The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

VLADIMIR I. TOUMANOFF

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INTERVIEW

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION
Family history; early personal history; education and professional history prior to Foreign Service.

Q: This June 18, 1999 interview, with Vladimir I. Toumanoff career Foreign Service Officer at about the same time as I was, and we knew each other, is conducted at his home in Georgetown in Washington, DC. It is under the auspices of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. Vlad, let's start off with, obviously, your background because you have a name that sounds like there's some association with Mother Russia.

TOUMANOFF: It's very closely associated with Mother Russia, and I probably should start a good deal further back than just when I was born because it all affected my life and, certainly, my career in the Foreign Service. Let me go back to the early 1800s, when Russia proper, under the Czars, conquered Georgia, then an independent kingdom. The family ancestors, my ancestors, were part of the elite, part of the ruling apparatus of Georgia, and in a tried and true ancient tradition (still practiced widely in the taking of hostages) the Russians divided the ruling families of Georgia and took some parts of

those families, some members of those ruling families, north to St. Petersburg. They kept the hostages at the royal court to watch and control them and to ensure that their relatives, who remained powerful in Georgia, behaved according to Russian wishes.

Provided the native relatives behaved, the treatment of the hostages was quite kind - in fact quite generous, even to the point of granting that part of my family which was at the Court a Russian title of nobility, and estates. The Russian title was *Knyaz*, which translates into English as 'Prince' but unrelated to the Royal Family. In Russian practice it was hereditary, passing through all the male line, but including wives and daughters for their lifetimes. So my ancestors became titled members of the Russian aristocracy, and over time they Russified, abandoning the Georgian version of the name for the Russian, and Tumanishvili became Toumanoff (the French spelling adopted by the family for transliteration to the Latin alphabet of the Russian, Cyrillic *Tumanov*). It was a title which I never used or mentioned. But my parents did. That background becomes relevant later.

Down through the generations some of the male members of the family joined the military, and by the time the First World War broke out a century later my father was a young officer in the Imperial Guard, eventually rising to the rank of Colonel. In the course of the Russian Revolution and the following civil war he fought, quite effectively, against the Bolsheviks and their Red Army, joining the White armies early and fighting to the bitter end. Thus, as a titled Czarist aristocrat he was not only, by definition, a mortal class enemy of the communists, but one who had cost them much blood. He and his family faced certain death if captured, and so, when the White armies were finally defeated, my parents escaped to Turkey and eventually reached Constantinople, where I was born on April 11, 1923.

Turkey had gone through a revolution and the leader of the new government, Kemal Ataturk, made Ankara his capital, established diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia, and was gradually extending his sway over all of the country. In the summer of 1923 Constantinople was still occupied by the British, and nominally under a Turkish Governor of the old regime. There was still a Czarist Embassy issuing documentation to Russian refugees, and my parents and their now two sons were thus reasonably safe. However, one fine day an order came from Ankara to the Turkish Governor to arrest the Toumanoff family and ship them off to Ankara, where they would be turned over to the Soviet authorities. Everyone understood it would be the end of the family. The Governor agreed to delay the order for 24 hours, so we had to escape from Constantinople very quickly. With the help of some American friends my parents managed that, and within 18 hours we were off in a freighter heading for New York City. That's how I came, five months old, to the United States, in September 1923.

Q: And you had some American connection?

TOUMANOFF: Yes. Well, okay, here are the details, and I'll try to tie them into the Foreign Service at the end.

My mother, it turns out, was something of a feminist. She graduated from the Law

Faculty of Moscow University in the first class to which women were finally admitted. She was also fluent in French and English, and familiar with German and Italian. In Constantinople she was giving language lessons to children of the Turkish Governor. It was he who received not one but two orders from Ankara for our arrest. At the first, he invited my mother to coffee after the language lessons, an invitation one could not refuse although my mother, an attractive 26 year-old, wasn't sure what to expect. He turned out to be a very cultured gentleman, expressed his pleasure at the progress his children were making, discussed literature and history over coffee which was something of a social ritual, and only at the end mentioned that he had some bad news and revealed the first arrest order. He then offered to hide us in one of his jails, unlocked, where he thought Ankara's agents would not find us, and he could report to Ankara that we had disappeared. So we moved in and, true to his word, the doors were never locked and life and lessons went on as before. At the second order he told my mother, again after coffee, that he could delay the order for 24 hours if the family could leave the country by then. After that he would have no choice but to execute the order.

My father was a gifted violinist and accomplished performer on several other instruments. As I understand it he had worked for, and through his music came to know, the American Director of the Near East Relief Organization based in Turkey. That organization was providing food and other relief to people facing famine and other desperate conditions in the region. The Director had a supply freighter leaving for New York in eighteen hours. With his immediate and effective help (he vouched for the family) we received visas to emigrate to the United States, and sailed out of the harbor on his freighter. Equally critical was the fact that my mother, through her legal training, knew that if I were born on Turkish soil I would be, legally, a Turk. She therefore had arranged to give birth at the Czarist Diplomatic Mission in Constantinople, i.e. on extra-territorial Russian ground. Had I been a Turk the vastly oversubscribed U.S. Immigration Quota for Turks would have excluded me from the United States, and my parents would have faced the dreadful choice of abandoning me in Turkey, or staying, facing arrest and execution by the Soviets. Which brings me to the Foreign Service.

At the end of my tour in Embassy Moscow (1960), Ambassador Thompson called me to his office, and in farewell gave me the following advice. "Remember, Vlad, that when you become ambassador it is too late to study, to research, to train. You will have no time for that. You must work with whatever talents, skills and knowledge you already have, with what you bring with you to the task, little more." I thought of my parents' survival and escape in Constantinople.

Q: This had nothing to do, though, if I understand it correctly, with your being a "refugee," as we think of them today - or has it?

TOUMANOFF: Well, yes. We were traveling on documents issued by the Czarist Diplomatic Mission in Constantinople at a time (1923) when the Czarist government no longer existed and the Russian (Soviet) Government was unrecognized by the U.S.. We were, in effect, stateless persons in desperate danger, to whom, as to so many others after that War and since, the United States gave refuge.

Q: I was thinking of the ideological overtones, that someone coming as a refugee from the Soviet Union - that wasn't an existing criterion yet.

Q: No, whatever were the rules then, they were generous and practical in that we arrived, as I have been told by my parents, with a kind of tarpaulin tied at the corners containing all of our possessions, and $24 in our pockets. So-

Q: -you were a refugee.

TOUMANOFF: We were refugees in the truest sense of the word. We certainly

went through Ellis Island, that whole process.

How would you like to go on?

Q: You got there with the drama, but without the knowledge, because you were but five months old. Why don't you jump ahead, aiming, if you will, for the university details and education unless you have some more stories like that?

TOUMANOFF: Well, there are lots of stories. Every émigré family goes through a very difficult time unless they're privileged and reasonable wealthy.

Q: And your family had just $24.

TOUMANOFF: Right. My father was, as I mentioned, among other things a violinist. My mother had some knowledge of several European languages in addition to fluent French and English. My father knew no English. So they were in New York for several years in various work; my mother in refugee resettlement and social services, my father played the violin in a speakeasy and worked in a ginger ale bottling factory. My maternal grandmother, who joined us, took in sewing and minded my brother and me. By 1927, or perhaps a bit earlier, we had moved to Boston where my mother became a school teacher and my father a musician and other employment. And that's where I was educated, in the Roxbury Latin School, and from there in 1942 to Harvard.

It was wartime so I went straight into summer school; volunteered in December and was turned down (4F) for a childhood history of asthma; back to Harvard; ran out of money and was given a full scholarship; accelerated and worked part time, receiving a Cum Laude B.A. in psychology in June 1945. From there I was two years in graduate work and practice in clinical psychology at the University of Chicago, and was employed by the University in vocational guidance and placement for students and war veterans. When my father died in 1947, I went back to Boston to help my mother in a difficult time.

Q: Did the Foreign Service enter at any point here, or was it after the universities?

TOUMANOFF: No, it came along rather later, Bill.

It had become pretty obvious to me that a career as clinical psychologist would be limited unless I went back to pre-med, medical school, and psychiatric training, for all of which I didn't have either the money or the time. So I had to give up that professional goal. For a couple of years while I helped in the aftermath of my father's death I worked in industry, trade, and the 1948 Presidential (and Boston mayoral) election campaign. In the latter I recruited and managed volunteer groups in three wards, and received a severe immersion lesson in city politics as run by former Mayor, James Michael Curley, whom we were trying to unseat. He had been pardoned from jail by President Truman to help carry Massachusetts. They both won. I also managed a brief "vacation" stint in the Swedish merchant marine.

But my other lifelong interest was in Russia and the Soviet Union. I knew the language, had studied the country, and was comfortable in the Russian daily culture.

Q: Was this encouraged by your parents, or was this all on your own?

TOUMANOFF: Of course much of it came from life in a Russian family. But the formal part was pretty much on my own. They were very kind and let me study and pursue my own interests.

Q: They didn't have a negative input?

TOUMANOFF: Not really, certainly not dislike of the nation as a whole.

Q: But you had some Russian cultural input.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, I had the language and a good deal of the Russian culture because, for example, we always spoke Russian at home as English never came easily to my father, and we had a great many Russian friends. They were for the most part highly educated and all were interested in what was developing in their home country, in what was then the Soviet Union, and talked and argued about it endlessly. So I grew up aware of what was happening in the Soviet Union and in a kind of total immersion at home in the Russian culture, mentality, mannerisms and even body language.

Q: But not necessarily as a "White Russian."

TOUMANOFF: Well, my parents certainly were not sympathetic to communism and the Soviet régime, and had strong feelings about Stalin, which obviously affected my own view as I was growing up in the family, but I was not attempting to remain a Russian - in fact, quite the contrary. I can remember as a child stubbornly refusing to speak Russian. My whole world was American and spoke English, and I saw no reason to have any identification with Russia or attachment to the Russian émigré community. As a practical matter, of course, my parents prevailed in the use of the language at home, and somewhere in early adolescence I realized that knowledge of Russian was an asset.

Q: Well, by the end of the war the Soviet Union became identified more as "the enemy," which had been an ally.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, that's right, but by 1945 I was 22 and my turn away from a life in the Russian émigré community came much earlier.

Q: For immigrant reasons, very common reasons.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, for obvious reasons: this was the United States, and I was an American, and that's the end of the story, as far as I was concerned. And my family did not really insist at all on my continuing to identify with the émigré community. Indeed with the passage of years they, too, became acculturated. But I was interested in Russia, so I read a great deal about it, and I studied it, and I maintained my language.

Q: This gets you closer to the Foreign Service, I sense.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, it does. When my plans to become a clinical psychologist came apart, the only other lifetime interest I had was Russia, so I decided to try to work in some fashion in American relations with the Soviet Union. You will recall that the USSR had been a heroic ally of the United States against Hitler throughout the War, and relations, while prickly at times in practice, had been close, and we had great sympathy and admiration for her struggles and sacrifices. The emergence of the Cold War in the aftermath of the War came as a disappointment and something of a shock to America. My own reaction was not so much surprise, because I understood the vulnerability of Soviet rule in the aftermath, the gigantic task of recovery, the hostile ideology and Stalin's savagery and paranoia. Rather it was a conviction that if nuclear war was to be avoided, an effort by America was needed to be moderate, confident of itself, informed and comprehending of that strange, alien society. I also thought that I could make some contribution to that end. To some extent it also reflected a sense of debt owed to America by my family and myself for all it had done for us. For me it was a turn from serving on a micro, individual clinical level, to serving in a much larger context. But still serving. And that's how I came to think seriously about the Foreign Service.

CHAPTER 2: EARLY FOREIGN SERVICE, 1950-53
Appointment to the Foreign Service: Post-war Personnel, Recruitment, Promotion.

Q: Did you at any point formally apply?

TOUMANOFF: Well, that was one of those Catch-22 situations. My mother, had applied for and received her American citizenship early on. But my father, who was running a game bird farm in the depths of New Hampshire, saw no particular urgency in getting his American citizenship. I think, also, that he always hoped the Soviet "experiment" would end and he would be able to go back to Russia. So he died, quite unexpectedly at age 48, without U.S. citizenship. As a consequence, by law, I could not receive citizenship through my parents, and had to apply on my own, after I reached age 21.

Q: Prohibited from doing it until 21?

TOUMANOFF: That's right. I had to reach maturity before I could apply for citizenship on my own.

Q: Doesn't sound like the open hand to the foreigner coming.

TOUMANOFF: Well, it's not bad compared to most countries!

Q: Those are the laws.

TOUMANOFF: Those were the laws at the time.

Q: And the spirit of the country.

TOUMANOFF: Possibly. I wasn't terribly aware of it. All I knew was that the rules for taking the Foreign Service Officer examination were that you had to be under 31 (or perhaps it was 30) and to have had your citizenship for 10 years. So I was locked out. I applied for citizenship as soon as I reached 21 and, again by law, had to wait two years before I could qualify. Finally, naturalized in 1945, ten years later I would be 32, and overage to qualify for the exam.

Q: That would have been hard at that point.

TOUMANOFF: The mathematics dictated that I would never be eligible to take the Foreign Service Officer examination.

Q: The 10 year rule couldn't be met.

TOUMANOFF: That's right. So there was no way I was going to be able to join the Foreign Service through the examination process. However, appointment to the Foreign Service Staff Corps, normally limited in the Foreign Service to clerical and administrative work, required only 5 years of citizenship. I decided to gamble that if appointed as Staff, some day I would be able to work on U.S.-Soviet relations. In 1949 I moved to Washington, took a position at the Library of Congress as a Russian editor, and waited for 1950. That brings us to one of the developments in U.S. foreign policy and the Foreign Service.

Q: At the Library of Congress?

TOUMANOFF: Oh, that was a unit in the Library which was reading and selectively translating the Library's collection of Soviet journals and newspapers. I was an editor of the translations.

Q: Now we had reached a point in American foreign policy where we had a very keen

interest in what was being said and written.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, it was the beginning of the Cold War, and the Library of Congress program was part of it. But about the Foreign Service-

The United States had emerged from the War a giant among lesser nations, many devastated by war with huge human, material and financial losses. To much of the world the U.S appeared rich, powerful, and successful beyond imagining in all spheres of human endeavor. That had two major consequences: America was hugely attractive as a model which other nations sought to learn from and emulate; and under the Marshall Plan and other legislation, America undertook vast assistance programs in many parts of the World. For the Foreign Service it meant that we had unprecedented open access almost everywhere, and the Service faced a steep demand for specialists of all kinds - in agriculture, energy production, transportation, communications, civil engineering, banking, constitutional law, medicine, political democracy, everything you can imagine. The small Foreign Service Officer Corps (perhaps some 1500 in all), diplomats by training and profession, were swamped and out of their depth. The Foreign Service had a dreadful labor shortage in all these specialized skills.

Q: It just exploded in need.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, it was sudden, huge, and urgent.

1950 was quite a year for me. I got married, my mother died, my five-year wait ended, I applied for the Staff Corps, and at the close of the year I was appointed a Staff Officer in the Foreign Service. As luck would have it mine was one of the very last Permanent appointments. From January 1, 1951 all Staff Corps appointments were temporary. That made a critical difference in the aftermath of my bout with Senator McCarthy. But about that later.

Q: And you started a new career.

TOUMANOFF: Yes. Well, it was to prove so later. The Department's solution to its labor shortage was to hire specialists into the Staff and Reserve Officer Corps, which could be done quickly, on a temporary basis, and bypassing the examination process. There really was no choice as the entire process of examination, written and then oral, selection and finally appointment to the Career Foreign Service Officer Diplomatic Corps was entirely ill suited by law and design for the task at hand. It simply took much too long. The Staff Corps ballooned to some 5,000, mostly at the specialist professional officer level, and I was an early beneficiary. I was hired for my training and professional personnel experience to be a Recruitment Officer of those specialists. In that sense it was not yet a new career.

Q: We had to find a way through our staffing problem.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, or see the Marshall Plan and other aid programs fail.

Q: Especially when it's in the national interest.

TOUMANOFF: Surely.

This was also a gamble on my part. My assumption was that once in the Foreign Service, even as a Staff Officer, one way or another my knowledge of the Russian language and of Russia would come to bear on assignments, and sure enough, eventually it did.

Q: When did you actually join the Staff Corps?

TOUMANOFF: It was very, very late in 1950.

Q: You worked in Personnel?

TOUMANOFF: Right, in the Bureau of Foreign Service Personnel (FP), as a Recruitment Officer. But there was that unique fact about my appointment that it was one of the very last *permanent* appointments in the Staff Corps. All later appointments were temporary for at least two reasons. One, to avoid having the Career Service overwhelmed by thousands of permanent Staff specialists; and two, to avoid the political risk of bypassing the intent of Congress defined over many years by Foreign Service Acts, through recourse to an emergency recruitment measure.

Q: Sounds like "Paragraph: new facts."

TOUMANOFF: Yes, new facts.

But before we go on to McCarthy, and we will shortly, I should pick up a couple of loose threads. One is an episode in my experience as a Recruitment Officer which is an object lesson in how <u>not</u> to try to join the Foreign Service, or probably any other organization.

An applicant came in to be interviewed who had a very exceptional background and qualifications, again, in the Russian field, the Soviet field. He was fluent in Russian. He was, I think, born in the United States but of émigré parents, he had extensive connections in the émigré community and had lived at least some important part of his life as part of that émigré group. So in terms of background, knowledge and education, he was not only qualified but he had some skills and gifts that the Foreign Service certainly could have used. The difficulty that I had at the end of the interview was his motivation. In part, he was playing on our common Russian ancestry as a bond which would give him special favor as an applicant, and in part it was that he seemed attracted to the Foreign Service for the social stature it would give him as much or more than for interest in its work.

Q: Well, neither of these are uncommon in human nature.

TOUMANOFF: Unhappily.

Q: But in those days maybe a little special?

TOUMANOFF: Well, I had some qualms about it, because on the one hand, he had these qualifications, and on the other hand I thought his motivation was not sound in terms of serious commitment to the work, which is often in very trying conditions. So I concluded the interview saying that I would let him know, went to Judson Lightsey, the Director of the Foreign Service Recruitment Branch, and explained the dilemma. Rather than telling me what to do, he asked me what my recommendation would be. I said that on balance I would recommend against employment simply because the motivation didn't seem to me as promising as it should have been. His response was, "Had you said anything else, Vlad, I would have been very disappointed." So the moral of that story is that the path to the Foreign Service is not connections, it is not old-boy networks, it is not social manner or social aspirations nor even just rare qualifications. In applying for the Foreign Service it is genuine interest and genuine motivation which are essential.

Q: I was reading something additional here, in the context of Russian-Soviet connections. I thought maybe our antennae were maybe a little bit stronger in those days; that we might have been more sensitive to a person's background in terms of potential KGB activities. That's a question, actually.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, Bill, I think you're right. As you know so well, service in Moscow those days was no joy ride. Quite the opposite, and some people broke under the strain. But that didn't occur to me at the time, at least not consciously. I knew that anyone who sought employment would have to go through a very rigorous security investigation. My concern was more that of a professional personnel officer looking at the promise that the candidates held for the Service rather than for themselves.

Q: Absolutely, with one slight caveat, and that is: don't always believe that Security does a superb job.

TOUMANOFF: That, too, is true. Besides, the wrong motivation can lead to all sorts of troubles and that's what was bothering me about the man. But I didn't tie it consciously to anything as specific as KGB activity. You're probably right, perhaps I should have. On the other hand, I wasn't really qualified to make a security judgement on the basis of a paper application and an interview.

Q: Extremely valid, and certainly leads into some of the suspicions of others, like the McCarthy group that we're about to talk about.

TOUMANOFF: Well, almost. The only other thread which I need to pursue for just a moment before we talk about McCarthy is that after about a year or more as a Recruitment Officer, I was transferred to the Performance Measurement Branch, where I was in charge of the Section which dealt with Foreign Service Officer promotions. The thread, which we should pick up again later, is that at my transfer I was nominated for a Meritorious Service Award.

Q: But you worked on Foreign Service Officer promotions even though you weren't an FSO yet yourself.

TOUMANOFF: That's right. But these were positions that could easily have been, and probably were, dual service - either Staff Corps or Civil Service - because the promotions system was largely a mechanical operation at that level. Briefly, the FSO promotion process was as follows. Selection Boards, composed of senior Civil Service, Foreign Service Officers and Public Members, annually reviewed the personnel files of all FSOs, rank-ordered the members of each Class, and recommended individuals for promotion. Those names were submitted to the Security Division (SY) for clearance. Those approved by SY were sent to the Secretary of State, to the White House, to the Senate for consent, and finally to the President for Presidential commission to the next higher Class. In that process our task was essentially service to the Selection Boards: to make sure that personnel files for all FSOs were available and corresponded with Class lists; that all required efficiency, inspectors' reports and other records of individual performance were in; that service records were complete and clear, and that personnel files were available and organized for the Selection Boards to review. It is well that we did since we would invariably find reports overdue or overlooked entirely, records incomplete or misfiled, files charged out to working personnel officers and not readily available, or files of Officers who had left the Service. That was not unusual in the pre-computer, paper personnel records of large organization with staff spread across the globe. It was one of my Section's tasks annually to make those records good in preparation for the Selection Boards. It involved frequent access by me and my staff to the personnel file room to work there or to log out files to our offices. That file room was in the charge of a Mrs. Helen B. Balog and her staff of file clerks.

CHAPTER 3: SENATOR JOSEPH McCARTHY, 1953
Preliminaries

Bill, as you mentioned earlier, the Cold War came as a shock to the U.S. public. With the defeat of Germany and Japan after a long, bitter struggle, ultimately including atomic bombs, the public expected an end to sacrifice, a respite of quiet, healing and return to normalcy - a lasting peace. Misled, in part by wartime portrayals of the USSR as a true ally ruled by an amicable "Uncle Joe" Stalin, Americans shortly found themselves facing a vastly greater enemy, nuclear armed with the help of astoundingly successful espionage in America. By the end of the 1952 presidential election, with the Cold War in full bloom, Senator Joseph McCarthy was riding high with his communist witch hunt on the resulting wave of public fear, frustration and anger. His campaign was already marked by brutal treatment of individuals and blatant falsehoods, shielded behind his Senatorial immunity.

So it was when on an otherwise routine day in late January 1953 (the 28th, I think), the telephone rang in my office and a peremptory voice commanded me to appear that same afternoon at a room in the Senate Office Building. When I hesitated to reply, the voice said it was calling from the Senate Government Operations Committee (Sen. Joseph

McCarthy, Chairman) and repeated the order. I demurred, saying I would need to check with my superiors. The voice said it did not care whom I checked with but unless I came it would immediately issue a subpoena and send U.S. Marshals for me. So I said that would not be necessary and I would be there, with which the voice hung up. I spoke with my superiors in Foreign Service Personnel (FP), as I recall including Ambassador Robert Woodward, a man of great integrity and then Director of FP, and was told that there was a presidential directive that we should all cooperate with the Government Operations Committee and that I should go and cooperate. That was the beginning.

I was taken to a windowless room somewhere down in the basement of the Capitol building, and was confronted by the three Committee staff who were to be my interrogators: Roy M. Cohn, Donald Surine and G. David Schine. I was sworn, told that our meetings would be in "executive session," and that if I told anyone of what transpired I would be in contempt of the Senate and face jail. In this first interrogation, while suspicious, they were not overtly hostile as they established my identity and asked about my own and my family's history. At the end I was ordered to return the next morning. My recollection is that for the next four or five days, morning and afternoon, I was interrogated, sometimes by all three, mostly by two in rotation, sometimes by one at a time. They concentrated in ever greater detail on my parents' and my own history, were repetitive as though they hadn't heard me before or were seeking and prompting differing versions or contradictions. Sometimes they were mild, sometimes hostile and sarcastic, or played good and bad cop. Their pressure was intense and exhausting, especially when they plainly demonstrated that they thought I was lying under oath. Their behavior was unpredictable from moment to moment, and their questioning was contradictory, leading, and calculated to confuse and entrap. I came to think that, with the exception of physical abuse, it must be like being interrogated by the KGB. To find that happening to me in the U.S. Capitol building was in itself shocking and terrifying, which I suppose was the intention.

Several things became clear to me in the course of those days:

- They were not interested in me as an individual, nor in the factual accuracy of my testimony. Facts and testimony could be twisted or disregarded. I was not their true target. I was just an exploitable and expendable instrument if I and my story could be bent to serve their purposes.

- Their real target was the Department of State, the Secretary, and through him the President (Eisenhower), newly in office. The President had refused to give McCarthy and his Committee access to Executive Branch files, stating that the Executive was fully able to assure personnel security and loyalty. McCarthy was determined to prove him wrong and get at the files to expand his demagogic witch hunt for communists and spies. Beyond that, his aim was to increase his political power in the country at the expense of the Secretary and the President. I tried to tell that to a couple of senior officers at State, but it became quickly evident that they preferred to have nothing to do with me lest they be contaminated by association. The word had spread that I was being investigated by McCarthy and people seemed terrified. (Later I had occasion to read a letter of that time

to the Department volunteered by one of our Ambassadors in Latin America, who personally knew my family and its history well, minimizing such knowledge as just a passing acquaintance. He had not been named, or involved in McCarthy activities in any way. He was just frightened enough to deny any near connection with me or my family.)

A few parts of my testimony in these "Executive Sessions" came to have a bearing later on the course of my Public Hearing before the Committee. You and I have covered all the points in detail above. I explained to the interrogators:

- That the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, on the grounds of which I was born, was Czarist, not Soviet, at the time; as well as my father's history as a White Russian Imperial Guards Officer fighting against the Reds in the civil war.

- That I had applied for and received citizenship as soon as I was legally able.

- That I had volunteered for military service and been medically turned down.

- And, in what turned out to be critical, that the Department had two separate sets of files on all personnel, one in the Bureau of Personnel for administrative materials (CV's, assignments, promotions, efficiency and inspectors' reports etc.) and another, separate and classified, in the Bureau of Security. I was asked what would happen if, in the review of files for the Selection Boards, derogatory security information were found. I replied that it would promptly be sent to the Security Bureau for investigation. Asked if it would be sent to the Selection Boards, I replied that it would not as they had no power to conduct investigations, such investigation by that Bureau should be undertaken without delay, and that all the Selection Boards' recommendations for promotion would be sent to the Security Bureau for clearance before any promotion action could be taken. Did I think that a good idea? Yes.

What I did not know at the time was that McCarthy had just established in sworn public testimony by Ms. Balog that much material was missing from the personnel files under her charge, and that some derogatory documents had been removed by orders from above against her protests, and even whole files were missing of people she thought suspect. Further, she had named me as having access to her files, although she evidently did not accuse me outright of such removal.

At the end of the last day (a Friday) in "Executive Session" they ordered me to appear before the Committee for a Public Hearing on the following Monday morning. Then they held up a sheet of paper for me to read, which they would not let me touch, the heading on which was "Mr. Toumanoff's testimony will be as follows." What it amounted to was that my parents were Russian and my father had never applied for American citizenship; that I was born in a Russian embassy years after Russia was Soviet; that I had not applied for U.S. citizenship until I decided to join the Foreign Service; and that I had not served in the U.S. armed forces. (As I recall, during World War II aliens could refuse to serve.)

Q: A negative. That was a negative.

TOUMANOFF: Not only that. What I also did not know was that McCarthy had announced at the end of Ms. Balog's testimony that Toumanoff was born in a "Russian legation subsequent to the Communist revolution, so of necessity his parents had to be acceptable to the Communist regime," [Washington Post 2/5/53], and that I would appear to testify the next day.

Q: This was on a page, maybe, or-

TOUMANOFF: Yes, they showed me one page. And I recognized immediately that in the first place it was inaccurate, it was not only inaccurate, it falsified the family history and myself. But were I to challenge that piece of paper immediately I would never get a chance to challenge it in public, because McCarthy would simply make some announcement on the floor of the Senate describing me in those terms with the obvious conclusion that I was a Communist, or Communist sympathizer, and a agent recruiting and helping promote more spies.The big lie would gallop around the world, and the truth, if ever made public would never catch up. So I avoided agreeing that such would be my testimony by pointing out some misspellings and mistaken dates and let it go at that. They thought I did not realize the import of what I was reading, and I calculated that I could set the record straight in the Public Hearing.

Q: Public, before the Committee.

TOUMANOFF: Before the Committee, yes, with Senator McCarthy in the Chairman's seat.

Q: He considered you important enough to give you his time.

TOUMANOFF: Well, obviously they thought they had a wonderful story proving that the Department of State was riddled with Communist agents, myself in particular. In the meantime, I had recognized, somewhere along about the middle of the interrogation, that their interest was not really in me as an individual. They couldn't care less about the truth about me or the accuracy of their statements. They were interested only in making another public sensation. Had I any doubts on that score, that piece of paper was proof positive.

Q: Had you consciously been forced to give names of other people?

TOUMANOFF: No, not in Executive Sessions. I think they felt they could twist and turn my story sufficiently for their purposes so that they wouldn't need any names. That could be saved for more sensations later. However, in the Public Hearing McCarthy threw names about in allegations of improper influence and destruction of damaging documents about suspect employees. The names and allegations were reported in the press, but never authenticated. Those of the allegations which I was charged to verify proved groundless or simply false, and I so reported to the Committee in writing after the Hearing. But, needless to say, none of my report ever surfaced in public.

Q: They already had the names they needed.

TOUMANOFF: There was another clear implication - that I had joined the Foreign Service in order to recruit my friends, Communists and spies, and then I had gotten myself assigned to the promotion system so that I could get them promoted. So here was this wonderful fabrication they had created-

Q: -which they could document.

TOUMANOFF: -which they could document with what I would call factoids. In the meantime I had concluded that, as I say, they were not interested in me; they were interested ultimately in an attack on the Secretary of State and on the President. So I went back to the Department to explain what was happening, and I ran into a stone wall.

Q: A scared stone wall?

TOUMANOFF: Yes. As I walked into people's offices, they turned pale and figuratively they adopted the pattern of the wallpaper and disappeared. Any association with me was damning in their eyes - too dangerous and too terrifying.

Q: And all the way up to the Secretary of State.

TOUMANOFF: Well, I didn't get anything like that far, but after going up about three echelons or so, I realized that I was *persona non grata* in the Department of State, and that I was not going to establish communication or get any help, really, of any kind at all. I was on my own.

Q: Let alone advice and counsel.

TOUMANOFF: Early on I did get some. I had always assumed that the embassy in Constantinople was still Tsarist when I was born. So, early in the interrogation, I went to the Department's Historian, and, without explaining why I was asking, asked him what was the status of the Russian Embassy in Constantinople on April 11, 1923. And he quickly told me that the Soviet Embassy was in Ankara, some 200 miles away, that the Constantinople mission was still the old Tsarist Embassy, just as I had assumed, and it did not become Soviet property until after the British evacuated, some months, some time later, after September when my family left Constantinople. That was really the only assistance that I got within the Department.

Q: You were only one, obviously, of a number of people, employees, that they faced, scared, obviously with reason.

TOUMANOFF: Especially with this order from the White House to cooperate with the Committee.

Q: Who was the President at that time?

TOUMANOFF: Ike. Ike Eisenhower. But this was early 1953 and I don't know whether this was his order or one left over from some previous Administration.

Q: We interviewers are usually most separated from the issues under discussion unless we've been involved with them. I will very briefly tell you that at this time, I was in the New York office of the State Department working on the Smith-Mundt Leader Grantee program. We set up trips and appointments around the United States and in general tried to make them friends of America. I got a call just like you did, without any identification, merely saying I was to appear the next morning at nine o'clock at the Waldorf Astoria. I took the same line you did, except maybe I'd heard a little bit more that they were in town. Finally, I was given the names, Schine and Cohn. Those I recognized. I went there the next morning as summoned. I had no staff support like you did in Washington, maybe for the best. But I arrived, and they weren't there. I had been told they had been called back to Washington. I asked, "Why was I called here?" And the secretary, apparently an administrative assistant to them, decided to talk with me. She seemed embarrassed, and said, "Well, because we understand that you would recruit people, of these grantees from foreign countries, to be recruited by the Voice of America, which has clearly been identified as a source of Soviet spies," et cetera. *So I said, "Well, if you ever need to know, I'll be glad to tell you: NO - very simply - no. You can take this down, if you'd like, but my only object was if the person wanted to talk about VOA's competence and technical level - as to whether the sounds came through well or not and whether they were appreciated, substantively speaking - and it was a volunteer program and it worked very, very well indeed and I think our VOA has improved because of it. And I bade adieu and never heard another word because it was the beginning of the McCarthy downfall. But it was exactly your experience - the rudeness, the insecurity, the no advice, because I was in New York. Not many people these days, I guess, have experiences with Mr. McCarthy and his ilk.*

TOUMANOFF: Well, it was a terrifying experience. Part of the terror was that if you grow up in the United States and you go to school in the United States and you read American history and you admire the country, you are not only mystified but totally taken aback to experience something as bizarre and as corrupted and as vicious as this, in the United States Senate. You're utterly unprepared. This is not the country that you know. The terror was magnified by finding that the Department - senior officials of the Department - were equally terrified, perhaps not equally, but certainly were frightened enough to avoid contact with you, that in their eyes somehow you had already not only been condemned, but that anybody who associated with you was likely to be equally condemned.

Q: Guilt by association.

TOUMANOFF: That's right. Well, there I was. In the meantime-

Q: You weren't totally surprised that this existed.

TOUMANOFF: No, I... Well, I was aware of the fact that some people had been attacked by McCarthy - not a great many at that point - and I was perfectly conscious of his accusations made very publicly and on the floor of the Senate-

Q: ...about the State Department.

TOUMANOFF: ...about the State Department being riddled with spies and so forth, but I had no conception of the viciousness of the interrogation.

Q: ...worse than the KGB.

TOUMANOFF: Well, the discomfort was considerable. Not only that, but when I came home, because there had been some publicity about me leaked from the Committee -

Q: Purposely.

TOUMANOFF: ...purposely, to prepare the ground for this Hearing, where there would be this great revelation, that "We've got one!" you know, that we've captured one, there he is, we've identified him.

Q: You didn't lose China.

TOUMANOFF: But it was worse. I was obviously spying for the Soviet Government at a time when the Cold War was very, very bitter. When I got home, I found that my wife, with our infant son and pregnant with our daughter, had already been receiving threatening, abusive and obscene telephone calls.

Q: From-

TOUMANOFF: From anonymous voices. So altogether this was a trying time. But there I was, Friday afternoon, and I had been reminded by the Committee staff, Cohn, Surine, or Schine, that these interrogations were Executive Sessions of the Committee, and that if I told anyone about what had transpired, I would be found in contempt of the Senate and jailed. So that was the situation as of Friday afternoon.

Q: And you, but a lowly Staff Corps person buried in the bowels of Personnel-

TOUMANOFF: Well, it was all pretty overpowering, and I wasn't getting much sleep. Anyway, I decided that I would disregard that injunction for silence and that I would be protected if I spoke with a lawyer as a client.

Q: Were you advised of that at any point, even by some of the timid ones?

TOUMANOFF: No. Oh, certainly not. No one was reading the Miranda Act to me. Besides, they probably didn't know about McCarthy's gag practices.

Q: Well, maybe it didn't exist, but at least good counsel would have been good advice.

TOUMANOFF: Quite the contrary - I was under injunction not to speak to anybody. And they didn't make any exception for lawyers. So I asked my wife if she knew, or if the family had, any lawyers who could-

Q: She certainly knew, and she wasn't enjoined not to speak, perhaps.

TOUMANOFF: I had not told her any details, they were too ugly, and the phone calls were already distressing. But that wasn't the question. I just didn't happen to know any lawyers in town. Well, it turned out that an uncle by marriage was Samuel Spencer, who - and this is a side issue which really is kind of pertinent to the whole political scene in Washington at the time - was the senior partner of a law firm here in Washington, and the papers for his appointment by the President to be Chairman of the District Committee, which was the governing body for the District of Columbia in those days, were on the President's desk for signature. Sam Spencer knew this. I didn't.

Q: He knew that this paper was on the desk.

TOUMANOFF: This appointment for which he had been considered and approved was simply waiting for the President's signature. Knowing nothing of this, as a family member he seemed to me the right person to consult.

Q: Republican, too, perhaps.

TOUMANOFF: I guess so.

Q: Good political connections, in any event.

TOUMANOFF: And a very good reputation. I called to ask if I could see him before Monday, and told him what the problem was. Without hesitation he asked me to come in first thing Saturday morning. So I did, and went over the whole business with him. In conclusion he said, "Vlad, I know that what they are about to announce or try to prove at this Hearing is simply false, but I don't know all the details. Could you write down the truth on every one of these points?"

Q: Including "I was told not to speak to anybody."

TOUMANOFF: No, simply the facts about myself and family.

How it was that I happened to be born in the Tsarist Embassy, not the Soviet Embassy; that my father was a titled officer in the Imperial Guard and had fought on the sides of the White armies against the Bolsheviks; that I had volunteered for U.S. military service; the reason I hadn't gotten my citizenship until I was old enough to do so, and applied the day after I turned 21 years old, and so forth.

Q: - lay out the checkable facts.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, and to repudiate, or attempt to repudiate, their appalling collection of factoids. I said, yes, I certainly could do that, did so on Saturday evening, and I went over it the next morning with Mr. Spencer. He then said, "Vlad, I'll go up to this Hearing with you and sit beside you and represent you before the Committee."

Q: You could get representation-

TOUMANOFF: I didn't know that, but he did. I thanked him, but said I didn't think that would be necessary. My story is perfectly straight forward, and all I wanted to do was point out the truth, and if it happened to contradict something the Senator or the Staff said I'd not hesitate to correct it. At which Sam Spencer said, "Well, Vlad, you probably will need some counsel, because you don't know what you're up against, so I will be sitting in the front bench of the audience right behind you, and the moment you think you need some help, just ask me, and I'll come forward and sit down with you and explain that I'm representing you." The next day he was there.

Had I turned to him, had I accepted his offer to represent me, he *never* would have been appointed to the Chairmanship of the District Commission, the equivalent of Mayor of the Nation's Capital. He knew that, but never told me. I only learned of it much later. But the integrity of that man was such that he was prepared to make that sacrifice on principle.

Q: He was more proud of his nation.

TOUMANOFF: Yes. By a yawning chasm of contrast with Senator McCarthy and his jackals.

Q: Honorable people there are.

TOUMANOFF: There are people of such integrity that one is left after the entire experience not in despair, but lost in admiration for the country.

Q: History did tell the bottom line.

TOUMANOFF: I think you may be referring to McCarthy's death by alcoholism, and Cohn's by AIDS.

TOUMANOFF: That afternoon, which was Sunday, February 5, I think, 1953, I was walking around in Rock Creek Park trying to clear my head for the next day's Hearing when coming the other way was a friend and college classmate called Douglass Cater. Doug Cater at that time was the Washington correspondent for *The Reporter* magazine.

Q: Oh, yes, superb. I read every issue.

TOUMANOFF: We hadn't seen each other since college days, and Doug asked, "How are you?" To my own surprise, I told him; everything. (It turned out later, of course, that the threat of contempt was hollow. No one was going to go through the trouble of getting the Senate to vote me in contempt.) Doug asked if I had my statement on paper and I showed it to him.

Q: What a story he had.

TOUMANOFF: "Well," he said, "make about 50 copies, and I will come to the Committee Hearing room in advance, and I will introduce you to the entire press corps, and as I introduce you, you hand out copies of this statement to every one of them."

Q: He covered the Hill, I presume, in one form or another.

CHAPTER 4: McCARTHY
The Hearing

TOUMANOFF: Yes. He would be covering the story anyway. Well, I did, and he did. And McCarthy and his staff were sitting up there because they'd been hearing some other witness before me, probably laying the groundwork for my appearance, and they watched us, with the floodlights glowing, flashes popping, cameras grinding, all going on as I went around from correspondent to correspondent being introduced, shaking hands and handing them each my paper. I was called to the witness table, sworn in, and McCarthy looked down at me, irritated, and suspicious.

Q: Insecure, because he didn't have total control.

TOUMANOFF: Partly that, I suppose, but also with his staff which must have assured him that my testimony would be as they had written and shown it to me. He opened with "I understand you have some sort of a statement." I said, "Yes, sir." He scolded me for disobeying a Committee rule which stipulated that no statement would be allowed unless submitted to the Committee in writing 24 hours in advance. I replied that no one had told me about the rule. He said, "Well, do you want to read it?" I said, "Only if you want me to, Sir," which was a mistake. I shouldn't have been so cocky.

Q: I don't see why it was.

TOUMANOFF: Well, because I had put him on the spot. He didn't know what was in it, the Press had it and was reading it, and he didn't know how to proceed with what he knew were falsities and distortions. I was rubbing it in.

Q: Oh, of course.

TOUMANOFF: His rejoinder was, "Read it!" A command, in a very angry voice. So I read it, and he knew that his whole fable about my parents' communism, including his

earlier public statement about my birth in the embassy, would be known to be false.

Q: Which took a while-I mean, it was how many pages?

TOUMANOFF: Well, I forget - it was maybe a couple of pages long. And by the time I got through to the end of it, he realized, and so did everybody up there on the Committee, that Mr. Toumanoff's testimony was not going to be according to that piece of paper that Cohn, Surine, and Schine had prepared.

Q: Which already had been submitted and had been read?

TOUMANOFF: It may have been passed around to the Committee members in preparation for the Hearing. Most of the Senator Members were present.

Q: Not the press yet maybe, but the-

TOUMANOFF: The Committee and its Staff, I assume. Athough he may not have, fearing a premature leak. Well, then the Hearing kind of fell apart. We sparred back and forth.

Q: Could you spar?

TOUMANOFF: Well, yes, because the story that McCarthy was prepared to present to the press was destroyed.

Q: Repudiated in advance.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, in advance, so he couldn't distort things the way he intended to. But he nevertheless tried to salvage some implication of communism with his questions, without much success. He asked, finally, why my mother had left her employment at the School for Advanced International Studies (she was Chair of the Languages Department). My reply, "She died, Sir." so flustered him that he hastened to explain that although the School was being investigated for communist sympathies at the time, it was later entirely cleared. And so he shifted to questions about my work in recruitment and promotion. Here he made more progress, rehashing Mrs. Balog's earlier testimony about suspect missing documents and files, which I was in no position to explain except the I had found some that were simply misfiled.

Q: And you had gained confidence, since you had been able to talk to two very helpful people before the Hearing.

TOUMANOFF: Yes. But it was an exhausting process because it was about as hostile, the questioning in this Hearing, as you can possibly imagine. It was a constant, skillful attack to entrap me in an inconsistency, a contradiction of some statement of mine in Executive Session, distortions, rewordings of my answers with changed content, assumed false conclusions, imputed meanings and motives, impatient interruptions, long

convoluted statements with which I was presumed to agree. I began to understand about the subjects of the Inquisition. I held up for a couple of hours but eventually tired, and McCarthy sensed it. Referring to my testimony in Executive Session he suddenly asked, "Do you still think it a good idea to deny the Promotion Board the knowledge that a man they are considering for promotion is a homosexual?" (Homosexuality had never been mentioned in Executive Session.) "May I elaborate?" I asked, thinking to explain the two Bureaus, their separate files and the security investigation and clearance measures involved in the promotion process, all of which I had done several times in Executive Session. "No you may not," he barked. "You can answer yes or no. You've already answered this question in Executive testimony. Just answer yes or no." I replied "Yes," calculating that one of the other Senators would simply ask me why I thought so. None of them asked. The irrelevant question of "allegation" or "positive knowledge" arose. I said that if there were documents proving a man to be homosexual he would not be in the Foreign Service: he would have been fired. To my amazement that brought a chorus of guffaws from the audience behind me. Senator Henry Jackson asked "Suppose that files about to be presented to a promotion board showed that a candidate for promotion is a convicted homosexual and a certified copy of his conviction is in the file?" The whole dialogue had become so unreal that I tried to think how to get it back to reality in the face of guffaws, and knowing McCarthy would cut me off, as he had so often already when I started an explanation he didn't want. He interjected "It's a hard question to answer isn't it?" I said "It certainly is," and he banged the gavel adjourning the Hearing, saying I'd have ample time later to reply. He then dismissed me commenting that I had wasted the Committee's time. He had his press splash and, of course, I was never called again.

No one in the press asked me either. Most of the newspapers simply ran the story as it happened, leading with McCarthy's sensation. One columnist, Jack Anderson of the Washington Post, if I am not mistaken, added his personal note that lights glistened off my polished fingernails. A few papers, evidently from their own knowledge, or perhaps prompted by friendly Senators, included a clarification about the security safeguards. The Department of State issued the following Statement, which missed the point. Instead of describing the security safeguards built into the promotion process and the difference between personnel and security files, the Statement elaborately repeated my assertion which had already drawn guffaws:

"Since 1947 the department has considered homosexuals and other sex deviates to be security risks. The department, therefore, has pursued an inflexible policy that any employee found to be a homosexual or a sex deviate must be separated from employment immediately. Furthermore the department has carried out, and continues to carry out an aggressive program to detect and rid itself of such employees."

Q: Was McCarthy the sole inquisitor?

TOUMANOFF: Yes, for almost all of the Hearing. A couple of other senators had a question or two but they didn't change the conclusion. Everybody knew that the communist angle was a washout. As one headline put it, "McCarthy Catches a Red Herring."

Q: And it had a degree of uniqueness. In other words, it didn't happen every day.

TOUMANOFF: That's right, yes. But worse things did under McCarthy before and after.

Q: Well, you're a hero.

TOUMANOFF: It sure didn't feel like it.

Q: At the time you weren't feeling it, but in retrospect you indeed were.

TOUMANOFF: I was lucky to bump into Doug Cater.

Q: And had the right wife who had a relative.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, had the right wife who happened to know somebody with the kind of integrity that Sam Spencer had.

Q: That's marvelous. I never heard anything as dramatic as that, of getting him, as he deserved, as he got himself.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, well, but it wasn't any total victory on my part because I'm not sure what the national effect was. The story, including my unadorned "Yes," got nationwide publicity, as did Mrs. Balog's greatly exaggerated criticism of the condition of the Department's personnel files and alleged practices. (See national press of February 5,6 and 7, 1953). McCarthy's aides (I assume including Cohn, Schine and Surine) prepared a report for his Senate Investigations Subcommittee which was leaked to the press for publication on the 4th of July(!), evidently on the same day it was delivered to the members of the Committee for their approval or revision prior to formal release. It may never have been released officially as it contained a vicious criticism of the Department's files and practices, including most of the falsehoods and distortion of the several Hearings McCarthy held on the topic. It received wide press coverage. (See, for example, the Washington Sunday Star, 7/5/53, page 1).

Q: When was this historically, in terms of McCarthy's disappearance?

TOUMANOFF: The Army-McCarthy Hearings which were his downfall were that summer, I think, 1953.

Q. *Why was that review of files done, before Selection Boards?*

TOUMANOFF: The review process was to make sure the required performance materials (efficiency reports and the like) were there, and complete. That involved reading the materials. If in doing so we noticed something that the Security Bureau needed to know about we would let them know. Suppose someone were reported as beginning to get mentally unbalanced, a potential "nervous breakdown," or suppose some report

mentioned a tendency to excessive drinking. We never saw the Security Bureau's files, but it was part of our responsibility to let the Security people know that there's a report they ought to look at, if they hadn't already.

Q: Because it raised a valid question about the person's security. After all, we are by law a sensitive agency.

TOUMANOFF: And remember, this was all about recommendations for promotion. Now as a matter of actual fact, I never did see anything of that kind, and neither did the staff of my office, but we nevertheless kept the possibility in mind, and perhaps others had in the past.

Q: Which is still done.

TOUMANOFF: Probably all computerized long ago.

CHAPTER 5: McCARTHY
The Aftermath, March-December, 1953

Q: But your relationship with the State Department didn't change?

TOUMANOFF: Well yes it did, and then some!

I went back to my desk after the Hearing, and within a few days was asked to see Ambassador Woodward, Director of the Bureau of Foreign Service Personnel. He told me that he had received orders from a Scott McLeod to transfer me to a non-sensitive position, and that hereafter I could receive neither that nor any other assignment without McLeod's personal approval. R. W. Scott McLeod was a new political appointee to the Department, placed in charge of all personnel, all security and all consular affairs, an unprecedented combination of powers. As I recall it, McLeod had been police chief of Manchester, New Hampshire, knew little if anything about the Department of State, was appointed on the insistence of a group of arch-right Senators including McCarthy, Styles Bridges, and Carl Jenner, and became their instrument of purge at State.

Q: The Director General?

TOUMANOFF: No, Woodward was chief of FP, which was the Bureau of Foreign Service Personnel, which included recruiting, promotion, assignments - all personnel actions, and ranked as Assistant Secretary of State. He was, however, under the new regime, subordinate to Scott McLeod.

The immediate difficulty was that the entire Department of State was, legally, a "sensitive" agency, and all positions in it were "sensitive" by definition.

Q: Who was the Secretary at this point? Was it Dulles?

TOUMANOFF: Yes, I think so. Yes, I think he had already been appointed and confirmed. Perhaps not, in which case it was Acheson, as a lame duck. (Incidentally, I remember that transfer of power. Dean Acheson made a graceful exit speech thanking the assembled employees. Dulles managed to tell us he was sure most of us were loyal. You can imagine the effect.)

Q: As a person who could have overruled or given an opinion that could have been personnel-supportive. He didn't.

TOUMANOFF: No. In fact, it got more complicated, and I'll explain that in just a minute. I asked Ambassador Woodward how we could find a non-sensitive assignment in a sensitive agency. Without exactly replying he suggested we try assignment to the Foreign Service Institute. There was a course already under way for embassy Administrative Officers which would last for something like a month or six weeks more. He was sure I could catch up. Clearly it was an assignment he thought looked innocent enough to get past McLeod, and perhaps long enough and far enough away (across the Potomac) to outlast the political heat. McLeod must have approved, so off I went.

That course ended, and I came back as the bad penny to Bob Woodward, only to hear that the heat was still on. McLeod had confirmed his earlier order. Bob asked if I had any leave accrued. I did, about six weeks. He suggested I go on leave, and he would take the temperature and call me back if it came down. I think he was hoping McLeod would come to know there were no non-sensitive assignments in State, or forget the vendetta.

Q: Your own personal leave, not even administrative leave?

TOUMANOFF: I doubt McLeod would have approved administrative leave, but it was the ordinary earned annual leave with pay. It was no great sacrifice on my part because I went up to stay with my in-laws who had a summer home in New Hampshire large enough to accommodate my family, and the most difficult decisions I had to make up there were whether to go swimming, riding, or go play tennis someplace. My son Michael was less than a year old, and Eileen was pregnant with our daughter. So the whole family went for six lovely weeks in New Hampshire summer time. Eventually, as my leave was about to run out, I made a visit to Washington.

Q: One step backwards: To the best of your knowledge, had anybody else like you - let's say a member of the staff, of personnel of the State Department - gone through anything similar to this? Where a supervisor didn't know what to do with an employee...and had orders from Scott McLeod?

TOUMANOFF: No, I think that was probably unique. At the time it may have happened to some others, but this was quite early in McLeod's tenure. Who knows.

Q: I just wondered if you'd had some model out there, but nothing was known.

TOUMANOFF: No, all of these were happy surprises.

Q: And the Office of Personnel didn't know about others?

TOUMANOFF: I never asked. This was a new ruling from McLeod. Well, so there I am back, the bad penny had shown up again, but by this time Bob Woodward had been displaced, had been given some other assignment, I suspect because Woodward, a man of great integrity, was too considerate and too loyal to the personnel of the Department, and revolted by likes of McLeod.

Q: And too professional.

TOUMANOFF: Too professional. And Robert Ryan was, I think, Acting Director of FP. I went in to see him as I knew him from before. He had some bad news for me. A large scale Reduction in Force (RIF) (positions being eliminated and staff being let go) was under way in the entire Foreign Service Staff Corps, and there were, consequently, no open positions available for my assignment. He went on to say that he could not ask me to do it, but if I were to request leave without pay he could arrange it quickly. The RIF was close to complete and he thought it would not take long to know if it would, or would not, reach me. It was plain that personnel operations were in turmoil and my peculiar situation was an embarrassment as there seemed to be no legal solution. Moreover, it would probably be unwise to bring me to McLeod's attention just then.

He said, "If you are willing, just write me a quick memo requesting leave without pay, and bring it in." So I sat down at a desk and prepared this little quick memo requesting leave without pay, and he took it with one hand and handed me my assignment to leave without pay with his other hand, and that was that. I went back to New Hampshire.

Not long after I heard from friends in FP that I had escaped the RIF. They had discovered that to reach me with my Permanent appointment the Department would have first to eliminate all Staff personnel with Temporary appointments. That meant, literally, many hundreds, perhaps thousands, including all of those specialists in petroleum and engineering and agriculture and labor etc. plus all the secretaries, clerks and everybody else recruited by other Officers over three years. Such was the law. Even McLeod couldn't face that.

However, when I went to the Department expecting assignment I was told that McLeod had ordered that all Staff personnel were frozen in their present assignments until they had been cleared by a new Security investigation. I was frozen in leave without pay. It was mid-summer 1953.

Backed up by my wonderful parents-in-law, I determined not to resign. If McLeod wanted to get rid of me that badly he would have to do it the hard way - find cause through the reinvestigation. Moreover, I had friends in the Security Bureau (SY) whose honesty and integrity I trusted. By that time I judged that McLeod had few, if any, in the whole Department. His reputation was "hatchet man" for McCarthy and Co.

Reinvestigation, which required only an update of the FBI full field investigation of 1950 should have been easy and quick. I touched base with FP from time to time, and in September returned with my family to Washington. The reinvestigation dragged on. Eileen gave birth to our daughter in October. I took to visiting a friend in SY from time to time who was keeping an eye on my case. He told me SY had submitted a clearance to McLeod several times and each time he had returned it with instructions to continue investigating. Some episodes in that time may be of interest.

A former landlord had said I'd jumped my rent and still owed him for two weeks. Asked by my friend in SY, I said it was actually the opposite, I'd paid two weeks extra. He asked if I could prove it, and I found and gave him my cashed rent check. In my presence he called the landlord and spelled out to him in painful detail the ugly penalties for false accusations to a Federal Investigative Officer, especially concerning another Federal Officer under investigation. Two days later I received a check from the landlord for two weeks' rent.

On another occasion, he asked me how it was that an ancient king of Georgia (USSR), of some three hundred years ago had the same first name as my middle name. I explained about my Georgian ancestors of the early 1800s, before the Russian conquest, that it was a common Georgian name, my father's first name, and my patronymic according to Russian custom. I wondered he should ask, and he told me the question came from McLeod.

On another visit he asked if I could help SY find a particular individual. I recognized the name as somebody who had gotten tangled up with McCarthy earlier and had been attacked in the press. I said, "Why do you ask?" and he replied, "Because he was a roommate of yours when you were doing graduate work at the University of Chicago." I asked him to spell the name, and it turned out that I had known a fellow graduate student with a similar sounding name but spelled differently, who had lived for a while in an apartment several floors below mine. "Somebody gave us a bum steer," he commented. "We've been wasting time."

Q. *Oh, Vlad...*

TOUMANOFF: Logically, a clearance reinvestigation covering three years shouldn't really take very long because I had been sitting at my desk in the Department of State all that time. It's not as though I'd been moving around or traveling abroad, or something.

Q: Vlad, if you hadn't discovered by then that things weren't logical at that time... they were pointed.

TOUMANOFF: Well, come December, SY told me they had explained to McLeod that they had investigated everything about me, had found nothing adverse, dumped a huge report on his desk, and went to work on other matters. They hadn't heard anything from him (and never did).

Q: You didn't.

TOUMANOFF: I didn't, and so far as I know, nobody else did.

Q: And these people, I'm surprised to hear in Security, were friendly to you.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, they were decent, professional guys with whom I had contact earlier as a Recruitment Officer. Having sent that huge load of paper to McLeod and having heard no complaints or instructions to reinvestigate some more, as had previously happened several times, they considered me re-cleared and reported so to FP.

Finally, I was called in to FP and offered my choice of three openings, Housing Officer in Addis Ababa, Motor Pool Officer in Athens, or Administrative Officer in Reykjavik. As you know, embassy Administrative Officers control all the embassy funds; all the codes and classified files; all the local personnel employments, assignments and promotions; all buildings and supplies; and the U.S. Marine Guards. I calculated that if McLeod approved that assignment for me I was security clear and the political heat was really, finally off. He did, and on December 12, 1953 I was appointed Administrative Officer in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Meanwhile, somebody in the Department must have decided that it would be "inopportune" to give me a Meritorious Service Award, maybe especially while I was on leave without pay and being investigated. Needless to say, that nomination sank without a trace and was never heard of again.

Before I pick up this story in Iceland, I should finish the episode with McCarthy and Mr. McLeod. In 1957, my wife and I and the family were on our way to a new assignment - this was two years, three years later - to Germany, and were going by ship, the *SS America*. On board the ship was Mr. McLeod, who had just been appointed ambassador to Ireland. The *SS America* did not go into port in Ireland. It stopped some place not too far offshore, and no one came out to greet Mr. McLeod except a mail boat. So the mail boat, which was open like a large rowboat, showed up full of mail bags with a couple of Irish mailmen. They delivered their bags and received a full load of incoming mail bags from America in exchange. Ambassador McLeod and all his duffle was perched ignominiously on top. The mail boat had also brought out the Irish newspapers, and we all read with glee the lead editorial in one of the prominent Irish papers, which admitted to mystification that the newly arriving Mr. McLeod had been appointed Ambassador as he had no qualifications the paper had been able to uncover to be America's Ambassador to Ireland except that it was rumored he could play the drums. Pity the Embassy when McLeod read that.

As far as I'm concerned, this was the end of the entire McCarthy episode.

Q: He was drummed out of the Service, but not quite. But you didn't say the one very important thing. Did you have lunch or dinner or drinks with him at all?

TOUMANOFF: He had a reception which included all the Foreign Service people on board the ship.

Q: Of which you were one.

TOUMANOFF: Only one of several other guests. There was a reception line, and we were all presented to Mr. McLeod. He obviously had forgotten me entirely, or at least he showed no signs of recognizing me, and I showed no signs of every having anything to do with him before.

Q: But reflecting back on your story, I don't remember, I don't recall, whether you actually were with him at any time in which you had a confrontation or questioning.

TOUMANOFF: No.

Q: You never were - unlike McCarthy.

TOUMANOFF: No, it was just rulings that came down from McLeod on high..

Q: Never one-on-one.

TOUMANOFF: Never one-on-one. Well, he considered himself the stratosphere and practically running the Department of State, and I was something of a political nuisance that he was trying to get rid of.

Q: His assignment to Ireland took care of that.

TOUMANOFF: I never did bother to find out why he was assigned to Ireland. It was obviously a political appointment. But that was years after my run-in with McCarthy. I'd done a tour in Iceland and a year back at Harvard in between. Iceland is next on our agenda.

CHAPTER 6: REYKJAVIK, ICELAND 1954-56

Iceland, within easy reach of the major convoy routes across the North Atlantic to Britain and Russia, became a major factor in the struggle against German submarine, aircraft and surface raiders in the Battle of the Atlantic in World War II. Under gradually receding Danish rule, the Icelanders took advantage of the German occupation of Denmark in 1940 to move toward full independence. Promptly that year Britain sent its forces into Iceland, which had no defence of its own (and still doesn't) to prevent a German occupation; and by agreement with Britain the United States substituted its troops for the British in 1941, to established a deterrent U.S. military presence. By the time Iceland declared full independence in 1944, U.S. base facilities and accessory installations had made Iceland a bastion of Allied military control over the North Atlantic. It was still growing and improving when I arrived in 1954, only by that time, as a NATO member, Iceland was a factor in the Cold War with the USSR.

The main base, on the barren Keflavik peninsula, some 35 miles southwest of the capital, Reykjavik, inevitably had great political, economic, social and cultural impact on the Icelanders. That impact had been, was in 1954, and probably continues to be the main concern of the American diplomatic mission, (a Legation in 1954, to become an Embassy a year later).

Picture an isolated island in the middle of the North Atlantic, touching the Arctic Circle, with a population of less than 100,000 in 1900, fishing and farming in tiny coastal settlements, with 80% of their country arctic, volcanic and uninhabitable, speaking a language unknown elsewhere, a minor colony for centuries of a distant, Danish, imperial power. An almost crofter, poor, patriarchal society. Iceland had barely entered the modern age when it was suddenly inundated by mid-20th century American culture, itself under the frantic pressures of wartime. Iceland had been so isolated for so long that its population was, as Hitler noted in Main Kampf, and contemporary genetic research has recognized, the most predominantly Nordic strain in existence. That nation of strong, healthy, handsome and hospitable people was so uniformly blond and blue-eyed that one could recognized villains on stage by their dark hair, the aberrants. By contrast the thousands of Americans on the Base looked like the New York subways and, under the press of the Battle of the North Atlantic, had no time to explain, accommodate or learn. Powerful and rich beyond imagining, utterly ignorant of their surroundings, they had a savage struggle in appalling conditions on their hands in which every minute counted. Everything but warfare was expendable.

After the war, I think in 1951, the American presence was regularized by formal agreement with the Icelandic government, by then fully independent of Denmark. In 1954, when I arrived, the Base generated as many problems for the Icelanders as it did benefits. As I'm sure it had since 1941, and probably still does.

Economically, the Base poured out money, absorbed labor, materials and services, and leaked volumes of all sorts of goods, including alcoholic, at an alarming rate in a very high tariff, impoverished and frugal nation. Prices had risen by a factor of eight since the war, and a black market flourished. Politically, one of the most important prizes of electoral victory was favored access to its manifold benefits. Consequently losers kept the existence of the Base and its ill effects a leading political issue, not just in elections but all the time. The Communist Party was, if course, the most vigilant, strident, and probably effective in its criticism, but was not alone in its appeals to nationalism and condemnation of alleged mismanagement of Base affairs by whatever Party was in power.

Socially, Americans, especially contract civilian workers, were, as the British once said, overpaid, oversexed, and over there, to such a degree that both military and civilian personnel were allowed off Base only by severely limited individual permission. Attempts to limit the range of Base radio (and later TV) broadcasts to the Base area were ineffectual. Base entertainment had to be provided and Icelanders, especially the young, inevitably flocked in for movies, dances and parties. Efforts to discourage marriage to

Americans stopped no one.

Culturally, the Base fractured the society. The young swallowed America's exciting youth culture, manners, music, style, slang, behavior and general irreverence as though famished, while bewildered parents resisted and resented. Something of the same division held among adults. The result was a generation gap on the scale of the Grand Canyon and a contentious dissonance in the society as a whole, beyond anything we experienced in post-war America.

The Embassy's task was to mediate between these two very disparate cultures, with almost diametrically opposite local purposes: the huge and hyper-dynamic United States for whom Iceland was in essence just a miniature ball bearing in the works of a global hot and cold war; and tiny Iceland emerging from a centuries-old time warp, striving frantically to contain and survive an unstoppable imported revolution in all aspects of its existence. The Embassy was advocate, mediator, trail guide, medic, grease monkey and safety valve for both sides.

For example: As I said, Iceland had joined NATO, and in 1951 signed a treaty with the United States for its forces to be stationed in Iceland. In 1955 the Icelandic Parliament passed an Opposition-sponsored Resolution calling for revision of the 1951 treaty. Failing that, the Resolution stated, Iceland would cancel the Treaty as was its right by its terms, and the U.S. Forces would have to leave. (Coincidentally, the USSR, on a Peace and Friendship campaign, was preaching that there was no longer any need for NATO, and was offering to buy all of Iceland's fish exports.) The American press sensationalized the event with headlines such as "Legislature of Iceland Wants U.S. to Withdraw Its Forces," "Eisenhower Worried By Reykjavik Action," and the Alsops devoted their column to a prediction that at stake were Danish and Norwegian withdrawal from NATO, and the loss of U.S. foreign bases in Morocco and Saudi Arabia, while the loss of Keflavik alone would tip the whole world balance of power decisively in favor of the communist bloc.

I doubt that the Icelanders were already so adept at manipulating American public opinion in preparation for negotiations. More likely they were surprised, and pleased, at the stir they had created. Iceland rarely appeared in the U.S. press and this coverage might serve well in what would likely be unequal negotiations. The Resolution's call for renegotiation did reflect a majority of Icelandic public opinion. The time had come for some changes in the Treaty and in habitual practices. The Base was in the midst of a major construction program and American contractors with imported U.S. labor were unduly favored over Icelandic. That was a major complaint in the Resolution, and a welcome one to Icelandic ears. In due course the Treaty terms were renegotiated at the Embassy in favor of Iceland, and some social sore points were adjusted. The U.S. forces remained and the Icelanders felt safe to sign a very large and favorable fish-for-petroleum agreement with the USSR, one provision of which was that Iceland would purchase no oil from other countries.

But I was not involved. The task of the Administrative Officer was the care and feeding

of the Embassy, keeping that apparatus running smoothly so the substantive work could go on without distractions. And to do so within the strictures of some Icelandic, but vast amounts of U.S. rules and regulations, standardized for every kind of Embassy in every kind of nation and circumstance, all of them designed to ensure documented accountability. It was no mean trick, especially when superiors don't know and don't wish to know, much about rules. It quickly became apparent that the less I explained them the better, seniors didn't have much patience for it.

G. *Shall we switch? How did that go?*

TOUMANOFF: Okay. Besides, all the substantive exchanges must be in the archives and declassified by now, and in press morgues.

Reykjavik was my first foreign assignment, and was a fascinating place. First of all, the arrival was a bit daunting. I left my family in Washington until I could find housing, and flew in on Pan American to the big American military base and airfield out on the Keflavik peninsula. It was late December of '53, or early in January, and we circled and circled and circled. At mid-afternoon it was pitch dark, of course, because there is very little daylight in Iceland at that time of year. The airplane, a large transatlantic four-motor, propeller-driven plane kept circling and circling in a very rough air. I finally asked a stewardess what was happening. She said there was a howling snow storm, visibility was zero, the runways were coated with ice, and we were circling hoping for a break in the weather to be able to land. I asked no more questions. We circled for half an hour or more. It felt like forever. Finally, there was a desperate effort with engines roaring. The plane landed on the icy runways and eventually came to a stop on reversed propellers only, as braking was too dangerous. But there was no taxiing and we sat on the end of the runway with all four engines going at a fair clip to keep the plane stationary and pointed into the wind. On the ground the plane still bucked. Eventually the stairway was lowered and we slowly came down the steps, holding hard onto both railings. As each one of us reached the ground, we were knocked flat by the wind. So we crawled on hands and knees across the ice to a military bus, which took us in blinding snow to the airport terminal, by dead reckoning I guessed.

That was the arrival. I decided not to ask if we had enough fuel to have just kept on going across the North Atlantic to some place where the weather might have been better - like Ireland, or back to Thule in Greenland.

Iceland was a very interesting place, Bill, for a variety of reasons.

Q: What kind of training did you have to go to Iceland?

TOUMANOFF: Nothing, really. It was on very short notice and I didn't have time for much except the Post Report and conversations with the Desk and INR Officers, and a quick scan of the administrative files. No, I take that back. The fact is that when the Department was searching for a non-sensitive position for me shortly after the McCarthy Hearing, I spent about a month at the Foreign Service Institute in an Administrative

Officers' training course. Long enough to find there were a couple of fat loose leaf binders full of administrative laws, regulations and procedures, and to read most of them. The embassy had copies or I would have been lost. Substitute pages with changes arrived about every month, and woe betide the Administrative Officer who fell behind.

Q: You also had some experience, in Departmental personnel work, for example.

TOUMANOFF: Yes.

Q: Not in GSO work necessarily.

TOUMANOFF: Well, Administration of an embassy involves a good bit more than General Services. It is not for nothing that in large embassies the Admin Officer is apt to be an FSO-1. As a matter of fact, it was very fortunate, because in terms of its administrative condition the Embassy (actually a Legation, which became an Embassy shortly after I arrived) was in really pretty desperate condition. The previous Administrative Officer had departed some months earlier. We were in the middle of building an addition doubling its size, with Icelandic contractors who spoke no English. So I learned my Icelandic from blueprints. The Disbursing Officer had just arrived, newly promoted from a clerking position at his only previous post. The General Services Clerk had no training as he had been the embassy chauffeur, and still was whenever needed.

Q: And not American.

TOUMANOFF: Not American, a young Icelander. The Disbursement Officer (equivalent of a treasurer) was American, and he had a clerk assistant, also an American. The Embassy files had expanded to the point where they had run out of storage space, so they were simply stacked in boxes in the attic, which was not secured due to construction. The Code Clerk, also new to the post, had been a file clerk. And the Administrative Officer, myself, was on his first foreign assignment and had never seen an embassy. Most of the embassy food had to be purchased and brought from the military base over 35 miles of unpaved track, through ice, snow, mud and potholes, sometimes impassable. There was an unofficial Embassy commissary operating on the honor system from an unsecurable basement two houses away. Fortunately our diplomatic pouches, which had to be handled by cleared American personnel only, also came and went through the Keflavik Base, so the Embassy used off-duty Marines (all six of them) and added the food and all sorts of supply orders to their chores. On top of that, the Minister and his wife kept making changes in the design of the new construction, which filled an empty lot between the Chancery and Residence, and connected with both. Each change, of course had to be designed for security both during construction and permanently, then worked out with the Icelandic contractors, costed, and approved by the Department. It was nearly two years before the work was finished and we could move in.

It took a lot of cleaning up, that embassy did.

Early on in my tour, when we were not responding quickly enough to the flood of

administrative mail from the Department, I received a polite but unmistakable prompt. So I sat down one Sunday and described the situation in a dispatch. The Department, which had, understandably, not paid much attention to Reykjavik and had no idea of its condition, panicked and cabled an offer to send a batch of emergency administrators to help. That's all I needed! So I cabled back, no thanks, we have good, talented people and we'll sort this place out ourselves. Just be patient. It worked. We were never bothered again and were treated very gently, i.e. given prompt, generous attention, and a lot of slack. The Department must have had a guilty conscience.

Q. *One of our greatest problems we faced when I was assigned to the American delegation to NATO in Paris, was the taking control by the Communist Party of the Government of Iceland. How to keep NATO secrets, and which ones, from the Icelandic delegation.*

TOUMANOFF: Iceland had, as I recall, six political parties, of which one that played a prominent part was the Communists, but they were not in the Government in my time. The Conservative-Farmers Parties in coalition were in power when I arrived, and the Communists, I guess, did not participate in a coalition government (probably with the Socialists) until some years later. As I recall, their ideological convictions were flexible enough to accommodate the benefits of Base retention.

Q: And it was only a part, it wasn't taking over the government, was it?

TOUMANOFF: No, I believe the most they ever attained was minority membership, and carefully limited at that. But that was not in my time. While I was there their orders from Moscow dictated a vociferous opposition.

Q: But it was out there. It was a big threat to what we were going to do.

TOUMANOFF: Exactly, because as coalition members they would be part of the Government, and however limited, in a position of formal and informal access, and even influence, in many spheres of government activity.

Q: Yes.

TOUMANOFF: Iceland had an elected parliament, two houses, upper and lower. It was a full scale democracy with a President and a Prime Minister, a Supreme Court and lower courts - all of the usual institutions of democracies. At the same time, by 1954 the total population was only about 150,000, of whom 50,000 lived in the capital city of Reykjavik, and almost all the rest were scattered in isolated, small coastal fishing villages and farmsteads. Most Icelanders had only a first name and patronymic. Thus: Olaf Trygvysson whose son would be Thorgir Olafsson and whose daughter would be Helga Olafsdottir. There being lots of Helgas and Thorgirs and Trygvis, the telephone book listed professions or occupations to help identify individuals, and which you needed to know to tell which number to ring. The island was about 200 x 300 miles, and the interior was nearly all at elevation, from some 1500 to above 5,000 feet, arctic in winter and

uninhabited. It was a full fledged western, democratic nation, but in miniature. The Foreign Ministry, as I recall, had seven Officers, and we had eight in the Embassy, from three Federal Departments.

Q: Seven Officers in the home office.

TOUMANOFF: In the Foreign Ministry.

Q: And then they had a Diplomatic service - but very few people.

TOUMANOFF: Right. Iceland was an ideal first post, so small it was comprehensible, almost a society in a test tube. So few people in the Government that access was easy. It had essentially a one-product export - fish. Its currency was blocked, limited to some Scandinavian arrangement. The Icelandic krone was not in circulation anywhere else in the world. Its language (close to old norse) was unknown except in Scandinavia where, if understood at all, it was apt to be treated as something of an antique joke.

Let's see, what else? It had a very strange geography; that is, it was very fresh, very new, and it was entirely of volcanic creation. In June the sun barely set and people mowed lawns and gardened in daylight at all hours of the night. In December there was a little watery daylight from about 11:00 to 1:00 in the afternoon. Many of us got by on three or four hours of sleep in summer, and could barely wake up after eight or more hours of sleep in winter. The light came at such a shallow angle that all colors in nature were different from ours, augmented by volcanic origin, and air so clear distances shrank.

Q: But warm, from the Gulf Stream environment.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, the island was surrounded by the Gulf Stream, which made the coastline quite habitable. On the coast it was a climate very much like New York, although changeable in minutes. But the moment you got inland, in some places the escarpment to the inland was right at the water's edge and in some places it was a very gradual gentle rise, but the inland averaged somewhere around 1,500 to 5,000 feet, and there it was quite Arctic with glaciers, some huge. About 80% of the island was uninhabitable. One effect of the Gulf Stream was to dump 40 or 50 feet of snow inland in the long winter. But you can read about the place in any number of books. It is stunningly beautiful and different. Run, do not walk, to see it.

Q: Heavy snow.

TOUMANOFF: Very heavy. As a consequence, it was probably the best possible first assignment, because if there was a dock strike, the effects of the strike would be immediately obvious, and a great deal else was on such an almost test-tube scale that it was accessible and comprehensible. Whereas if there were a dock strike in New York City you never could figure out what the consequences really were. Something of the same was true of political, social, and cultural developments.

Q: Whereas most governments where one serves in the Foreign Service, you had to find out behind the scenes what is motivating or what is happening and what is truly happening, certainly with Soviet affairs.

TOUMANOFF: The motivation and underlying causes weren't always that transparent, although there really was a principal motivation, which was: Who will receive the profit from the American base? It was a matter of millions of dollars, and in Iceland a million dollars was a gigantic sum. One way or another the Base was almost inevitably involved.

Q: Was this Air Force-oriented mostly?

TOUMANOFF: Yes, by the time I was there it was air oriented. There were several installations, radar, weather, a naval air station flying anti-submarine PBY's, and the huge Keflavik Base which served commercial as well as military air. The other main function during the war was sea transport, convoy assembly and protection. But the "Icelandic Defense Force" as the U.S. forces were called probably contained some of every service.

Q: Were there any other NATO nations there in support of our support of Iceland?

TOUMANOFF: Not military, I think, except for liaison. There were a few embassies - Russian, French, British, the Scandinavians, Germany - but nothing like what you'd find in any major capital city. There was certainly a prominent British Embassy, but the British troops had all gone back to England early in the War to participate in other warfare while we defended Iceland.

Q: So we really were the defense, the NATO defense.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, after NATO was established and Iceland joined. But it was called the IDF, Icelandic Defense Force, a totally American operation after U.S. forces arrived in 1941. British naval forces, of course, until well after the U.S. entered the war, conducted convoy protection and anti-submarine operations, doubtless operating out of Iceland. Later in the war, I believe, the U.S. took responsibility for the North Atlantic traffic all the way across.

Q: Because this was the point, we recall, that the Soviet threat began to be explicit.

TOUMANOFF: Early in the War convoys to England and the USSR assembled in Icelandic fjords and harbors, and later it served as a staging area for convoys when ships had to travel in convoy all the way from the Atlantic Coast of North America. But initially, ships would arrive singly, unescorted, in Iceland, and the convoys would be made up there, so there was a huge naval support operation going on.

When I was there, the Cold War opponents were the Soviets and their bloc, and our main focus was to keep track of their naval, especially submarine operations. Iceland stood in the middle of their access to the Atlantic and beyond, until submarine passage under the North Pole opened.

Q: Now were you involved, other than administrative work in the embassy, with any of that effort, or was that totally done by the military?

TOUMANOFF: No, that was a totally military operation.

Q: And good relations?

TOUMANOFF: Basically, yes. But the Base had such a huge impact on all aspects of life in Iceland that, together with its benefits, it could not help but be a constant source of irritations and tensions, on both sides. Keflavik Base, was constantly being worked on and expanded, and so there was not only a large military population but also a large civilian labor force, brought from all parts of America by U.S. contractors. We brought in equipment, construction methods, and technologies unknown in Iceland, and some of it classified. Icelandic contractors and labor learned quickly, but availability, urgency and language requirements made heavy use of American labor imperative. So there was this great big foreign operation going on in this tiny isolated and insulated country, nearly overwhelmed by our presence but eager to reap the manifold benefits. The overarching goal of the enterprise was common to the two countries. The ready means available to them were anything but. Small wonder there was friction and heat.

Q: Did you have a good USIA? What kind of cultural support did you have there?

TOUMANOFF: There was a small USIA unit. Two Officers and a secretary, working at a library across town.

Q: They couldn't come to grips with this.

TOUMANOFF: They were talented and skilled, but this was a force of vast, vast power, driven by a global imperative. This was a fantastic, ultra modern mid-twentieth century America descended upon, by comparison, an almost primitive, microscopic, alien culture. ('Nobody speaks Icelandic.') It and they were amazingly strong to survive. It is also a tribute to America's beneficence that they have.

Q: It's such a difficult language. Maybe this is time to bring in the rest of the Embassy, because this is one of the main issues, I sense, of your time in Iceland-maybe still is. But who else was there? Who was the ambassador? What was the staff like that your American presence could focus on this?

TOUMANOFF: Well. It was a Legation when I arrived, and our Minister was Edward Lawson. Due to the complications of building an addition which connected his Residence with the Chancellery, with provision for passage to and fro, and the frequent changes of design involved, I saw a good deal of him. He was a kind and gentle person, thoughtful and effective in his quiet way with Icelanders and Base Military Officers alike. He was a Career Officer with previous service, as I recall, in the Middle East. His wife was of delicate health and his concern for her was steady.

Q: Was he there for the entire tour you were there?

TOUMANOFF: No.

Q: He was your first Chief

TOUMANOFF: Yes, our first. And the staff was really very good. It was young and energetic, and there were few but enough of us so that there was no problem about communications, you know, one hand not knowing what the other hand was doing. We all knew each other very well, were close at work and after, had children of like ages and got along well. Morale tends to be high at small, hardship posts with heavy, interesting and important workload and lots of individual responsibility. We had all that and a fascinating, novel and beautiful country around us.

Q: And all new to the Foreign Service, for the most part.

TOUMANOFF: Not really. Except for myself and the Consular Officer, who was new, I think the rest of the officers had all served in at least one previous post. They were the Economic Officer, two Political Officers, two at USIA, and the Disbursing Officer.

Q: Your guidance from Washington? Your support beyond the post?

TOUMANOFF: Well, except for the fact that the administrative side and the consular office were staffed by brand new people who had relatively little if any experience at doing what they're supposed to do, the other Officers had Foreign Service experience and knowledge. It wasn't that complicated a place to understand or to operate in. As I said earlier, once it woke up to our administrative condition, the Department gave me generous and attentive support.

Q: Maybe Washington wasn't focusing on it very much.

TOUMANOFF: Well, Washington was not focusing on it very much except for the military side, and its political and economic consequences.

Q: Like that Resolution.

TOUMANOFF: The actual fact is that the Icelanders really were not in a position to do very much about the base anyway. They understood perfectly well that this was a vital link in two gigantic global confrontations. The Resolution was calculated more to catch Washington's attention than a realistic threat. Neither country, for quite different reasons, could tolerate termination of the Base. The U.S. for reasons of NATO and the Cold War. Iceland had no alternative choice, certainly not the USSR, and the economic effects alone of Base closure would have devastated their country. They could, and did, force changes, minuscule for the U.S., vital for them.

Q: And they weren't making trouble for us in the sense that there wasn't an aggravating issue out there other than their Communist element.

TOUMANOFF: By and large, the only complication was that whichever of the Parties were not in the Government, sought to oust the governing Party in an election so that they could be on the favored receiving end of the benefits of the Base. So there was a good deal of criticism of the way any Government in Iceland was running, relating to, or managing this whole Base issue. The criticism was not limited to the Communists, who, on Moscow's orders, tried to make life difficult for any Government, and for the U.S./NATO Base.

Q: But the inter-generational ones, which you've just explained in depth, because it was an issue that was affecting relations in some ways. After all, it was our government, or rather, our people who culturally were feeding out all of these disturbing issues wasn't anything else that really bugged you?

TOUMANOFF: No, oddly enough, perhaps the most interesting and unimportant part of the cultural shock for me - I was dark-haired, dark eyebrows, and reasonably dark-featured - dark complexion - was that the uniformly blond and blue-eyed Icelanders were sometimes initially cautious with me as an anomaly, and that the blondness and the blue-eyedness from time to time became somehow uncomfortable for me. So I, and others at the embassy, would occasionally go out to the base, and there was this refreshing, extraordinary, wonderful conglomeration of people.

Q: It was all colors.

TOUMANOFF: All colors, all shapes, all sizes, all accents. It was like going home. It was, in fact, a bit of home.

Q: And the PX.

TOUMANOFF: Not so much in that sense. Thanks to the PX, duty free imports and a very strong dollar we were not materially deprived. But a trip every now and then out to the base was a refreshing change.

Q: Re-Americanization.

TOUMANOFF: Re-Americanization, exactly.

What else about Iceland? Yes, you asked me about being Vice Consul.

Sometime early in 1955, Minister Lawson left, and Ambassador John Muccio arrived. He was quite different.

Q: Oh, yes!

TOUMANOFF: We couldn't quite make out why he came to Iceland, because he had most recently been Ambassador to Korea, In that war, and Iceland seemed to us some considerable demotion, especially as it was still a Legation when he arrived. Rumors began to fly that he had run into some trouble with General MacArthur. Perhaps so, but we never knew. In any case the Legation was promptly raised to Embassy status, and the Ambassador took hold. He had the habit of command and we all knew promptly that any laxity could be painful. He expected active brains and applied skills, appreciated them when present, and his displeasure at less was clear and blunt. He suffered frequently from attacks of gout in one leg and we learned not to trouble him overmuch on those days. Not long after he arrived he instructed the Vice Consul and me to swap jobs. We didn't ask for an explanation and never received one. I think Muccio simply wanted to train us more widely for our own good and the Service's. So Greg Novakowski became Administrative Officer, and I became the Vice Consul.

Q: By act of the ambassador.

TOUMANOFF: By act of ambassador. Well, I knew next to nothing about consular work, and Greg knew literally nothing whatever about administration, so he and I both had a hard time at first, but we helped each other, and we had the regulations, and we could read.

Q: I was going to say, in both sections you did have a degree of strength of local employees that helped.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, an Icelandic consular clerk and myself - that was it. That was the Consular Section. But he, fortunately, had been in that position for a considerable number of years, so he guided me pretty carefully at first. And Greg had, by then, a fairly experienced administrative Icelandic staff, as well as the financial section and code/files clerk, who were all American. So it worked out all right.

One aspect of having this extraordinary military Base full of Americans was that by some informal arrangement no Icelander could marry an American, temporarily in Iceland to work at the Base, without the approval of the Embassy. That task fell to the Vice Consul. Now many Icelanders, especially the young, most of whom due to the war had never been off the island, thought of the United States as paved with gold. They had all sorts of illusions about that extraordinarily attractive, marvelous, almost magic place - compared to the croft with sheep, or the fishing village that they were used to. The American workers were mainly single men as there was little if any housing for families. Icelanders are not only a handsome nation known for striking blondes, but attitudes were more Scandinavian than puritan. It was a potent mix.

Q: And to emigrate.

TOUMANOFF: Emigration to the U.S. was one factor. In any case the couple had to come and be interviewed by *me* to get permission, formal permission from me, to get married.

Q: This is an Icelandic law, it must have been.

TOUMANOFF: I doubt it was a law. More likely a tacit arrangement reflecting the preference of both the Base and Icelandic authorities.

Q: To protect their own-

TOUMANOFF: Yes, to protect the country from loss of their young population, and to avoid the anguish of broken marriages which were a too common result. For the Base, marriages involved scarce housing, labor turnover, and other complications including security.

Moreover, such marriages resulted not infrequently in tragedy when a young Icelandic bride with little English found herself with an older, heavy equipment operator, living with his family in the back woods of America where to her dismay the streets were not paved with gold. Such young women, if they returned to Iceland, especially if with a child, also faced a very hard time.

In practice, all that was involved was that there would be a quick, discreet name check by the Icelandic authorities to see if there were any kind of obstacle.

Q: And no red lights.

TOUMANOFF: No. Actually Iceland had almost no criminality, and offenses were more likely drunkenness or minor pilferage. The police force was almost nonexistent, and those few individuals who were jailed were allowed out on weekends. I'm not even sure what the name check involved, quite truthfully, it was handled by the Political Section and I never had a rejection.

Q: They're all -ssons and -dottirs!

TOUMANOFF: Right. The task fell on me. I would try to get the Icelander and the American to talk about the United States, what the one expected and how the other lived. It might be the last chance before marriage for a grand romantic illusion about the United States, if there were one, to emerge.

Q: But they liked blondes.

TOUMANOFF: Who doesn't? But to get the American to explain something about the United States, and his life there in case it had never come up between them, really to try to make sure there was some shared knowledge of it. But that's all I could ever do, and as a consequence it became something of a *pro forma* visit. Especially as I had to avoid like the plague any appearance of trying to discourage the marriage. It was, at the same time, awkward for all three parties concerned. Their basic interest in this kind of interview was to get in there and get out as fast as they could and get this thing out of the way. It was a

ridiculous, really, truly ridiculous business. I'm sure it daunted no one from marriage.

Q: My counterpart, in the late '50s, in Birmingham, England, was my association, as Consul, with the Transatlantic Brides Association, which had the same object: the British mother and father didn't trust what they saw happening, the Americans stealing away their young bride. Love at first sight, perhaps, but this exact same cultural conflict. Another part that probably was with you, too, were some unhappy parents that were watching this child going off to America. They were against the marriage.

TOUMANOFF: I think that's true, Bill, parents in opposition. But I never had a parent come in and say, "You're going to interview my daughter and her boyfriend, for goodness sake talk them out of it if you can." Or worse, "prohibit it." That would have called for a soft landing. I think it continues to be true in a great many parts of the world, Bill, that the United States is still an extraordinarily attractive place, so there's pressure to emigrate to it or to get to it one way or another. And one way is to marry an American.

Q: The easiest and fastest. But you didn't sense that was actually happening.

TOUMANOFF: Well, actually it was happening in Iceland, and that's where part of the pressure came from. It wasn't just that the Icelanders were so handsome, and so friendly. It's the magnetic pull of the United States.

Q: We can't stop being a magnet.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, exactly. And a good many of these marriages break up.

Q: Yes, oh, yes, because of the difference of cultural realities.

TOUMANOFF: I remember what one hoped for was that there would not be children involved, that the disillusionment or the conflict would arise before children were the product of the marriage.

Q: Now it sounds to me as if you are about to leave Iceland, I think, in 1966. Would you like to venture into the next part of your career, including your entry into the Foreign Service as an Officer? I say, "as an Officer" - you were a Staff Officer. I meant a Career FSO. I am correct, am in not, that in Iceland you were a Foreign Service Staff Officer?

TOUMANOFF: Most of the time there. I was trying to recall when I became a Career Foreign Service Officer. The Wriston program was going strong, and my recollection is that someplace around the middle of my tour in Iceland I came back to Washington for my oral examination. I had applied.

Q: You had to come back, rather than a team coming out.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, and it may be that I just took advantage of Home Leave.

Q: But you were examined by the Board. I think we had better stop, and tell us about the Wriston Program.

TOUMANOFF: Bill, do you remember enough about it to fill us in? As I recall, a law was passed.

Q: I was "Wristonized," so therefore I do remember some details. It was set up by the Secretary, I presume, or maybe even by Congress, under Wriston, who was president of a university, as I remember. He was told to examine this growing, changing Foreign Service. You were describing earlier in your interview, the personnel and programmatic needs which resulted in an ever-growing Foreign Service as well as the continued demands for better integration since 1924, of the two systems: staff and officer corps (in both consular and diplomatic services) along with the Civil Service employees in the State Department.

TOUMANOFF: Not only that, though, but the personnel system was completely out of balance. My recollection is that when I was recruiting for the Foreign Service, even then, earlier, there were something on the order of 2,000 Career Foreign Service Officers and 5,000 Staff and Reserve officers.

Q: Yes, because Staff was the way to fill the need in a hurry.

TOUMANOFF: And so there was that pressure also, somehow to amalgamate all of this.

Q: Would you describe it in terms of what happened to you and how it happened?

TOUMANOFF: As soon as I had my citizenship for the requisite 10 years I applied under this Wriston Program which moved Staff Officers into the regular Career Foreign Service Officer corps. The process involved writing an application explaining why you wanted to apply for Career status, and if the application was accepted, to be examined by the equivalent of the Career Examination Board. My application was accepted and I took advantage of Home Leave from Iceland to come to Washington to the Department for the oral examination. The examination was an interesting one because no one on the panel knew much about Iceland, and in fairly short order they were asking me about it. I took advantage of the fact that the country was really so transparent, compared to most, and so fascinating in every way, from its geology to its economics, its politics and its culture, that we wound up talking about Iceland for most of the time. I was lucky, or perhaps they were impressed by how much I knew about the place, despite the fact that at that point I was still listed as Administrative Officer with my nose pointed inside the Embassy rather than out into Iceland and the problems of the Base. At any rate, they passed me, so I became a Foreign Service Officer. That was 1955.

As I think back about it, perhaps the McCarthy episode had something to do with it. The Board had my file and it would have reflected my full testimony and the manner in which McCarthy had made his splash. Perhaps that, and the fact that I had withstood the McLeod aftermath and refused to resign, may have stood me in good stead. Or maybe the

recommendation for a Meritorious Service Award surfaced. Who knows.

Q. *But you went on after Iceland into Soviet work. How did that happen?*

TOUMANOFF: Just before we go to that, there was a traumatic moment connected to that FSO application. I had just been transferred to be Vice Consul before Home Leave. The first visas, the very first visas that I signed and issued, was to an Icelandic parliamentary delegation coming to the United States under U.S. Information Agency sponsorship. By coincidence I left Iceland for that Home Leave on the same Pan American flight as the Parliamentarians. Pan Am was flying sleeper aircraft, and the parliamentarians and I all wound up with bunks, upper and lower berths.

There I was in my berth preparing to get undressed for the night and all those parliamentarians were still up, talking with great interest and excitement about their arrival in New York and their visit because none of them had been in the United States before. I suddenly realized with a terrible start that when I had issued their visas I had not checked to see if they all had their international inoculation certificates or had been inoculated. I started having visions of arriving in New York City surrounded by the parliamentarians when they would be stopped by the U. S. Public Health Service, packed back on the plane and shipped back to Iceland. And I knew that my career at that point would likely come to a sudden end.

Q: And you're on your way to reinforce your career at that point.

TOUMANOFF: Right. Needless to say, I got no sleep, I didn't even bother to undress. Instead I arranged with the stewardess to be the first one off the aircraft, thinking to appeal, probably in vain, to every U.S. authority in sight. It was a very bad night. The wheels had barely stopped when I jumped off the plane, dashed to the Immigration Offices and breathlessly explained the terrible situation. They looked at me benignly and explained that Iceland was the only country in the world from which we did not require immunization certificates. I blessed my Consular Clerk, Harold Wright, and fled.

Q. *Thank God for local employees. They have saved most of us at some time in our careers. But now you are still far away from Soviet affairs. What happened?*

TOUMANOFF: Well, as I may have mentioned at the very beginning of our discussions, the reason that I joined the Foreign Service in the first place was that I was interested in working in some fashion in the field of U.S. relations with the Soviet Union, using my knowledge of the language and my background knowledge of that country. And here I was in Iceland being an Administrative and Consular Officer. Pretty far from U.S.-Soviet relations. Happily, the Department was operating a Soviet Area Training Program, involving a year at a university, which was a kind of ticket to Soviet area assignment, and at the same time a sine qua non. Applications were open for the 1956-57 academic year when I got back to Iceland, and I applied.

The history of my application was not without its hurdles. For those abroad, the Chief of

Mission was required to add his appraisal of the applicant, and to endorse the application.. Ambassador Muccio, when I told him that this was my professional career goal, and why, he explained to me that it was the Department's practice to avoid appointing ambassadors of foreign ancestry to their earlier native lands for reasons of possible bias or involvement of remaining relatives. He then said "Well, Vlad, I come of Italian ancestry, and I can never be ambassador to Italy, so you'd better forget the whole thing." So there I was, stuck. I thought it better not to explain that I had no ambition to be ambassador to the USSR, or Deputy Chief of Mission, or any inappropriate rank. On the other hand, he had not said "Do not apply"; he had simply said what he thought was the Department's practice, and had dismissed my plans. I could understand the practice if there were relatives, or other close ties, or the opposite, resentment or residual hostility, which could risk bias, improper influence or divided loyalties. But I had no relatives behind the Iron Curtain, knew no one there, had lived in America since I was five months old, and my opinion of the country was about that of any interested American in the Cold War. With the advent of nuclear weapons it was the dangerous state of U.S.-Soviet relations that concerned me. Besides, several American children of Russian emigrés had already served in Moscow. I decided to pursue my application and let the Department decide.

As luck would have it, Ambassador Muccio left Iceland on vacation shortly later, and I explained the situation to the Deputy Chief of Mission, who was Chargé in the Ambassador's absence. He took a more sympathetic view, agreed with me that this was a matter for the Department to decide, endorsed my application and sent it in.

Q: And who knew the system.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, he knew the system and realized the risk he was taking in not following the Ambassador's course in this case. But I think it was, for him, a matter of judgement he was prepared to defend. I doubt that Ambassador Muccio ever gave it a second thought, for him it was such a small matter. Perhaps he never knew, or had already forgotten his previous action. In due course my application was accepted and, at the end of my Iceland tour, I went home to an academic year of Soviet studies at Harvard, my alma mater.

Bill, I think that ends my tale of Iceland.

CHAPTER 7: HARVARD, 1956-1957
Soviet Area Training

Nothing terribly dramatic happened at Harvard, although Zbig Brzezinski was one of our instructors, as were Marshall Schulman, Adam Ulam and Edward Keenan. All giants in the field.

Q: I think probably at that time it was the best program of the Soviet area studies in the United States.

TOUMANOFF: It was all run out of the Russian Research Center, which had an international group of some 30 scholars in addition to the dozen or so of Harvard faculty. Many, many years later, after I retired from the Foreign Service, I became Associate Director of that Center. But that's a different story.

Q: Courses particularly? Would you like to give us a summary of your experience there?

TOUMANOFF: Well, I had a considerable advantage over the other Officers. I was already fluent in Russian, and familiar with the resources of the University in the Russian/Soviet field. It was an intensive program, especially so for those who also had to study the language. We covered everything; history, foreign and domestic politics, the economy, literature, geography, cultures... Let's see, there were five of us, and all but one carved out notable Government careers in the Soviet/East European field: William Culbert, William Koplowitz, Francis Meehan, and Paul Smith. There must be a record of the class somewhere in the archives.

Q: It just underscores our memory does become a little weaker.

TOUMANOFF: It does. From there, which was in June 1957, I was assigned to Frankfurt, Germany, in peripheral reporting.

Q: Before you do it, do you want to give just a word or two of your impression of the year in Harvard? Was it a good course? Were they helpful?

TOUMANOFF: It was an excellent course. With my language I could go directly to original sources, and Harvard had large holdings. For the others that was more difficult.

Q: They hadn't learned Russian yet?

TOUMANOFF: They had some Russian, but reading Russian was difficult and slow for them at first. It also took some time for them to become familiar with the original language sources available at Harvard. But the faculty, including those from other universities, were generous in their time, attention and help. It was a fascinating and hugely useful preparatory year in terms of skills and acquisition of knowledge.

Q: And applied to your subsequent work on the Soviet Union? There was a practical side as well.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, very much so. We brought a variety of backgrounds to the program. Some in economics, others in political science, or sociology. I, for example, had not paid much attention to economics in general or to that of the Soviet Union. A number of years had also gone by since I'd been directly involved in keeping track of what was happening in the USSR. In Iceland there wasn't that much to know, outside of Soviet-Icelandic relations, which were not the center of America's or Russia's concerns. I think we all treasured it as a very, very useful, very productive year. I need not tell you how the Foreign Service draws intensely on everything you know, the challenge is so broad. That

year at Harvard added greatly, not just to specific applicable knowledge for work on the Soviet Union, but enriched our career capabilities and our lives as a whole.

CHAPTER 8: FRANKFURT, GERMANY, 1957-58
Peripheral Reporting

Peripheral reporting in Frankfurt is the next subject, Bill. Peripheral reporting, for those who may not be familiar with it, is (or was during the Cold War) a Foreign Service program which operated as follows. Periodically, and sometimes quite frequently, Russian citizens, typically military personnel, and residents of other communist dominated countries would escape to the West. As I recall, there were two collection points for such defectors, one in the Pacific, and I believe it was in Japan; the other one was in Frankfurt, Germany. The defectors would be brought to Frankfurt, where first they were tested to see if they were legitimate defectors or whether they were plants, whether they were Soviet, or other, intelligence agents, deliberately sent abroad in the guise of disaffected citizens.

Q: Could you give us a quick word on what "magic" you had to test them?

TOUMANOFF: Fortunately, the Central Intelligence Agency and the military did all of that. In fact, I'm pretty sure it would have been the Central Intelligence Agency that did the testing through intensive interrogation including, I assume, lie detector tests. It would be, I think, very difficult to fabricate a biography that would escape some false notes if the questioner had a storehouse of detailed information to draw upon about your country.

Q: So they didn't make it to you until they had been screened.

TOUMANOFF: They actually didn't make it to me for quite a while, because first they would go through this screening process and be questioned for whatever urgent intelligence information they might have. Then, if they were found to be legitimate defectors, they would go to the military and CIA for thorough questioning about any other useful knowledge they might have. And when everybody else was finished this small, three-man State Department Foreign Service unit would get its turn to ask about attitudes, public opinion, education, and whatever social, political economic and other topics seemed useful to pursue.

Q: Are these Soviet citizens only?

TOUMANOFF: Mostly, but not entirely. We saw a few people from Eastern European countries, other than East Germans. The Federal Republic took charge of those. I think the zone from which people were sent to Frankfurt ran as far east as Turkey, maybe conceivably Iran, but past that geographic line they would be shipped off to Japan to go through the same process there.

Q: Japan-I don't quite get the connection.

TOUMANOFF: Well, I always assumed there were those two centers for reasons of economy in transportation, but now that you ask, it may have had something to do with China, or North Korea or other national and language groups. In any case that was the kind of operational information we didn't have. We never knew much about the other center. Politically it was probably less sensitive within NATO than in the Pacific.

Q: But it was geographic because they defected that way.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, because people were jumping out from the communist countries in Asia and the Pacific rim as well.

The process was that appointments would be set up in various safe houses, and the defectors and one of us three would meet in the safe house.

Q: Safe house to us is well known, but there might be some who don't know that term.

TOUMANOFF: Well, these were typically either apartments or actual houses which were under complete control of the United States Government, and whether it was the military or who it was that was in charge of these locations, I never found out. But they were inconspicuous, carefully guarded, and unidentified in any public manner.

Q: They were secure in the sense that people were protected in them.

TOUMANOFF: People in them were both protected and controlled, so that these were perfectly safe places for candid conversations. We would not be overheard and access as well as egress was carefully controlled. The State Department's small unit of three Foreign Service Officers was attached to the Consulate General but offices were in one of the many 7th Army buildings.

As I mentioned, our focus was on the political, social, cultural, economic conditions in the USSR. Public opinion, living standards, how elections were actually managed, etc. One of the most interesting conversations I had was with three professional criminals who described in detail for several days the structure and functions of criminality, from street crime to saturated corruption from the bottom at unskilled labor to the very peaks of state power and governance. What impressed me most was that at all levels crime was an essential survival mechanism in that society, had been for centuries, and as such extremely hard to extirpate.

Q: Rather than intelligence.

TOUMANOFF: Well, rather than what is conventionally thought of as "intelligence" or the work of spies. Although to my mind what we were receiving was more important for the conduct of foreign relations than the more "technical" materials. I think an accurate grasp of the conditions and perceptions of foreign publics and leaders is essential for successful diplomacy, both confidential and public. Others might retort "But so is war, and its instruments!"

Q: You got that from people.

TOUMANOFF: From people, yes. It took a certain amount of skill, and my training and practice as a clinical psychologist helped. But fluency in Russian with no foreign accent was probably more important. Very quickly the Russians I talked with would wind up speaking to me as a to fellow Russian rather than as an American, and it was easier to establish trust, and confidence that they were being properly understood and not judged by alien standards of a different culture.

Q: And they all had defected. They had committed an act of espionage, if you will.

TOUMANOFF: Well, they had all jumped. In this case all three were professional criminals who had been drafted into the Soviet army and all three of them had engaged in criminal activity in East Germany, and been caught. Rather than go back, into the Gulag (Soviet convict labor camp), the three of them decided to run, and being skilled criminals they figured out a way and they got out.

Q: Were they together, a team, if you will, the three?

TOUMANOFF: Recently, yes. But not throughout their careers.

Q: They knew each other.

TOUMANOFF: We went through their criminal histories, which differed in part, and the organization of crime, of corruption, the sources of violence, behavior in the Gulag, the whole range of the criminal world in the Soviet Union, including government campaigns to suppress it, more successful at the bottom rungs than higher. It was a truly fascinating account. For example, I learned the extent to which counterfeiting of any document was available if you knew the right people and paid the right price. Their account was corroborated by an incident in Moscow, later. In a totally accidental encounter, a plain workman whom I had picked up on my bicycle refused to believe I was an American diplomat and rejected my Soviet Foreign Ministry documents as false. He proceeded to tell me where in Moscow to go and how much it would cost to get such counterfeits.

Q: And how the Soviet system could be fiddled with.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, well, and the prevalence of criminal activity and behavior of every conceivable kind, from the most savage forms of violence to corruption in government to the highest levels.

Q: All being crime, but not looked at as crime. Because they were part of the system.

TOUMANOFF: It was not a terribly legally-conscious society, you might say. And so, in a great many ways, what was criminal activity was and still is, in that vexed society, part of the survival mechanism, crucial survival techniques, for everybody from individuals to

organizations and institutions. At the same time, the giving of gifts to authorities is an imbedded custom in much of the East, including parts of the former USSR, and looked upon as a gesture of respect rather than bribery. Even more widely customary is the obligatory exchange of favors, regardless of formal "legality".

Q: How did that information then get used? Maybe you never knew. Maybe you never found out where it went into the system.

TOUMANOFF: Do you mean what happened to my reports? Oh, I really don't know. I assume that they were distributed routinely to the intelligence community, to appropriate Embassies, and to various Desk Officers. I don't remember every seeing one later in the Department. But I never looked for them.

Q: I don't either. How invaluable that was, for the very reason that you just said.

TOUMANOFF: You know, it never dawned on me to inquire about distribution.

Q: Did you analyze them in any way or just do them raw?

TOUMANOFF: As I recall, we reported what information the defectors provided, occasionally with commentary. But no systematic analytic work.

Q: And they led you, probably, to the questioning.

TOUMANOFF: Well, you certainly, - it was essential to establish rapport and confidence, to be genuinely interested in them as people. It was easiest to start by asking about their childhood, where they were born, school, where they grew up. Then go on about the rest of their lives, and what they thought and how did they feel, as one would with a new friend, following whatever leads emerged that sounded promising. But these were conversations, not interrogations. Most of them had a surfeit of those and were heartily glad to relax and chat.

Q. *How long were you in that assignment?*

TOUMANOFF: About a year and a half. Then one of our Officers in Moscow was PNG'd (ordered to leave the country by the Soviet Government) and I was transferred to Moscow in his place. I came to Frankfurt straight out of Harvard area training, so it would have been about June of 1957, and I left for Moscow in September of 1958.

But there was another episode in Frankfurt I should tell you about.

An Attempted Assassination

Headquartered in Frankfurt was a Soviet émigré organization called the Natsionalnyy Trudovoi Soyuz, the NTS (the National Labor Union in translation). It was bitterly anti-Soviet, as you can imagine, and it conducted all kinds of hostile activities against the

USSR - infiltration of persons, smuggling in anti-Soviet materials, contacting and soliciting defection from Soviet officials and delegations in the West, organizing anti-Soviet demonstrations, publishing hostile literature - all sorts of activities designed to make life difficult for, and undermine the Soviet regime. As a consequence, it was a target, and a high priority target for the Soviet intelligence agencies, and as it turned out, was in fact infiltrated. The NTS, this organization, held an international congress or conference of members and invited delegations of sympathizers from all over the world while I was in Frankfurt. I was assigned by the Department to attend this conference and report on it.

Two things happened at the conference. One was that the NTS leadership announced and initiated the launching of a very ambitious program of international recruitment designed to expand the organization and its activities to a truly global scale. That looked to me serious enough to warrant U.S. Government attention. Whatever their chances of success, the leadership meant business. So I reported the conference, and collected and shipped back to the Department all of the literature that had been distributed to the attending members, delegations and the press. The result, I learned quickly, was quite a firestorm in Washington. One consequence was that support for the organization which was coming, I assume, from the U.S. intelligence community in one fashion or another, was sharply curtailed, and the global ambitions and expansion program was scotched. As I understand it, there were those in Washington who were much in favor of the program, and others who were much opposed to it, so there was a good deal of argument and heat in Washington before the final decisions were made and implemented. I was the fellow who was blamed for having started it all with my report, and some people held it against me later and told me I never should have reported as I did. But there were no adverse effects I could see on my subsequent career.

The NTS surely was getting funding from private sources - from its membership and other solicitations. But it was common talk that a large part of its support came from the United States Government.

Q: So they could shut it off.

TOUMANOFF: So presumably they could shut it off. But I was told later by former NTS people that they didn't shut it down completely, they just refused to support the ambitious expansion program, and reduced funding.

Q: And that sort of stopped it.

TOUMANOFF: So far as I can tell, that was the end of that. I never heard again of a global NTS program.

On the last day of the conference there was a small dinner party given by the president or director of the organization for a group of maybe 15 or 20 high-level members, and myself.

Q: Were you the only State Department representative?

TOUMANOFF: I think so.

Q: And U.S. Government?

TOUMANOFF: None I knew of. It was an evening dinner party in the offices of the this Union. At the end of the dinner party, the president addressed the company. It was a closing speech reiterating the plans and ambitions for global operation, and bidding the guests to forward it in every way. The next day, I went back to that office, which was in a different, separate building, to pick up some more of the literature, and what I found was armed guards blocking admission to the building by anyone. To the best of my recollection, I got past the first armed guards with my State Department pass, and then I met a steel door, shut, with more armed guards, and was told to turn around and leave. Which I did with some relief.

What had happened, I found out later that day, was that the president, (director) had been poisoned at that dinner, and poisoned to the point where he very, very nearly died. He was rushed to emergency, hospitalized, remained hospitalized for some considerable period of time, had all sorts of strange symptoms, and my recollection is that he was comatose and his life hung in the balance for a week or more, and for some time after lost his capacity for speech. I believe he also lost his hair. There was a good deal of press coverage of the incident.

Q: What nationality was he?

TOUMANOFF: Russian, as were most of the members. It was an émigré organization recruited from Russian émigrés for the most part, as well as others from the USSR and Eastern Europe. And they finally determined, or at least they concluded - concluded because they were so intent on discovering how the poison was administered. They concluded that it was in the after dinner coffee, that in some fashion Soviet agents managed to get this poison into his coffee cup, and no one else's. The rest of us felt that somehow we had escaped with our lives because another way of poisoning would have been simply to poison one of the dishes, which we all ate. Indeed there was some suspicion that one or more at the table were infiltrated Soviet agents and we were spared general poisoning because the Soviet KGB did not wish to sacrifice its own.

Q: By infiltrators that had been part of... or even the staff of the kitchen.

TOUMANOFF: I don't know how they did it, and I decided I really didn't want to know particularly, and I wasn't going to press the issue. Having completed my assignment to report on the conference, I didn't want to have anything more to do with the organization. I assume the Soviet intelligence services had infiltrated the organization, or had bribed somebody on the kitchen staff, or a waiter. Who knows.

Q: But it was in their interest decidedly. They saw a danger.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, yes. And this could not have been a sudden, last minute operation. My guess is that the organization had been infiltrated thoroughly for some time, its leader had been targeted earlier, and that knowing its ambitious expansion program the Soviets decided that at the conclusion of this conference they shake the cage brutally to cut it short. It is not as though the Soviet Government did not have many sworn enemies spread around the world. The NTS expansion program probably had some promise, although perhaps less than the Soviets feared. My hunch is that the NTS continued to receive some support but under a much tighter rein.

Q: Well, I've never heard of the organization. Now what happened to it ultimately? Did it-

TOUMANOFF: Well, I think it ultimately dissolved or disintegrated and lost its function in life. Although for all I know, there still may be some remnant of it somewhere. Some emigrés, I'm sure, depended on it financially, and perhaps it ultimately converted to a benign social welfare unit. That would have been a suitable end.

Q: And then you moved on?

TOUMANOFF: Not quite yet. An issue arose in Frankfurt over language capability in the Foreign Service, which illustrated a problem common at many other posts. Frankfurt was the headquarters of the post-war U.S. High Commissioner for Germany, a huge bureaucracy in its time, as well as of the U.S. 7th Army. The consequence was a veritable American city within the City. Every conceivable urban service and function, including churches, schools, food, clothing, goods of every kind, recreation, cars, fuels, public transportation, fire, police, hospitals, repairs, and above all blocks upon blocks of giant apartment houses; everything American, from cradle to grave, was provided in this huge American ghetto. And that is where we, thousands of civilian and military Americans, but not Germans, lived. Moreover we were deterred, either by administrative prohibitions or by financial costs, from living in and with the surrounding German community. The discrimination as well as the distinction caused Germans to avoid the ghetto and its natives. U.S. administrative efficiency (for which read dollars), and paternalism isolated the two populations from each other. While I was there the Department announced emphatically that all Foreign Service personnel stationed abroad should learn the language of the nation in which they were serving.

Q: Yes, they got caught in Mexico or some place by Secretary Kissinger.

TOUMANOFF: Well, were Frankfurt an exception, unique, it would not have mattered greatly. But equivalent American confines prevailed at many posts. What's worse is that now, under the impress of security needs, we are walling in more of our posts and people, physically and psychologically.

Q: Typical ghettos, as I recall, having stayed in one for several weeks.

TOUMANOFF: In any case, I was moved in Frankfurt to send the Department, in reply to its language announcement, a pungent, Official Use Only, commentary detailing the many ways in which its Administrative arm obstructed its substantive goals. In Frankfurt it took a very special effort, usually at some considerable financial sacrifice, to participate in the daily life of the surrounding German society, or even to study and have live practice of their language. The Foreign Service Journal wanted to publish my reply, but I refused. Publication risked politicization. I had had enough Congressional investigations.

Q: Germans were still the enemy.

TOUMANOFF: No, it was just administratively efficient to piggy back on the huge military establishment, and oh! so comfortable.

Q: That's a better word, paternalism.

TOUMANOFF: For instance, if you wanted to live outside of American housing, you had to pay for it yourself. There was no housing allowance, and due to wartime destruction, housing was scarce and rent for Americans was elevated.

Q: So the system was made that way.

TOUMANOFF: The system was made that way. And not in Germany alone. Not then and, I fear, not now.

Anyway, that's enough about Germany, I guess.

CHAPTER 9: MOSCOW; 1958-60
The Setting, First Impressions, KGB #1

One of the officers at the embassy in Moscow was PNG'ed, declared *persona non grata* by the Soviet Government, and expelled, for God knows what reason.

Q: Quid pro quo? That is, had we expelled one of their officers in Washington?

TOUMANOFF: No. I think it may have been because he had developed too many, or perhaps the wrong kind of Russian friends. I believe he actually joined a Russian basketball group. His name was John Hemenway, and with that expulsion his prospects for being allowed back into the country were dim, certainly for years. Consequently his future in the Foreign Service as a Soviet area specialist were limited. I think he went on to assignments in other parts of the world. I was transferred from Frankfurt to Moscow to take his place.

Q: This would have been, then, September, roughly, of 1958.

TOUMANOFF: That's right, August or September. I was surprised as I had not finished my tour in Frankfurt, but delighted because service in Moscow had been my goal from

the start. Remember, to make some contribution to the course of U.S.-Russian relations was the main reason I sought to join the Service.

So I arrive in Moscow, and it comes to me as an extraordinary surprise in a number of ways. One was that having grown up in a Russian family after the Revolution and knowing how profound the changes had been since then, what extraordinary traumas the society had gone through, and the insistence by the Government and the Communist Party that it was remolding everything, destroying the old and remolding entirely the Czarist society, all its institutions, its mores, values, and its very people, I expected to recognize very little from what I had lived with, had learned by living with my parents and their Russian friends, all of whom had grown up under the Czars, before the revolution. I was astounded at how familiar it all was, that except for a certain coarseness in the language, a certain loss of vocabulary and introduction of much bureaucratic slang, the Russian language had changed very little.

Q: And Russian culture, despite the inordinate attempt to change it.

TOUMANOFF: Body language had not changed. Facial expressions had not changed. Forms of humor had not changed. There was really remarkably little of the impact I had expected after nearly 50 years of Soviet power and unbelievable traumas and human sacrifice. It was astounding to me how little the communist experience had changed the people. That was one major surprise. So I found myself being taken for a fellow Soviet. Except for my foreign clothes, I did not stand out as an alien in spite of the enormous and shocking differences in the physical appearance and amenities between Russia and America.

Those were a second surprise, as anyone who visited Russia in the late ‘50s will attest. Materially, even Moscow was a different civilization, to say nothing of the condition of the rest of the country. The people impoverished, stunted and too often maimed or crippled. Structures, except for Stalinist showpieces, worn out, shabby to slum-like, neglected and crumbling, with huge identical poorly built "new" apartment blocks already breaking down. Crowds and lines everywhere seeking scarce or nonexistent goods. Truly appalling, backward working conditions. And with all that a stalwart, energetic, intelligent, kindly and humorous people, looking aged ahead of their years.

I thought I would be a Rip Van Winkle, that the place would have changed to such an extent that I wouldn't understand it, and it wouldn't understand me. And that was simply not true. Incidentally, I had no relatives or parental friends in Russia. They were wiped out or escaped.

Q: Oh, we should have raised that earlier. That's very important.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, it is. Because had I any relatives or friends, they would have been targeted by the KGB and used against me.

Q: For the record, Helen Semler, Peter Semler and his wife, who were with me in

Moscow in 1962-64, was told that they could not go on assignment to the USSR., because of her family back in Russia. But she got it overruled, and the policy ultimately changed. She was the first one to enter, I was told, that had family there.

TOUMANOFF: Good for her.

Q: Now it wasn't the Officer. It was the spouse, but still.

TOUMANOFF: Another surprise was how quickly an event occurred which showed me that the place was not all that friendly, or all that easy to navigate in. The first day in the Embassy, I said to myself, Great Scott, here I am in Moscow! And I went out for a walk, just to look around and soak up the reality that I really was in Moscow, with all the associations the name of that city had for me. And I hadn't gotten a block and a half from the Embassy when I heard footsteps behind me, which quickened when I quickened and slowed when I did, several times. When they were very close behind as I approached an intersection, I turned as I came to the curbstone, to the person who was just behind me at my shoulder and asked, in Russian, whether there was something I could do for them. The individual was rather taken aback, but in very short order it turned out that he was a Yugoslav. He had been incarcerated at some point, jailed or in a *Gulag*, had been finally amnestied or released having served his term, and he wanted to escape from the country. As a former prisoner, however, he had no right to visit Moscow. He had waited in a barber shop across the street from the Embassy until he saw someone who was obviously an American, or at least a foreigner, dressed in foreign clothing, come out. He hoped an American diplomat could help him escape.

Q: But couldn't do it immediately in front of the embassy or try to enter. The Soviet guard would stop him and it would probably result in his re-arrest.

TOUMANOFF: That's right. He could see the two uniformed and armed Soviet guards, one on each side of the entrance. Moreover, the barber shop may easily have been a KGB observation post to see and record who went in and out. But in his innocence he probably didn't realize that I, as was every American diplomat, was probably being followed by the security "organs" at some distance back. I explained to him that I was an American, in the American diplomatic service, and that my purpose in being in Moscow was not to worsen relations between the United States and Russia but rather, if possible, to improve them, and that even if that were not my purpose and duty, I certainly was not in a position to help him in any conceivable way. I suggested he go to his own, Yugoslav, Embassy, which he rejected in disgust because they would just turn him over to the Soviet police. I then told him that I was probably being followed by the KGB and that he would probably be picked up when he left me. His earlier manner and now obvious terror convinced me that he was genuine, and not a Soviet plant calculated to trap me on my first outing. So I suggested he say he had asked me directions to the post office, I would point down the side street toward the center of town, and we should part. Which we did. I crossed the street and after a few steps looked back. He was already surrounded by several men forcing him against his struggles into the back of a large black car. I did not stop to watch and walked on. They must have driven up quite close behind us as we talked on that

corner.

Q: You'd been there only one day.

TOUMANOFF: First day, and first walk on Moscow's streets. That was the first episode which started to tune my radar pretty finely in terms of what to expect. It was not to be the last. But more about that later on.

Q: This is a real experience, versus the briefing you got from security and so forth.

TOUMANOFF: Exactly. I hadn't anticipated that it would happen so soon. I thought I'd have a certain amount of time to acclimatize and get my radar tuned and develop the street smarts that one simply has to have in any city.

Q: Okay, let's back up just a bit. You were assigned to the embassy in Moscow in September, '58, because of this PNG situation. To what position were you assigned?

TOUMANOFF: Second Secretary, Political Officer in External. The Political Section had an "internal" and "external" Sections.

Q: Okay, and how many were there in that section? Could you give us a slight snippet of the atmosphere at that point and who was in charge, so we know the names of the individuals?

TOUMANOFF: Llewellyn Thompson was the ambassador. The Political Counsellor, David Marks was PNG'd shortly after I arrived, and Boris Klosson came to replace him. Under him were two Sections of three Officers each, The Internal Section under Robert I. Owen covered Soviet domestic politics, and the External under Ralph Jones, with Francis Meehan and myself covered Soviet international relations.

Q: You had an area of the world that you-

TOUMANOFF: No, there were too few of us for that. Essentially the assignment was that all of us looked quickly, when we first arrived in the morning, through the incoming and outgoing telegrams from the previous 24 hours, and scanned the main Soviet newspapers. These were normally Pravda (the Party paper), Izvestia (the Government), and either Trud (labor) or Sel'skaya Zhisn' (agriculture), and occasionally Krasnaya Zvezda (the military) although the Service Attaches could be relied on for that. I think we divided up the newspapers, but not consistently. We would then meet with the Political Counselor to decide and assign drafting duty among us for anything important enough to warrant a separate cable to the Department. All else worth reporting would be covered and drafted by one of us in a daily round-up cable called the 'presstel.' That was usually a pretty dull chore calling for little if any comment. For press items warranting any extensive comment, we would quickly draft cables to Washington describing the item and adding our interpretation of its significance. For example "The lead editorial in today's Pravda claims the U.S. Government intends to... This new accusation expands on the earlier

(Embtel #) intended primarily to cause public concern in the NATO nations over U.S. nuclear weapons policy in advance of the resumption of arms negotiations scheduled next month."

Q: You had a kind of informal list of what you should keep your eyes out for, in terms of Washington's interest.

TOUMANOFF: Nothing formal. The list would have been too long by far, or updated all the time. focus was the purpose of the daily meeting of both sections with Boris Klosson, who reviewed and edited our cables before they were sent.

Q: The "presstel," was probably unclassified, in terms of comments.

TOUMANOFF: The presstel was probably Official Use Only, unless there was some comment in it, as was usual in the separate cables, in which case the comment would define the classification. For example, "There has been no public comment yet from either Beijing or Moscow on the Secretary's announcement last week that... The presence in Moscow of the Chinese Foreign Minister suggests that the topic may be sensitive and coordination of positions awkward," would warrant a higher classification. Once the press coverage was out of the way, we worked on all sorts of other reporting tasks, visiting delegations, negotiations, preparing diplomatic notes, consulting with other diplomatic colleagues, attending public agitprop (agitation and propaganda) lectures, traveling, etc.

Q: Do you want to add in here comments on travel, how you took it, how you arranged it, or is that to be later?

Travel, Holiday Notes, Russian friends, Family life.

TOUMANOFF: As you know, Bill, from your own experience, very large parts of the Soviet Union, including even parts of Moscow, were closed, off limits to diplomats, especially American diplomats. For the rest, if you wanted to travel at any distance outside of 25 kilometers, I believe it was, from the center of Moscow, you had to have special permission from the Foreign Ministry, whether it was 26 kilometers or someplace way out to the other end of the entire country. So you'd send a note to the Foreign Ministry saying that so-and-so, an officer of the embassy, requests permission to travel on the following itinerary, route and conveyance. Ordinarily that was allowed, sometimes with some emendations by the Foreign Ministry, and if you got this permission, off you went. You didn't even ask to go to places that were closed. We always traveled in pairs, together.

Q: Like nuns.

TOUMANOFF: Well, mainly because a single American diplomat traveling alone would be more vulnerable, more apt to be set up as a target for some sort of provocation or incident, or simply to provide instant assistance and witness in case of accident or illness.

I should recount several incidents. Reasonably frequently, permission for travel would be denied, and I think the one that I found most amusing was that one of our officers had served in the Forestry Service of the U.S. Park Department. He requested permission to go to an "open" Soviet National Park, of which there were many, this one someplace in the Caucasus, I believe. The answer came back refusing permission because that national park was "Closed for repair," which suggested that while officially "open" further requests would be unavailing.

Speaking of Diplomatic Notes. Not specifically for travel, but to give you an idea of the working relations, for the most part at the routine level, with the Soviet Government. Regularly, late in the day on Christmas Eve and on New Year's Eve, the embassy would receive a gigantic diplomatic note running to 15-20 pages and full of nothing much, indeed nothing but the current, routine, standard propaganda boilerplate. The intention, clearly, was to spoil some officer's, or maybe even a couple of officers' Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve, because the Foreign Ministry knew that the moment any diplomatic note arrived duty officers would have to go in to translate it and to prepare and send a cable to Washington with the translation. At that end some other officer would have to come in to the Department to read the cable and decide if it warranted prompt attention from some senior official.

Q: Even though you know it's trash and done for an irritation?

TOUMANOFF: Right, our standing instructions were to read, translate and send to the Department any Note from the Soviet Government. This was just a calculated annoyance, a form of mild harassment.

Q: Anti-religious, perhaps.

TOUMANOFF: Well, perhaps so, but I read or translated several of those, and I never found one that had anything other than the very, very familiar kind of stuff that you read a week or two weeks earlier in an editorial in some newspaper. We didn't retaliate in kind, perhaps because the U.S. set a higher value on diplomatic notes than the Soviets, and didn't want to cheapen ours.

I should go back and talk about what travel was like. It was rather exceptional on several counts.

One had to do with the change in U.S.-Soviet relations during the period of my tour in Moscow, that is 1958-1960. About the time I arrived in Moscow there was some minor problem going on, I think it was over Berlin, but I'm not sure. In any case relations were a little strained, and standard anti-American propaganda was raised to match. Whatever was the problem, it ended quickly. And then, quite rapidly, the great Khrushchev thaw came into effect, and relations improved markedly. A number of exchange agreements were negotiated, (remind me to tell you about one such) including arrangements for the great American exhibition, and for the exchange of visits by Khrushchev and

Eisenhower. "Peace and Friendship" and "The Spirit of Camp David" became the new, overwhelming Soviet propaganda slogans. All that has been thoroughly documented in books and articles. What is not so well known is that the bars against contact between Soviet citizens and foreigners, particularly Americans, including American diplomats, suddenly came tumbling down. They didn't vanish by explicit direction from Moscow. They vanished more by the radical change in the atmospherics, the suddenly favorable propaganda treatment of the United States. The Soviet public, which for some half century had been starved of contact with foreigners, with the West and most especially the U.S., by every means up to and including mortal threat, simply stampeded out of the corral.

In my travels and in Moscow, I met many Russians and other Soviet citizens, mostly by chance, and even developed a few genuine friends. A couple of perhaps important observations. One is that in all these random contacts not once did I encounter anger, antagonism or hostility toward the U.S. On the contrary, in spite of the intense efforts by the Communist Party and Soviet Government since at least 1900 to alienate the population from America, there was profound skepticism about the official image ("we know they lie to us"), great hunger for reliable information, eager curiosity about all aspects of America, and a vast reservoir of admiration and good will. Almost frighteningly so: Firstly because much of the admiration tended to be exaggerated in wishful contrast to their own brutally hard half-century; and secondly I heard often enough, and in unlikely places busily fixing up, cleaning up, and painting, "Maybe your President Eisenhower will come here on his visit. If he does we will give him a welcome such as no Soviet leader has ever had!" If I was hearing this often, the KGB must have been picking it up in spades. I'm persuaded that Khrushchev's anti-Stalin liberalization, and this turn towards the U.S. resulted in a widespread Public reaction which was read by Soviet authorities as a dangerously spreading loss of control. Unless contained and reversed, I think they feared, correctly, that it could accelerate and grow to torch them, the Party, and the nation. That fear, I believe, contributed to the Soviet extreme reaction to the U-2 incident, and ultimately (together with much else) to Khrushchev's fall and the Brezhnevite clamp down at home and in Eastern Europe. That may seem to some a very long bow for me to draw. But I would cite in support of my view the invasion of Czechoslovakia as prompted in large part by fear of domestic contagion from the "Prague Spring," as well as the later spontaneous collapse of Soviet control of Eastern Europe.

On a personal level, travel for me was unusual on several counts. In the first place, of course, was the general feeling among Russians that contact with Americans was now safe, indeed, seemingly encouraged by the official line. Random contact was easy to make, indeed, sometimes it was initiated by Russians With my very Russian name, and because I spoke without an accent, they would take me for a Russian, sort of pulling their leg. That was dangerous for us, as the KGB was still following American diplomats, and would usually question the Soviet after we separated. I did not wish for the KGB to think I was trying to pass for a Russian So, early in any conversation I would explain that I was not a Russian, that I was an American, an American diplomat, and that I worked in the United States embassy in Moscow. Most often the caution didn't last and after a bit they would say "Okay, fine, but you're not really an American; at heart you're really one of

us." and I'd be accepted and the talk would turn unconstrained. Occasionally I'd repeat the caution, promptly disregarded.

Q: My comparable experience was I was always identified as a Latvian, Lithuanian, or Estonian, because I was dressed a little bit differently from the Soviets, even though the others were Soviets, and secondly I had this funny accent in Russian.

TOUMANOFF: Well, I tended to wear some native clothes, by preference, especially in winter, some of it suited the climate or the wear and tear of travel better. But that was not of any great significance, because over all I was obviously a foreigner. The result, however, was some very candid conversations. Outside of Moscow talking with an American fluent in Russian who new enough about life in the USSR not to be surprised, was almost always a first-in-a-lifetime experience, not to be missed. They were so hungry for such contact. All telephone calls from and to the embassy passed through a Soviet operator, and were, of course tapped and recorded. Russians knew that. It seems hard to believe in retrospect that my office phone would ring and it would be somebody I had met on a trip, or a Muscovite saying, "Here I am in town. Let's have lunch, or dinner. Let's go to a concert. Even, as happened once " I've just finished building my new apartment, I'm having a housewarming. Come with your wife and join the party."

Q: Most unusual, most unusual-and suspect. My first reaction is this is a plant.

TOUMANOFF: Well, it wasn't, for the most part. I can tell you about how plants worked and how you recognized them. After you had established a measure of friendship the next time you met your friend, an "old wartime comrade" would show up and would be introduced, somewhat awkwardly. Your friend would fade away, usually not to be seen again, while the newcomer would try to substitute. Or a friend, after a while would have some forced question or two to insert into our conversation, easily recognized by content or manner as planted. My tendency was to provide an equally obvious, plausible but worthless reply. That done and out of the way, we would resume with relief our natural relationship. But it was a signal that before too long the friend would be told to end the relationship.

Q: How fortunate you were.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, and of course. But all of that came to a crashing end with the shoot-down of the U-2. The telephone stopped ringing. My Russian friends and acquaintances were totally silent, not to be found. And even random contacts were shunned. I didn't even really try as I, like every Russian, read the strident denunciations of America as a clear signal that contact with Americans was again highly dangerous.

Q: Do you think they were told to, or do you think-

TOUMANOFF: They didn't need to be told. They read the Russian media coverage. They read the total change in the tone of the relationship with Khrushchev, vilifying the United States and the President, calling off Eisenhower's proposed visit, making a tremendous

scene in Paris. It was one of those wonderful demonstrations of how sensitive the Russian public is to stark changes of official direction. It was okay, "Peace and Friendship" meant you could have American friends, but as the whole tone of the official line coming out of Moscow, and all the press, turned 180 degrees, so, of course, did the Soviet public, and marched in the opposite direction.

Q: The reversal was dramatic.

TOUMANOFF: The reverse signal came out with the shoot-down of the U-2, and everybody read it, and all of a sudden, all of that friendship was cut off. Once again, it was dangerous to be in contact with Americans - which was back to normal.

With one exception, Bill, and this might be of some interest. The telephone did ring. I was due to leave Moscow in the, lets see, it would have been late summer of 1960. This was just... The U-2 was shot down on May Day of 1960, and the trial had already been held. (I attended the trial, and I'll talk about that later.) But the telephone rang one day in the embassy, and it was one of my friends, who was a good friend. He had come out and stayed with us for a weekend in the American embassy *dacha*, and whom I had been instrumental in helping during the Nixon visit. He was a journalist, photographer. He had asked me to help him have some contact with the U.S. delegation and Soviet escorts when we were in Central Asia so that he could get a story and some photographs.

Q: For whom did he work?

TOUMANOFF: Oh, he said he was freelance, and I believed him. He went on to become a very gifted, internationally known photographer with shows, not only in the Soviet Union but also in the United States, Japan and elsewhere abroad. Anyway, he was quite an independent figure, and even to this day I won't identify him further. Who knows what kind of trouble he may be in now? Call him Peter. Anyway, he said he knew that I was leaving Moscow soon (I had told him that my tour was due to end in the summer), and he asked me to do him a favor. I said I'd be glad to if I could, what was the favor. He said, "I promised Howard Sochurek [the Life magazine photographer who also covered the Nixon visit] that I would send him some copies of my photographs of the Nixon tour. I wondered if you could take them with you and give them to Sochurek when you get to New York?" I asked why not just put them in the mail?

Q: This wasn't on the phone, I presume.

TOUMANOFF: All on the telephone. I hadn't seen or heard from him since before the U-2. I'm sitting in my office in the embassy, and he doesn't say where or how he is, nor ask about me and Eileen. No ordinary talk, just business, and his voice is strained and speech awkward. Very unlike himself. He paused, and kind of stumbled and mumbled something and finally said, "Well, you know, the mails are not that reliable, and would you do that for me?" I replied that I was sorry but that was not something I could or should do. And with that, the conversation ended, abruptly. About an hour later, the telephone rang again, and a muffled, slightly disguised voice said, "You know who this is?" I recognized his

voice and said, yes, I did. The voice said, "I just wanted to tell you how much I've enjoyed our friendship, how much I hope that some day circumstances will be such that we can meet again." Click. And I realized that the KGB had forced him to make that first phone call to try to set me up for arrest at the transfer of documents as they had, and would again, other unwary foreigners. He had made that call reluctantly and with unusual restraint in his speech and constraint in his voice which might alert me. He was risking the second call to apologize for having made the first, and to restore my confidence in him and our friendship.

Q: Trying to get you lined up.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, because while the voice was muffled and semi-disguised, the tonality was totally sincere because I knew him so well. Well, that was part of the life of the Foreign Service in Moscow.

Q: Readers of the interviews with other Moscow veterans presented by this Oral History Project will see that on this subject they all read alike. I think we've all had similar experiences, even back in the old days, the Stalin days, all the way up to the present.

There's something also that has come out in many of these interviews that you haven't given us yet - the family. That is to say, I found wives often kept out of things, just by the classified nature of the work, or difficult language perhaps, and stress, that inability to have a normal relationship with the society. Is this a good time to tell us how your family reacted to this?

TOUMANOFF: Oh, sure, yes. It was atypical, Bill, because in the first place, Eileen, when we first got married, in fact, even before we got married, when we were planning to, Eileen started taking Russian lessons.

Q: This, incidentally, was not authorized by the State Department.

TOUMANOFF: No, both of us were still in college at that point. So she started taking Russian lessons, and she took some lessons from my father and some lessons from my mother, and then she took some lessons while she was still in college. So she knew some Russian, and then she went on with tapes and records before we went to Moscow. She could get around reasonably well. So there were four of us in Moscow, my wife, Eileen, myself, and our two children, age 5 and 6.

Q: And reading.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, yes. No problem reading. She could speak Russian more or less and understand much more by the time we arrived in Moscow. She wanted to continue learning the language so she made a special effort when she went out to shop or to the park with our children to speak with Russians. Obviously a foreigner, she attracted curious Russians, especially when with our small children. In addition we got from the diplomatic service, the official Moscow government diplomatic service for foreigners-

Q: UPDK (Diplomatic Service Agency)?

TOUMANOFF: UPDK, yes... We got a Russian language tutor to give her systematic Russian lessons.

Q: But she had to report back about you to Soviet intelligence.

TOUMANOFF: Of course. We all understood that, it was a given, and so was our discretion. Actually, she turned out to be one of our closest friends - not because Eileen and I were revealing anything to her but because she was educated, she was cultured, she was a professional editor of Russian dictionaries at one of Moscow's academic publishers. Also, work with Eileen was an extraordinary opportunity for her to perfect her English, which she was working on. She and Eileen became good friends and enjoyed each others' company. She had a boyfriend who was a master of sports, a champion of one, I think gymnastics. One of the fun things they did was to ride in parades, including the November 7th parade through Red Square, the civilian part, in which he drove a motorcycle and she rode standing on the handlebars as a kind of Winged Victory of Samothrace. We had dinner at their apartment one evening I remember.

Eileen also did a great deal of shopping in the local markets and stores. In those days, there was not a Moscow store that did not have long lines, which served as Moscow's free wheeling, high speed, news and information channel, run largely by grandmothers. Those conversations were one of Eileen's favorite activities, and occasionally my best source of information and insight.

Q: She'd had more exposure than many of the wives and therefore found herself more satisfied, perhaps.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, hardships aside, she was having a wonderful time. She really was. It was a great experience for her as it was for me.

Q: You both were more fortunate, I think, than most. As well - intentioned as those other officers were.

TOUMANOFF: We were extremely lucky to be there when there was that remarkable openness, curiosity and friendship for Americans and the U.S.; when we were sought after and made welcome. We were also used to Russians from my parents and their friends. So they and their ways were not strange, we felt familiar and safe in their company. All that changed soon.

Q: And didn't feel kept out, felt quite the opposite in many cases.

TOUMANOFF: Well, quite the opposite during this extraordinary period. There's another side to this image. Let me give you an idea of just how secretive Eileen and I were in our apartment because there were microphones - in fact, the first apartment we lived in fell

down.

Housing: Failure, Construction, KGB #2

Q: Fell down?

TOUMANOFF: Nearly. It was out on I think it's called Kutuzov Street, opposite the National Economics Exhibit, the National Exhibit of Economic Achievements, I think it was called.

Q: "Achievement" was the word, yes.

TOUMANOFF: The building was a hollow square. The Chinese were in one wing, the Westerners were in another wing, and I forget who was in the rest, Eastern Europeans probably, we had little if any contact with them.

Q: The press, perhaps.

TOUMANOFF: No, probably somebody like the North Koreans.

Q: Friendly.

TOUMANOFF: The building started to grow cracks in the walls, and the cracks grew larger fairly rapidly. The embassy kept calling Soviet authorities saying, "Something's wrong with this building." The answer was always, don't worry about a thing, we'll let you know if there is any problem.

Q: This is good Soviet architecture.

TOUMANOFF: Right, well, I don't know whether they would have claimed that, because it would have been so transparently false because the cracks got longer and wider up and down the walls and in the ceilings, ever longer and wider, inches in a day, until one fine day there was a rapid exchange with the Soviets, and they said we were to be evacuated, the entire building, over the next three days. They had found a building for us which was out on Prospekt Mira, you know, out at the opposite end of town. It was an emergency. We found out later that gas pipes were rupturing. In the mean time, pieces of the building had been falling off.

Q: And they had baskets underneath to catch them?

TOUMANOFF: No, they didn't have baskets, they built a reinforced sort of tunnel from the front door out far enough into the yard so that the pieces of concrete or whatever it was falling down wouldn't actually brain one of us, but bounced off this tunnel. Anyway, literally within 24 hours they had stevedores in and in three days they picked up everything and moved everyone out to the new quarters. I knew where this was, they gave me the address, and I went out on the first day to see what this placed looked like

that we were being thrown into by the Soviets. It was a brand new building, still under construction, and I had some very interesting experiences. I may as well get into this. I wasn't going to, but it may be of interest to any student of Soviet architecture.

Q: It's personal, so therefore it is relevant, Vlad.

TOUMANOFF: It was another hollow square design. One wing of which was completely finished, and ordinary Russians - well, perhaps not ordinary because they were the lucky few who had new housing, but Russians had already moved in. A second wing was the wing into which we were going to be placed, and it looked just in the last external finishing stages. It was built and it was habitable. I knew which apartment would be ours. There was something of a mess inside. It looked as though the workers had just left and hadn't cleaned up. They left scraps of building materials and junk behind. I won't tell you what condition the toilet was in, but I managed to make it workable. A third wing was still under construction, and as I watched the work, I witnessed one of the flaws that pervaded the Soviet Union, and perhaps still does in Russia.

There were banners all over this construction site. Incidentally, and the huge yard held between these three wings looked like the fields of Flanders after the battle. The ground totally churned up, it looked bombed, with pieces of broken construction materials, hunks of scrap iron, old tires, every conceivable form of trash, some half buried, strewn everywhere.

But back to the banners and posters, which were up everywhere. They exhorted saving. FOR EVERY BAG OF CEMENT YOU SAVE THE BUILDING TRUST SAVES TONS FOR NEW HOUSING. FOR EVERY BRICK YOU SAVE THE TRUST SAVES THOUSANDS, and so on and on. So I watched the bricklayers. They saved! Bricklayers would take a small dab of cement, and put it on the underneath brick, and put two dabs of cement on ends of the brick they were laying, and they'd plunk this thing down, and do the same to the next. *Occasionally I could even see what looked like a hole!* I talked with one of them while I watched and explained I was an American, as if my obvious western clothes were not enough. I did not want to be taken for an inspector, although, if there were any, I was pretty sure they and the foremen were paid off with kickbacks. Eventually I asked if someone would come along later and do some pointing up. The answer of course was "no."

Q: They were reading the banners, apparently.

TOUMANOFF: Well, it was a dumb question on my part, but I asked, "How about the holes?" He looked at me as if to say "What holes?" and then I got a very candid answer. "You see that banner? I'm saving cement. If I save enough cement on my shift, I get a bonus. If I save enough bricks, and I save a lot of bricks, I get another bonus."

Q: This was motivation of the highest sort.

TOUMANOFF: This was the motivation, planning motivation. And I think it prevailed

throughout the economy, even military industry. The apartment, absolutely standard in the stairwell, and probably in that and thousands of other buildings just like it throughout the country, really wasn't bad at all. It was built for at least two families, with a common kitchen and a common bathroom, and five rooms - two rooms and the kitchen on one side of a central hallway, three rooms on the other side, and the bathroom at the end. So each American family was getting the space assigned, *theoretically*, to two Russian families, but probably in the post-war housing shortage occupied by five, one in each room, with a common kitchen and a common bathroom. One of the problems allegedly discovered by the new American tenants was when they turned on the gas stove, water came out of the burners. It may have been parody, but equally plausibly somebody had connected a water pipe to the gas line.

Q: There had to be a banner to explain this.

TOUMANOFF: That would be my explanation. The more pipes you connect, the more pay you get, the more bonuses you earn, until you make foreman. Then you collect kickback from the workmen, and nobody asks which pipe you connected to which other pipe.

I should mention a couple of other things about it. One is that when I went into the apartment that we were going to get, there was a spot of fresh plaster on a wall in each room. My guess was that each covered a newly installed microphone.

Q: Oh, of course.

TOUMANOFF: They must have had very short notice of the arrival of American diplomats because of the emergency evacuation. So I think walls which had already been plastered, had to be broken into for the microphones and the holes then covered with new fresh plaster just before my visit. It was really of little interest because we naturally assumed rooms would be bugged one way or another. Some months later one of our Embassy officers managed to open a locked attic door to find a battery of tape recorders, and a man with earphones. The Soviets promptly expelled that officer from the country. Remind me later to tell you about one way of thwarting such microphones.

One day, after we finally got a telephone in the apartment, it failed, and of course, the Embassy had to call UPDK, the diplomatic service bureau; repeatedly, and in vain. After a couple of weeks I decided to break the deadlock. By that time I knew the UPDK telephone number, so I called them from the Embassy, all of whose lines we knew were tapped by the KGB. I explained that, as reported to them earlier several times by the Embassy, my home telephone had gone bad and would they fix it please. They'd say, yes, yes, and nothing would happen. After several more fruitless calls just to build the record for what I was about to do, I called UPDK again and said, "Look, as they must know, the Embassy and I had called many times to request repair of my apartment telephone, and it still doesn't work. It is most inconvenient, and impedes the work of the Embassy. So you leave me no choice. If it is not repaired by the time I get home this evening, I'm going to take it apart and fix it myself." Well, there was a telephone repairman out there in no time

at all and when I got home it worked like new. My calculation was that UPDK (an intelligence arm itself) as well as the listening KGB, knew there was a microphone or some other tap in the telephone instrument at home, and they didn't want me to tinker with it, perhaps to find and remove it. That might hit the western press and cause some sort of incident, or protest, or just prompt us to examine all our telephones, or reveal some of their technology. The promptness of repair might have been just coincidence, but I doubt it. Besides, we learned to use the Soviet listening practices occasionally to work to our advantage.

Another example of the same nature: When we first arrived and back when we were still living in the first building, we tried to get someone to help with the housework. So the Embassy called the service agency, and kept calling and calling, only to be told, "Terribly sorry, no one is available." In the meantime, several newly arrived nonaligned diplomatic families had received household help promptly. So finally I called myself and said, "As you know, we've been asking for several months, and a number of other diplomats have received help, diplomats who arrived in Moscow well after we registered our request. If no one is available now, nor by the end of this week, I'll go next Saturday to the collective farm market where I'm sure I can find someone to hire myself." Well, practically instantaneously a lady, Ukrainian, appeared. She was with us until we were evacuated from that building, when she decided to go back to the Ukraine. Interestingly, her reason for returning to the Ukraine was that, unlike our outgoing kids, her own daughter in the care of grandparents was turning into a spoiled, snobbish "aristokratka" and that would never do!

So sometimes you could turn the Soviet system of isolation and control to your advantage.

Q: How to beat the system.

TOUMANOFF: Occasionally, you could use the system, in small, unimportant things. But not abuse it. The country was, and remains, their back yard and they have ultimate sanctions. Some American diplomats, exchange students and others who have overdone it have been expelled, or worse.

In a worst case, an American youth tried to enter the USSR from Helsinki by bus, without a visa. This was possible for Finns on daytrips. He, however, was stopped by Soviet authorities at the border, removed from the bus and told to return to Helsinki to apply for a visa. The bus went on to Leningrad without him. Instead, he tried to sneak across the border through the woods at some distance from the highway. Caught by Soviet border guards, he was tried as a spy and jailed. Tragically, he required medicine which he carried with him. Medicine was extremely valuable in Soviet prisons and in the Gulag. Transported by prisoner train, he was killed en route. When the body was returned, his throat had been cut. The medicine was missing.

But let me finish the story of the evacuation. Having seen the apartments we would occupy, I went in search of a telephone to tell my wife that they would be fine. The

telephone was in the construction shack, and chaos reigned there. It seems the pipes in the attic of one wing had frozen in the night and flooded a stairwell under construction. The construction boss was on the only phone, and as I waited and listened he called authority after authority, from the Moscow Government and Party headquarters down through both chains of command; the same with various Construction Trusts involved in the project, from top to bottom, as well as other units I couldn't identify. In part he was absolving himself as the pipes had also frozen earlier that night in another, occupied wing, and all available labor was struggling to stem flooding there. Mainly, I realized, he was spreading responsibility so widely that no ensuing investigation would have much chance of unraveling primary fault, if any.

Q. *Soviet Bureaucracy at its best skill, but not unique.*

TOUMANOFF: I was going to tell you something more about travel. There were many trips, and much to tell. Too much. So I'll describe a few episodes which will give you some idea of what it was like in 1959 and '60.

Edward Killham (Political Officer in the Embassy "Internal" Section) and I set off together, first stop by air to Kiev. The plane landed in Kharkov instead, without explanation and was going no further. So we were immediately off our Foreign Ministry approved itinerary. The rules called for notification to the Ministry and effort to get back on the itinerary as soon as possible. We telephoned the Embassy, reported what had happened, set about trying to get back on our itinerary by bus, plane or train. We could manage it by catching a midnight train, which would take us to another train which would get us back on route. At the bus station we had been surrounded by a troop of gypsy beggars, complete with a fake baby, (a doll in swaddling) who backed off promptly when we told them we were Americans and probably being followed. We also saw that we had enough time to take a quick round trip to the next town. That turned out to be a huge cement works, blanketed in cement dust, everywhere. No grass, dead trees, almost no one in the street. Dust everywhere, kicked up in clouds by passing trucks. It was a scene of environmental (and likely health) devastation. We left within a few minutes, back by the next bus. The midnight train was "hard" - open compartments with wooden benches facing each other and a small fold-down table under the window. In the station we had found only a half-liter bottle of pepper Vodka of suspicious color, not even bread. We bought the vodka but the omens were for a sleepless 6-hour night.

As the train started, a middle-aged Russian man sat down on the bench opposite us in the compartment. He lowered the table, opened his suitcase and produced two bottles of vodka, pickles, black bread, hardboiled eggs, and a pie. We added our bottle of pepper vodka, which he promptly threw out the window. At our surprise, he explained that his best friend was the director of a distillery, who, early each month monitored a batch of vodka from start to finish, took it all for himself, and provided his friends including our companion. We still looked puzzled, so he explained further. Everywhere in the Soviet Union the workers slacked off from the beginning until close to the end of each month, when there would be a crashing effort to meet the planned quota or even surpass it by a little for the bonus; a little because if by much they knew that the quota would be simply

be ratcheted up. During the crash effort abuse of every kind prevailed, negligence, corruption of input and process, adulteration of materials, disregard of standards, industrial safety. The result was that end-of-month products were not just poor quality, but possibly dangerous. The quality of the monitored early batch of vodka was assured. That is what he was offering us. The pepper vodka was just as likely to be pepper-disguised poison.

He had never before met Americans, let alone Russian speaking diplomats. He showered us with questions and hospitality, sharing all he had brought, at the same time showing much distrust of the official versions of America. After an hour or so a conductor called him out. He returned, a bit preoccupied, but within minutes resumed the conversation as before, this time telling more about himself. He was Chief Engineer (2nd in command) of a very large coal mine, and a Party Member. But mostly we talked of America. Not long after he was called out again, this time for much longer, perhaps half an hour. He returned very upset and angry. After a few minutes of awkward silence I suggested we talk of something else, fishing for salmon in Iceland for example, and started. That quickly became too stilted and artificial to sustain, and he broke out that he held a high position of trust, responsible for the safety and production of thousands of workers, a decorated veteran of the War, and a loyal Party Member, and who were "these people" to tell him he couldn't talk with us! It's not as though he were telling us secrets! With which he pointedly asked us about coal mining in America. Neither Ed nor I knew much about that industry, certainly not enough to match his expertise, which led him to explain the Soviet industry to help us understand his questions. That eventually led to his main concerns, which turned out to be appalling working conditions, water up to the waist, clouds of dust, mechanical failures, shaft collapses, explosions, the prevalence of black lung, phlebitis, and physical injury, resulting in much disability, with high and early mortality. He was called out again, and did not return. I caught a glimpse of him at the next station being hustled off the platform between two burly men in uniform.

Q: Did you keep his vodka?

TOUMANOFF: Everything was left behind. His bag, his coat and hat and the remains of food and vodka, everything. No, we didn't touch it after he left, nor, as I recall, did anyone collect it while we were there. Well, there wasn't much vodka left. We had pretty much demolished the food and most of the vodka by that time, which may account for why he was not more careful. We, too, were at fault for allowing him to run on, following his lead. Although we had identified ourselves as American diplomats, and there was never any question he knew with whom he was speaking.

On another trip we were again deposited by air in the wrong place. Destined for Tbilisi, capital of Georgia, we landed in Sukhumi, on the Black sea coast. Tbilisi, we were told, was socked in. This time, however, after a brief wait in the terminal we were met by a Russian civilian who introduced himself as the Director of the Sukhumi Zoo, to be our escort during our layover. The layover would be until the next day and he suggested a tour of the Zoo until hotel accommodations could be arranged for the night. There being no other offer, and being unexpected guests, so to speak, we made the tour while he

described the Zoo as specializing in monkeys due to the benign climate. Monkeys were purchased in large batches from India for the entire USSR, shipped to Moscow, and distributed to the nation's zoos from there. We learned much about the names, habits and antics of various monkeys. Those we saw seemed in good health and comfortable. Things moved rather slowly and we saw only a small part of what appeared to be a large establishment, widely spread out on a wooded hillside. Our escort was bright, informed about zoos, amusing and good company, so it was growing late when he took us to dinner at a hotel. Our room was not quite ready so we sat down to slow motion zakuski (appetizers) and ample quantities of vodka. Time slipped by. The main course eventually appeared, followed eventually by something else, followed by toasts, anecdotes, and random tales. Our room remained on the verge of readiness and there was nothing for it but to wait. Our escort, never flagged and we were enjoying his company in the well lubricated evening. The room was finally ready shortly after midnight. It was bare, with two cots and blankets, no sheets. My blankets were still warm from the previous occupant, who evidently had been granted half a night and then evicted for us. A common bathroom held a hand basin with one spigot, and a rather noxious round hole in the floor. Never mind, we were tired and had a flight to Tbilisi the next morning. Our escort met us, took us to the airport, and mentioned that he came to Moscow occasionally to receive his quota of monkeys, and would look us up at the Embassy. To my surprise he did, leading to lunches and a couple of supper parties at Russian apartments. I was careful not to go alone but always with another American, to suppers with Eileen. At one such supper party the game was that every guest was required to climb to the top of a 4-foot stepladder at the table head, toast the company with a glass of vodka, and climb down backwards. (I learned from watching Eileen to spill a lot of vodka on the way up in pretended inebriation.) At that party our friend from Sukhumi, quite maudlin with drink, drew me aside and whispered that he was a Communist Party member, and had been reporting to the KGB on all our meetings. I assured him with a smile that it was quite all right as I had assumed both from the start. He then asked me if I had been reporting on him to my government. I, truthfully, said no, as he had never told me anything worth reporting. Years later, in Washington, I learned that the "zoo" he had so artfully disguised from us was actually one of the Soviet Union's main research stations for the effects of nuclear radiation. That's where the monkeys came in.

It is astounding, now, to think back that social conversations with Russians had become so routine that we reported selectively, when there was meaningful content.

Another travel episode is the other side of the coin. We had all been cautioned stringently to be very careful when travelling to avoid being trapped into some compromising, sexually compromising, situation. This had happened to others previously, so it was not idle talk. Consequently I was conscious of this, knowing that in some way an attempt might come. Fore-warned, I thought, was fore-armed and I was determined to stay alert to fend it off at the first sign. I forget now who was traveling with me on another trip, this time including an overnight train. This train had sleepers, four beds, upper and lower in each compartment. We had made reservations, but after the train was underway we discovered that we had been separated, placed in different compartments and different cars. That was most unusual, but protests were in vain. We both thought "Here it comes,"

and that I, with my Russian background and language fluency would be the likely target. Sure enough, two husky men and a young woman entered the compartment and my companion was banished to another car. Evening, and bedtime came. Meanwhile the men, one at a time, kept going out and returning, so there had been little conversation except introductions, all of which heightened my apprehensions. The arrangement was that we three men stepped out of the compartment while the woman undressed, got into her lower bunk, and drew the curtains. The men insisted that I, as a foreign guest, should take the other lower bunk and go next. I did and, leaving my shoes on the floor as she had, got into my bunk, drew the curtains, rustled about for a while, and finally stretched out, fully clothed including necktie. I calculated that, under assault, my clothes would either daunt the assailants, or give me time to raise a huge ruckus. The men came in, undressed, and climbed into their bunks. Nothing happened, all was still, but I stayed on my guard. And so it remained, all night long. It was the most uncomfortable, sleepless night I've ever spent, punctuated by dreadful dreams when I dozed off, especially when my necktie wrapped itself around my throat as I tossed and turned. In the morning I stayed in my bunk pretending sleep until they all, considerately, left the compartment for me to emerge, feeling very foolish and doubtless looking worse. They turned out to be kindly, interesting, sociable people, and made me feel at home with a game of dominoes. My traveling companion had a quiet night of restful sleep, and couldn't stop laughing the next day over my "entrapment."

Q: What were they?

TOUMANOFF: They were Russians.

Q: But how had they identified themselves?

TOUMANOFF: Oh, the woman was a teacher, one man was an engineer of some kind, and the third some sort of inspector.

Q: A good cover story, if it was a cover. It might have been real.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, I think it was perfectly real, just the usual reservation muddle. Anyway, that was my sole sexual entrapment episode. More like I trapped myself.

Q: That's marvelous.

TOUMANOFF: One more travel item. This one in Leningrad during that famous Nixon "kitchen debate" trip in 1959. The Leningrad Party boss, a primitive called Romanov (no relation to the Czars) famous for smashing priceless museum china in drunken routs, was Vice President Nixon's host, and on the evening before Nixon's scheduled departure the next day, Romanov gave a dinner for the Nixon delegation. As I recall, it was in a reception room at the theater after a performance of the Leningrad Ballet. Toward the end of that dinner a waiter accidentally poured a good deal of brandy on my shoulder, so I rose and stepped outside the room to fan the fumes out of my jacket. A group of some ten Soviet security men were lounging around the antechamber and one of them, clearly in

command, asked me what was going on inside. I told him that Romanov was urging Nixon to extend his visit in Leningrad for an extra day. With which the security man jumped to his feet and exclaimed, "What does he think he's doing! I have ten thousand men on this operation all of whose orders will have to be changed!" He was so shaken he looked to me in dismay, and I realized he took me for a high Russian official, probably from Moscow as he didn't know me, who might be able to intervene to prevent the disaster. With hardly more than a word and wave of my hand I dismissed the talk as mere chit chat, nothing would come of it, and quickly returned to the party. That was a close call. Had he realized to whom it was that he had revealed the scale of KGB security and isolation arrangements for Nixon's tour, I think in the KGB mentality I'd have been guilty of passing for a Russian, if not of espionage. In any case the man's error would demonstrate how dangerous I was, even if unintentionally, and make me a target for expulsion. Being taken for a Russian had its drawbacks.

Vulnerability, Protection, Thompson & Khrushchev KGB #3

Actually, by that time I did have some special protection from the KGB. I should explain. The Ambassador during my entire tour in Moscow was Llewellyn Thompson, from September of 1958 to September or thereabouts of 1960. And Bill, if I forget, remind me to tell you about the Francis Gary Powers episode and what a public show trial in Moscow looked like.

Q: And it involved you because you were an observer, or whatever.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, I attended his trial. But, back to the Ambassador. Llewellyn Thompson, by the time I got to Moscow, had established an extraordinary relationship with Khrushchev, and one of the privileges resulting from being the most fluent Russian speaker in the Embassy was that Thompson - whose Russian was really quite good - nevertheless took me along with him for some of his meetings with Khrushchev, and they met fairly frequently. Not to every meeting - he did not take me out to Khrushchev's *dacha*, those were informal, family affairs and I had not been invited. But to the occasional more official meetings he took me along in case he needed some translation. He would also sometimes check his reporting cables to be sure he had properly understood and had missed nothing.

Q: You took notes. You were the official notetaker.

TOUMANOFF: No, I did not take notes. He never asked me to, and it would have interfered with the atmoshere of informal trust and candor. They spoke Russian quite freely and I recall only two occasions when he asked me for help with a word.

Q: But Thompson often spoke in his native language, which diplomats do to get double time, if you will.

TOUMANOFF: No, actually, the conversations were always in Russian. So far as I know, Khrushchev never brought an interpreter to his meetings with Thompson.

Q: And had to be in Russian.

TOUMANOFF: Right. After I'd gone to the first or second of these I realized that Thompson had established a truly almost unbelievable degree of confidence and trust with this extraordinary personality called Khrushchev. I am convinced that when Thompson finally left Moscow - this was after I had left - Khrushchev lost one of probably the only two people in the entire Soviet Union whom Khrushchev totally trusted. The other being his wife, Nina Petrovna. With Thompson I think he knew he would not be deceived, not be lied to, and that he would get accurate, thoughtful information and opinion - that Thompson genuinely represented the United States Government, the President, and that he had the President's confidence and was the epitome of what an ambassador should be. But to have this happen in the Soviet Union was perfectly extraordinary. Eileen and I came to know Nina Petrovna a little, and she was marvelous. I'm sure that she kept Khrushchev sane, because she was so intelligent, so down-to-earth, so straightforward and so genuine.

Q: And knew the system.

TOUMANOFF: And, well, yes, I'm sure she knew the system, but she did not strike me as manipulative. Just the opposite. I think she must have been emotionally and *morally* a tower of strength for him. There was no falseness; there was no artificiality; but intelligence and thoughtfulness and acuity. The same was true of Thompson.

Q: Thompson recognized this and therefore could use this quality of his to-

TOUMANOFF: Well, I don't think he could be anything else, it came so naturally to him to have that kind of integrity, presence, acuity, perception, thoughtfulness, accuracy. It did work. I mean, he recognized the nature of the relationship, and he valued it, as did Khrushchev. Now let me tell you of an episode which demonstrated this relationship and, incidentally, why I was not troubled in Moscow by entrapments or police harassment, or anything of the kind. You will recall that when we began these interviews, I said that my Russian ancestry was prominent, privileged, and titled aristocracy, that my father was, his final rank was colonel, in the Imperial Guard, which was a very elite group, close to the Tsar. Obviously, my father fought on the side of the White Russian armies during the Civil War, was an adamant opponent of the Revolution and the Bolsheviks, and in the United States actively and publicly opposed recognition of the USSR. To such an extent was he an enemy of the Bolsheviks that they put a very large price on his head and on the heads of the entire family. My mother, who graduated from the law faculty at Moscow University, was equally dedicated and equally able, intelligent, and skillful in her opposition to the Communists. The Bolsheviks captured my father several times during the revolution and civil war, and on each occasion he broke out of captivity, and even engineered the escape of a prominent General. He was anathema to the Bolsheviks, and, as his son, I was not sure (a) whether the Soviets would let me into the country, even on a diplomatic passport, or (b) what might happen to me after I got there.

Q: Because they obviously knew your background.

TOUMANOFF: Well, that's the interesting thing. I don't think they did. Clearly, there must have been a large dossier on my father his family running into the early thirties, until shortly after U.S./Soviet recognition when my parents settled back into private life. American Communists disrupted some meetings, public lectures and a radio broadcast by my mother while she and my father were actively opposing recognition. So I assume Soviet Intelligence tracked my parents in the United States through 1933. Therefore when I got to Moscow in 1958, I thought I'd probably be more of a target of the KGB than most American diplomats, and I had better be alert and tune my radar pretty sharply.

Q: And no signals had come to you before you had received the assignment, from the Security Office or anything.

TOUMANOFF: None. But the NTS episode in Frankfurt made me think that they might have noticed my presence.

Q: They should have.

TOUMANOFF: They could have, but I guess they were so preoccupied with poisoning the Director of the organization that they didn't bother about the crowd of people who came to that conference.

You remember that when the Germans were approaching Moscow early in World War II, the KGB started destroying and burning their files. My guess is that somewhere in those bonfires the dossier they had on my parents disappeared, and by 1958 nobody remembered anything about Toumanoffs. Otherwise they would have turned up the dossier when the Department applied for my diplomatic visa. Another reason they didn't identify me right away is that the last name, Toumanoff, is a very common Russian name. As common I suppose, as Anderson, or Edwards in the United States. There were probably a hundred thousand or more Toumanoffs in the USSR. Anyway, the following episode transpired, which illustrates, among other things, the nature of Ambassador Thompson's relationship with Khrushchev and his effectiveness as our Ambassador. Khrushchev went off to the Balkans, I forget whether it was Sofia or Bucharest, but he was out of the country. When he returned all the ambassadors went out to the airport to welcome him back, as was customary for a Chief of State, although he was actually chief of the Communist Party. As Khrushchev came down the reception line of ambassadors he stopped at Thompson and said, "There is something I want to talk about with you. When I finish this reception line they will pull up my car and you could ride in to Moscow with me and we can talk on the way."

Q: Down that special reserved lane in the middle of the Ring Road!

TOUMANOFF: Ambassador Thompson had taken me with him to the airport and I stood at his shoulder in the reception line. By that time I had been at several of Thompsons meetings and talks with Khrushchev. He knew that Thompson trusted me and he had

accepted me as part of the threesome that met. When they pulled up Khrushchev's limousine, I recall three rings of security personnel between the car and everyone else. I could be wrong on that, perhaps only two, but security was certainly visible and tight. From the car Khrushchev waved to Thompson, who started forward, but I held back as I had not been invited. Khrushchev saw that, called me by name and waved me forward. As I went to the car through those concentric rings of security personnel I knew I was going to be safe for the rest of my tour in Russia unless I did something really stupid, which I had no intention of doing. The fact that Khrushchev new me by name and trusted me to ride with him would be a considerable shield against KGB harassment or provocation. At the same time, it made me a dangerous person on whom they would concentrate their attention, especially to identify and learn all they could about me. I think they resented that special access and protection, the more so when they finally learned my ancestry. But that was late in my tour, after I had also been the personal escort for Milton Eisenhower, the President's brother, on the Nixon tour of the USSR. (See below.)

Q: So they wouldn't set you up, in order to have you expelled.

TOUMANOFF: Within broad limits on my own behavior, I think that's right. I felt freer than most, but too much of a provocation on my part by single act or a pattern, would provide justification for action against me and bring them down on me. For example, in any but the slightest chance contact with Russians I would always identify myself early in a conversation as an American diplomat, working in the American Embassy in Moscow. To pass for a Russian, which I could have done, would have been a grave mistake.

Q: You weren't a target.

TOUMANOFF: Certainly nothing ever overt. There was a gentle attempt to recruit me, but that was by sheer accident, as the result of a flat tire during the Nixon visit. We'll get to that later. But I think that ride with Khrushchev probably saved me from any trouble. Strangely, I don't even remember what it was he wanted to talk about with Thompson. Nothing very important, I would guess. But the Thompson cables have all, I think, been declassified and released.

In any case, they finally figured out who I was, but this was in the last six months or so of my tour.

Q: How do you know they found out who you were?

TOUMANOFF: They told me.

Q: Oh, they told you. Who's they?

TOUMANOFF: There was some sort of a Soviet affair, an official dinner for some U.S. delegation, perhaps Congressional. In those days there were quite a few American visitors. Before the U-2, that is. I was sitting across from a Soviet official, I don't

remember who he was, but not high ranking. In the middle of the dinner he looked me straight in the eye and said meaningfully, almost in a challenging tone. "We know who you are."

Q: That clearly.

TOUMANOFF: That clearly, with emphasis. I brushed it off with, "Oh, fine, good." And that was that. But he was saying that they'd *finally* figured out who I was. It must have come to them with a jolt to find the son of a titled White Russian, Imperial Guard Colonel and mortal enemy, in their midst meeting and riding with Khrushchev.

Q: And this man was in a position that you recognized that's what he was saying.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, yes.

Q: Because he could have been saying other things by then.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, no. We have identified you, is what he was saying. And he was saying it with a glint.

Q: We finally did it.

TOUMANOFF: We have finally figured out who you are. And there was resentment. There was resentment, in the first place, because it had taken them so long. I represented an embarrassing lapse in their vaunted security services. In the second place, there was resentment because it was too late to do anything about it. There was resentment because they had built a large dossier on me, I'm sure because I had traveled so much, met so many Russians and had friends who telephoned and invited me out, even to their homes. Finally there was resentment that I, of all people, should have enjoyed the kind of access and privileges that none of them had with their own leadership at the highest level.

Q: You were the enemy of enemies.

TOUMANOFF: That would be their immediate assumption from my parentage. But at a more practical level I was a dangerous enemy because Russians I met at random most often treated and spoke with me as to a fellow Russian in spite of my care to identify myself to them. Some simply refused to believe me, and when I showed my Soviet-issued Diplomatic Identification Card, one or two had dismissed it as a hoax, a counterfeit, so common and easily purchased in the USSR. One such randomly met individual offered to show me the district in Moscow where I could buy any sort of counterfeit Soviet document. I demurred.

Q: And you'd been the closest to their leader.

TOUMANOFF: Which they should have prevented.

Q: And trusted by the leader.

TOUMANOFF: And trusted by extension of his trust in the American Ambassador.

Q: But if Khrushchev had been... Maybe that's why he fell, Vlad!

TOUMANOFF: No, many things contributed to his fall. Only one of which, I think, was his turn to the West, and the United States in particular. There are many excellent books written about his rule and fall. Very briefly, let me comment on only one element. Khrushchev launched the Berlin crisis in 1958 amid extravagant missile rattling and threats. That terrified the Soviet population with the prospect of atomic war. Then suddenly he turned to "Peace and Friendship," "The Spirit of Camp David," and an exchange of visits with Eisenhower. The prospect of a visit by Ike, the wartime hero and ally, the epitome of U.S.-Soviet cooperation in an agonizing, mortal struggle, was such a relief from the prevailing fear of war that the Soviet population simply stampeded out of control in their enthusiasm and eagerness to show their gratitude, love for Ike, and yearning for peace with America. All else that coincided with Khrushchev's domestic thaw following his anti-Stalin speech. I think the Kremlin's organs of control were terrified at its increasing loss, and held him to be responsible.

Incidentally, I saw Khrushchev before and after his very successful 1959 trip from coast to coast in the U.S. and there was a real change in him. He had never seen the United States, he had no conception. Remember, his formal education ended with grammar school, about the fourth grade I think. After that the only education he had was in Communist Party training facilities which gave him a crudely warped picture. So he had no conceivable notion of what the United States was like. He knew little of Western Europe and nearly nothing of the rest of the world. Eastern Europe after the War and Stalinist rule was not altogether different from the USSR. So he was handicapped in dealing on the world scene, and you could tell that he felt himself handicapped when he was talking to Thompson. Somehow he would say things or talk on assumptions about the U.S. and other parts of the world which were simply not so, Party cant. Part of the conversations with Thompson, whom he respected for his knowledge and objectivity, were almost educational, a kind of reality check of his images induced by Communist mythology and propaganda, especially his notions of the United States.

Q: And Khrushchev would be able to listen, and not take it as a criticism or put down. How was his language? How was his level of language, in terms of literacy?

TOUMANOFF: Khrushchev?

Q: Yes.

TOUMANOFF: I didn't see any serious flaw. He loved to use slang, and salty expressions, but that was being a populist.

Q: That's fine, sure. So he never suffered - he never suffered from-

TOUMANOFF: From being inarticulate? No he did not.

Q: Or being embarrassed, maybe, by his equals.

TOUMANOFF: Well, I'm not sure that the latter is true. I think when he ran into cultured Russians who spoke a different kind of Russian language, one of erudition -

Q: As in all languages.

TOUMANOFF: - as you and I might if we spoke with a British don speaking in paragraphs instead of sentences, a very, very articulate Britisher - he would feel this handicap; he would feel that this was a different kind of a person - not superior, because he, after all, had reached the pinnacle and was tough as nails. He had accomplished extraordinary things and had survived extraordinary things, but he knew the difference and felt his discomfort, he was aware of the uncertainty, or unreliability of his knowledge in fields of learning, and was apt to cover it with bombast.

Q: And it didn't enter into the relationship with the ambassador.

TOUMANOFF: Actually, I think it helped. Thompson had genuine respect for Khrushchev and showed it at all times. It was mutual, and they liked each other.

Q: Obviously because he's speaking a foreign language-

TOUMANOFF: No, they spoke in Russian. But this ambassador was the Ambassador of America, and he was different. He represented a great nation, the constant object of Soviet foremost international concerns. Anyway, when Khrushchev came back from his American visit, and I saw him not long after he returned, he had been humbled by his experience in the United States - humbled in the sense of revelation, that is, he never said so in so many words, but you could see that he had been enormously impressed-and challenged. Some part of that sense of challenge and almost defensive reaction was a remark that he made during the trip. He was intentionally driven by car down the New Jersey Turnpike and the Interstate from New York to Washington. It had been arranged to drive rather than fly or go by train with the thought that he would be impressed by the fantastic highway and the unending stream of equally fantastic automobiles carrying ordinary people. Both not to be dreamt of in the USSR. Well, he <u>was</u> impressed. Asked eventually during the ride by Henry Cabot Lodge, who escorted him on that trip, what he thought, Khrushchev turned and, looking at the stream of automobiles, said, "We'll never make that mistake." Of course, they have made that mistake, but <u>their</u> domestic oil reserves are bottomless.

He was thoroughly impressed, how could he not be. By contrast his USSR, still barely recovering from the devastation of the War, was like a moonscape. In Washington, at the end of his trip he had practically flayed the Soviet Ambassador, Menshikov, along the line of "Why haven't you told me the truth about this country?"

Q: "Because I didn't dare."

TOUMANOFF: Well, I wasn't told how Menshikov answered, but he was roundly, roundly scolded by Khrushchev, who was furious that Menshikov had not prepared him for the United States by telling him what kind of a country he was coming to. And poor Menshikov - obviously - you're perfectly correct. Had he described the United States in real terms he -

Q: -would have been removed.

TOUMANOFF: -perhaps even packed off to the Gulag. But to my mind Khrushchev was venting on his Ambassador his own frustrating realization how superior and mighty was the American society. Well informed on U.S. military and technological superiority, he was unprepared for our phenominal living standard and the scale and efficiency of our national infrastructure. He had already launched his ill-conceived and badly executed "virgin lands" corn campaign, hoping that Garst-like farms would solve his agricultural problem. He promptly ordered supermarkets. At the same time the U.S. challenge spurred his national pride, his genuine patriotism, and his drive for reform with slogans like "overtake and surpass" America. Ultimately, in his impatience he tried to divide the Soviet Communist Party into urban and rural branches to set against each other in an effort to move that glacial apparatus. Small wonder he was deposed.

Brezhnev, Mikoyan

I think for the moment that's enough about Thompson and Khrushchev. Let me tell you a couple of quick insights on other leadership in the Soviet Union. One was Brezhnev and the other one was Mikoyan.

In 1959 there was the usual 4th of July large reception at Spaso House, the Ambassador's residence, and as this was a time of "Peace and Friendship" a few members of the Politburo and other high Soviet officials came. On this occasion I saw Brezhnev standing alone and looking uncomfortable. So I went over, introduced myself, welcomed him, and invited him to the buffet and drinks table. He refused, bluntly. I asked if I could bring him some refreshment, "No," looking like he suspected poison. I tried to engage him in conversation, small talk, to make him more comfortable. As I recall it was a beautiful summer day, vacation time, so I asked if he had been able to enjoy some leave. He said "No," looking as though I was prying into secrets. I asked if he had been to Spaso before, thinking to tell him a bit about its history. He did not reply. Very plainly he was not interested in small talk and continued to look and feel enormously uncomfortable and awkward. At that moment a Soviet official in a slightly rumpled suit came over to talk to him, whom Brezhnev obviously knew. Brezhnev pounced on him scolding violently for being slightly unshaven. An attempt to explain that he had been working late was cut off in mid-syllable. Brezhnev went on belaboring savagely for so shaming the USSR before Americans by his uncultured behavior, and banished the poor man, fiercely ordering him home to shave. The man cringed under the onslaught and practically ran out the door.

Embarrassed to witness so blatant a display of inferiority complex, I had moved off, and I stayed away from Brezhnev, probably making matters worse. I probably should have suggested we have a shot of vodka and forget the incident. But I was in mild shock at this revelation of another, major cultural obstacle, at the top of Soviet power, to U.S.-Soviet relations.

Q: And in front of you. Clearly, you were not spared any of this.

TOUMANOFF: Brezhnev was already feeling out of place, unskilled and powerless to cope with this alien American setting and company. Even as a junior Embassy officer, but speaking his own Russian language fluently while he knew no English, nor probably any other foreign tongue, I increased his discomfort and, for him, a rare sense of inadequacy. He was at a loss for what to say or do or where to turn: Stripped of command. Worse still, this was enemy territory and he was weak and helpless in it. You once asked me whether my training in clinical psychology helped. Well, it helped a great deal. But on that occasion I was taken aback by the scale of the cultural and personal crevasse between him and us, and I failed to bridge it.

Q: At the American embassy residence.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, at Spaso House, the American Ambassadors' residence. But for Brezhnev it was a magnificent pre-revolution, Czarist era, Russian private mansion, full of all these well-dressed, smooth-faced, confident Americans, comfortable, totally at home, speaking Russian on top of everything else. In every way this setting and company was not of his world and it put this tough communist, bred in the Stalin era and barbaric war, this Soviet Politburo boss, completely off his stride.

Q: The Russian inferiority complex-through history.

TOUMANOFF: That vicious, arbitrary tongue-lashing was the result. The poor official, who must have been high-ranking to be invited, had to stand there silently, looking shamefaced and terrified, until the storm was finally exhausted, and then scuttle away home, banished, thinking his career and perhaps ability to feed his family, wrecked.

Q: The unshaven unsuccessful diplomat, or whatever he was.

TOUMANOFF: As an example of Soviet brutality of governance, it was telling.

Q: Yet it was Brezhnev they chose to be leader when Khrushchev was deposed. I shared your opinion of him throughout all of his years at the top, especially towards the end. I mean, Brezhnev was pathetic at the end, and sick.

TOUMANOFF: I remember Thompson telling me, just before he returned, in 1967, for his second tour as Ambassador in Moscow, that Brezhnev and his Politburo were a limited, narrow-minded bunch to whom he would have little access, and probably to little effect. He was not looking forward to his 2nd tour. Well, they kept Brezhnev propped up

long after they should have let him lie down.

Now, by contrast, about Mikoyan. At the end of Nixon's 1959, "Kitchen Debate" visit, there was a small dinner at Spaso for the Vice President, and Soviet guests. Khrushchev and Mikoyan came. I was seated, to interpret, between Mikoyan and Mrs. Nixon.

Q: What was Mikoyan at this point?

TOUMANOFF: Well, he was a member of the Politburo, and I don't think he had any ministerial or formal Government post. But he was obviously a very close associate of Khrushchev. Remember? Mikoyan had been sent to the United States in advance of the planned Khrushchev visit (and to abate the mood of crisis over Berlin); and later to Cuba after the Cuban Missile Crisis to pacify Fidel Castro, who was in an uproar that he had not been consulted about the terms of its settlement. Back to the dinner party; and here I'll be quite candid about my impression of Mrs. Nixon, which is not based exclusively on this particular episode. Earlier in the trip I had interpreted for her a bit, and on the day of the dinner for her visit to a Moscow primary school.

Q: Nor known to you exclusively.

TOUMANOFF: At all times she kept herself under tight control, saying and doing little. The same happened at dinner. Mikoyan had already taken the trouble to be thoroughly briefed about her visit to the school, and knew that she had been a school teacher herself. He promptly initiated conversation with Mrs. Nixon by asking her if she had enjoyed the school visit. She said, Yes. It was very nice. What was her impression of the school? It was very interesting. Was it like American schools, or different in some way? Well, it was a long time since she had taught school. Mikoyan was a little bit taken aback, but not daunted, he tried again, and brought up some other activity that she had been engaged in during the visit. He had obviously been thoroughly briefed and had taken the trouble to remember. But he got essentially the same replies, kind of noncommittal-but-pleasant and brief. No one could take offense, or even make much of a news story of them. But it became obvious to him and to me that she was not going to be responsive. He had tried, gracefully, but Mrs. Nixon clearly wished to avoid conversation. So he and I had a brief conversation about the school visit to let him know it had gone well, and Mikoyan turned to his other side. I told Mrs. Nixon what I had said to Mikoyan, which was about the school welcome (nothing about herself) and to her relief we turned quietly to our dinners.

In sum, it is my clear impression that Mrs. Nixon was under the tight constraints of Mr. Nixon's election plans. He was already running for the presidency in the 1960 elections, and on this trip in Russia she must have been strictly enjoined neither to distract the press from him, nor under any circumstances to say or do anything that might damage his press coverage. On the unfamiliar ground of Russia, she chose to do and say as little as possible. I would put it more strongly, I think she was actually fearful lest her husband disapprove of anything she might do.

Back to Mikoyan. At the dinner, the time came for after dinner toasts. Khrushchev rose to

make a toast, and he was either tired or had a fair amount of drink. He seemed a bit unsteady on his feet and was plainly garrulous. He started off on what turned out to be a very long toast to the Vice President, Mrs. Nixon, the President's brother, the assembled officials of both nations, relations between the countries, events during the visit, contributions to peace and friendship and on and on. But he wandered off so far afield that he lost track of his theme. He'd gotten off on some side track, came to the end of it, and started to pause trying to remember-

Q: -where he'd left.

TOUMANOFF: Sort of like you and me in this interview. What was it we were talking about before I got sidetracked? He hesitated for just part of a breath, and Mikoyan interjected a little witticism, just a quick quip which caused a general chuckle but reminded Khrushchev of his theme before the pause became a noticeable silence.

Q: That's a friend.

TOUMANOFF: And Khrushchev took off, back on track. It happened again. There was this momentary hesitation, and Mikoyan injected another little witticism, an amusing quip which again put Khrushchev back on track. Mikoyan did this *three* times, quickly, skillfully and pleasantly to enable Khrushchev to bring the toast to a successful conclusion.

Q: As a good Armenian would.

TOUMANOFF: -as one of the smoothest, greatest rug dealers of all time. That's an unjust statement. Mikoyan was one of the mysteries of Sovietology. How in the world had he survived as a leading communist from the early ‘20s through all the deadly Party struggles, all of Stalin's purges, the post-Stalin battles for leadership? He was unique. That evening I began to understand his talents. A lightning quick mind, no ambition for leadership, threatening no one, and with a deft light touch, he made himself indispensable in service to those in power. I think he was never pushy; he was not trying to draw attention to himself, he was not demonstrating any ambition except to be serviceable the best way he could, in a way that I think nobody else in that entourage in the Politburo could match.

Anyway, I did come to know Mikoyan's son, who's here in the United States. He's teaching at the University of Maryland. When he first came he was at the Kennan Institute, and on some occasion I made a point of going up to him to say that I knew his father a little and I admired him greatly. I told him about the dinner at Spaso and he said it was typical of his father. The son, too, is a very intelligent, sensitive, and by nature a gentle human being.

Q: And what does he teach, the son.

TOUMANOFF: Political science and I'm sure Russian-Soviet studies.

Q: Beautiful. That's a nice story to end on the personalities of the leadership of the Soviet Union.

The Nixon 1959 Visit, Milton Eisenhower

As we're in it already, let's go on about the July 23 - August 3, 1959 Nixon visit and tour in the USSR, the occasion for the famous "kitchen" debate.

In part, it was a kind of test run for the President's planned visit in 1960, his return visit for that of Khrushchev to the U.S. which was to take place later in the summer of 1959. In part it was a demonstration of improving U.S.-Soviet relations. In part it was necessary international experience for Vice President Nixon. And finally it was part of Nixon's presidential election campaign. It quickly became evident that this last was Nixon's overwhelming primary concern. For him it was first and foremost a public relations exercise. He was on stage (as in the "kitchen" debate). Not only did he and the delegation monitor U.S. and Soviet press coverage intensely, but press briefings were of the essence.

I was not involved in the following episode, but I was quietly told by some who were. So this is hearsay. Back in Moscow, at the end of Nixon's country tour, there were three days of negotiations. By agreement they were to be confidential, no publicity. On the evening of the first day (8-hour time difference) U.S. news media carried reports about the talks, favorable to Mr. Nixon. The Soviets complained, confidentially. The second day there were more such reports. The Soviets complained again. On the third day it became evident to some of our participants that the Soviets had lost trust in Nixon and the negotiations, and talked accordingly.

If the above account is true, that Soviet experience came on top of Nixon's reputation, established earlier in his public career, of being harshly anti-Soviet, and for behavior which gave him the sobriquet of "Tricky Dick". I'm unaware of any evidence that such a sacrifice of trust, if true, affected U.S.-Soviet relations during his presidency. But it wouldn't have helped.

Q: But the coverage may have helped him get elected, and that was more important.

TOUMANOFF; The famous "Kitchen" debate at the American Exhibition in Moscow (which, incidentally, Nixon opened during his visit) in which Nixon and Khrushchev publicly harangued each other, served the same purpose. Our press reported that Nixon not only proved he could stand up to the Soviets, he bested Khrushchev in their contention. But Yes, you're right. If he lost the election, trust or no it wouldn't matter. Some more about the visit.

This one is more about the United States and President Eisenhower. At some stage, when the Nixon visit was being planned, President Eisenhower asked his brother Milton Eisenhower to join the group, and he agreed and came. I was lucky enough to be assigned to be Milton Eisenhower's escort officer and interpreter, and kind of guide for all of the

trip outside of Moscow. Milton Eisenhower was a very thoughtful, very kind, very intelligent and perceptive man. Now while I did help and interpret occasionally for some of the other members on the voyage, essentially I made that trip with Milton Eisenhower. As a consequence I had a fascinating and easy time. That was a great relief, because there was often a huge mob, and noise, of correspondents, security types, delegation members, local Soviet officials, interpreters and other people surrounding Nixon. In the press toes were stamped, shoes were destroyed, people's clothes were torn, it was dangerous to stumble. A mob scene when he toured a factory or other installation. Milton Eisenhower and I would let the mob go through ahead of us and come along behind, sometimes alone, sometimes with one Soviet official detailed to escort the President's brother.

Q: Because the President's brother wasn't participating in any form, or near to it.

TOUMANOFF: He had no official function, but that's the interesting part of this, that as time went by I got the impression - although Milton Eisenhower never explained his role beyond saying that we needn't move with the throng - that the President had asked him to come for more than just to have his impressions of the USSR. It seemed to me more than that. Clearly the President wanted his brother's assessment of the USSR. Milton Eisenhower was alert, intellectually curious and asked many questions of Soviet escorts. But when we were alone our discussions ranged much more widely. He asked about what we had seen, what we had been told, about the Soviet Union as a whole, and the treatment accorded our delegation by the Soviets. Particularly he wanted to know my opinions of it all, and to check his own. We had some candid talks. There was something about his manner, or approach which suggested some psychological distance between him and Mr. Nixon. I began to think that perhaps the President wanted a wholly independent, astute, reliable and trustworthy account of the Nixon visit. Or perhaps counted on his very presence to exercise some sort of moderating influence. This aspect of it was never mentioned and never articulated by me or Milton Eisenhower or anybody else. But the implication for me was that Ike did not altogether trust his Vice President.

Q: And you went at Milton Eisenhower's direction, in the sense of shall we do this or shall we join them?

TOUMANOFF: Yes, I would ask whether he preferred to tag along behind or get in there with the group. It didn't matter very much if we were safely well behind because we could always catch up. Usually he preferred to avoid the throng.

Q: As I remember, reflecting back into history and up to present times, in the sense of what's been written, I think the relationship between President Eisenhower and Vice-President Nixon wasn't probably the best.

TOUMANOFF: Well, I got the impression that there was not total trust-

Q: "Trust" is the way it's put. And also, Nixon seemed very nervous as he wound himself upward through the route of Vice-President.

TOUMANOFF: Well, Mr. Nixon was a strange person anyway, and I don't think I want to get into-

Q: No, no, I wasn't inviting you to. I'm merely saying how it had been a little bit easier, perhaps, to deduce some of Milton's presence and why.

TOUMANOFF: Bill, let me describe another episode of that visit. It was at the very end, the last night before Nixon was flying home in the morning. He and some of his staff were relaxing in a small group at Spaso after dinner. The visit was over and Nixon was off stage. I think he had some drinks, and he sort of let his hair down. He proceeded to review moments of the visit extolling his own performance, "Wasn't I clever to... Didn't I handle that one... I sure showed them when I... Wasn't that the best answer you ever...," and so on and on, becoming foulmouthed in the process. These were not just rhetorical questions. He was pleading for reassurance and, as nearly always happens, the confirmations and slightly sycophantic replies and comments from his staff did not help. His insecurity was too deep, he was too intelligent, and I surmise he had repeated the same scene too many times and for too many years to fool himself. His anxiety seemed to increase. It looked like a long evening, and it was dangerous. I drifted out.

In sum, my over-all impression of our Vice President by the end of his visit was that he had little, if any moral yardstick, and was not well.

Q: And the President was himself, perhaps, with some insights.

TOUMANOFF: From the open literature one gets the distinct impression it was not a completely happy relationship between the two.

A few more quick episodes and I think we may be done with Moscow.

Admiral Rickover, who was on the delegation, was already famous for having firm opinions and speaking them directly. On a flight between two stops in Siberia he said he wanted to talk to a particularly poisonous Soviet journalist who was on the plane with us, and asked me to interpret for him. That journalist, named Romanovsky, I think, specialized in vitriolic front page editorial articles about the U.S.. He was talented and well connected. When we reached his seat the Admiral's first words to him were, "Why are you such a son-of-a-bitch?" These waters, I thought, are mined. So I explained in Russian that I was an officer serving in the U.S. Embassy, that Admiral Rickover had asked me to interpret for him and I would do so not in my diplomatic capacity but strictly as translator. That said, I did so using an exact equivalent insulting Russian epithet, and waited. What came back was a smile, a chuckle, "What makes you think so?" and an invitation for the Admiral to sit down in an empty seat opposite, all <u>in fluent English</u>. I withdrew. I did notice they talked for quite a while.

On the ground in Siberia a motorcade set off from the country villa where the delegation was housed to a theater performance. It consisted of (at least) one security car in the lead, followed by the Vice President's car; another security car; the car carrying Milton

Eisenhower; another security car, and more cars carrying Americans with security cars between each. Ambassador Thompson's wife, and I rode in the back with Ike's brother, and two unknown, unintroduced and unresponsive (probably both security) Soviets in front, the driver and another. This was the standard arrangement of those motorcades. We were late, and raced down the road trying to catch up with Nixon's car which had left ahead of us. Mrs. Thompson asked the driver, in her Russian, to slow down. No reply, no effect. Milton repeated the request to me, which I passed to the two in front, emphasizing that it was the President's brother speaking. In vain, nothing. They were under iron orders, so we sat back, crossing our fingers. Around the next corner we came upon a woman crouched in the ditch holding her bloody head in her hands, a bent bicycle, and the VP motorcade stopped beyond. With which our front passenger turned to the driver with a chuckle saying, "That'll teach 'em to get in our way." It turned out the lead security car had struck or blown the bike into the ditch, Nixon had seen it happen, his car stopped only when he demanded it, over vehement Soviet protests Nixon had sent his personal physician who was riding with him back to attend the woman. The motorcade moved on again only when the doctor reported that the injuries, despite the blood, did not seem serious, and Soviet assurances that the accident had been reported and First Aid would arrive shortly.

An Invitation to Defect

In another such motorcade, our car blew a tire. Room was made for Ike's brother and Mrs. T. in the following security car and it moved off. I was put in another security car further back. There I was, alone in a car full of KGB officers with the rest of the motorcade already off in the distance. It was a novel experience for all of us, and got more so. I introduced and identified myself promptly. They asked what had happened and I told them. That broke the ice and talk continued. They were very curious about this American diplomat with the Russian name who spoke Russian like a native. They asked, really in wonderment, about that and I explained about growing up in the U.S. in a Russian-speaking family. They asked how long I'd been in Russia, in Siberia, where else in the USSR, how I liked Moscow, which they had never seen. They turned out to be locals, and were asking at random as they had never seen an American, not up close, and not like this one. I think they, too, were beginning to think of me as a Russian when one of them asked, "But don't your heart strings draw you to your native land?" I said I thought they had a great nation and a great people. They took that for a 'yes' and suddenly political reality struck. After a long pause one of them, in a different tone, said, "When?" I replied without hesitation, "Well, someday when your Government cares much more for its people, maybe then I might think about it." The language I used implied that the "someday" was doubtful and, at best, distant. I had expected that, dutifully, there would be some reply defending their government, but our conversation stopped. Siberians are different. They are far from Moscow and its age-old imperative deceits. More straight forward, their silence suggested they understood, far better than I, the Soviet reality, but would neither discuss it with a foreigner, nor bring themselves to defend it with artifice.

The U-2 and the Powers Trial

Yes. Let's pick up on the U-2 and the trial of Francis Gary Powers.

Q: It also takes us into the last half, the end of the Peace-and-Friendship era.

TOUMANOFF: Right. The first we came to know of the U-2 was that the Ambassador was invited to attend a session of the Supreme Soviet at which Khrushchev, of course, was going to give a speech, and for whatever reason, Llewellyn Thompson took me along with him, the first and only time I've ever been to a Supreme Soviet session, because they're not open to American diplomats. They certainly were not in those days.

Q: And not that frequent.

TOUMANOFF: And not that frequent. Once a year, as I recall, at which the Supreme Soviet enthusiastically rubber-stamped whatever the Party presented. It was held in the Kremlin, the Great Hall, and Thompson and I were seated prominently in a balcony. It was a gloomy, cloudy, drizzly day, and the Hall had a large skylight. Well, Khrushchev made a long report and toward the end, looking directly at Thompson, he revealed the fact that an American spy plane had been shot down.

Q: For the first time this was revealed.

TOUMANOFF: Yes. This was the first announcement. It was a very long speech by Khrushchev, a kind of state-of-the-nation report, which was of course in wonderful condition and even better than it was the last wonderful time. There were the usual interruptions by applause and exclamations of approval and praise. It went on and on and carried nothing of particular interest for the Ambassador, and I began to wonder why he had been invited. We could have heard it on the radio, or waited to read it the next day when the full text would be in the newspapers, and then report with commentary to the Department. Toward the end of this speech, Khrushchev paused. He stood on stage at an elevated podium in a theatrical position, with all the audience of the Supreme Soviet below him, and Politburo, high Party and Government officials behind. He looked up at Thompson, and announced the shoot-down. At that moment the sun broke through the clouds and a bright ray of sunlight beamed down upon him through the skylight. It was very dramatic, and after a pause the audience went wild in applause and shouts of acclamation. Khrushchev was in his element and launched into his denunciation of America's perfidy. As he went on and on piling accusation upon accusation it seemed clear that the Spirit of Camp David, and the era of Peace and Friendship were over. Meanwhile, the cameras had swiveled and, following Khrushchev's gaze, every eye was on Llewellyn Thompson, the American Ambassador.

Q: Where at the point of the speech did this come?

TOUMANOFF: Oh, a the end, Khrushchev had saved it for the climax. As he went on and on about how appallingly nefarious and dangerous was this action by the United States, he did not accuse the President of ordering or perhaps even of knowing about the flight, but pointed out that if not, any American general could start World War Three. He

also said nothing about the pilot. The rhetoric and theatrics were full scale, and the audience applauded often and mightily. It was a trying, not to say traumatic, time for Thompson, but he showed no sign of any kind. (He was, by the way, a masterful poker player.) When it was all over we left quietly, and back at the Embassy he immediately prepared a telegram to the Department in which, my recollection is, he pointed out Khrushchev's silence on the fate of the pilot, which suggested that he may have survived and be in Soviet hands. If so, we should assume the pilot might be forced to tell the Soviets everything he knew.

Q: And didn't take the pill.

TOUMANOFF: Well, actually it wasn't a pill. It was a poisoned pin hidden in a silver dollar. He did not use it. I'm inclined to believe the explanation for it which Powers gave at his trial. Be that as it may, this was the beginning of the great U-2 affair, which has been described and analyzed in book after book, with the benefit of much declassified material and extensive discussions with the Russians. As you know, the President took personal responsibility for the flight. The summit meeting in Paris was aborted and Eisenhower's visit to the Soviet Union was canceled. The Soviet public understood the message, contact with Americans was again taboo, and broken off. In the garage at the embassy was a large motorboat, intended as Ike's gift to Khrushchev. It was one of the first motor boats which was water-jet propelled rather than propeller driven. It had to be sent back to America.

Q: Out at the little dacha where they were to meet, at the corner of the lake and the river the Russians had a jet, their own proud version, and they showed me and told me about it when I visited there three or four years later. They were so proud of their boat, and of Ike's planned visit. Their disappointment was sharp. They felt it deeply. They were local scientists there. I felt their professional and personal sorrow.

TOUMANOFF: As I mentioned earlier, I think the extreme Soviet reaction to the U-2 was prompted, in part, by their fear of a public welcome for Ike so massive as to generate a spontaneous and general public escape from their control. The population, massed in welcome, might realize that opposition to the regime was common, and act on it; as happened later in Eastern Europe. Whether that fear was accurate or not none can tell. But atomization of society, and ruthless suppression of opposition, especially when grouped, was a key component of Soviet rule.

Q: An appreciated foreigner.

TOUMANOFF: Ike was much more than that. If I was seeing and hearing this exuberant public response to the prospect of his visit, the KGB must have been picking it up in spades. And bars really had tumbled down and the stampede out of the corral was everywhere evident. The kinds of conversations that I was having, and that any foreigner could be having, in Russia at that time were such as must have terrified the KGB. I think that was a very large part of the motivation of Khrushchev and the Soviet government in rupturing good relations over the U-2 and going back to essentially Cold War attitudes.

After all, the Government knew that U-2s had been overflying the USSR for several years already.

Q: They had to crack down.

TOUMANOFF: I'm not sure they had to. But I'm sure they thought they had to.

Q: Otherwise their system might have fallen.

TOUMANOFF: That's right, That is precisely what they feared. Who knows what might have gotten out of control if Eisenhower had come. So in a sense, we handed them an excuse to do so on a silver platter with that U-2 flight.

Later, they invited the Ambassador to attend the trial of Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot. Obviously, he did not go, but he sent two of his junior officers, Vice Consul Lewis Bowden, and myself.

Q: Trials of American citizens are normally attended by a consular officer anyway. Ambassador's don't go to trials.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, especially Moscow propaganda show trials.

Q: It was also probably wise to send two of you.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, for corroboration, if not for safety. So we two went. Again, that trial has been written up at vast length, but there's one part of it which I have never seen in print, and that was about a part of Francis Gary Powers's behavior in the course of that trial. There he was, on trial for his life so far as he could tell. He had been held for something like three months with no access to anyone except Soviet authorities, interrogators, and a "planted" cellmate. No Americans nor any foreigners. He'd been held completely isolated from information except what the Soviet authorities provided, and that seems to have been exaggerated accounts of the staggering consequences of his "crime." More than enough to warrant execution.

Q: And Bowden hadn't gotten there under any-

TOUMANOFF: No consular visits. Nobody. He was being interrogated for intelligence, and being prepared to be put on show at the trial.

Q: No press, period-not even Soviet?

TOUMANOFF: Bill, they wanted to have total control of what he knew, no surprises or conflicting information at the trial. It was to be as nearly totally scripted as they could manage. He was isolated from the world except as they wished him to think it. Outside, the Soviet propaganda machine was, of course, grinding full speed and at very high volume. Besides, Powers knew no Russian.

So there was Powers, on stage, for a Moscow theatrical, called trial; the full panoply of press from all the world in the balconies, provided with every technical facility; and a packed and picked Soviet audience below, largely KGB and military, plus some carefully selected foreigners, Lew Bowden and myself.

Q: You were the only two foreigners?

TOUMANOFF: The Powers family was there, with their lawyers. I don't know about others except for the press corps, which was international and included a large American contingent. The more press, the more cameras, the more microphones the better. Anybody that would serve their propaganda purposes.

Q: But the press corps was relatively open?

TOUMANOFF: Probably. Remember, this trial was staged for world-wide propaganda. Otherwise they could easily have tried Power in a closed, secret court, as they did with many dissidents.

I believe what follows has never been published. After introductory remarks by the Judge/Prosecutor the trial moved to presentation of evidence, and that is my topic. One bit of evidence presented was Powers' flight map with commentary stressing that the routing over Soviet cities was for bombing run practice to wreak future havoc and slaughter. At the end of the official presentation the Judge asked Powers if he had anything to say. To his surprise Powers rose and asked to see the map. It was the size of a newspaper page. Holding it up with his left hand, he examined it carefully, tracing his flight path with the index finger of his right. The map never shook. It was absolutely still and steady. Satisfied, he confirmed that it <u>was</u> his flight map, and handed it back. Two things struck me: on trial for his life he was suggesting by his request and action that he, at least, thought this court capable of presenting false or tampered evidence; and that he must have nerves of steel not to show the slightest tremor while doing so.

The Court then called a series of learned, scientific commissions, each of which had been tasked to examine other pieces of evidence. Each Commission, in turn, was introduced with elaborate recitations of the members' impressive credentials. Most were members of the Soviet National Academy of Sciences.

Q: Oh, to support the technical aspects.

TOUMANOFF: To support the weight of their testimony and findings. The first commission had been asked to examine his pistol, and they concluded that Powers had been given the pistol to murder innocent Soviet citizens. The judge, having set the precedent, again turned to Powers and asked "Is that your pistol?" The pistol was brought to him, Powers rose, looked at it and replied "Yes, that's my 22-calibre pistol." He then went on to explain that it was part of his survival gear, if down in the some wilderness, to be able to shoot small game such as birds, rabbits or squirrels, for food. The 22-caliber

was well known in the Soviet Union, common in most of the world, it is a plinking gun. One that's not much good for anything larger than a woodchuck, or porcupine, if that.

Q: But not Soviet citizens.

TOUMANOFF: But not people. If your purpose were really to go murder people, which includes innocent Soviet citizens, you wouldn't take a .22; - in the 1950s more like a standard army Colt .45, as the Moros taught us in the Philippine War. So here's Powers, on trial for his life, discrediting the learned commission and its testimony, and undermining the validity of the court.

Q: To defend himself.

TOUMANOFF: Certainly in that legitimate mode, but risking his life by undermining the credibility of the Court.

Q: They couldn't cover up, they couldn't change that.

TOUMANOFF: The next learned commission dealt with the poison pin. And they, too, concluded and testified that it was given to Powers for him to murder innocent Soviet citizens, this time in a surreptitious fashion, so they might not even know that they had been poisoned with a deadly poison. Having set the pattern, the Judge felt obliged to turn again to Powers. He explained that this, too, was part of his accident gear. In case he was very badly injured, helpless, in agony, or attacked by wild beasts, with no prospect of survival, the pin would end his life quickly and painlessly.

Q: Or to silence himself under duress which, of course, was the big story.

TOUMANOFF: That aspect never came up in court, and couldn't. It would imply that Soviet interrogation might be savage. But once again, you see, he's attempting, and probably effectively, to discredit these learned commissions and undermine the process. The next learned commission was given what the commission described as "an incendiary device" designed to burn down "our homes, our factories, and our people's economy."

Q: With one airplane, which might have caught fire, but in the end-

TOUMANOFF: I'm not quoting exactly, but the general tenor was that this was to destroy the fabric of the society by flames. Again the Judge turns to Francis Gary Powers and again he rises to address the court, asks to see the device, and they hand him an object, the size of a small box of matches. He looked at it, and explained, "It is also a part of my survival equipment, a form of matches with which, if I'm down in a wilderness, to light a campfire, even with wet wood." Then Powers asked that the object be given to the interpreter so he could read and translate into Russian the instructions on the box. They turned out to be directions on how to build a campfire with wet wood. Powers then asked the interpreter to please turn the box over and describe the picture on the back. The

interpreter turned the box, hesitated and looked at the judge. The judge ordered, "Do it!" And he said, "It's a picture of a campfire." Powers sat down.

Q: Out in the middle of the woods.

TOUMANOFF: And here's this extraordinary person, doing his quiet, dignified best, and succeeding, in revealing the court for the propaganda theatrical it was; in demonstrating before the journalists of the world the clumsy and cynical corruption of the Soviet judicial system along with its scholars; in defending his own nation as best he could; and deeply risking his own life in the process. So far as I can tell, the Western press missed it. Not one word of his astounding courage, integrity and loyalty under the most fearful conditions, was ever printed or broadcast. By that time the Western news media, as an entire institution, was in some sort of mass hysteria to condemn and sacrifice Francis Gary Powers for betrayal of America by "failure" to commit suicide. Scapegoating, I call it. I would ask whom and what our media was, itself, betraying by being blind or silent on his actions in court. Was it betrayal of him alone, or of our nation? Would we be better off if we felt betrayed, or if we recognized a heroic act by one of us? If he had used the pin on the ground, unhurt, would the flight not have been flown, the U-2 not crashed, the poison gone undetected, or Soviet response been different? Would we, as a nation, prefer suicide as our model, or Powers' acts in court had they been reported?

Q: Well, you remember, I'm sure, what was being reported in the press, that it was all aimed that way. It was the story.

TOUMANOFF: Oh, yes, of course I remember. It's one of the reasons I'm skeptical about press coverage of large political events.

Q: First of all, it involved an intelligence agency. Secondly, it involved a person who was doing something so secret, so sensitive, and thirdly, our worst enemy. It had to be that way. This was the only story.

TOUMANOFF: Powers couldn't use the pin when falling by parachute. He'd have to have used it on the ground after landing, and with no fatal injuries there would have been an autopsy to determine cause of death and the poison discovered. To my way of thinking, he used his head, and did not betray either his nation or his faith. On the contrary. What he did at that trial was truly heroic, and should have been reported as such. Actually, I suppose the fact that it was never reported probably saved his life. I doubt the Soviets would have forgiven him for so discrediting, before the eyes of the world, the regime and its great show trial.

Q: The prosecutor didn't have to be so stupid, either. They could have read the box of matches first.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, or just adhered strictly to the truth, especially with their commissions and phoney conclusions. They had the plane, they had the pilot, they had all the equipment and all the documentation. They even had the President's confirmation of

responsibility. Our action, its danger and its consequences were more than enough to capture the attention of the world. They didn't need the theatricals.

Q: How long was it between-

TOUMANOFF: They held Powers for a couple of months or more before the trial. They had already blown away Ike's visit and the Paris multilateral summit.

Q: Oh, yes. They needed it. They needed all that ideological support, and they just missed it.

TOUMANOFF: They also wanted time to interrogate, to get all the information they could out of Powers, and to prepare him for the trial. The fascinating thing is the psychology of that period. (Maybe I should tell you another travel incident. I'll do that next, you know, another extraordinary kind of vignette of life for a foreigner in Russia.) I mean, for all their interrogation and observation they had failed to see what kind of a human being he was. They had put him up on trial convinced that, faced with the possibility of a death verdict, he would be perfectly compliant and, when asked if he had anything to say, would confirm the preceding "evidence" by having nothing to say, or by acknowledging, "Yes, that's my route map. Yes, that's my pistol, of course, of course. Yes, that's my incendiary device. Yes, that's my poison pin." The last thing in the world they expected was a challenge of the findings of their learned commissions.

Q: And they'd come to all the conclusions from their experience with earlier Moscow show trials of purged communist leaders.

TOUMANOFF: Who admitted to all the false accusations and confirmed those massive propaganda exercises, in the hope of saving their lives and possibly others'.

Q: They couldn't. It wasn't planned enough.

TOUMANOFF: And I was taken aback. At first I couldn't believe my eyes and ears as I watched and heard him, quietly, with respect and dignity, do what he did. And there was a strength and integrity to him that came through, so when he said to the court, "I could never think of shooting a person," it rang true.

Q: Yes, and while he had received his training, he had been well briefed, should this ever happen, and so on. There was just plain self-integrity and intelligence. Maybe they picked him for that reason.

TOUMANOFF: Well, they recruited the right guy.

Q: They did indeed.

TOUMANOFF: Also an enormously skilled pilot.

Q: Help those of us that can't remember the denouement of the story. What happened?

TOUMANOFF: To Powers?

Q: Yes.

TOUMANOFF: It's a tragic story. When he was released by the Soviets it took some time for him to recover. Then he left Government service, was divorced, and had difficulty finding employment. Meanwhile he married a psychiatrist he had worked with during his recovery. Then...

Q: He was married at the time he was released, though. Mrs. Powers withdrew?

TOUMANOFF: I don't know how it happened. Well, she was a difficult person, and in a difficult time.

Q: She had reason to be, in the sense that his U-2 service wasn't a happy lifestyle either.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, well, there were all kinds of reasons why that marriage might not survive. Anyway, they were divorced. And in due course he remarried.

Q: Because he came back relatively soon after his trial?

TOUMANOFF: He was traded for some Soviet agent we had in prison. I've forgotten the details, but it's all published. I think it was more like two or three years later, and he came back to the Agency.

Q: They didn't ask to talk to you.

TOUMANOFF: No, there was no reason for them to talk to me. I'd be very surprised if they didn't have someone at the trial. He eventually wound up in Los Angeles as a helicopter traffic reporter for some Los Angeles radio station. The fuel gauge on his helicopter was faulty and showed empty when there was still a large amount of fuel in the tank. So he would disregard the fuel gauge and keep on flying because he knew how much fuel there was left. He was a very skilled pilot and probably knew the fuel consumption rate of his aircraft. Some klutz of a mechanic fixed the fuel gauge without telling him, and so of course, he ran out of gas, crashed, and was killed.

Q: He was alone, flying alone?

TOUMANOFF: I guess so, no one else was mentioned in the press reports.

Q: I hope the press got it right this time.

TOUMANOFF: I couldn't have known any of this unless it was reported in the press. I'm sure I read it in the newspapers. This was not many years later.

Q: I'm asking this not only for more facts, but also because I was left with the impression that his reputation had not survived the U-2 episode - that he went out of government without a good reputation.

TOUMANOFF: That's right. Yes. And I think totally unfairly. He really should have been a hero. I'm sure there were those who defended him. He must have been defended by part of the press, but he was forever tarnished with that "betrayal" brush.

Q: And the trial was thought of by many as a typical Soviet setup.

TOUMANOFF: Well, it was fascinating for me because you don't often get to see a Moscow show trial. They don't have them all that often. It was fascinating to see how they staged it. This wasn't law or due process or anything like it. It was theater. Very heavy handed theater at that.

I was going to tell you about an episode which demonstrated a different psychology. It was, in essence, an arrest situation.

Arrested by the Red Army

Every now and then one got tired of being cooped up in Moscow. So Eileen and I decided one early spring day to get in the car and drive out to the 25 kilometer mark, and then turn around and come back, which we could do without going through the tedium of obtaining Foreign Ministry permission. So we picked a highway at random, and headed off. Not very far out of Moscow, but way beyond the limits of the city itself, we came to small church, still standing, down a dirt track. We walked down the track to the church, which was open and contained a collection of icons painted in a style I had never seen. I asked and received permission from an attendant to photograph them, took color pictures of a half dozen, about which the attendant knew nothing, except that they were old. I thought I might have documented a unique, local style. We drove on and came to a large village with a small Kremlin, a sort of a walled citadel, with some church spires showing over the wall. The sun was setting, there was snow everywhere, and this beautiful pink light colored the scene of the wall and church tops with snow on them.

Q: And you had some shots left in your camera.

TOUMANOFF: Right! So we stopped and I told Eileen I'd take some pictures and be right back. Eileen stayed in the car, and I hopped out and took a couple of shots. I then said I'd walk around to the other side of the Kremlin, maybe 50 yards, and take some more pictures from there.

Q: You were already in the kremlin.

TOUMANOFF: No, I was taking pictures of the kremlin itself from the road, which went past it along one wall. So I went ahead and around the corner of the wall, out of sight

from the car. With the camera to my eye taking the second batch, I felt as though I was sort of collecting a crowd. But that was not unusual for foreigners in Russia in those days, and I went on shooting without lowering my camera. When I did, the crowd turned out to be a half dozen troopers with their rifles pointed at my stomach. They all looked very young, very nervous, but grimly determined. So I kept my hands on the camera at my chest, smiled at them, spotted the sergeant in charge and said to him, "I think you must have a problem of some sort. Tell me about it, and what can I do to help you with it?" using the polite form of "you" and in fluent Russian. Well, nobody expected that, and the sergeant had not been addressed as 'thou" probably since birth, certainly not for years in the army. The tension broke, the troopers' guns started to droop. In a quite normal, almost conversational tone he said, "I have orders to arrest you and bring you in." I replied, "Well, I'll be perfectly happy to come with you, but you can't arrest me because I'm an American diplomat - my name is Vladimir Toumanoff - and we have diplomatic immunity. But if you'll just ask one of your boys to go tell my wife, she speaks Russian, that I'm going with you, I'll be happy to come along and see if I can help solve the problem, whatever it is." By this time the sergeant and his kids, the troopers, were greatly relieved. He said yes he would, took one of his troopers aside for some orders, who then left in the direction of the car, and we set off in the opposite direction trailed by the squad. Of course the trooper didn't, so Eileen was left wondering where I'd disappeared to. We took a small path in the snow across a field. I said, "Well, how far are we going?" and he said, not very far, you can see, there's another village down the path." It was a few hundred yards away.

Q: They were friendly to you.

TOUMANOFF: Yes. I struck up a conversation with the sergeant and we were chatting about the weather and about the birds and the geese and fishing and farming, and I was telling him about raising pheasants in New Hampshire. We had hardly gone a hundred feet when the sergeant, who was walking alongside me, looked at me and said, "You know, you don't have a hat and you're going to catch a dreadful cold. Here, wear my hat." He took off his warm, uniform hat and gave it to me, and I put it on. We walked along chatting happily, with the guys in back listening with all their ears.

Q: You didn't mention your meeting the week before with Khrushchev and the ambassador.

TOUMANOFF: No, no, no. I didn't want to pull rank on this guy. We were talking to each other as equals. You see, he had not arrested me. I was happily coming along to help solve a problem that he had. He took his hat back before we actually entered the village, and everybody sort of straightened up and pulled themselves together, and he marched briskly forward looking more military. He stopped me in the center of a small village square, saying, "You stay here," and left his little troop with me so that I wouldn't run away. He walked into a fairly good-sized hut facing the square, and I gave him about - I suppose I gave him about 15 seconds or so, and walked in after him. The troopers were so surprised they didn't try to stop me, I was walking into the command post after my friend their sergeant!

Q: And it was warmer in there.

TOUMANOFF: Well, they didn't even come in with me. They entered command posts only on orders. They were doubtless obediently staying behind me someplace in the square until ordered to move. There was a central dirt floor with rooms opening off it, and I walked in just in time to see the sergeant walk into the room on the right. Again, I gave him a few seconds to report and walked in after him. There was a desk facing the door with a young man in uniform sitting behind it, and a collection of six or eight people standing around in the room, maybe some 20 feet square. The sergeant, standing before the desk, had evidently just saluted when I walked in. I went up to the desk and asked, "Are you in command here?" Surprised, the man said, "Yes, I am." And I put my hand out, reached across the desk and shook his warmly, introducing myself by name. I said, "I am an American diplomat, Second Secretary of the United States Embassy in Moscow. I understand you have a problem of some kind. What can I do to help you?" It was not combative. It was not confrontational. I was quite sincere, and there obviously was a problem. It was not my problem. It was his problem. And I was here offering to help if I could.

Q: You didn't even talk about the fact that you were within the acceptable travel zone of Moscow.

TOUMANOFF: No, no, no. You know, I wasn't going to start asking questions about what I had done wrong, or justifying myself in advance. That would have been just the wrong foot to start. By that time the officer (he was that, although he never gave me his rank or name) had gathered himself and said, rather formally and authoritatively "I have orders to take your camera."

Q: Okay, that's understandable.

TOUMANOFF: Not only did that tell me the problem was that I had taken a picture of some prohibited object, but it was a considerable relief for me to know that it was nothing more serious. Moreover, I knew that the ultimate solution would likely be exposure of the film. But I was reluctant to do that because I had all those pictures of what might be quite rare and unique icons on the roll. He also was relieved, there would be no language barrier between us, no panic or anger or fear, and he also knew that I was an Officer of the most important Embassy, and probably that I outranked him. So I looked at him seriously and said "Well, you know, I regret it, but I cannot give you my camera. As a diplomat I have diplomatic immunity, and that applies to my personal possessions." He replied equally seriously, not threateningly, "But I have orders to take your camera." I said, earnestly, in the tone of discussing a common problem, "I have with me my Diplomatic Identity Pass issued by your Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which includes the text of the immunity law, and as an American Diplomat accredited to your Government, I may not violate your laws." With that I showed him my Pass.

Q: The law, I guess.

TOUMANOFF: The Soviet law. I was not going to make it easy, and I wanted if possible for him to propose the obvious solution, to expose the film. I was prepared to do that if necessary, but I certainly didn't want to lose my camera if that could be avoided. Besides it was still a very civil conversation.

Q: Or lose your camera because once in their hands it likely would never be returned.

TOUMANOFF: Or lose my camera. But the camera was really sort of a test to see how far he would put up with this kind of legalism coming from me. He could easily have just ordered his men to take the camera - and that would be the last of it. Or just keep me there, knowing Eileen was sitting in the car wondering and worrying. But that would have demonstrated military disregard for Soviet law. In addition, he did not want a diplomatic incident to mar his military record. And in a way he was enjoying the novel experience of dealing with this Official American in easy Russian. He excused himself and went to a telephone on the wall. I did not hear the conversation, but when he returned he said, "Well, give me the film instead of the camera." That was good news. They were prepared to, sort of, negotiate. So I said, "The difficulty is, I can't give you the film for the same reason, but I can take it out of the camera and expose it. But please make sure that solves the problem, because I have these pictures of the icons from that little church back there and I'd hate to lose them for nothing. If it will solve the problem, I'll do it."

"All right, just a minute." and he went to a telephone. More muffled conversation. He came back and said, "Good, expose it." I did, and he said, "Okay, now it's no good to you, so give me the film."

I objected, said I thought we had agreed, and didn't understand why there was still a problem.

He said, "I need to have your film. Those are my orders." So we went back and forth about this a little bit, I was still amicable, still relaxed, although in the presence of others he was a bit more formal and military in his bearing than I, but not showing any strong emotion.

Q: He had his orders.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, he had his orders. So I finally said, "I tell you what. I'll burn it for you." I had given him a little time to propose it himself, but he didn't and couldn't. I found out later why. I was also thinking about Eileen, but assumed the trooper had told her, so she would at least know what to report if I didn't return. But I added that this time he should make sure that would end it, or we might have a much larger problem on our hands. After a much longer telephone call he returned and, to my surprise, said "Okay, burn it." They brought a tin bucket and some matches, and I started to burn the film. Of course it was safety film and would only melt slowly in gobs. At that point a shadowy figure, the only one in the room in civilian clothing, whom I hadn't noticed before, remarked with pride in his voice "Our film burns just like <u>that</u>." and snapped his fingers.

Q: Oh, God love 'em.

TOUMANOFF: And I thought, he has just made three mistakes, and probably regrets it already (he had left the room). He has revealed to me, and to any of the others who didn't already know, that he is KGB; he has told me that Soviet espionage film burns, and may be designed to burn, rapidly; and that a possible reason for the reluctance to propose burning, and the long phone call, is that they may have a process to recover images from a film exposed to daylight.

So I melted the film glob by glob, put the empty spindle in my pocket and said, "Okay, that's it." The Officer said, "Yes, that's fine," and offered me the sergeant as guide back to the car. I turned down the offer with thanks, we shook hands with something of a grin, and I left.

Q: They had an outstanding regulation that said "no cameras."

TOUMANOFF: Well, back at the embassy telling the story I discovered that the small kremlin, churches and all, was used as some kind of military base, and obviously off limits for photography. Typically, there were no signs or notices.

In any case we parted in a friendly way, almost reluctantly.

Q: Except your wife. She wasn't happy sitting back in the car..

TOUMANOFF: Poor Eileen, she was distraught. But while I was gone, seeing her distress some little old grannies had come to the car to comfort her and tell her everything would be all right. They were delighted that she understood them and spoke some Russian, and were terribly solicitous, and I think they brought her some hot tea and a bun or something, and they stayed until they saw me coming.

The point of this long story is that in 1959 there was a deep reservoir of goodwill for America in the Russian population, even, given a chance, for spontaneous friendship between a transgressing, obviously "White" emigré Russian turned U.S. diplomat and wholly Soviet-trained, young Red Army Noncoms and Officers. I fear we've lost all that by the end of the century.

Negotiating an Agreement

I think the next topic, the U.S./Soviet Science and Technology Exchange Agreement, still about Moscow, is an illustration of Soviet negotiation methods. Detlev Bronk, President of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, came to Moscow in 1959 as the head of a delegation to negotiate the first scientific and technical exchange program. I was detailed to that delegation. The negotiations went reasonably well. They were not terribly difficult, but there were interests that had to be reconciled on both sides, and there were practical arrangements for implementation. Difficulties arose later in practice and with

sub-agreements on particular disciplines, but this master agreement raised no grave problems.

Q: And you didn't sense being misled or tricked or anything like that. It was a scientific exchange.

TOUMANOFF: No. For one thing it became obvious from early on that the Soviet group was under imperative orders to have a successful outcome and a signed agreement before Bronk left. So they were quite cooperative, compared to their usual practice, that is. And it was certainly our intention to have the negotiations succeed. So for the most part it was just a question of arranging the details and the mechanics and the subject matter that would be included in the basic concept of science and technology, and what would or might be not included. Moreover a good deal of preparatory work had been done, and there was no great disagreement over the purpose. So we completed the substantive negotiations and marked up text on the next to last day of Bronk's visit. The Soviet side promised to prepare overnight and deliver the next morning a clean, full text in both languages for signature by Bronk and the Soviet Academy President. That last day Bronk and his delegation were scheduled to be the guests of the Soviet Academy President in visits to various Soviet academic and research centers that would participate in the exchanges, followed by a press conference to report on the negotiations. I was left behind to check both language versions of the full text. I checked the English version first and it was fine. But when I read the Russian I ran into a headlong collision.

Bronk was authorized by the Academy to negotiate an agreement text, but subject to review and approval, or change, by the U.S. Academy. In either case the text was to be returned to Moscow - changes, if any, would be negotiated thereafter.

The English version of that process stated that a signed Agreement text would be taken to Washington by Bronk and submitted for approval to the American Academy, and a text would be returned to Moscow. The Russian language, however has no definite or indefinite articles - no "a" or "an" or "the." So the Russian version read that "signed Agreement text would be taken to Washington by Bronk and submitted to American Academy for approval, and text would be returned to Moscow." In the Russian there was no room for changes, especially as "approval" in this context in the USSR, at every level except the secretive Politburo, meant just that - an automatic, enthusiastic rubber stamp.

I pointed out the resulting important difference between the two language versions and suggested we insert the word "draft" in both. The Russians objected fiercely and refused outright. It became clear to me that, although they never quite admitted it, the Soviet team was under imperative orders to produce a completed, signed, formal Agreement and, given the importance of this first scientific and technical exchange with America, the Russian text must have already been approved at the highest Party and Government levels. I left it that I would have to point out the difference to President Bronk. They pointed out to me that he was probably in a car or they didn't quite know where he might be and they couldn't reach him, so I'd have to wait until he got back. With that in mind I asked when the delegation would return. Stone wall. Nobody knew. I finally took up a

post on the grand front steps of the building intending to catch him there. While I waited they assembled a huge crowd, including an array of journalists, correspondents, cameramen, sound technicians, floodlights and a lot of husky security guys on the steps of this pavilion where we had negotiated. So I moved to the bottom of those steps, where the cavalcade of cars would pull up. Time passed. It was well after the time for the scheduled news conference, late in the afternoon, when finally the cavalcade showed up. I assumed the front car would be security and went quickly to the second car, opened the door, and there was Bronk. He looked tired and bleary. I tried to explain, saw I was not getting through, and I got the clear impression that he was not only exhausted but that he had had to drink a lot of toasts. I was still trying to catch his attention and explain about the two versions when a couple of Russians pulled him out on the far side and started to hustle him up the steps. I tried to reach him and was slowed by some very broad backed guys who surged around me. Meantime, other Russians congealed around Bronk and made a hullabaloo escorting him up the steps, saying that everybody was waiting for the press conference and that he had to be rushed through because everything was scheduled, and the lights blazed and cameras ground and correspondents with microphones pressed in asking questions while they hustled him up the stairs with me clambering along trying to catch his attention. Always there seemed to be these great hulks of guys between me and Bronk until he disappeared through the doors while I was elbowed aside. They claimed he was being taken somewhere to freshen up and he was not available to see me. The human barrier remained effective until by the time I managed to get through, the full panoply press conference was already underway with Bronk seated at a beige-covered table signing the Agreement among Soviet dignitaries, and the speeches and celebration began. It was too late. I would never be allowed to disrupt those proceedings, and I didn't want to. So the different versions remained. Their "negotiating" tactics had prevailed.

Q: Vlad, you have to drop the other shoe. Did they come back? Did the U.S. side come back with any problem?

TOUMANOFF: I never did hear the end of the story but assume no issue ever arose, certainly not one important enough to risk the Agreement, or one that couldn't be resolved otherwise.

Q: Much ado about nothing-maybe.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, but part of your task as a Foreign Service Officer, when you bump into such seemingly minor grammatical ambiguities, is either to resolve them if possible, or if not, or if the price of resolution is too high, to make sure that everybody on both sides who has authority and is responsible for the negotiations is aware of the ambiguity and whatever risk they may entail. In this case the Soviets simply manipulated us into an impossibility before the highly public signature. The risk, of course was that any attempt by the American side to make changes in the Agreement pursuant to U.S. Academy review would give the Soviets an excuse to charge us with failure strictly to abide by its terms.

Q: Unable to alert Bronk before the great signing ceremony, you did it at some other

time before the departure of the U.S. Delegation?

TOUMANOFF: Yes, I found other members of the Delegation because Bronk was to be inaccessible until he got on the airplane.

Q: Your role was fully played. Just a little bit delayed.

TOUMANOFF: Actually, I never thought so. We, including myself, should have anticipated the possibility of some problem with the two texts on the last day, and made arrangements for the Delegation, or at least Bronk and some senior members to meet privately before the signing. I learned not to place one's self in Soviet hands for all the logistics and other arrangements, and determined to prevent that whenever I could. I think perhaps Bronk learned that, too.

Q: Or perhaps he raised that with the Soviets before he left Moscow.

TOUMANOFF: He may have, or communicated with Washington. But I doubt both. As a wise old bird I suspect he had taken the measure of the Soviet desire for the Agreement, and was sure they would not make an issue of some subsequent changes. Lots of problems arose, but later in the practices of the scientific exchanges. In any case, I dropped out of the picture.

Q: One more role by a Foreign Service Officer. Now are we going to leave Moscow? What items are left?

Eluding KGB Surveillance

TOUMANOFF: Well, Bill, there are a couple of more items still from Moscow, which I think might be useful or describe what life was like there and in a good many other posts and, increasingly I'm afraid, in many places where the dangers of the Foreign Service are becoming greater. Also maybe instructive of how to manage these kinds of difficulties, which I think probably everybody in the Foreign Service comes to face sooner or later somewhere. One of them concerns the KGB and the fact that wherever we went, in Moscow or out, we were followed. Every American diplomat was followed. They were sometimes very subtle about it and sometimes very, very obvious, and this was intentional. When you got into your car, for example, there would always be a Soviet counterintelligence car that followed you. Sometimes they'd follow you very, very closely and make themselves almost dangerously obvious, by tailgating. And they'd keep that up for a while and then, all of a sudden, they would stop, and seemingly disappear. If we bothered to keep an eye on our rear-view mirror, they would sometimes be the second car behind you, or the third, or vanish altogether, only to turn up some minutes later. We learned to read number plates, if they happened to carry a number plate. It became sort of a game, like children counting cows on a trip. After a while, one way or another, we came to know their practices, or ways to detect the followers, such as stopping, or taking several turns down side streets. But that game, too, could easily be overdone. Their rules were simple. Never acknowledge their presence, and give them no trouble. They had little

sense of humor if you violated their rules. Basically, they wanted you to assume you would always be followed. I suspect that is the practice of counterintelligence services all over the world. Until they suspect you of real espionage, that is. Then, I suppose, they get much more secretive.

The second aspect of this is having listening devices in your housing, your phones, your car or aimed at you outside, trying to overhear everything you said, everything that went on. Let me talk about the microphones in housing. One technique that my wife and I developed, apart from writing each other notes and burning them, which is time consuming and messy. When we wanted to communicate something that we really did not want to have overheard, we used an ordinary mailing tube. You put one end of a cardboard mailing tube to your mouth and the other end to your wife's ear (and *vice versa*) and whisper, so that no sound escaped into the room. It was quick and easy, and it worked nicely so we got quite used to it, although it was a longish tube. At one hilarious point, we found ourselves one evening, having already gone to bed, with my wife 'way over on her side of the bed and I 'way over on mine, talking to each other through this mailing tube. Well, we broke up in giggles and laughter over this new kind of pillow talk, Soviet style. It was a while before either remembered what we had been talking about. But that's a simple, and turned out to be a fun way to beat the mikes.

Q: Maybe I should make it clear that you and your wife were not exchanging classified information, but rather it was for personal reasons. Would you like to talk a little bit to the kind of information you felt you had to write out or whisper through the tube?

TOUMANOFF: Oh, all sorts of things. Our finances, accounts of conversations with Russian friends. Friends' names. Travel plans and accounts of travels. Impressions and opinions about events and personalities. Thoughts about our children and their reactions to life in Moscow. Health, state of mind. Annoyances and satisfactions. Sometimes it was just personal, about ourselves. or families at home. This is the kind of information which the KGB in those days would accumulate to look for weaknesses.

Q: That's the point, some weakness.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, is this an officer with financial troubles who might be bribable? Is this an officer we can get to through some friends? Is this an officer with sympathies for socialism? *Et cetera, et cetera.*

Q: It's data-gathering on you as a family.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, it's biographical on our family. Are the husband and wife getting along together, or are they fighting all the time? You know, can we interest this officer or his wife in some Russian romance? Are either one disaffected? How's their mental health?

Q: Is there a weakness in that family that we can exploit?

TOUMANOFF: Exactly, so it's that kind of information. Occasionally I needed to tell her about some Embassy business which would involve her, that the KGB would like to know in advance?

Q: -or a little bit of gossip.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, or a little bit of gossip, so that you tended to play it safe and communicate in some fashion which the KGB could not pick up. Days would go by without the tube, but now and then it was handy.

Q: Something that I know my wife and I very much noticed, and I'm sure you and others, too. It's just to irritate, to get us tensed up - calls in the middle of the night.

TOUMANOFF: Never had midnight calls. But yes, there was a certain element of harassment - which included sending these gigantic useless Foreign Ministry diplomatic notes on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. But I mentioned those earlier.

Q: Striped pants life under the Communist system.

TOUMANOFF: Exactly. Let me go back to this business of being followed. The other aspect of it, Bill, is that - as you probably experienced yourself - eventually, maybe after six months or ten months or a year of this, but sooner or later it gets on your nerves. You just get sick and tired of being followed all the time, especially as you are not doing anything that in any way would be hostile or in some fashion illegal or improper. There are several techniques for getting rid of or losing the people who follow you, but you do that at your peril, and under almost every conceivable circumstance I can think of, you simply resist that temptation. You do not play games. You do not even acknowledge to the followers that you're aware of the fact that you are being followed and that they are the followers. It's as though they simply do not exist. That's the-

Q: And we are so briefed because the chances are we will be hurt by or we will make errors.

TOUMANOFF: So sooner or later this following becomes an annoyance, enough on your nerves that you do something which gives them an excuse to throw you out of the country, and that's a disservice to your own country, because once you've been thrown out, the chances are you'll never be able to go back so your usefulness to your own government has suddenly been curtailed sharply for the rest of your career, especially if you're a Soviet specialist. And a good many people do get thrown out - sometimes absolutely arbitrarily with no reason whatsoever, and sometimes for mistakes that they've made - or, you know, some of these techniques of trapping people such as finding some Russian so-called friend who'll hand you a package or paper, and you are immediately pounced upon because the paper, it turns out, allegedly contains some sort of secrets.

Q: The famous one being Professor Barghorn.

TOUMANOFF: So what I'm about to tell you is really a kind of lesson in what not to do. When I was followed it was either in a car or on foot. But I had a bicycle in Moscow, and once I finally got tired of being followed. I knew a path that went across a swamp, went over a brook in the middle on a large gas or oil pipeline, and then out the other side. So I got on my bicycle, took this path, and was careful not to look back. Obviously my Soviet agent companions, who were following me in a car, could neither drive their car nor keep up with my bicycle on foot. It was a big swamp without a road in sight on the other side.

Q: Some very angry KGB people.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, I was playing games, and that's exactly what you should never do. That could have been sufficient to have me thrown out. But by that time, I had this small element of protection from my contact with Khrushchev. The KGB would be a little reluctant to pester me or move against me. That might be at some risk to themselves, because if my action was seemingly innocent - such as this bicycle ride - they would expect that the American ambassador might complain to Khrushchev. I also calculated that they certainly had the capacity to radio ahead to some police car on the other side of the swamp to pick me up as I emerged from the path, so it was not that great a risk. But it is not recommended. Without that special protection - which in this case I was relying on, not relying with certainty but counting on as a possible deterrent, a measure of protection - I would not have done it.

Q: A timely story to end your stay in Moscow?

TOUMANOFF: That's it. That's all for Moscow.

CHAPTER 10: INR/SOV, 1960-64

Well, that brings us to 1960. The Powers trial was, I think, in July, The two phone calls from my photographer friend a few weeks after, and I think that along about August of 1960, my Moscow stint ended and I was transferred back to Washington and assigned to INR, the Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, to its Section on the USSR, INR/SOV.

Q: Describe INR for us.

TOUMANOFF: Essentially the task of that Bureau is to analyze all the information flowing in to the Department about events and conditions in the world, and to prepare research reports of their meaning or consequence for U.S. foreign policy. It is more of an information than of a policy service. I was in a small unit of three or four officers specializing in Soviet domestic affairs.

Q: You might throw in some illustration of what you did.

TOUMANOFF: That small unit read the incoming messages to and from the Embassy, the Soviet press and Soviet journals, reports about the USSR from other parts of the

world, reports from the rest of the U.S. intelligence community which includes some half dozen other Departments and Agencies, and anything else that contained information that would help us understand the Soviet domestic scene. That material included open, unclassified sources, and some at very high levels of secrecy. The purpose was to distill such knowledge as we thought the rest of the Department and Government should have. For example, it tells you something about the state of agriculture when the Soviet Government decrees the death penalty for neglect of farm machinery. Or when it returns repeatedly to some problem by issuing the same "remedial" decree for the third or fourth time over the span of a few years; some levers of government are disconnected from the society. It was our task to explain why, if we could decipher it. It was a matter of distilling what we thought senior members of the Department and U.S. Government should know, sometimes in a hurry, sometimes not. If it was important enough, it would get all the way to the Secretary of State, to other members of the Cabinet, and to the President. But that would be a rare occasion. For the most part, our research reports were distributed to lower levels of the Department and to the Embassy, just to keep everybody informed and working with the same information.

Q: This was on specific information. Was there a sort of a daily roundup of things?

TOUMANOFF: There was a morning meeting with the Director of the Bureau. Someone from each area Section would come in early, scan the overnight "take" and identify anything of importance. They would then meet with the Director (now an Assistant Secretary of State) and brief him before a morning meeting of the Secretary with his staff of senior officials. There was also a special CIA world roundup prepared overnight and delivered to the President and Cabinet early each morning. That was done pretty early in the morning because Secretaries of State and the upper reaches of Government don't keep normal hours either. They're apt to come in very early in the morning, and leave late.

Q: And of course the principals in the State Department had other sources as well from other agencies-

TOUMANOFF: Oh, yes. Well all parts of the Department were expected to be alert for things that the Secretary or the Undersecretary or even the President needed to know. Later, when I was on the Soviet Desk in the European Bureau, which is an operating arm that dealt routinely with the USSR, we were at one point asked to prepare a special notice of anything we thought that the President should know, and no matter what it was, to limit the text to what would fit on a three-by-five card. There are so many things that people want to bring to the President's attention, the shorter the better was the maxim, literally no longer than would fit on one side of a three-by-five card. These would rapidly be filtered several times on the way up, and very few, I think, ever reached the President.

Back to the small Soviet Section of INR; I was in the Soviet domestic unit.

It was pretty routine work, Bill, except that there was one occasion which really is worth recording. There were three of us in that domestic affairs group. Among us, Sidney Ploss was unique. Apart from being an astute analyst of the USSR, Sid had the great talent of

speed reading in Russian. He could go through a printed page in a couple of seconds, as though leisurely just turning the leaves. As a consequence he had set himself long ago to read what we called the "fat" journals. These periodicals, which ran to 100 or more pages, were dedicated to issues of ideology and its applications, and were written in a dense dialectical materialist jargon so esoteric as to constitute a language of its own, impenetrable by the layman. Aimed at graduates of higher Party schools and above, they constituted the authoritative guidance, the ideological exegesis, for the highest levels of Party power in the USSR. Essential reading for Central Committee members and up, they carried coded communications for the elite on issues of government policy and performance. Sid's years of practice made all this legible, at a very fast clip. None of us could match him, and didn't try.

Khrushchev in Trouble. Security Classification

Some time before the U-2, late in 1961 I think, Sidney, became convinced through his readings of these journals that Khrushchev was in political trouble. The journals were carrying more and more criticism of his policies and his leadership, couched in abstract, ideological terms. He was not named but their thrust ran counter to both. The volume and variety of this coded criticism was striking.

Q: And these were all public.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, these were open journals. You could buy them freely in Moscow. The criticism was becoming both wider and sharper, and the alleged errors and contradictions in Khrushchev's policies, practices and pronouncements clearer - or perhaps less opaque is a better word for it. Sid showed me his evidence, and when we both became persuaded, he prepared a research report citing the journals and concluding that the criticism had reached a level which was not simply some kind of dialectical philosophical exercise but that there was a growing political opposition, aimed either for a substantial change of policy and practice, or perhaps even a change of leadership; namely, that Khrushchev was in serious political trouble and would either have to change his line markedly, or risk being deposed.

Q: And the style of change within the Soviet bureaucracy was small and well-known to us, in the sense that it was not very public and it could be very fatal, and usually was. So therefore it had to take this form, almost, since there were no meaningful elections.

TOUMANOFF: Criticism of Stalin was an easy way to get acquainted with a bullet or the Gulag. But those drastic practices had moderated very considerably, especially under Khrushchev. Except for Beria, deposed leaders were no longer executed or imprisoned. More broadly, he had also introduced his great ideological "thaw," in which literature (and other forms of expression) which previously would have been banned outright and the authors deported where they would be allowed to expire, was in fact allowed and published, published publicly and distributed publicly in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev; and that ideological laxity also was one of the aspects of his rulership which was being criticized.

So we prepared this report, and sent it off, classified a lowly "Confidential."

Q. Why so low?

TOUMANOFF: You're right, that was a mistake. It obviously was a highly sensitive document, and by higher classification or by other means, we should have limited its distribution sharply. Whether that would have saved it, I don't know. The report was sent routinely to the embassy in Moscow, and much to Sidney's and my surprise, a telegram quickly came back from Ambassador Thompson saying, in effect, that no competent observer or anyone familiar with the Soviet scene would give any credence whatever to this analysis and conclusion. That was a very, very forceful repudiation, which essentially sank the report to the bottom of the sea, because Ambassador Thompson had an enormous reputation as one of the greatest authorities on the Soviet Union, especially about Khrushchev because of his relationship with the man. The effect was not only to dismiss the report, but to suppress further research, or even useful discussion of opposition to Khrushchev's line or of his security in office. He was, of course, deposed about two years later.

At first, I was very disappointed, because I was convinced that Sidney was right, and by his skill and talent had not only detected a major political development but had documented it convincingly. Moreover, I thought Thompson would agree. Then it dawned on me that he may well have agreed, but his cable was prompted by the sensitivity of the message and the substantial risk that it would leak. Most matters of that importance at that classification leaked readily. It was the kind of finding which warranted communication by Thompson in person only to the President and Secretary of State, or perhaps in a personal, "Eyes Only" message from him to them.

The sensitivity, of course, was that if it became known to the press and the whole world that the Department of State had concluding that Khrushchev was in serious political trouble and might be deposed, the resulting damage would be incalculable. Khrushchev would hold Thompson responsible and their relationship would terminate abruptly and in angry betrayal. Khrushchev, and many others in the USSR and the rest of the world, would see the leak as a deliberate attempt by the U.S. Government to undermine him. It could become a self fulfilling prophesy. The potential was of fundamental damage, globally. Small wonder Thompson moved quickly and drastically to squash it. He knew far better than I how things like this leak out of the United States Government to the press, because there are lots of people who would see personal political advantage in loosing this kind of a bombshell to the press; name recognition and enhanced future access to the press as a valuable source, just for starters. Some, in this case, would see a chance to further their own agenda in U.S.-Soviet relations and in our own domestic politics.

Q: Whether it was true or false, good or bad analysis.

TOUMANOFF: Right.

Now let me describe a little about the security classification system of those days because it is relevant to the next episode which is, I think, worth making a record of. There were in those days four categories of classification to protect government information, from least to most sensitive. The lowest, OFFICIAL USE ONLY, was an administrative, rather than a security classification. It meant essentially that anyone in the government could have and make copies of a document. It was, in effect, not for publication. Above that were CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET. AND TOP SECRET, increasingly restrictive in handling, distribution, and access. Unauthorized revelation of such material could land you in jail. And beyond that were special categories which confined materials further, on a 'need to know' basis, deigned to segregate information by various subject matters so that only those officials involved in the topics were given access: atomic energy for example, or various sources of intelligence, or scientific programs, etc.

Q: And basically the purpose of all that was to protect the national interest. Revelation of such classified information would damage or endanger America in varying degrees.

TOUMANOFF: That brings me to my next assignment, still within the Research Bureau, INR, of the Department.

The Bureau created a new small unit to monitor scientific and technological developments in the world which could have foreign policy importance, and to report on that aspect. For example, the development of a new, large scale water desalination process appropriate for foreign aid which might ease international tensions in areas of fresh water shortage. Alternatively, development of new weapons which might do the opposite. Frequently this kind of information was available from the open press as a domestic news item with no thought to possible international implications. Occasionally from government documents, some of which were highly sensitive and classified in one or another of these special categories. So we - this group of three of us - were given some of these special clearances.

Q: Did I hear you say three of us?

TOUMANOFF: Three of us.

Q: Which underscores what I was starting to say, which was that the Department of State tends eventually to recognize it had better get its nose into the tent, because there's a big tent out there, and other agencies or other centers are all of a sudden doing our business, in the sense of involved in international affairs.

TOUMANOFF: Well, there were others in the Department. There was a Science Advisor, as I recall, to the Secretary of State, and he, as well as senior officials had full access to all the resources of the Government. There were also Science Officers in our major embassies. Our unit was created, I suppose, to put the Research Bureau into the business in a systematic way.

Q: All three of you.

TOUMANOFF. All three of us. And therein lies another lesson. Be prepared to do anything you're asked to do in the Foreign Service. The three of us were not what you might call scientifically qualified. The leader of this little section had a doctoral degree in philosophy. The next senior member had been trained as a ceramics engineer. And my background, as you know, was in clinical psychology.

Q: Probably the most precious of all three.

TOUMANOFF: Well, no. But useful, possibly because part of it was to judge public reaction, whether this would be a frightening development, or reassuring, or some of each.

Q: Threatening?

TOUMANOFF: A threatening development, where, who had it, who didn't have it, was it a United States development or some hostile country? That kind of thing.

We were, however, qualified in the sense that our task was not to try to explain the science or the technology, that is, how it worked - but rather to focus on possible implications for international relations and policies. And that, I think, we were qualified to do. Expertise in any particular science or technology was not the issue. The task was to try to anticipate possible effects on relations between nations, and to alert others. Anyway-

Q: And you dealt with the world, the three of you.

TOUMANOFF: Yes. And you know there were not that many major scientific and technical breakthroughs.

Q: This was pre-computer.

TOUMANOFF: Right. And television was still sort of a novel notion. This little section was created in 1962, and I was assigned to it from the start. As a consequence, I was given clearances for some of these specialized materials. And promptly became immersed in Soviet developments, arms and space in particular. This unit was also asked to represent the Department of State in the preparation of National Intelligence Estimates.

Q: Vlad, who prepared the National Intelligence Estimates?

TOUMANOFF: They were prepared by the National Intelligence Council, that is, initially drafted typically by the CIA and then reviewed by all the Government members of the Intelligence Community, and redrafted. Those included State, Defense (including the intelligence components of the army, navy, and air force), the FBI, the Atomic Energy Agency and other Departments and agencies depending on the subject matter. I

believe they could be initiated by the White House and/or the CIA, as well as by other members of the Intelligence Community by agreement. Some were annual.

Q: Which did you get involved in?

TOUMANOFF: For me, that meant Estimates about the Soviet Union, its space program, missile program, conventional arms capability, atomic energy program - the weapons side of it - and also some Estimates of mainland Chinese programs and capabilities. I became a member of two Joint Intelligence Committees, the Guided Missile and Astronautics Intelligence Committee (GMAIC), and the Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee (JAEIC), The first followed Soviet missile and space developments, and the second Soviet nuclear weapons. Both Committees were small, 8 to 10 people. And so I became familiar in the course of this work with not only what we knew about Soviet military capability, but also how we knew it and how reliable our knowledge was. As a consequence, I got involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis, and that's a story probably worth recording because, again, it was quite unique.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

Q: And it's a very good example, I think, of what we're talking about, and it's very much about bilateral U.S.-Soviet relations on a very scientific, in a sense, a dangerous military level.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, although at the time I did not appreciate the particular nature of the danger. I knew that the strategic balance - that is, the ability to deliver nuclear weapons - was enormously in favor of the U.S. So much so that in the event of nuclear war the Soviet Union could not survive. It would have been utterly destroyed, while America would not only survive, but might emerge nearly unscathed. I was convinced, and to this day I think rightly, that the Soviets, who for all their bluster also knew the balance, would not commit suicide for Cuba. The danger, of course, was breakout of combat through accident, lack of control, ignorance, momentum. Not by intent. I'll give you a possible example later.

My telephone at home woke me a bit after midnight, and the Deputy Director of INR, first made sure it was me, then that I was fully awake, and then said, "Vlad, what we have been fearing has happened." That covered a lot of ground, so I asked for specifics. He said he couldn't be more specific, and that I should get to his office as fast as possible. That was the early morning of October 15, 1962. At his office he told me that evidently Soviet ballistic missiles had been detected in Cuba; that I should go immediately to the National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) where GMAIC and JAEIC were assembling to review the U-2 photographs taken on October 14, and any other related available intelligence. I was to work in GMAIC and our section leader was to be with JAEIC. We were to prepare a report.

NPIC was in a dangerous part of town and I was told to stay in my car with the lights on, the doors locked and the motor running until several others arrived, in the same manner,

and only then to move as a group to the entrance.

That was the early morning, about 2:00 a.m. October 15, 1962, the first day of the Cuban Missile Crisis. We were to prepare a report for what became the famous ExComm. Go home for a bit of sleep. Come to INR before normal working hours, pick up a copy of our report from a tightly secured room, show it to our "Principal" (Secretary Rusk for me), explain it if asked, say nothing to anyone else, return the report to the secured room, go to our desks and act as though nothing had happened. We did that every night until after the President made his television speech on October 22. Thereafter we worked more normal hours until the missiles were withdrawn. From that first night, and every day after that we watched the deployment of a missile force in Cuba, observing from overhead photography that the launch facilities were being constructed exactly as they were in the USSR, the same sequence and pattern on the ground, with no camouflage or attempted disguise, although they knew that U-2, low level, and space reconnaissance was operating constantly. Only after the President spoke did camouflage appear, and that haphazard. The absolutely standard construction, the initial absence of camouflage, and its pointless appearance after, can only be explained by Soviet military rigidity, in the face of the imperative for secrecy.

The GMAIC reports identified the missiles, first MRBMs and then IRBMs, gave their range (about 700 miles, and 1,100 miles respectively), estimated their numbers, estimated the dates they would become operational, and, when it became evident, we reported that the scale of deployment was not just for a token force, but one which would change the strategic balance significantly.

The JAEIC committee searched for the presence of nuclear warheads for the missiles, found storage and transport facilities for them, but could not determine if the warheads themselves were present in Cuba. The only safe assumption was that they were, hidden. Years later their presence was asserted by Soviet authorities, but never, so far as I know, detected by the U.S.

National Intelligence Estimates of those times have been declassified and are available, and much has been written and published about them and about that Crisis. I expect all those reports to the ExComm are also available by now. So I will not dwell on it further, except to raise a question which is based on a public account by American authorities on the Cuban Missile Crisis. It illustrates the kind of danger of mistakes and miscalculation I mentioned earlier.

Soviet, or Russian, sources are alleged to have asserted in recent years that nuclear warheads with a yield of something on the order of 10 kilotons were available in Cuba for short range (10-20 mile) Soviet coastal missiles, intended to deter America from attempting a naval invasion of Cuba. But without any knowledge of their presence by America those warheads had no deterrent value and we might readily have launched a seaborne invasion. Under those circumstances a sudden, surprise nuclear attack on the U.S. fleet could easily have provoked a nuclear response, and the spark of nuclear war would have been lit. My guess is that either the allegation is untrue, or the assertion of

purpose is mistaken. But if both are accurate this illustration of danger through error is vivid.

Q: Vlad, a couple of questions. Why were you called initially by Personnel?

TOUMANOFF: They knew I had all the special security clearances for access to the kinds of information we would be given. And they also knew that I was the Department's representative on GMAIC, and deputy on JAEIC, had been following Soviet missile development and deployment closely for months, and had been helping write the National Intelligence Estimates on that topic.

Q: And you were the only State representative.

TOUMANOFF: I was the only one actually in the GMAIC meetings on Cuba, but Howard Wiedeman, the senior member of our S & T Unit, and I were members of both GMAIC and JAEIC so we could substitute for each other in case of need. He attended the JAEIC meetings on Cuba.

Q: And they picked you because they felt it best to pick from this newly created specially targeted science and technology Unit?

TOUMANOFF: Yes. Because we both worked on the Estimates, Howard and I probably had the latest and most detailed knowledge in INR of Soviet missilery and nuclear weapons. We both also knew not only what the U.S. knew, but how we knew, and could therefore judge the reliability of the information presented to us about deployment in Cuba. Among other things, obviously, one of the ways in which we knew was from overhead photography.

Q: I was wondering if Mr. Powers was going to come into of this.

TOUMANOFF. Not on Cuba, I think he was still in a Soviet cell. He was one of the pilots of the U-2s that flew over the Soviet Union, and obviously their targets would have included Soviet missile and nuclear sites, test areas and manufacturing facilities. But after he went down there were no more U-2 flights over the USSR, and satellite photography soon took over.

Q: Did those reports recommend any actions?

TOUMANOFF: No, neither actions nor policy. Our task was factual, what was actually being done in Cuba. We went beyond that to provide our best estimates of how soon various elements would be finished; when and how many missiles would become operational; which missiles with what ranges; estimated explosive yield; which American cities could be reached; flight times; warning times; how long before a salvo of many missiles might be possible; is it a token kind of thing, or is this really on a scale which would change the balance of power; what's the scale of the destruction that we could anticipate; how long does it take from the time of delivery of a missile to its launch site to

the actual launch; what preliminary activity might we detect; how much warning time might we have. The reports were intended to provide information which might be the basis for decisions on policy and actions, not to try to recommend either.

Q: But facts are needed for the President to make a decision-

TOUMANOFF: Exactly.

Q: -about the national security of the United States.

TOUMANOFF: How much time does he have to think about it or negotiate? Is the scale of damage such that he can expect our entire counterstrike capacity to be destroyed? Or is it beyond the capacity of what's in Cuba and in the USSR? Will we be in a position to say in negotiations with the Soviets, "If you carry on with this, even to the point where you launch a full first strike, we will survive and still destroy the Soviet Union?"

Q: And be convincing.

TOUMANOFF: And be convincing, and be in a position to have a nation left in the United States. So it was that kind of technical information. We didn't think in terms of what the U.S. should do.

Q: Wouldn't want to.

TOUMANOFF: And shouldn't. Just keeping up with the technical side of it is an all-consuming task.

Q: And scary in itself.

TOUMANOFF: I don't think any of us were scared. We were too busy, and we knew it would take a massive deployment in Cuba to let the USSR think about a nuclear strike.

Q: And you actually put in the words that went on up? You did whatever form these reports took?

TOUMANOFF: Oh, we wrote them.

Q: You wrote them. What form did they take? Memoranda to the President?

TOUMANOFF: Frankly, I have no recollection at all. I suppose they were "Memorandum to the President: Soviet Missiles in Cuba."

Q: Did you go so far as to anticipate Soviet reaction to our reactions?

TOUMANOFF: No.

Q: A little bit of why they were doing this at this time, maybe?

TOUMANOFF: No.

Q: No, not even that.

TOUMANOFF: I don't think so. We each probably had our own opinion. But no. No, I don't think we put that in.

Q: Not you but somebody in-

TOUMANOFF: Once the President had made his announcement, we were busy following up with briefings. For example, I briefed the Department with slides of what was in Cuba, and then flew up to the U.N. and briefed the Latin American ambassadors.

Q: Our Ambassador briefed the United Nations.

TOUMANOFF: I'm sure there were other U.N briefings, and you recall the General Assembly and Security Council took up the matter.

Q: Unclassified, at that point.

TOUMANOFF: Unclassified, yes, of course. It had to be because the President had just announced it.

Q: And you were pleased to learn that your former boss, Tommy Thompson, was part of that decision-making in the White House. He was brought back, as I remember-

TOUMANOFF: I was glad to know his wise head was involved, and history shows he gave President Kennedy some critically important advice. But I think he may have already been back in the Department. I also had great respect and faith in the wisdom of the Secretary of State. This was Rusk, and I thought that if ever there were two good men from the Department of State involved, they were Llewellyn Thompson and Dean Rusk.

Q: Vlad, I'd like to hear your own thoughts on the broader issue at the time.

TOUMANOFF: Okay. As I said earlier, I was not frightened because I was confident the Soviet Union would not commit suicide over Cuba. Especially I thought so because I knew the "missile gap" was real, but in reverse. The USSR had almost no ICBMs and those took days to launch. Our advantage was truly gigantic. I was also sure that before the deployment in Cuba reached anything like its full design we would stop it one way or another. Perhaps a token or progressive conventional bombing as each launching site approached readiness; perhaps a full air and sea blockade; perhaps a massive and persuasive mobilization for full scale invasion: Perhaps even an intimation to Khrushchev that if he pushed ahead he might force us to use a nuclear weapon or two on Cuba, as we had on Japan. I anticipated a very tough negotiating line with Khrushchev to which he

would ultimately have to give in. By that time I also though the Soviets had essentially been defeated, in a very peaceful manner, and had given up over Berlin. Moreover, for us to allow full nuclear deployment in Castro's island was simply madness. Quite apart from the nuclear balance, Castro was too irrational and potentially desperate. I also underestimated the danger of mistakes and accidents. Happily they didn't happen, and in some small part because of the work of that little committee called GMAIC.

Q: We didn't back down easily.

TOUMANOFF: We didn't just pull the trigger, either. Okay, so I was quite confident that one way or another, and at some face-saving price to us, this crisis was going to be resolved by the Soviets dismantling or disabling their missiles under satisfactory inspection. And Castro notwithstanding, probably because Castro would realize that if it were not done he risked his regime, or having his island attacked. You see, it is well that GMAIC did not put forward any recommendations for action or policy!

So we went about our work without being much worried. But I must say, that at least one of the members couldn't take the pace. It was just exhausting. If you weren't reasonably young in reasonably good health and condition and fairly confident that this was going to all work itself out, just the physical business of getting a couple of hours sleep, going down, working like a demon for three or four hours, going back, getting a couple of hours sleep and then showing up at your desk for the full seven or eight hours - it was just not getting enough sleep.

Q: Just plain physical.

TOUMANOFF: That and the nervous exhaustion, because it was very intense work, and you had to be very careful, very accurate about what you said and how you said it. And one poor fellow, who was somewhat older, was sitting there at one of these meetings, and all of a sudden they noticed that he'd just gone glassy. He wasn't responding when spoken to. And he'd just passed out sitting in his chair, and his eyes were still open, from physical exhaustion.

Q: Did he make it?

TOUMANOFF: Oh, yes, sure. Three or four days of rest and relaxation did it. Initially they took him to a hospital.

Q: To be observed.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, to be observed.

Q: Because he was a precious item.

TOUMANOFF: I suspect that probably someone from the government sat there with him to keep the news from leaking out in case he talked. Or maybe it was a secure

government hospital.

Q: By slip of the tongue.

TOUMANOFF: Or simply under sedation. This was still when it was being held very closely, and if he had told a nurse or doctor they might have said, "Oh, boy, what a story! Wait till I tell my mother," and so on and so forth. But the President spoke very soon thereafter, October 22, 1962, to be exact.

Q: Yes, to tell the Soviet's explicitly what they were to do.

TOUMANOFF: Well, this is the negotiation between Kennedy and Khrushchev which resulted in the withdrawal of the missiles. All of that has been released and written up *ad infinitum*.

Q: I was lining it up for you to say at which point you were able to pull out of this particular pressure.

TOUMANOFF: Well, I think after the president spoke we worked in normal hours. Perhaps not, I don't remember. But in any case the double time stopped and we got more sleep. The same groups monitored the whole operation; both of these little committees monitored the situation from the first sign right through until the missiles were withdrawn. As I recall, they were actually put on the decks of Soviet freighters, and when an American airplane flew across to take pictures, the canvas covers were pulled back by the Soviets to show that these were real missiles and not mocked-up dummies.

Q: The count was made, and the incident was over.

TOUMANOFF: That was that.

Okay, Bill, let's take time out for a bit while I think about what's next and we check the tape.

Q: Okay, Vlad, I guess what we can do is move from INR, your Soviet expertise having been brought rather dramatically to bear on several issues, to when you moved to what is known in the trade as the Soviet Desk.

CHAPTER 11: THE SOVIET DESK, 1964-68
The U.N. Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee

TOUMANOFF: Which is the basic operating arm, as contrasted with the research arm, for the conduct of relations with the USSR. It was and is part of the European Bureau (EUR) of the Department, led by an Assistant Secretary of State. Below him were a number of geographic area Offices, one of which was the Office of Soviet Union Affairs (EUR/SOV) commonly called the Soviet Desk. That Office had three Sections, Economic, Bilateral, and Multilateral. I became chief of the latter which dealt with all

matters involving some other entity in addition to the USSR, including third countries, the UN and other international organizations, arms control and disarmament, outer space, and more global issues such as environment, demographics, oceans, etc.

Q: Yes, well, EUR/SOV was, it should be understood, the lowest level of the huge apparatus of the U.S. Government, from the President on down, which dealt one way or another with the USSR. Nevertheless, it was the place where daily real action happens in that field. Where would you like to start?

TOUMANOFF: Bill, I was transferred from INR to SOV late in 1963. Very shortly later, about January 1964, I was temporarily detailed to the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC) in Geneva. I had two functions, one as a Soviet specialist advisor and the other as the interpreter for the chief of our delegation, Adrian Fisher, familiarly known as "Butch," who was Deputy Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), to interpret for him in meetings with his Soviet counterpart. Those were special meetings. The Committee had two Co-Chairmen, the chiefs of the American and Soviet delegations. The latter was named Tsarapkin and held the position for all the period I was there, about six months. I guess I should tell you a little bit about how this Committee worked and a substantive highlight of the negotiations in that period.

The main negotiations were conducted by the two Co-Chairman who met, separately from the rest of the Committee, once or twice a week for an hour or more depending on need, at the Soviet headquarters where they would negotiate on a bilateral basis. That is, they would deal with arms control proposals, with Tsarapkin speaking for the USSR and ostensibly for the Soviet bloc and, "Butch" speaking for the U.S. bearing in mind the interests of NATO. Both Chiefs were keenly conscious of the cares and concerns of the rest of the U.N. and of public opinion at large. The schedule for their meetings was public, and the rest of the procedure reflected that awareness.

Q: Did this have a UN mandate?

TOUMANOFF: Yes, it did. This was a U.N. Committee, it was established by the U.N. At the end of each session with Tsarapkin, Butch would return to his office and take the following actions: brief the staff including his Public Affairs Officer and define the Press briefing; brief the NATO nation Chiefs; brief the other delegation Chiefs; review the (classified) reporting cable to the Department and ACDA which I would have drafted by that time based on my interpretation at the meeting and discussion with Butch on the way back. That cable would typically include comments or policy recommendations or suggestions for U.S. response that he might want. He would then take up preparation for the next plenary session of the Committee which usually took place the next day, and at which the Co-Chairmen would report, independently and with commentary, each of their views of their last meeting, sometimes in harmony, sometimes not. The Committee would then take up the agenda, including whatever progress or lack thereof the delegations wished. Those sessions were apt to be calculated as a public forum, a mix of substance and public relations.

I should mention here that, while Tsarapin had his own interpreter, he turned out to be weak in English. As a consequence, early on, Tsrapkin asked me to interpret both ways, from Russian to English for him, and English to Russian for Butch. To his credit, the Russian interpreter did not resent it, and we became quite friendly.

Q: These were heavy on the technical side, in terms of vocabulary and in terms of the thrust of what you were discussing?

TOUMANOFF: Well, sometimes so, sometimes not. Sometimes it would deal with proposals affecting the strategic balance between the two great powers, such as a ban on nuclear testing, but a fair amount of time that spring was devoted to a different way of trying to address arms control, the negotiations of which I should describe. That was the proposal which, I think, originated with Mr. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, which was to try to control the military budgets on both sides. It was familiarly known as "My Hatch would talk with your Hatch." That is, "my Hatch" was the chief budget officer for the U.S. Department of Defense who would negotiate with his counterpart in the Soviet Union and see if they could work out some kind of arms control by controlling military budgets.

Q: The Soviets aren't terribly famous for their openness on budgetary decisions.

TOUMANOFF: Well, some progress was made on other topics like the test ban, and non-proliferation, which are well documented in the now-public record. But the idea of budget controls died with finality for just your reason. I'm not sure to what extent Butch Fisher thought the idea of arms control by budget a non-starter, and that attempts to advance it by our negotiations a waste of time. But I very quickly convinced myself that it was a total waste of time for all kinds of reasons, primarily by problems of definition and verification. As you say, the Soviets released next to nothing about their so-called Military Budget. But more fundamentally, the CIA and many economists had been trying for years to measure the Soviet economy as a whole, with unreliable and widely ranging results. Their success was even less in estimating the proportion of that economy geared to support the military. We know now that our highest estimates were markedly too low. The "Military Budget" announced by the USSR was in the realm of political mythology rather than fact. The entire economy of the Soviet Union was geared in very substantial part to support of the military, and the 'civilian' and 'military' were widely intermixed. How in the world we would ever verify any negotiated budgetary controls... Well, I made it plain to Butch that I thought the whole idea a waste of time, and why. He never acknowledged any doubts because he was a very professional executor of Government policy and instructions. As delegation chief and negotiator it was his job to try to advance the official proposition. But I was an advisor and served him best by speaking my mind. I suspect that he, too, fully appreciated the weakness of the proposition. In any case, while I was there, he got instructions from Washington, which I never saw-

Q: Principally from the Defense Department, or-

TOUMANOFF: Oh, no. His instructions came from the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), which at that point was, I think, still part of the Department of State. In any case you may be sure they were cleared with State, Defense, and probably the White House, especially these instructions.

Q: So from our side it was a serious-

TOUMANOFF: Oh, yes. This was the United Nations forum for negotiations about arms control. Obviously, negotiations with the USSR on other topics (or perhaps even these in some circumstances) would be going on in other channels. But the ENDC was the formal UN forum for arms control.

Q: Set up by the United Nations.

TOUMANOFF: Right. Well, Butch at some point received instructions which allowed him to scuttle the whole idea, and he asked me to write a speech for him to make at the full Committee meeting, essentially scotching the notion that military budgets were a promising instrument for arms control.

From my clinical training I happened to know that one of the most radical treatments for schizophrenia in those days, back in the ‘40s, was something called a frontal lobotomy, in which neural connections between the frontal lobes of the brain and the rest of it were severed by surgery. It did not hamper most normal functions, but it did remove the patient's capacity to anticipate consequences of complex actions. So I built into the speech I drafted the notion of control through military budgets was akin to frontal lobotomy - the controls would be unverifiable and the consequences unpredictable. Butch removed that passage as the reaction by Mr. McNamara was predictable. He thought I was revealing my total frustration with the grand waste of time and treasure by the U.S. and other nations on an idea bad from the start. He was right on both counts. Other parts of the speech were used including a dramatic moment when Butch held up a 300-odd page Congressional report on the U.S. military budget and contrasted it what the USSR revealed of theirs -"Seven words and one number."

Q: Less factual.

TOUMANOFF: Less. Strikingly. In the meantime Butch had told Tsarapkin in advance that we thought this was a dead end approach to arms control and we were going to say so. As near as I could judge, Tsarapkin was neither surprised nor disappointed.

Q: But just that one issue, not-

TOUMANOFF: Just that one issue. It was probably the highlight of that session of the ENDC, which lasted from about January to about May of 1964. I don't recall that we accomplished any breakthrough on other issues by the time the Committee recessed, and my assignment ended.

I thought I'd just mention something about interpreting, an episode which will illustrate the kind of problems which one faces and how to manage them - sometimes well, sometimes not so well. Butch had a seemingly endless supply of Kentucky Mountain jokes. They depended on mountain lingo and accent at which Butch was a master. And one day he started a meeting with Tsarapkin with one of those jokes. Translating jokes from one language and culture to another is a chancy proposition at best, Kentucky Mountain jokes in dialect are untranslatable, I didn't even know any comparable Russian jokes. But there it was.

Q: The joke was on you, so to speak.

TOUMANOFF: Oi! Well, Butch had said it, and I couldn't just sit there dumb. I had to try to convey it. I did my level best, and it was an absolute disaster. I struggled through something Butch and I thought was truly funny, and there was this total silent deadpan on Tsarapkin's face. So I stumbled around and tried to explain the joke and something about life in the Kentucky mountains. Tsarapkin began to look at both of us strangely, Butch by now was looking at me quizzically as I labored on and I could see I was losing them both. So I just shook my head, waved it away and fell silent. Never try to explain a dead joke. Going back in the car, I said, "Butch, there's no way to translate a Kentucky Mountain dialect joke into Russian." And he said, "Why isn't there?" I said, "It doesn't work that way. Next time try it in French." He didn't.

Q: He spoke no foreign language?

TOUMANOFF: Yes, Butch, I'm sure, spoke French. Perhaps other languages.

Q: All right. So this is the end of our interview the 16th of July, 1999 of Vlad Toumanoff, and we are just arriving at his new assignment in Soviet affairs, on the Soviet Desk.

The Origins of SALT

TOUMANOFF: I returned from Geneva in May or June of 1964, back to the Soviet Desk where I think I had spent maybe a couple of weeks before I was detailed to the ENDC in Geneva. Back to the Soviet Desk, which was my regular assignment.

Perhaps the first thing of any genuine significance was that the experience in Geneva had convinced me that the course of negotiations with the USSR on arms control, which I had witnessed in Geneva, was not going to make much progress. But my previous experience working on National Intelligence Estimates of Soviet military capabilities made me think that there was an entire area, a very important one, which we could at least try to make some progress on, which was not being addressed. So in the course of that summer one of the first things I did in Soviet Multilateral Affairs on the Soviet Desk was to draft a treaty - that is, make a draft of treaty provisions - that would stop the deployment of strategic missiles, ICBMs, intercontinental ballistic missiles. I wrote it as a treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union. This was based on very highly classified material because its validity as a proposal was based on our ability to know, to verify, any such

freeze on the deployment of ICBMs. The means we would have to be able to verify compliance with such a treaty were the same means that enabled us to write accurate, reliable National Intelligence Estimates of Soviet strategic capabilities. Those Estimates, and knowledge of our means, were classified above Top Secret on a "need to know" basis.

That classification posed a dilemma for me. The proposal made no sense without knowledge of our means of verification. That knowledge, and any document which revealed it, required special handling and storage, and was limited to those with a "need to know" clearance. I could write it, but not even store it. I did not know who in the official chain of command above me in SOV, or in the European Bureau, had that clearance. So I wrote the draft as "Top Secret" with no mention of verification. Absent that, I knew the proposal would be fatally flawed and would go nowhere. The first official in the normal chain of command above me without the special clearances would bounce it back for an explanation of verification which I could not give, or would simply ignore the proposal as well meaning but amateurish work of a junior officer. So I bypassed the normal chain of command and hand carried the draft to Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson, who by that time was back in Washington as special advisor to the Secretary of State on Soviet affairs, and who, I knew, had all the necessary clearances. On the way up to Ambassador Thompson, I showed it to his assistant for national security issues, Raymond Garthoff, who agreed that I should take it directly to Thompson.

Thompson read it in my presence and commented that at some point in any resulting negotiations with the Soviets we would need to bear in mind the NATO governments lest they feel we were striking a bilateral bargain in disregard of their situation, already threatened by hundreds of deployed Soviet medium and intermediate range nuclear missiles. He then told me to take the draft to Adrian Fisher who was directing ACDA in the absence of the Director in Geneva, and hand wrote a note to Fisher which he gave me to take with the draft. He had folded the note and clipped it to the draft so I did not read it. I assume with confidence that he commended the draft as an idea worth pursuing. I had just worked closely with "Butch" Fisher at the ENDC in Geneva, so I went straight to his office, was admitted, told him briefly about the note and draft which he promised to read promptly, and went back to my office.

Q: One second, Vlad, before we completely put the chain of command aside - the person or persons you might have gone to first to see that it was okay - anything to say on them?

TOUMANOFF: Yes, well, I would have in the first place gone to the Deputy Director of SOV (the Office of Soviet Affairs) Adolph Dubs (later murdered when Ambassador in Kabul), then to Malcolm Toon, Director of SOV. "Mack" Toon, later to be Ambassador in Moscow, happened to be away for a week or so at the time, so it would have had to wait. My next step would have been to the Assistant Secretary of State for the European Bureau or one of his Deputies, doubtless through their staffs. It is unlikely that all, or any for that matter, of these superiors had the right clearances. I had them only because of my previous work in INR. Had any of them asked me "How could we verify Soviet compliance?" I would know they did not have the clearances, probably did not know they

even existed, and I was prohibited from telling them. I didn't want to walk down that path.

Q: Sometimes our business is not entirely understandable - but certainly doable because there is flexibility in the system, although bypassing a superior chain of command is chancy.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, well, I really didn't think I had much choice in the matter. But that's one reason why I went to show the draft to Ray Garthoff, who I knew did have these clearances. I neglected to mention that I knew Fisher also had the clearances. I also felt comfortable in bypassing all of his staff and the other officials of ACDA because I was acting on Ambassador Thompson's instructions and with his personal note. That's all I needed to be safe in doing so.

Q: And we really are dealing with very responsible people at the right level at this point.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, exactly, because if they did not approve of the draft it was going nowhere and I should tear it up and throw it away, burn it, that is. As it turned out that draft was the origin of SALT I, and launched a whole series of treaties controlling strategic weapons which we have negotiated successfully. We will probably continue to negotiate new treaties in that series far into the future as that class of weapons develops and spreads. This origin has, to my knowledge, never been made public, probably because it would take an exhausting search of ACDA archives by some scholar to unearth that original draft and Thompson's note, if they still exist. Anyway, back to the story. I heard nothing about the proposal for several months. I assumed that ACDA, and perhaps others were studying the proposal and examining its many possible variants, all of which would have widespread consequences, not least on military planning. Eventually I was asked to come to a meeting in the Disarmament Agency to discuss the proposal for a treaty of this kind. I arrived at the appointed time and it turned out to be a rather large meeting, about thirty people, many of whom where in military uniform, all already seated, and silenced at my entrance. There was an empty chair for me at the near end of a long conference table, and a uniformed general sat at the other end. The room remained silent as I entered, sat down, gave my name, and said I hoped I had not made a mistake about the time. The general said no, I was right on time, introduced himself and announced the topic as the proposal for a treaty that I had written. It already felt uncomfortably like some sort of trial, and more so as he went on to say that all present were familiar with the draft and looked forward to this opportunity to discuss with me some questions which had arisen. I was secretly glad the proposal had come so far in the Government as to include the military, but was again very cautious about getting in to much of a discussion, because I knew the whole question of verification would come up as central. Besides, there was a distinct air of hostile superior authority about the place, a whiff of something like what I had been through with McCarthy.

Q: And controversial in general, or-

TOUMANOFF: Well, it was bound to be controversial because the Pentagon was

unlikely to look kindly upon a treaty that would so disrupt their assumptions, plans and programs to further enhance our nuclear armament and our national security the way they saw it.

Q: The basic argument.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, the basic argument: should we or shouldn't we limit, tie our hands, and what makes us so sure that the Soviet Union would abide by a treaty, and if we can't be sure that they'll abide by the treaty, and verify their compliance with high confidence, while our own compliance would be known to the whole world, this treaty would be dangerous at best and suicidal at worst.

Q: And leading beyond that is the congressional role, valid and indeed appropriate, with lots of opinions and with imperative programs stalled by debate. You hadn't even opened that, I presume. This had not gone to the congressional level?

TOUMANOFF: No, I'm sure it had not. I can't be certain, but I think it would have leaked to the press promptly, with uncontrollable damage all around. Anyway, here I was walking into this meeting, and much to my surprise, the tone as it opened was one of challenge to me as the author of this draft.

Q: Like you shouldn't be the author, or-

TOUMANOFF: Well, I was a fairly lowly figure, and here were people with a great deal of experience, rank and vital interests at stake.

Q: And ego.

TOUMANOFF: They were concerned. They were properly worried and were not glad to have this idea surface in the venue and form that it had taken. ACDA was not their favorite Agency. It's mission was the opposite of theirs and not all the ideas it generated were valid. So I sensed that this was going to be a rather difficult time, and that sure enough, one way or another, the whole question of verification would be up front and paramount.

Q: A fundamental question.

TOUMANOFF: Surely. And I would be under great pressure to explain exactly, in detail, why I was confident of our ability to verify Soviet compliance. So, partly to know if I was under classification constraints, partly because I resented the air of superiority, but mostly because I was pretty sure the whole crowd did not have the special clearances, and I saw an escape hatch, I did something legitimate but very bureaucratic. I asked, very early in the meeting, at what level of security classification the meeting was being held. The answer came back," Top Secret."

Q: And ACDA was responsible for establishing that.

TOUMANOFF: Yes. Every meeting in "sensitive" Government Departments, State, ACDA, Defense, etc. were "sensitive," needed to know whether the proceedings could be made public, or what level of security should prevail. I than asked, "Nothing beyond Top Secret?" And they all looked at me with puzzled faces. Clearly they were unaware of the existence of special "need to know" classifications. I said, "Well, you know, I can't really discuss this topic at the Top Secret level, so I think I must excuse myself rather than be uncommunicative." And I left.

Q: That's the dirtiest bureaucratic trick there is.

TOUMANOFF: Not really, there are worse. But I knew it would breed resentment. It was absolutely necessary, however, because if this idea was going to be discussed seriously, the first thing we would have to discuss, and the first thing I would want to discuss, was whether, if the Soviet Union went along with some kind of a deployment freeze of this nature, possibly including the smaller missiles, the medium- and intermediate-range missiles threatening both Eastern and Western Europe, even possibly including submarine launched missiles, whether it would, in fact, be verifiable, and how reliably or intrusively. And that got to the heart of a great many very, very highly classified matters.

Q: And maybe in some cases impossible.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, exactly. But if the proposal were discussed and that question were left unexamined, there wasn't much point in doing anything with this draft piece of paper, least of all having it bruited about and having it leaked to Congress and the press, and then having a huge international dove-hawk debate over something which was either undoable, or so esoteric that few if any would understand. And that is not to speak of the damage revelations would do to ongoing verification activities essential to our national security. Far better suffer some resentment.

Q: Did you in fact escape that way?

TOUMANOFF: Yes. I didn't really ask their permission to leave the meeting, I just said "Excuse me, please," got up and walked out the door.

Q: And with reason. Everyone in that meeting understood that there are that kind of checks and controls.

TOUMANOFF: Well, I'm not sure they did.

Q: Oh, really?

TOUMANOFF: I think a certain number of jaws dropped. But more than that. If, as I suspected might be the case, the military had prepared a major assault to kill this thing dead right then and there at this meeting, they would be feeling deprived of the opportunity by my action, another cause for resentment. But I didn't think the proposal

deserved that fate. And the meeting had the virtue of alerting those who may have been lethally inclined that the proposal had dimensions they were unaware of, and was not to be disposed of easily.

Q: That's not called "suicidal," I don't think, is it?

TOUMANOFF: Well, I didn't think that the *idea* deserved that fate. I mean, it wasn't going to affect me.

Q: Yes, except that it was a good idea, and it was yours.

TOUMANOFF: Well, it would have affected me to the extent that were both basic premises - that a treaty could freeze ICBM deployment, and that might be a good thing to do - scotched as absurd it would have reflected on me as a professional.

Q: But the meeting had not reached that level of discussion.

TOUMANOFF: Indeed, after what I had said, it couldn't. Of course, I don't know what they may have gone on to discuss. I suspect that the meeting ended.

Q: I want to hear the other shoe.

TOUMANOFF: Okay. At that point I was busy doing a whole lot of other things. We'll come to some of those later. Besides, this was really the business of the Disarmament Agency, and I had great faith in Butch Fisher. I was sure that he, like Thompson, would think the idea worth pursuing and worth examining very carefully. So I kind of put my nose back in my own affairs on the Soviet Desk, assuming that at some point I might be involved again should need arise. It didn't, and I didn't.

Q: Did you think you were cut out of the loop by resentment?

TOUMANOFF: No. The review would have been at too high a rank, too high a classification, and involve too many departments for that, if there was any residue of resentment, to be a factor. The issue was of such importance that I think Thompson would have represented the Department of State. Moreover, there was the "need to know" classification, which presented a bureaucratic obstacle. To involve me in the work, ACDA would have to justify a request for my services down through the official chain of command. While I still had the clearances, many intervening rungs in that ladder did not, and did not know that I had been involved at all.

As time went by I checked occasionally out of curiosity to hear if the proposal was progressing, and learned little. At best, it seemed to be very slow. That made sense since the consequences of adoption would be very far-reaching, and consideration would be complicated, highly classified and involve many parts of the Government. Moreover, after the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, the Soviet Union had launched a massive buildup of their intercontinental rocket forces, determined to remedy their deep inferiority to

those of the United States. Under those circumstance it seemed plain that they would have little interest in freezing ICBM deployment until their power matched ours, or nearly so; except, perhaps, to drag out negotiations to try to slow our own force expansion. I worried some about the delay because not only were the numbers on both sides increasing, but technology, especially ours, was making giant strides in warhead and missile design, MIRVs, solid fuel, submarine launched missiles, mobility, all were on the horizon to make verification (bean counting it was called) more difficult.

The first hard news to reach me was in the summer of 1968 in the context of the Czech crisis (about which later). I learned that we had finally persuaded the Soviets to start systematic negotiations toward a treaty, and had agreed on a simultaneous announcement in Moscow and Washington on August 21.

Meanwhile, as the "Prague Spring" advanced, Soviet objections to it became more virulent and their military preparations grew. I was told that as part of our effort to deter a Soviet invasion we informed the Soviets that if they invaded Czechoslovakia there could be no arms control negotiations. They invaded on the night of August 20-21. As history was to prove later, their fear of political contagion from Czechoslovakia to the rest of Eastern Europe, and to the USSR itself was valid, and far outweighed all considerations against invasion. Accordingly, there was no announcement.

That, I knew, ended all prospects for the project for some time to come. With a presidential election in November it would be a long time before a new Administration, especially with a change of parties, would review the project all over again, and perhaps reject it. At the time I was on vacation in New Hampshire before leaving for my next assignment, to Canada. There, I lost track of the project. Eventually President Nixon moved it forward, and it became SALT I; the first of a series of negotiations and agreements on strategic arms limitations.

Q: Tell me about the preliminary negotiations.

TOUMANOFF: At that point the whole matter was being handled so carefully by the United States with the Soviets that I was never even aware of the fact that such lead-up negotiations had taken place.

Q: In what channel were they taking place?

TOUMANOFF: I don't know for sure, but Thompson went back for his second tour as Ambassador in Moscow in early 1967, and the most likely channel, I think, would have been through him as he had doubtless been involved from the very beginning and he was held in high regard by the White House. Khrushchev, of course, was long out of office and Thompson had no special access to Brezhnev or others in the Politburo. The negotiations are most likely to have been successful in 1968 by which time the Soviets had corrected the strategic balance. The mighty effort and cost of that may have prompted them to seek relief through negotiation.

Q: This is to me a striking example of how a Foreign Service Officer, and the State Department, in a very multi-faceted subject, are put to the test, and what happens when an Administration changes. You went back to your desk. You didn't wait?

TOUMANOFF: Not quite. We'll get to that eventually.

But you are right, Bill, I thought it was important also for a reason beyond the substance. It demonstrated to me the remarkable flexibility and openness of the Department and the Government. That a very junior Officer, close to the bottom of the Department's organization, could originate an idea, in an extremely sensitive and restricted field, have an avenue for it to the top, and thereby initiate action ultimately by the whole Government and foreign nations, continuing to this day and beyond, and affecting everyone's safety. America has repeatedly demonstrated this flexibility, this freedom of thought and action, the absence of which, incidentally, helped end the baneful Soviet regime in Russia. There are few governments in which a junior officer, a section chief with a staff of three, has that opportunity.

Q: Point well taken of what the role of an FSO at a lower level can be, and continues to be.

TOUMANOFF: Among other things, that's why in the Foreign Service we had then and we still have something known as the Dissent Channel. That is, if an officer abroad differs with some policy or practice, or has an idea he wishes to present, he is free to write and send the Department what is known as a "dissent" message, and it cannot be forbidden, nor punished in any way.

Q: And not suffer from choosing that route.

TOUMANOFF: Exactly.

Q: Yes. Well, there's a clear example, Vlad.

TOUMANOFF: Bill, it is part of this extraordinary capacity of the United States for self-correction, and it's essential. Well, enough of that. We have to go back to about 1965 to pick up the story of my assignment on the Soviet Desk. I got back from Geneva about June of 1964, and the freeze idea and routine work kept me busy until a year later, when the next episode of possible interest came along.

Siberian Mushroom Picking Goes Awry.

Two men from a Siberian coastal village, the school janitor and his handyman friend, went mushroom picking on an off shore island. They used an open, pipeframe and walrus hide boat, with two outboards in case one failed. They collected their mushrooms, had a little bite and a little drink, took a little nap, and set off for home late in the afternoon. The fog rolled in, the wind picked up, the boat tossed, and there was nothing for it but to head into the wind, bail and hope to survive. Darkness fell. One motor died. They kept

steering into the wind, drenched, frozen and hanging on for dear life. Dawn came. The wind died. The fog lifted. They were still alive, and there was the shore! Exhausted, soaked and freezing, they built a fire, lay down, and slept. It was still early when they woke, and thinking to find their way home they looked around. Things somehow didn't look quite right. Indeed, the more they looked the stranger they appeared. Some odd looking dogs came along, and some people in finery who came over speaking gibberish, but friendly. Soon two hurried off while the rest remained pointing at the boat, motors, and clothing and making signs and more unintelligible noises some with whistling. They seemed hard of hearing, shaking their heads when spoken to.

By international convention the home government of a foreigner must be notified, and given access when one of its citizens is taken into custody. The U.S. Coast Guard took custody, with a young Ensign who had once taken a couple of semesters of Russian. The two Siberians wanted to go home so a Coast Guard Cutter set off with them for Big Diomede Island (USSR) the nearest Soviet port. Our heroes started to think, and remembered that they had been caught once before in the forbidden Red Zone outside the narrow coastal waters allowed for villagers. That had resulted in brutal threats by the KGB that if caught outside again it would be the Gulag for life. They asked the Cutter to stop and send a message ahead to Big Diomede in which they asked for assurance from Soviet authorities that they would not be prosecuted. The Cutter stopped, and sent the message. Dead silence ensued. Their message was repeated. Nothing changed. No acknowledgement. No reply. Our heroes thought some more, and realized that they were setting conditions to their own government on their willingness to return. Moreover, the conditions were not only embarrassingly distrustful of Soviet justice, but public, and sure to be exploited by the U.S. and foreign press. They were in deep trouble. The Cutter Captain was getting impatient with bobbing around in mid-ocean, so they all came back to Alaska. Accordingly, the Coast Guard, or INS, notified State, and we notified the Soviet Embassy in Washington that we had two of their people in Anchorage. The Soviets requested access, which by convention had to be in the presence of a U.S. official to prevent duress of any kind. State sent me. The Soviet Embassy sent one of their Consuls.

In Anchorage it was headline news. The city had taken the two poor Siberians (held at a naval base) to its heart; all Anchorage wanted them to stay. But it also had never been visited by a SOVIET OFFICIAL DIPLOMAT FROM WASHINGTON!! Anchorage spread out a red carpet welcome. Flooded by invitations, trailed by the press, his every word printed, quoted and repeated, the Consul spread plausible Soviet gospel and was the social rage. The drama of would the Russians stay or go back was front page in every paper. Meanwhile, in a quiet courthouse room, the four of us met. It took three days. The Siberians wobbled to and fro. The Consul was skillful. The first day he listened sympathetically to their ordeals at sea, solicitously about their circumstances at home (which were dire), and encouragingly about their hopes and dreams. Our heroes wanted assurance that they would not be punished. He, of course, assured them that they would not, that everyone understood it was an accident of weather. They wanted assurance from their Government. He explained, correctly, that as Consul of the Embassy was, and spoke for, the Government. They said how could he be if he was here in America. They

remained unconvinced, they wanted assurance from Moscow. Eventually he understood that there was less than perfect trust in local officials far from the seat of power. He gave up and promised to contact Moscow.

The second day he said he had contacted Moscow and had assurance for them from Moscow that they would never be punished, on the contrary they would be welcomed home as heroes after all their ordeals. He went on to say they would be provided with new housing, whatever training they might choose, better jobs, higher pay. By contrast he cautioned them about their future in America with no English, no skills, unemployed, no friends or relatives, and the risk that they might be drained of information and then discarded "like squeezed lemons". But where was the assurance from Moscow? They obviously wanted it in writing which they could carry home with them. Once again distrust loomed its ugly head. He said he did not have it in writing, it would take too long to mail it from Moscow to Alaska. They just glanced at each other. The Consul had never threatened them or their families or coerced them in any way, so I had no reason to intervene, and just listened.

On the last day they, too, were silent. He seemed a bit impatient, eager, and overplayed his hand. He said he had been in touch with Moscow again and painted an ever rosier picture of their future lives in the USSR. One of our heroes was having wife trouble, and the Consul went so far as to suggest help with marital problems, divorce would be easy, there would be lots of pretty girls in his new life. That did it. They decided he had been lying, and bolted. They refused to return to the USSR, and never wanted to see him again. Anchorage was happy that the stray waifs were staying. The INS took charge of them, and the Soviet Consul and I went back to Washington, separately.

But it was not over. In those days the U.S. could not legally deport them once they asked for asylum, so I assume they went into some INS sheltering program. However, some months later first one, and then a bit later the other, walked into the Soviet Embassy asking to be sent home. That involved a corresponding interview for each, again with me and Soviet officials to make sure their return was voluntary, this time in the State Department building. They each confirmed that, and left. Shortly after each went back prominent articles appeared in Moscow's two main papers, Pravda and Izvestia, the national Party and Government organs respectively. The articles were grossly falsified accounts of villainous persecution of the Siberians at the hands of the U.S. Government. They named me as helping coerce the victims, and at least one version made me out an agent of the CIA. The two men were pictured as innocent captives who had heroically managed at the end to escape from the clutches of their tormenters. Let us hope that whatever tale the heroes concocted for the KGB to save their skins, saved them from the Gulag. Thompson took the trouble to call in the Soviet Ambassador to tell him I was a legitimate career Foreign Service Officer, and not with CIA, which was very gratifying for me, but probably to little avail. With the passage of Khrushchev from the scene I guess the KGB was getting even for the "protection" I had. So ended that chapter.

Q: Did that ever arise again?

TOUMANOFF: Not that I know of. But I don't know what may be in some KGB dossier on me and, as life has turned out, have had no occasion to find out.

Q: That was in 1965.

TOUMANOFF: Right. The first Izvestia article came out in December 1965, on the 11th, I think.

Q: What comes next?

The Outer Space Treaty

TOUMANOFF: Several things coincided next year. The Anniversary of World War II victory in Europe is celebrated on May 9th every year, in what used to be called Red Army Day, now called Victory Day. It was, and still is, a major national holiday and celebration which included parades, march-pasts and a major address by the Defense Minister, among others. On that day in 1966, Marshall Malinovsky said something in his speech which made me think the USSR might be looking for a short cut of some sort (other than missiles in Cuba!) to strategic equivalence with the U.S. Their own massive build-up and deployment of ICBMs was forging ahead but not there yet by a large margin.

At the same time, with Vietnam spoiling his days, President Johnson was looking for countervailing, positive foreign policy initiatives, and we had a standing request from the White House to propose any we might think of. By "we" I mean at least the State Department, more probably the entire Executive Branch.

Finally, I knew that the proposal for a treaty to freeze ICBM deployment was working its way slowly through the bureaucracy, so there was nothing new there, except that its slow pace confirmed the principle that in arms control it is easier to ban something that has not yet happened than to stop something already underway with commitment and momentum.

I started thinking about what had not yet happened in strategic weaponry, and suddenly those pieces fell into place: - nuclear weapons deployed in outer space. They fitted Malinovsky's hint. They would be a twofold shortcut to strategic balance because the Soviet space program already had the lift capacity and satellite vehicles; and delivery onto ground targets from orbit would be faster than ICBMs and reduce warning time. Unlike ICBMs, deployment in space had not yet happened. And finally, a U.S. proposal for a ban would be seen globally as a major new positive initiative.

This time I did not draft a treaty outline. Instead, I called a friend in the Department's Legal Division and asked him how long it would take him to draft an actual treaty. He said a matter of days. I suggested the sooner the better and told him my thinking. He was as good as his word and a draft was submitted to the White house as an initiative proposal in response to the President's request. I lost track of it at that point, but it must have

moved through the approval process at lightning speed because, as I recall, it was submitted as a U.S. draft resolution to the UN General Assembly, probably in September. The language would ban placing nuclear weapons in orbit. Negotiations started and the USSR submitted a comparable draft resolution to the UN soon after, in December, I think. All of this has probably been published but perhaps not the following detail.

Within weeks after the U.S. submission, in late September or October, as I recall, American intelligence detected Soviet testing of an orbital bombardment system, evidently in late or final stages of development. As I understood it, they were launching satellite vehicles suitable to carry nuclear bombs into orbital trajectories which overflew the United States, and bringing them down over their testing grounds in a sharp, steep reentry in disregard of survival at landing. I may have some of the details wrong or incomplete, but our intelligence agencies concluded that this could only be for orbital bombardment. The discovery raised a controversy in our Government about the U.S. draft UN resolution. Some argued that we should publicize the discovery, suspend negotiations, and require the USSR to immediately halt their activity. That was not done, not even after the Soviets presented their draft, which suggested that development of their orbital bombing system had been completed. Instead, the White House decreed that there was no contradiction between the Soviet Testing program and the proposed treaty because the Soviet test satellites were brought down before they had completed one full orbit. Negotiations continued and in January 1967 the U.S., the USSR and sixty other nations bound themselves not to place nuclear weapons into earth orbit.

The American rationale struck me as patently flimsy and contrived, not to say cynical. It fell in my mind into a variant of Lincoln's dictum: You can fool most of the people most of the time, or you can try until cumulatively you lose most of your credibility with most of the people for all of the time. But I explained it in several possible ways. 1) We had decided, for various reasons, not to develop a system of our own, and therefore would not be hampered by the ban. Orbital bombardment was extremely expensive. It was impractical, a terror weapon at best. It invited a space war as each nation destroyed the other's vehicles as soon as orbited, easily done. It was inaccurate. It was technically unreliable. It would be hard to coordinate with ICBMs in a first strike and would not survive for use in a retaliatory 2nd strike. Low trajectory ICBMs and submarine launched missiles would be better in many ways. etc. 2) Denunciation of Soviet perfidy for negotiating in bad faith would gain us little, but would set us back considerably in our quest for other agreements, the Hot Line, Nonproliferation, and help with Vietnam. Better a Space treaty before nuclear weapons were deployed than no treaty at all. 3) We did not want to reveal our detection capabilities. 4) But probably decisive, Lyndon needed his positive initiative for political reasons, including the next election.

In any case, I believe that to this day the USSR has never deployed an orbital nuclear bombardment system, nor has any nation.

Q: Were you involved in this Outer Space Treaty, as it came to be called?

TOUMANOFF: No, not really, not after I saw the draft prepared by the Legal Division.

When I saw the international fanfare over the UN adoption and the support by so many countries, I concluded that the USSR would not deploy an orbital bombardment system except under extreme conditions, and we would gain more by revealing such a violation than we would have had we raised the issue beforehand.

Q: Does that bring us to the end of 1966?

A Presidential Proposal

TOUMANOFF: Almost. Actually, the next episode worth mentioning carries over into 1967.

In the autumn or early winter of 1966 Ambassador Thompson learned that he would be going back to Moscow in 1967 for his second tour there as Ambassador to the USSR. He was not enthusiastic about it. He told me he thought Brezhnev and the Politburo around him were a sorry bunch. He used the Russian word "grey" which connotes mediocre, stolid, closed. He anticipated little contact or access, nothing like his relationship with Khrushchev, and thought the occasion for presentation of his credentials as Ambassador would be one of the few opportunities he would have for direct communication with the top leadership, and planned to take full advantage of it. Thompson asked me to draft a credentials presentation speech which would go far past the conventional platitudes, into genuine substance. That was my guidance, no details, no outline, no themes.

I went back to my desk three floors and about ten ranks below, tried to think what Thompson would like to say, and drew a blank. I tried picturing Thompson addressing a Politburo leaning forward in their chairs, interested and impressed. Nothing. The same, later, in full session composing a reply. To what? I gave it up. In desperation, and however unsuitable it would be for Thompson, I thought what would I want to say. That came easily. 1967 would mark 50 years of Communist rule in Russia. (The 50th anniversary year of the November 1917 Revolution.) Congratulate them on their achievements in the first 50 - and look at the next 50. The speech I wrote briefly reviewed some of the major problems of the world in which both our nations would live - demographic, technological, ideological - and ended with the statement that the U.S. Government stood ready to consult, cooperate and collaborate with the Soviet Government in addressing these and other matters. Mind you, we were in the middle of the Cold War.

I gave the draft to Thompson, hoping he would just think it an aberration and that my career would survive. Weeks went by. I heard nothing from him and assumed he had thrown it in the waste basket. I didn't feel too badly about disappointing him because I assumed he had drafts more compatible with the times from other officers. One day he called me to his office, gave me a speech text, and asked me what I thought of it. To my amazement, it was my draft, slightly altered, but with one major change. The last line now read "President Johnson has instructed me to tell you that he stands ready to cooperate on these and other problems of mutual concern." The change was in pencil. Thompson asked me if I recognized the handwriting. I didn't. He said that he had sent my

draft to the President, who was in Texas at the time, and that it was his handwriting.

Q: What were the problems and issues, Vlad, describe the contents in more detail.

TOUMANOFF: Bill, the text was translated into Russian, Thompson made the speech at his credentials presentation in Moscow on January 23, 1967, gave the Russians copies in English and Russian, it was reported briefly in the New York Times (which missed the punch line), and it was sent by mail to the Embassy's Russian mailing list; several hundred or even thousand addressees by that time. Among the issues the speech touched on were maintenance of peace; the growing burden of armament; the revolution in communications and their hostile content; the increasing disparity between industrial and underdeveloped nations; demographics versus resources, food production, water and energy. But there must be copies in various archives. With release by the Embassy mailing it would be unclassified.

Q: So then what happened? Did we get any reply from the Soviets? Where's the other shoe? That was quite a message for Cold War times.

TOUMANOFF: I stayed on the Desk for another eighteen months and so far as I know, there was total silence from the Soviets. The pebble never hit the bottom of the well. That's not definitive. Conceivably Thompson got some answer and reported it in an "Eyes Only" for the Secretary of State, which I would not have seen. But I think not, for a different reason. Andrei Sakharov, the "conscience of the Soviet Union" would have been on the Embassy mailing list. Some six months later he sent his famous letter to the Politburo advocating an end to the practices of Class Warfare and the Cold War. In it I found not only some of the same thoughts, but very similar passages as in the speech. In light of the persecution he received, there would have been little welcome for the speech in the Politburo. A "sorry bunch," indeed.

We had to wait for Gorbachev's Perestrioka to hear a similar invitation from the Russians for cooperation. I wrote to him, with a copy to Secretary Schultz, calling attention to President Johnson's earlier offer of cooperation, but there was no water in either well for that pebble to hit. But that particular theme of cooperation on future global issues dropped out of Gorbachev's rhetoric, most probably because it was getting shopworn. However, things seem to be moving in that direction now.

Q: You had quite a time of it on the Desk. Anything more?

The Czech Crisis

TOUMANOFF: One more worth mentioning. The Czech crisis. Sometime in May 1968, the Foreign Service Institute, then across the Potomac in Virginia, offered a week-long course on the ramifications of nuclear energy research which I was attending, mainly to look for any bearing on our relations with the USSR. In the middle of a session with Lawrence Livermore Labs, I received an urgent message from Malcolm Toon, SOV Director, to return. I did, it was early afternoon. Toon told me the Secretary wanted a 24-

hour Task Force on Czechoslovakia to be set up in the Department's Operations Center, and asked me to do that, quickly. He added that the Secretary would come by at about 6 o'clock that evening and I should be ready to brief him on the latest developments. A few minutes later at the Center I found to my relief that it was already monitoring developments in the growing tensions between the Soviets and Czechs. We had been watching that intently in SOV, but I was several days behind events. The Center gave me the latest, and I started drawing people for the Task Force. These came from various appropriate offices in the Department, mostly European desk officers from the Bureau, INR, the Political/Military Office, and Policy Planning. Soon we were joined by military personnel from the Department of Defense.

The Secretary appeared. His greatest concern was the increasing threat of a Soviet military invasion of Czechoslovakia. I was able to tell him the latest news, in which the threat remained but there were no indications of immediate military action. He said he would be at home for the evening. I asked if he wanted to be waked up if the USSR invaded, and he said yes. To get some feel for U.S. policy, I asked if we should wake him if the Soviet forces were invited in and went in peacefully. Much to my surprise, he said "No." That was the first indication I had of U.S. policy. It told me we would not move militarily to prevent Soviet reoccupation of the Czechs and suppression of the "Prague Spring." We would not risk U.S.-Soviet combat in Czechoslovakia. The danger, then, was that in a Soviet armed attack on the Czechs some Soviet units might overrun the NATO border (Germany) in hot pursuit. Nothing happened that night.

It must have been on the next day that we discovered that the U.S. 7th Army had a large war game exercise scheduled that summer for the German-Czech border, and had already begun preparations for it on the ground. All we needed was for some lost Soviet unit, or one chasing and even shooting at fleeing Czechs, to blunder into the middle of the 7th army at war games. An urgent cable canceling the exercise went from State and Defense, followed by others to NATO, and for consultation with NATO governments. As I recall, all western military units were also quickly drawn back from any normal stations at or near the border, leaving a tripwire of German forest rangers, equivalents of U.S. game wardens, probably unarmed, to intercept incursions and direct them back. Brave men. Doubtless more serious preparations were made further back. So far as I know, no incursions actually occurred. My belief at the time, and still is, that the Soviets were well aware of these western withdrawals to avoid conflict, and may have been encouraged to invade. Clearly they signalled no NATO military measures to deter invasion, and a diminished risk of conflict by accident. But with cohesion and control of East Europe, and even of the Soviet Union itself, at stake, the Soviets would have invaded whenever that became necessary to suppress the "Prague Spring." Our measures made little if any difference, except prudently to reduce the risk of accidental war in Europe.

The 24-hour Task Force went on, monitoring developments, distributing information, clearing messages and initiating some, briefing officials, and compiling a loose leaf 'contingency' book for use in the event of Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. It contained general guidance, documents recording actions already taken, draft action messages to be sent, and draft statements and releases to the press. Two copies of that book were made

available to the Executive Secretariat (the Office serving the Secretary and his immediate subordinates), and I kept one reserve copy in my safe in SOV. The operation became routine, and my presence in the Center was no longer needed, so I returned to SOV.

By that summer of 1968 I had been held on assignments in the Department for eight consecutive years, three years over the limit for FSOs. I already had my next assignment, which was to the Department's Senior Training Program. To get me out of Washington it was to be at the Canadian National Defence [sic] College, starting in early September. I bad farewell to SOV late in July and went on leave to my farm in New Hampshire.

Morning, August 21, 1968, found me on my tractor mowing the lower field, at some distance from the house, when I saw my wife on the porch frantically waving to me to come. When I got there she told me the Department was trying to reach me urgently, and gave me a number to call. It was the Executive Secretariat. The Soviets were invading Czechoslovakia and they couldn't find their copies of the 'contingency' book. I told them to look in the bottom drawer of my SOV safe, my secretary had the combination, and went back to mowing. And I knew that there would be no announcement and no negotiations of a freeze on ICBM deployment for a long time.

CHAPTER 12: THE CANADIAN NATIONAL DEFENCE COLLEGE

Q: Okay Vlad, pick up with your assignment to the CNDC, your penultimate assignment. Describe the Program a bit to sort of set the stage.

TOUMANOFF: The Department's Senior Training Program was a kind of brain stretching exercise for selected Foreign Service Officers who had moved up in the Service through an area or functional specialty and reached senior enough rank, typically about FSO-3 or 2, that their next assignment would be broadly supervisory rather than necessarily in their previous specialty. It was designed to broaden their horizons to prepare them for truly global availability and managerial responsibility. Most of them went to the U.S. National War College for a flag rank program.

One each year was sent to the Canadian National Defence College (CNDC) and one to the British Imperial War College. One Army, Navy and Air Force Officer, typically a senior Colonel or Brigadier General, also went to each of those two foreign institutions. In exchange, their counterparts from the UK and Canada went to the U.S. National War College. The balance of my class at the CNDC were twenty five Canadians, senior military officers and civil servants, plus two businessmen. The programs ran for an academic year or a bit more; at the CNDC from early September through June. These were unique and preferred assignments in the Foreign Service. I'm afraid that entire program has been dropped by Canada for reasons of economy, and may have also been dropped by the British. It would be a pity, as they offered rare opportunities for broad learning.

The Canadian program consisted of an intense 4 to 6 week study of a region, followed by a visit, and a post-visit review. We began with Canada, and visited every Province and

the Northwest Territories; then the U.S./UN; Mexico and South America; Africa; the Middle East; and finally Europe. We missed a visit to the Far East for lack of time. On the visits the CNDC had two advantages: The group was small, just 29 of us led by the Commandant, a General; and it was *Canadian* which meant none of the political problems a U.S., or even UK, military visit would have posed for both hosts and guests. As a consequence we enjoyed remarkable access to countries and within countries, as well as candor in discussions. Let me give you a few examples.

Nyrere and Tanzania

We landed in Tanzania when Julius Nyrere was President, and when we arrived there was an invitation to meet with him. We all assumed that this would be just a protocol courtesy call, he'd welcome us to his country and turn us over to somebody else. We met at his home. He did welcome us expressing pleasure at our visit. The Commandant of the College made a little speech about how pleased we were to be there, and we thought that would be the end of it. Instead, he said, "Well, now, you've come here because you'd like to know something about Tanzania, and let's go out on the back porch where we can be comfortable, and talk." So we all went out to his back porch overlooking his garden, and, alone, he sat down with us, some seated, some leaning against the porch bannister. When we were settled, so informally he said, "All right, here we are. What would you like to know?" We were all somewhat taken aback by this and didn't know how seriously to take it. There was a silent pause. I knew Nyrere was a Rhodes Scholar, spoke perfect English, and had on his hands a very difficult nation, which had been tribal until very recently - perhaps still was. I decided to take the bit in my teeth. Here was an open invitation not to be wasted.

Q: Actually two countries.

TOUMANOFF: You're right. Actually two countries, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. And he was trying to build a unified state. So I introduced myself giving my full - obviously Russian - name, explained that I was an American FSO, there not as a diplomat, not representing the United States Government, but as a student like the rest of the class, but what I was about to ask he should not ascribe to any Canadians or the College, it was unprepared, all my own, a very individual, personal question. (By this time my Canadians were looking for an exit!) I thanked him for the opportunity, and then said, "I have been in my career something of a specialist on the Soviet Union, and I have come to understand profoundly the disadvantages of a one-party political system. Mr. President, you have a one-party system. Why?"

Well, he hadn't been asked a question like that by visitors for some time, and he relished it. He thanked me for getting right to the heart of the matter, one of the most important issues of his rule, and he explained about tribalism, how long it had prevailed and how recently. He explained that if he had multiple parties, they would be tribal parties and they would not be political parties in any sophisticated sense that Westerners would recognize. His ministers were all tribal chieftains, and had recently emerged from days when they were all at war with each other. They would revert to tribalism. His greatest

task was to build a nation, a consciousness of something greater than tribes, loyalty to it and dedication to its creation and common welfare. His one party was the main instrument for that development. But the entity, Tanzania, was still so fragile that given multiple parties it would fragment and sink back into that primitive and savage earlier state. He said, "You will be talking to our ministers. Watch them and listen carefully. You will see that they all still have their tribal loyalties and their dislikes and their remaining hostilities and their suspicions.

I am trying to create the concept in their minds, and in this entire society, of a nation which reconciles these differences, provides instrumentalities for solutions of their differences, and for pursuit of the common good. That is why I have one party. It is an instrument of nation-building." He went on to say that fortunately the present problem was not that a dictatorship would develop, but the emergence of what was already nicknamed the "Wabenzi" Party. He explained that many tribal names began with the syllable 'Wa' and ended in 'i.' The Wabenzi being the tribe of 'benzis' that is - Mercedes Benzes. It was still small in numbers and relatively clean of corruption or favoritism. For the most part it was the product of incipient prosperity and he viewed it as perhaps an encouraging evolution of a higher loyalty to modern economic development instead of to warfare and slavery in zero sum tribal struggles for survival. Prosperity does not come in the modern world to tribes at war. But he was conscious of the danger of corruption and the potential cleavage of society into the haves and have-nots.

Q: There's a candid explanation.

TOUMANOFF: Well, I'd never heard anything like that, and neither had my Canadian classmates. Perhaps the Brits had, they had more experience with tribalism. But as one looks at the murderous warfare that has emerged in other parts of post-colonial Africa since Nyerere spoke, he seems justified. In any case, that started us.

From politics we went to economics, and Nyrere gave us an example of the difficulties of Western aid. The Western world was generous to Tanzania. Many specialists came to study and recommend economic programs. In the field of agriculture, to move from one based on something like subsistence family plots, to an export industry they recommended fibre hemp, which could be raised on an industrial scale. With considerable disruption of traditional ways, anguish and travail in the countryside, and much cost, the program was introduced widely. Shortly after, Dupont invented nylon, and the bottom dropped out of the market. That was as much a political as an economic setback to his national goals.

Q: And not the only case in the world.

TOUMANOFF: Some two hours later we were still at it. His staff had come in several times to remind him of other engagements only to be brushed off. Finally they became desperately insistent and pleaded with that he was sorely needed for other pressing matters. He relented and reluctantly bad us farewell, urging us not to be shy with our questions to ministers and others, and to observe carefully, especially their relations with

each other and how they spoke of their respective areas of responsibility. He really was desperately needed in that dual nation, and he ran it, and he led it, and he resolved many of its deep differences.

Q: And the nation grew.

Ethiopia. Cyprus, Yugoslavia

TOUMANOFF: A few more illustrations of the CNDC course.

In Ethiopia we were struck by the ritualized, almost Eastern ceremonial chasm between Haile Selassie, the Emperor, and the population at large, not just in Addis Ababa but reaching out into the country. A quick example. Miles out of the Capitol our bus pulled over, stopped on the shoulder of the road and we were all ordered to stand, stooped over in it, until an oncoming motorcade passed by. Asked what that was about we were told it was the Emperor. We were guests of the Army, and among its senior officers the Emperor was spoken of in hushed, adulatory tones, as though even discussing him was somehow disrespectful. For the rest, they were a raucous, tough bunch. I can't help thinking that the distance between Haile Selassie and the rest of the society contributed much, and maybe decisively, to his overthrow a few years later. Of course, abject poverty and backwardness was everywhere.

On Cyprus, first we listened to two impassioned tirades, one each by Bishop Makarios and the Turkish leader (Denktash was it?) each against the other, reflecting a present irreconcilability and a centuries-old mutual hatred bred in oppression and massacre. We were then flown by helicopter to a Canadian-manned UN observer camp in a cleft between two hills. As we landed at the helipad we were warned to crouch and keep our heads down as we scuttled along a short trail through trees and brush to the camp site. The Greeks and Turks on the two opposing hilltops were exchanging rifle and machine gun fire over the heads of the observers. That, we were told, was usual, unpredictable in timing but occurred on more days than not. Occasionally, and seemingly coincident with the state of play at the UN, the bullets from one side or the other flew uncomfortably low over the heads of the Canadians. There had been no casualties yet, but they joked about these reminders of their vulnerability, not to say ineffectiveness. We joked about our calculated welcome, and left early.

In Belgrade an invitation to dinner awaited me from the Chief of the American Desk at the Foreign Ministry, the former chief of intelligence at the Yugoslav Embassy in Washington who used to drop in on me when I was in SOV (the Soviet Desk). He was generous in his hospitality. We dined together at a fine restaurant and later went to his home. He described Yugoslavia for me, its problems, its goals and policies, and his own hopes and fears for its future. It was, I think, remarkably candid, as though he had waited for years to unburden himself, free at last of the tight restrictions under which he had lived and worked for years. Among the more interesting topics he covered in detail was why, after the break with the USSR it took so many years, some ten or more, to turn around the entire military apparatus from pointing West and thinking and planning

against the West as the enemy, to pointing East, against the USSR. That painful, almost cultural reversal, had taken forever, in spite of the obvious lessons of Soviet conquest, occupation and suppression in eastern Europe, including re-invasion and suppression of Hungary in 1956. Serbian affinity for Russia continues today.

In Bogota (Colombia) we heard passionate, and differing, accounts of the *La Violencia*, the brutal political strife that tore the country apart for a decade, and of the residual problems and hostilities. Again we were hearing the seeds of present day conflict.

Well, that's the kind of experience we had.

Q: And that is, again, an illustration of the Canadian posture in the world.

TOUMANOFF: Yes. They are certainly unthreatening, and have a reputation for unbiased, good works in the interests of peace. They wear white hats, and are welcomed. The CNDC benefitted directly even though it was a military institution. Among other things, it provided a wonderful political shelter for its four Americans and four British members. Were we part of a British, let alone an American, military institution, a U.S. "War College" for instance, we would have been a political problem for almost any host country, some would have declined us, and the access and candor we enjoyed would have been impossible. As it was, everywhere we went we spoke not only with government officials but with a wide variety of others including journalists, educators, businessmen, opposition figures, and diplomats from other countries.

Q: And Canada has had lots of practice at peacekeeping and negotiating as a disinterested, or at least trustworthy mediator.

TOUMANOFF: They're also respected as a highly successful, highly developed, advanced, cultured democracy.

Q: That's right. They've proved it. All right, now you're going to take all that to Canada, to the U.S. Embassy, your next, and as it turned out, last assignment?

CHAPTER 13: CANADA, TRUDEAU AND THE FLQ

TOUMANOFF: Yes, at the end of this wonderful brain-stretching exercise, I was posted to the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, Canada, in the Autumn of 1969 as the Embassy Counselor for Political Affairs. It was a logical enough assignment as I had been immersed in Canada, so to speak, for almost a year. But it was decidedly out of my Soviet area field of experience, knowledge and interest.

Q: And you were there how long?

TOUMANOFF: I was there until 1973, April 30, to be precise.

Q: The normal two- to four-year tour.

TOUMANOFF: Actually, it was a slightly extended 3-year tour, but we can get to that at the end, if you are interested.

One thinks of Canada as a stable, somewhat staid society. Such, emphatically, was not the case during my tour. Three elements coincided to produce turmoil.

One was Pierre Elliot Trudeau, the "J. F. K. of Canada" newly Prime Minister, young, energetic, glamorous, brilliant, charismatic, eloquent in both national languages, but with an attitude toward the United States of an arrogant French intellectual aristocrat. In a word, scornful dislike. Be it said we were not all that likeable - in the midst of the Vietnam war, with Nixon as President, and almost absent-mindedly an overwhelming cultural, economic, political and demographic threat to the sanctity of Canada - 20 million people spaced out like small beads on a long thread along the border of 235 million Americans, a megastate by every measure.

Another was an alienated French Québec so resentful of real and imagined oppression and injury at the hands of English-speaking Canada as to be on the verge of secession, with an impact something like having the Mississippi watershed secede from the United States, with no common language.

And finally, a burgeoning Canadian nationalism, anti-American and anti-Québec in the English provinces, and assertively anti-Anglo and pro-independence in Québec. The alienation of the French Québecois was so intense it had already spawning the terrorist FLQ the *Force Liberation Québecoise*, loosely but accurately translated as the Québec Freedom Fighters, which had started blowing up mailboxes with sticks of dynamite by the time I came to the Embassy. The pro-independence political party, which disowned the FLQ, was the Parti Québecois. It had a near majority vote in the Province and had provoked a constitutional crisis.

Trudeau's imperative task was to combat Québec separatism and preserve the unity of Canada. To that end he pursued a three-fold program: to stimulate Canadian patriotism/nationalism; to portray the United States as an ugly, aggressive giant constantly threatening to overwhelm Canada; and to assuage and accommodate Québec as a treasured and protected unique component of Canada. His calculation was:-

1) To generate in English Canada a combination of ardent Canadian nationalism and fear of U.S. takeover in the event of Québec secession. An independent Québec would have broken English Canada into two small, very different clusters of provinces separated by a French nation; an Atlantic maritime cluster, and a western remnant, each with starkly smaller populations and economies, and each much less able to withstand absorption by the U.S., perhaps piecemeal, province by province. Thus Trudeau would move English Canada to be more sensitive and accommodating to Québec, and the Québecois to forgo secession in order to preserve their own precious Canadian identity and escape the ugly American.

2) To persuade French Québec that independence would leave them isolated and surrounded by a resentful and vengeful English Canada and a giant America, a tiny French island of barely 4 million in a gigantic sea of 250 million Anglos. What chance had they of preserving their French culture from being overwhelmed and expunged. Better to stay in a caring and accommodating Canada.

Q: Real nationalism.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, and it included, and required, an anti-American spasm. Remember, most Canadians liked, respected and admired America. They had relatives, they shopped, traded, vacationed, many spent entire winters in Florida and the South. A fair number actually thought joining the U.S. might not be such a bad thing, probably bring greater prosperity. Get rid of those pesky Québecers and join the U.S., some thought, especially in British Columbia, which had its own small independence movement.

Trudeau had to alienate that affection and attraction to save the nation. He went at it with a will, partly as he shared neither the affection nor attraction. In large part he succeeded. Let me illustrate. First of all, he was the epitome of the vibrant, new, glamorous and exciting Canada, the J.F.K. of the north, after we killed ours, as well as his killer (Canadian version). While the U.S. was mired in Vietnam and domestic turmoil. Our cities were burning, our students revolting, fighting with police and National Guard, even being shot. Our President distrusted, neurotic, and vilified by the press. Trudeau did not disguise his disdain. His speeches, and those of his Officials and ruling Party leaders were critical and eloquent in contrasting our warts with beneficent Canada. The Canadian press occasionally reminded me of Pravda and Izvestia in its caustic coverage of the U.S. The Trudeau Government pursued a demonstratively divergent foreign policy. It became counter-productive for us to call on the Foreign Ministry ("External Affairs" in Canada) to seek support for a U.S. position. If they did, the inevitable question in Parliament would be "Has the U.S. made any representation to this Government to that end?" And if the answer was "Yes" the Government lost votes across the nation. Canada continued to accept and harbor American draft dodgers, even deserters. American faculty were gradually being dismissed by Canadian colleges and universities. Entry and distribution of American news magazines and other publications were obstructed. Protesters picketed the Embassy and Consulates.

Finally, the anti-U.S. posture became so marked that the opposition Party, the Conservative, introduced a resolution in Parliament condemning the Government for its anti-Americanism which, had it passed would have been the same as a "no-confidence" vote, and the Trudeau Government would have fallen. He countered, adeptly, by announcing a visit by President Nixon, his first out of the U.S.. The resolution got nowhere. The visit took place with the usual U.S. hype, although official Canadian reception was proper but measured. My conviction was that Mr. Nixon needed that visit to boost his standing at home, where Canada and Trudeau were popular. But the truer measure was a scribble by Henry Kissinger found after a session of the two leaders. It read "Trudeau S.O.B." It leaked to the Canadian press but was suppressed. Trudeau went to visit China before, as I recall, his return visit to the U.S.

At the same time he was strikingly accommodating to Québec and was forcing English Canada in that direction. He visited his native Province often giving rousing speeches in fluent French. He engineered constitutional changes, economic aid, and even went so far as to require present civil servants to learn and demonstrate fluency in French as a qualification for promotion and retention, as well as requiring French of new applicants for employment. In the end he successfully defeated Québec separatism, but it was a near thing.

Q: Now there are two target areas here you pointed out. One is the actual terrorism, danger, threat to American embassy people or Americans in general. And then there is the psychological battle, if you will. How did you fight these two principal battles?

TOUMANOFF: Let me come to the terrorism later.

We didn't fight the nationalism, although Washington did defend U.S. interests against some of the discriminatory economic measures such as obstruction of U.S. publications. But those were technical legal issues taken up in established trade treaty institutions, which, incidentally were seemingly always engaged in one or another U.S.-Canadian trade question. We were each other's major trading partners. They drew little if any public attention. The publications obstruction was unpopular among Canadians and eventually died quietly for the most part.

But the Embassy, every Consulate and all other American Government offices in Canada, and the U.S. Government as a whole, consistently and successfully stayed out of the Québec separatism fray. Whenever asked for an opinion, and there was much legitimate curiosity, as well as intentional provocation, the standard and uniform answer was that this was a Canadian matter, and we had no comment on it whatsoever. Public America is, of course, irrepressible. Every talking head and writing pundit had a field day. The resulting chaos of comment provided Canadians with whatever answer they might want to praise or blame, and, by contrast with our habitual ignorance and inattention, lots of satisfyingly prominent coverage.

As for the anti-Americanism, we made believe it didn't exist, and it was not a topic Canadians felt comfortable to raise with us. Besides, there was the Nixon visit's public face to hide behind.

Q: That was wise, they would have been in a fighting mood, and they couldn't fight if there wasn't an enemy. That 'No Comment' about Québec hasn't changed by so much as a comma ever since.

Terror, Canadian Style

TOUMANOFF: Now about terrorism and the *Force Liberation Québecoise* (FLQ). I'd call them Québec Freedom Fighters, which is how they thought of themselves. That group and their terrorist activities have been well documented since, but there are a few

things that may have been missed and may not be readily available in various archives. I'll try to stick to those and make it brief.

By the time I arrived to take up my duties at the Embassy in Ottawa, which was about September of 1969, the FLQ was planting bombs, fuzed dynamite sticks as I recall, in public mailboxes in Québec and blowing them up. Then came the worst.

A Volkswagen in Montreal ran a red light, was flagged down by the police, the driver jumped out and ran, escaping. In the car the police found a stack of FLQ posters proclaiming that they had kidnapped the American Consul General in Montreal and were holding him hostage. Their demands were something along the lines of immunity from arrest, publication and broadcast of their manifesto, and I think resignation of the Provincial government and a plebiscite on Québec independence. They were a bit premature as they had not yet kidnapped the Consul General, and counter-measures were immediately taken. The Embassy and all our 12 Consulates across Canada were notified, heavy police guards provided, and the news of the FLQ plot widely publicized. The FLQ, realizing they had lost their chance at an American, moved quickly and promptly seized a British equivalent, I think the British Trade Commissioner in Montreal. Their demands were rejected and an intense hunt began. However, not long after, the FLQ managed to capture a prominent member of the Québec Government, a Provincial Minister if my memory serves. Him they held in a Montreal house, tortured, and ultimately killed, evidently in his attempt to escape. They fled the house, and vanished. Some weeks later, they were caught in an outlying farmhouse. The Britisher was rescued unharmed, They were tried and jailed, probably for life. Their life in prison, I imagine, was not pleasant, but they and the FLQ dropped out of public sight. They had also greatly harmed their cause.

Q: And discredited it totally.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, it was too savage for the Canadian culture.

Q: Including the Québecois?

TOUMANOFF: Too savage, even for *Québécois* secessionists. This was simply beyond the pale. I think there were very few, just a handful of these radical madmen prepared to act that way. You were in Montreal later as Consul General for four years. I don't think the FLQ functions any longer, does it?

Q: Well, they do in telling old stories, but not these kinds of stories, because those terrorists were immediately discredited.

TOUMANOFF: No activism now?

Q: No, none whatsoever, except perhaps a bit of "old times" talk.

TOUMANOFF: That episode in Montreal affected the Embassy and our Consulates

General, so let me turn to that now. There was, of course very close contact between the Embassy and the Canadian police, that is the Mounties, the RCMP. But it went through a liaison group in the Embassy for systematic contact with the Canadian Government on security matters. I got involved only once. The Canadian Government had asked all Canadian print and broadcast organizations to refrain from reporting any manifestoes or other statements from the FLQ. I happened to know that a radio station in northern New Hampshire or Vermont broadcast programs in French to the large French Canadian populations in those two states, and to the Québcois across the border. So I alerted our liaison people to have the U.S. Government request that station, and any others broadcasting in French, also to refrain from carrying FLQ statements until the Canadian media did, and we told the Canadians we had done so.

After that FLQ kidnapping poster the Department had to try to address the whole question of terrorism in Canada directed against the Embassy, the Consulates General, and Americans at large. I'll not get into that larger picture, that's for archive study. Individually, we all knew we were targeted. Measures, now familiar, but then quite novel, were instituted. Guards were posted at the buildings and the residences of the Ambassador and Consuls General. For fear of a letter bomb we were told not to open our mail at home unless we either recognized the handwriting or we were otherwise absolutely confident that it was a legitimate piece of mail. If not, we were told not to open it, to touch it as little as possible, and to call the police.

Q: Security-or Canadian.

TOUMANOFF: The Canadian federal police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the "Mounties," and we were given an emergency 24-hour telephone number which all family members had to carry with them at all times.

Q: Who are responsible under diplomatic tradition for diplomatic and consular safety in Canada.

TOUMANOFF: Right. In fact, we were given a whole lot of precautions and advice, well intended but by and large pretty useless. We were to vary your route from home to and from the Embassy, as well as shopping and any other habitual movements like dog walking. Call taxis, vary our hours, not walk alone, look both ways every time we stepped out of your house, keep the house doors always bolted and locked, always set our home alarm system if we had one, or perhaps get one. Keep someone informed of our whereabouts and expected time of return. Travel by daylight and in company as much as possible, etc.

Q: Did you? Did we get security alarms?

TOUMANOFF: No. That is, not at Government expense. I installed one after our house had been burgled and set afire, fortunately quickly put out. It was a silent alarm direct to the police. It was tripped late one night by a thunder storm. They came, forced the front door, stepped over our soundly sleeping dog (he was a bit deaf), and we woke up with

their flashlights in our eyes. But that's a different story. Had nothing to do with terrorism.

Q: Total security.

TOUMANOFF: Well, total of a sort. Anyway, the advice was really almost impossible to follow, and even if followed, unavailing. Like so many others in the Foreign Service now at risk, the fact is that anybody determined to capture you could easily find a pretty sure way of doing it. To fail they would have to either make a mistake, or be unlucky. As a practical matter the safest place is in jail, which I fear some of our Embassies are beginning to resemble.

Q: Or shoot you, if that's their objective.

TOUMANOFF. Yes, or shoot you. If that's their objective its even easier. We were very careful with the mail, and reasonably so within practical limits in our movements. But we decided not to tell our children unless orders came to evacuate unessential spouses and children. Such orders never did, and no attempt against us or consular personnel took place that I ever heard of. I think the RCMP would have informed us of any attempt they might have learned of.

But the Embassy received a couple of bomb scares in the next few months, notice by phone that a bomb had been planted in the building. We would all scramble out and stand around while the police searched the place. They never found anything and nothing ever exploded. But it did take a long time and disrupt things some. It also reminded us not to get sloppy.

Q: Lovely targets, standing around.

TOUMANOFF: It also made you feel, as you said, Bill, quite vulnerable, because the entire staff of the Embassy would move out some distance, and gather on the grounds of Parliament across the street.

Q: Very nice open area.

TOUMANOFF: Well, yes. A great big open area with lots of access. But that was the center of Government with the Parliament and Government Ministries on three sides, with police always stationed and on patrol, in addition to the ones who responded to the bomb threat.

Q: You may be pleased to know that those are the same instructions we received in Beirut, and we went outside and stood outside the embassy in Beirut. So at least we're consistent.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, well, yes. But the fact is that there isn't any conceivable way I can think of to have an embassy continue to function and be secure at the same time, unless you plant it behind high walls in the middle of 20 acres of open land. Anyway, very

quickly, when you're faced with it in practice, you discover that if somebody wants to kidnap you or shoot you, they're going to do it.

Q: Yes, and that's really the message to get across. Just be careful. Do the following things that might help. Don't make it any easier.

TOUMANOFF: You can, presumably, protect an embassy from being bombed from the inside. You can't really protect an embassy from having some mortar rounds aimed at it or some shoulder launched rocket grenades to be launched at it, or get shot up by a gun. Even in Moscow some character stopped his car, unloaded an AK-47, shot up the embassy, and got away. No one was injured.

Q: Any more stories about Canada that you want to tell?

DeGaulle Interferes

TOUMANOFF: It is another one on Québec separatism, which is doubtless buried in detail in archives, but may be worth mentioning as a reminder. It illustrates the sensitivity of that issue for Trudeau, its international reach, something of the Québecois illusions, and the weight of Canada on a global scale.

The central issue for the separatists was an historic and very present threat to the survival of their French language and culture, from English Canada by both intention and disregard, and from the U.S. by its colossal influence in every sphere. They consequently turned, eagerly, to France as their mother country, for practical support and emotional sustenance. The French response was modest, lukewarm, nothing like the passionate embrace they sought. The French were friendly and recognized historic ties, but seemed somehow preoccupied with other matters, which, of course, they were.

Québec sought a visit by de Gaulle, the President of France. After some delay, Trudeau evidently decided it was better to invite de Gaulle on a state visit than to delay indefinitely and inflame the issue to a separatist battle cry. De Gaulle accepted, landed in Montreal to a wild, hero's welcome, and stayed, instead of going on promptly to Ottawa, the Capital, as protocol would require. Worse, his public statements increasingly celebrated the ties between Québec and France, until in a public address from the Mayor of Montreal's balcony to the cheering crowd below he ended a real stem-winder with the cry "Vive La Québec Libre!" - Long Live Free Québec - the separatist and FLQ rallying cry. The Trudeau Government promptly invited him to leave Canada, which he did.

I read that several ways. In the first place it was a shocking provocation to all the rest of Canada. Secondly, de Gaulle must have known the economic damage separatism was already causing Québec as capital fled and investment faltered. He also must have known that his act would accelerate that damage. Moreover, he had no intention or even capability to provide compensatory support. It was a wanton act of destruction and as such a profound insult to Canada as a measure of how little importance he ascribed to that nation. The episode was also symptomatic of the illusion, more accurately the delusion

prevalent in French Québec that France would somehow be the savior of their culture and shield them from their anxieties.

Q: I find it particularly interesting, and I think it's almost the root of the problem, is the way Canada was founded by two father/mother countries - France and England - and all through its history these two different cultures have been vying with each other in many ways, and one losing.

TOUMANOFF: And fought a war about it.

Q: Yes, that too. And the arrogance of the victorious British colonials, and the opposite French arrogance in complaining about the Anglo presence and activities. That to me is pretty much the underpinning of the separatism. In a sense the Québecois won. In fairly short order they got what they wanted, respect if not honor, dignity, and more elbow room to run their own affairs within the confederation, including more equal terms to compete with the Anglos. Now, can you give us your views from that perspective because I think that's very important to the nationalism of Canada and their survivability as a nation?

TOUMANOFF: Bill, I think all you say is true, but it would take a book to describe the gains and losses of the separatist spasm. Their successes came at a price, one of which is that assertive Frenchness still retards their material prosperity. It is a modest economic handicap. Probably willingly paid.

But I had a somewhat different take, and it's not limited to Québec, or Canada. But I'd put Québec into the following context. It seemed to me even then that the speed of change in the context of human life was increasingly disorienting people. Put another, narrower way, scientific and technological development and application, for example, was out of societal control and accelerating. Not just their subject matter, but especially their effects on peoples' lives were outstripping common comprehension, as well as the institutions societies had created for some sort of orderly governance of our lives. In noble, and sometimes ignoble, efforts somehow to manage we were creating civilizations too complex for anyone to understand. The forces determining the daily fate of individuals, and of ever growing masses, seem gargantuan, infinitely beyond our capacity to influence, or even anticipate. The result is not conducive to global mental health. Much follows from that aspect of our reality, some of it is about Canada.

It is easy to generate anti-Americanism. We are the origin and engine, not to say main if selective beneficiary and common victim, of most of those forces. How else could Trudeau succeed when Canada's evident prosperity in every realm (perhaps excepting weather) is a product of the United States?

I judged, and still do, that the real forces loose in our world are of such potency, and accelerating, that short of a raging civil war which seemed most unlikely, whether Québec seceded or it didn't secede was not going to govern the welfare of the Québécois, or the Canadians, or the United States: That separatism might be interesting, but didn't

really matter very much. Now that would have been the wrong thing to say out loud in Canada.

Q: You couldn't say that. Only the opposite, and that too, would have been a mistake. Now I see what you meant by "no comment."

TOUMANOFF: Bill, I was very conscious of the obstacles which Canadian nationalism, and anti-Americanism to the extent it existed, placed in the way of smooth resolution of lots of relatively small problems, and a few relatively big ones involving more than just the U.S. and Canada. But once again, the power of wealth, the power of economics, the power of the totally permeable boundary-

Q: And peace between us.

TOUMANOFF: Yes, and peace between us, and the wisdom of the United States in, for goodness' sake, not taking sides on any of those internal French/Anglo issues, and Trudeau's French sense of scorn and superiority and the Québecois arrogance about Anglo-Saxon and American culture being part of that whole picture - it still struck me that other forces, not government control, were going to command the destiny of that nation, our own nation, and the world at large. And it seems to me that that's happening ever more.

Q. *Vlad, that was your last assignment in the Foreign Service wasn't it?*

TOUMANOFF: Yes. I took early retirement from Ottawa and headed home.

Q: Why did you retire?

TOUMANOFF: Well, it was quite a unique, personal case, nothing to do with the Service as such. First of all, it was an option we all had as FSOs. Something like military Officers. After a certain number of years of service, I think twenty, we could take early retirement at a reduced annuity any time after reaching age 50. At that point a number of circumstances coincided. You remember, I joined the Service in the first place specifically because I wanted to work in the field of U.S. relations with the USSR, not because I wanted a general Foreign Service career. Several obstacles loomed up on that score. The main one was that I was senior enough that a next assignment to Moscow would likely have been as Chief of Chancery, or even Deputy Chief of Mission, too senior for an Officer of recent Russian ancestry. Recall Ambassador Muccio's dictum that he had never been assigned to Italy, having Italian ancestry, and never expected to - and that I should bear that in mind about future assignments in the Soviet Union. That would be especially true now that the Soviets knew me to be the son of a titled Russian Imperial Guard Colonel who fought effectively in the White Armies in the Civil War and escaped with a price on his head. Moreover, the Soviets also knew about my parents' anti-Soviet activities in the United States. In addition there was the Siberian mushroom picker's incident and Soviet press accusations that I was an agent of the CIA. My chances of assignment to Moscow were, properly, slim at best. It was also too soon, after eight years

in the Department, for another tour there. Such an appointment in the field of my interest would have meant dealing with the Soviet Embassy and visitors, and the political obstacles would have been the same. My senior training in Canada and assignment there were out-of-area and looked to be predictive of the future.

I had a badly neglected farm in New Hampshire that needed attention, close to relatives on both sides, and not far from Boston where both our children were in college - Harvard and the Museum School. It would likely be the last opportunity for us, for them, and the extended family to be together. Besides, Harvard offered me an appointment with the Russian Research Center. As it turned out, that led to a 25-year academic career in the Soviet and East European field. I think I probably made the right choice.

Bill, I think we're finished. Let's pause, think if there's anything we've forgotten, and if not, that'll be that.

Q: If not, I'll conclude this by saying how much the Association appreciates your giving of your time. We have some marvelous first-hand accounts of you as a Foreign Service Officer involved in real issues, not made-up issues, and ones in some cases rather dramatic, and I thank you very much on behalf of the Association. If we don't add something to this. We'll pause.

TOUMANOFF: I should add my own pleasure at having had an opportunity to do it, and my thanks to you for taking your time and your patience to listen to me babble on and on and on without saying, "All right, Vlad, that's altogether too much, not just enough."

Q: Thank you, Vlad.

End of Interview