

Chester and Nikita



Nikita Krushchev cemented his place in history as First Secretary of the Communist Party and Soviet Premier during the 1950s and 1960s, but according to his memoir, he'd much rather be remembered for his ventriloquism skills. At nearly every Politburo meeting, he'd show up with Chester, the Russian Bear. No matter his performances were embarrassingly bad – Krushchev never learned how to keep his lips from moving – his colleagues always gave him a standing ovation. After all, Krushchev and Stalin had been pals, and political purges and persecutions were an everyday occurrence in the Soviet Union during the Cold War days. Scores of erstwhile “Friends of Nikita” who failed to laugh at Chester’s antics quickly found themselves reclassified as “enemies of the people.” And being charged with Article 58 of the RSFSR Penal Code was no laughing matter. So if you knew what was good for you, when Chester chortled, you did, too.