



**JohnARitter.com**

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## **NEWSLETTER II**

By John Ritter

I was one of fifty American and Canadian lawyers who gathered in February and March to prepare for teaching Anglo-American law in former communist countries. Sponsored by the Center for International Legal Studies, we met in Salzburg, Austria to hear Hungarian, Russian, and Czech professors and lawyers advise us on how to teach the American legal system, and how not to be Ugly Americans.

After one week in Austria, the challenges seemed harder than I had thought: Russian law students are college students aged 19-23, and not graduate students as in the U.S.

They are not used to being questioned in class about assigned readings or engaging in what American law professors call “Socratic dialogue”. They usually receive oral examinations and if exams are written, they discuss the questions with neighboring students. I will report after I am in Petrozavodsk teaching Russian law students to describe my actual experience. The teaching is in English because most Russians learn English as a second language.

I have just written and released my 4<sup>th</sup> book in the You Be The Judge series of court case summaries. This one is in both Russian and English because I plan to use the book to assist in teaching the American Legal System to Russian law students in the fall of 2007. The book consists of shortened versions of American Appeals Court cases, which in the Anglo-American common law system serve as the source of law for future cases on similar issues. I will lecture to Russians on the differences between common law and civil law, which is the system the Russians are now using.