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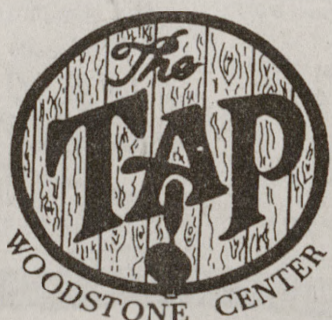
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PANEL PARTICIPANTS

- Rox Anderson
Business Partner Program Manager
IBM
- Maritza Pozo-Grise
Director of Human Resources for
Chemical Solutions Enterprise
DuPont
- Kara Pelacky
Manager
Ernst & Young

Wednesday, March 29, 2000

5:30-7:00 pm

301 Rudder

Work/Life
Issues

PANEL MODERATOR

Ramona Paetzold, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Management



WORLD

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THE BATTALION

Thursday, March 23, 2000

Election apathy runs high in Russia

Putin, politics viewed as having little impact on daily life

CHELBYABINSK, Russia (AP) — Tractors are the key to how Valery Pozdeyev will vote in Russia's presidential election on Sunday.

Look at the output at the Chelyabinsk Tractor Factory, a mini-metropolis of tin-roofed warehouses, grease puddles and conveyor belts that dominates the skyline and economy of the Siberian city where Pozdeyev is deputy director.

In 1989, during the communist era, the factory made 2,580 tractors a month. By 1998, output had plummeted to just eight tractors a month; now, 250 tractors a month roll off factory assembly lines.

Pozdeyev credits acting President Vladimir Putin with the recent growth and plans to vote for him.

In industrial regions across Russia, Putin is reaping political benefits from an improved economy that has convinced many that, as Pozdeyev puts it, "returning to the Soviet era is not the only path to prosperity."

Not that Chelyabinsk, 950 miles east of Moscow, is prosperous now; it's just not as poor as a few years ago, during the worst of Russia's post-Soviet recession.

The region's renounced nuclear research facilities sit idle. Residents who contracted cancer living downstream from nuclear test sites cannot

afford treatment. Major highways are slalom courses of months-old snow and ice because most snowplows are broken. Organized crime and corruption are rampant, as are deals for barter instead of cash.

Bus stops are plastered with posters offering jobs at metallurgy and machine-building factories, a welcome sign after years of layoffs.

Shoppers swarm an outdoor market offering cheap Chinese radios.

Putin has almost nothing to do with what's happening in Russia's economy.

Analysts tie the boost in domestic production to the 1998 ruble crash, which forced most consumers to abandon expensive imports and reach for long-forgotten homegrown brands.

While Putin is widely expected to win, some people in Russia's vast hinterland say whoever heads the government won't make any difference.

Around Russia's regions, many voters feel betrayed and alienated by Kremlin politics after a decade in which a small elite amassed fortunes while their salaries and savings shriveled.

"Moscow has nothing to do with us. The politicians there are corrupt and don't care what happens to us," Nina Fazeyeva said, tucking her white hair into her fuzzy headscarf and watching over her wares: homegrown beets and carrots piled on an overturned cardboard box

at an outdoor market.

Reformers say that frustration might not be such a bad thing for democracy.

"People are no longer waiting for salvation from Moscow. They realize they have to take more responsibility for themselves. That is a key step away from communism," said Oleg Kozmin, a

Chelyabinsk environmental activist

Regional leaders are wary of suggestions that he would strengthen central government.

"Moscow is an island that is far farther and farther from its suggestions," said Pyotr Sumin, the Chelyabinsk region's centrist governor.

Chelyabinsk has seen little paing for the presidential vote, only election billboards downtown for a minor candidate, Dzhabrailov, who most local voters never heard of.

Even without campaign posters, support for Putin in Russia's region is strong. Much of that is thanks to domination of regional media by the acting president with his ca attention.

It is also thanks to Putin's resolute, dependable leader after a year of upheavals.

"I no longer think about production levels," Pozdeyev said just want stability.

At the tractor factory, the once produced tanks for the Red Army in World War II is back in action, turning tank engines that are being used in the Chechnya war, and parts for tanks that Russia is selling to India.

Australia offended by NRA video

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — Australian officials demanded today that the National Rifle Association pull a video airing on its Website claiming that the nation's gun reform laws had backfired.

The video, presented as a television news story, claims that crimes involving guns have increased in Australia since the laws, which ban all semi-automatic rifles, semi-automatic shotguns and pump action shotguns, were introduced.

Federal Attorney General Daryl Williams said the NRA was using inaccurate statistics and urged the group to remove "any reference to Australia" from its Web site.

"I find it quite offensive that the NRA is using the very successful gun reform laws introduced in 1996 as the basis for promoting ownership of firearms in the United States," he said.

Williams sent a letter today to NRA president Charlton Heston, asking for the immediate withdrawal of misleading information.

Australia's gun-related homicide rate was 0.28 per 100,000 people in 1998 compared to 4 per 100,000 in the United States,

Williams wrote in the letter, which was distributed to reporters.

"There are many things that Australia can learn from the United States," he wrote. "How to manage firearm ownership is not one of them."

Australia adopted the gun laws after an April 1996 rampage by Martin Bryant, who opened fire with military-style rifles at the Port Arthur historic site in the state of Tasmania. Bryant, who killed 35 people and injured 19, is serving a life sentence.

More than 640,000 firearms were removed from the Australian community under a buyback program. The NRA video shows footage of guns being sawed to pieces, and thousands of destroyed guns piled on scrap heaps.

South Australia's Attorney General Trevor Griffin said he was not interviewed by the NRA and a quote from him was taken from a previous interview and used out of context.

The video claims that after the gun laws took effect, armed robbery in Australia went up 69 percent, assaults involving guns rose

28 percent, gun murders increased 19 percent and home invasions rose 21 percent. It does not give a source for the data.

Dr. Adam Graycar, director of the Australian Institute of Criminology, said the statistics were misleading.

He said the latest annual crime figures, for 1998, showed that assaults had increased but that most attacks did not involve guns. He said homicides decreased and were only rarely committed with guns.

Because there were so many other factors involved, such as population change, it was "enormously difficult" to draw conclusions about what effect the gun laws have had on the level of crime, Graycar said.

"It is a very long bow to draw," to claim the ban led to an increase in crime, he told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio.

"What we've got here is an American group with a heavy gun culture — guns figure very significantly in crime in the United States — trying to transpose that into Australia. There is no comparison," Graycar said.

Flood risk in Mozambique



Source: Compiled from AP wire reports

Neeson declines hometown award due to controversy

BALLYMENA, Northern Ireland (AP) — Actor Liam Neeson has turned down an award from his hometown, saying it would be "inappropriate" to accept given the rancor the honor has generated between local Catholics and Protestants.



NEESON

Neeson, 48, was offered the Freedom of the Borough of Ballymena ear-

lier this month. On Tuesday, he turned down the award because some local politicians from the Democratic Unionist Party, a hardline Protestant party, had voted against it.

Party members claimed Neeson made derogatory remarks about growing up in the predominantly Protestant town northwest of Belfast. Neeson was quoted in a U.S. magazine last year as saying he felt "second class" as a Catholic.

Neeson, best-known for his starring roles in "Schindler's List" and "Star Wars: Episode I — The Phantom Men-

ace," denied the accusations and said he was proud of Ballymena.

"Although I very much appreciate, and am greatly honored by, the majority decision of Ballymena council to offer me the Freedom of the Borough, I nonetheless believe that it would be inappropriate for me to accept in view of the stated opposition of some members and the resultant controversy," Neeson wrote in a statement.

In a letter to the city council, he added: "I will always remain very proud of my upbringing."

"I regard the enduring support

which I have received over the years from all sections of the community in Ballymena as being more than sufficient recognition of my success which I may have achieved as an actor."

James Currie, mayor of the Clontarf Antrim borough, called the situation "desperately sad."

"Ballymena and Northern Ireland have lost out," Currie said. "It has been a golden opportunity for a terrific boost for tourism. It is the people who voted against that I

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