

Russia's leading libertarian

Andrei Illarionov's Busy Year

When he's not on a plane, flying from one corner of the world to another, Andrei Illarionov, senior fellow at the Cato Institute's Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity, is on the phone. This workaholic champion of market democracy is Russia's leading libertarian, a former chief economic adviser to Vladimir Putin, and now a force in Russia's pro-liberty opposition. His colleagues find Illarionov still at his desk when everyone else is headed home for the night—and still there as they arrive again in the morning.

This overwhelming productivity isn't new for Illarionov. Before leaving the Kremlin in 2005 in protest over Putin's authoritarian policies, Illarionov was instrumental in reducing government expenditures, cutting red tape, liberalizing the Russian economy, creating the Stabilization Fund, and bringing Russia into full membership in the G-8. He's published three books and more than 300 articles on Russian economic and social policies.

Illarionov remains Russia's leading voice for liberty, a role he retains even though the government prevents him from appearing on television and limits his access to newspapers and radio. With those mainstream sources cut off, much of Illarionov's advocacy flows through his hugely popular Russian language blog, one of the top 100 blogs in the country. It was there that he broke many crucial facts about the airplane crash at Smolensk in April that claimed the lives of Polish president Lech Kachinsky and almost 100 members of the Polish political and military elite.

He also travels. Since 2009, Illarionov has given lectures in Britain, Germany, Belgium, Poland, Slovenia, Macedonia, Estonia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Mexico, and Peru—as well as Chicago, New York, Charlottesville, Bozeman, and Washington, D.C. He spoke about the global financial crisis, the necessary conditions for freedom, democracy's impact on economic growth, communism's heritage and the post-communist world, the Russian-Georgian War, and the questionable science of global warming alarmism.

So much time in the air and behind the lectern hasn't prevented him from spending much of the last year studying what he terms "the Russia Puzzle," the combination of economic growth occurring simultaneously with the government's destruction of the institutions of civil society. This has led Illarionov to begin work on a book that will trace how Russia had diverged from the path of political and social evolution familiar to the modern civilized world. Much of this huge endeavor has already appeared as articles Illarionov authored for journals, including "The Siloviki in Charge," published in the April 2009 issue of the *Journal of Democracy*.



At the Cato Summer School in Alushta, Crimea, Ukraine, senior fellow ANDREI ILLARIONOV (right) awards a diploma to VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY (left), senior fellow at the Cato Institute, former Soviet political dissident, author, and activist.

Cato News Notes

DOWNSIZING HHS

With Cato Institute ads in all the major newspapers telling President Obama that it's time to cut the size of the federal government, Cato director of tax policy studies Chris Edwards and budget analyst Tad DeHaven have expanded DownsizingGovernment.org. Freshly added is a detailed report on the bloated Department of Health and Human Services, with a budget of \$869 billion in 2010, or about \$7,400 for every U.S. household. Edwards proposes \$81 billion in annual cuts to non-health programs and reforms to health programs that would cut overall HHS spending to less than 40 percent of current projections in the decades ahead.

CATO IS EVERYWHERE

August was the Cato Institute's biggest month ever for broadcast appearances. Forty Cato scholars appeared 267 times—100 times on television and 167 times on radio. They participated in 89 interviews on major networks. Neal McCluskey discussed President Obama's federal takeover of education on ABC's *World News Tonight* with Diane Sawyer, while Cato's Capitol Hill briefing on counterterrorism was featured on C-SPAN's Book TV.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM DROPS WORLDWIDE

The *Economic Freedom of the World: 2010 Annual Report* brings bad news. Co-published by the Cato Institute, the Fraser Institute in Canada, and more than 70 think tanks around the world, the new edition shows the first global setback for economic freedom in decades. The average economic freedom score rose from 5.55 (out of 10) in 1980 to 6.70 in 2007, but fell back to 6.67 in 2008, the most recent year for which data are available. Of the 123 countries with economic freedom rankings dating back to 1980, 88 saw their rankings decrease while only 35 recorded increases. In this year's index, Hong Kong retains the highest rating for economic freedom, 9.05 out of 10, followed by Singapore, New Zealand, Switzerland, Chile, the United States, Canada, Australia, Mauritius, and the United Kingdom.

THE FALL 2010 ISSUE OF REGULATION



Is Coca-Cola the cause of Americans' exploding waistlines? Or is it the huge portion sizes in most restaurants? And, in either case, what can be done to bring Americans back down to a more manageable and healthy size? These questions and many others are answered in the Fall 2010 issue of *Regulation*.