

HARRIMAN INSTITUTE
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The Reminiscences of

Robert Legvold

Columbia Center for Oral History

Columbia University

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PREFACE

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Robert Legvold conducted by Mary Marshall Clark on May 23, 2016. This interview is part of the Harriman Institute Oral History Project.

The reader is asked to bear in mind that s/he is reading a verbatim transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose.

ATC

Session #1 (audio)

Interviewee: Robert Legvold

Location: New York City, New York

Interviewer: Mary Marshall Clark

Date: May 23, 2016

Q: Okay, today is, what is the date of today? Today is May 23rd, 2016 and it's Mary Marshall Clark and Christina Pae, who I'm very glad is here, with Robert Legvold, and thank you so much for taking this time.

Legvold: My pleasure. Good project.

Q: Oh, thank you. So we just want to begin, as we always do, with a little bit about your education and your motivation for coming to Columbia [University]. We have some of that in other places, but what led initially to your interest in Russian studies, Soviet studies?

Legvold: I'm not sure what the answer to that question is. I'm a Midwesterner. I was born in Minnesota. I was raised in Minnesota and South Dakota with an interlude as a youth in Texas. My ancestry is Scandinavian, not Slavic. My parents had nothing to do with the Soviet Union professionally. But I was interested in foreign affairs. I was interested in a career in the Foreign Service, I thought, or maybe international law as an undergraduate at the University of South Dakota. And at that time and for much of my life, the Soviet Union was at the center of international politics, certainly at the center of U.S. foreign policy concerns. And the subject itself was interesting from a distance, the little that I knew about it.

So I chose a graduate school, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts [University], largely on the strength of a single individual, Marshall [D.] Shulman, who would then end up at Columbia, my predecessor at Columbia. I did that because as this rather callow and innocent youth out in South Dakota, I picked up the *New York Times* one morning, and in the *Sunday Magazine*, Shulman had written a piece that very much impressed me, and I said, “I want to study with this guy.” So I applied to a number of schools, Harvard [University] and Columbia and Stanford [University] and the others, but in the end the one that I really wanted to go to and the one that I chose was Fletcher because of Marshall. That already more or less set me on a path, because Shulman was principally concerned with the Soviet Union. That’s the work that I did, at Fletcher.

And then along the way, even though I was interested still in the Foreign Service and a career in the Foreign Service, and I took the exams to go into the Foreign Service, but then decided that really what I wanted to be was a kind of permanent student, and I could only do that one way or two ways—go back to South Dakota and Minnesota, become a farmer, sit on a tractor and read about Russian and the Soviet Union whenever I wanted, or else continue in the university world. So I did, and my first teaching assignment or first teaching opportunity was at Tufts University, where I taught the first ten years. And then Marshall had left Fletcher and Harvard to come to Columbia. He, as you know from the work you’re doing, was the longest serving director of the Russian Institute at the time, and really the architect and beneficiary that produced the Harriman Institute as its current version. And I was asked to come down, when he joined the [James E.] Carter [Jr.] administration to work with Cy [Cyrus R.] Vance, to replace him.

I left after a year, a year and a half, I think it was—to go to the Council on Foreign Relations to run the Soviet Studies Program there and did that for six years, and then was asked to come back to Columbia permanently and what I did following.

Q: Thank you for that beautiful summary. Just a few tiny questions. When you arrived at Columbia, how did he describe his philosophy, which you must have already known? But in terms of his institutional philosophy of developing the Institute, what did he ask you to do specifically?

Legvold: Well, I came in not as the director of the institute temporary, but as the assistant or associate director. I didn't have a permanent faculty appointment at Columbia at that point. And therefore, it was really to support interim leadership and the interim leadership was attempting to find its own footing in that context. But I had known Marshall as my PhD director at Fletcher. We'd become close subsequently. His outlook on the Soviet Union—how he ought to approach it in terms of U.S. foreign policy and academically—had heavily shaped the way in which I then and now think about the subject. So I knew pretty much what his basic orientation was toward the substance of the issue, and what he would want at Columbia and training teachers. And I took over the course that he had taught for many years, which was a general course on Soviet foreign policy. I'd taken that course from him at Fletcher. I knew what he was teaching at Columbia over the years, and I taught that for many years after until the Soviet Union came apart.

It then became a course on the foreign policies of the post-Soviet states, the fragments or the pieces. As far as the Institute itself was concerned, it, as you know from the history you're doing, had a long established history. It was the oldest area institute of this kind by one year, maybe two years from the Harvard Center [Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies]. And it was a going concern, although we were at that point entering a period where Marshall would play a very important role. And that is, by that period, 1977-1978, early in the Carter administration, attention to Soviet studies and to institutions like the Harriman Institute had flagged, and Marshall had grown concerned while he was in the Carter administration, that government was not very well served by the expertise that it had.

He was worried about a subsequent generation. He could see that there wasn't national support foundation, despite Title VI and Title VIII, sufficient government support for maintaining the kind of expertise that was needed and therefore when he came back—and we sensed that in the interim—when he came back there was this major effort to work with the Rockefeller Foundation, Carnegie [Corporation] and the others to essentially re-fund centers, and the Harriman Institute was one of three major centers that received funding at that point. So it was at that point, to answer your question in a kind of vague fashion, while I—when I first came down and it was under interim leadership, as I suggest a kind of forming the vague sense that we needed rejuvenation, so much of it was sort of holding the fort until we could go forward.

Q: I've read a little bit of [Stanley L.] Engerman's thinking about the crisis of the 1970s, and he wrote that the diminishment of Soviet studies was a result of many different trends. How would

you describe those trends and what do you think led to what he called “intellectual stagnation,” and do you agree that it was intellectually stagnated?

Legvold: I don't agree that it was intellectually stagnated. I think there was a kind of diffusion within both academic and policy-related research, that is the think tank world. Some of it, when I say “diffusion,” was a product of fragmentation. The academic community, not just in Russian studies or even just in area studies, but in the social sciences generally, were dividing subjects up in order to make them even more rigorous in the study of them, therefore you were no longer addressing the large questions that our predecessors had in the late '40s and the early 1950s in the major projects at Harvard and at Columbia and the generation of the mid 1950s, nobody was writing books like that, the Merle Fainsod or Zbig [Zbigniew Kazimierz] Brzezinski's on the Soviet Bloc. That in turn I think may also have partially been a function that we were now ten years beyond the Cuban Missile Crisis, which was the last major episode of confrontation.

Although at that time, I think we may have underestimated what the 1973 October War in the Middle East was all about, where the United States and the Soviet Union still could be at near loggerheads. It was also a period when we had begun arms control with the Russians: the SALT negotiation in 1969 and then by 1971-72, '72 particularly, the Nixon administration, the [Leonid Ilyich] Brezhnev leadership had begun engaging in détente. And I think there was a sense that the intensity of the competition and ferocity of the Soviet challenge was somehow behind us. So I think there was a national mood that didn't completely displace the Soviet Union, hardly so—but that did sort of weaken the preoccupation with the U.S.-Soviet relationship.

And then in addition, there was the rise of other new issues that we knew were important and going to be increasingly so: China—Nixon’s trip to China—Chinese studies began to get a boost at that point. So I think a number of things combined to contribute to what I call a kind of—I said, “diffusion through fragmentation,” but a kind of effusion of attention or preoccupation.

Q: Did the creation of the National Council for Soviet and East European Research have any impact on the field? I think that was in 1978.

Legvold: Yes. But we already had ahead, the effort by the Social Science Research Council, in which Columbia faculty had played an important part. I think that was, in a way, that was a kind of *cri de coeur* by people that cared about what was going on, not only in Soviet studies but in collateral fields. And an effort to—as a national effort—to draw attention to it, that no one center, whether it was Harvard’s or Stanford, [University of California] Berkeley or ours or so on, could deal with. But it couldn’t—it couldn’t reorient the field substantively and fundamentally alter the way in which we went about training or thinking about the field. That would have to be the product of institutions. But this was an effort to help institutions at least think together about the problem.

Q: So what led you to go to the Council on Foreign Relations [CFR]?

Legvold: Well, I had come to Columbia in a kind of parachuted way, to help cover the period while Marshall was in Washington [D.C.]. I wasn’t coming down as a principal or as a faculty member. I think there was some thought that in the longer run as Marshall, or when Marshall

approached the point of retirement that I would be somebody they would think about. But that was not immediately on the horizon, and Winston Lord had heard some things about me. He was president of the Council on Foreign Relations. He had called Marshall and said would Columbia mind if he approached me to see whether I would be willing to undertake a new Soviet studies program at the Council. Because in this period, '77-'78, it wasn't just universities that were thinking about gearing up again, because things were happening, but places like the Council on Foreign Relations. They did not have an ambitious Soviet studies program at that point.

So Winston then did get in touch with me and he said, "Would you come at least temporarily to the Council and launch this program? I know you'll go back to the universities." So we agreed to a three-year commitment. That program was funded, and it involved a number of study groups and books. I think we ended up doing six books in that series. And it was my job to organize that, recruit the people that would do it, make my own contribution to it, and run—in broadly what the Council does—working groups, study groups, that served the membership and mobilize resources, talents from around the country. It turned out that that was—it was worthwhile from my point of view, it was worthwhile from the Council's point of view, so they asked if I would renew it and so I agreed to another three-years and we carried on the work for three more years. But as that was drawing to a close, Marshall had reached the point where he was retiring and then the Columbia issue came up directly.

Q: So we have a very nice interview with you on the council, the CFR, but I'm just wondering, Christina, if you have any particular questions about CFR.

Q: Just based on your interview at CFR, we understand some of the work you did there and I'm wondering how when you—well, maybe this is, I don't know if this is a question for now, but I was curious with respect to Harriman, how the work you did at CFR may have affected the way that you ran Harriman, when you came back to Columbia.

Q: Or if you just can compare the two institutions regarding influence, but that's a great question, too.

Legvold: Well, its—in very basic way it's different. Even though I was directing a project and therefore attempting to bring people together and facilitate collaborations and directing the Harriman Institute was the same kind of thing. Directing the Harriman Institute has more of a quality of herding cats than it does of organizing collaborations.

Q: [laughs] I had the feeling you were going to say that.

Legvold: So there's a basic difference in the way in which you go about trying to encourage collaboration or facilitating the work of the people you're with. At the Council, it's much tighter because I had an agenda, and I had the ability to recruit the people I wanted to work on that agenda. In a university, you're simply trying to make things in an institute like Harriman, make things congenial and supportive for a faculty that has their own projects. At points, you do try to organize activity at the Harriman Institute that involves collaboration. That then becomes a little more like what we were doing at the Council, because it may indeed involve either mobilizing people who are there as visiting scholars or even reaching out beyond the university to bring the

right team together. But you don't, I didn't—I'm not somebody who's enthusiastic about organizing collaborative volumes. I've learned that through hard experience.

That's what I was doing at the council. At the American Academy much later, within the last twenty years, last fifteen years—again I did a project where we ended up with five collaborative volumes and even the volume that honors Marshall is a collaborative volume. So I've done a lot of that and maybe with the exception—well, the MIT Press project at the Academy was done while I was Harriman director, but that kind of collaboration, which is parallel to what was done at the Council, was essentially extracurricular, it was essentially outside the activity of the Harriman Institute or Columbia. It's what Columbia faculty do when they're doing a lot of things that are not necessarily Columbia.

But I suppose to answer your question, what I'd done at the Council and certainly had a bearing on the way in which I thought about and went about the academy project with the five books on the post-Soviet space—security in the post-Soviet space—and it certainly had something to do with the Shulman volume. But there, I would say in a dual sense, it brings us back to where the original questioning was. The way we thought about, conceived that volume and the authors that we selected and the way we did that volume was not simply how we produce a collaborative volume that would do honor to Marshall, but—and a volume that would have more of a shelf life than most things in a very rapidly changing environment—but one that in effect, reflected the spirit of Marshall, that the tone of the book, the authors, the way they'd write it, the balance, which is Marshall, the wisdom which is Marshall, we wanted that to be part of what that book

did. So that book was more than simply a collaborative volume, if you will a Festschrift. That was a volume that was meant to embody Marshall as well as to honor him.

So two things came together and in doing that, obviously from the many things I'd done in pulling people together in order to produce a volume that's relevant—in a broader sense, since the Council was almost entirely organizing working groups and study groups and collaborative volumes, that was all quite related and all quite singular. An academic appointment, administrative appointment at Columbia, whether it's department chair or a dean or running an institute, is much more variegated in the things that you have to think about and are worrying about.

Q: Anything else? Ok. Switching back to world history for a minute—so officially the Cold War ends when you're still at the Council.

Legvold: Marshall used to joke that when he turned the Institute over to me the Soviet Union was intact.

Q: [laughs] That exactly was my next question. You must have felt great coming in. [laughs] Tell us about that transition. What was it like?

Legvold: That was very important. That is the single most important thing that happened to me and to the Institute during my tenure as director of the Institute. I'd inherited, after several interim directors, an institute that had literally been created and that personified Marshall

Shulman and it had been put back on its feet because of what Marshall had accomplished. It now had a new name, the [W.] Averell Harriman Institute for the Advanced Study of the Soviet Union. So the first thing that happens at that point is an identity challenge.

What are we going to be? Up to this point, we'd been an institute that studies a single country. We're the only area institute—the only kind of area institute in the country—that does that. Even the Asian institutes that focused heavily on China normally had a Japan component. Latin America was a region, Middle East was a region and so on. So what are we going to do? Are we going to become a regional institute or are we going to remain a Russian institute, now Russia, independent Russia? And that required a fair amount of deliberation because it had very basic implications, significant implications. If we were going to become a regional institute, it meant that we had to develop capabilities for studying now the many parts. That had implications for language training, even though Columbia always had a very rich program from Uzbek, Ukrainian to Russian, but that would have to be beefed up.

It would be an issue now in the core disciplines that drive area studies, the social sciences. History at Columbia and most universities had been essentially imperial Russian history that studied the center. Now the periphery mattered in enormous ways, and different parts would politically and sociologically now be important. We needed people who understood Central Asia; we needed people who understood the Caucasus, Georgia, Romania, Azerbaijan, and separately Ukraine. At Harvard, they decided to be a Russian institute, but they then separately had a Ukraine institute, and then they created under the auspices of the Russian institute a so-called Central Asian program. But we made the decision not to be a recrudescence of the original

Russian Institute—that's what it was originally called at Columbia—but we would be an institute that studies the region and we had a kind of cop out, but an easy way of coping with that in terms of what we call ourselves.

We could simply call ourselves the Harriman Institute, which is what this has now become. It's been a struggle all along the line because of resources, student interest and the rest of it, to address that omnibus agenda that I just referred to. Columbia may have done that as well as any center. None of them has done it in a, in a comprehensive and from my point of view, fully adequate way. But it's a new world for people that are interested in Russia and the region, whether it's Ukraine or whether it's Belarus or whether it's Kyrgyzstan or wherever, and you can do a reasonable job of studying that at Columbia. At least you can do virtually as good a job studying it at Columbia, as at other institutions and that's really a product of those decisions that were taken in 1989, '90, '91, '92.

Q: How did you undertake your decisions?

Legvold: In not as disciplined or effective way as we should have. When I first became director, I was both pushed, and I accepted the advice of senior colleagues that cared about the Institute, mostly particularly Seweryn Bialer, to create an executive committee that had not existed before that would draw five major senior faculty members from the different disciplines. And we'd use that as a kind of decision-making body. It included Leo [Leopold] Haimson, who was our senior historian, as Marc Raeff was being, moving toward retirement from the History Department. It

included Matthews [Rufus W. Mathewson?] from the Literature Department. Rick Erickson was just hired because we'd raised money for a new economist and he was the economist on it.

And that in some ways didn't work as well as it should, so that was basically the body that we were dealing with by the early 1990s. Part of the problem was, it's a bit of an illustration of herding of cats because not all five people in that group were willing to submit or to subordinate their personal agendas, serving on an executive committee, to what was needed by the Institute. And there was a little too much, What can the institute do for me and my program? And, By serving in this committee, I can ensure that I get my share? Rather than really thinking across. And part of that was, I suppose it's true in any institution, the tendency of some faculty not to think beyond not merely their own specialty, but even beyond their own discipline. So some on the committee really didn't give a damn about what was going to happen in political science or what was happening in literature and so on.

The short of it is, it was not an effective committee, executive committee. And as a result, I was left trying to lead decisions that were not easily made at that time. I didn't have a free hand to make decisions, but on the other hand I didn't have the kind of support that I wanted, to make them, and as a result we ended up with sort of half-baked solutions, partly driven by the fact that you then have to come back to the university and say, "Well, are there going to be lines in history or are there going to be lines in this department or otherwise?" And we weren't, we weren't a collected team that could really force that issue. But—

Q: Can you give me an example of half-baked solutions?

Legvold: Well, rather than—at the time what I was trying to do is saying, Okay, if we're going to be a regional institute, then we've got two levels in which we have to make decisions. We have to do it in terms of personnel and areas that we'll cover, and what are our priorities? Where do we need to create strengths that we simply don't have now that we're moving beyond a principal Russia-Soviet focus? And the other part was programmatic. That is, what kinds of things we hope we will accomplish both in training and in terms of what we would like to see, even though it's individual faculty making decisions, in terms of a sort of cumulative research product. And I tried to lay out choices in each of those areas, and it was virtually impossible to get clear-cut decisions, so we didn't act as a collectivity. It meant that I ended up sort of lobbying different pieces of it and trying to make different pieces of it work.

Q: And when you say you didn't have a free hand, are you talking about when you were associate director?

Legvold: No, no. I'm talking about—when I came back from the Council and then went through the tenure process and then became director of the Institute, that's what I'm talking about. As an associate director none of this came up. I was more or less holding a place.

Q: So what was the decision-making process in which you didn't have—what meant that you didn't have a free hand?

Legvold: The fact that I felt obliged to try to get the consent of the executive committee, because we'd agreed from the beginning that it would be important—we thought this in fact would be an improvement on governance within the Institute. Under Marshall, and even particularly under the interim leadership, there was a kind of chaos in governance. It wasn't clear that the director took a great deal of initiative, but in turn, there also wasn't much of an effective decision. There would be sort of semi-annual meetings of the faculty, so-called executive committee of tenured faculty, and a director would report on the kinds of things that had been happening in the Institute. But what had been happening the Institute was essentially bubbling up from below, whatever the faculty were doing and then, as associate director, I would try to help with programming.

This is still true at all of the area institutes. There's an awful lot of traffic of people from the outside who'd say, you know, I'm coming to Columbia. I'd like to give a luncheon seminar, a book talk, or whatever it is and you try to bring some order to that. That was essentially what was going on. So we said, and I thought, as I said, I was pushed in this direction, but I thought it a pretty good idea to create an executive committee that would create kind of orderly decision-making and get buy-in from key faculty members. The problem was that we never got a buy-in from a sufficient number of them.

Q: Can you take a couple of the decisions you had to make, like in '89 or something, to show what the cost of that was, that obstacle?

Legvold: Well, I don't know that I took decisions that were invidious, that is [laughter] to show what we were losing by not doing it collectively. I took decisions that I thought needed somehow to be taken and we weren't able to do it.

Q: No, I more meant places that you were constrained, where you would have acted or taken a decision that you couldn't.

Legvold: Well, this is now '91, '92, because the Soviet Union's coming apart in late 1991, and in fairness to everyone, there was a lot of confusion, as we were trying to come to terms with what was going on. So it wasn't as though we had a clear notion of everything that should be done. But one of them was in terms of—we knew Ukraine was going to be an important piece. We were not going to create a separate Ukrainian center as such, but the question was how we would—I thought the question had to be answered: what are we going to do to beef up what we do in Ukrainian studies? We had people that knew something of them in the language, and so I was the one at that point that encouraged people, some that—Mark von Hagen, who had a strong interest in Ukraine—to begin thinking about ways in which we could create more in the Ukrainian area and fund it from the outside.

Mark had come in to be the associate director during that period of time, and so Mark and I did a number of things to sort of beef up what we were doing almost from the beginning in Ukrainian studies, and then later others were able to raise money for it, including the fellowships that now bring a faculty member from the outside here. There was also a period of time when George Soros was interested in potentially funding parts of the program. He'd approached the [Russian

and] East European Institute at one point and while I raised the issue within the executive committee, in the end it was my decision not to go forward with that because in talking to administration at SIPA [School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University] and otherwise, I thought George's desire to have a fair influence over actually the way the program would be put together was not going to be acceptable at Columbia. So we ended up not going down that road and that was not something that we really deliberated within this executive committee. I figured it would just end up being, you know, confusion.

Q: A free-for-all?

Legvold: Yes, yes. And there were other small things. I'd have to spend a little time ransacking my memory to answer your question well because I don't—it's not on at the edge of my memory.

Q: Well, take us through some of those times. The big, you know, the amazing events that happened between '89 and '92. I read in your CFR interview that you didn't anticipate [laughs] what was going to happen. But bring us into the room that [Mikhail S.] Gorbachev or whomever you were able to meet with during those times.

Legvold: Well, several things, several steps. By 1982, '83, '84 we knew that the Soviet Union was limping along. Seweryn, who had suddenly become very prolific, especially on the eve of getting his MacArthur Fellowship—whereas over many years earlier, he'd been slow to produce—late produced rapidly. And one of the things he produced the most rapidly was a book

called *The Soviet Paradox [External Expansion, Internal Decline]*, which was on the Brezhnev period. It was a book in which he argued that it's not a system in crisis, it's a policy crisis. But he understood that it was a crisis of sorts. That also reflected, however, and I think most people didn't disagree with Seweryn, at least most of what I would regard as the serious specialists. That is not a fair because it implies that others that didn't agree with that aren't serious. But I think most people recognized that the Soviet Union was grinding down. They themselves were beginning to say it and there were plenty of signs that was the case.

There had been books written even earlier than that. [Andrei] Amalrik had written a book about the sort of 1984 and the Soviet Union collapsing in a George Orwellian form [*Will the Soviet Union Survive until 1984?*], but for the wrong reason. He thought it would be because of a Sino-Soviet war. The French specialist, good friend of mine and fine senior scholar, the only female academician of the French academy for many years, H el ene Carr ere d'Encausse, had written a book called *L'Empire  clat * which was *The Empire Exploding*, but that was because she believed Central Asia would revolt and they were the last and didn't want to revolt. So there were some people who were right in their broad prediction, but for the wrong reason. Most, I think, scholars in that '82 to '85 period didn't think the Soviet Union was likely to—they didn't expect the Soviet Union to come apart or the Soviet system that had been formed after 1917, and particularly by [Joseph V.] Stalin, would completely fail. But they did see it in serious trouble.

So the first story that I think is relevant here was in 1986, after the 27th Party Congress, which is Gorbachev's first party congress. Seweryn and I decided to organize a national conference and bring what we saw as the most senior and best of the Soviet specialists from around the country.

Some of them were at RAND [Corporation] not merely at universities, many of them universities, and they were in IR, International Relations, they were in comparative politics, they were in economics and so on. And talk about what that congress had been all about, because Gorbachev had begun using the language of perestroika by then. He'd come to power in '85. He was there almost a year. They were up to their eyeballs in Afghanistan, which he referred to as “a bleeding wound,” and there was other language that suggested that something was likely to begin happening in Russia.

But I think it is telltale that the boldest prediction at that meeting was by Jerry [F.] Hough, senior specialist at that point at Duke University, who had been closely following all Soviet leadership. He had a detailed sort of card system in which he—and he had a mind for remembering everybody down to literally thousands in the nomenklatura, but the national leadership—he'd been interested in Gorbachev through these earlier successions that had brought the last of the decrepit to power, [Konstantin U.] Chernenko after [Yuri V.] Andropov, after Brezhnev. And he said maybe, maybe what's going to happen is as what happened after the Hungarian Revolution and maybe Gorbachev will be another János Kádár.

That was the boldest thing that happened in the spring of 1986. That's as far as we could be imaginative. So we certainly didn't understand how far the revolution that Gorbachev was going to introduce, probably a revolution that went much, much further than he himself expected. One other question was how he dealt with the unintended consequences of what he was doing, and what he called the so-called *novoe politicheskoe myshlenie*, new political thinking, which was the equivalent of perestroika—perestroika for foreign policy. What I call “foreign policy revolution”

and that sort of unfolded piecemeal. It wasn't a coherent design that he had in mind. In many ways one step led to another until he was getting deeper and deeper into foreign policy and national security change. We didn't understand that that's likely what would happen after 1986.

Therefore we didn't understand what the steps would be, both in terms of how far he would lead change, what the resistance to it would be, what the failures would be at the end that would then lead to the collapse in 1991. Nobody at that meeting, and I think no one subsequently in the work that they were doing and what they were writing, anticipated that. But throughout this we were attempting to come to terms with what was happening as it happened. That leads to probably a second dimension that is relevant to this history and that is what people at the Harriman Institute, beginning outstandingly with Marshall, had done beyond the university. That is in government and in the outside. Marshall had done it by becoming part of government.

He'd done that in the late '40s and early '50s when he was in the [Harry S.] Truman administration, working with [Dean Gooderham] Acheson and the others and then he went back in the Carter administration. Seweryn and I never—I'm not sure Seweryn—well, maybe despite his foreign birth he would have been—presumably he would have been eligible to do these things, but neither he nor I ever were—we were never pushed to do something in government and we never sought it. But we were always quite active in working with people in government or above all else, and something else that Marshall was absolutely central to, and that is Track II. And Marshall was central to that not only because he was an important sponsor and participant, but because of the way he participated—

Q: Say a little more about that—

Legvold: —We can come back to that.

Q: Oh—we can come back to that. Okay

Legvold: The Track II diplomacy was—sometimes it was almost one and a half because it reported to government, but it was made up of people who were not in government and normally senior specialists. The key enterprises, like Pugwash, were populated by basically physicists who cared about the nuclear relationship and getting some control over it. The Dartmouth [College] Exchange—all of this goes back to the late '50s, the early 1960s—had participants like David Rockefeller and other senior people who weren't scientists, but who cared about the overall relationship, and Marshall was very active in both of those plus some others.

Stanford Research Institute [SRI] had one, and one of the first things that he did for me as a young academic, just out of graduate school, was to include me in one of those, an SRI in the mid 1970s, the SRI Exchange with counterparts in Russia, again, not official but from the institutes under the academy. Not primarily universities on the Russian side because more gets done under the institutes and the Academy of Sciences. But in both instances, the Track II stuff—we can come back and talk a little more about what it was for Marshall, so far as I observed it, and then the tail end when I was part of it and then what it became once I was part of it, because it had many different forms.

But back to the question of interacting with these events unfolding and the personality of Gorbachev himself—one of those occurred in 1988 and it was when—in some ways it was an outgrowth of something that David [A.] Hamburg had created at the Carnegie Corporation as soon as things began happening in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev and the rest. In 1985 he created, as part of what the Aspen Institute does, a congressional seminar, one that would be specifically focused on the Soviet Union and designed for as many of the good people he could draw together—that is, the ones willing to invest themselves in the Soviet/U.S. issue, from the Senate and from the House. And they met annually in order to talk about what was going on, and in order to stimulate that discussion, they would invite so-called experts. Seweryn was at the very first one. He and I were at the second one. I've been at a number of them since.

They've discontinued them, even though it went into the post-Soviet period for quite a while—ended up splitting so there was post-Soviet and East Europe as separate things. But as an outgrowth of that, he did, David Hamburg, organized in 1988 a very special version of that, where he invited I think at least three, maybe four senators, Carl [Milton] Levin, Alan [K.] Simpson on the Republican side, Sam [Samuel Augustus] Nunn [Jr.] and at least one other person that I'm forgetting now and then Sid [Sidney David] Drell from Stanford, a physicist, and me and I forget who else, to go for meetings with the Soviet leadership. So we had a session with Gorbachev in St. Catherine's Hall. This was going to be before the summit that was about to be held when [President] Ronald [Wilson] Reagan went to Moscow, and it was after Gorbachev had announced that they would be getting out of Afghanistan.

And there were things beginning to move on strategic arms control. The two presidents had met at Reykjavík more than a year before and there seemed to be real progress. Eighty-seven they had signed the Intermediate [-Range] Nuclear Force[s Treaty] agreement, the INF agreement, so a lot was going on and people like Nunn and Simpson and Levin and the others needed to hear what was possible, and I think David, who was on that trip, also wanted to sort of stimulate a larger, a larger discourse.

Q: David felt, when I interviewed him, that that committee was crucially important—

Legvold: I think it was.

Q: —in terms of impact.

Legvold: Because it would, in the long run, especially—I think it also included Dick [Richard Green] Lugar—because in the end Sam Nunn and Dick Lugar worked so closely together—

Q: [unclear] Lugar and Nunn?

Legvold: Lugar and Nunn Initiative [The Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program, better known as the Nunn-Lugar Act], but that was something that came out as the Soviet Union was coming apart.

Q: I see.

Legvold: So leap forward from '88 to 1991, and there happened to be a meeting of this Aspen Congressional Seminar. This is now not Columbia, it's not Harriman Institute, but it is the Aspen Institute Congressional Seminar that was being held in Budapest a week or two after the coup in Moscow in August. And [Andrei V.] Kozyrev was able to slip out of the Soviet Union, come to that conference and, at its conclusion, Sam Nunn, I think maybe Dick Lugar, but Sam Nunn went off to Moscow to begin talking about what might be done in order to secure nuclear materials, as this country was coming apart at the seams.

That had already been developed by, in an academic setting, but it wasn't Columbia, it was Bill [William James] Perry working with Ash [Ashton Baldwin] Carter up at the [John F.] Kennedy School [of Government] at Harvard and that was crucial in helping Nunn and Lugar think about what they wanted to do on this, and then they came back and did the legislation that has been so important in securing these materials. But it gives you something of a sense of where the links were, the overlap. As I say, Seweryn and I were, I think—Padma [Desai] may have at one point participated in one—but I think Seweryn and I were the ones, he in the early years and I and then I over the longer period, that most regularly participated in those seminars and they went on for about twenty years.

The other thing that the Harriman Institute did, and Marshall was crucial to this, was form a partnership with Harvard. And annually, we held the Arden House Conferences, and that was in the Soviet period. It was very much Marshall's notion of how do you employ the resources of a research center like Columbia and faculty like Columbia to interact with the business community

representatives of government to enrich the discourse. And that was before, long before Gorbachev and real movement. That was in the Brezhnev period. And in a way, I think it probably—I forget precisely when it developed, when the first meeting was. I would guess that it has to be deep into the—or early in the 1970s, maybe even in the late '60s.

So it probably was designed in Marshall's mind—I never talked to him about that, and his partner was Marshall [I.] Goldman at the Russian Research Center—to improve the discourse in this country at a time when things seemed to fall apart. We had détente. People had hopes around that, and then suddenly we're back in the ditch. And that was always of enormous concern to Marshall because he felt that our country was just not mature at various levels, and think tanks and universities weren't helping the country to be more mature—its political class and policymakers—to think in a steady and sophisticated and complicated way about the Soviet challenge. We were always, they too, always subject to oversimplification and then responding to our oversimplification. That was Marshall. That was key to Marshall in the way in which he thought about these things. That was key to the spirit of this book we did in honor of him.

And you'll notice in the dedication in the last paragraph, that's what highlighted—he didn't, as we said in that introduction, want the Soviet Union, good and bad, to be the cardboard figure that we continually reduced it to.

Q: Mm-hmm.

Legvold: And Arden House was part of that. What he did in Track II stuff was part of that. The way in which he worked with graduate students was part of that. What he was as a person was part of that. And we tried to carry that on in the subsequent period.

So in reacting to all of the drama within the Soviet Union in this period, even though we were not very good in anticipating everything that was going to happen, trying to stay abreast of it, trying to do some justice to it, that is recognize the change that had already occurred for what it was, rather than pooh-poohing it. There was a tendency in this country to say, No, you know, Gorbachev isn't for real, and the extent of which he is for real, this was a very popular attitude in Eastern Europe itself and the extent to which that had an echo in this country, He will fail, because he'll be overthrown by the system. Anybody's who's progressive isn't going to survive in that system. Through that period of time I think much of the work that was done at the Harriman Institute, beyond the scholarly stuff that really wasn't relevant to what was happening in the day in the Soviet Union, was more of that kind. That is, to first of all credit change as it was occurring and then secondly to try to convey the complexity of what was happening there, without really knowing what the denouement was going to be.

Q: Sounds like a scholarly vision in which you were willing to take on incremental change rather than a kind of holistic change.

Legvold: Well, as much as anything, it was an effort to do justice to a very complex, unfolding reality without trying to guess what it would all be within ten years. Now maybe we should have done more guessing, because that would have forced us at least to think about alternative

outcomes that would have done justice to what the ultimately dramatic outcome was. But the truth of the matter is we were trying to understand complexity, probably with the expectation that that's what the future was: ongoing complexity, not a dramatic break or discontinuity. We didn't—it wasn't within our ken to anticipate that dramatic break. So I think we went about it more or less in terms of the best we could do in trying to understand it without having, sort of, the genius' capacity to anticipate the unexpected.

Q: The prophet's capacity.

Legvold: Yes.

Q: Yes. Do you recall any specific conversations or encounters around the time that it all goes down in 1991?

Legvold: Well, Seweryn at that point, much more than Marshall—Marshall was sort of settling into retirement—Seweryn was very active and Seweryn was very well connected on the Soviet side. He and I, in 1988, I interrupt myself, had been invited to come to an international conference that Gorbachev organized, a strange conference. It involved hundreds, but with a strange cast. It included people like Seweryn and myself, but it included Jane Fonda and [Eldred] Gregory Peck and it included orchestra directors, famous orchestra directors, and famous politicians, national leaders—I think [Valéry] Giscard d'Estaing and people like that. And it was a giant, almost circus-like event. It was billed as, to translate the Russian, as Surviving in a Nuclear World. It was mean to begin focusing on the nuclear issue.

You'll remember that by 1985, by 1986, by the Reykjavik meeting, the two presidents had even talked about eliminating nuclear weapons entirely and Gorbachev was in favor, had taken the lead in doing that kind of thing. So he was concerned about where things were happening. It's now post-Chernobyl, which I think had an immense impact on his thinking.

Q: We were going to come back to that.

Legvold: So he organized this big, big event and Seweryn and I agreed to go to it. They had big round tables with maybe fifty people at a round table and then there must have been seven or eight such round tables, with this mix of people, some very senior Russian people. At my table—and they asked me to chair one afternoon of it—but my table included [Yevgeny M.] Primakov, who would later become prime minister, foreign minister; some of the old guard, [Boris N.] Ponomarev, who had been many, many, many years in the, in the part of the central committee that dealt with Communist parties, sort of the deputy to Mikhail [A.] Suslov, one of the old ideologues. And then with some of these personalities that I'm talking about, we were supposed to talk about these issues and produce, I think in the end they produced some kind of collective report. It had major religious leaders at it from the different faiths.

So that was one thing. I started by saying Seweryn was involved with a lot of this, but he was involved at a higher level yet. He did have private meetings with Gorbachev during that period, but he was very, very well connected with [Eduard] Shevardnadze and with some of the people at the next level down, beginning with [Georgy A.] Arbatov, Senior, whom I did know pretty

well. That was sort of the height of what I was doing as a young academic. And as a result, in a quiet way, he also had at that point become quite close to [Margaret H.] Thatcher and to [Yasuhiro] Nakasone and they would—he'd meet with Thatcher at Chequers and he would meet with Nakasone to talk about what was going on in the Soviet Union. It was all sort of quiet. I think there was no other American academic, certainly not another one that worked on the Soviet Union that had that access and people relied on, sort of, his gut feeling. And Seweryn was special, because of his life's experience.

He could sing more World War I Soviet war songs than contemporary Soviet generals knew, and there was a lot of this kind of stuff. That didn't come back to Columbia in any direct way. He didn't teach courses where that was being revealed, but it was a part of what was going on in those years. How much of an impact it actually had—did it really help Gorbachev to understand the United States? Because he then had equivalent contact back in the United States. I don't know. Seweryn wasn't somebody who concerned himself with the nitty gritty of foreign policy. He would not have said to them, this is what you need to do in, at this stage in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. He wouldn't even had known what the key issues were. But I think he could have given them, I think he did—we used to talk a lot and so I didn't ask him what his conversations with them were, but I knew what our conversations were—give them a sense of how they should be thinking about Gorbachev and what was going on and indeed some of the problems that he was facing.

So by the fall of 1990, when Gorbachev was beginning to hit the wall, there was a real question of where Gorbachev should go in that regime with economic reform, and he was being

challenged now by [Boris N.] Yeltsin, who would emerge as the alternative leader on the Russian side. There had been the effort by Graham [T.] Allison and Grigory [A.] Yavlinsky to think about a grand bargain. Seweryn was right in the middle of all of that. One of the key economists that was working on a so-called 500-Day Plan [500 Days Program] that would have accelerated economic reform with [Stanislav] Shatalin. Shatalin was very close to Seweryn. Seweryn was close to several of the other senior economists. He was meeting with them, I'm not sure that he was influencing them, but he had insight into what was happening and he was the first to come back and say, "Gorbachev has hit the wall, you know, he's not—he can't go forward with this kind of thing." That would be followed then by the trouble in the Baltics and his mishandling of what was going on in Lithuania and so on and then into 1991 in August.

But again, that was independent of organized programs at Columbia or Harriman Institute and that was very much the product of a prominent personality. But it was all—I was interacting with it and I had my own separate track of activity of this kind. I mentioned the 1988 meeting that Hamburg organized and the—the thing that we went to on preventing nuclear war and surviving the nuclear age. But there was a lot of other stuff going on at that time and I was, I forget the precise period, but I also continued to organize things that were collaborative, that did involve the Harriman Institute. Two I would mention—there probably are half a dozen things, but I'd mention two that are illustrative. One was, and this was academic: it was an effort to bring what was a kind of budding field in academics, of International Relations theory, the way in which IR theory was in the U.S. They had some people at one of two of the institutes that were beginning to think about it, actually had begun studying some of what was being done in the west.

Political science as such, was basically not seen as legitimate in the Soviet Union, so you didn't talk about if you're a political scientist, or that that's a discipline or otherwise. But they did do international relations research. That's what this Institute of World Economy and International Relations was all about and they had a section in that interested in theory. So I organized an exchange where I brought not just our theorists, one or two, Bob [Robert] Jervis, was key to it.

But of the three or four major theorists from the rest of the, from elsewhere: Joe [Joseph S.] Nye and Stanley Hoffman from Harvard, at that time Robert [Warren] Tucker from Johns Hopkins SAIS [School of Advanced International Studies], Bob [Robert Owen] Keohane, who was, I don't know whether he was at Duke [University] yet with his wife or, I forget, Brandeis [University]—these were giants in the IR theory field in the U.S. and I thought it would be very good for the Russians that cared about—there are some of them senior—and we had two or three meetings, we alternated countries, to actually talk about the way in which theorists were thinking about international relations and reported on that to the funders. But it was primarily the—first of all to let people like Hoffman and Nye and the others have the Soviet exposure, because it was done still in the Soviet period and, on the other hand, to let them interact with senior westerners.

The other thing was, at a time of change, as the Soviet Union was changing under Gorbachev, I organized another thing in partnership with the Japanese, with a man named Hiroshi Kimura, who at that point was running the Slavic Center in Hokkaido at the University of Sapporo. And that brought again a collection of experts, some of them from Columbia, but whatever we needed from around the country, six or seven, with their leading Soviet specialists, including economists. And that was an effort to see how Japanese specialists versus American specialists

were sizing up what was going on in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev, and that went on for at least three years, maybe a little bit longer. And we had at least one, sometimes I think two meetings a year, generated papers. That stuff would be issued. I don't think we ever did a book as such, but it would be made generally available.

Some of them were done collaboratively, not very many. Most of them were a Japanese author taking an issue or a U.S. author taking an issue. And there are other things of that kind. That, again, it became—back to the original point of how much of these collaborative efforts really suffused the entirety of the Harriman Institute, and how much of them, which is the real case—the degree to which they tend to be individual entities that are sort of off from the core activity, certainly of the training activity, of an institute plugged into the departments.

Q: Mm-hmm. What incredible stories. Thank you so much. How did you think about the training at Columbia? Were you responsible for the master's program?

Legvold: Later—no, I think there always was a master's program, but creating a standalone master's area studies program, what it's become now, it may have begun while I was still director. I forget when it began. If so, it was fledgling. I'm sure it did, because I think there were two or three, maybe more involved, but it wasn't sort of the established program that it is now. It was principally a master's program that was, you know, the first circle of *Dante's Inferno* before you were able to get into the PhD program.

Q: You mean you were trying to eliminate people? [laughs]

Legvold: Well, it was Columbia then. I don't—I think now at least our department, political science, didn't admit people directly to the PhD program. You were admitted to the master's program and then if it all went well you could join the PhD program. So that was the way in which it was basically a PhD program and at that point Columbia was still admitting large numbers of students. So we had quite a fair number of students, certainly in the Soviet period, that were coming to work on the Soviet Union. It was not to Columbia's credit at that point because it became something of a factory, from my point of view.

It wasn't like Princeton [University] or like Stanford, that had a narrower—a narrow point to the funnel and therefore more of those people completed their education and more of those who completed them actually got jobs. When you had the program that we did, too many people didn't finish the program and too many people didn't get jobs. At least not why they had come and spent all their money to study the Soviet Union. I don't mean that to be as negative as it sounds, because Columbia along with Harvard were the two institutions that trained most of the people that went on to do the important things in Soviet studies, Soviet policymaking, Soviet commentary, Soviet dealing and Soviet business.

And so the product was—and this from my point of view was some of the cost that went with it or accompanied it—but the actual product was enormously important to this country. If you look at what Columbia has done for this country in many areas, but certainly in the Soviet area and now in the post-Soviet Russian area, it's immense. I'm an old guy and I've been through a lot of students at Columbia and I don't go to any embassy in any of the post-Soviet countries on any

given trip where I'm not seeing people that have been trained at Columbia. And not just Americans, but people from those countries now, as a result of post '91. In fact, [laughs] at this stage I'm getting to a point where many of those students that were serving, including ambassadors, are retiring. So [laughter] in the future they will be Columbia products, but they won't have studied with me.

And all of that, you know, I'm very proud of that, to have been a part of that. Much of it was done in the years before I arrived at Columbia in terms of the overall picture, when the Soviet Union was very much at the center of things. But Columbia then and during a period I was here and subsequently, I think, has been absolutely critical. The other side of it, I suppose implicit in your question, Were they well trained? Did we do our job? I think so. Behind that is, Could it have been better? What would have been required to make it better? I think it was good. It was good because A, it was a time by the 1960s when our program was committed to giving them the basic skills if they didn't have it. As we believed deeply, they needed the language, if they were going to work in the area, because opportunities were beginning, so they could do field research.

They would need it simply to read to do their research to begin with, but that had always been true and it had been sort of slipshod. People, sort of, thought they had a reading knowledge but if you really were going to do it, you needed to have the opportunity to learn a language. I'm not saying that everybody learned it as well as they could or should have, but it was our mission that they would have that. Secondly, I think long before I arrived at Columbia, but certainly while I was here, we thought long and hard about what makes sense in terms of what they should understand if they were going to get PhDs, even if they were going to get PhDs in political

science, what else did they need to understand. And we thought literature was an important part of it.

We thought economics would be an important part of it, particularly if he were interested in sociology or the politics of it. And we created a program that encouraged that and often created attention because that was the certificate on the way to the PhD and it was something they did essentially voluntarily, because they didn't have to do it to do a PhD to get out of this institution. But it was a basis by which we could be confident that if they wanted to go off and say, you know, I'm a specialist on the Soviet Union, even as an economist or a political scientist, that we thought they had had that broad enough background.

A bit of literature, a bit of economics doesn't make them confident in economics or in literature. But it gives them a taste for it and it gives them a sense of what the range is that they needed. So I would argue that most people that I know that graduated from Columbia, one of my good friends is Jack [F.] Matlock, [Jr.].

Q: Mm-hmm.

Legvold: Matlock was the ambassador to the Soviet Union, to Russia, and I think Jack is as grateful for what he needed to do in literature as he is for whatever else he did in the program and I think that was a basis by which even once he was in Foreign Service and advancing through the Foreign Service, he was always as interested in reading Russian literature as he was in doing the work, the study that he had to do to be effective as ambassador.

So I think that part was right as well. And subsequently there's been a tension because—and by the end of the Soviet Union and certainly in the years since the Soviet Union, what young people can now do, often have done before they ever arrived at Columbia, by way of exposure in the region itself is phenomenal. The opportunities they've had for experiences and the opportunities they can have, they can get, for experiences and then doing their work at Columbia, dissertations and otherwise, is fundamentally different from Marshall as a student, from me as a student, even though by my day I was able to go and do field research there, of a sort.

But the alternative, which means in short that you put it together with our early emphasis on learning language, then our concern about the breadth of training, rather than just disciplinary training. Now you have the experiential part, which is richer than ever before. But simultaneously the disciplines themselves, political science and economics, are saying, Well, culture, language, that's not as important as advanced statistical methods and the other things that you need in order to be a good social scientist, to be a good economist, to be a good political scientist. So there now is something of a new kind of a tension for people who are academics going onto the PhD.

I don't know quite how that will settle down. The truly talented manage to do both. But there are a lot of people who aren't talented at that level and I'm not sure what that tension is doing. It also, in the disciplines, means that—this may simply be an old man's bias—but it means that in order to develop that kind of rigor, theoretical and methodological, you end up defining subjects or identifying subjects that are amenable or susceptible to that kind of work, rigorous theory and

so on. Those often are smaller, manageable questions that you can probe deeply with large end studies or with models that work in that context.

But when you've got issues like how do you account for the French Revolution? Or how do you account for what's happening in a Russia that's going through this transition, that's not as susceptible to the same methods and the same theories and people that are sort of forced into that other pigeonhole are then not addressing bigger questions. The stuff that they're doing is useful, it's interesting. Well, not always interesting. It is probably useful. But it means that bigger questions that I would like to see the young people attacking, at least trying to attack early, so that once they've had experience they can come back to them, aren't afraid to tackle larger questions.

That's what we need these days because we're moving into a world of great uncertainties. Russia—what's going to happen to Russia under its current leadership and where it goes afterwards in the context of a China that's changing fundamentally, a world of Islam that's in flames. People need to be willing to think about larger questions and I'm not sure, to bring it back to what we were talking about, area studies at Columbia or at any university, including Russian studies, is really in a good position at this point to encourage its students to ask bigger questions, feel free to deal with bigger questions. The more advanced you are in your graduate work, I think there's a very heavy emphasis on professionalism. And as I've said, that professionalism now tends to skew away from the cultural component of training somebody in the social sciences.

Q: That's brilliant, and there's a lot I'd like to come back to in our second session about the field and your new book, also.

Legvold: No, the new book doesn't make any pretense to be academic by these standards. It's meant for a broad audience, yes.

Q: It is the definition of your emphasis on getting to the broader question.

Legvold: Yes, yes, very much so.

Q: Let's just take a few minutes about it right now because you're going to speak about it tonight. So we talked about it, of course, before the recorder was running, but I wanted to ask you questions on tape about how it's being received, this idea that we are in a new time of Cold War. Maybe it never ended.

Legvold: The legacy of the Cold War was more powerful than we understood. The Cold War ended, the original Cold War. The original Cold War had characteristics that this does not. First of all, the original Cold War, at least for most of the thirty-nine or plus years, depending on how you define its end, beginning and end, was literally coterminous with the international system. It engulfed the entire international system. It dominated, drove the foreign policies of the two super powers: the Soviet Union and the United States. This Cold War is among a set of states: Russia, the Euro-Atlantic states, maybe Japan but not China, not much of the United Nations, including important regions of the world, they're not part of it.

Secondly, the original Cold War was driven by, at least initially and maybe in the long run theoretically, a contest between economic and political systems that were wrapped up in competing ideologies. However you want to represent that—Marxism, Leninism, Communism versus Jeffersonian democracy and so on—that’s not the issue today, even though in the book I argue there may be some substitutes for that, that make it less comfortably distant from the original Cold War, and that is this clash of civilization that we now get as [Vladimir V.] Putin begins emphasizing socially conservative cultural values and so on—and no longer seems to be preoccupied with building democracy in Russia, but going the other direction.

And third, throughout all of that—we talked a little bit about this in the nuclear context—it’s not unfolding, at least not yet, under the shadow of nuclear Armageddon. Schools no longer have those yellow and black pinwheels that showed me as a student where to go in the case of a nuclear attack. Grade school students wouldn’t know what to do in the case of a nuclear attack and their teachers wouldn’t know how to talk to them about it. That was part of the Cold War. And there are other reasons that it’s different. It’s a globalized world and Russia, no matter what he does to control media and otherwise, Putin can’t shut that society off—from travel, from social media, from all kinds of other things. Plus the other effects of globalization.

But that said, the relationship has gone over the cliff. If, for much of the period after the Soviet Union collapsed, the so-called post-Cold War period, the relationship was an ambiguous one, where neither side was quite certain how much the other was friend, how much foe. But as I say in the book, more or less, left to hope mostly friend and mostly we could cooperate, even though

the relationship was up and down, beginning even in the Yeltsin period in the mid-1990s.

Nonetheless that, in the end, we would be able to do business and maybe somehow figure out how to smooth out the ups and downs, relationship gets some traction so that it could be steadily upward. That's dead, that's gone. We're over the cliff. It's now an adversarial relationship.

The two sides are estranged, and even if in the next six months we were to put the Ukrainian crisis behind us, of which there's no chance of that happening—or we were to begin serious and more extensive cooperation than the glimmer of cooperation that we're getting over Syria and potentially ISIL [The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant]—the relationship will still, at its roots be estranged. So the question is, how do you understand that? Qualitatively different from that earlier period with its ambiguity and, for me, because it does have, as I argue in the book, five qualities that are like the original Cold War and alas like the early period of the Cold War, my concept for capturing that is Cold War. The publisher originally wanted to call this book *Return to the Cold War*, I said, “No, no, you fundamentally misunderstand. That article changes everything. This is not a return to the original Cold War, this is a return to Cold War,” and when people—the first reaction I get in many of these meetings, Well, you can't call it a Cold War. It's too—it's fundamentally different. As one senior former official and good friend said, “You know, I read your book. You don't persuade me that it's a new Cold War. It's not of that scale,” I'll come back to him and say, “What do you mean by scale? What are you talking about, by scale?”

But in any event, the first reaction is not Cold War. One of the things that I then say to audiences, as I've been speaking now in Europe and in Washington, I will in New York, is Do

you recognize it as qualitatively different? And very few people will say, No, of course it's qualitatively different. Okay, then what's your concept for capturing that? In order to then begin understanding its potential implications and consequences. That's the reason for figuring out how you label it. Otherwise you simply live with it and react tactically and otherwise.

And secondly, is the Syrian Civil War today, is that like World War I? Is it like World War II? No, it's not. So it's not a war? It's not a war because it's not like the big wars? So you can have Cold War. I would argue that the U.S. relationship with Iran since 1979 has been a Cold War, in many of its features. And a bilateral Cold War between countries as important as Russia and the United States, or we were to get to one with China, would have immense implications for the entire international environment. So that's what this is all about.

In terms of the reception that you ask about, to the book, I think most people, even if they're positive about the definition of the problem, even if—and this is the step that most do not take and that is the most important thing that I would want them to take from the book—is okay, now focus on what the consequences of this are. Because each side—in Moscow, Russia in general, the U.S., much of Europe—the focus is almost exclusively on the challenge posed by the other side, and the fault is almost exclusively placed on the other side. And as a result there's very little attention that's being giving to the state of the relationship itself and what the significance of where that relationship is. So the consequences are what I'm particularly eager for people to begin thinking about, even if they don't agree with my characterization of what these consequences are, the opportunity costs and so on, and it's not entirely clear to me why they get

hung up over, Is it Cold War or not? Who's to be blamed for it or not? And not take that next step. So I'm wrestling with that with audiences at this point.

Now even for people that are prepared to say, Yeah, I don't fundamentally disagree with your description of how we got here, because I argue we did this dance together over twenty years. It wasn't just what the Russians did in the Ukrainian crisis, though I think what the Russians did in the Ukrainian crisis pushed us over the cliff. I don't have any trouble arguing that the Russians are responsible for driving us into this new relationship in its last stage, but we got here together.

And people will say, Okay, I may not agree with precisely everything you say and how that dance was done, and I understand that therefore both sides need to be thinking about where we are and I even am prepared to think, maybe not exactly as you do about its consequences, but frankly, and this is something I agree with, they'll say, But it's not an idea whose time has come. There's no chance that politically, in this country or there—look at the presidential election, look at the Congress, look at the way the media handles this issue or doesn't. Even within the administration in its approach or Putin's approach to us, the stories that each side is telling itself about the other side just doesn't permit people to think in these terms. So even if I'm sympathetic with what you're arguing here, this is—and I now start almost every presentation by saying, “If ever there was an idea whose time has not come, it is this book,” but simply to put it there. Now I suppose a follow on question, I don't mean to anticipate where you want to go with this, is why then why do the book?

You know, if it's not an idea whose time has come, why do the book? And the reason for doing the book is, first of all, to begin putting in front of people the consequences of what's happening. If you'll not simply focus on the challenge the other side poses, but the consequences of where the two sides are as a result of how they got there. Because only if you think about that will you believe the stakes are high enough that you begin asking yourself, Okay, what should we do in order to make sure that ten years from now we've got a better outcome than where we're headed right now if we follow the current path. And the reason for doing the book is to continually keep that in front of people until an increasing number of people are prepared to step back and say, Yes, no, we've got to change where we're going at this point.

Secondly, even though I've retired from Columbia, I have done some teaching in the last two years, which is not Columbia, because I live in Boston, but it is Moscow and the Fletcher School and these are young people. They're fifteen graduate students in Moscow each year, fifteen at Fletcher. I've now handed it off to the two institutions. They will continue, I mean, you're interested in technology as well, in what's called a "connected classroom" and the classrooms are taught in real time, they're together, audio/visual. First half of the semester I teach it from, or taught it from Moscow, and the Fletcher students were in a lovely audio/visual classroom and in the same classroom discussion on Wednesday, they were in a discussion together. Then I came back second half, taught from Fletcher. Moscow was in the same classroom. Then I went back, worked individually with the Moscow students and then—and they weren't all Russian: eight of the fifteen were foreign students on the Russian side—and then came back to Fletcher and worked with, with those students individually.

And the publisher is very eager to send it off to faculty members. So I'm hoping that in various contexts, for various reasons, younger people, particularly those who are working on these issues, will be encouraged to explore that, maybe encourage them in their spare time and in the shower to think in these terms, even if in the classroom they're thinking in smaller terms.

And the last thing that's relevant to this—not so much the book, although the spirit of what I'm saying—is something else that's been done that does involve Columbia. After, or as I was retiring from Columbia I was asked to be the director of something called the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace]. That was a high-level commission of non-academics. I was really the only academic involved, but former cabinet-level officials and senior policy types, now all out of government working from Russia, from Eastern Europe, from Western Europe, from North America including a senior Canadian. But everybody involved had gray hair or gray beards and we knew that even before the Ukrainian crisis did what it did, because we were done with that work by 2012, that we needed to think about a new generation.

So one of the things I've done is help create a new university consortium to train students, and it is Columbia, the Harriman Institute, and Harvard, the Davis Center, on the U.S. side; Oxford, principally St. Anthony's [College], and the Free University of Berlin [Freie Universität Berlin] on the European side and ВШЭ [Vshke], the [National Research University] Higher School of Economics and the university where I taught the fifteen students, the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. They concluding the first of what will be a pilot three-year program with a lot of interaction, drawing their graduate students in, so this business now, that takes us

back to what happened to Russian studies, area studies, where it is right now, where there— where the real fall off is being felt now at all levels in governments. And people talk about a deficit of Russian expertise in this country, in Washington and elsewhere, which they've noticed because Russia's now again up on the agenda: Ukrainian crisis, new Cold War, all the rest of it. This program probably—I mean the numbers will be small. If you think that Columbia will involve two to six people at the depth and regularity of involvement over the next three years, you're talking about somewhere between thirty, thirty-six and fifty students.

[END OF INTERVIEW]