

Cold War Architecture

The Russian Embassy in Ottawa

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Located at 285 Charlotte Street, among the historic homes and green space that characterize the Sandy Hill neighbourhood, the Embassy of Russia is a dominating structure whose architecture speaks not only to its purpose, but its connection to another place and time in history. Built between 1956 and 1957, with later modifications made to the façade in 1992,¹ the Russian federation occupies the only purpose-built embassy of the thirty-one embassies and legations located in Sandy Hill.² The building's rectilinear shape, emphasis on symmetry, imposing sense of order, and use of glass, stone, metal, and concrete, are all defining features of modernism, a style that despite its different variations and developments over the twentieth century, has largely articulated the importance of technology, new materials, and the functionality of architecture.³

The architectural design for the Russian Embassy is both a product of its Soviet roots and the Canadian context in which it was built. Despite alterations made to the façade of the building after the fall of the Soviet Union – changes that were likely undertaken to make the building appear less imposing – the Embassy remains a symbol of Cold War aesthetics and the complex relationship that existed between Canada and Russia during the 1950s. Furthermore, the Russian Embassy must also be

viewed within the framework of diplomatic architecture, and the design restrictions that apply to this specific type of building. In addition to having to effectively function as a secure multi-purpose structure that includes offices, ambassador's quarters, public gathering spaces, and in this particular case, living quarters, the Embassy also has to be an effective symbol of a foreign nation abroad. As such, the consolidation of both Soviet and Canadian elements of modernism in this building are also central to diplomatic role of the Russian Embassy, and the carefully conceived image projected through its design. These unique design attributes and the comprehensive ideological narrative constructed at this site are all contributing elements that lend to the heritage value of the Russia Embassy.

The current Russian Embassy was built after a fire destroyed their former headquarters on New Year's Day, 1956.⁴ Originally located on the site at 285 Charlotte was a large Colonial-Revival manor built in 1917 for the Booth family – a prominent Ottawa family associated with the lumber industry⁵ (Figure 1). Although the home was originally purchased by the federal government for the use of the Royal Canadian Women's Naval Service, it became the Embassy of the Soviet Union in 1942 when the Canadian government found themselves under pressure from the Soviets who needed a property suitable to accommodate their large embassy operation.⁶

This was likely seen as an ideal location due to its large-sized lot with picturesque views overlooking the Rideau River and Strathcona Park, as well as its close proximity to the downtown core of Ottawa.

The fire that destroyed the first Soviet Embassy remains a controversial event in its history. When the fire started in the Embassy on January 1st, 1956, embassy officials attempted to put out the blaze themselves for forty minutes before the fire department was called.⁷ Upon their arrival, the embassy staff called for diplomatic immunity, forcing the firefighters to wait outside the gates while they safely removed any equipment and classified documents from the site.⁸ By the time firefighters were granted entrance to the building, as a result of intense negotiations between Mayor Charlotte Whitton, Paul Martin Sr., and the Soviet Ambassador, the fire had damaged the building beyond repair.⁹ In addition to demonstrating the Embassy's legal right as a physical extension of the Russian nation to disregard the standard procedures of Canadian legislation, the aftermath of the fire also highlights the tension that existed between these two nations during the Cold War period.¹⁰

Rather than move their diplomatic enclave to a new site, or rebuild the Embassy in a similar fashion to the Booth manor or other historical buildings surrounding the site on Charlotte Street, the Soviets chose a modern design for their new embassy. In knowingly creating a building that would differ dramatically from its surroundings, it could be argued that they were well aware of the strong image they were projecting of the Soviet regime. To carry out this project the firm of Noffke and Ingram were hired. W. E. Noffke, the better known of the two architects, had a prolific career in Ottawa throughout the majority of the 20th century designing numerous domestic, commercial, and institutional buildings throughout the city.¹¹ Architectural historian Shannon Ricketts has

described Noffke's buildings as being traditionally influenced and reflective of the dominant architectural trends of their time.¹² While the majority of Noffke's architecture can be distinguished by its clearly articulated historicist elements, the Russian Embassy is dramatically different in its design – a result of the client's strict demands.¹³ According to Ricketts, Noffke and Ingram were required to create a building within a set of rigid guidelines and principles set out by the Soviets.¹⁴ The resulting rectilinear design, stressing linear order and repetition, was the subject of much dispute in Ottawa.

The public commotion regarding the building is evident in a front page article from a May 1956 issue of the *Ottawa Citizen*, highlighting the Federal District Commission's (FDC) rejection of the proposed design for the new Soviet Embassy's as being both 'monotonous' and 'dull'.¹⁵ A statement from the FDC detailing their disapproval of this design reveals some interesting issues regarding the perceived image of the capital city:

The question as to whether the building should show some national character is perhaps the purport of this committee, but even without such national character the committee feels that the design does not indicate appreciation of the site or of fundamental approaches in design which would lead to a pleasing architectural solution.¹⁶

While the extent to which the architects made alterations to their design still remains unclear, a statement from Rowell Lashley, the counsel of the contracting firm hired by the Embassy, expressed that the building was intended to be "just a bit of Russia in Ottawa."¹⁷ Lashley informed the FDC that whilst the Embassy would take into consideration their suggestions, as a

project being carried out on Soviet soil it was ultimately within their rights not to comply with any federal or local bylaws.¹⁸

Although the FDC viewed the design of the new Soviet Embassy as being both visually uninteresting and unsuitable in its ability to properly represent the national character of the capital and the picturesque quality of this specific site, the aesthetic characteristics and design features of this buildings are arguably much more complex than the FDC's summation suggests. Despite the FDC's criticism that the Embassy design made no reference to the national character of the capital, Ricketts suggests that the building, pre-1992 renovations, actually recalls the type of classically-influenced modern architecture popularly used for official buildings in Canada in the 1920s and 1930s.¹⁹ This style of Modern Classicism is defined by its restrained and unornamented use of classical forms.²⁰ It is also associated with the economic downturn of the post-World War I period and the need to create building that, while economical and conservative in appearance, still project a sense of monumentality.²¹

While Modern Classicism is generally seen in Canadian architecture dating from the 1920s and 1930s, it continued to be utilized, albeit in an even more restrained manner, in the capital city during the period in which the Embassy was built. The East Memorial Building (Figure 2) on Sussex and the Health Protection Building (Figure 3) on Parkdale are just two examples of Federal architecture built in Ottawa in the 1950's. Much like the Russian Embassy, their austere exteriors are emphasized through a simple and unornamented use of materials and the reproduction of standard linear forms.²² Additionally, these buildings convey a similar sense of monumentality by way of heavy volumes and stone massing.²³ Both examples of designated heritage sites, these two buildings demonstrate that the Russian Embassy is in many

ways emblematic of a valued architectural style in Canada.

Although the original repetitions of small square windows can still be seen on the side and back of the Russian Embassy, the later modifications made to the building's façade, despite being less typical of Classical Modernism, still reflect the intentions of Noffke and Ingram's initial design. The geometric glass bays, for instance, are meticulously repeated across the façade while the linear slabs of stone articulated between the glass bays can be read as streamlined pilasters, reaffirming the buildings modern realization of classical forms.

Although the Russian Embassy may not be representative of the type of aesthetically pleasing architecture the FDC perceived as being representative of Ottawa's national character, it is certainly operating within the same aesthetic field as much of the federal architecture being produced during this period. In creating parallels between itself and this style of Canadian federal architecture, it could be argued that the Russian Embassy is asserting both its political importance and significance as an institution in Ottawa.

According to Ricketts, Noffke and Ingram's design for the Russian Embassy also speaks to the type of Soviet architecture being produced in the late 1950's, and its similar regard for the visual characteristics of stripped classicism.²⁴ The Embassy can be positioned in relation to a distinct shift that occurred in Russia's architectural program after the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953.²⁵

As part of his oppressive reign over the Soviet Union, Stalin put an end to the Avant-Garde architectural experiments and projects of the 1920s.²⁶ This type of architecture was considered by his government to be wholly unrepresentative of the prestige and power of the Soviet Union, and was also regarded as a threat to the communist agenda for its promotion of artistic individualism.²⁷ From the

1930's until the time of Stalin's death, the official architectural program was thus one of Soviet Neoclassical Revival, a style architectural historian Dimitry Shvidkovsky describes as being a visual representation of totalitarian ideologies intended to express the monumentality and prosperity of the Soviet Union – a regime in reality defined by its suffering economic circumstances.²⁸ Employing tradition forms such as rounded arches, columns, and temple facades, this style emphasizes massive and awe-inspiring elements of classicism.

Following Stalin's death, Nikita Khrushchev's rise to power marked the ushering in of a period of de-Stalinization – a move that dissolved several rigid policies enforced under Stalin's reign of terror, including his strict architectural program.²⁹ While the overtly neoclassical motifs of Stalinist architecture by no means disappeared overnight, Khrushchev's government rejected the ostentatious and traditional ornamentation of the past emphasizing instead what architectural historian Andrei Ikonnikov labels as a "rationalistic attitude to both architecture and its social objectives," in which the standardization of materials, architectural forms, and even artistic ideas was stressed.³⁰ This shift in aesthetics under Khrushchev is perhaps most clearly demonstrated when comparing the classically-oriented Russian Embassies in Berlin (Figure 4) and Helsinki (Figure 5), both built in the early 1950s, to the much more restrained aesthetic of the Embassy in Ottawa – a design that is radically different despite being built in the same decade.

This being said, the elements of stripped or bare-bones classicism visible at the Russian Embassy in Ottawa are consistent with the public buildings being constructed in Russia at this same point in time. Although the government wanted to purge architecture of superfluous ornamentation and anything deemed unnecessary to its utilitarian purpose, they saw

the revival of traditional solutions as a key component of rational design.³¹ In the Lenin Stadium in Moscow (Figure 6) and the Soviet Pavilion at the International Exhibition in Brussels (Figure 7), both examples of public architecture in the late 1950s, one can see the rejection of ornamentation and straightforward use of materials that is clearly articulated in the Russian Embassy's design.³²

Following the collapse of the USSR, the modifications made to the façade of the Russian Embassy may have been an attempt to create a building that was more visually dynamic whilst also eliminating blatant aesthetic associations with the rigid qualities of late Soviet architecture. Despite these likely intentions, it could actually be argued that the building now bears resemblance to the State Kremlin Palace (Figure 8), one of the quintessential structures of communism and a building described by Shvidkovsky as displaying a calculated "image of the Soviet regime" with its "severe monumentality, cold inhumanity and calculatedly inflated scale."³³ The confused imagery of these additions could be attributed to the postmodern condition of Russia, which architectural historian Anna Sokolina notes was struggling with the dilemma of establishing a new cultural identity.³⁴ This period of exploration led to a somewhat schizophrenic state of Russian architecture during the 1990s where a resurgence of both traditional and modern ideals occurred.³⁵

In looking at the Russian Embassy, it is evident that the stylistic elements it borrows from both Canadian and Soviet modernisms are very much alike. While these two outlooks on modernism share similar concerns regarding rationality, simple geometric forms, and the truthfulness of materials, the ideologies behind each style differ radically. Canada, like the rest of the West saw modernism as a style that encouraged social improvement, innovation, and technology, all characteristics perceived as being

associated with democracy.³⁶ The Soviets on the other hand, in reimagining the communist utopia in the late 1950s and 1960s, envisioned that the industrial and technological progress of the West could be utilized within a Soviet context to generate prosperity and the assurance of the dawn of true communism.³⁷ When utilized in these different national frameworks the same principles of design thus become associated with highly different political ideologies. Therefore, the modern design of the Russian Embassy, which one might reasonably dismiss as boring or dull without the proper context, is in reality a fascinating exploration of modern architecture entrenched in multiple levels of social and political meaning. Its ability to combine forms from both Canadian and Russian architecture lends to the heritage value of this site, and its truly unique status within the Ottawa landscape.

The design for the Russian Embassy was also heavily influenced by its role as a diplomatic mission and the specific functions this type of building has to serve. According to architectural historian Jane C. Loeffler, “Embassies are symbolically charged buildings uniquely defined by domestic politics, foreign affairs, and a complex set of representational requirements.”³⁸ As such, these important structures, built to represent a foreign nation abroad, involve a great deal of consideration and planning.³⁹ For Loeffler, the most successful embassy designs are able to react to the local environment and its architecture while also creating a distinct presence and identity that reflects the nation’s image of itself.⁴⁰ Despite the Russian Embassy having a dominating presence amongst the older period homes that line Charlotte Street, the building’s design, as indicated by the previous discussion, speaks to the growing modern aesthetic in both Canada and Russia, and thus denotes an attempt to negotiate visual representations of national identity within a specific foreign context.

As the Embassy was built during the height of the Cold War and had suffered from a leak of highly classified documents in the past,⁴¹ it is understandable that security was a major component of the building’s design. Unlike the large majority of embassies in Sandy Hill, the Russian Embassy is surrounded by an iron fence and strategically set back from the public sidewalk, making it difficult for protestors or passer-by’s to get close to the building. Positioned on a sloping hill, the Embassy is built up on a concrete platform, giving the building support, but also making it inaccessible from both the side and exterior. According to the autobiography of former British Intelligence Officer Peter Wright, the walls of the Embassy were “nearly two feet thick, with a fourteen-inch concrete block inner leaf, a two-inch air gap in the middle, and then four-inch-thick stone facing on the outside of the wall.”⁴² The thickness of the walls, although a structural requirement, additionally ensured that the building would be impenetrable to listening devices.⁴³ Moreover, while the recent addition of glass to the exterior appears to give the façade a greater sense of openness, the original concrete and stone wall actually still remains intact behind the glass, lending strength to the building’s exterior core (Figure 9). Noffke and Ingram’s original plans for the building indicate that security was a priority in the interior of the building as well. The majority of the offices and living quarters intended to be accessed only by embassy staff have been located on the upper floors, and are physically separated from public areas such as the ballroom and theatre, which are all located on the first floor only.

Architectural historian Marie-Josée Therrien contends that embassy architecture is often unglamorous as a result of these types of security requirements, and as such, “The critical analysis of [these] premises must take into consideration the interrelation of the external

factors that shape and reshape diplomatic architecture.”⁴⁴ While the aesthetics of security are certainly a factor in this building, it could also be argued that the Embassy is in fact attempting to maintain an imposing appearance – a visualization that would further assert the physical dominance of this structure, and the image of Russia as a powerful nation. Regardless of whether or not the Embassy’s intimidating presence is intentional, this building functions as an excellent example of the vast requirements that must be factored into the design of a diplomatic structure. These unique necessities lend themselves to both the social and architectural value of this site.

In a 2010 heritage study of the Sandy Hill conservation districts, the neighbourhood is described as a “patchwork quilt” defined by distinctive streetscapes whose variety helps to tell the story of the evolution of a non-static cultural landscape.”⁴⁵ While the Russian Embassy is not included in this study likely as a result of both its foreign status and the fact that it is a particularly isolated example of modernist architecture in this neighbourhood, it should be argued that this building has been an important structure in the development of the historical, social, and architectural character of Sandy Hill. Despite the fact that the Russian Embassy is housed in the newest consulate in Sandy Hill, the diplomatic mission of Russia has a longstanding history in this neighbourhood, as it was one of the first embassies to be located in what is now known as the Sandy Hill “embassy quarter.”⁴⁶ As the sole example of a purpose-built embassy in Sandy Hill, this diplomatic structure is also the only embassy that functions as a carefully constructed advertisement of national identity and the political atmosphere that existed at a specific time in history.⁴⁷ As a visual marker of a contentious time in Russian-Canadian relations, and as a structure that continues to be a site of political tension, the Russian Embassy is an

important heritage building within both the specific context of Sandy Hill and the greater architectural landscape of Ottawa and the nation at large.

¹ Information is from conversation with an archivist at the City of Ottawa. A database unavailable to the public indicates that the Embassy applied for a building permit in 1991 and began construction in 1992.

² Fournier Gersovitz Moss et associés architects, Herb Stovel and Dana Johnson, *Draft Report: Sandy Hill Heritage Study*, (Ottawa: City of Ottawa, June 2010), accessed November 4, 2012, https://ottawa.ca/sites/ottawa.ca/files/migrated/files/con0535_58.pdf, 24.

³ Harold Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture*, (Toronto; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 782.

⁴ “Soviet Embassy Fire,” City of Ottawa, accessed October 1, 2012, http://www.ottawa.ca/en/rec_culture/museum_heritage/archives/history/events/fire/index.html.

⁵ *Ottawa Citizen*, “Russian Embassy Burned in Spectacular Blaze Year Ago Tomorrow,” December 31, 1956, accessed November 4, 2012, <http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=eNoxAAAAIABJ&sjid=1uMFAAAAIAIJ&pg=6184,7003854&dq=russian+embassy+ottawa+fire+booth&hl=en>.

⁶ *Ottawa Citizen*, “Russian Embassy Burned,” and Phyllis Wilson, “Display of Vast Wealth Recalls Day of ‘Kings’,” *Ottawa Citizen*, October 3, 1958, accessed on November 4, 2012, <http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=Ma4xAAAAIABJ&sjid=q-IFAAAAIAIJ&dq=embassy%20fire%20285%20charlotte%20ottawa&pg=5805%2C629492>.

⁷ “Soviet Embassy Fire”

⁸ “Soviet Embassy Fire.”

⁹ “Soviet Embassy Fire.”

¹⁰ “Soviet Embassy Fire.”

¹¹ Shannon, Ricketts, “Werner Ernst Noffke: Ottawa’s Architect,” *Heritage Ottawa Newsletter* 32, no. 3 (2005): 1, <http://heritageottawa.org/sites/heritageottawa/files/2005summer.pdf>.

¹² Ricketts, “Werner Ernst Noffke,” 1.

¹³ Ricketts, “Werner Ernst Noffke,” 2.

¹⁴ Shannon Ricketts, “W. E. Noffke, An Ottawa Architect” (Master’s Thesis, Carleton University, 1990), 67.

- ¹⁵ *Ottawa Citizen*, "Board Refuses Building Permit to Russ Embassy," May 15, 1956, accessed November 4, 2012, <http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=rMgxAAAAIABAJ&sjid=HeMFAAAAIABAJ&dq=soviet%20embassy%20ottawa%20ederal%20district%20commission&pg=6137%2C3410464>.
- ¹⁶ *Ottawa Citizen*, "Board Refuses Building Permit to Russ Embassy."
- ¹⁷ *Ottawa Citizen*, "Board Refuses Building Permit to Russ Embassy."
- ¹⁸ *Ottawa Citizen*, "Board Refuses Building Permit to Russ Embassy."
- ¹⁹ Ricketts, "W.E. Noffke, An Ottawa Architect," 67.
- ²⁰ Shannon Ricketts, Leslie Maitland, and Jacqueline Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles, Second Edition* (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2004), 185.
- ²¹ Ricketts, Maitland, and Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles*, 185.
- ²² "East Memorial Buildings," Historic Places, accessed November 17, 2012, <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=9541&pid=0>, and, "Health Protection Building," Historic Places, accessed November 17, 2012, <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=12897&pid=0>.
- ²³ "East Memorial Building." and "Health Protection Building."
- ²⁴ Ricketts, "W. E. Noffke, An Ottawa Architect," 67.
- ²⁵ Otakar Máčel, "Post-War Modern Architecture in the Eastern Bloc," in *Back from Utopia: The Challenge of the Modern Movement* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2002), 111.
- ²⁶ Dimitry Shvidkovsky, *Russian Architecture and the West*, trans. Antony Wood (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 368.
- ²⁷ Shvidkovsky, *Russian Architecture and the West*, 368.
- ²⁸ Shvidkovsky, *Russian Architecture and the West*, 368-369.
- ²⁹ Jamie Glazov, *Canadian Policy Towards Khrushchev's Soviet Union*, (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 27., and Máčel, "Post-War Modern Architecture in the Eastern Bloc," 111.
- ³⁰ Andrei Ikonnikov, *Russian Architecture of the Soviet Period*, trans. Lev Lyapin (Moscow: Raduga Publishers, 1988), 269.
- ³¹ Ikonnikov, *Russian Architecture of the Soviet Period*, 272.
- ³² Ikonnikov, *Russian Architecture of the Soviet Period*, 273-275.
- ³³ Shvidkovsky, *Russian Architecture and the West*, 377.
- ³⁴ Anna Sokolina, "Architecture and the State: Moscow Urban Concepts After Stalinism," *The Anthropology of Eastern Europe Review* 20, No. 2 (Autumn 2002): 91, Accessed November 4, 2012, <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/aeer/article/view/464/570>.
- ³⁵ Sokolina, "Architecture and the State," 94.
- ³⁶ Rhodri Windor Liscombe, "Conditions of Modernity: Si[gh]tings from Vancouver," *JSSAC* 25 (2000): 5.
- ³⁷ Shvidkovsky, *Russian Architecture and the West*, 373-374.
- ³⁸ Jane C. Loeffler, *The Architecture of Diplomacy: Building Americas Embassies, The Revised Second Edition*, (New York: Princeton Architecture Press, 2010), 3.
- ³⁹ Marie- Josee Therrien, "Diplomatic Malaise: The Challenge of Representing Canada Abroad," *JSSAC* 28 (2003): 16.
- ⁴⁰ Isabelle Gournay and Jane C. Loeffler, "Washington and Ottawa: A Tale of Two Embassies," *Society of Architectural Historians* 61 (2002): 501, Accessed on November 2, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/991870>.
- ⁴¹ James Marlow, "Russian's Used Clever Ruse to Get Canadian Spy Recruits," *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, August 13, 1948, accessed November 17, 2012, <http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=8uNXAAAAIABAJ&sjid=sfUDAAAAIABAJ&dq=russian%20embassy%20ottawa%20spy&pg=2314%2C4705694>.
- ⁴² Peter Wright, *Spycatcher: The Candid Autobiography of a Senior Intelligence Officer*, (New York: Viking Publishers, 1987), 87.
- ⁴³ Ricketts, "W. E. Noffke, An Ottawa Architect," 67.
- ⁴⁴ Therrien, "Diplomatic Malaise," 23.
- ⁴⁵ Fournier Gersovitz Moss et associés architects, Herb Stovel and Dana Johnson, *Draft Report: Sandy Hill Heritage Study*, 24.
- ⁴⁶ Fournier Gersovitz Moss et associés architects, Herb Stovel and Dana Johnson, *Draft Report: Sandy Hill Heritage Study*, 82.
- ⁴⁷ Gournay and Loeffler, "Washington and Ottawa," 481.

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Images

Figure 1: *Booth Manor, 285 Charlotte Street, Ottawa.* January 2, 1956. City of Ottawa Archives. Source:

<http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/arts-culture-and-community/museums-and-heritage/witness-change-visions-andrews-newton-33>

Figure 2: *East Memorial Building on Sussex, Ottawa.* Parks Canada Agency. Source:

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/image-image.aspx?id=9541>

Figure 3: *Health Protection Building, Ottawa.* Parks Canada Agency. Source:

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=12897>

Figure 4: *Russian Embassy, Berlin.* Source:

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Berlin,_Mitte,_Unter_den_Linden_55-65,_Russische_Botschaft_02.jpg

Figure 5: *Russian Embassy, Helsinki.* Source:

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Russian_embassy_Helsinki.JPG

Figure 6: *Lenin Stadium (Luzhniki Stadium), Moscow.* *Sunsite Moscow Images.* Source:

<http://www.soviethistory.org/index.php?page=subject&show=images&SubjectID=1956luzhniki&Year=1956&navi=byYear>

Figure 7: *Soviet Pavilion, Expo 58, Brussels.* Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images. Source:

<http://www.gettyimages.ca/detail/news-photo/aerial-view-of-the-soviet-pavilion-being-built-brussels-news-photo/50403210?Language=en-US>

Figure 8: *State Kremlin Palace, Moscow.* Source:

http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/nav_maps/71938.inc

Figure 9: *Facade of current Russian Embassy, Ottawa.* Source:

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Russian_Embassy_in_Ottawa.JPG