

SOVIET 'CONTEST' AWAITING NIXON

U. S. Fair and the Kremlin Compete for Sympathies of Moscow Populace

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MOSCOW, July 22—Vice President Richard M. Nixon's jet ride to Moscow will thrust him into the midst of a subtle but vigorous East-West contest here for the attention and sympathies of the Soviet people.

As soon as Mr. Nixon steps from his plane at Moscow's Vnukovo Airport tomorrow afternoon, he will find himself in charge of the American half of this propaganda tussle.

The Vice President will be the highest ranking United States official to visit the Soviet Union since President Franklin D. Roosevelt attended the Yalta conference with Stalin and Prime Minister Churchill early in 1945.

And not since those days of wartime alliance has the United States had the kind of opportunity to address the Soviet people that it will have in the coming days.

Nixon to Open Exhibit

Mr. Nixon is to open the American National Exhibition in Sokolniki Park. The exhibition, whose general manager is Harold C. McClellan, is a large and impressive collection of facts, figures, pictures and goods intended to depict life in the United States.

The indications tonight were that Mr. Nixon would also have several opportunities to discuss larger issues of East-West contention with Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev.

The competition being waged in Moscow revolves essentially around contention by both the United States and the Soviet Union that each offers its people and the rest of the world a better life and more freedom.

In recent days the average Muscovite has been treated to a series of articles in the Soviet press portraying the life of the average American as one of economic hardship.

For the most part these articles have culled supporting testimony from the speeches and debates of Americans themselves. Speeches by United States Senators and labor leaders form the core of a new pamphlet entitled "Americans About America," which has been on sale within a few feet of entrances to the American Exhibition.

Last week-end Soviet papers produced the testimony of an American who brought his family to settle in the Soviet Union because he could not make a go of it in the United States. Perhaps the most sweeping assault came this morning in a long Pravda article signed "Observer."

The Communist party newspaper objected to a resolution of Congress and proclamation by President Eisenhower calling for observance of "Captive Nations Week." Pravda said this "provocative" campaign was designed to fan ill will at a time of friendly exchanges of exhibits and officials.

["Captive Nations Week" is designed to remind Americans of Soviet domination of countries in Eastern Europe.]

Millions Termed Oppressed

Pravda declared that "the much vaunted bourgeois democracy has always been a paradise for the capitalists and slavery for the working people. The people of the Communist countries are "the freest people on earth," Pravda contended, and it told Congress: "Elephants will roost in trees before your delirious ravings come true."

Caught up in discussions here of which system and nation promise a better life are thousands of American tourists. In addition several hundred Americans have come to speed the exhibition on its way.

One highly placed Russian who saw the show this week referred to it contemptuously as nothing but a "Macy's basement." While there is much in the show about American culture, science and technology, he was right in assessing the exhibit's major premise. It is primarily a colorful and rich acclaim of United States abundance in consumer goods.

The Russians, too, seem intent on proving to their people this summer that the Soviet consumer is not far behind. They have erected modern restaurants around the American exhibit and have filled Sokolniki Park with automatic soft drink dispensers.

And this evening they announced the opening of the "first traditional Moscow fair." Muscovites were invited to come and buy goods from all over the Soviet Union, including washing machines, television sets, canned goods, stockings, blouses and kerchiefs of artificial fibers, knitwear and other goods, with the luxury of home delivery.

This bazaar is certain to prove a worthy counter-attraction to the American exhibit, where visitors will be able to come away with only a cup of Pepsi-Cola.

Some of Mr. Nixon's program remains to be settled. On Friday, the morning after his arrival, Mr. Nixon will make protocol calls on Marshal Kliment Y. Voroshilov, titular chief of state, and on Premier Khrushchev.

The televised ribbon-snipping at the exhibit and the preview tour of the pavillions are scheduled for Friday evening. The exhibit opens to the public Saturday.

The Vice President will leave Moscow for other Soviet cities Monday followed by about 100 United States correspondents. He will return to the capital July 31 and depart for home Aug. 2.