



Myron Rush

January 1, 1922 - January 8, 2018

Myron Rush, a Kremlinologist whose careful lexical analysis of public leadership statements surprised the world by determining that Nikita S. Khrushchev had won the power struggle to succeed Stalin, died 8 January 2018 of kidney failure at his home in Herndon, Virginia. His book *The Rise of Khrushchev* described a predictive analytic technique that established his reputation among the pre-eminent Soviet scholars of his generation. His life and his career at the CIA, RAND Corporation, and Cornell University Department of Government coincided with the USSR's history. He retired from Cornell in 1992 as the Soviet Union collapsed.

Mr. Rush was the son of Louis and Anna Rush (nee Chase). He was the youngest of five and only son in a family of Orthodox Jews who had immigrated from Motal, Russian Empire. He grew up in Hyde Park on the south side of Chicago. He brought competition, discipline and study to all his activities. As a youth he studied violin, rising to first violin in the Hyde Park High orchestra. He was an avid athlete whose applied study, discipline and competitiveness overcame an aversion to cold and any limitations in talent to win pickup basketball, stickball, football and tennis games throughout his life. When a friend's wife asked him to throw a tennis match in empathy, Mr. Rush replied "tell him to toss the ball higher on his serve." He deeply loved and appreciated fine literature, art and music. He loved Bel Canto opera, as well as Bach and music of Mozart and Hayden, eschewing the schmaltz of romanticism.

Mr. Rush was a scholar and teacher who became an analyst and later an academic. He graduated from Hyde Park High and went on to Woodrow Wilson Junior (now Kennedy-King College) where he won a competitive scholarship to the University of Chicago. For such a careful and disciplined mind, family lore tells that he forgot to put his name on his first-place exam paper, and administrators had to come knocking on the apartment door to proclaim his scholarship. After graduating from the University of Chicago, Mr. Rush joined the Army Air Forces where he first trained as a meteorologist and later served as an encryption specialist at Adak Army Airfield in Alaska. Upon honorable discharge from the Army, Mr. Rush studied under Edward Shils and Daniel Boorstin at the University of Chicago, and was deeply influenced by Karl Popper, while attending the London School of Economics. He earned his PhD from the Committee On Social Thought (the second granted) with his dissertation, on Disillusion in American Social Thought 1880-1920.

After working for the CIA first as an economist and then as a member of FBIS Analysis Group where he helped establish the field of Kremlinology. He joined the RAND Corporation in 1955 and in 1965 he joined the faculty of Cornell University in 1965, focusing on political succession in the USSR and Soviet bloc countries. Together with Arnold Horelick he wrote Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy, an important analysis of the Cuban missile crisis. He took leave from Cornell to serve as the pioneer scholar-in-residence at the CIA, a program he helped make successful, and served as a consultant to the CIA several times in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

Mr. Rush was a patriot who immersed himself in American ideals of democracy and republicanism. In his teens he followed the Chicago Tribune's accounts of Stalin's and Hitler's terrors with equal aversion, and spoke out against totalitarianism and repressive regimes for the rest of his life, often on behalf of Soviet Jewry. In his final years he was alarmed by the rise of American populism and nativism.

In retirement Mr. Rush applied his philosophy that "the best things in life are

free." He attended to his ailing wife of 61 years (Theresa nee Neumann), developed a deep, loving relationship with his grandchildren, faceted with his great-granddaughter, read, listened to music, and enjoyed fruit, good conversation, walks in the parks, and idling on benches where he took in the view and passing parade of dogs and children. He was preceded in death by his parents, his sisters and his wife. He is survived by his three children Anita Solan (Lawrence), Kenneth Rush, Victor Rush (Alicia Rudin), four grandchildren Renata Solan (Douglas Haynes), David Solan, Izzi Rush and Samantha Rush, his great granddaughter Iris Haynes, and his nieces Norma Goodman and Barbara Ann Reinhardt.

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Tribute Wall



“ *Myron Rush*

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