



Sharp questions of American reporters needed Premier Khrushchev when he spoke at Press Club during his U. S. tour.

Most famous photograph taken at Press Club showed Lauren Bacall inspiring a well-known amateur pianist to strike up "Missouri Waltz."



Khrushchev exploded, Truman was flustered—just two examples of VIPs who found the seat of honor a hot one at the National Press Club

Nixon was willing, but Truman refused, telling the club members he'd be durned if he'd rub shoulders with "that man," even on a piano bench.

British Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery's imperious ways were recalled in his presence by an introduction which related a supposed wartime conversation between a British chief of staff and King George VI. Club president Ted Koop quoted the chief of staff as saying: "I am rather afraid Monty is after my job," to which the King replied: "I am delighted to hear it. I was afraid he was after mine."

PRESS CLUB spoofing is bipartisan in nature. In 1956, club president Frank Holeman tagged Ike's Secretary of Defense, Charles E. Wilson, as "one of the few men who have earned more money in one year than Betty Grable," adding: "He didn't do it with his legs, either, although he is pretty agile. His friends say that it's over a year now since he put his foot in his mouth."

The same year, Holeman described Averell Harriman, then New York's millionaire governor of New York: "It may be hard to think of our speaker as a self-made man, but he is. He just started at a different place. Very few men with his beginning ever got to where he is today. It was a real downhill struggle."

With Khrushchev, President Lawrence took no more liberties in his introduction than to suggest the club was happy to take him out of the kitchen and into the ball-

room, a reference to the famous Nixon-Khrushchev debate at the U. S. model-home exhibit in Moscow.

Lawrence dealt much less gently a few months earlier with Everett McKinley Dirksen, Senate minority leader, who opposed Ike's nomination in 1952. Noting that Dirksen's father had been a great fan of President William McKinley, Lawrence remarked with accurate candor: "As a matter of fact, our speaker didn't get McKinley as his middle name until 11 months after he was born, which was about as belated as his conversion to Eisenhower Republicanism."

If anyone carries any grudges about the club, he would do well to consider how Presidents of the United States are treated. The club once levied a \$5 penalty on Franklin D. Roosevelt for late payment of dues. When Dwight D. Eisenhower received his membership card last year, he observed somewhat wistfully:

"I understand—possibly erroneously, but I hope it is true—that members of the press deal gently with their members. So I hope possession of this card gives me a certain immunity that, up to the moment, has not been mine." When the Press Club members subsequently grilled him for an even longer period than Khrushchev and with questions of similar tough caliber, it became perfectly obvious that the President of the United States had no such immunity.

It is even rumored that one problem Ike and Khrushchev failed to settle was: "Who fared worse at the National Press Club?"



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