

Co-ops Connect FYI

By Jonathan Chambers • Mar 04, 2022

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Updates and insights for electric cooperatives considering or operating rural broadband networks.

A Pause from Broadband to Honor the People of Ukraine



Events of the past few weeks have jolted my memories of events in my life before I started working in the telecommunications field.

When I was a young man, I had the great fortune to be a witness to history:

- **I lived in Moscow** during the first years of the Gorbachev presidency, the beginning of the end of the Soviet Union.
- **I was in Warsaw** during the summer of 1989, while the Solidarity movement and the Jaruzelski government began a power-sharing arrangement, which led to the peaceful transfer of power and the end of Soviet control of Poland.
- **I was in East and West Berlin** the week the Wall came down, crossing one last time through checkpoint Charlie.



- **I was in Johannesburg and Capetown** months before the release of Nelson Mandela, a man who walked away from 27 years in prison with forgiveness in his heart.
- **I was in rural Nicaragua** as an official observer for the 1990 elections, which led to a peaceful transfer of power from the Sandinistas to the presidency of Violeta Chamorro.

- **I was in Bangkok and Phnom Penh** in 1990, meeting with Prince Ranariddh and then with Hun Sen prior to negotiations that led to elections, peace, and the capture of the leaders of the genocidal Khmer Rouge.



Though I never believed in the “end of history,” the events over a brief period of time in Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia, had a profound impact on my views.

I came to believe that anything is possible, that there are true heroes to be admired and followed, that there is a deep reservoir of good in the world that can and does prevail over evil.

I came to believe especially in the divine spirit of dissidents: Natan Sharansky, Lech Walesa, Vaclav Havel, Nelson Mandela, and men and women dating back to Job who question power and authority.



Jews mourn by lighting a light. When our world is darkened, we light a candle.

Tonight, I will light a candle for for those who continue to fight against tyranny. For Alexy Navalny, jailed by Putin in Russia. For Volodymyr Zelenskyy, for the Snake Island defenders, for anyone who would face down a warship or a tank, whether that be in Moscow, Kyiv, or Hong Kong.

Stand with them. And should they perish, hold onto their memory.

As my rabbi says:

“We have memory, and from memory will come wisdom. Wisdom brings strength, and strength will yield hope.

“With hope, there will be renewal and ultimately redemption ...

“We will go forward carrying an ancient vision of righteousness and peace.

“Or, in the American vernacular, the vision of freedom and justice for all.”

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