Timeline of Yuli M. Vorontsov’s Life and Career
Prepared by the Honorary Russian Consulate General of Russia in Colorado

Childhood and Early Life


1939- Vorontsov’s father is posted as a naval attaché to Berlin (Russian Wikipedia Article, Shustov, 2004)

1940- Yuli Vorontsov and his mother join Vorontsov’s father in Berlin (Russian Wikipedia Article)

1941- In the month before the outbreak of war between Germany and the USSR, Mikhail Vorontsov sends Yuli Vorontsov and Elena Vorontsova back to the USSR. They leave on a train to Turkey, and then re-enter the USSR via the Turkey-USSR border (Shustov, 2004).

1942- During the war, Yuli Vorontsov attends a naval military school as a cadet.

1947- (Presumed year of enrollment, based on age and length of schooling) Vorontsov enters the Moscow State Institute of International Relations.

1947-52- Meets Faina Andreevna (Maiden name unknown), future wife (Shustov, 2004).

1951-52- Vorontsov is the editor of the international affairs section of MGIMO’s newspaper, Mezhdunarodnik (Pladyshev, International Affairs 2005).

1952- Graduates from MGIMO (MSIIR).

(Soviet) Career and Personal Life
1952- Enters the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and after a short training period, receives first assignment in New York (Shustov). Serves as Expert, Chief Expert and then Attaché of 2nd European Section of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PMUN, 2007)

1954- Attache and then 3rd Secretary at the Permanent Mission of the USSR to the United Nations

1958- Second Secretary, First Secretary and then Counselor at the Section of International Organizations of the USSR Ministry of Soviet Affairs (PMUN, 2007)

Also during this year, Vorontsov is a member of the Soviet delegation to the "Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests" in Geneva, Switzerland. It is here that he learns the value of listening to the positions of other countries and making sure both sides fully understand each other and differing points of view (Shustov, 2004).

1963- Counselor at the Permanent Mission to the USSR to the United Nations (PMUN, 2007)

1965- Deputy Head of the Section of International Organizations at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PMUN, 2007). According to colleague Vladimir Shustov, it is here that he works on issues related to disarmament, which prepare him for the missile and disarmament negotiations later in his career (Shustov, 2004).

1966- Counselor and then Minister-Counselor at the Embassy of the USSR to the USA (PMUN, 2007)

June 8
ACDA Director Foster learns from Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin that Vorontsov will be made Dobrynin’s new counselor, in contrast to previous reports that Vorontsov would be assigned to Geneva (Foster, 1966).

September 9
Vorontsov goes to see George Bunn of the ACDA to discuss nuclear non-proliferation efforts and the U.S. position on the issue (Bunn, 1966).
October 3
Vorontsov goes to see George Bunn of the ACDA to discuss nuclear non-proliferation efforts and the U.S. position on the issue following meetings in New York (Bunn, 1966).

1967-

January 17
Vorontsov goes to see Bunn again to discuss nuclear treaty matters (Keeny, 1967).

March 18
Vorontsov expresses concern about the feasibility of monitoring weapons levels and how that may affect negotiations. His concerns are noted by the U.S., but not thought to be damaging to negotiations (Hughes, 1967).

June 20
Vorontsov arranges a lunch meeting with a U.S. official, Nathaniel Davis, and spoke “personally and informally, and not bearing any official proposal” on the possibility of arranging a summit between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. during Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin’s upcoming trip to New York (Davis, 1967).

June 23
Vorontsov participates in meetings (proposed June 20) at Glassboro, New Jersey between President Johnson and Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin (Muromcew 1967). During a meeting between Secretary of State Rusk and Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko, Vorontsov is named as the delegation’s non-proliferation expert (Rostow, 1967).

June 27
Vorontsov participates in a high-level non-proliferation meeting with Foreign Minister Gromyko, Ambassador Dobrynin, and Secretary Rusk (Akalovsky, 1967).

1968-
During his work in the U.S., Vorontsov participates at some level in Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, arguing Soviet positions (State News Service, 2008).
Around this time period, Vorontsov is also deemed to have played a major role in assisting Anatoliy Dobrynin in negotiating and developing the SALT I treaty. Neither man was officially a part of the Soviet SALT I negotiation team, but worked towards it anyways (Committee on Foreign Affairs, 1979)

April 15
During a conversation between a National Security Council officer and a secretary of the Soviet Embassy, the latter reported that Vorontsov had already visited Mexico and might shortly be visiting Brazil and a number of other Latin/South American countries to drum up support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty. He also referred to Vorontsov at the time as the Embassy’s “Economic Counselor” (Wright, 1967).

August 19
Vorontsov meets with State Department officials to discuss the timing and content of proposed Strategic Missile Talks (Shaw, 1968).

1970-
While working at the Embassy of the USSR to the USA, Vorontsov was tasked with conducting the “100-years since the birth of V.I. Lenin” reception/ceremony at the Embassy, a politically significant event (and task).

-It also seems that throughout this period, Vorontsov was meeting with Kissinger and other US/State Department officials regularly (Kissinger Papers and various USG documents)

-August 4th
Vorontsov calls on Henry Kissinger. He is optimistic about the seemingly improving nature of US/Soviet relations. He imparts that he wants to reaffirm the 1962 Kennedy-Khrushchev understanding of 1962 regarding Cuba. This was on of the events said to set the stage for the Cienfuegos Crisis (Garthoff, 1983).

-August 7th
On this date, Vorontsov received confirmation from Kissinger about the reaffirmation. This was a very coy move on the part of the Russians. No official understanding had ever come to pass in 1962, but the state department took the Russians at their word. This functioned to get the Americans to agree to
something (not to invade Cuba) by stating it as fact in the first place (Garthoff, 1983).

- This agreement was said to begin the Soviet-US détente of the 1970’s. Increasing technology (submarines, reconnaissance aircraft, etc) provided ample opportunity for both entities to test this agreement, but all issues were settled diplomatically (Garthoff, 1983).

December 3
Vorontsov has a conversation over lunch with NSC staff member Helmut Sonnenfeld, in which they discuss disarmament, bilateral relations, security arrangements and other matters (Sonnenfeld, 1969).

1971-

March 26
During a conversation between Secretary Kissinger and Ambassador Dobrynin, Dobrynin tells Kissinger that if there are any technical questions (while Dobrynin is away in Moscow), Kissinger can direct them to Vorontsov. They also agree that Vorontsov and another State Department man can work out details between them on matters involving Berlin (Kissinger, 1971).

August 25
Vorontsov is briefed by Assistant Secretary Atherton on U.S. efforts to create peace between Israel and the Arab States (Kissinger, 1971).

December 21
Vorontsov meets with Soviet defector Anatoly Chebotaryev at the State Department to give him correspondence from his family. At the meeting Chebotaryev told Vorontsov that he had come to the U.S. of his own free will (Johnson, 1971).

December 24
Vorontsov called on Deputy Assistant Secretary Richard Davies and informed him that Chebotaryev was at the Soviet Embassy and had expressed a desire to return to the Soviet Union. Vorontsov was informed that INS procedure would
have to be followed and that Chebotaryev would need to be interviewed by officials before he could leave (Johnson, 1971)

December 26
Vorontsov attends Chebotaryev’s INS interview (though has to wait outside) at JFK airport, and lodges a protest after waiting 45 minutes for a decision to be made (Johnson, 1971).

1972-
February 1
Vorontsov approaches U.S. State Department staff to address the matter of a Soviet family who had lost all of their documents while in the U.S., who the Soviets wished to return to the Soviet Union (Davies 1972). It is interesting that Vorontsov would have been tasked with this, given that at the time, he was not involved in consular affairs and had spent much of his time working on disarmament issues up until this point.

1975-
November 11
In a telegram to U.S. embassies, Henry Kissinger seeks confirmation of statements made by Vorontsov that Soviet Premier and Politburo member Kosygin was about to be replaced, shortly after Vorontsov made statements that Kosygin was ‘irreplaceable’ (Kissinger, 1975).

1976-
February 7
Vorontsov speaks with Arthur Hartman, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, about the Nicholas Shadrin (a Soviet defector working to the U.S. who was suspected to have been kidnapped by the KGB while in Vienna) case. Vorontsov denied that the Soviet Union had Shadrin in their custody (Shadrin, 1977).

1977- Deputy Head of the Foreign Policy Planning Office of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, member of the Ministry Board and then Ambassador of the USSR to India (PMUN, 2007)
- Vorontsov is first “professional” ambassador posted to India by the USSR. Strengthens USSR-India ties significantly, and coordinates Leonid Brezhnev’s visit to India. Of all of his postings, Vorontsov remembers this one the most fondly (Shustov, 2004).

- Shortly after Vorontsov’s arrival in India as ambassador, Soviet Prime Minister A.N. Kosygin visits India, where a broad 10-15 year agreement on relevant scientific/technical and trade/economic topics was signed between the two countries (Shustov, 2004).

- During this year, Vorontsov also participates in the Belgrade Conference on East-West Cooperation, which follows the 1975 conference establishing the Helsinki Final Act. Vorontsov is the chief Soviet delegate at the conference and has a difficult time representing the Soviet commitment to human rights as Western delegates are able to exploit rights abuses (Chicago Tribune, 1977).

1980 - February 2nd
Met with Muhammad Ali in India while Ali was in the country visiting some of his charitable foundations. Ali was disgusted with recent Soviet actions, and was being used as a diplomatic tool by the US State Department. The US State Department wanted Ali to visit Africa and speak to leaders about boycotting the 1980 Moscow Olympics. Vorontsov decided to catch Ali in India to try to see if he could convince Ali not to go. He didn’t succeed in stopping the trip, but did succeed in drawing out the meeting so long that Ali’s itinerary was disrupted (Wenn and Wenn, 1993).

- Vorontsov headed the USSR delegation to the Belgrade Conference during this year (UN, 2000).

1983 - Ambassador of the USSR to France (PMUN, 2007)

1984 - Arranges for the transfer of the remains of famed Russian opera singer Fyodor Ivanovich Shalyapin from Paris to Moscow, a move greatly appreciated by Russian intellectuals (Shustov, 2004).

1985 - Arranges highly successful visit of M. Gorbachev to France, Gorbachev’s first European (continent) visit as Chairman of CPSU (Shustov, 2004).
1986- First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR (PMUN, 2007). While in this post, arranges for Gorbachev’s first visit to India and accompanies him on his trip. Vorontsov also participates in the development of the Delhi Declaration, signed by Rajiv Gandhi, which advocates the development of a non-nuclear world (Shustov, 2004).

-Prior to receiving this post, it was rumored that Vorontsov would be made Soviet Ambassador to the US in Western press sources (AP, Washington Post, 1986).

1987- June 7th
Vorontsov addressed the issue of Soviet ships in the Persian Gulf region and two sticking points on missile treaties with the United States. Vorontsov assured the US that there will be no additions to the Russian fleet in the Persian Gulf. Iran and Iraq, who were at war at this point, expressed concern over a growing superpower presence in the area. Vorontsov acknowledged that such a presence in a war zone could quickly develop into a more serious conflict. As for the issue of missile treaties, Vorontsov acknowledged two sticking points. The Soviets were not willing to take missiles away from all US allies (Japan) and the US was not willing to move missiles from Alaska, which were in range of Russia (Lewis, 1987).

- At some time in June, Vorontsov made a trip to Iraq to discuss ways to end the Iran-Iraq war (State Department Cable, 1987).

-July 8
Vorontsov visits the U.S. Ambassador to Moscow to discuss the Iran-Iraq War and the instability the war was causing in the region. He made a number of proposals to the ambassador, such as a withdrawal of the U.S. Navy from the Gulf, which he suggested would increase stability by removing an opportunity for Iranian provocation (Combs, 1987).

-July 14
U.S. Embassy in Moscow briefs Vorontsov on U.S. efforts to secure Chinese support for attempts to resolve the Iran-Iraq War within the U.N. Security Council (Combs, 1987).
Vorontsov meets with U.S. Ambassador Matlock to praise and criticize U.S. actions with a recent Security Council decision on the Iran-Iraq War (Matlock, 1987).

Vorontsov comes to meet Ambassador Matlock to discuss the Iran-Iraq War. He says that Iran has been much more flexible (in its positions) than Iraq, and that the U.S. should try to pressure Iraq to be comparably flexible (Matlock, 1987).

Vorontsov was part of an inner circle of advisors that convinced Gorbachev to agree to a global ban on medium-range and short-range nuclear missiles (Taubman, 1987). Vorontsov plays a major role in this treaty (Shustov, 2004).

Vorontsov visited Iraq as Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister, where he met with Saddam Hussein and other Iraqi officials, briefing them on Soviet policy towards and efforts to end the Iran-Iraq War. Afterwards, Vorontsov went to Kuwait (Howell, 1987 [198711xx Cable]).

Starting in 1988, shared the Office of Ambassador of the USSR to Afghanistan (PMUN, 2007)

In this post, Vorontsov has two goals – to ensure the rapid, but dignified, pullout of Soviet forces and to ensure that they are not attacked or bombed while withdrawing. To this end, he holds negotiations with various mujahedeen leaders in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan (Shustov, 2004).

Vorontsov was clearly the decision maker concerning Russian operations in Afghanistan. He was heralded internationally for the quick pullout of over 100,000 troops. After this however, he was dealt the complicated tasks of trying to ensure that the USSR retained some influence in the region, trying to quell rebel insurgence, and trying to manage a power struggle between those hoping to take over the new government that was to be installed. He was distrustful of US attempts to open talks, and seemed to resist any international influence. He was confident that the
USSR’s plan would bring peace, and ensured that developing a competent reconciliatory government was his top priority (Lamb, 1989).

February 21
Vorontsov heads a meeting between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. in Osobnyak where Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Central America are discussed (U.S. Memo, 1988).

1989-
- Early in the year, Alliance (insurgents) suspends talks on the Soviet withdrawal with Vorontsov due to Soviet insistence that the communist government be in a post-war government (Burns, 1989).

June 19th
Vorontsov was overseeing the Soviet pullout from Afghanistan. In an interview with the Financial Times, Vorontsov displays how much control he has over the situation in Afghanistan. He assures the reporter that Afghanistan will be turned over to a reconciliatory government and that the US does not need to deal behind the Soviets’ backs to ensure that a non-communist regime is installed. He also mentions that the Soviet Union does not want to lose all influence in the area but that this sentiment will not affect governmental proceedings.

Post-Soviet Career and Personal Life

1990- Permanent Representative of the USSR to the UN (PMUN, 2007)


1991- After the Gulf War, Vorontsov advocates that arms supplied to the Middle East should be curtailed in order to prevent regional conflict in the wake of Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait (New York Times, 1991).

- During this period, Vorontsov is instrumental to Russia following the collapse of the USSR. He successfully preserves Russia’s permanent seat on the UN Security Council.
Councill, deflecting efforts by other countries to use the Soviet Union’s break-up to remove Russia from this position (Shustov, 2004).

-During this period (presumably throughout the 1990s) Vorontsov is privately despondent and disillusioned by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the status of Russia in the world, and despises Boris Yeltsin and his leadership of the country. However, he keeps this private and is outwardly optimistic and positive (DAP interview with Aleksandr Ilitchev, 2009).

1992- February- Vorontsov is appointed State Adviser to the President of Russia on Foreign Affairs

-June 20th
The US and Russia were attempting to cooperate economically at this time. Russia’s banking system needed modernization, and Vorontsov was the head the Russian side of a commission with this goal. He cooperated with banking leaders throughout the US in the attempt to install high-technology systems in the Russian banking system (Quint, 1992).

1994- Appointed Ambassador of Russia to the USA (PMUN, 2007)

1997- Vorontsov participates in a conference of ambassadors in Salt Lake City. While there, he mentions that he is close with Madeleine Albright (interesting compared with Aleksandr Ilitchev’s remarks on her not liking him) (Salt Lake Tribune, 1997).

- Vorontsov also stresses the need for increased U.S. investment in Russia during the year at various talks and conferences (Salt Lake Tribune, Columbus Dispatch, 1997).

June
Vorontsov comes to Denver, CO as part of Boris Yeltsin’s entourage to participate in the “Summit of the Eight” meetings. More information in Dr. Palmieri’s letter collection to be added.

1998- February 2nd
Vorontsov is Russia’s representative at the signing of the space station agreements. Each participating representative gave remarks, and Vorontsov stressed a new era of cooperation in space exploration. He considered rivalries a thing of the past, and pledged that Russia would be a full contributor to the construction of the space station starting with the first module (Vorontsov, 1998).

-March 10th
Vorontsov writes an article for the Washington post in which he explains that Russia as a whole is against NATO expansion. Giving several reasons, the most notable is that NATO expansion feels very similar to historically western-centric policies that were intended to “contain Russia.” He says that this encroachment has severe psychological effects on civilian Russians, who believed military threats from the west to be a thing of the past. Vorontsov also mentions that ratification of the Start II treaty may be impossible if NATO continues to expand because ratification would take away some of Russia’s defensive measures. Other progress that has been made between the east and west will also erode (CDI, 1998).

-July 9th
During economic crisis, he assures his countrymen that he will not devaluate the Ruble, a move that would lead to further economic crisis. He asks for the world to be understanding. At this same time, urged Russian-American economic relations to push forward despite shakeups in several very high level Russian positions (AP, 1998).

-Also, from 1998-2000, he served as adviser to the President of the Russian Federation of Issues of Foreign Politics (Biography page on ICR site)

1999- Special Envoy of the Secretary General for CIS, also named Chairman of the Board at AIG’s Russian-American Investment Bank (PMUN, 2007; AIG, 1999)
- Also becomes President of the International Roerich’s Center at this time.
- Gives an interview to the Moscow Times detailing how the Soviet Union got involved in Afghanistan, and what could have or should have been done differently (Moscow Times, 1999).

2000- Shared the Post of the Secretary General’s High Level Coordinator for compliance by Iraq with its obligations to Kuwait (PMUN, 2007)
This was the work that Vorontsov focused on until his death. In fact, he returned from Kuwait only a few days before his death. The work, which was mandated by two UN resolutions, focused on returning Kuwaiti people and property to Kuwait. The resolutions also forbade the killing of Kuwaiti nationals by Iraq nationals. This was considered Humanitarian work, which seemed to be much different from the work that he did in his previous posts. In his previous posts, he was in positions where he had to solely advocate the interests of Russia and the USSR. Here, his seems very selfless and absent of the competition that pervades international relations. His work was well received by his colleagues at the UN. Press releases tell us that his visits to Iraq and Kuwait were encouraged and that he had managed, since 2000, to get Iraq to cooperate with the mandates (UN; 2000, 2003, 2004). He also made reports to the UN General Assembly and Security Council on this project and his efforts to create Iraqi compliance.

October 6th
At this time, Vorontsov is also the president of the Russian American Business Cooperation Council, which tries to strengthen economic ties between the two nations (Interfax, 2000).

2001 - March 3rd
Vorontsov agreed with Russia’s foreign minister on the subject of favorable terms of trade for American companies in Russia needed to be developed, and vice versa. He also agreed to try to diplomatically sponsor the most attractive entrepreneurial activities between the two countries, and that entrepreneurial activity needed to increase (RIA Novosti, 2001).

-December 17th
Vorontsov at this time was arguing for a mini-Marshall plan for Afghanistan, the result of which would be political and economic evolution. This is monumental, because Afghanistan had given Vorontsov a very difficult task at the end of the 1980’s (Interfax, 2001).

2002 - From the Ninth Report of the Secretary General Pursuant to paragraph 14 of Resolution 1284 (1999)…This is a report detailing the progress of Vorontsov’s humanitarian mission in Iraq. At this time, Vorontsov was traveling to Kuwait and to Iraq, trying to resolve issues of missing persons. This particular report
deals with issue of determining the fate of missing persons. Apparently, Iraq had progressed concerning the humanitarian mission as a whole, but was dragging its feet concerning this aspect. The reports mentions that Vorontsov called for quicker and more decisive action on the part of the Iraqis. It also details some of his daily schedule, meetings, etc (UNSC, 2002).

2003- January 18th
Vorontsov attempts to track down a missing US pilot in Iraq, representing the first time his humanitarian efforts at the UN have directly aided the US (AFP, 2003).

-March 3rd
Vorontsov is critical of US plans to invade Iraq. Although the US apparently offered economic incentives for support of the war, both President Putin and Vorontsov were receiving rave reviews in Russia for their public disapproval. In a shot at the Americans, Vorontsov said that that any incentives that the Americans promised would never be realized, as the US never let economic advantage slip from its grip (Al-Ahram, 2003).

2004- December 12th
In an interview with the BBC, Vorontsov admits that the invasion of Afghanistan was a mistake made because of bad intelligence which held that the US was planning an invasion of Afghanistan. This scared politicians into immediate “surgical” action. Vorontsov mentions that aggressive diplomacy with Pakistan could have solved the issue earlier, and would have led to a better solution for the Soviet Union (BBC, 2004).

2006 (approximately) - During the last years of his live, Vorontsov becomes President of the Russian-American Council for Cooperation, a participant in the dialog group “Russia and America – Looking to the Future.” (Russian MFA statement on YMV’s death).

2006 - June 9th
At a media seminar on the Middle East peace process, Vorontsov mentioned that he was concerned about the deteriorating situation. He did not support an
economic blockade of Palestine, and brought up historical examples of blockades having their greatest impacts upon peoples. Blockades, he argues, rarely produced resolution or cooperation. His reasons for not supporting Israel’s construction of a wall were similar. He feared that Israel’s greatest threat was quickly becoming Iran, but did not support a preemptive Israeli strike (UN, 2006)

2007- Vorontsov dies on December 12th (RMFA, 2007)
During this year, Vorontsov and other US and Russian diplomats met in Russia to discuss the deteriorating relations between the two nations. Considered to be the causes were the US’ placement of missiles in Eastern Europe, the US’ support of Kosovo, and the stability of Russia’s democracy (PTI, 2007)

In September of this year, Vorontsov was a contributor to a piece that appeared in the International Herald Tribune. Here, other former diplomats from Russia and the US expressed their opinions about the future of Russia-US relations. The article recognized past grievances, recognized cultural differences, and argued that civil diplomatic work was the way through which the relationship would be strengthened. The piece recognized common fronts of security concerns, and that terrorism and nuclear proliferation were of paramount importance. The piece also asked for increased economic relationships, so that Russia could take its rightful place among world trade leaders (IHT, 2007).

Also at this time, Vorontsov was interviewed on NPR. Security and nuclear proliferation were the starting issues, and then the conversation quickly turned to the Iran situation. Vorontsov and the former US diplomat that was interviewed agreed that many in the US are too hasty to expect that Russia can put pressure on Iran to end its nuclear program. According to Vorontsov, the problem lies in a simple issue of proximity. On this program he also countered the widely held view that the American’s had “won a victory” when the USSR dissolved. According to both Vorontsov and The American Diplomat, Russia had made a decision to dissolve, and would have regardless of what the US had done (NPR, 2007)

Vorontsov, in an interview with the Russian Embassy of Chile in September, seems to be very discouraged by the condition of relations between Russia and the United states. Negative to him are the reluctance of American companies to do business with Russia and the type of work that American companies allow
Russian branches to do, which he argues is very remedial. He gives reasons for why America behaves the way it does, and his primary conclusion is that America was thrust into leadership after WWII. It never had a chance to mature as a world power, and thus does not know how to cooperate (REC, 2007).