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Being Kept in the Dark

By The Moscow Times

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Tell me it's not just me. I surely can't be alone in thinking that the abolition of daylight savings time here in Russia is simply not working.

My husband says it is just me. He thinks I'm being ridiculous when I mutter and grumble about it being dark outside as we eat breakfast, as we drop the kids into school in the morning, as I drive him to the station and as I battle the traffic on the highway — all, seemingly, in the dead of night. I need to get with the program, bite the bullet, just ruddy well get on with it and stop complaining.

I never thought I would care, to be honest. I mean, winter is winter, right? It's supposed to be dark and gloomy, for goodness' sake. But when I caught myself writing a note to Mr. Medvedev as I waited for the sun to peep over the horizon somewhere around 9:50 a.m. this morning, I decided that my husband is right. I do need to get over it.

I mean, does it really matter if the centers of business in Europe and the United States are now one hour further behind us and, in the case of London, now don't start work until just about

the time we in Moscow are deciding which filling to have in our sandwich? I suppose not.

Does it matter that the extra hour of darkness make what is already a challenging commute even more "entertaining" and more likely to result in "little" accidents? Not if you have a driver, I guess.

Does it really matter that most people outside Russia are unaware that the time here has not changed here and so merrily go on their way scheduling telephone meetings for what they think is one time, but which is, in fact, another? Only if you do business internationally and you actually want to be available to take the call, I suppose.

And don't get me started about every electronic source of time outside of Russia — and, I suspect, many of those inside Russia — having updated incorrectly to the time that the computers think it should be rather than the time it actually is, leaving many people — oh, OK, just me again, probably — unsure of whether their on-screen clocks are referring to Russian time as it is now, or as it would have been this time last year. For example, that automated e-mail from the airline informing you of your arrival time: Should it read 5 p.m. or 6 p.m.?

But no. Obviously none of this is important, and we'll get used to it all eventually, I guess. Until the end of March, anyway, when the rest of the world puts their clocks forward and the confusion starts all over again.

Oh goody.

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