

October 6, Friday. Before we reached Moscow, Regina Fischer had written to Mrs. Khrushchev asking for an interview. To our surprise and delight this had been arranged. At noon Bea, Erika, Franziska, Gerard, Jules, Lyn and Millie were taken to the reception at the House of Friendship. Mrs Khrushchev shook hands with each and chatted warmly. Later they took seats around a long table and formal introductions were made.

Lyn Marsh gave a talk about the March and its program. Mrs Khrushchev replied vaguely. Bea asked whether she was sympathetic to unilateral disarmament. She said she preferred universal, general disarmament as proposed by the Government. Gerard wrote:

...When my turn came I asked Mrs Khrushchev if she would convey to her husband our deep concern that the USSR had tested 17 bombs within the last month and that this would affect children in every part of the world. Mrs Khrushchev said she had just been reading an article by Dr Linus Pauling and she had been disturbed by the information about the effects of the bomb tests and it certainly was a problem. She preceded this with an assurance that she most certainly would tell her husband. When Franziska again brought up the subject of the tests...Mrs Khrushchev replied that she did not have the information on how many tests there had been and that we were better informed than she.

[Mrs Khrushchev, like all Russians we talked to everywhere, knew her government was testing nuclear weapons. American newspapers and magazines have reported erroneously that the Russian people were kept in ignorance of the testing. There is no excuse for these false reports. The American news media should have known the truth. Pravda, before the Russian test series began, devoted almost an entire issue to announcing the tests and justifying the Government's policy on them. However, the Russian people, like Mrs Khrushchev, were not fully informed about the number and size of the explosions. --B. L.]

...Much of the time at the reception was taken up by a woman official of the PC who explained the Soviet Union's United Nations peace proposals and emphasized that they were for universal disarmament by agreement.

The meeting proved a good opportunity to explain unilateralism to Mrs Khrushchev. That she had a clearer picture of it as a result of our 50 minutes with her can be shown by her notice of my statement that we advocate to each government that they throw away their bombs and armies regardless of what...others do. She immediately asked for a clarification of that "regardless" and the interpreter translated my explanation that we believed each nation should do right rather than copy the wrong of others.

Bea asked her if the Russian Government really wanted peace and if there was a civil defense program in Russia. Mrs Khrushchev replied that both the people and Government wanted and demanded peace and that to her knowledge there was no civil defense. (It is relevant to add here that in our 23 days' walking in Russian cities large and small, including Moscow, we saw not the slightest vestige of a civil defense program; not a poster, booklet, leaflet, shelter, shelter sign or evacuation highway marker.) Tea was served. Mrs Khrushchev autographed books about Moscow. She impressed the marchers as being a charming, gracious and motherly woman. The meeting lasted an hour and a half.



*Mrs. Kruschchev, a Peace Committee interpreter, Bea Herrick, Yvette Naal and Gerard Daechsel at the House of Friendship, Moscow. UPI photo*



*With Michail Gyeorgadze, Secretary of the Praesidium, in his Kremlin office. Left to right: Regina Fischer, Patrick Proctor, Barton Stone, Yvette Naal, Bradford Lyttle, Mr. Gyeorgadze, Cyril Pustan, Millie Gilbertsen.*