

[From the Des Moines Register, June 26, 1996]

A MARK OF FRIENDSHIP

There are corn and hogs, but a lesser known state hallmark is Iowa's long-term relationship with the former Soviet Union that has continued with present-day Russia.

The essential ingredient: people—Russians and Iowans who have moved to a productive common ground where international bridges are built from a shared interest in agriculture and progress.

Among the Iowans is John Chrystal, a 70-year-old Coon Rapids resident, Iowa banker and agricultural adviser to the Soviet Union and now Russia.

Chrystal is a charming and insightful fountain of memories about meetings with Mikhail Gorbachev, observations of Soviet communism and of Russians coming up to him just to touch the fabric of his—at the time—all-polyester wardrobe.

On Monday, Chrystal was given the highest award that Russians bestow on foreigners: the Order of Friendship.

Praised by the Russian ambassador to the United States, Yuli Vorontsov, Chrystal joins a noted group of Order of Friendship honorees that includes South African President Nelson Mandela.

It's proud recognition for Chrystal, but also for Iowa and its contribution to the futures of two great nations.

[From the Nebraska World-Herald, July 7, 1996]

RUSSIA FOUND A GOOD FRIEND IN OUTSPOKEN IOWAN

(By Rainbow Rowell)

COON RAPIDS, IOWA.—A statue of Lenin that once sat in Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev's office now sits in John Chrystal's Coon Rapids farmhouse.

It's as much of a surprise to see it there as it is to meet an agricultural adviser and friend of the Russian people in this small Iowa town.

Chrystal has spent 36 years cultivating a relationship with the former Soviet Union. Last month, Russia awarded him the Order of Friendship, the highest honor it bestows on foreigners.

Chrystal has become an expert on the affairs of the Soviet Union. He said he's an accidental expert. He never had any particular interest in the nation, never was especially interested in foreign affairs.

And he certainly didn't expect the Russians to ask for his help. Yet that's almost exactly what happened.

Chrystal folded his 6-foot-2-inch frame into a living room chair last week and started talking about the history of his unique friendship.

A Soviet delegation came to Iowa in 1956, looking for trade. They found Chrystal's uncle, Roswell "Bob" Garst, and a whole lot of seed corn. Garst visited the Soviet Union a few times but didn't feel like going when he was invited in 1960.

So Garst sent Chrystal, who never had been east of South Bend, Ind., in his place.

Chrystal thought that first visit would be his last, he said. Communist officials took him on a tour of the country's key agricultural areas and he was critical of their farming methods.

Surely, Chrystal recalled, the Soviets wouldn't ask him to return. But they did, again and again.

And after every trip, he wondered if there would be another invitation, never really counting on it.

Chrystal didn't quit his many day jobs to become a diplomat. When he wasn't visiting the Soviet Union—or later, Russia and the

other independent states—Chrystal worked as partner on the family farm, a successful banker and a Democratic party leader.

"I've been very fortunate," Chrystal said. "People that I've been associated with let me do other things. Maybe they wanted to get rid of me. That never occurred to me until this second."

Slim chance. His colleagues described Chrystal as a rare patriot, a man who is at once intelligent and humble, able and energetic. At 70, he is chairman of the Iowa Savings Bank in Coon Rapids and serves on many boards.

Bill Hess, the bank's president, said Chrystal is "Tops. Mr. Integrity, spelled with capital T's."

"He's a wonderful human being," Valentina Slater Fominykh said. "Your country must be very proud."

Ms. Fominykh, who now lives in Des Moines, first met Chrystal in 1989. She was a Soviet foreign-language professor, part of a delegation to Iowa.

She described Chrystal as a fair man who isn't afraid to express his opinions.

People respect that, Dale Dooley said. Dooley of Johnston, Iowa, worked with Chrystal to help form Iowa Transfers System, now Shazam Inc.

The company almost failed, Dooley said, but Chrystal's confidence, contacts and know-how saved it.

"It amazed me," he said, "the depth of that man's knowledge and complexity."

Chrystal has vision, Ms. Fominykh said, and that vision helped him foresee major changes in the Soviet Union.

"He was a loyal friend when friendships with the Soviet Union were not in vogue yet," she said.

Chrystal downplays any risks he may have taken by befriending the communist nation. When he talks about the Cold War, it hardly seems like enough to send Americans scrambling for their bomb shelters.

"I don't think we were ever going to attack Russia," Chrystal said. "I don't think we're an attacking country, and Russia is isolationist."

He said he never hated communists, never thought they were an evil people. He saw their empire as one on the cusp of great change.

"I never questioned what I was doing," Chrystal said. "I never questioned that they would have to change and would be an enormous market for us."

His willingness and frankness made him a valued adviser to the rapidly changing Soviet government. Chrystal is widely known and well-respected there, Ms. Fominykh said.

"People listen to what Chrystal has to say," she said.

The Soviets respected his opinion because they knew he was independent from the U.S. government, that he was speaking only for himself, Chrystal said.

That respect brought him close to leaders such as former Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and Gorbachev. He speaks easily about the two and their roles in history. He speaks with confidence and with the insight of an eyewitness.

Chrystal never counted his many visits. Some years, he didn't visit at all. Other years, he made three or four trips. He figures he has spent about a year and a half there total.

Yet he never learned to speak Russian. He has picked up some. If the conversation is about agriculture, he probably can follow along.

"I never thought that I would be going back so much," Chrystal said, explaining why he never learned. "I was a farmer and a banker and I would have had to drive to Ames to take lessons. Maybe I was lazy."

Chrystal said he sees his role as agricultural adviser coming to an end.

"I don't think I have as much to offer anymore," he said.

Russia will get along fine without him, he said. The country is becoming more and more stable. Those who predict a return to communism, he said, should consider all the nation has accomplished since the Soviet Union dissolved.

The still-struggling government needs independence, he said.

"I think they'll succeed, and I think they'll succeed on their own. The faster the better for us."

He already sees that independence growing, he said, giving as an example an agribusiness seminar he attended in Moscow in May.

"For the first time, I met young people who were talking a new kind of economic language," who were ambitious and determined.

After an hour of talking and tracing the history of his ties to Russia, Chrystal looked around his living room, at the many gifts and souvenirs from his travels—at the paintings, the carved clock and the colorful rug. He has many Russian friendships that will outlive his official relationship with the government.

"My impression is that there will be a new critic," he said, smiling, "which is fine." ●

SALUTE TO NATIONAL REHABILITATION WEEK

● Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise today to salute the founding and success of National Rehabilitation Week which celebrates the accomplishments of people with disabilities and focuses on continuing efforts to improve the lives of people with disabilities. This year marks the 20th anniversary of National Rehabilitation Week, and as we celebrate this week, it is important that we take time to applaud the individuals who live, work, and succeed with these disabilities everyday. National Rehabilitation Week serves as a reminder that it is our responsibility, as legislators, to insure that those individuals with disabilities are able to enjoy the same freedoms and privileges as all Americans.

While National Rehabilitation Week is normally held in September, it was moved up this year to August 15-25 to coincide with the Paralympic Games being held in Atlanta. Both events bring together Americans who strive to overcome barriers and herald the victories of Americans with disabilities.

The Paralympic Games—which have coincided with the Olympic Games since their inception in 1960—were started by Dr. Ludwig Guttmann, a doctor in Post World War II London who dreamed that sports could be used to improve the quality of life for people with spinal cord injuries. It took him 12 years to achieve his goal of creating a worldwide sports competition like the Olympics for disabled men and women.

Like the Paralympics in which more than 4,000 athletes from over 100 countries will compete this year, National Rehabilitation Week will celebrate the strength of human perseverance over

physical disabilities. As chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Disability Policy, I have been fortunate to have witnessed that strength firsthand.

The last 20 years have brought many milestones for Americans with disabilities. We have learned the value of rehabilitation for the disabled, and we have seen the glory of a dream coming true with the help of a rehab professional and sheer determination. We have also watched as perceptions of people with disabilities have been shattered by the perseverance of those people with disabilities and rehabilitation professionals who never shied away from a challenge.

Mr. President, please join me in saluting the 49 million Americans with disabilities and the countless rehabilitation professionals who take the time and care to reach for these dreams and shatter the myths. National Rehabilitation Week continues to gain momentum. This year, more than 5,000 organizations are observing this event nationwide, including Health-South Hospitals in my home state of Tennessee. This is a week to applaud the accomplishments of people with disabilities and to recognize what still must be done.●

CRIME PREVENTION

● Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the growing problem of juvenile crime, and the failure of this Congress to adequately address it. As the former chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice, I am particularly alarmed by the growth of juvenile violence today, and the fact that we are doing little to slow this trend with investments in our young people.

At a time when crime is generally falling, a growing number of young people are becoming the perpetrators—and victims—of violence in America. Juvenile offenders are now responsible for 14 percent of all violent crime and 25 percent of all property crime. Criminologists report that 14 to 24-year-old-black males, who represent just 1 percent of the population, comprise 17 percent of all homicide victims and 30 percent of all offenders. Arguments that used to be solved with fists in a school yard are now being settled with Uzi's and Tech 9 semi-automatic weapons. Some schools are starting to resemble prisons, with metal detectors, armed guards, and bars on the windows.

This is not the healthy environment that will nurture a new generation. Instead, this is a recipe for disaster—a formula for creating an army of young criminals whose only future is to commit more heinous and vicious crimes with each passing year. And this army is likely to expand: there are now more pre-teenagers in America—39 million under 10 years old—than at any other time in the past generation.

There are many ways that society can combat this juvenile crime trend—and I support all of them. First, we can

get tough on the most violent juveniles—trying them as adults and locking them up—so that serious crimes receive serious punishment. Second, we can improve our ability to catch all juvenile offenders through more vigilant law enforcement. Accomplishing these goals requires more prisons and more police, and Congress is providing billions to build penitentiaries and fund 100,000 new police officers through the Crime Act of 1994.

However, a third part of the Crime Act calls for a different approach. Instead of spending all the money on prisons and police, Congress wanted some of it, about 20 percent, to be spent on preventing crime before it happens.

Now, crime prevention used to be a dirty phrase in Washington, something that so-called liberals touted and conservatives criticized as a strategy for coddling criminals. I hope we have moved past those simplistic arguments and are prepared to recognize the value of crime prevention programs. For years we have heard evidence about the value of investing some funds in crime prevention, and the fact that these programs measurably reduce crime. More recently, numerous studies have documented how small investments in a troubled young person's life will not only save that child from a life of crime and misery, but will also save society thousands of dollars in court costs and prison fees. Most important, these investments protect the lives of citizens and prevent tragic crimes before they occur.

There are literally hundreds of examples—I'll note only two here. A few years ago Fort Worth, TX, initiated a program called Code Blue. The program offered year round structured social, education and recreational activities for young people. Kids not only engaged in sports, but received homework assistance and help with college and GED preparation. Five community centers were established to help young people get on the right track and make a difference in the local neighborhoods.

According to the Fort Worth Police Department, crime dropped by 28 percent within a one mile radius of each center. Gang crimes declined by 30 percent city wide in the first 6 months of 1995. This was achieved at a cost of \$10 a year per student—that compares with the \$40,000 a year it costs to incarcerate a juvenile offender.

The results are the same across the country. A program called Children-At-Risk [CAR] coordinates social service agencies, police, and school officials to target intensive education, counseling, and family services at 11–13 year olds. A National Institute of Justice quasi-experimental study in five cities found that the CAR test group had almost half the number of contacts with police as the non-participant control group, and had less than half the number of contacts with the juvenile court as the control group.

We have seen these kinds of case studies proving the value of crime pre-

vention programs for years. But, Mr. President, we are now seeing comprehensive reports demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of crime prevention. Last month the Rand Corp. released a 2-year study comparing the value of investing in crime prevention versus tougher penalties and incarceration. It compared prevention programs such as graduation incentives, delinquent supervision, and parent training to a "three-strikes-and-you're-out" law. The study found that crime prevention was three times more cost-effective than increased punishment.

The study concluded that a State government could prevent between 157 and 258 crimes a year by investing \$1 million in crime prevention, compared with preventing 60 crimes by investing the same amount in incarceration.

Law enforcement officers—the troops on the front lines in this battle—are also calling on Congress to fund prevention programs. A recent Northeastern University survey of more than 500 police chiefs and sheriffs found that three-quarters of them believe the best way to reduce crime and violence is to increase investment in prevention programs. This is not surprising: it confirms what we found out last year when we polled Wisconsin police chiefs and sheriffs: almost 90 percent supported the Crime Act's prevention programs. These front line crime fighters know—better than anyone else—that crime prevention works.

Mr. President, let me be clear on this point. I am not advocating that we commit all our resources to crime prevention and no money to punishment and incarceration. Like the police chiefs and sheriffs, I support the Crime Act funding formula which allocates 80 percent for punishment, tougher penalties, and more police, as well as 20 percent for crime prevention.

Unfortunately, in the last 2 years since that legislation was passed, Congress has not lived up to its promise to adequately fund crime prevention programs and is actually moving toward eliminating the few programs that it has funded. Just this week, two bills were reported out of Committee which either defund or eliminate virtually all effective prevention programs. As a member of both relevant committees, I spoke out against these cuts in committee, and will work to reverse them on the Senate floor.

First, the Senate Appropriations Committee voted out the Commerce, State, Justice appropriations funding measure for 1997. Despite mounting evidence of the cost effectiveness of crime prevention, this bill fails to fund more than \$500 million in prevention programs authorized under the Crime Act. While I commend the drafters for appropriating \$20 million for Boys and Girls Clubs, this is a fraction of the prevention Congress authorized 2 years ago.

During the same week, the Senate Judiciary Committee passed the new 4-year authorization for the Juvenile