



STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Center for
Russian & East European Studies

Encina Hall, Room 200, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-6055

NEWSLETTER

Winter 1992-93

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1992-93

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Working in Moscow

by Jonathan Neighswander

I've been an "Amerikanski Sotrudnik" at the *Commersant* organization for three months. *Commersant* is now an umbrella organization for three publications—a weekly review, an English-language weekly, and a daily paper called, naturally enough, the *Commersant-DAILY*. I've worked for Russian organizations before, but *Commersant* took a little getting used to.

Founded (or re-founded, since the paper claims to be the descendant of the pre-revolutionary paper of the same name) by Vladimir Yakovlev, one of the first "new Russian entrepreneurs," *Commersant* sees itself as a symbol of the new Russia. As soon as you see the *Commersant* building you know this is not a typical Russian company. At the front door you do not find a regular door handle but an outstretched brass-hand, which you are forced to grasp in order to enter the building. Lest you confuse this for a welcoming gesture, you are confronted with a strict, grey-suited security team as soon as you enter the marble reception area, asking for various forms of identification to ensure that you belong there.

The interior does not in any way resemble the typical Russian office with long corridors, shabby wooden floors, and plywood furniture. In Moscow, *Commersant* is a little island of the West. It is located in a rehabilitated nineteenth-century building outfitted with Italian office furniture, glass doors, dividers, IBM computers for the reporters, Macs for the designers, and even

Ambassador Troyanovsky on
the Post Cold War Era

Ambassador Oleg Troyanovsky discussed the world political situation in the aftermath of the Cold War to a large audience of Stanford faculty, community members, and students on January 25, 1993. Ambassador Troyanovsky, currently an advisor to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was the USSR Ambassador to the People's Republic of China (1986-90), USSR Permanent Representative to the United Nations (1976-86), and USSR Ambassador to Japan (1967-76). He addressed the contradictory aspects of the transition to the post Cold War era.

Ambassador Troyanovsky proposed three conditions which he felt made the Cold War a unique historical confrontation. First, he argued that it was characterized by the "extraordinary polarization" of military power and the emergence of the United States and Soviet Union as superpowers after World War II. Second, the existence of nuclear weapons gave each country a previously unknown magnitude of destructive power. Third, ideology accounted for an unprecedented showdown between the competing systems of the United States and the Soviet Union. The Ambassador emphasized that the responsibility for establishing and continuing the Cold War should be shared by both sides.

Even though we have entered an era of increased ethnic conflict, the

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**STANFORD UNIVERSITY
1993 SUMMER LANGUAGE
INSTITUTE
DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC
LANGUAGES AND
LITERATURES
SUMMER PROGRAM
(June 22 - August 14, 1993)**

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures is offering a summer program in Russian and Polish languages, taught by native speakers.

Intensive First Year Russian for Beginners: An accelerated eight-week course covering the syllabus of all three quarters of first-year Russian. Objective: to develop all four language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing). Students are expected to spend 2 hours a week in the language lab. MTWThF, 9:00 - 12:00, 12 units. Dr. Rima Greenhill.

Individualized Russian Conversation: Conversational Russian tailored to student's needs. Students work at their own pace in regular consultation with the instructor. Beginning, intermediate and advanced sections. Emphasis on conversation and essential reading skills. 3-5 units, hours by arrangement. Dr. Sima Radivilova.

Individualized Polish Conversation: Conversational Polish tailored to student's needs. Students work at their own pace in regular consultation with the instructor. Beginning, intermediate and advanced sections. Emphasis on conversation and essential reading skills. 3-5 units, hours by arrangement. Visiting Prof. Waldemar Martinyuk.

In addition, **Masterworks of Russian Prose**, a Russian literature in English translation course, will be offered. The course will cover some of the most admired works of Russian literature of the 19th and 20th centuries, MW, 1:15 - 3:00, 3 units. Julie Cassidy.

For information and application materials, please contact:

Department of Slavic
Languages and Literatures
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305
(415) 723-4438

Slavianskii Dom

For 47 undergraduates at Stanford, Slavianskii Dom is at once home and a cross-cultural experience. While sharing in all the activities common to dorm life, the residents of Slavianskii Dom also devote their time to learning about the cultures of Russia and Eastern Europe. As part of this experience, students in the Dom participate in one of five theme projects. This quarter they can choose among groups focusing on Slavic cooking, the history and culture of nineteenth-century Russia, social and cultural change in post-totalitarian Russia, current events in Russia and Eastern Europe, and the Stalinist culture in Eastern Europe.

Slavianskii Dom also has a mission to serve the Stanford community at large as a center for activities related to Russia and Eastern Europe. Each quarter, for example, the Dom sponsors a house seminar. During fall quarter, the seminar covered films of the glasnost era. This quarter the focus has shifted to Czech literature since 1965. In Spring quarter, the house will sponsor an introduction to Eastern European music

covering various national traditions and a wide range of musical styles. The Spring seminar will meet on Mondays from 7:00 to 9:30 in the lounge. Among the other activities open to the university community are language tables (Russian table meets Tuesday nights and Polish table on Wednesdays), films, and lectures.

This year Steve Moeller-Sally, Assistant Professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, took over the reins as Resident Fellow from Jehanne Gheith. Jehanne was hired by Duke University and will be sorely missed. Her four years of exemplary dedication helped make Slavianskii Dom the thriving place it is today. Steve is joined on staff by Andrea Driano (Resident Assistant), Vik Iyengar (Kitchen Manager), Imran Qureshi (House Manager), Natasha Brubaker, Kathleen Dunlop, Gabe Esparza, Sarah Kling, and Dave Noren (Theme Associates).

If you have any questions regarding Slavianskii Dom, please call Steve Moeller-Sally at 497-5262 or Andrea Driano at 497-2933.

Commersant, continued from page one

copying machines. There is also a decent cafeteria and a cafe that serves pastries and coffee. Rumor has it there is a secret gym in the basement for the journal's elite but I have yet to meet anyone who admits to having seen it. How Yakovlev financed all this is not something people speculate about openly; suffice it to say, it was not from selling newspapers.

In physical size, *Commersant* is the largest daily paper in Russia at twenty-two pages and with two sections. Most papers average eight. I asked my department head why the English title, and he explained that Russian "ezhenedel'naia" doesn't sound catchy enough. He did note that the mix of English and the archaic hard sign seemed kind of strange. Using lots of English is one of the ways the paper is trying to be modern and "progressive." In the same spirit, it has also decided to abolish patronymics.

It looks impressive to have articles in Russian under my name but I actually write them in English and then our section head, whose English is excellent, translates them. Sometimes I collaborate with a Russian reporter. I also work at the weekly English-

language edition where four of us 'inotrantsi' spend all Saturday and most of Sunday trying to turn Russian journalism into something Western businessmen would want to read. It is not always successful, but it is beginning to improve.

Our biggest problem is that most of our journalists quote "Commersant experts" in their stories. These "experts" are often simply the reporters sitting at the next table. We try to encourage a little more objectivity. One reporter had been to America where, she said, she had learned to keep her opinions out of her articles. "Now," she continued, "I just quote my friend who I know has the same opinions as I do." Obviously, the concept has not quite taken hold.

The staff at *Commersant* is generally optimistic about the future, which is refreshing since the population at large tends not to be. But everyone agrees that life here is certainly never boring.

Troyanovsky, continued from page one

danger of nuclear war between the super-powers has been reduced. Ambassador Troyanovsky warned that regional power vacuums of social and political upheaval pose difficulties for the new optimism. However, due to the new found cooperation among the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, we stand upon the frontier of a new international order based on cooperation. With the Soviet Union no longer a counter-weight to the United States, he implored the American government to show wisdom and restraint as the sole arbiter of international affairs.

In this post Cold War era, the United Nations will assume a more prominent role in resolving international strife. In order to decrease the possibility of future conflicts, Ambassador Troyanovsky advocated the creation of new regimes to cope with the emerging complexities, instability and population movements of the post Cold War world. With the end of the Cold War, countries now have greater freedom of action, not having to worry that their response would impinge on the Cold War conflict and lead to reprisals from one party or the other. As a result, many changes have been wrought by intense nationalism in Eastern Europe with the break-up of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. These two examples illustrate the international communities' lack of mechanisms to respond to drives for national self-determination.

Ambassador Troyanovsky lamented the intensification of economic conflicts. He noted that the United States still insists on the economic embargo of Cuba even though a large majority of United Nations' countries, including Russia, are opposed to it. Also, the dismantling of nuclear weapons proposed by the START II Treaty presents Russia with the problem of the high cost of nuclear waste disposal. Finally, Ambassador Troyanovsky discussed his concern for the conversion of military industry in Russia and the danger of arms producers turning to the international munitions market to earn hard currency.

Russia continues to define a foreign policy distinct from that of the former

Soviet Union. According to Ambassador Troyanovsky, Russian foreign policy should not be guided by ideology or the desire for confrontation with other nations. Instead, Russia should actively seek cooperation with other nations. He stressed public opinion as a new determinant of foreign policy in Russia, the role of which should not be underestimated by democratic countries whose foreign policy decisions it has traditionally influenced.

In closing, he stressed that the many opportunities presented by the end of the Cold War should not be missed, and that we must endeavor to create solutions to world problems that transcend an archaic East-West conflict perspective.

In a lively question and answer session following the talk, Ambassador Troyanovsky, when asked for his advice to President Clinton on the dissolution of Yugoslavia, advised the President "not to rush where angels fear to tread" but to proceed with extreme caution, because of the "very complicated" nature of the conflict. He also intimated that while unilateral action in Yugoslavia by the United States may cause resentment among some in Russia, it would not greatly affect Russia's internal political situation. Alluding to the failed efforts of Russian diplomats to prevent the recent bloodshed between the Croats and Serbs, Ambassador Troyanovsky stated his confidence in the abilities of Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen to resolve the continuing violence in Yugoslavia.

Ambassador Troyanovsky also discussed Russia's national interests in China and Japan. He maintained that they had shifted from the political and military to the economic sphere. He emphasized that relations should be kept on "an even keel." Regarding the Kurile Islands' dispute with Japan, Ambassador Troyanovsky criticized the Japanese position as inflexible. Had they pursued economic ties and offered aid, a dialogue regarding the islands' future might have resulted. Now, however, he expressed doubts concerning the Russian government's ability to return the islands to Japan due to the temper of public opinion in Russia, which now is strongly in favor of keeping the islands. He emphasized that if the Russian government were to relinquish the islands, Yeltsin would lose

most of the Siberian vote in the next election. The Russian government is also hesitant to open a Pandora's box of border conflicts at a time when the dispute between the Russians and the Chinese regarding two islands off the coast of Khabarovsk is unresolved.

Addressing a question on Russia's new international role, the Ambassador explained that there is, of course, nostalgia for the Soviet Union as a superpower, but that at present the focus of concern is the re-establishment of economic ties among the former republics.

by Glen Reed and Nameeta Tolia

Look for an announcement in the mail for a conference on Ukraine at Stanford on May 1. Place and program to be announced.

Applications for the 1993 Summer Session Language and Area Studies Fellowships must be received by April 16, 1993. Pick up your applications at the CREES office for intensive Russian. Must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an advanced degree program at Stanford.

Long, Hot Summer in Hungary

by Richard S. Esbenshade

This is Part II of Richard Esbenshade's article, continued from the Fall '92 CREES Newsletter.

On the home front, the transition to democracy and capitalism seemed to be bogged down in political squabbling and continuing economic crisis. The governing coalition (Hungarian Democratic Forum, Smallholders' Party, Christian Democrats) and the opposition (Free Democrats, Young Democrats, Hungarian Socialist Party) spend much of their energies on grandstanding and attacking each other; meanwhile there is a widespread perception that all major parties are ignoring economic realities and the problems of the country, and a consequent alienation from politics except as a spectator sport. Those left behind by the spate of joint ventures and the new entrepreneurship--the elderly, industrial workers, residents of the countryside, all but the relatively small, though quite visible in Budapest, stratum of the successful--sink steadily into resentment, insecurity, and ill health.

Even friends who are themselves doing well tend to be dismayed by a feeling that the country is continuing to decline. They criticized the awarding of large contracts for needed transportation improvements to the most qualified, inevitably foreign, bidders in a strictly economic cost-benefit approach (a new fleet of environment-friendly buses to the Dutch; high-speed railroad cars to the Spanish)--ignoring the possibility, with relatively minimal investment, to develop new domestic cutting-edge industries from the obsolete socialist "dinosaur" plants. There were also persistent reports of foreign companies buying up related Hungarian factories in order to simply shut them down and destroy domestic competition for their own exports to Hungary.

In late July there were angry demonstrations in Miskolc over a factory closing, with one worker interviewed on television threatening the eruption of "another '56." The dismantling of the old economy, the growing gap in incomes and future prospects, and the perception that no one is looking out for those shut out by economic changes is clearly causing an escalation of social tension, although as of yet there are no organized outlets for such frustrations. A deputy from the Socialist Party (the revamped communists, already seeming to have slipped into a respectable niche as a social democratic opposition) reported at a Parliamentary session on the situation at an agricultural cooperative in his district, where farmers who had gone months without being paid for their deliveries by the supposedly cash-strapped management smashed up the fleet of expensive Western cars at the managers' disposal. Another independent deputy reported that in his constituency he was hearing more and more talk of a '*nomenklatura* aristocracy.'

In step with rising social tension, media and culture wars continue apace. The ruling coalition and its nationalist allies outside the government continue to struggle for control of the state television (still headed by last year's visiting professor at Stanford Elemer Hankiss)* and radio stations. President Arpad Goncz, allied with the opposition liberals, maintained his refusal to fire Hankiss and the president of the radio, while Prime Minister Jozsef Antall pressured Goncz through political and legal means to accede, and the nationalists organized periodic demonstrations at the television building (accusing Hankiss and all of the media of being 'not Hungarian enough') to impose more direct pressure. All sides were looking for some resolution in, and of course battling over the contents of, the Law on Media expected out of Parliament this Fall, which will regulate not only the state-owned media but also the operation of private television and radio stations--for which assorted media barons, having brought up the major newspapers, are waiting.

Later in the summer the focus of attention (and of scandal and attack) shifted from Hankiss to the populist writer and MDF Vice-President Istvan Csurka. Csurka's publication of a manifesto, innocuously titled, "Some thoughts on two years of the transformation and the MDF's new program," unleashed a firestorm across the Hungarian media that leapt as far as the U.S. Congress. Csurka is known for his relentless invention of wide-ranging conspiracies against the Hungarian people involving international bankers, the old *nomenklatura*, liberal intellectuals, the media, and, of course, local and international Jewry. His analysis of the transition intertwines party politics and the decline of Hungary's capital reserves to show that international banks (which happen to all be run by Jews) and their local allies have hijacked the country's economic and political life; he further laments the "genetic deterioration" of the Magyars, and employs all the traditional barely-coded terms and concepts of Hungary's historical anti-Semitic discourse. He calls in his pamphlet for national renewal and purification guarantees of Hungarian "elbow room," throwing out the *nomenklatura* (under which rubric he of course includes the radio and television presidents and the former dissidents, now in the liberal opposition), and a new politics in the interests of "true Hungarians."

The publication became the center of heated debate in Parliament, with the main opposition parties attacking Csurka vehemently and demanding a forceful repudiation by the government, and even a fellow MDF delegate calling him a fascist. South Bay Congressman Tom Lantos, himself Hungarian-born, focused on the scandal during a late August visit to Hungary, and upon his return moved to bring the matter before the House of Representatives. Prime Minister Antall finally did issue

*Since then, Professor Hankiss has resigned as director of state television.

a weak condemnation of Csurka's piece, though the MDF directorate deemed the diatribe a "useful contribution to debate." The MDF is straining to maintain unity among its politically disparate factions, and the emerging health concerns of the statesmanlike and unifying personage of Antall (he is undergoing treatment for cancer) have thrown the party's future leadership and direction into question--the Forum is clearly caught between the need to maintain international respectability towards the IMF and Western powers, and escalating pressures to pander to the baser urges of the Csurka faction (and other rabid populist leaders in the governing coalition, such as the equally outrageous Smallholders' Party hothead Jozsef Torgyan).

Just beyond the implicit anti-Semitism and xenophobia of the Csurkas, a small but virulent skinhead movement is growing in some of Budapest's apartment block suburbs. There were a number of attacks over the summer against foreigners and gypsies, with Romanians a particular target. In a newspaper report, one young man described his and his friend's motivation for pulling a Romanian man from his car and beating him: "first we noticed the Romanian license plate, and then he was breaking the [Hungarian] language [i.e. speaking it badly]." Despite a rash of such incidents close to home, the neo-Nazi riots in eastern Germany (Rostock) gathered more attention and alarm. The local skinhead attacks were subsumed by the growing concern with street crime and day-to-day violence, or perhaps tacitly condoned by many themselves looking for a scapegoat for the transitional society's failure to meet basic needs.

As the summer wound down the record heat wave continued--it was over 90 degrees practically every day for two months. I can't exactly describe the summer as pleasant; tension was everywhere, insecurity and pessimism reigned, and the heat was truly oppressive. But we all know the transition is no cakewalk, and for anyone familiar with Hungary, pessimism and under-the-surface tension go with the terri-

tory. I was reassured that, whatever the future holds, it won't be boring. If the dollar edges up a few forints and the thermometer down, I'll look forward to summering in Budapest again next year.

Richard Esbenshade is a student in the Master's Program. He was a recipient of a CREES travel grant to study Hungarian last summer.

CREES ENTERPRISE FELLOWSHIP

UPDATE

Dan Trubow (M.S., Engineering '93) is in Ekaterinburg. He has started teaching at the University of the Urals and is also working as an advisor on conversion at several Ekaterinburg factories.

Jonathan Neighswander (see story on page one) has left Moscow and is working in Nizhni Novgorod.

Kathy Vitz (M.A., REES '90) is in St. Petersburg, working for a Russian company which recruits and trains personnel for foreign companies.

Robin Carpenter (B.A. Psychology '92) was back briefly to make plans for her wedding which will take place this summer. Robin is marrying fellow CREES Fellowship recipient, Ed Stevens. They will continue their assignments in St. Petersburg until May. Robin is helping to set up an English language school and Ed is developing marketing strategy for "Pirometer," a Russian scientific instrument producer.

Wes Cole (B.S. Biology '92) is working at "Glasnet," a joint venture company. Wes helps set up computer networks for non-profits--such as universities, hospitals, environmental and humanitarian organizations.

The next recipient of the Fellowship is **Tasha Brubaker**, who will be leaving for Omsk, Siberia, in April. She will be special assistant to Yeltsin's representative in the Omsk region.

Would you like to be on our mailing list and participate in CREES activities?

Please fill in your name and address, and return to the CREES office, Encina Hall, Room 200, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-6055.

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Areas of Interest: CIS Language and Literature History Economics
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We welcome letters from our readers regarding the articles featured in the CREES Newsletter. Your suggestions for future issues are welcome.

THE XVIIth ANNUAL BERKELEY-STANFORD CONFERENCE
The Disintegration of Multinational Communist States
Friday, March 12, 1993, Lipman Room, 8th Floor, Barrows Hall, UC Berkeley

Morning Session: LENINISM, NATIONALISM, AND EMPIRES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

9:00 am - 10:30 am

Opening Remarks: *George W. Breslauer, UC Berkeley*

Chair: *Nancy Kollmann, Stanford University*

Speakers: *Ernst B. Haas, UC Berkeley*
Kenneth T. Jowitt, UC Berkeley
Edward J. Keenan, Harvard University

RUSSIA AND THE USSR

10:45 am - 12:15 pm

Chair: *Gail Lapidus, UC Berkeley*

Speakers: *John Dunlop, The Hoover Institution, Is Dismemberment Reversible?*
Gavin Helf, UC Berkeley, The Political Geography of Disintegration in Russia
John Litwack, Stanford University, The Economic Causes and Consequences of Disintegration
Frank Sysyn, University of Alberta, Russia and Ukraine: Forging a New Relationship

Afternoon Session: CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND YUGOSLAVIA

2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Chair: *Wayne Vucinich, Stanford University*

Speakers: *Andrew C. Janos, UC Berkeley, The Dissolution of Multinational States: Czechoslovakia*
Dijana Plestina, College of Wooster, From Disintegration to Balkanization: The Case of Yugoslavia
Veljko Vujacic, UC Berkeley, Comparing Serbian and Russian Nationalism

IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

3:45 pm - 5:15 pm

Chair: *Alexander Dallin, Stanford University*

Speakers: *David Holloway, Stanford University, Military Security Implications of Imperial Disintegration-USSR*
Andrei Kortunov, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia's Search for a New International Role
Steve Weber, UC Berkeley, European Power and European Choices

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