

RUSSIANS FETE MACMILLAN.

To Moscow a Comet Four brought Mr. Macmillan and the Foreign Secretary, after a four-hour flight. The Prime Minister appropriately wore an astrakhan fur hat, and it was smiles all round as Mr. Khrushchev welcomed him to Russia, in an atmosphere of cordiality calculated to thaw out the cold war. Also in the welcoming party were the British Ambassador to Russia, Sir Patrick Reilly, and Foreign Minister, Gromyko. Mr. Malik, Soviet Ambassador in London, was in Moscow for the meeting.

There was the very smart guard of honour, always paraded at the airport for important visitors.

The Guard was inspected by a statesman who, in World War One, fought in the Grenadier Guards. Indeed, Mr. Macmillan's bearing even at this early stage, very much impressed the Diplomatic Corps and all who were at the airport. Russians of all classes are most hospitable folk. The people sensed that the Prime Minister of Great Britain was a man who passionately desired understanding with Russia, as the best means of avoiding war. The greetings over, visitor and host turned their backs on the airport and drove into Moscow.

The historic Kremlin was the scene of the first meeting of the statesmen, a few hours later. It was the beginning of an exchange of views, expressed on both sides with that frankness which is the best path towards agreement. At the businesslike conference table, with the Prime Minister sat Mr. Selwyn Lloyd and Sir Patrick Reilly. Mr. Macmillan told Khrushchev, Gromyko and Malik that he had no authority to negotiate on behalf of the western powers. But he attached great importance to this getting together for exploratory talks. If there was to be genuine peace, the West and Russia would have to understand each other's point of view. This was an excellent start.