushchev often appeared to be inebriated, uneducated, crude and unstable he was easily dismissed as a buffoon. However, Nixon was advised not to make such a mistake, since: "[a]nyone who has fought his way up through the jungle warfare of the Communist hierarchy until he reached the top of the heap, and has survived forty years of purges, intrigue, and plotting, simply has to be a man to reckon with."[141] Nixon has described Khrushchev as the "Communist man at his most dangerous best,"[142] and a "crude bear of a man, an earthy chunk of mother Russia" who had no regard for "courtesy, protocol and itineraries."[143] That Khrushchev was the "Devil incarnate, many would concede. That he was an ominously able Devil, few could dispute."[144] Nixon himself was known for his brashness and colorful language and many of his speeches and comments were heavily edited to remove profanity. In fact, Nixon was not the only V.I.P sent to open the American exhibition in Moscow; Eisenhower also sent his brother Milton to officiate, and perhaps also to act as a moderator between Nixon and Khrushchev.

One of the first meetings between the two leaders was during an initial viewing of the as yet unopened exhibition site. After examining the exhibit, Khrushchev turned to Nixon and said: "Mr. Vice President, you're ahead of us now economically but we're moving faster than you are, our system is better."[145] These were words strong enough to rally

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141 Nixon, The Challenges We Face, 39.
142 Richard Nixon, Six Crises (New York: Pocket Books Inc., 1962), 252.
143 Richard Nixon, Leaders, (New York: Warner Books, 1982), 175-177.
144 Ibid., 171.
145 Ibid., 177.

Americans, and Nixon would take full advantage of them. Nixon would use Khrushchev's blustering statements as accurate indications of Soviet intentions. He would welcome competition between the United States and the USSR. However, Americans had to be careful since the totalitarian system had the ability to amass great quantities of resources and labour for intense short periods of time. This ability to achieve great feats quickly was dangerous. The Russian masses were "working long and hard, driven by fanatically dedicated leaders who are motivated by but a single objective- the communization of the world."[146] While it is currently difficult to conceive of the Soviet Union overtaking the United States, it must be remembered that at least up until the era in question, the Soviet Union had done nothing but surprise the West with its ability to concentrate its forces and achieve many feats which the West did not believe could be performed. The growth of the USSR and its potential to outstrip the West were taken very seriously. Many of these feats were especially unfeasible in democratic capitalist nations. Richard Nixon would cite that between 1917 and 1957 there was a transformation from a world without a single Communist government to one with twelve nations and over a billion people under Communist control. Russian science had advanced from the eighteenth century to the twentieth in a span of forty years.[147]

As spontaneous as the interaction between the two leaders appeared, they were in fact well planned. Both men were extensively briefed and were waiting to enter into discussion with each other. Having been briefed and advised on what to say, Nixon decided to put aside the recommendations of the State Department. Nixon had refused to follow the guidelines given to him by American specialists in Soviet relations, and Khrushchev was unpredictable at best. As well briefed as

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146 Nixon, The Challenges We Face, 25.

147 Ibid., 26.

the two were, there were going to be unexpected events.

The exhibition began with a rousing speech by Nixon, which one historian has described as transcending "his country's pro-civility for idealism."[148] In this opening oration broadcast back in the United States as well as in an historic first broadcast by an American official in Russia, he declared that based on the distribution of wealth the nation to the ideal of a classless society was the United States. On the stage behind Nixon, Khrushchev shouted 'Nyet, nyet.'[149] The Vice President then recited great lists of consumer wealth stating that, forty-four million American families owned 56 million cars, 50 million TV and 143 million radios. After the opening address the two leaders toured the site and continued their often acrimonious discussions. Whenever Khrushchev felt that Nixon had 'scored a point' he would give Nixon a firm slap on the back.[150] At the end of the official opening Nixon and Khrushchev went to the Californian wine table for a toast. Khrushchev proposed a toast "to peace" and the end of foreign military bases. Nixon countered with a toast just to peace. An argument ensued but was resolved when someone suggested a toast to one hundred years to Premier Khrushchev. The toast was accepted.

> Khrushchev: At ninety-nine years of age we shall discuss these questions further. Why should we be in haste?
> Nixon: You mean that at ninety-nine you will still be in power with no free elections?[151]

When one examines Nixon's comments a pattern clearly emerges. Nixon tended to concede Russian feats in space as achievements in and of themselves. However, he dismissed these as unrepresentative of a nation's success, which was better measured by domestic consumer goods.

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148 Whitfield, The Culture of the Cold War, 73.
149 Nixon, Six Crises, 254.
150 G. Lubin, "Report on the Trip to Moscow," (July-August, 1959) : 5.
151 Nixon, Six Crises, 281.

This assessment would rank the United States as the superior nation.[152] According to Nixon the focus on consumerism had to remain paramount even when the Americans achieved parity and then superiority in the space race and other military contests. This line of argument suited both of the superpowers' best interests at the time. The Americans perceived themselves to be behind in the space race and this permitted them to maintain a field of supremacy, while at the same time pouring money into the military industrial space business to 'catch up'. Nixon asked "Would it not be better to compete in the relative merits of washing machines than in the strength of rockets?"[153] Any focus on rockets at this time would have pointed to a misperceived American vulnerability and conversely to supposed Soviet strength. A commercial war placed the United States in a far more advantageous position than an atomic war. It appears that Khrushchev was willing for the grounds of the race to shift to consumer goods as this would not only be in keeping with his new policy of peaceful coexistence, but seemed conducive to motivating the population to produce. If production increased and resources were utilized more effectively, it would be possible to redirect scarce resources from military and heavy industry to lighter consumer oriented industries. This in turn could satisfy the wants of the people and potentially secure Khrushchev's leadership without threatening his power basis of heavy industrialists.

One of the Soviet's main objectives for the Exhibitions was to increase trade opportunities, especially in the area of production technology. Therefore, it is unlikely that they would extensively promote their military superiority as the Americans had trade regulations against anything that could aid in the development of military goods being sold to the Soviet Union. The exhibition was

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152 May, Homeward Bound, 164.

153 "Their Sheltered Honeymoon," Life Magazine (August 10, 1959), 52.

perceived by the Soviet officials as an excellent opportunity to improve trade and diplomatic relations between the two nations. It was also problematic. The official Soviet line tended to link the promise of parity with the American standard of living as represented by the contents of the exhibition. Few things are more dangerous than moving the utopia into the realm of realism. By setting a real but potentially unattainable goal, the Soviets created a situation in which failure would be disastrous. Commenting on the 'Kitchen Debate', *Life Magazine* reported that the two leaders were making implied references to the arms race when they discussed Soviet and American washing machines, televisions, and electric ranges. At one point during Nixon and Khrushchev's tour, a model had pressed a remote control button which made a dishwasher appear out of a cabinet and then pressed another button for an automatic floor washer and polisher to appear from another cabinet. It was space age technology in the kitchen and there was little doubt that it could be applied to civilian and military uses. Khrushchev's reaction to the remote controlled dishwasher and floor polisher was to query if the Americans had machines that "puts food in your mouth and pushes it down?"[154]

At the model American grocery store, Nixon volunteered that his father had owned a small grocery store and that he had spent many hours working in that store. Khrushchev's response was to dismiss all shop keepers as "thieves." Nixon took umbrage to this and pointed out that when he had been in a Soviet street market soon after arriving in Moscow, and he had noticed that people were using scales to reweigh the produce that they had just purchased in order to determine if they had been given the correct amount. Soon after, Donald Kendall, the international president of Pepsi Cola, gave Khrushchev a sample of Pepsi Cola to try. Nixon interpreted Khrushchev's reluctance as suspicion at

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154 "The U.S. in Moscow: Russia Comes to the Fair," Time Magazine (August 3, 1959), 13.

the nature of the substance.[155]

There were several periods throughout Richard Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union that afforded he and Khrushchev the opportunity to engage in discussions. The best known of these discussions is the Kitchen Debate that occurred in front of television cameras and left most viewers with mixed reactions. Was it or was it not a good thing to see the two leaders of the superpowers engaged in frank conversation, talking, listening, and poking one another in the chest? Both leaders were given the opportunity to impress the citizens of each other's nations with their strength, wit, and commitment to both peace and victory. These discussions were published in the newspapers of both the Soviet Union and America. One example is Khrushchev's address of July 24,1959, in which he began by noting that the Russians stood for peace and that they were looking for peaceful coexistence. He stated that the Americans were free to live under capitalism: "[t]hat is your own affair and doesn't concern us. We can still feel sorry for you but since you don't understand - live as you understand." He then went on to make the point that America should, by the historic duration of its existence, be far more advanced than the USSR, and that "in another seven years we will be on the same level." Khrushchev's point would have been better supported if he had not approximated the age of the United States in 1959, as 300 years.[156]

The kitchen debate ended with an agreement to attempt to achieve peace and a final comment from Khrushchev, who asked Nixon to thank the housewife who had permitted the two men to use her kitchen. After the debate Khrushchev left Nixon to trail behind him as he went out to greet the people. Nixon wrote of Khrushchev walking over to an older woman who had been cheering him and giving her a "tremendous hug in which the

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155 Nixon, Leaders, 181-185.

156 Christian Science Monitor (July 25, 1959), ??

both rocked back and forth for several seconds while photographers took pictures."[157] Peaceful coexistence was viewed with mistrust in America, while it was interpreted as a means for the Soviets to put the Americans off guard, advancing the Soviet war effort without American knowledge until it was too late.[158] Any American participation in the charade was simply an effort on the part of the United States to combat "dangerous Soviet ignorance."[159]

After several reasonably promising statements beginning with 'let us' and involving the exchange of information, Nixon went on to state that the field of competition between the USSR and the USA should be in goods, and more specifically, in consumer products: "Would it not be better to compete in the relative merits of washing machines than in the strength of rockets?" Khrushchev adamantly agreed with Nixon. This does not seem to have been a ploy on the part of the Soviet leadership. A dictator could seek to maintain the acceptance of the people by providing them with a standard of living higher, or at least perceived to be higher, than in nations where the population chooses its leaders. An increase in trade that either freed up Soviet raw materials for the consumer industry or an improvement in trade which afforded the Soviets the opportunity to trade their raw materials or heavy industrial goods in return for consumer goods would have been extremely beneficial for the Soviet government and people. As Max Frankel, a columnist for the *New York Times*, wrote: "Surely one reason why the obviously uneasy Soviet hosts tolerated this carnival was to give Russians a glimpse of the rewards of hard work and the fulfillment of Premier Khrushchev's economic plans."[160] The Soviet campaign against the exhibition focused

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157 Nixon, Six Crises, 279.

158 "The Nation: Peaceful Coexistence," in Times (July 13, 1959), 13.

159 Ibid., 13.

160 Max Frankel, "Ivan Appears to Like the Way the Joneses Live: but Visitors to Moscow Fair Have Doubts on Wealth's Distribution" New York Times (August 2, 1959), 5(E).

on the glorification of Soviet achievements and statements about the propagandistic and false nature of the American exhibition. C.P.S.U. organizations instructed those attending on the weaknesses of the capitalist regime and the falsification of American life as presented by the exhibition. Moscow television stations were instructed to show new films and to expand their programming during the exhibition. Exhibitions displaying the achievements of other Communist nations were established and the Soviet equivalent to the Circarama was opened.

Khrushchev was often left agreeing with Nixon on the issue of peaceful competition but was constantly pointing out that he believed that it was American unwillingness to negotiate that impeded the process. However, Khrushchev was not about to concede to American superiority in consumer goods and industrial achievements without affirming Soviet superiority in the science of rockets. Nixon would use this opportunity to point out that the Americans wanted peace, and that it was the statements of Premier Khrushchev about rockets and Soviet victory that prevented this outcome. The conversations often had difficulty maintaining any sort of veneer of respectability, since both sides perceived the other as threatening. In one reported debate Khrushchev accused Nixon:

> It sounds like a threat to us. We too are giants. You want to threaten US.
>
> Nixon: Who is threatening? I am not threatening. We will never engage in threats.
>
> Khrushchev: You want to threaten us indirectly. We have powerful weapons, too, and ours are better than yours are if you want to compete...[more of the same]
>
> Nixon: My point was that in today's world it is immaterial which of the two great countries at any particular moment have the advantage.[161]

Not all news coverage was of the politicians. Much of it focused on the

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161 Christian Science Monitor (July 25, 1959).

Russian response to the exhibition. It is interesting that just as the Russians showed a great deal of interest in discovering how the Americans perceived them, the Americans were curious to know how the Russians viewed them, and specifically their exhibition.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOVIET REACTION

A Soviet Communist, after showing a foreigner the Exhibition of Economic Accomplishments, ... says: "well, now you see that socialism can be built in one country." "Sure, that's true, but why would anyone live there?" [162]

The Soviet belief in their superior system was never equated with a belief in a superior standard of living. The average Soviet citizen and the government accepted that the USSR lagged behind other developed nations in many areas. This was not a surprise, the Soviets had born the brunt of being the first Communist nation, the brunt of the attack of Fascists and were required to support and develop their underdeveloped regions as well as fledgling governments of newly formed states. In a perceptive statement, journalist Max Frankel noted that the Soviets doubted the credibility of the American exhibition due to its emphasis on the supposedly "average" American lifestyle. The Soviet population largely accepted American superiority and expected to be impressed at the Exhibition. The problem with the American exhibition was that it made "such a fetish of presenting the 'average' that it strains the Russians' built-in suspicion that all national exhibits are really lavishly produced Potemkin villages."[163] As one Soviet journalist wrote: "[w]e may not like the toys depicting little monsters... but we understand very well the merits of a machine capable of answering four thousand questions, or the quality of plastic dishes."[164] That the American economy was superior to the Soviet one did not mean that the Soviets were never to achieve parity.

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[162] Stites, Mass Culture, 284.

[163] Max Frankel, New York Times, 27 July 1959, 12(P).

[164] N. Sergeyeva in Soviet Culture (July 30, 1959).

American failure to treat the Exhibition as a trade fair, or to entertain talks of trade agreements, negated the Soviet government's primary purpose in permitting the Exhibition. The Soviet government subsequently dealt with the Exhibition as providing a means to further the belief that the Soviets would catch up with the Americans. The general consensus of opinion as printed in the Soviet press was that while there were definite merits to the exhibition,they were overshadowed by the lack of production machinery, and the undue emphasis on consumer machinery such as dishwashers and automatic lemon juicers, as well as by the false representation of the American life.[165] The press tended to focus on the areas of production that the Soviet government sought to develop. Khrushchev himself spoke along these lines. In his speech to officially open the exhibition he remarked that the:

> Exhibition has many interesting things. For example, plastic articles, household goods, synthetic textiles, and various manufactured articles...I not only experienced a feeling of satisfaction, but also, to a certain degree, a feeling of envy. But this is good envy, in the sense that we should like to have all this in our country as soon as possible...This exhibition is useful to US, we can learn something from it. We regard the American Exhibition as an exhibition of our own achievements in the near future.[166]

Despite his denunciations of Stalin, Khrushchev, with his seven-year plans and the projection of the future onto the present in order to create a new reality, was very much a product of the Stalinist era.

In interviews and discussions with friends, Alexander Werth has compiled the opinions of medium and high-ranking Soviet journalists. Most were international affairs specialists and members of the Communist Party, and the majority were well traveled and well educated. Discussing the exhibition they commented on the tensions between

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165 "Visitors' Reactions to the American Exhibit in Moscow: A Preliminary Report" (September 28, 1959), 47-59.

166 Nikita Khrushchev in Izvestia , 25 July 1959, 1.

Khrushchev and Nixon, noting that it was disheartening but that it was not all that important at the time. Khrushchev did not like Nixon and vice-versa, but for Khrushchev it was Eisenhower who was important. "Journalist A" was struck by the observation that for all of Khrushchev's admiration for American consumer goods, he could not accept the basic premise of the market economy as sensible. Khrushchev "thought the economy was run on absurd lines... with its incredible waste."[167] "Journalist D" reported on the Exhibition and found that while the citizens were impressed, they were not as impressed by the "super G.U.M" as many had anticipated. Speaking on behalf of the Soviet public he commented that the goods were: "rather better than ours; but so what? We'd catch up with them in a few years where that sort of thing was concerned. They hadn't had a war the way we had; so what the hell? All the same, our young people went pretty crazy about their cars." The exhibition went wrong, according to these Soviet journalists, in failing to display "wonders of engineering" and in failing to convince the Soviets that what was represented was "average." [168]

Some interpreted the constant assertion that the Soviet Union would attain American standards of living, a means of justifying the standard of Soviet living by portraying it as temporary. The other opinion is that the Soviets actually believed that they would achieve parity with the United States; this theory is quite credible considering the state of postwar and post-Stalinist optimism that was still present within the USSR. The severest criticism of the exhibition had to be the Soviet press's questioning of its credibility. One of the prime objectives of the exhibition was to impress upon the Soviets the wealth of the average person within the United States. However, it was often difficult to convince visitors of the degree of normality illustrated.

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167 Werth, The Khrushchev Phase, 173.
168 Ibid., 173.

It seemed to make little rational sense to Soviet viewers to spend millions of dollars on exhibiting merely 'ordinary' goods. The multilingual weekly KGB paper *New Times* printed an article entitled "Discussions in Sokolniki" which concluded that the American Exhibition could not possibly represent what was average, as it was human nature to represent something of which one was proud in the best possible manner.[169]

On August 2, 1959, the weekly illustrated magazine *Ogonyok*, ran an article by the American expatriate Martha Dodd entitled "An American Woman's Impression of the American Exhibition in Moscow." She stated that while she loved her country, she did not see an accurate representation of American life. She stated that the exhibition put her "on guard" from the very beginning and that it showed the average American life as one of luxury in which hardships and toiling were never involved. According to her, Americans themselves would be envious of the lives depicted at the exhibition. The concept of goods purchased in installments was not adequately described, giving the impression that the average American owned expensive goods outright. She, along with most Russians writing on the subject, questioned the calculation of the average wage, noting that it failed to represent how extremely wealthy a select few were and how poor others were.[170] Martha Dodd was one of several Americans to visit the exhibition. In 1959, between 10,000 and 15,000 Americans went the the USSR, the majority to Moscow, twice as much as in the previous year. The Soviets facilitated this by processing visa requests with great efficiency.

The Russian press also sought to discredit the areas of the exhibition that presented American superiority in fields of which the Soviets were particularly proud. American superiority in juicers and

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169 Y. Zhilin and S. Menshikov, "Discussion in Sokolniki," in New Times no. 34 1959, 24.
170 Martha Dodd, "Under the Gilded Dome: An American Woman's Impressions of the American Exhibition in Moscow," Ogonyok, 2 August 1959, 4-5.

cosmetics was far more palatable than in the areas of education or provisions for the unemployed. The representation of the Soviets by the American government was also targeted in the Soviet press. In the July 28 edition of the *Teachers' Gazette* the article "Why Should a Child's Mind be Corrupted?" appeared. The author had discovered a list of offensive statements and questions in the back of an American grade school geography textbook. The Soviet Union was described as having a standard of living far below the western world, it was stated that Russians were deprived of the basis personal freedoms afforded to those in the West, and lacked the money to purchase consumer goods. The questions found most offensive included: Was the Russian Revolution justified; name some freedoms which Americans enjoy but the Russians do not; and "The Soviet Union frequently states that it is a peace loving country. Can one assert that the Soviet Union's actions after the world war support this contention?"[171]

Whether the Soviet denunciation of Nixon's activities in an early morning market were believed by the Soviet people or whether it was accepted as a government ploy is not known. What is known is that the media of both countries as well as the memoirs of both Nixon and Khrushchev mention the occasion. On July 25,1959, *Pravda* ran an article about the Vice President of the United States attempting to buy a Soviet worker. An unnamed worker had reported that after exchanging words with Nixon in an outdoor market early in the morning, the Vice President tried to force him to take a one hundred ruble note. In the Vice President's televised speech of August 1, 1959, he stated that he had come across many friendly individuals in a fruit and vegetable market one morning on an impromptu walk about. Upon discovering that many of those present would not be attending the Exhibition, Nixon assumed that the reason was lack of funds. He then provided the man with whom he had

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171 Ibid., 4.

been speaking with a bill to purchase tickets for whomever the gentleman wanted. It was then explained to Nixon that the problem was not money but access to tickets, as they were initially reserved for party members and distributed by various Communist organizations. The incident was an interesting reflection of Nixon's ignorance as to the economic situation in Russia. During the mid-1950s, the problem was not a shortage of money but a general lack of goods on which to spend one's accumulating wealth. The Soviet account accused Nixon of trying to buy citizens for the cause of capitalism.

The weekly Soviet humor magazine *Krokodil* ran several cartoons and anecdotes about the exhibition. It used the introduction of Pepsi Cola to illustrate the Russian reaction to American goods. Before the introduction of Pepsi as a sample product at the exhibition, the Soviets had depicted cola drinks as "manifestations of decadent American capitalism,"[172] a manifestation of postwar American expansionism. The well known children's author Sergei Mikhalov wrote this poem, published on August 20, 1959 in *Krokodil*.

Pepsi Colitis

A very curious spectator
Examined American exhibits
Reflecting life across the ocean
(Somehow not from all its sides!)

It seems he liked all that's foreign,
And here and there his sighs were loud:
Ah, modern pots - and how stylish!
Ah, what paintings of world renown!
Ah, one can see they are from overseas!
Ah, ah, the abstract art - what mastery, indeed!

And thus with Rock'n'Roll playing around,
He reached the Pepsi Cola stand.
And here he lost his head completely:
Ah, what a beverage , and how aromatic!

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172 Harrison E. Salisbury, "Cola Drink Captivates the Soviet Hierarchy," New York Times 27 July 1959, 12(L).

Ah, you don't say, it's also free!
Let's have a glass! No, make it two!
The Yankee girl is glad to serve.
The praising gust imbibes with pleasure
He drinks and drinks, and asks for more!
His stomach twists in painful rumble,
But still he gulps the drink from overseas...

As a result, let us admit it,
This staunch lover of all that's foreign
Got sick and landed in a city clinic,
Where free of charge he was fed and treated.
But this made no impact on him;
Demanding help, he grumbled at nurses.
His country's blessings he fails to notice,
And still loves blindly all that's foreign.[173]

[173] Sergei Mikhalov, "Pepsi Colitis," Krokodil 20 August 1959, 4.

This poem reflects many of the perhaps legitimate fears of the Soviets. Was there a chance that they would be susceptible to the lure of what was foreign, causing them to not analyze foreign goods? Would this failure lead to an inability to understand that these items came at a cost, and possibly threatened services such as health care, employment stability,and education? Would the Soviets come to neglect what they did have, in their aspirations to acquire what they believed the Americans had?

Perhaps the one aspect of the exhibition on which Soviet opinion was clear was the modern art display, which included several abstract paintings as well as a collection of modern and abstract sculpture. Chosen by members of America's top art galleries these works represented the cutting edge in modern art, a medium which most Americans found difficult to appreciate. The USIA and State Department were criticized for their choice of art by members of the U.S. government. Over half of the artists were charged with having records of affiliation with Communist organizations. Several artists were summoned before the House Committee on Un-American Activities and asked about their organizational affiliations, and many refused to testify.[174] Nixon suggested withdrawing the art exhibit entirely. This created a problematic situation, for as much as many in Washington wanted the art exhibit withdrawn, they were concerned that this action could be grounds for comparison with the Soviets. The exclusion of the art display would also disrupt the balance between the realism of the supermarket and the cultural ideals of painting and sculpture.

The Soviets did not even try to interpret or appreciate the art displays, the denunciations of which were endless. One of the remarks listed in the comment books was "[o]ur people have realistic taste in

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[174] Sandeen, Picturing an Exhibition , 129.

art. Do not show us the abstract art again. You had better keep it at home and use it on ranches to scare off crows."[175] The American plastics specialist G. Lubin was told by many Russians that "the best part of our art exhibit was the thick carpet."[176] *Red Star* wrote that the modern art display was both "ugly and silly."[177] The same article ran with two photographs, one of the happy crowds examining the Explorer VI and the other of an abstract metal sculpture. Under the picture of the metal sculpture was the caption of a young boy and his father talking. The boy asks: "Dad, what is this scrap - iron doing here?"[178]

Mrs. Halpert, an American assigned to the modern art display, responded to Soviet complaints that the artwork was incomprehensible by noting that it was incorrect to require art to make sense or to have a social purpose. Art was to make an esthetic impression on an individual, and did not have to appeal to the general population nor did it have to posses any social relevance. This was a new philosophy for the viewers. The authors of one article, writing from a socialist realist background, asked: "How can you divorce the esthetic from the social? How can you have any criterion of beauty outside of society, outside of social interests?"[179] The running commentary published in *Krokodil* surrounding the "Magician," an abstract metal structure, went as follows:

> 'what, in our opinion, did the sculptor want to convey through this figure?'
> 'This is not a figure! It's a construction!'
> 'Nonsense! it is a scrap taken from a dump!'
> 'No, this is simply a delirious roofer's ravings represented in three dimensions!' [180]

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175 White, "Soviet Reactions," 4.

176 Lubin, "Report on the Trip to Moscow," 6.

177 B. Vrensky, "How the Exhibition Really Looks," Red Star , 28 August 1959, 4.

178 Ibid., 4.

179 Zhilin, "Discussion in Sokolniki," 24.

180 "Trip to America for One Ruble," Krokodil 4-5 no. 22. 23 August 1959, as republished in The Current Digest of the Soviet Press XI no. 34,14.

On a tour of the exhibition on September 3, Khrushchev viewed many of the displays that he had been unable to see previously. He duly inspected a model of an American satellite, the fashion show and the art display. Before entering the modern art display, he was told by an American guard that in America artists were free to follow whatever forms of expression they chose and that there were many different types of art, all with their own supporters and critics. After viewing the paintings Khrushchev compared a painting by E. Speicher entitled "The Blacksmith," which was painted in a realistic manner, with a painting by J. Pollock entitled "The Cathedral." According to Khrushchev, the first work was filled with a compassion towards humanity while the second contained only "variegated blots and crooked lines. What is the result of this artist's "freedom"?"[181] Khrushchev's comments were increasingly derogatory as the tour proceeded to the outdoor modern sculpture area.

It was often reported by the Soviet press that the pathway along which visitors walked appreciating the beauty of the park and of the sculptures had been nicknamed the "Path of Laughter." One metal sculpture of an extremely robust female nude caught Khrushchev's attention. In front of the sculpture "Standing Woman," Khrushchev remarked: "'[h]ow unhappy must be the woman who gave birth to this sculptor. How ungrateful this man is even towards the woman who gave him life.'"[182] The sculpture made such an impression on him that this passage is also contained in his biography. In a final denunciation of modern art Khrushchev responded to American statements that the general Soviet dislike was due to their immaturity in the fields of free artistic expression, the Soviet leader stated: "'Terrible. I thank God for not being grown-up enough to understand such forms of art. Do not be

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181 "N.S. Khrushchev and A. I. Mikoyan Visit the American National Exhibition in Moscow," Soviet Culture 5 September 1959, 2.

182 Ibid., 2.

offended, I say what I think.'"[183]

While the modern art exhibit was not generally popular, the general American population likely would have reacted in a very similar way, it did provide Soviet artists and intellectuals with an exposure to a new form of art, which represented a potentially welcome change from the constraints of "socialist realism."[184] The exposure of Soviet citizens to the new American art form was to have an enduring effect on many, despite the fact that the Soviet leadership abhorred it and delighted in abusing and mocking it for many years. Furthermore, there were a few underground Soviet artists who took note and started to integrate modern art forms within the confines of the Soviet art structure. As for the "Standing Woman," which was the subject of so much ridicule, the sculpture is located in a small outdoor garden featuring the finest of American sculpture at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C.

A study conducted by Ralph White for the USIA is one of a few detailed examinations of Soviet reactions to the exhibition. A former psychology lecturer at Cornell University, White was the Chief of the Communist Analysis Division, Office of Research and Analysis at USIA. His study concluded that the fair was an overwhelming success, with a favorability rating of 85 percent listed with the RAMAC computer and predominantly 65 percent favorable comments in the guest books. White believed that this positive reaction was due to the magnitude of Soviet goodwill towards the United States and to the Soviets' curiosity. He attributed the Soviets' desire for souvenirs as a tangible illustration of their goodwill, noting that guides perceived a difference in the mood of the crowds when it was discovered that there were souvenirs on hand.[185] One of the souvenirs that viewers could acquire were plastic

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183 Ibid., 2.

184 White, "Soviet Reactions," 4.

185 Ibid., 1.

bowls, masses of which were produced daily. There are official press photographs of Khrushchev, standing to one side of the machine while receiving his bowl.

In America this was the era of the housewife who was often well-educated and had money to spend on her family and her home. Thus, in attempting to be representative of American life, the planners of the exhibit included fashion shows, cooking displays and a model home. The fashion show consisted of forty models, of whom eight were professionals, and included three families; all were chosen based on their appearance - "no anorexic high fashion models" - and their ability to sing, dance, and respond to shouted questions. The families were chosen based on the above criteria as well as their socioeconomic class. The head of the Davises was a needle trade union worker, while the other two families were chosen to represent city and suburban life.[186] There were also criticisms by Americans that the fashion show was too frivolous; of the 250 fashion editors who previewed the show, forty-one signed a petition stating that the show was not representative, and only showed Americans at play. Furthermore, one particular rock and roll sequence was considered too "raucous."[187] The press did report that the Russian women were impressed by the wedding section; *Time* magazine quoted one Russian as remarking "We used to have that [spectacular weddings] long ago. But not any more."[188]

The displays were set up in a way that limited the number of people who could view them. Mr. Corn cited the extremely popular Circarama, which provided the Russians with the vividly dramatic "Panorama of America and American Life," could only be seen by

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186 Sandeen, Picturing an Exhibition , 137.
187 "Foreign Relations 'Slice Sliced'" in Time Magazine (August 3, 1959), 14.
188 "The U.S. in Moscow," Time , 12.

approximately 10 percent of the Fair's visitors.[189] There was also some concern with the scale and content of the Circarama display consisting of a series of seven massive movie screens showing Charles Eames' film *A Trip Across the United States*. Some of the pictures were as simple as seven screens, each twenty by thirty feet, displaying images of washed and topped carrots filled all seven screens. Other images included American buildings, countrysides, and citizens. According to Mr. Corn, the result of having seven large images was an assault on the senses. Images were shown for a period of one to six seconds a set. Mr. Corn found it difficult to follow the quick flood of images, referring to the pictures as a 'colorful blur' and not as a well planned visual story of the United States. He stated that the Russian college student accompanying him had great difficulty following the presentation, and that he doubted that the average Russian's comprehension was any better. The American expatriate Martha Dodd concurred with Mr. Corn's assessment of the Circarama presentation, writing that its: "[e]xtremely loud narration and highly strung music, unpleasantly affect[ed] visitors' nerves."[190] As the Soviets were unfamiliar with large multiple color screens, the cumulative effect may well have been too much for their senses. The Soviets had also launched their own version of the Circarama theatre before the American Exhibition opened, thus reducing the ability of the new technology to be sufficient to please the crowds.[191]

Perhaps Mr. Corn's gravest criticism was that the American

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189 Corn, "Exhibition Designer's View of the American Fair in Moscow," (Samuel Rivkin Co. 1959) : 2.

190 Martha Dodd, "Under the Gilded Dome: An American Woman's Impressions of the American Exhibition in Moscow," in Ogonyok , 4.

191 The Soviet "counter-exhibition" was located just outside the main entrance to the U. S. exhibition and included models of Soviet cars and consumer goods. There was little chance that a direct comparison would not be made. Unlike the American exhibition, the Soviets knew which of the items on display were not available to the public or which were too expensive for the average citizen to purchase. Part way through the exhibitions, a storm struck Moscow. Many of the structures housing the Soviet exhibition were damaged or blown down, while the American structures remained intact. Thomas, "Report on Service," 21.

Exhibition failed to take into consideration the nature of the audience. For example, the display of baseball involved a photo of a major league player sliding into home plate. The picture was surrounded by a number of bats, and baseball stockings all of which manifestly failed to convey the American passion for the sport. Furthermore, the American dream was only represented as it had materialized in the suburban home, the family unit, and heightened consumerism. The Soviets knew that they were struggling to build Communism. Whether they believed in that goal or not is largely immaterial. One Russian man asked the Americans: "[y]ou didn't tell us how you live-what you live for. Are houses and autos the only thing you live for?"[192]

According to Mr. Corn's report, the "unqualified hit of the show" was the "Family of Man" display by Edward Steichen. While the Soviet's primary interest was in the consumer products of America, the "Family of Man," in which only the similarities of humanity were displayed, was the most popular exhibit. Ralph White's study of the exhibition conducted for the USIA listed the "Family of Man", automobiles, color television, and the Circarama as the top displays in terms of popularity. White further states that while the model house was obviously of great interest to the Soviets and there were continuous queues to get in, it did not receive a high level of approval.[193] Interestingly, the "Family of Man" was the one display that did not receive the majority of its funding from businesses, nor was it created expressly for the exhibition. Concurring with the official objective of the exhibition, Mr. Corn concluded that exhibitions and fairs would further the mutual respect and understanding between Americans and Russians. He perceived the Russians to be "generally friendly, inquisitive and serious, much as was the American audience at the Russian Fair at New York's Coliseum

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192 Ralph K. White, "Soviet Reactions to Our Moscow Exhibit: Voting Machines and Comment Books" in Public Opinion Quarterly XXIII no. 4 (Winter, 1959-1960), 4.

193 White, "Soviet Reactions," 4.

earlier this year."[194]

The photos of the book display show literally table after table of books, lying there for all to pick up and read. Ultimately, many of the books were discretely removed by Soviet visitors at a rate that caused great concern about the viability of maintaining the display for the entirety of the exhibition. On the first day six hundred books, including fourteen bibles, were taken. This was not totally unforeseen since the Americans had erected the display to allow for easy access to and removal of the books, and had ample reserve stocks. However, they lost nearly 70 percent of the books within the first days of the exhibition and had to close the display until an emergency shipment from New York arrived.[195] As in previous foreign exhibitions the United States included a supermarket display, which contained a massive frozen food section, the entire contents of which were also open to the public. Over seven tons of food were sent by General Foods and General Mills to be displayed, prepared and stolen.[196] One Soviet woman complained to the two American women food preparers about the horrid taste of the American frozen food. The presenters soon realized that the visitor had opened up one of the frozen packages of potatoes and had tasted the product, semi frozen and uncooked.[197]

White's study cautioned that any evaluation of Soviet reaction had to take into account Soviet expectations. Not only were they accustomed to viewing state presented exhibitions, but their image of the United States was largely self and state constructed and bore the marks of great exaggerations. The Russians assumed that in an overall technological comparison, the United States had the advantage. Their

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194 Corn, "Exhibit Designer's View," 6.

195 "McClellan Report," 42.

196 "Moscovites Marvel at Kitchen Show," Washington Post, 3 September 1959.

197 Wayne Halle, "How Ivan Q. Viewed Our Exhibit," Washington Post , 9 September 1959. Wayne Halle was a guide at the exhibition.

general disappointment at the failure of the exhibitions to awe them was a result of their previous understanding of American technology.[198] Perhaps the organizers' failure to show the spectacular rather than of the ordinary to the Russians was perhaps their biggest mistake. Russian comments indicate that they went to the exhibition to get away from everyday reality, be it Soviet or American.

The Soviet press was not the only body that was unhappy with the contents of the American exhibition. There were Americans who felt that there was far too much consumerism displayed and there were concerns that the exhibition was focused on showing parallel aspects of Soviet and American life. Both countries had cars, apartments/houses, books, films, and technology, but there were certain quintessential aspects about America that were simply not present within the Soviet Union. These differences should have been the focus of the Exhibition it was argued. The three main differences were: the freedom to dissent; the ability to have massive social changes without revolution; the right to vote meaningfully, thereby choosing a popular government; and the ability of the people to remove that government should it not satisfy their needs. The reason given by the USIA for not blatantly focusing on these issues was the belief that it would not be permitted to do so by the Communists.[199] Furthermore, it was feared that a focus on freedoms and forms of government may have reflected an American sense of insecurity that the Soviets either had or could achieve parity in the technological, cultural and consumer industries. If the Soviets were to achieve parity, rights and freedoms would *de facto* be the defining difference. One American journalist wrote: "it strikes me that many of our exhibits in natural science, technology, and culture will likely produce the Soviet reaction: '[w]hy, we have much of this, some that is

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198 White, "Soviet Reactions," 2.

199 Roscoe Drummond, "What Should the U.S. Exhibit," Christian Science Monitor, 21 February 1959, 1.

better.'"[200] This belief was not completely unfounded, the Russians were in fact making rapid advances and had been doing do since before the time of the Russian Revolution.

Typically, the most popular displays at the American Exhibition had little to do with consumerism, and much more to do with humanity and culture. An example of this is was the extremely popular exhibition the Family of Man, consisting of an internationally renowned collection of photographic images compiled by Edward Steichen. It included of 503 photos by 273 artists representing 68 lands, with works ranging in size from 8 by 10 inches to 10 feet square. It began with the meeting of two people and a kiss, then followed through weddings, pregnancy, childbirth, mothers, children at play, working in the fields, praying to various gods and eventually dying. Steichen's goal for the photographic exhibition was to facilitate a thaw in the Cold War. He and his chief assistant Wayne Miller had created the Family of Man in an attempt to transcend ideology using universal symbols, and with the objective of including the viewer in the world of those photographed, regardless of race, nationality, age, religion, or sex. One example of this was the section depicting couples, which was introduced with the title: "Couples from all over the world united in bonds of love or loyalty - We two form a multitude." One of the reasons why the Family of Man and other cultural events were included was to persuade audiences that America was able to produce high quality culture. Interestingly, the "Family of Man" was not originally included as part of the Exhibition, but was only added in February 1959.

A major problem with the Family of Man exhibit was the cost of the installation. While the consumer goods were donated almost in their entirety, the cost of exhibiting the Family of Man had to be borne either by the government or by non-profit art organizations. There were

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[200] Ibid., 9.

three copies of the Exhibit, two were very well traveled and had been to Scandinavia and Asia; and the Museum of Modern Art original, which had water damage. Those pieces which were not in a suitable condition had to be reprinted. This significantly added to the already considerable cost of installation. The negotiations to acquire the necessary funds are illustrative of the interconnected sense of power and influence in the sphere of cultural diplomacy during the 1950s.[201] While searching for the $35,000 required, McClellan consistently came into contact with the same people. Some of the organizations from whom donations were requested were the Museum of Modern Art, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Nelson Rockefeller, the president of the Museum of Modern Art, had previously worked with the Office of Inter American Information, the predecessor of the USIA. His sister-in-law Blanchette was the president of the Museum of Modern Art's international program, while Mr. Porter McCray, the program director for the international program, sat on the advisory board of the Moscow Exhibitions. Interestingly, every art organization above rejected financial support for the Family of Man, noting that their role was to fund those art innovations/shows that the government would not support. Eventually, the government supplied $40,000, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund gave the Museum $15,000, and the plastics industry donated the viewing pavilion at an estimated value of $50,000.

Sandeen has written extensively on this subject and postulates that the Family of Man Exhibit was included for its "sentimental message."[202] He argues that this message was severely diminished, as its sentimentality was "no match for the technological race with the Soviet Union and the space age suspicion of the post-Sputnik era."[203] The exhibition was a staging ground for highly aggressive arguments

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201 Sandeen, Picturing an Exhibition, 132.
202 Ibid., 133.
203 Ibid., 125.

conducted through the media of radio, newspaper, and more importantly, television. Arguments about washing machines and modern art were made by politicians speaking on behalf of the people. It was a form of controlled competition. Only in comparison with the tense hostility of other Cold War periods did the exhibition represent an uneasy period of peace or common humanity. While the Family of Man exhibit spoke words of human unity, the Moscow exhibition itself did not. Inherent in the conception of the exhibition was the idea of difference and dissonance between the two superpowers. This cultural event was in fact the deployment of American propaganda against Soviet indoctrination.[204]

After the undisputed success of the Exhibition several official studies of the Russian response and the overall results of the Exhibition were conducted. Most of the researchers noted that the public opinion information collected through open comment books, secret ballot voting, secret ballot comment centres, conversations overheard by guides sent out to collect unsolicited comments, and information gathered from the RAMAC computer were of dubious accuracy. As the Soviet government controlled ticket distribution and had the bearers of officially distributed tickets attend a lecture on the true nature of the exhibition, some of those commenting could well have been responding in accordance with the government line. The other concern expressed was how the information was to be interpreted. For example, the American Exhibition had extremely high attendance records, and attendance increased as the exhibition continued. This was often interpreted as a sign of success, but there were several other reasons for the high level of attendance that had nothing to do with the quality of the exhibition. The Russians were curious about the United States, or for that matter about anything foreign; there was little else occurring in Moscow that was of interest; the exhibition had been presented as a peace gesture,

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204 Ibid., 133

promoting the relaxing of the Cold War situation; the Soviets had a great interest in industrialization; and the Soviet government had presented the Unites States as being the world leader.

The documented total number of various questions, or groups of questions based on similar themes, asked by the Soviet public was 924. The main object or persons to which the questions were directed was the RAMAC computer. The RAMAC machine had pre programmed questions to which it could respond. This limited the range of questions asked by the Soviets. As the Americans sought to avoid issues like the treatment of African Americans, the RAMAC did not contain questions about it. The second source of information was the oral and written questions asked of American guides and travelers during the summer of the exhibition. The findings based on these sources are of a very general nature; there is no telling how many questions were not asked because of fear, or lack of confidence in receiving an honest answer. It is also likely that some questions were asked under the instructions of the Soviet government. Also, American guides and travelers were only asked to record the questions put to them as the exhibition came to an end, meaning that they were basing much of their assessment on memory. Furthermore, what constituted a memorable question for an American may not have been one of the more frequently asked questions. All of these caveats aside, questions were repeated often enough to draw a general conclusion about what the Soviets wanted to know.

In short, the questions were friendly and curious. The six most common topics accounted for 60 percent of the total questions asked. Listed in descending order of frequency the subject areas were: living conditions, American awareness of the USSR, technology (notably consumer technology), education, music (notably jazz), freedoms, and ideas. The three subjects which were more antagonistic than friendly accounted for 13 percent of the composite questions. Interestingly, they accounted

for 23 percent of questions asked of guides. These three subjects were: unemployment, the Negro problem and the existence of military bases around the USSR. The results of the Soviet questions could then be compared to those of other nations in which the United States had conducted exhibitions. In comparison with other nations the Soviets varied little in their interest in the life of the average American and their relative lack of interest in American religion, and racial discrimination. The issue of U.S. unemployment was also rarely addressed; a fact which surprised American officials who had spent a great deal of time on the issues of race, unemployment, and health care. The Soviets did have several areas of interest which differed from those of their counterparts in other parts of the world. They expressed very little interest in issues dealing with foreign affairs, atomic inspection agreements or in the philosophies of political and economic freedoms. This is not to say that there was not considerable interest in other liberties such as freedom of information. More so than in many other nations, Soviet citizens were very concerned with how others saw them, and with the attitudes of others were towards them. There were also comparatively high levels of interest in education, wages, and technological and cultural developments.[205]

John Thomas was one of seventy-five guides at the American exhibition in Moscow. At the time of writing his monograph, he was working in the Social Science Division of the Rand Corporation. The only other biographical detail provided is his recollection of the 1937 disappearance of Russian fathers of children with whom he used to play.[206] His report is based entirely on his diary and his personal recollections, and contains no references. His reason for writing the report was a desire to provide a description of a "major landmark in the

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205 "Sources of Information: Official Study for the USIA," i-iii

206 Thomas, Report on Service, 41.

U.S,-Soviet cultural exchange program."[207] The first chapter of his work focuses on the exhibition, while the second and third deal with private meetings with Soviets, a summary of views on war and peace, Red China, and his visit to Latvia.

John Thomas believes that he was chosen out of 800 applicants due to his "neutrality" towards the USSR. It was an exciting opportunity for Thomas, and, in his opinion, for the United States. The exhibition was going to provide a very different opportunity from the more traditional well regulated delegations of the past. He believed that his job was "to tell the U.S. story to the Soviet masses directly," without the distorting lens of Soviet propaganda.[208] The overriding impression he had of the Soviets was of their curiosity. The questions he was asked were generally friendly and became more so as the exhibition progressed. During the first week of the exhibition the visitors appeared to consist largely of the elite, although this would soon change. That the early visitors were typically members of the elite was confirmed by later visitors who explained that initial ticket distribution was handled through the Party organizations. For example, the director of a factory would be given fifty tickets to distribute. Each visitor came with "varying degrees of governmental sanction."[209] One assistant plant director from Leningrad had his assignment written in his travel papers. He was to visit the fair and then report back. Citizens were warned not to be impressed by a "showcase sample from a decaying capitalist society."[210] During the first week of the exhibition no tickets were sold to the public. A week after the exhibition opened posters went up announcing that the tickets were on sale. However, the posters were displayed without the bottom strip

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207 Ibid., iii.
208 Ibid., 1.
209 Ibid., 5.
210 Ibid., 21-22.

which contained details of the points of sale and in some cases without the closing date of the exhibition. Many of those who did attend did so illegally, not having registered for the trip and without legally obtained tickets. Priced at one ruble they were selling for as high as 75 rubles each on the black market.[211]

Thomas was assigned to the voting machine, which was set up for the Soviets to cast their ballot on the quality of the exhibition. He found that the display received significant attention, notably from the Communist Party activists, whom he felt were instructed to "harass the guides with embarrassing or provoking questions."[212] Their main tactic was to go into a voting booth and to stall. When people called for them to hurry, they complained that their right to exercise their democratic vote was being hindered. This tended to be the rationale for the vast majority of visitors who asked difficult questions. Thomas was pleased by the frankness of the discussion among visitors who would often discuss politically sensitive issues between themselves, seemingly oblivious to the presence of the Americans. Silence was interpreted as a sign of approval. Soviet officials would later charge that the American guides were becoming too engaged in numerous political debates, and were characterized as "hired defenders of the capitalist system" and accused of "misbehavior, rudeness, or misrepresentation of facts."[213] An eyewitness to a debate between Nixon and Khrushchev on opening day, Thomas recalls how Nixon tried to illicit a comment from Khrushchev about the voting machine. Nixon began discussing the voting machine when Kozlov joined in, saying that he had heard about the machine from the Brussels Fair. Khrushchev interrupted, declared that "this doesn't interest us" and walked away.[214]

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211 Ibid., 23.
212 Ibid., 7.
213 Ibid., 16 and 19.
214 Ibid., 7-8.

Initially, the Russian press responded rather favourably to exhibition director Harold McClellan. He was reported as being dismayed when he discovered that his hope of impressing the Russians was futile since it rested on a collection of washing machines, toys, baseball bats and other innocuous displays.[215] Soviet journalists were not always so kind about the Exhibition, which was reported as being everything from too average to too wealthy to too consumer-based. Commenting on a display of cash registers, a Moscow writer asked his readers: "Really, now, what ordinary visitor can take an interest in a cash register, no matter how perfect it is? But there are people standing around it." He resigned himself both to the inexplicable fascination of Russians with such items and resolves that "[i]t is well that we are studying furniture rather than bomb releasing devices and fuses."[216] The same author noted that while the American automobiles were quite impressive he himself would have preferred a modest Czech made Tatra or Skoda. The American cars were for him akin to a "high speed bed."[217] Another author commenting on the American cars wrote that while he liked the cars he would not want to be more specific for fear of causing a "competitive fight between Ford and Chrysler."[218] This same journalist then summarized his opinion of the Exhibition. He wrote:

> We left the pavilion with the hope of finally seeing what America is most famous for. We wanted to become familiar with its automobiles and machine tools, with the mechanization of agriculture- in a word, with technology with a capital "T". But we had hardly left the pavilion when we learned there was nothing more to see. Period. Instead of a prospectus on technology, we were given a publicity brochure from Helena Rubinstein, one of the most preeminent authorities on facial beauty treatments with the use of compact, lipstick, liquid rouge and other cosmetics.[219]

The pamphlet contained instructions on how to put on lipstick, first by

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215 Obraztsov, "More Press Comments," 12.
216 Ibid., 12.
217 Ibid., 13.
218 "Trip to America," 14.
219 Ibid., 14.

lining the bottom lip, then filling in both lips and pressing them together.

On August 25, 1959, the commerce department of the American exhibition announced that it would be selling 1,800 items from the exhibition to Soviet buyers when the exhibition closed. The items included the entirety of the model kitchen, the furnishings in the model home, tools, automobiles, office equipment, photographic equipment and so forth. Non-strategic items such as the iron lung were to be donated to the host nation. The Soviets accepted the donated items but blocked the sale of many of the consumer goods.[220] From the vantage point of the historian, it is easy to trace the rapid industrialization of many nations to the readiness to take foreign goods and to make copies of them *en masse*; a technique which was used by Peter the Great and the early Bolsheviks. The Soviet reluctance was with sales to individuals because the knowledge would reside with that person and not with the party. Khrushchev was not against the borrowing of western models for production within the Soviet Union so long as it was conducted by the Party. In Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost Tapes, he recalled how in the fifties the Soviets were making a concerted effort to develop their oil and gas sector. They lacked the machine tools necessary, and what they did have failed to compare with the American tools. "Then out of the blue the Rumanians came up with machine tools...So the machine tools were Rumanian, but the plans were American." [221] Within half a year of the closing of the exhibition, USIA reported an increase in the sales of processed foods, medicine, and medical supplies in Moscow. G.U.M. was soon selling clothes patterned on those found in the American fashion show.[222] The United States of America was a "net cultural exporter"

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220 Hixson, Parting the Curtain, 207.

221 Khrushchev, The Glasnost Tapes, 110-111.

222 Hixson, Parting the Curtain, 211.

with respect to its greatest rival.[223] The Soviet people needed to work hard to achieve mass consumerism, but it was the Communist Party that was to lead them.

Khrushchev's final assessment of the overall exhibition was negative. He found that the exhibition lacked a solid foundation in technical, scientific, and cultural achievements. It was showy, and flashy propaganda, which failed because even given the esthetically pleasing nature of the displays they were, to use Khrushchev's words, "of no earthly use."[224] One example was the automatic lemon squeezer. Why he wondered, could Americans not slice their lemons and place them in their tea, using a spoon to squeeze out the few drops of lemon juice necessary for a good cup of tea? "I'm just talking about the exhibit, which consisted mostly of a bunch of photographs, some household products you won't find in any household, and some pieces of sculpture which were good for nothing but laughing and spitting at."[225] He did however comment favourably on the prefabricated buildings, calling this method of construction "novel and sensible."[226]

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223 Coomb, The Fourth Dimension , 24.

224 Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: the Last Testament , 365.

225 Ibid., 366.

226 Ibid., 364.

CONCLUSION

Many of the primary sources used in this thesis are the same as those used by Walter Hixson. However, unlike Hixson's study, primary Russian sources are also used. This is due to the different foci of the two works. Hixson's work presents an excellent analysis of the American Exhibition within the context of American cultural history. Primarily, this thesis studies the exhibition within the Soviet sociopolitical context of the 1950s. Theoretical consideration of what is cultural diplomacy, and the history of exhibitions is also provided in this work.

In his final analysis of the Soviet Exhibition, Walter Hixson concluded that while it was "well conceived and smoothly executed, the Soviet exhibition had little hope of fundamentally altering the American mass perception of the USSR."[227] The same can not be said about the effects of the American exhibition in Moscow. Coupled with the Soviet government's promise to improve the standards of living, the exhibition reinforced the belief that great technological progress was not only possible, but should be beneficial to immediate generations. What remained to be proved was whether it could be achieved under Communism and within the Soviet Union. Khrushchev, with his faith in the Communist ideology and having born witness to the accomplishments of the Soviet Union, believed that it could be done.

The USIA concluded that the exhibition was the "'largest and probably the most productive single psychological effort ever launched by the U.S. in any Communist country."[228] One wonders if this is not as much a statement about the nature of the programmes the two nations were willing to enter into with each other as it is a statement about the

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227 Hixson, Parting the Curtain, 161.
228 Ibid., 210.

benefits of the exhibition. While not the historian's objective, it is fascinating to consider what could have been. Given the tumultuous reception of the exhibition by many in the Soviet government, and the general support of it by Khrushchev and the Soviet people, what would have happened if the Americans had been willing to enter into increased trade with the Soviet Bloc? Would the Soviets have continued to bankrupt their state attempting to secure its international position through militaristic means?

Khrushchev had said that the Soviet Union was not negotiating from a position of weakness but was entering into agreements as an equal. Historian Adam Ulam referred to the Soviet diplomacy during this period as exhibiting "imprecise friendliness."[229] The question is why would two cold war enemies be friendly? On July 4 1955, an American house subcommittee released a statement by Secretary of State Dulles, who was part of the American delegation at Geneva. Dulles testified that the Russian economy was "on the point of collapse."[230] One of his tenets was that the Soviet Russia was inherently weak because it was 'morally rotten.'[231] While the moral strength of the Soviet Union is not within the delineation of this thesis, the state of the economy is. If Khrushchev's primary objective was to increase trade with the West thereby stimulating production within the Soviet Union, he might have been willing to make great sacrifices to this end. There was also the proviso that the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States needed to find a way to scale back the military competition. The trade could have taken the form of allowing for primarily peaceable contact between Americans and Soviets. In essence, it could have been in the form of cultural diplomacy.

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229 cited in Albert Weeks, The Other Side of Coexistence: An Analysis of Russian Foreign Policy (New York: Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1970), 569.

230 D. F. Fleming, The Cold War, 747.

231 Leonhard, Three Faces of Marxism, 286.

Eisenhower placed a great deal of faith in the beneficial nature of cultural diplomacy. In his memoirs he wrote that his objective was for the exhibition to increase and diversify contacts between the United States and the Soviet Union. He also sustained the "hope, faint though it might be.. that we could encourage the Soviet rulers to relax the rigidity with which they kept their society closed."[232] This would increase the respective nations' awareness of each other. Eisenhower's final assessment of the exhibition was one of delight. It was deemed constructive as it brought thousands of Soviets of all ages and socioeconomic groups face to face with American technology, products, ideas, and citizens. Cultural diplomacy, especially on this level was "a fine progressive step toward peace in the world."[233] Given the international tensions of the time, the access to Soviet citizens and the crucial fact that the colossal venture was largely funded by industry, the exhibition could not fail to be perceived as a success. Perhaps not as revolutionary or as dramatic as the crises which led to a deterioration the detente, it was a moment of success for which the American government should be praised even though they were not entirely responsible for it.

Nixon's assessment of cultural exchanges was not as enthusiastic as Eisenhower's. He concluded that while people to people contacts and cultural and informational exchanges are not as significant as "some of the dewy eyed advocates claim" they were beneficial. They represented in his view, an investment in a long process. He added that they were as important as nonstrategic trade.[234] In Nixon's assessment Khrushchev was willing to deal with the West out of respect for its economic progress. He wanted this American industrial success for his own

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232 Eisenhower, The White House Years, 403-404.
233 Eisenhower, The White House Years, 410.
234 Nixon, Leaders, 215.

country.[235]

In Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States: An Interpretive History, John Lewis Gaddis postulates that perhaps "[a]tmospherics are sometimes more important than accomplishments...and the sight of capitalist and Communist leaders amiably agreeing to disagree had a curiously reassuring effect on world opinion."[236] The American exhibition created these atmospherics both through the meeting of Nixon and Khrushchev and on the level of citizens, corporations and government agencies. However, the atmospherics were not improved by the determination with which both sides sought to display their superiority. This constant vying was far more conducive to continued conflict than it was to compromise. After the Paris Summit Khrushchev stated that "We shall not tolerate insults, we have our pride and our dignity we represent a mighty socialist state."[237] "Words were weapons" and consumerism was mightier than ideology.[238] In *Pravda* on November 7 1959, David Zalavsky wrote about a very different interpretation of international relations. He argued that the better the international relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, the "more acute" the ideological conflict would be.[239] In easing diplomatic tensions, opportunities for communication, and therefore for propaganda, increased.

Nixon was the principal representative of the American state at the exhibition. It was from him that Khrushchev would learn of American willingness to enter into peaceful coexistence. Advised by many to assure the Soviet echelons that the U.S. was for peace, "I [Nixon]

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235 Ibid., 199.

236 Gaddis, Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States, 216.

237 "22910: Khrushchev's Press Conference Paris May 18,1960. in Documents on International Affairs (London: 1961), 34.

238 Coomb, The Fourth Dimension, 33.

239 as cited in Werth, The Khrushchev Phase, 188.

decided to completely reject the advice."[240] Post war revisionists have summarized that the Soviet Union was the enemy mainly because the United States, for various reasons, needed an enemy. For most of the Cold War the USSR was on the defensive, not the offensive. Some revisionists expand their theory to included a complete benign Soviet Union. This is simply ahistorical. That the United States needed an enemy is probable. Through blustering speeches on the expansion of Communism, the facade of military parity, enough military power to obliterate a large portion of the world, and Communist propaganda, the Soviet Union created itself as the enemy. The American exhibition in Moscow was an opportunity to promote not only knowledge or understanding but to subvert the Communist system. Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson stated that the "primary focus of the exhibition should be to endeavor to make the Soviet people dissatisfied with the share of the Russian pie which they now receive."[241]

Khrushchev's objectives were straight forward. He sought to imitate Western, specifically American industries, repeating their advances and "'creatively' duplicating their technological and scientific work."[242] How well did Khrushchev do towards increased production of consumer goods? Alex Nove compared Stalin's target for 1960 and the actual levels.

Table Three

Plan Targets

	1946	Stalin's 1960 target	Actual 1960
Steel [millions of tons]	12.25	60	65
Coal [millions of tons]	149.3	500	513

240 Nixon, Six Crises, 263.
241 Hixson, Parting the Curtain, 1.
242 Medvedev, Khrushchev, 62.

Oil	[millions of tons]	19.3	60	148[243]

As Nove has cautioned, even if there is statistical exaggeration there has been a substantial increase. However, "neither cotton cloth nor footwear had reached target (or 1940s) levels."[244] The spread between targets of producers' and consumer goods increased with the former benefiting.[245] As historian Louis Fischer has explained: "Khrushchev's power rest[ed] in part in his ability to court both the Party and the people."[246] His downfall lay in his inability to please both the Party and the people. He also facilitated the shifting of the people's focus from ideology to material progress. The Soviets increasingly displayed great pride in their scientific advances, and focused on these tangible accomplishments instead of Communist ideology. Adam Ulam theorized that "technological and economic achievements... replaced Communist ideology as the main factor of social cohesion."[247] Catching up with America became a rallying cry for the nation, which all could comprehend but of which few realized the practical difficulties.[248] The system however, was not open or reformed enough to allow for innovations. This was a fundamental flaw. When Khrushchev proposed peaceful coexistence, the intent was to shift the scope of competition not to broaden it. However, the Americans had managed to both maintain the focus of military defense and to introduce domestic software.

John Thomas concluded that the general level of interest of the Soviets in ideology or foreign affairs was almost as low as that found in Americans. They expressed general concern that there would be a war

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243 Nove, An Economic History.

244 Nove, "Industry," 61.

245 Gregory Grossman, "Communism in a Hurry: the Time Factor in Soviet Economics," in Problems of Communism VII no. 3 (May - June, 1959), 5.

246 Louis Fischer, Russia, America and the World (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1961), 90.

247 Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, 606.

248 Grossman, "Communism in a Hurry," 4.

and hoped for understanding. What did capture Soviet curiosity were the "material details of U.S life."[249] The Soviet leaders were cognizant of the fact that increased contacts with the West, be they cultural, trade or diplomatic, ran the risk of destabilizing their mode of governing, as well as increasing their dependency on foreign technology and goods. However, isolationism seemed even less viable with significant if not debilitating retardation of improvements to living standards, and scientific and technological advances. Soviet leaders believed that without rapid technological and scientific advances their military complex would be unable to defend the nation.[250] During Khrushchev's period in office the memories of the Second World War were too prominent in the psyche of the nation. In 1983, Andrei Sakharov wrote that the Soviet Union was heading towards a "major systemic crisis arising from its inability to live up to its promises."[251] The roots of this crisis can be found in the late 1950s, when despite Khrushchev's aspirations, he too made promises that could not be fulfilled by the system he totally supported.

Khrushchev permitted the American Exhibition because it represented an opportunity to improve relations between the Americans and the Soviets as well as provided a setting in which to discuss increased trade. He also needed a source of support. He could maintain his alliance with heavy industry only if he acquired enough technology to alleviate the shortages of resources. He could potentially gain the support of the people if he increased their standards of living. If not done properly, any diversion of resources from heavy to consumer industry would threaten his main source of political backing before it established an alternative one. A significant injection of Western

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249 Thomas, Report on Service, 45-47.

250 Laird, "The Scientific' Technological Revolution," 404.

251 Walter Laquer, The Dream that Failed: Reflections on the Soviet Union, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 123.

technology was a viable alternative to this dilemma. The intention was that this injection in turn, would place the USSR in an economic situation similar to that of the Americans. In the end the Soviet system did try to match the West on both fronts and failed. The Soviets would not have to choose between military, industrial, and consumer goods.

The American government and industries were willing to incur the costs of the Exhibition as it represented a never before presented opportunity to solicit the Soviet masses. There was enough concern about Soviet technology and economic growth for the Americans to feel the need to remove the Soviet threat through non-militaristic means.

Exhibitions were representative of the aspiration that these two hostile nations could communicate through rational non-violent means. Yale Richmond, author of the classic work of American cultural diplomacy, U.S - Soviet Cultural Exchanges 1958- 1986, has stated that the issue of cultural agreements is not an issue of who wins, with both sides accumulating points towards their objectives. More significantly it is a means of maintaining necessary communication and of increasing understanding of each other. The objective of cultural agreements is, "not necessarily to resolve differences but to understand them better and to make more rational decisions on issues dividing the two countries."[252] Used by both American and Soviet governments to further their objectives, the American exhibition in Moscow in 1955, marked the beginning of cold war cultural diplomacy.

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252 Richmond, 1.

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