Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for being

here to testify today.

Ambassador Swartz, in September 1993, Russian President

Yeltsin reportedly gave President Clinton an hour’s notice that he

was going to dissolve the Russian Parliament. During the May

1995 summit with Clinton, Yeltsin stated that there were no ongoing

military operations in the region of Chechnya, even as the

forces were attacking the Chechnyan villages. Through most of this

decade, while the Yeltsin government has been denying that Russia

was allowing any proliferation of dangerous weapons technology to

Iran, it appears that there has, in fact, been proliferation.

In June of this year, Russian peacekeeping troops suddenly deployed

from Bosnia into Kosovo, while Yeltsin and the other Russian

leaders are saying no, it is really not happening; and then

Yeltsin later, I think even publicly, commended the general that

did it, did the surprise move.

Finally, recently the Russian Government said that they had no

intention of mounting a military operation in Chechnya, but in fact

they did so.

My question to you, Mr. Ambassador, is why have these apparent

lies been overlooked by the Administration and by this government?

Is everyone naive, or is it lack of sophistication? What is the

reason now? That is my question.

I have just been on this Committee for a short period of time. I

have to do a lot more reading than probably other Members who

have so much institutional knowledge. This is a book that I read

recently written by a U.S. Berkeley professor, ‘‘The Soviet Tragedy:

The History of Socialism in Russia, 1917 to 1991,’’ by Martin

Malia. But after reading this book—and I was in the military 30

years ago or 30 years ago plus 30 days when I got out—I was reminded

that there were some really bad people running the Soviet

government over a period of many years, and they did some really

bad things, lying being the least of all of what they did. That was

just routine for them. Has anyone read this book? Is anyone aware

of the fact that they do, in fact—their leadership lie and cheat and

steal? I think there are some wonderful Russian people, but their

leadership has been bad.

My question is, why have these lies been overlooked by our government?

Thank you.

That is a plausible explanation, I would presume.

Did you have any comment?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Presiding.] The Committee will now reconvene.

We have a smaller group. Now we can really get something done.

I always enjoy these meetings. I have a little game I play, trying

to decide who is here from the other government, whether, it is

China or Iran or Russia. I really would like to get them up, but

in lieu of that, we will follow standard procedure. I am not a real

politician, in case you couldn’t tell.

Mr. Timmerman, you have written in an article in the ‘‘American

Spectator’’ of April 1998 that Gordon Oehler, a career intelligence

officer who headed the CIA’s Nonproliferation Center and who had

briefed congressional Committees on Russia proliferation to Iran,

may have been forced into early retirement as a result of high-level

pressure from the Administration.

Can you back up that allegation or can you explain more, sir,

give us more detail?

Thank you.

Mr. Campbell.

Thank you, Mr. Campbell.

Dr. Waller, you have written about the bilateral commission with

the Russian Prime Minister headed by Vice President Al Gore, referred

to generically as the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission. How

influential a role did the Vice President have or did he play in U.S.

relations under this Administration due to his leadership of this

commission? That is my first question.

Second question: In a ‘‘Washington Post’’ article of August the

27th of this year an unnamed advisor of the Vice President was

quoted as saying Gore clearly chaired this commission, but it was

Administration policy, not his policy. Do you agree with this assessment

of the Vice President’s role? Basically both my questions are

directed at Vice President Gore’s influence and basically his effect

on this commission and on our relationship with the the Russian

Government.

Another question: Mr. Wayne Merry, a former

State Department official in Moscow, has written that every program

or project associated with the commission’s meetings had to

be deemed a, quote, ‘‘success.’’ He argues that the commission

should have been disbanded long ago, making a case that it was

part and parcel of the Administration’s interest to have State Department

personnel tell, in his words, that its policy is a success.

Do you agree with that assessment?

So you have no argument with that——

Good.

Mr. Timmerman, in your earlier article for the ‘‘American Spectator’’

you referred to a ‘‘Washington Post’’ profile of Deputy Secretary

Strobe Talbott, a statement in the article to the effect that

no career diplomat should think of opposing his policy line toward

Russia. What, in your view, are the sources of Mr. Talbott’s influence

over policy toward Russia, and does the Deputy Secretary

have greater influence over policy toward Russia than former Secretary

of State Warren Christopher or current Secretary of State

Madeline Albright?

Mr. Cannon, how much influence has the U.S.-

Russia Business Council had in setting the agenda of past meetings

of the so-called Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission, and how do

you believe outside organizations can influence the agenda of the

commission?

I will repeat that. One, how much influence has the U.S.-Russia

Business Council had in setting the agenda of past meetings of the

so-called Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission; and second, how do you

believe outside organizations can influence the agenda of the commission?

Good. Thank you.

I have a personal comment and then a question for the three of

you. Due to my age and my past time in the military, I still have

somewhat of a concern about the people that are running the government

now, because they were all educated in Moscow and came

with the old Soviet mentality. I feel that past political model and

that past economic model have been totally discredited. But even

though I have only been to one city and spent about a week there,

in St. Petersburg—it is a beautiful city, the Russian people I met

were wonderful, nice people, obviously a lot of them are very

bright, well educated—I can’t help but feel that they are not going

to really put their country together and have a democracy as a po-

litical model, a market-driven economy, until this generation is off

the scene.

Do you feel that that is a correct position or is there any hope

that these people that were educated—part of the old problem,

maybe midlevel, but still part of the old problem—do you think

they can be salvaged or salvage the remnants of the Soviet Union?

Mr. Cannon, and really for all of you, one final

question from me, What will be the future of Russia if U.S. relations

continue along the same track, if we don’t change the policy?

Thank you. We appreciate your testimony and

your participation in this hearing today. It has been very informative.

Your thoughts and comments I can assure you will contribute

to this Committee’s understanding of the problem. Hopefully,

the Administration and maybe the House will review its policy

toward Russia and, in the long run, do what is best for the Rus-

sian people, for the American taxpayers and for everyone that is

influenced by these two nations.

Thank you very much. The meeting is adjourned.