new initiatives.

Nixon's adventures helped him enhance his public image and reinforce his authority within the Administration. Only a proposed congressional investigation of the Caracas events detracted from the trip. Eisenhower advisors feared an inquest might prove embarrassing, especially to Nixon. On May 16, Dulles called Nixon about the partisan investigation. He recommended those involved "get our position coordinated here." Nixon said he would not attend the committee hearings, but would talk with the people giving testimony. They "agreed [Wayne] Morse is out to discredit all as much as he can." At that moment, Nixon was careful not to take too much credit for the trip and the planning of it. He noted threats had accompanied all his foreign trips, but none had ever been realized. Caracas was simply a matter of overestimating the ability of the Venezuelan government to provide adequate protection. He claimed that despite reports of possible violence in Lima and Caracas, "the govt still insisted the invitation was open and urged him to go."18

Nixon ignored his own role in inviting trouble. He had refused to cancel several engagements, insisting instead that the regimes admit it was too dangerous for him to attend. He did not want to be criticized for weakness. Of course, those governments could not rescind any invitations without embarrassment at their inability to provide adequate security. So, Nixon courted peril through his unwillingness to bare the onus of retreating. His claim that the Peruvian and Venezuelan governments urged him to venture onto unsafe campuses was a fabrication. To the relief of the whole Administration, the inquest did not result in any lasting harm.

The Vice President took advantage of the positive image he inadvertently had gained.
Once the threat of an investigation passed, he wanted credit for the entire trip. In a memorandum he noted, "One thing the State Department did after my Asian trip -- they put out some canard that everything I said was prepared by State and read by me. This is not true -- also get out the word that virtually anything that we did on this trip that was worth anything we thought of ourselves." Nixon would not get much argument from Rubottom, who recalled the Vice President's order that all State Department suggestions be routed through his close advisors. Nixon avoided working closely with the State Department experts when possible, and he disregarded State advice when it inhibited his aims. He wanted both a measure of independence from Dulles, and a public image reflecting his presidential caliber.

In September, Nixon requested updated background material from his May excursion to use in conjunction with an upcoming Latin American Ministers' visit. He wanted the report to include recommendations for a Latin American agency, stabilizing programs for commodities and a more focused economic effort. His primary motivation for the revised information was to counteract criticism that no public report was made, and to emphasize his enduring attention to the subject. "My main interest is in getting action, and I am continuing to push through on these things." Nixon was laying the ground work for his presidential bid in 1960. He was a man who got things done. It was imperative that the public knew it.

While Nixon sought benefits from his dramatic experiences in Latin America, he also unceasingly demonstrated his global foreign relations expertise. His advice typically addressed whatever he saw as the latest Russian incursion. In an August NSC meeting, he counseled "it might be difficult to reduce US assistance programs in South Asia at a time when Communist activities there are increasing." Specifically, "It would be unwise to
consider reducing assistance to Pakistan without remembering what the Soviets are doing."

Pakistan was "the one solid pro-U.S. country" in that part of the world. Here Nixon revealed his affinity for Pakistan long before the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War. He also implicitly drew on his Asian experiences to give the recommendation authority.

Nixon made one additional trip abroad in 1958. Just after returning from Venezuela, Dulles had asked the Vice President to visit Great Britain in November. The trip, purely ceremonial, was to dedicate the American Memorial Chapel at St. Paul's Cathedral. Upon arrival, Nixon made a statement at the Pilgrims Society. After listening to speeches given by one of the royal Dukes and the Prime Minister, he spoke in Guildhall. He even held a televised press conference. The Vice President received a warm welcome and high praise from the British during his four day tour. To be sure, it was not a trip he enjoyed. There was no opportunity to display his foreign affairs proficiency. It was a goodwill trip and Nixon could not manipulate it to appear as anything more substantial.

By December, the US-Soviet wrangling over Berlin again came to the forefront. Khrushchev sent a letter to Eisenhower proposing that West Berlin be made a demilitarized free city, with its own government. The Russian leader threatened that if the four powers did not withdraw from West Berlin in six months, his nation would accede its control of East Berlin to the German Democratic Republic. When officials gathered to discuss this new Berlin crisis, Nixon presented himself as a seasoned Communist expert. He suggested that Khrushchev wanted more than a free West Berlin. The U.S.S.R. "stirred up trouble as a device to lure us into a conference."21 None of the other participants at the meeting responded to the Vice President's remark. They favored alternate explanations for
Khrushchev's statement. But Nixon's mentor, and primary ally, was not in the room. Had the Secretary attended the meeting, he probably would have agreed with Nixon's assessment. The concept of the Soviet Union willing to talk made a good impression on the rest of the world. By that time, however, cancer was depleting Dulles' strength so he did not attend the meeting.

One of the final assignments Dulles gave to Nixon came on January 15, 1959. Dulles asked the Vice President to join him at a dinner given for Anastas Mikoyan, Nikita Khrushchev's deputy. Nixon was reluctant. But, "after discussion, the Vice President changed his mind and decided to attend the Sec's dinner for Mikoyan as the Sec said he felt he could contribute to the evening. N said he would see the Sec before the dinner to see if there is anything he wants him to needle Mikoyan about." Nixon's initial unwillingness could have been related to Mikoyan's lack of a diplomatic agenda. He was in the United States to research and learn, not to negotiate. Stephen Ambrose was probably correct in concluding that Nixon accepted the invitation after he decided the event had a propaganda aspect to it. International affairs was a passion with Nixon, but public relations also appealed to him. And, propaganda against Communists did make a diplomatic statement. In addition to publicity, the meeting may have served Nixon well that summer, when he journeyed to Russia and met Mikoyan in the Kremlin. For his part, Dulles, fighting cancer, might have welcomed Nixon's support.

As the Berlin Crisis heated up, John Foster Dulles lost ground. He was in and out of the hospital starting in November 1958. In February, Dulles requested a leave of absence for another cancer operation, and time to recuperate after the surgery. Eisenhower immediately
granted the furlough. Doctors tried radiation therapy. Meanwhile, Nixon continued his attempts to be heard. But, Eisenhower had taken the matter into his own hands and was not interested in Nixon's assessment. When the Vice President did get listened to about Berlin, it was as a liaison between the Executive and top Congressmen, not as an advisor presenting his own ideas. In March, Nixon briefed Representatives and Senators on the situation. That was as far as Eisenhower believed his subordinate's role should go.

About the only influence Nixon had in determining Berlin policy ironically came after Christian Herter replaced Dulles as Secretary of State. Nixon suggested that Herter make his first speech on the Berlin Crisis. Until that time, only Eisenhower's March 16 radio/TV broadcast, discussing the Berlin situation, had received national attention. Some Congressmen had publicly broached the subject, but they did not spread the Administration's message far. But, Secretary Herter's first speech could do just that. Ike approved the plan. Nixon's idea related more to domestic reaction, than foreign relations. The President would listen to Nixon's political assessments. Without question, to Nixon's mind, it was crucial to maintain national support for the Administration. Unity behind Republican policies could translate into votes for Nixon in 1960.

Just before the end of Dulles' life, Nixon moved to shift his alliances. For nearly eight years, he had relied on Dulles as a patron. It was the Secretary who allowed him a role in international affairs. When Nixon approached Eisenhower with unsolicited foreign policy ideas, he generally received an indifferent response. But, with the passing of Dulles from power, Nixon needed to appeal more to the President. His relations with Chris Herter, although dating from 1947, were not nearly as close as they had been with Dulles. Nixon and
Herter exchanged almost no correspondence once the latter was named Secretary of State.²⁴ Besides, when Dulles could no longer function as primary international advisor, Eisenhower tightened his own grip on American foreign relations. He neglected to take Nixon into his confidence.

Nixon reinvigorated his attempts to win Eisenhower's confidence in May 1959. At the NSC meeting on the twenty-first, Nixon heartily agreed with Ike's proposal to unilaterally invite 10,000 Russian students annually to American universities. If the Soviets accepted, the US got to expose Soviet youth to the advantages of capitalism. If the offer was refused, America received world accolades for making the effort. Nixon also stated, that he had supported the idea two years before, when Ike first proposed it.

Such a plan appealed to Nixon's preference for bold policy initiatives. He claimed "the President's statement caused him to think that the time might well be at hand to re-examine the basic principles on which our policy with respect to East-West exchanges had been developed." He proposed an end to quid pro quo exchanges, in favor of US initiatives like the one Ike advocated. This idea contradicted Dulles' basic principles, but coincided with Eisenhower's perspective.²⁵ There was no surprise when Ike agreed with his second-in-command's analysis. Nixon, however, may have had a sense of deja vu, since he had resurrected his pre-inaugural role, created in the Commodore Hotel, as yes-man.

John Foster Dulles would not have leapt at the President's one-sided plan. He had opposed Open Skies, even though that initiative also benefited America regardless of the Soviet response. The Secretary wanted to be able to predict with a degree of certainty, the results of any diplomatic move. Despite apparent clarity, Dulles did not rush into anything
without first analyzing all the ramifications. He would have advised greater caution, or at minimum, time to examine the proposition in detail. Seeking to win Eisenhower's confidence, Nixon had no such compunctions.

Since an alliance with Ike could not be relied upon, Nixon looked again to his travel as a means to expand his horizons. His 1958 tour of Latin America, because of its dangers, had reinforced his public image as the beacon of Democracy, indomitable in the face of communism. It was a perception the Vice President had worked hard to develop through all his trips. But, to outshine his life threatening expedition in Venezuela would be difficult. The secret to success, however, is often timing. In 1959, Nixon was in the right place, at the right time. His final trip abroad presented him with a more spectacular opportunity than he had inadvertently found in Caracas.

The Vice President's grand finale was a trip to Russia and Poland in July and August 1959. His good fortune came out of circumstance, not persistence. Khrushchev was searching for an chance to visit the United States. The Russian Premier used the opening of an American exhibition in Moscow, as an excuse to invite Nixon to Russia. By having the Vice President as a guest in his country, he set himself up for a reciprocal offer to see America. If all went well, he would then extend an invitation to Eisenhower. The highly publicized trip offered Nixon an opportunity he had hoped for throughout his vice presidential career: to confront the Communists on their home territory. Previously, his requests were rejected by Secretary Dulles. Finally, on his death bed, Dulles favored it. The Secretary had several reasons to support the mission.

Although Khrushchev extended an invitation to Nixon for self-serving purposes, the
gesture still constituted a friendly move toward the United States. It behooved the
Administration to accept. Agreeing to the visit avoided criticism that Washington was not
making an effort for peace. It also provided the State Department with Nixon's valued - at
least by Dulles - assessment of Russia.

The Secretary of State generally took a dim view of 'personal diplomacy' with
Communists, believing "more often than not these meetings were used by Communists, not to
settle differences, but to exploit them and to gain propaganda advantage." One factor behind
his opposition to meeting with the Soviets could have been his goal of limiting Soviet
influence on the free world. Stephen Ambrose contended that, "Dulles could see no reason to
reach out to the Russians. . . ." Meetings with the West added legitimacy to the Communists,
who already had been accepted into the international community. Dulles wanted to deprive
Russia of its global respectability, in order to force peaceful change from within. However
by 1959, he trusted Nixon not be manipulated, and supported the trip to Moscow. He also
must have recognized the domestic public relations opportunity it presented to Nixon, just
before the 1960 presidential campaign began.

Nixon claimed to have vigorously prepared for the trip to Russia. He "spent every
spare moment studying reports and recommendations from the State Department, the Central
Intelligence Agency, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the White House staff." Yet, the
information preserved in his files did not reflect the extensive resources Nixon implied. His
trip file for the Soviet Union contained only basic information from public sources. The State
Department provided Nixon with American Automobile Association travel guides of the
U.S.S.R., implying US analysts had few of their own sources. Additional information came
from published booklets about Russia. There existed a tremendous disparity between the briefing materials available for other regions Nixon had traveled to and those provided about Moscow, illustrating just how little interaction occurred between the US and the U.S.S.R. during the 1950s. Undoubtedly, Nixon received more information than the file contained - especially in the form of talks with Dulles - but how much more would be impossible to judge. It appeared that he received fewer research materials from the Administration on this trip, than he had received on his previous vice presidential goodwill journeys.

Nixon relished the relative freedom of action that resulted from State's inability to brief him. A few days before departure, he revealed that he would observe his standard audacious style in Russia. Nixon used a conversation with journalist Paul Nevins to emphasize his desire to meet the people of Russia, not just the leaders. Nevins recommended that Nixon "from time to time try to duck us [the media] and spend some time with the people." The Vice President concurred. He instructed his staff to remember "I cannot always have all of the press with me. There will be times when we will slip out without anyone from the press at all." That would give Nixon an opportunity to talk directly with the people, and the pleasure of deceiving the media. In addition, one can surmise, Nixon expected somehow the story would end up in the newspapers. There was no public relations advantage to sneaking out to speak with the people, and not having it reported to American constituents. He had never done that before, he would not start in the Soviet Union.

Despite the invitation, American-Russian relations remained tense in 1959. Khrushchev renewed threats on West Berlin immediately before Nixon's departure, making the Western world uncomfortable. The same week Nixon left on his trip, Eisenhower
responded to the annual congressional passage of a "Captive Nations" resolution by encouraging Americans to pray for an end to totalitarian rule over Eastern Europe. In essence, the declaration called for an end to all Communist regimes. Moscow's leadership would berate Nixon unmercifully for the timing of this resolution. Other tensions were unspoken. The Central Intelligence Agency continued to launch U-2 flights over the Soviet Union, despite Russian protests. Also, the space and arms races were quietly accelerating. In this atmosphere, Nixon finally made his way behind the Iron Curtain.

Even without State Department directives, the Vice President had to contend with Eisenhower's unwillingness to allow him an official policy making role. Although the Vice President had proven himself, Ike would not budge. Before Nixon left the United States, Eisenhower informed the presidential staff "the Vice-President is not part of the negotiating mechanism of government." Nixon was fully aware of Eisenhower's position. With Milton Eisenhower chaperoning the trip, he did not attempt to negotiate - at least not when Ike's brother was watching him.

True to his word, one of Nixon's initial maneuvers in Russia was to slip away from the press. The morning after his arrival, he left the American Embassy with Secret Service agent Jack Sherwood, who had accompanied him to Latin America as well. Nixon and Sherwood made their way to the Danilovsky market, giving the Vice President his chance to meet with the local people. Some in the crowd asked if Nixon had extra tickets to the exhibit he was scheduled to open. Nixon misunderstood the question and offered 100 rubles to pay for 100 tickets. There were no more tickets available.

Nixon guessed he would be under Soviet surveillance and probably expected some
mention of his generosity in the Russian newspaper. The story was not what he anticipated.

To Nixon's consternation, the following day Pravda carried a photo of him giving money to a Moscovite and accused the Vice President of offering a bribe. That the Soviets obtained the photo, in addition to the story, illustrated how closely they were watching his movements. The Vice President learned from the incident. After it, he did not attempt anything more than conversation with the common people. No gifts. Despite Russian efforts to provoke him, Nixon did not again provide the Communists an opportunity to twist his actions or words in order to embarrass him and the United States. At the same time, he faced down hecklers planted in the crowds, who asked questions about America's racial inequalities and aggressive military stance.

The Vice President spent almost two weeks talking with Soviet leaders and touring parts of Russia. Khrushchev put on a good show. Nixon and the Premier matched wits repeatedly. At the American Exhibition, they debated the respective merits of Democracy and Communism. First, they were filmed on camera in the section promoting American television technology. Nixon and Khrushchev defended the accomplishments of their particular countries. They moved on to a life-sized model American kitchen. There the debate continued, with loud exchanges and finger pointing. Although the dialogue almost degenerated into a shouting match, Khrushchev seemed to enjoy it. And, Nixon had the satisfaction of knowing he had stood up to the most powerful Communist in the world.

Stephen Ambrose claimed that Nixon learned a new lesson from his exchanges with Khrushchev. On his return to the states, he would warn Eisenhower not to "expect to change Khrushchev's mind by arguing with him about the merits of the two competing systems."
According to Ambrose, "it was a lesson he learned so well that he never again, in all his dealings with Communist leaders, made the mistake of trying to do so."

Of course, this was a lesson Nixon had actually absorbed over a decade before, dealing with Giuseppe De Vittorio. Like Khrushchev, the Italian refused to concede his point.

Nixon never believed he would change Khrushchev's mind by engaging him in debate. He primarily hoped to win over those watching, and display his stalwart defense of the American-way. Khrushchev was not about to give into Nixon's arguments. The best outcome of the dispute either one could expect was a stalemate. When they managed it, each man claimed victory.

Eisenhower had not authorized the Vice President to negotiate with the Soviet representatives, but when Nixon found the opportunity, he tried anyway. In his private meetings with Russian leaders, he made every attempt to fill the role of plenipotentiary statesman. Nixon emphasized the need for a thawing in relations. Khrushchev had previously called for diminished tensions also. An early version of Détente, he probably reasoned that neither country benefitted from their ongoing rivalry. The diplomatic effort, however, was as self-serving as it was altruistic. A tangible improvement in US-U.S.S.R. affairs would enhance Nixon's reputation among American voters in 1960.

On July 25, Nixon had two meetings in the Kremlin. His first meeting was with Khrushchev's deputy, Anastas Mikoyan. Mikoyan complained that the United States waged an economic war against the Soviet Union, and deprived Russia of needed goods. Mikoyan probably made a valid charge, since the US discouraged its allies from trade with non-democratic regimes. Nixon replied that trade could only increase after political relations
improved. "He [Nixon] could not agree that trade agreements must precede political settlements." The talks with Mikoyan ended at 10:15am. Soon thereafter, Nixon found himself face-to-face with the Deputy Premier, Frol Kozlov.

The Vice President explained to Kozlov that diplomatic breakthroughs could only be made by cutting through the bureaucratic red tape inherent in the large governments of America and Russia. Nixon remarked those impediments "should be cut where important and far reaching decisions are to be made. The purpose of high level diplomacy is precisely to cut red tape." Nixon, the constitutional second-in-command of the United States, was talking to the number two man in Russia. They were thus engaged in the highest level talks going on between their nations. The Vice President's statement implied he could be a part of the tape removal process - expressly ignoring Ike's orders. Nixon did not assume that Kozlov had the authority to reach any agreements, but everything said to Kozlov, Khrushchev was certain to hear also.

Nixon had met with Khrushchev on July 22. That first exchange exposed Nixon to the Russian leader's bluster, as Khrushchev railed against the "Captive Nations" resolution. In subsequent talks, however, Nixon attempted to make headway. Foster Dulles had insisted that the U.S.S.R. could not expect to intervene in the non-Communist world without allowing the free world do the same in Russia's satellite countries. The Secretary had explained that Khrushchev "should be told that until he puts a stop to such activities, his call for reducing of tensions and for peaceful co-existence will have a completely false and hollow ring." Nixon might have listened to this strategy in May, but Dulles was two months in the ground by the time Nixon was in Eastern Europe. And, it was perfectly clear from his public discussions
with Khrushchev that this line of reasoning would be rejected.

Nixon's tactic actually seemed to be more conciliatory. He informed Khrushchev that respect for the military power of each country could replace the unceasing race for military and economic superiority. The debate about which nation was stronger only created tensions and fear. Nixon's perspective actually was more enlightened, and realistic, than what Dulles suggested. He understood Khrushchev would not back down unilaterally, but hoped the Soviets would mirror US steps away from confrontation.

When given the unprecedented opportunity to address the Russian people via a televised speech, Nixon again disregarded advice he had received from his mentor in May. Dulles suggested the main objective should be to put "the responsibility for peace upon Khrushchev's shoulders." In 1955, Nixon had decried the Premier's efforts to place the onus of peace on America, so it was conceivable he would reciprocate, as Dulles recommended. Instead, Nixon responded to complaints raised by hecklers, denied Pravda's bribe story and gently explained that the West would not allow Communism to overrun the world. Nixon knew the speech was not as hard-line as conservatives back home wanted. But, hoping his words might be believed by a few of the Russians, Nixon stopped short of a harsh condemnation of the Soviet system.

Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson wholly praised the Vice President's performance. He claimed Nixon's foreign relations experience had served him extremely well on the trip. The Vice President succeeded in "getting our story across and at same time not upsetting bigger game we are playing by provocative statements." Thompson remarked that Nixon's radio/TV address may have sounded soft to US citizens, but it was "extremely effective with
Soviet audience." In fact, the Russian people probably were not affected by Nixon's words. Most importantly, he had presented the United States positively and the Soviets less so, and from Moscow no less. Concurrently, he checked his vitriolic anti-Communism throughout the entire speech. Both details were undeniable accomplishments.

After twelve days in Russia, the American group flew to Poland. In terms of media attention, the Polish segment of the trip surpassed the Russian. Nixon received a much warmer welcome from the citizens of Warsaw than the Moscovites. Personally, however, the Vice President must have been dissatisfied with his time there. Unlike Moscow, he did not manage any private meetings with the Polish officials. Instead, Milton Eisenhower attended his conference with President Władysław Gomułka. With Ike's brother in the same room, Nixon could only inform Gomułka that he was a messenger, not a negotiator. He repeatedly explained to Gomułka "that under his constitutional position as Vice President of the United States he does not originate foreign policy nor does he engage in negotiations. He would report fully to the President and to the Secretary of State the views expressed by Mr. Gomułka of this subject." Obviously, this was not the role Nixon had so often attempted to make for himself. Constitutionally acceptable or not, Nixon aspired to be a statesman. In Moscow, he had removed this yoke. In Warsaw, Milton reasserted that control.

On the whole, both parts of the trip were triumphant for the Vice President. It was an historic visit because of the precedent it set, and the publicity Nixon gained. Here was another great media success for the Vice President. In September, however, Nixon was not given an opportunity to again boost his image when Khrushchev made his reciprocal trip to America. Eisenhower gave the job of tour guide to US Ambassador to the U.N., Henry
Cabot Lodge, Jr. Although the highest ranking official to have spent time with Khrushchev, Nixon was not considered for the assignment.

In August, the Vice President had claimed that he should not be the person to accompany the Russian party because it would be "improper since he had not done so with any other head of state." Eisenhower did not bother to contradict the Vice President, despite obvious counter-arguments. First, Khrushchev had accompanied Nixon on some of his trip in Russia. Second, as leader of the America's greatest opponent, Khrushchev was a person who required special attention. Lodge's position carried prestige, but Nixon's probably carried more. It was Eisenhower's decision, and the President held more faith in Lodge, than in Nixon. Perhaps, Ike wanted to avoid another confrontation between the Vice President and the Premier.

Acting as a host to the Russians would have increased Nixon's exposure and his foreign relations reputation. Regardless of whether the visit had any diplomatic negotiations attached to it, talking one-on-one with the head of the Soviet Union gave official stature to the guide. Nixon had gained some from his visit to Moscow. He would not have declined the opportunity to debate the Soviet Premier again, had Ike dismissed the "improper" argument. Possibly, the Vice President raised the idea with the hope that Eisenhower would discount it. Nixon miscalculated, as no one else offered arguments in favor of the Vice President showing Khrushchev the US. Dulles was gone and could not intervene on the Vice President's behalf. Nixon had lost any chance of participating in the Russian leader's visit.

Whether or not Nixon hosted Khrushchev was less important than that he had gone to the Russia. He could add to his credentials that he had established a relationship with the
Soviet government unrivaled by any other American political figure. James Reston admitted
the trip was a superb way to launch a presidential campaign.33 Nixon was hailed for his
stalwart defense of capitalism and his firmness in dealing with the communist leadership. He
returned home to showers of congratulatory letters and high praise from the American press.

The tour behind the Iron Curtain brought the Vice President's overseas traveling to an
end. By the time he returned from Poland, Nixon had built an impressive foreign affairs
resumé. He was a Vice President with fantastic name recognition who, through his trips and
efforts in the Administration, constantly displayed his experience and competence. By the
summer of 1959, Nixon had created an image of himself that was quite presidential in
character. He achieved something no previous vice president had managed. He turned his
position into a viable jump-off point for a presidential campaign. In so doing, he transformed
the office for all those who followed him.

Nixon's main obstacle to maintaining his unprecedented position was Eisenhower. Ike
refused to see Nixon as anything more than a political hatchet man. Although the Vice
President consistently worked to expand his role in the Administration, Ike was steadfast.
While Dulles was alive, Nixon had an advocate who could help in his efforts to attract
responsibilities beyond political jobs for the Administration. Without the Secretary of State,
Nixon's international role shrank each day the election came closer.

Ambrose accurately described the position Nixon found himself in after Dulles' death.
"Eisenhower in his last two years was going to put the long-term good of the country ahead of
all other considerations, and would not gear his actions or his ideas to the immediate problem
of electing Dick Nixon in 1960."34 In fact, Ike's plan included boosting his own image,
rather than Nixon's. He hoped to leave a legacy of peace and action. To attain his goal, Eisenhower supplanted Nixon as goodwill ambassador. World peace would be his crowning achievement and ensure him an enviable global reputation. Given the President's authority, and Nixon's growing need to concentrate on his campaign, it was not difficult to lock the Vice President out of the foreign policy picture. This was a frustrating end to a hard fought battle to increase his exposure and reputation.

Until the second half of 1959, Nixon had made slow but steady progress in his quest for an extended role in the Administration. At National Security Council and Cabinet meetings, Nixon displayed his foreign affairs competence. After each of his international voyages, he presented a detailed analysis of his findings. He offered a considered opinion on any topics for which he could claim the slightest knowledge. And, in such regions as South East Asia, he spoke with authority and confidence. His input in high level meetings and briefing sessions earned him some of the respect and rank he thirsted after. Because it was largely a behind the scenes role, however, it could never satisfy his goals.

The public opportunities to portray himself as an international relations expert came most often when the Vice President traveled abroad. His expeditions made him a global figure. Yet, throughout the Administration he tried to mutate the goodwill ambassador image into one of statesman. He did not avoid these assignments for fear of injuring his relationship with Dulles, and reducing his role in the Administration. But he did attempt to elevate the relevance of each overseas assignment. He sought presidential directives to improve the stature of excursions and endeavored to convince Dulles to expand his assignments beyond bringing good wishes to foreign dignitaries. Nixon craved a prestigious mission.
Despite his reservation about goodwill trips, Nixon used them as much to his advantage as he could. In foreign countries, he could hold press conferences that received media attention because of his exotic location. He could project himself as a decision-maker, without being tied directly to Eisenhower or Dulles.

In addition, Nixon worked to modify the public perception of his travels. Since the trips were not statesmanlike in nature, Nixon promoted his travel as more important than he actually believed it to be. In such an effort, the Vice President once wrote three pages of notes about the merits of goodwill trips. His scribbles included the phrases "There will be peace - if people can know people -" and "good will is essential to good relations." Nixon ended up with an eighteen page speech justifying goodwill visits as important for assuring positive communications with allies, learning and sharing respective cultures and determining the thoughts of governmental leaders.35 Nothing he said was inaccurate. He simply believed his untapped diplomatic talents could be used more effectively, to benefit his country and himself. Not a man afraid of manipulating public perceptions, he promoted the importance of his trips, disregarding his own doubts about their utility.

Nixon’s tours between 1953 and 1960 did not possess the level of foreign policy importance that his 1947 excursion had. But, they were significantly better than no international role at all. Through surveys abroad and participation in foreign policy discussion in the Administration, the Vice President achieved some of his goals. He gained an expertise in foreign relations and a reputation as a risk taker. International relations was probably his most admired quality among the populace. Certainly, his vicious partisanship did not endear him to the majority of voters, although it did win him allies among grassroots
Republican organizations. And, Nixon's role in the Administration was larger because of his efforts - efforts which included maintaining a patron/protégé relationship with Dulles - than would otherwise have been possible.