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N.S. KHRUSHCHEV: FEATURES OF A SOVIET LEADER RULE

N.S. Khrushchev rule at the helm of the USSR lasted ten years and was marked by many important changes in the life of the country. Probably, Khrushchev most important act as the leader came at the XX Party Congress in 1956. There and for terrible crimes against the Soviet people and for creating “a cult of personality”. Although the worst of Stalinism was over the government of his successors led by Khrushchev and his followers still repressed dissenters who pushed the Communist party leniency too far.

On the domestic front Khrushchev successes alternated with failures. Besides the end to Stalinist terror and liberation of millions of its victims Khrushchev is remembered for launching the first large scale-housing program trying to alleviate the plight of this long neglected sector. Remarkable achievements in the Soviet space program, namely the launching of the first space satellite, constituted another streak of glory for Khrushchev. However, he failed in many endeavors to get the Soviet economy on the path of sustained growth. Most spectacular were the failures in agriculture where he revealed a Communist zeal for total collectivization comparable to that of Stalin. There was a “corn campaign” with the anticipated result of making corn to be Russia’s main crop. Not taken into consideration, however, was the fact that soil and climate in the Soviet Union generally were not good for corn.

On the international scene Khrushchev quickly asserted Soviet dominance over its satellites by crushing the Hungarian uprising in 1956. This made it clear that Moscow would not tolerate any east-european nations braking ranks. Khrushchev also lent support to Cuba after Fidel Castro declared himself a socialist. This move brought Soviet influence into the Western hemisphere. Later, this entailed the world’s worst crisis (“Cuban crisis”) with the dramatic imminence of an all-out nuclear war. Khrushchev also gave large loans to Egyptian leader Gamal Nassar in an effort to establish Soviet influence in the Middle East.

In 1964 Khrushchev was removed from power in a plot by top Soviet leadership tired of his constant reformist endeavors his domestic and international failures and antics on the world stage.