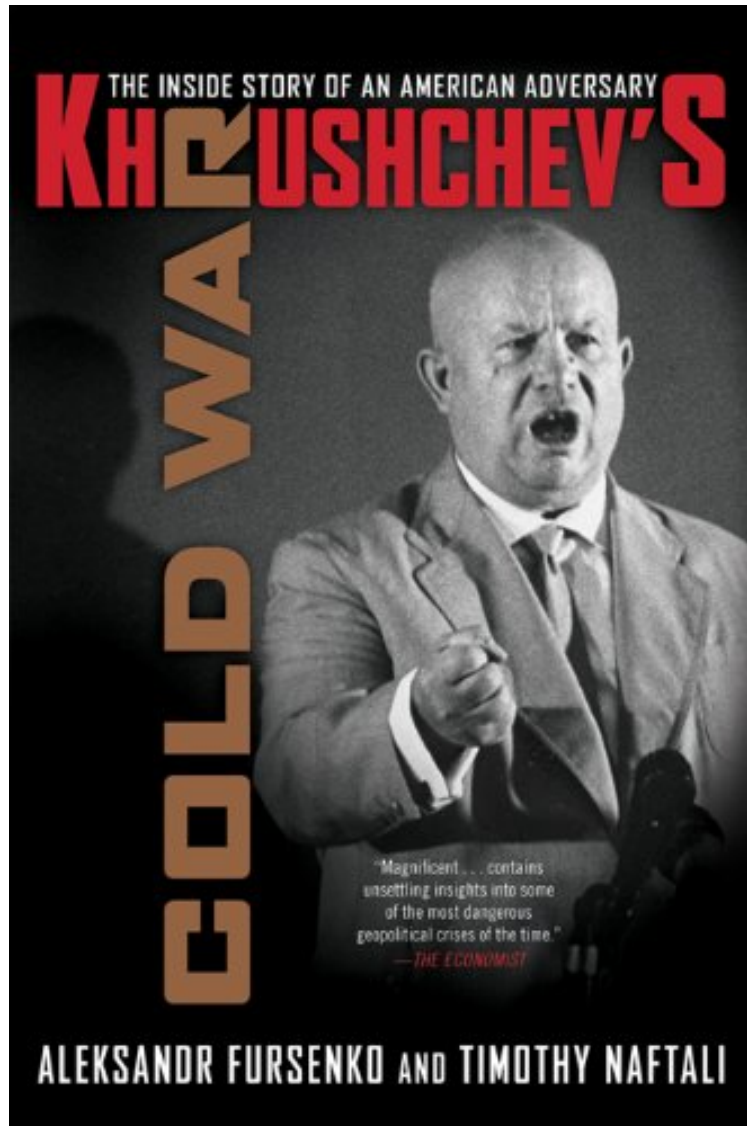


(Free) Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary

Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary

Von Aleksandr Fursenko, Timothy Naftali
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Von Aleksandr Fursenko, Timothy Naftali : Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. "As power has grown more awesome, it has also turned more abstract." (Henry Kissinger)Von expressThe Khrushchev

years include some of the most dramatic moments of the Cold War - Suez (1956-57), Iraq (1958), Berlin (1958-61), and Cuba (1962). Each of them seemed capable of producing World War III. Khrushchev chose to keep his adversaries off-balance, a dangerous strategy at any time, but potentially suicidal in the nuclear age and even more risky for the weaker superpower. In his days Nikita Khrushchev was seen as an enigma to the West but in the last years, more information has come to light. Today, more is known about Khrushchev than about perhaps any other Soviet leader. He himself revealed a great deal, he gave endless speeches (perhaps a weakness of all communists, from Lenin to Castro) and after his ouster from power in 1964 he disclosed even more. He dictated several thousand pages of memoirs and even managed to get them published in the West before his death in 1971. Since 1991, party and state archives have opened to researchers and Aleksandr Fursenko, a leading historian and member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and co-author Timothy Naftali have successfully dug for the real nuggets in all the archival dross. They explain convincingly how Khrushchev, during the Suez crisis in 1957, discovered mere bluff as political tactic; how he recognized that Western estimates far exceeded Soviet capabilities to strike targets in Paris and London. The USSR had the medium-range ballistic missile R5-m, but the deployment could not take place until much later. Khrushchev knew well, that nuclear bluff was risky, yet it worked. On July 14, 1958, a group of army officers, led by Brigadier General Abd al-Qasim had entered the royal palace in Baghdad and executed the royal family. Qasim proclaimed a republic and ended Iraq's alliance with Great Britain and the West. Khrushchev wasn't surprised, au contraire, his single-handed three-year effort to increase Soviet influence in the Middle East had produced a happy result. The putsch was a windfall to Soviet strategic interests and represented a test of the Eisenhower Doctrine (a pledge to assist any Middle Eastern country that was the victim of aggression from "international communism"). Khrushchev resorted to political theatre again and threatened the West with war if they used force against Iraq. The Iraqi Revolution survived and Khrushchev drew enormous self-confidence that from this second triumph. As the authors recognize, "From now on Khrushchev was convinced he could play on the nerves of his adversaries by threatening nuclear strikes he had in fact no intention of undertaking." Khrushchev was a true believer in communism and in his country's mission to overtake and surpass the West. But he was not a believer in war, having seen too much of it firsthand himself. Khrushchev outlined at the end of 1959 an audacious new Soviet military strategy designed to win the Cold War without firing a single shot. He didn't think the Soviet Union could afford to match the United States in defence spending without breaking his promise to improve economic performance and raise the standard of living for the Soviet people. So Khrushchev embarked on deep cuts in Soviet conventional forces, including bombers, surface ships, artillery, and troop strength itself, while eschewing tactical nuclear weapons for fear they would lower the atomic threshold and risk nuclear war. His strategy was to rely mainly on strategic nuclear weapons (ICBM's), or rather, since reliable Soviet intercontinental missiles weren't ready for deployment in substantial numbers, on the appearance of having more missiles than in fact he possessed. One of the reasons for the so-called missile gap that haunted the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. A tactic, also exemplified during the Berlin Crisis and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Regarding the Soviet Navy, his doctrine of restricting future procurement to missile cruisers and submarines, rather than aircraft carriers seems strategically a bit short-sighted. Rather he should have tried to find a middle ground between his concept and Admiral Nikolai Kuznetsov's grand and economically unrealistic dreams of a massive three-ocean navy, similar in size and capability to the U.S. Navy. However, a superpower like the Soviet Union would have been better suited to defend her interests by adding three carriers and their battle groups, this wouldn't have bankrupted the state (in fact, the Soviet Union never built a single carrier). There is a reason why every U.S. president, when faced with crisis, first cries, "Where are the carriers?" The authors chronicle Khrushchev's conduct of Soviet foreign and military policy in great detail and cover events like the launch of Sputnik "Khrushchev's Comet" and draw astute portraits of American presidents as well as leaders in the developing world who often confounded Moscow and Washington: Fidel Castro, Patrice Lumumba, Gamal Abdel Nasser, or Mao Zedong.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Khrushchev - A Most Amazing Mixture of Mercuriality and Idiosyncrasy Brought Vividly to Life Von Dr. Gerhard Volz If - and that is a big if (the book is fully 600 pages long - it helps to fall ill when you read it - I did!) - you have the time and want to invest it for obtaining a first class overview over the great power play during the decade between 1955 and 1965 - the Khrushchev era - this definitely is the book to read! Its authors not only provide a refreshingly new perspective to the (more or less well-) known events of, i.a., the first Israeli-Egyptian war, the (Soviet) occupation of Hungary and the Cuban missile crisis, they fully succeed in transforming this period of history into a most plausible and very exciting "story", in fact, into something of a "thriller" (in the best sense of the word). It is the story of a great power desperate to come up to its claim to possess or at least to be accorded equal status with the other - even greater - super-power, the United States or, more generally, the "West". In order to achieve that one goal, almost anything would do, even extreme brinkmanship that several times brought the world close to thermonuclear war. Khrushchev is shown as a man to have carried within himself the dominating characteristics of the Soviet Union itself, viz., an enormous inferiority complex, trying to combine it with catching any opportunity that would present itself to bring pressure to bear on the other side, even using or better: threatening the use of force, wherever it seemed this might bring political advantage. Fortunately for the world, this mercurial leader who disposed of the means to blow up the world (or at least: great parts of it) was restrained enough (be it on his own reason, be it by

his more risk-averse colleagues within the Presidium) not to actually let the world go "over the brink" but to withdraw each time at the last moment. It is the humiliation of these retreats as well as the sense of responsibility displayed by him in making them which, if anything, ultimately cost him his job and earns him the status of a statesman (rather than merely that of a cunning politician). Against this background, only two - very minor - criticisms: First, there is a really unwarranted "blank space" in the book as regards the European Economic Community (today's "European Union") whose very creation was decisively triggered by some of the events described in it (Suez; Hungary), by making the European states mercilessly feel their own palsy vis--vis the super-powers. It is ironic - and should clearly have been mentioned in the book - to see how the very institution for whose creation Khrushchev bore no minor responsibility - would become one of the cornerstones of the West's economic superiority and thus a decisive factor for the eventual downfall of the Soviet Empire. Second, even though this would admittedly go slightly beyond the clear scope of the book (Khrushchev's Cold War, restricting its topic to his role as politician), it might have been interesting for the reader to be permitted at least a brief peep behind the veil of this astounding politician's official role into his private life, if only to underpin/corroborate some of the conclusions regarding this most Mercurial character! This leaves only one thing to be hoped for: at least I, for my part, am dying to read PART II: "The Brezhnev Years", by the same authors, should it ever come out!

Kurzbeschreibung Contains unsettling insights into some of the most dangerous geopolitical crises of the time. The Economist This acclaimed study from the authors of One Hell of a Gamble brings to life head-to-head confrontations between the Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev and Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. Drawing on their unrivaled access to Politburo and KGB materials, Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali combine new insights into the Cuban missile crisis as well as startling narratives of the contests for Suez, Iraq, Berlin, and Southeast Asia, with vivid portraits of leaders who challenged Moscow and Washington. Khrushchev's Cold War provides a gripping history of the crisis years of the Cold War. Pressestimmen "Magisterial... a fascinating tour of foreign policy." Moscow Times "Deeply researched... indispensable for anyone hoping to understand the Cold War's most dangerous phase, and how the world managed to survive it." The New York Times Book "[Contains] unsettling insights into some of the most dangerous geopolitical crises of the time." The Economist "...enthraling... I find this book instructive and very dispiriting." Jonathan Mirsky, The Spectator "Kurzbeschreibung Contains unsettling insights into some of the most dangerous geopolitical crises of the time. The Economist This acclaimed study from the authors of One Hell of a Gamble brings to life head-to-head confrontations between the Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev and Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy. Drawing on their unrivaled access to Politburo and KGB materials, Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali combine new insights into the Cuban missile crisis as well as startling narratives of the contests for Suez, Iraq, Berlin, and Southeast Asia, with vivid portraits of leaders who challenged Moscow and Washington. Khrushchev's Cold War provides a gripping history of the crisis years of the Cold War.