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Problems With Foreign Adoptions

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By [Timothy D. Naegele\[1\]](#)

International media organizations have reported recently about an American woman from Tennessee who adopted a young boy from Russia, and then sent him back after trying to deal with his mental health issues.[\[2\]](#) This episode is sad and tragic—for the child, for the mother, and for lots of innocent people—everyone knows that. However, the deeper issues surrounding this adoption involve the inability of so many Americans to adopt children who are born in this country, and the willingness of Russia, China and other countries to foist “sick” children on U.S. adoptive parents.

Adoptions are critical to so many people. They save lives that might otherwise be aborted; and they offer precious loving options to those people who cannot conceive children of their own. For the adoptees, ideally they provide new parents and bright futures where there were none, and a chance to escape from the poverty and hopelessness of their countries.

A relative of mine and his wife are perfect examples of Americans who wanted to adopt, because cancer treatments had prevented one from ever conceiving again. They desperately wanted to adopt more than one

child, and they tried to adopt in the U.S. but found it was near to impossible^[3], so they turned their attention abroad. First, they adopted a baby from an orphanage in China, and all went well. Then, they sought to adopt a second baby from another Chinese orphanage, and it was an unmitigated disaster.

The child had serious physical problems, which were not disclosed to the couple. For a child to have “psychological problems” or to be “mentally unstable,” “violent and angry” or have “severe psychopathic issues”—in the case of the Russian boy—is tragic but not surprising. China wants to get rid of such children, and presumably Russia and other countries do too; and it is arguable that the United States has become a “dumping ground” for these children.

It is easy to be holier-than-thou, and to tar or condemn the adoptive mother or parents as unfit and criminals, yet first those who do so should walk a mile in the person’s (or persons’) mocassins. How would we feel, and how would we react? I have searched my own soul with respect to that question, trying to put myself in the shoes of my relative and his wife, who are wonderful and loving people.

For the the U.S. ambassador to Russia, John Beyrle, to say that he was “deeply shocked by the news” and “very angry that any family would act so callously toward a child that they had legally adopted,” constitutes pure theatrics, grandstanding and callousness by a political hack. With the advent of ObamaCare’s healthcare “rationing,” the cost and human toll of dealing with sick children from other countries might overwhelm adoptive families and our medical system.

There should be an international agreement on the conditions for adoptions, the obligations of host families, *and* the obligations of those countries that seek to have Americans adopt their children. It is a two-way street, and there is plenty of blame to share. I do not have much patience with the Russians; and I have enormous contempt for the thoroughly evil Putin regime.^[4] Hence, it is not surprising that they would seek to exploit sensitive adoption issues, at a time when they are allowing sick children to be adopted by American families.

Perhaps, the easiest way to deal with any Russian concerns is to cut off all adoptions from that country immediately. This will stem the tide of sick children being foisted on Americans; and the same thing might be done with China and other countries, which are enormously brazen and uncaring.

A Chicago Tribune article states:

Rather than condemn the Tennessee woman, [other parents of adopted children who exhibit severely challenging behavior] are blasting adoption agencies that are not always reliable reporters about a child’s troubled past, leaving families adrift to manage extreme problems without training or options.

It includes the comment of a mother:

“I want to ask these people passing judgment: What would you do if your child threatened to kill you every day?”

...

Since 1991, more than 50,000 Russian children have been adopted by U.S. citizens, according to the State Department. Add the former Soviet bloc countries, and the region is second only to

China as a source of international adoptions for Americans, who are often drawn overseas by the difficulty of adopting domestically.

But prospective parents can be unprepared for the behavioral and emotional challenges that await them, explained Judy Stigger, an adoption therapist at The Cradle in Evanston, Ill.

. . .

Because children can be superficially charming and their disabilities are invisible, their problems often get blamed on “bad parenting.” Also, adding to the uphill battle: The right kind of interventions—often not covered by insurance—can be scarce and prohibitively expensive.^[5]

When Russia, China and other countries foist sick children on U.S. adoptive parents, they are engaging in brutal and callous human trafficking, which must be stopped.^[6] On the bright side, my relative and his wife ended up adopting one child from China and another from Vietnam. Both children are enormous blessings, and there is love abounding.

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[2] See, e.g., <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304222504575173741062876452.html?KEYWORDS=Russian+adoptions#articleTabs%3Darticle>

[3] In at least one instance, a birth mother “interviewed” them, and then she backed out. I remember their frustrations with the American adoption process, so they went abroad.




[4] See <http://naegeleblog.wordpress.com/2010/02/09/russias-putin-is-a-killer/>

[5] See <http://dailyme.com/story/2010041500002200/overseas-adoptions-blessing.html>

[6] See <http://naegeleblog.wordpress.com/2009/12/28/human-trafficking/>

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