

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLD WAR, 1953-1962

- Chairman So – did Khrushchev make the Cold War better, or worse?
- Russian historian Of course he made things better. It was a political earthquake in the Soviet Union in 1956 when he declared Stalin is being a tyrant, and going to de-Stalinise Russia.
- E.European historian Pfaff! ‘De-Stalinsation’ was just window-dressing. Khrushchev TALKED de-Stalinisation, but tell me ONE example of where he did it. There was no curbing of the KGB, no granting of human rights. Control was actually *tightened* in Poland and Czechoslovakia! Hungary was worse – when Nagy [actors’ note: pronounced Noj] tried to reinstate the Catholic religion, introduce democracy, allow freedom of speech – wham ...Khrushchev sent in the Red Army! Do not they say 30,000 Hungarians were killed?
- Russian historian 30,000 is a HUGE overestimate. Nowadays, we think perhaps 4,000 at most, with only 300 executed.
- E.European historian ... 4,000 is still a HUGE number ...
- Russian historian Maybe, but most of Khrushchev’s so-called ‘tyranny’ in Hungary was American propaganda.
The TRUTH is VERY different. Khrushchev *invented* the idea of ‘peaceful co-existence’ – he said: ‘There are only two ways - either peaceful co-existence or the most destructive war in history’
He was right!!! Do you realise how close US came to using nuclear weapons in Korea in 1953? Khrushchev’s ‘Peaceful co-existence’ idea , pulled the world back from the brink.of a nuclear catastrophe
Khrushchev saved world – it is as simple as that.
- American historian I’ve heard as much of this as I can stomach! What Khrushchev meant by ‘peaceful co-existence’ was ‘unhindered competition’ – he wanted to be free to build his armies, buy allies with economic aid – while the US sat back and let him!
So he talked ‘peaceful co-existence’, but in practice he was hellish aggressive. The Russians developed the hydrogen bomb in 1953, and set up the Warsaw Pact in 1955.
- Russian historian ... Khrushchev formed Warsaw Pact because NATO put an army of half-a-million into West Germany ...
- American historian Awww, but you know that it was Russia who had the HUGE conventional forces in eastern Europe – NATO’s army practices at that time consisted of going to the East German border, turning round, and running away as fast as they could – because if it had come to a war, the most they hoped to do was retreat in good order!
You just CANNOT sustain a picture of ‘Khrushchev, the peace-maker’, or even of ‘peace-wanter’. He was ready for war, and daring the US to stop him.
- E.European historian I do not think he *wanted* war. Khrushchev believed – genuinely believed – that Communism was better than Capitalism and that, in a fair race, Communism

would win. So THAT IS why these years were the years of the 'space *race*' and the 'arms *race*'.

Khrushchev just was not intelligent enough to see that this kind of competition created confrontation, not 'co-existence' – and that is why the Cold War was very dangerous during this period.

- Russian historian Khrushchev started summit meetings with the US, to talk through problems. Surely you accept this helped reduce international tension?
- American historian Khrushchev walked out of the Paris summit of 1960 after only *three hours*. And after Vienna in 1961 – when he couldn't bully Kennedy into quitting West Berlin – he went home and built the Berlin Wall. That's hardly 'talking problems through'...
- Russian historian Khrushchev walked out of the Paris Summit because the Americans had been caught, red-handed, using a U2 plane in Soviet air-space to spying on Russia. And he built the Berlin Wall because hundreds of American spies in West Berlin taking open border into East Germany. Khrushchev could only have 'peaceful co-existence' with the west if the west was ready for 'peaceful co-existence' with him. But America at that time was hysterical for war, not peace. Remember that this was the time of the Northwoods Conspiracy, when American militarists were doing things like plotting to shoot down a civilian plane, blaming Cubans and using it as excuse to invade Cuba.
- American historian ... but they didn't ...
- Russian historian ... yes, but it shows how they were thinking. These were the years of McCarthy 'witch-hunts'! And one explanation of UFO sightings, you know, is that invented by US government to keep people in a continual state of terror over invasion.
- Chairman But, even if it *was* the Americans' fault, isn't this saying that – despite Khrushchev's talk about 'peaceful co-existence' – that these were years of great danger?
- Russian During these years, however tense the Cold War, it was NOT in danger of escalating into nuclear war. Whether you like or not, 'peaceful co-existence' DID make the world safer place.
- Chairman Hmm not so sure about that . I need to go back and look at the facts.