**“WHAT’S THE STORY?”: LIFE STYLE NARRATIVES STUDY GROUP**

**Next Meeting – over ZOOM:**

**Sunday, May 8, 2022 – 1:00 p.m. Central**

**CHANGE IN PLANS!**

**Instead of a “Live” Life Style Demonstration (as publicized), we will read and interpret**

**THE RECOLLECTIONS (AND LIFE STYLE) OF VLADIMIR PUTIN**

**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86180909518?pwd=bk9oTk03UnRXbThRcE5QVHV1WWNydz09**

Meeting ID: 861 8090 9518

Passcode: 522847

**Meeting should last 1 ½ - 2 hours**

**Leave your bias at the door!**

***What’s the Story?* is a book club with a twist in which we read and interpret a person’s perceived important memories (the Early Recollections) as if, “strung together,” they compose a short story or literary text.**

**Check us out!**

**<https://www.whatsthestory.online/>**

**We are now meeting every three months**

**ZOOM SUNDAY, MAY 8, 2022**

**Yes, that’s Mother’s Day in the U.S. (not Mother Russia Day)**

**Also, Victory in Europe Day (WWII) – as celebrated in the U.S. and most of Europe,**

**but celebrated May 9 in Russia**

**(1:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (U.S./Canada/Chicago); 2:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time/New York; 12:00 p.m. Mountain Standard Time/Denver; 11:00 a.m. Pacific/Los Angles; 7 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time/London; 8 p.m. Central European Time/Paris, Warsaw).**

**CONTINUE SCROLLING DOWN!**

**In 2000, after he had been appointed – anointed! – president of Russia by his predecessor Boris Yeltsin, but before he had actually been elected, Vladimir Putin gave a number of interviews to Russian journalists. In between some of his musings, such as –**

On the rebellion in Chechnya:

One should never fear such threats. It's like with a dog, you know, a dog senses when somebody is afraid of it and bites. The same applies here. If you become jittery, they will think that they are stronger. Only one thing works in such circumstances. To go on the offensive. You must hit first and hit so hard that your opponent will not rise to his feet. … We will fight to keep our geographical and spiritual position and if they push us away, then we'll be forced to find allies and reinforce ourselves. What else can we do?

On dictatorship:

I prefer another phrase: not strong, but effective authority.

On Mother Russia:

From the very beginning, Russia was created as a super centralized state that's practically laid down in its genetic code, its traditions and the mentality of its people.

On corruption:

Whenever I hear someone accused of theft or something like that, I want to ask, do we still presume people to be innocent? If a crime is not proven, no one can be accused of it.

On his behavioral “code”:

I have some rules of my own. One of them is never to regret anything...As soon as you start regretting and looking back, you start to sour…You always have to think about the future. You always have to look ahead, of course, you have to analyze your past mistakes, but only so that you can learn and correct the course of your life…We live each second and we can never live that second all over again.

**– he describes his childhood, including descriptions of himself, family members, others living in his household (did you know the family sharing his family’s Soviet postage-stamp- size apartment was Jewish?), and those who had inspired him …**

**… as well as some recollections about growing up, school, sports, what he wanted to be as an adult (oh, the power of the movies!) … and other challenges that confronted him on the threshold of adulthood.**

**Life Style, anyone?**

**Anyone for “Monday morning quarterbacking?”**

**Leave your bias at the door!**

(WillPutin declare victory on May 9? Oh, the coincidence of it all!)

**Why, just consider what appears to be the first ER he recounted:**

The factory gave papa a room in a communal apartment in a typical St. Petersburg building on Baskov Lane, in the center of town. It had an inner airshaft for a courtyard, and my parents lived on the fifth floor. There was no elevator.

There, on that stair landing. I got a quick and lasting lesson in the meaning of the word *cornered* (journalists’ italics). There were hordes of rats in the front entryway. My friends and I used to chase them around with sticks. Once I spotted a huge rat and pursued it down the hall until I drove it into a corner. It had nowhere to run. Suddenly it lashed around and threw itself at me. I was surprised and frightened. Now the rat was chasing me. I jumped across the landing and down the stairs. Luckily, I was a little faster and I managed to slam the door shut in its nose

**There are more!**

**Why, just consider how he describes himself:**

I really was a bad boy.

**For more information, contact: Les White,** **lesw@rcn.com** **or** **leswhitechicago@gmail.com****, or go to our website:**

[**https://www.whatsthestory.online/**](https://www.whatsthestory.online/)