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AUGUST 2007

## **NEWSLETTER III**

By John Ritter

It's 30 days before the plane to Russia and in 40 I will be meeting Russian law students and starting my lectures on the American legal system. I'm feeling a responsibility to teach them how America has learned to control our leaders, military, and police, from President Nixon to Sergeant Cally to the New York Police Department. Russia has at least a 300 year history of being unable to stop its leaders from unnecessary, jailing, spending, and executing.

More important now that Russia is rich with oil money, is my responsibility to show them how American free enterprise spreads money around the country and the population rather than concentrating it in governments and big corporations. Yes, we have our Exxons with \$400 million retirement bonuses and enormous oil spills unpaid for like the Exxon Valdez, but we have thousands of individuals and small businesses that own and profit from gasoline stations. For every gallon of gasoline sold we have a federal gasoline tax which goes to build our modern nationwide interstate highway system and keep it in repair. For every car accident we have an insurance industry to keep agents, adjusters, and auto body shops thriving while the insurance companies keep thousands of trial lawyers for the insured and insurance companies busy and wealthy.

American capitalism has managed to spread the enormous wealth of the U.S. around this large country and into the hands and bank accounts of thousands of hardworking small business persons, lawyers, service and industrial companies.

American law, lawyers, and judges have been instrumental in keeping American government and wealth under control and spread throughout the nation and population. My job will be to explain to future Russian lawyers how we do it and to give them ideas they can apply and use in the different circumstances of Russia.

I also feel a large responsibility to educate myself and my fellow Americans – lawyers and non-lawyers – about what the Russians believe about the U.S. Why do we tolerate President Bush and why are we letting him build missile sites in Eastern Europe when the Cold War is over? Why aren't we cooperative with Russia against our common enemy – Muslim terrorists and extremists? Americans need to see that Russian democracy and capitalism are new but will not look to the model of America if we do not do a better job today of changing policies that are not working and controlling our President and military. In short, we need to use the advantages of democracy to improve our government and international relations or we will no longer be studied and imitated by other nations.