

WORD DOSH



Grozny, 1989



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**LOOK, THE
CAUCASUS:
YERMOLOV
IS COMING!**

MIREILLE PERRIER:
ANNA HELPED ME TO
UNDERSTAND A LOT

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BRUSSELS TRAM:
FINAL DESTINATION – CHECHNYA

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This summer we suffered another bitter and irreplaceable loss.

Malika Betieva left us in a tragic way. Malika closely cooperated with DOSH in the past four years. Holding the position of Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the republican newspaper Molodezhnaya smena, she had the time to contribute to our magazine as well. She demonstrated responsibility, professionalism and enthusiasm in undertaking any editorial task.

Malika prepared publications on a variety of topics. She actively worked on the preparation of the Contest among disabled veterans, which DOSH planned to hold in Chechnya. And suddenly Malika Betieva got killed in a car crash together with her family.

At first it was a shock. Our hearts and reason could not in any way reconcile or believe in it. Perhaps it was an error and it happened to someone else? Or perhaps they managed to survive in the accident? But they did not.

The worst proved to be true. On the way to the grave of her mother-in-law before the beginning of Ramadan, their car collided with a jeep. The collision was fatal: Malika, her husband Askhab, their two sons Tamerlan and Mansur whom were only 14 and 12 years old, and the sister of her husband died at once.

It happened only two days after all of were sitting together in Grozny and discussing everything what close friends and colleagues can speak about. We were making new plans. There was a kind, pure smile, as always, on Malika's face.

Malika often said: "I am proud of my cooperation with DOSH!" And we knew that she was sincere, because dishonesty was unacceptable for her. Many loved her because of her views. We were proud that Malika Betieva worked with us. The memory of this bright person will always live in our hearts.

Israpil SHOVKHALOV

Photo: Malika with her sons.



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Mireille Perrier :

"I wanted to draw attention not so much to Anna's tragic death, but to her constant fight for human rights and her commitment. I preferred to show her again alive in the final scene".

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The lawyer's profession in Dagestan is experiencing revival or, maybe, the return to its true roots. For a long time, not the one who knew laws and was able to apply them was considered as a good lawyer in the republic, but the one who knew necessary people and could find approach to any investigator or judge to mediate. However, in the past years, primarily thanks to juries, we now have competent and uncompromising defenders who worked instead of "making deals" in Dagestan. They also became the first victims of arbitrariness.

In November, 2007, a popular lawyer Konstantin Mudunov was attacked near his office in Makhachkala. A criminal shot him in the head, but Mudunov managed to survive and named the person who he considered was the instigator.



Photo Izolda IZLITSKAYA

Look, the Caucasus: YERMOLOV IS COMING!

In September 2010, during the final days of the Muslim month of Ramadan, a monument to General Alexey Yermolov was unveiled in Pyatigorsk, the capital of Northern Caucasus Federal Area, in honor of the city's 230th anniversary.

According to its designers, the cost of the monument amounted to 5 million rubles. Its manufacturing and installation were carried out thanks to sponsors and donations by townspeople. The Cossacks also actively participated in implementing the idea of such a monument.

Placed in the center of Pyatigorsk, the monument is made of bronze and represents a full-scale sculpture of General

Yermolov on a horse on top of a two-meter high pedestal.

The inscription says: "Alexey Petrovich Yermolov (1777-1861). Hero of the 1812 Patriotic War, Commander of the Independent Caucasian Corps, Infantry General. He made a great contribution to the formation and development of the city of Pyatigorsk."

There were sharply divided opinions about the installation of this monument. The authors of the idea believe that such a monument is necessary for the capital of North Caucasus Federal Area.

"General Yermolov was not only an outstanding military leader whose glory

has passed through centuries till these days, but he was also a remarkable politician and a refined diplomat. He appeared in the Caucasus when the Caucasus became the center of attention of many Western states, and Russia needed to strengthen its security here, and General Yermolov completed this task with excellence." These words were said during the monument opening ceremony and then extensively quoted in the media.

However, according to many respected people, the reality is absolutely different.



SVETLANA ALIEVA

Forgery and Substitution: The Main Political Principle

In the middle of May 2010, coming back to Moscow from the Caucasus, I intentionally bought a ticket from Pyatigorsk to spend a few hours in the places so dear to me. I was born in this city almost 75 years ago. Pyatigorsk has always been for me and my family a symbol of my native land, beauty and poetry: the monument to Lermontov, the monument to the Eagle soaring over the green mountainous Beshtau (Five Mountains was the initial name of the settlement, in the Karachay-Balkar language), the institute, parkways and city parks, spa resorts, and the healing Lake Tambukan. In 1934, my father, the first Karachay philologist, after finishing his graduate studies, got an appointment with the newly-opened Mountain Pedagogical Institute and arrived to Pyatigorsk with his young Russian wife. The couple had their first picture taken against the Eagle monument. A couple years later, a picture with a newborn daughter was also taken against the Eagle monument. In 1958, when our entire family with already adult children returned home from the deportation, a memorable picture was again taken against the Eagle. Since then, it became a family tradition: each time we arrived or passed through Pyatigorsk, we always came to the Eagle and the monument to Lermontov.

I had a few before the train departure. On my way to the Eagle, I first came to see the monument to Lermontov. I could not find it in the usual place. I asked the people in the streets, mostly visitors, and finally found it far from the central streets, somewhere on the outskirts of the city. Discouraged and perplexed, I hurried to the Eagle. My dear fine Eagle was standing almost in the same place, but nevertheless not exactly where it used to stand, and it did not look the same. Our Eagle was carefully and with love made of forged metal parts, it was alive, it was taking off, while this one now was a mere cast iron pig. Our Eagle

was standing on volcanic plates. You could sit on them or walk around them. This one now was sitting deep on a concrete block and shifted to the edge of the rock. It was now impossible neither to approach the eagle, nor to sit down. It was only possible to crash down together with the Eagle into the deep gorge. Crash down only to perish.

I returned to Moscow but I am still shocked: someone has stolen from me, and not only from me, the bright and kind symbols of this city. What for, why was it all done? Pyatigorsk has been opening the path to the remarkably beautiful mountainous region that since ancient times has been occupied by the generous and magnanimous people, with dignity and the feeling of personal pride and honor which here was always appreciated more than life. The great Russian writer and poet Mikhail Lermontov, so popular among the people of the North Caucasus, noticed this image and character of the mountaineers and recreated it in his works. The monument to him was put with the money raised by the local community in the 19th century. This 27-year-old young man, almost a boy, with a surprising for such early age wisdom, penetrated into the essence of an unbreakable liaison between the beauty of the mountains and the character of the peoples living there. He distinguished various ethnic groups among them and he knew them, their folklore and their history. "The village of Dzhemat is great and rich and it doesn't pay taxes to anybody." Every educated person knows these lines, but only the Karachay people know that they were written about their ancient village that prospered in Teberdinsky gorge through the 17th century before plague broke out.

Sooner or later all the hidden becomes obvious. It soon became clear why the monument to Lermontov was deported far away from the eyes local people and visitors (it is interesting to know

whether his museum is still in the same location): the place was needed for installation of the monument to General Yermolov, the conqueror of the area and the subjugator of its population. He was known for bloody cleansing of the indigenous population, brutal punishments of rebellious mountaineers, burning of villages together with women, children, and old people. Even Tsar Nicholas I was indignant with unprecedented executions and violence: after taking the throne the new Tsar sent the General without any honors to a settlement in Oryol province where this executioner ended his days.

Why was he so suddenly revived and rewarded by setting up a monument to him instead of Lermontov?

They say that the monument was put here at the request of the Cossacks. Allegedly, the Cossacks had a gathering and unanimously decided to remind who represents the real power in this region. Not the peoples who live there but the Cossacks whom Yermolov brought to the Caucasus, gave them the lands taken away from the mountaineers, set up villages, and gave to the newcomers the rights and the power to protect the Russian borders from rebellious foreigners.

So who is the foreigner here: the Cossacks who intruded here with arms or the natives? What a silly question! Certainly, the conqueror! And General Yermolov is viewed as the benefactor and the father to the Cossacks. Therefore, the monument was put to him with gratitude, for edification of the Caucasian people. It is natural: General Yermolov is a symbol of the Russian imperial power. Let the subdued peoples of the Caucasus remember him and stay scared!

And who said that the peoples of the Caucasus are subdued?

The Peace Treaty of 1861 only changed the war forms and methods. The violent mass exile of the mountainous peoples beyond the Russian bound-

aries before the October revolution did not deprive them of their love to the land of their ancestors but rather taught them to survive in new conditions. Stalin's break-down on the kulaks, the destruction of the intellectuals in the 1930s, and repressive deportations of some of the North Caucasus peoples on slanderous charges with the purpose of their total disappearance in the 1940s did not result in the embodiment of the dream to get rid of "rebellious mountaineers" who did not subdue or obey.

The Perestroika of the 1980s was a declarative refusal of the aggressive imperial conceit strengthened by communist ideology that created the new form of "friendship among peoples" of the Soviet imperial style. Having rejected its Soviet (communist) component, the pseudo-democrats started to cultivate pure imperial ideology with a slight fascist smell. We cover, mask, and look for new names for these Russian neo-fascists: we do not have fascists, they are simply "skinheads." And now the Cossacks adjoin them. All of them are convinced defenders (from whom?) of the Russian people and ruthless enemies of all foreigners without exception. They are especially aggressive towards the peoples of North Caucasus.

This monument to General Yermolov is obviously a rough announcement of a new war against the peoples of North Caucasus. It is a scarecrow of imperial Russia shown to the mountaineers.

Who are the Cossacks? Are they an ethnic group? No! They do not call themselves Russians. They are neither peasants, nor workers. Neither are they intellectuals because they are not engaged in any intellectual work. They are a classless, asocial community of fighting horsemen with the self-name COSSACK, which in Turkic languages means a soldier-horseman. Historically, it was a name for vagrant soldiers, pedestrian and horse-mount, and mercenaries united in groups and serving certain states. With the formation of the Russian state, part of them were accepted to permanent service and

provided with a piece of land to settle. Their settlements were called "stanitsa" ("stan" means a camp in Turkic languages). From the 17th century, when the process of colonization of the territories adjoining Russia proper started, Cossack communities emerged: Don, Kuban, Terek, and Volga (we are not talking about Siberia now). The Kuban and Terek Cossaks, followed by the Don Cossacks, invented a special uniform to a large extent imitating national clothes of the Caucasian peoples.

Certainly, the Kuban, Don and Terek Cossacks are obliged to General Yermolov because they received from him the best lands taken away from the Caucasian peoples and a permanent place of service. Just like the mountaineers, they remember that they live on the lands that are not their native lands. Both the Cossacks and mountaineers, contrary to imposed reputation, are not vindictive but genetically are afraid of

each other. The Cossacks keep their traditions, their way of life and occupation and are not going to give up them at all. Only a few of them receive modern higher vocational education and leave their communities, but the majority of them stay on the land and dream of security-sentry occupation, like to show daring, to sport in the Cossack uniform, to boast of high military ranks, etc.

Another question is who of those staying in power approved and supported this idea with the monument, apparently, having armed the Cossacks with the right to dispose, execute and pardon representatives of the Caucasian peoples?

The revival of General Yermolov is a serious threat to the integrity of the country. It is openly symbolic. The poetry is killed and the Eagle will not fly up any more. The Scarecrow of Russia was put to scare the peoples of North Caucasus.

ISMAIL KHACHIROV

Chairman of Djamagat Karachay-Balkar society

A Monument to the Chastener

I am personally against such a monument because for the Caucasus this person was not better than Hitler. Since childhood, we know from books about the Chechen Republic that he burnt and exterminated the entire villages. I consider it correct and reasonable that the peoples of the Caucasus became part of Russia. However, the means that Yermolov used to conquer these lands are unacceptable.

Certainly, I am not historian, I am agriculturist. However, I know that there were many great, clever, fair people, real internationalists, among outstanding military men of the Russian army of those times. Probably, it would

be more reasonable to put a monument to someone like them, for example, to General Emmanuel. He fought against the Karachay. He met with Krymshamkhalov, the leader of the Karachay community. As a result, the general did not move the army into the village and the conflict was resolved peacefully. They signed an agreement, and our peoples have been true to it for the past 180 years. By the way, in Cherkessk they wish to put a big monument to him.

Yermolov is negatively perceived not only by the Chechens. The Adyghe people also suffered during the Caucasian War.

**MAGOMED MUZAEV, historian,
Head of Archival Department
of the Government of the Chechen Republic**

The Monument of Contention

Monuments should unite people and not divide. A country, if it is united, should have common heroes and common ideas. But I do not know what General Yermolov did to unite the Caucasus around the memory of him. He appeared here in 1817 and then started building the fortress of Grozny. In the opinion of the Chechens, all talks that this person tried to bring civilization, Russian and European culture to the mountaineers are a deceit. Yermolov was the chastener, one of the most terrible conquerors of the imperial power. Many believe that Yermolov's arrival became the reason for a long war in the Caucasus. He brought severe sufferings to the mountaineers, and it also cost big losses for Russia. Ordinary Russian soldiers and officers lost their lives. General Yermolov invented brutal, ruthless methods to conquer the people and suppress their emancipating struggle, without trying to find any less blood-thirsty methods. Meanwhile, many Chechens wished to be allies of Russia, but not serfs.

He was enraged by the way of life of the Chechens. In addition, he wanted to make them starve. He wrote to the Tsar that, in his opinion, Chechnya was a big gangster nest for the entire Caucasus. It accumulated all those who ran whom the authorities, who were persecuted or could not get on in other places. He confirmed that rebels always found protection there and that is why Chechnya was the center of constant danger. He warned the Tsar that internal revolts and mutinies were more dangerous than external threats.

Indeed, defecting Russian soldiers were accepted in Chechnya and provided shelter and protection even under the threat of physical destruction. Some of these soldiers accepted Islam.

I would like to note that all campaigns of the imperial armies began at the moment of crop maturing. The armies destroyed the entire settlements, with women and children. They simply burnt what they could not steal or take away, leaving nothing for the inhabitants.

The monument to General Yermolov in Pyatigorsk offends me and causes alarm in the Russian conscience which owes a lot to the Caucasus. It bubbled in Pushkin, Lermontov, the Decembrist and writer Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, and the great Russian writer and spiritual instructor Leo Tolstoy.

Years, decades and centuries are needed to smooth old hems and scars through a friendly dialogue. Russia has a lot of attractive faces for this purpose: those who helped the peoples of the Caucasus to open universities, schools, theatres, and hospitals, and to develop the economy, science and culture. They are unifying persons, whereas General Yermolov is a separating person and even shameful for Russia.

Then people ran away, hid in the woods, built there small defensive strongholds and used primitive tools to dig small holes where they threw a handful of corn. It was then when corn became to be used instead of wheat and barley. Corn produced a lot of grain and consequently became the "bread of war." It was impossible to keep cattle in such extreme conditions. Usually a family kept only one goat. This was the way people lived, constantly being at war.

Thus, the Chechens did not obey, but became avengers. They began to attack imperial fortresses and villages that

stood on the taken away fertile lands. So the aggressive spirit was growing in them, which was later given out for born rage and aggression of the Chechens.

Therefore, both history facts and traditional rumor make an absolutely negative impression of Yermolov.

It should be noted that the Chechens were able to give due to their enemies, even if those were brutal. They respected their enemies for bravery and other worthy qualities. For example, General Sleptsov was rather brutal but he fought on the battleground and perished as a warrior. General Paskevich was not merciful but he was not as brutal as Yermolov.

The mountaineers had a special respect for General Baklanov. They even named their children in his honor. In addition to all the above mentioned atrocities, Yermolov deliberately spread epidemics. His name was given only to

dogs. The people are not mistaken and do not forget, especially his words that he would not stop until the last Chechen was still alive.

Perhaps he was not a bad warrior when he fought against the French, the Turks, the Persians or other external enemies, but in the memory of the mountaineers he remained as a ruthless executioner who in every way tried to wipe them out. To put a monument to him in the capital of North Caucasus is, to put it mildly, illogical. Honors rendered to this person cannot be apprehended positively in Chechnya.

**CHINGIZ HUSEYNOV, writer,
Professor of Moscow State University**

Learn to Hear Each Other

The Soviet propaganda transformed history into a prostitute and tried, counter to the truth, to create the idea of friendship among nations from extortionate and aggressive actions of the past.

Thus, the monument in honor of the 200th anniversary of the Treaty of Georgievsk was erected in Moscow. As is known, Russia took advantage of this treaty to take over Transcaucasia. The authors, the popular sculptor Tsereteli and the poet Andrey Voznesensky, were inspired with a laudable art plan to

embody the idea of unification of peoples through interlacing the letters of the Russian and Georgian alphabets that twist around the monument. In line with the treaty, the imperial armies under the command of General Tsitsianov (a russified Georgian Tsitsishvili) quickly marched towards Tiflis and then to Baku where the general was killed. Later the thirty-year long Caucasian War broke out and ended with capturing Shamil in 1859.

I should recollect thereupon Lermontov's plan to write a novel about the "bloody suppression of the Caucasus by General Yermolov." Yermolov was celebrated in the USSR as a symbol of the Russian people in the war of 1812, the defender and the liberator of Fatherland from Napoleonic invasion. And it was always forgotten that for fellow citizens-Caucasians the memory of the general was bad, for here he symbolized exclusively imperial colonialism. Each time they put a monument to the general in the Caucasus, confirming the imperial power, this monument is destroyed. And today, alas, Yermolov took over Lermontov, having pushed aside his monument, to get on top of the horse, teasing the peoples of Caucasus. I remember that once the poet Lev Oshanin decided to invite Rasul Gamzatov to his apartment, but Gamzatov exclaimed, having learnt the address: "I will never step into the street named after General Yermolov!"

The same positive and negative symbolism is also applicable to General Skobelev who is esteemed in Russia and who used fire and sword to subdue the peoples of Central Asia.

There are many examples in the past when the Russian people were deaf to foreigners and when showing off only

the positive in history offended and teased their neighbors. There used to be celebrations of anniversaries of the so-called voluntary joining to Russia. Thank God, today we do not celebrate such anniversaries.

I think that sometime all will agree that double standards of such kind are immoral and harmful. Nowadays each people remember how strangers killed their kin, but nobody wishes to recognize that they also killed. When the World day of repentance will be established at last, the Russians, and I also consider myself Russian, will fairly admit that the basic, all-consuming business, the meaning of life and the occupation of the title people for centuries has been to be at war, spread, and acquire new territories. This has always been a dominating principle. The other side of it has been complete indifference of the authorities to the life of their own people and other ethnic groups, which were indicatively called "foreigners," aliens, following the tradition of imperial Russia. Ironically, even freedom-loving persons, such as the Decembrists, saw Russia only as the state of the Russians, while other ethnic groups were simply ignored.

This tradition still defines the views of many outstanding figures. But there are exceptions: Alexander Pushkin, with all his political fidelity to Russia, saw Russia as a multiethnic country. In his short "Monument," he demonstrated a rare multiethnic thinking that many politicians lack today: he speaks of "the grandson of the Slavs," the Tungus (Evenks) known to very few people, and devotes almost a whole line to the Kalmyks.

Leo Tolstoy was similar to Pushkin. In times of ethnic troubles in Russia, the best advice to the authorities will be to read Khadzhi-Murat (I am afraid very few of them read this story). We should not forget: the great Russians bequeathed to us the traditions of sympathy and responsiveness, and even a hidden or even an obvious feeling of national guilt.



They moved Lermontov,
our times have different heroes.

ANDREY TARASOV
journalist, writer

Is Russia a Scarecrow?

I heard that a new monument was put in Pyatigorsk in early September. General Yermolov on a horse in the city center.

I did not see it. And I do not wish to see it. I feel shame. Yermolov personifies Russia to the peoples of Caucasus whose lands he conquered for the Russian empire, performing numerous acts of violence. I do not know whether it was

the central or regional authorities, or an aggressive community who brought forward this symbol of animosities that left a mournful memory in the hearts of fellow citizens in Russia and in the Caucasus. The only thing I know is that this symbol offends the Caucasian community.

The monument to General Yermolov in Pyatigorsk offends me and causes

alarm in the Russian conscience which owes a lot to the Caucasus. It bubbled in Pushkin, Lermontov, the Decembrist and writer Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, and the great Russian writer and spiritual instructor Leo Tolstoy. Years, decades and centuries are needed to smooth old hems and scars through a friendly dialogue. Russia has a lot of attractive faces for this purpose: those who helped the peoples of the Caucasus to open universities, schools, theatres, and hospitals, and to develop the economy, science and culture. They are unifying persons, whereas General Yermolov is a separating person and even shameful for Russia.

MARIA KATYSHEVA

Provocation

Everyone realizes that federal authorities have neither the ability, nor political will, nor desire to improve the situation in the Caucasus. Who was that great history expert who suggested putting a monument to the subjugator of the Caucasus General Yermolov in Pyatigorsk? It is obvious that it is a provocation with the purpose to prevent stabilization in the region. Or was it someone's malicious intent?

Historical sources show that General Yermolov was an outstanding person, courageous and brave, the war hero of 1812, sympathized with the Decembrists, etc. However, for the peoples of North Caucasus he was a ruthless executioner. And it also a historic fact.

For a long time the Chechens did not have a written history. But they keep their historic memory: everyone from the early childhood knows the names of the ancestors for at least seven generations! Their memory keeps stores of brutalities performed by the subjugators of the Caucasus over the local population. It was so brutal that conscientious contemporaries of those events could not be silent. There was, for example, a testimony of the legendary General Nikolay Rayevsky: leaving the Caucasus, he wrote

in 1841 that he was compelled to do it because "our actions in the Caucasus remind all those disasters of an initial conquest of America by the Spaniards."

As a matter of fact, it is not necessary to dig deep in the archives, it is enough to open Leo Tolstoy's book *Khadzhi-Murat*. This greatest psychologist, the artist with a huge moral sense, and the eyewitness of the events described everything very authentically. It only takes to read attentively and make conclusions out of this severe lesson of history.

However, we do not wish to make conclusions because the arrogance does not allow us to do so. Why are we then surprised that the peoples of North Caucasus do not give up thoughts about their sovereignty? For what reason are we so indignant about the aggression demonstrated by their radicals? It is only a reaction to the actions of the federal center, such as the establishment of this monument.

There used to be a rather expressive monument to General Yermolov in Grozny. It stood in the city center, but behind a high fence, so it was difficult to see it. Those who did not know the historical background were usually sur-

prised. Once I saw how students from Latvia toured the city and became curious why the monument to Yermolov was blocked from view. The guide answered: "It was blown up more than once!" The Latvians were surprised. "It is written here that he was the founder of the fortress of Groznaya. How is it possible to destroy a monument to the city founder?" The guide answered: "Yermolov founded Groznaya on the lands of several Chechen villages that were burnt by his order, and the memory of this remains in generations. People in villages still call their dogs Yarmal."

Tens and hundreds of years pass but the memory of old events is alive. "Reconcile, the Caucasus, Yermolov is coming!" This will not work today. This monument will not improve interethnic relations or bring peace to the Caucasus.

Or, perhaps the Caucasians and, in particular the Chechens, will not make a tragedy with another monument to Yermolov and will not blow it up? Perhaps they will look at it differently, with the sense of humor that is so typical of them.

Let's imagine for a minute that some joker will say that a monument to Ahmed Zakayev, now under an international warrant, in the role of General Yermolov was put in Pyatigorsk (he was excellent when he once played this role in the National Chechen Theatre).

HASAN DZHANTAEV

Full member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences

A Symbol of Colonial Administration

The opening in Pyatigorsk, the recently proclaimed capital of North Caucasus, of the monument to General Yermolov, unfortunately, will not add interethnic peace in this distressful region. It is difficult to say what is more in it: a sophisticated provocation or a militant ignorance of the initiators of this politically short-sighted action.

The serious reproach thereupon, undoubtedly, is deserved by the authorities of the new federal area who are supposed to establish political stability in the region. Under such circumstances, the authorities, aspiring to bring investments to the region, will eventually get nothing. The mountaineers have a good memory. Unlike strangers, they remember both the good and the evil done to them.

It is clear to anyone that a monument to a well-known person, native of this place and equally respected both by the mountaineers and the Russians would be more appropriate in the capital of new area. Don't we have such people in the history of North Caucasus?

The inscription on the pedestal of the new monument reads that Yermolov was the hero of the war against Napoleon. This is true. But he was not the only and not the main hero of that war. There were other good fellows and there were also those native of the Caucasus. They are generals and heroes of the same war: Peter Bagration and Alexander Chechensky. The latter was a six-year old boy when he was picked up in a burned Chechen village by Nikolay Rayevsky (also the hero of the war of 1812-1814), adopted and brought up by him. He became the closest friend of Denis Davidov, another hero of that war, and even his relative through getting married to his cousin. A. Chechensky was so successful and well-known in foreign

campaign of the Russian army of 1814 that the valorous French garrison of Dresden gave up the city to him without fight. Speaking of the patriotic war against the French, we should know all of its heroes for the history not to appear before us one-sided.

Say that the initiators of installation of the notorious monument were the Cossacks of North Caucasus. They probably very much love Yermolov. Though, as is known, the bloody general was neither the Cossack, nor the Cossack general. Have the Cossacks really forgotten their generals? We can remind. Three Cossack armies simultaneously (Terek, Kuban and Don) were under command of the hero of the War of the Caucasus (1840-1864) and the Russian-Turkish war (1877-1878) Lieutenant General of cavalry Ortsu Chermoyev. According to imperial archives, he was very successful. Why not put a monument to him in Pyatigorsk? Or to General Eriskhan Aliyev, the hero of the Russian-Japanese war and World War I, shot by security officers in the 1920s?

The inscription on the monument pedestal in Pyatigorsk informs also that Yermolov very much cared about Pyatigorsk. He also founded the fortress Groznaya in 1818. After the deportation of the Chechens, a bust to him was put in the center of Grozny. This monument was blown up annually by patriotic young men who returned to their native land. It lasted this way until the reasonable decision of taking it down was adopted in the late 1980s.

However, we will return to the reasons causing especially warm feelings to Yermolov among the Cossacks. During the First Chechen war, the Cossacks of North Caucasus formed a regiment named after Yermolov and moved to Chechnya. The results of that campaign

were sad. The regiment shared the fate of the elite of the Russian army (Maikop and Pskov airborne brigades).

Our neighbors probably like Yermolov because he boasted that he set on fire three hundred Chechen villages. Let's mention only one episode, the slaughter in the village of Dadi-Yurt that was located opposite the village of Chervlenaya, on the opposite bank of the Terek. By order of Yermolov the village was surrounded at night and in a few days of fierce fighting was entirely wiped out by gun fire.

You can read interesting documents of that time in the Russian State Library. One of such documents is a petition to the Tsar from the Proconsul of the Caucasus Yermolov with the request to reward several dozen officers and lower ranks who distinguished themselves during the battle of Dadi-Yurt.

The Russian Emperor Nicholas I wrote his resolution on this document in his own hand: "The destruction of the inhabitants of a peaceful Chechen village is not a military valor. Therefore, reject the awards requested by General Yermolov!" In the 1820s, long before the beginning of the War of the Caucasus, for his inept, short-sighted and, moreover, criminal management of the region Yermolov was withdrawn to Russia and sent to his entail property to live his final days in obscurity. This person, who so disgracefully finished his military career, did everything to infuse hostility between the mountaineers of the Caucasus and Russia and to sow a long and deep alienation, mistrust and animosity between them.

Russian writers have stories of the eyewitnesses who observed how Shamil, "the Generalissimo of the mountains," was driven with an honorable escort in 1859 to Kaluga through the native vil-



After the deportation of the Chechens, a bust to him was put in the center of Grozny. This monument was blown up annually by patriotic young men who returned to their native land. It lasted this way until the reasonable decision of taking it down was adopted in the late 1980s.

lage of Yermolov. The old veteran of the War of the Caucasus came out to greet Shamil who refused to shake his hand and said that the Caucasian war might not break out, had Yermolov not have burned down the villages of the mountaineers.

That is why the erection of a grandiose monument to this odious person for the peoples of North Caucasus is perceived by the mountaineers as a sign on absolute approval of the barbarous methods of colonization of the Caucasus that were condemned in due time even by the imperial authorities. The monument in honor of the general-suppressor, the general-chastener gives to the mountaineers all grounds to perceive the city where it was put and the administration residing in it as something deeply alien and hostile to them, as a colonial administration in its worst alternative. They do not anticipate anything good from the administrative center where the monument to the person who confessed being their sworn enemy stands.



Photo from personal archive of Beslan KOSTOEV

Probably someone fondly believes that only the Russians are granted the right to be indignant concerning pulling down or erecting monuments (even in foreign cities, such as Lvov or Tallinn). However, the Caucasians also have this right. I am far from thinking that the authorities of new Russia, who do not have a distinct ethnic policy, share the opinion of the mountaineers about the

monument to Yermolov. I can even admit that there may soon appear another monument next to this one, to Colonel Budanov. Numerous crowds of the Cossacks gathered meetings in his support during the litigation at Rostov district military court. They once again let us know that we are strangers for Russia. However, we never had an occasion to forget about it.

AIDA GADZHIEVA

DEFENDERS WITHOUT PROTECTION

On June 29th, 2010 the Council of the Dagestan Chamber of Lawyers published its petition to the Minister of Internal Affairs of the republic Ali Magomedov and the Public Prosecutor of Dagestan Andrey Nazarov with the request to guarantee security of lawyers and to provide their access to clients. The document reads: "Each act of violence against lawyers in connection with their professional work becomes a blow on the civil society. If in republic cannot provide safety for lawyers at least within the walls of law enforcement structures, then it is useless to hope for safety of other citizens."

The lawyer's profession in Dagestan is experiencing revival or, maybe, the return to its true roots. For a long time, not the one who knew laws and was able to apply them was considered as a good lawyer in the republic, but the one who knew necessary people and could find approach to any investigator or judge to mediate. However, in the past years, primarily thanks to juries, we now have competent and uncompromising defenders who worked instead of "mak-



Sergey Kvasov

ing deals" in Dagestan. They also became the first victims of arbitrariness.

In November, 2007, a popular lawyer Konstantin Mudunov was attacked near his office in Makhachkala. A criminal shot him in the head, but Mudunov managed to survive and named the person who he considered was the instigator. He later told: "The case was not opened for several days. They delayed because they did not wish to accept our version. I feel as if I am a soldier in the enemy's rear." The case was never solved.



Konstantin Mudunov

On April 9th, 2010, another popular lawyer, Sergey Kvasov, was brutally attacked in the center of Makhachkala. Several men in masks rushed into a hair-dressing salon, where Kvasov was, and beat him with iron rods. They kept beating the lawyer even after he fainted. Sergey Kvasov received severe traumas and is currently in hospital. The criminals were not found. The investigators believe that the reason for the attack was the lawyers' professional work.

Leaflets with threats to "collaborators of insurgents" appeared in Dagestan a year ago. They were ostensibly written by the relatives of the killed policemen. The list of "collaborators" contained the names of human rights activists, journalists, and several lawyers who defended those accused of participation in illegal armed units. Law enforcement experts came to a conclusion that the leaflet was produced in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It is hard to tell if it is true or not. However, proofs appeared this summer that the idea of punishment of lawyers is popular among law enforcement agencies and that their management encourages such things.



Dzhamilya Tagirova

WOMEN FOR BEATING

On June 17th, the lawyer Sapiyat Magomedova was beaten in the Department of Internal Affairs of the city of Khasavyurt. She requested admission to her client who was delivered to the department earlier that day. The police officers beat Sapiyat in the face and the head. When she called an ambulance, the police did not let the doctors in and said that nobody called them. This inadequate and impossible for men in the Caucasus behavior is explained by the conflict that the lawyer had two years ago with the investigators of the Khasavyurt Office of Public Prosecutor who filed a written complaint accusing her of offense by calling them "morons." According to Magomedova, it was the other way round: the officers offended her and accused her of writing complaints and statements for her clients! The case concerning the "morons" lasted for more than a year. The legal community protected their colleague but could not rescue her from the fists of the police officers.

Thanks to the Internet, the country learnt about the shocking incident in Khasavyurt. Meanwhile the police maintain that it was Magomedova who attacked the men and that they have numerous witnesses. Sapiyat Magomedova is in a Moscow hospital now. According to her colleagues, the problems with health became a consequence of the brain concussion received in the police building. The President of Dagestan Magomedsalom Magomedov took the investigation of this case under his personal control. However, the victim is sure that the policemen will incur no punishment. She told to *Noviy Izvestia*: "Now the policemen are trying to collect

any compromising evidence on me, they check my income and attentively study my private life. But there is no compromising information about me as I did not do anything bad. Nevertheless, I do not believe that while this case is investigated in Dagestan, the policemen who beat me will be punished. Today everything is done in the republic to blacken me and to whitewash the policemen." Shamil Temigereyev, chief of Khasavyurt police commented to the newspaper: "We have already got tired of reading all these lies about us in newspapers. Nobody revenges Sapiyat Magomedova. Magomedov defends people who set up explosions in the Moscow metro. We have a videorecording of her attacking the policemen and provoking our people. We have numerous witnesses who can testify that nobody beat Sapiyat Magomedova. Sooner or later she will be punished for this slander."

While the country discussed this accident and the president "personally supervised" the investigation, there was a new shocking attack. On July 3rd, the lawyer Dzhamilya Tagirova was beaten in the building of Sovetsky Department of Internal Affairs in Makhachkala. She came to investigator Kerim Mazayev to

be present at the face-to-face interrogation of her client and the victim. In her statement addressed to the head of Investigation Department of SKP Kasumbek Amirbekov she wrote: "The investigator refused to enter my remarks in the records of the interrogation of the suspect. After the interrogation was over I managed to write my remarks into the appropriate column and the investigator tore the records and threw it on the floor. After I lifted the papers and put them on the table, Mazayev snatched out the papers from my hands and began to punch me in the face and in the body, while offending me by obscene words." Together with the statement she also submitted the doctor's confirmation of grazes on her face, neck and a hand.

The Office of Public Prosecutor is still considering opening a case against investigator Mazayev. In the meanwhile, the Minister of Internal Affairs of Dagestan Ali Magomedov expressed his attitude to it and similar incidents. He charged the heads city and regional police departments "to conduct explanatory talks, strengthen educational work with the subordinates, pay attention to possible provocations, and be ready to react to them adequately and according with the law. While working with the arrested persons and their defenders, with a view of a non-admission of insinuations or charges against the investigators, behave politely and use video and an audio equipment for fixing investigatory actions, as needed."

*Photo: Natalia Kraynova
and Sergey Rasulov -
New Business/NewsTeam*



Sapiyat Magomedova

AIDA GADZHIEVA

THE WAR AND INVESTMENTS

The hopes that the coming to power of the new president of Dagestan Magomedsalam Magomedov would put an end to the power struggle and stabilize the situation in the republic have vanished. It only became worse: the armed underground became more active, acts of terrorism and murders have become frequent and are now directed not only against agents of national security but also against civilians. Law enforcement officers became more brutal: they used to beat only suspects earlier and now also beat lawyers and even victims. And they all continue to attack businesses. Experts speak about afghanization, i.e. the transformation of the republic into a military training field where the economic development of the territory is impossible.

In early August of 2010, the Minister of Internal Affairs was replaced in Dagestan. The former FSB officer Ali Magomedov (according to some observers, he was a bench manager for such an uneasy republic) was replaced by his assistant, the chief of investigatory management of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the republic Abdurashid



Sergey Rasulov/NewsTeam

Magomedov. This 52-year-old colonel of justice with a long experience perfectly knows the state of affairs in the Dagestan police. He declared the struggle against extremists as his primary goal, and action was quick. On August 21st, one of extremists' leaders Magomedali Vagabov was killed as a result of a special operation in Gunib. However, the death of Vagabov served as a signal for the insurgents. The republic was literally covered with a wave of grave crimes directed against law enforcement officers. Casual passers-by, including children, became victims even more frequent. Experts explained such escalation by the struggle among commanders of the insurgents for the vacant post of the leader. However, this version was not justified. Anyway, after the insurgents appointed Israpil Validzhanov their leader, the quantity of attacks did not decrease. Security forces undertook a series of counter-terrorist operations across the

Investments were the main topic even during Aleksander Khloponin's visit to Dagestan 21-22 September. "Unfortunately, today there are only conversations and no projects", added Khloponin.

entire Dagestan. During two weeks in September, 22 insurgents were killed in Dagestan as a result of five such special actions.

It is obvious that this toughened struggle against the insurgents is authorized by the federal center. At a meeting in Sochi on August 11th, Dmitry Medvedev agreed with the proposal of the president of Dagestan Magomedsalam Magomedov to create a battalion of 800 people for conducting operations in mountainous woody districts of the republic. It is planned that well prepared fighters will be selected from local residents and they will be supplied with the best ammunition and equipment.



Photo: Bashir Aiev/NewsTeam



According to the president of Dagestan, this unit will help to break the situation in counter-terrorist struggle.

However, as repeatedly noted by both local and federal authorities, power methods alone will not solve the problem of terrorism, whereas economic development should stop the social source of the extremists. However, neither the creation of the new North Caucasus Federal Area, nor the appointment of Alexander Khloponin, nor the appointment of Magomedsalam Magomedov as president of the republic that supposedly would let Kerimov's billions flow into the republic (Suleiman Kerimov is a Russian billionaire, representing Dagestan in the Federation Council) affected in any way the economy of Dagestan. Crazy sums of money keep arriving into the republic in the form of grants, subsidies and investments into various projects and dissolve somewhere without any economic benefit. "The German village," the ambitious project started by the former president Mukha Aliev who wanted to build a modern city-resort on the seacoast in Karabudakhkentsky District, became the talk of the town. The project failed already at the stage of land allotment.

The lack of land usage regulation in the republic is only one of the problems hampering its economy development. Another problem is the so-called "jamaat tax." Everybody in Dagestan knows that the insurgents collect a tribute from all large businessmen using as their argument not only threats, but also abduction of businessmen or their children, attacks on businesses, and arsons. The police quite often found letters with threats, lists of "tax bearers" and accounting documents on the killed insurgents. The police were surprised why businessmen did not turn to the police or the Office of Public Prosecutor for protection. At the same time, people tell stories that the insurgents knew about such appeals an hour after they were filed. Neither officials nor businessmen (frequently they are the same people) can exist in Dagestan without an armed group of security.

Nevertheless, according to businessmen, the main impeding factor for the republic's economy is not extremism but corruption. Illicit payoffs reach up to 30-40%, but they do not guarantee that business projects will be completed. The most popular type of business in the republic is to get financing of any object from the federal or the local budget and then amicably to plunder this money.

Under such conditions, it is no wonder that no private investor wishes to put up money in the Dagestan economy. During his meeting with Magomedsalam Magomedov and Alexander Khloponin in Sochi, Dmitry Medvedev spoke precisely about it: "Another sphere which is very important and, maybe, even crucial for the development of the republic are investments. So far, there are no investments. Lately, almost nothing has been done. We cannot develop the republic's economy further without investments. I hope that the new management can improve this process."

Investments became the main topic during Alexander Khloponin's visit to Dagestan in September. At various meetings he repeated: the federal center provides huge financing to Dagestan for various programs and it is only necessary to be able to implement the ideas in the form of projects and there will be no problems with financing. He also added: "Unfortunately, today there are only conversations and no projects." He also mentioned and insurgents: "We should mobilize and stop moaning and saying that the terrorists plunder and kill us. It is necessary to give a chance to the people to work, earn money, build houses, and engage in business."

THE MURDER OF FARID BABAYEV: ONLY THE EXECUTOR HAS BEEN PUNISHED



The killer has been condemned, the organizer is under a search warrant and the customer is unknown. Such are the results of the second trial in the Supreme Court of Dagestan on the case of murder of the leader of the Dagestan branch of Yabloko party and the State Duma candidate Farid Babayev.

The politician, who was returning home from the party office, was shot at the entrance of his house ten days prior to the elections to the Duma, on November 21st, 2007. The doctors struggled three days for his life but on November 24th Farid Babayev died.

The second trial was almost the repetition of the first one, only this time not all witnesses dared to come and it seriously weakened the position of the prosecution and the victims. However, the result was the same: on May 21st, the jury recognized Rasil Mamedrizayev as the murderer while his companion Seferali Sefimerzoyev was acquitted. On June 3rd, the judge of the Supreme Court Zakir Israfilov sentenced the murderer to 15 years of prison. This is one year less than the previous court decision that was cancelled in June last year by

the Supreme Court of Russia the request of the prosecution and the defense.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR THE CUSTOMER

The one who the prosecution calls the customer but whose role, according to all evidence, is that of the organizer has been hiding from law enforcement. Sedredin Kanberov, one of the Kanberov brothers who are trying to be engaged in politics in Southern Dagestan, is the last link between the real customer and the murderer.

There are doubts that Kanberov is the final customer because nobody has yet identified the motive which could induce him to this murder. However, he had a motive not to kill: Farid Babayev openly struggled against the head of Dokuzparinsky District Kerimkhan Abasov (together with his son he was even detained on suspicion in Babayev's murder), and in this struggle the Kanberovs were on Babayev's side.

The leader of Yabloko party campaigned against Abasov after the execution of the meeting of district head opponents on April 25th, 2005 in the village of Miskindzha when one person was killed from bullets fired by the police. Babayev was not interested in the political reasons of the meeting. He was concerned with the rights of the people who, as he said, "were shot only because they came to a meeting." The Kanberov brothers wished to overthrow Abasova using someone else's hands.

Thus, Kanberov could be induced to organize this murder only by decision of the person much more influential and to whom he could not refuse. Kanberov was operating on a district level (he was active in several areas occupied by the

Lezghins), it is clear that, to organize the murder, and he could depend on someone more influential operating on at least the republican level.

THE LAWYERS' FAILED REVENGE

The second trial was difficult to endure both for the victims and the prosecution. During the first trial, the witnesses and the jury saw the defendants in the cage. Now Sefimerzoyev was first sitting in the hall, came in and left together with them through the same door, which for them could be psychologically difficult. Later the prosecution insisted on detention of Sefimerzoyev and he was put in the cage as well.

The loss of the main witness of the prosecution who was acting in court under the pseudonym Akayev became the most unfavorable circumstance for the victims and the public prosecutor. He told the investigation that on October 21st, 2007 he saw Mamedrizayev running with a hand gun in his hand just in that place and at the time where there was the murder. It was in the evening and it was already dark, but at that moment a passing car threw light on Mamedrizayev and the witness identified him during the investigation.

Akayev stated then that he went that day to see his relative who was working in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. He told about the person with a pistol. The relative already knew about the attempt on Farid Babayev and asked about the details. Having understood that Akayev could see the murderer, he persuaded him to go to the police and give evidence. He even wrote an official report to his superiors about it, which later helped to convince the jury of the authenticity of the initial evidence provided by Akayev.

Akayev gave evidence and confirmed it

at the first trial. He was under serious pressure. For example, during one of the court sessions, one of the defense lawyers told Akayev who was sitting behind the screen (the anonymous witness should remain hidden): "Be more precise in your statements, we know where your relatives live." The reaction of the judge to this trick was unexpectedly soft.

Akayev did not come to the second trial at first because the police officers "could not find him." Then he unexpectedly appeared and refused his evidence.

However, the evidence provided by Akayev to the investigation was read to the jury. The jury also listened to Akayev's relative and also read his official report. They only needed to decide whether to believe that Akayev did not see anything or to trust his previous evidence that was confirmed several times by himself and his relative, an employee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Most likely, the jury believed the "initial" Akayev.

NOBODY WANTED THE THIRD TRIAL

Farid Babayev's younger brother Arthur is convinced that both defendants are guilty. Other relatives of the victim think so too.

According to Arthur Babayev, the investigation presented a large amount of facts confirming the fault of both Mamedrizayev and Sefimerzoyev. These include evidence of witnesses who saw them and the logs of telephone conversations between them. The defense brought new witnesses to prove their clients' alibi but their evidence failed.

However, the Babayevs did not want to cancel the results of the first trial despite the acquittal of Sefimerzoyev. This time they did not want to bring the case to the Supreme Court of Russia. In their opinion, each consecutive trial only reduces the chances to put the murderers in prison. The arguments of the prosecution do not change as they are based on the same evidence. The witnesses show less determination and the lawyers of the defendants each time present new "surprises" in the form of

witnesses who ostensibly saw the defendants at the moment of the murder anywhere, only not on the crime scene. It does not really matter that such witnesses often confuse their evidence and contradict themselves and each other. The Babayevs believe that this can anyhow affect the opinion of the jury.

The relatives are discouraged by the vote of the jury which was slightly different from that during the first trial. During the second trial, the vote on Mamedrizayev was 7:5 in favor of his guilt, just like during the first trial, while the vote on Sefimerzoyev was 12:0 in favor of his innocence, whereas at the first trial, with the same arguments of the prosecution, the vote was only 7:5 in favor of the defendant.

Mysterious motifs of both the jury and the judges during the both trials do not make the Babayevs believe in justice of the court. The attacks of the lawyers of the defense that were obviously breaking the norms accepted in court were not punished by the judges. The jury pronounced Mamedrizayev guilty and for some reason recognized him as deserving leniency, which reduced his sentence by a year. It remains a riddle how a person can deserve leniency if he committed murder for money, having left four children without the father and the mother without the son.

A DANGEROUS GAME

Farid Babayev was murdered at the start of his political career, when he, without any financial support and essentially without contacting the criminal world, nevertheless, started to gain strength and popularity.

After the execution by the police of the meeting in Dokuzparinsky District on April 25th, 2006, his activeness created serious problems to the regional head Kerimkhan Abasov. Only protection from above could rescue Abasov from resignation.

Without money and without having built properly the Dagestan branch of Yabloko party, Babayev nevertheless carried out loud actions against lawlessness

of the police, extrajudicial executions, and abductions of the Dagestani by those whom diplomatically they call "persons in camouflage uniform." He also stood against noisy and destructive special operations when people are intentionally not allowed to surrender while maximum damage is done to their houses. He organized round table discussions with representatives of the authorities and human rights activists and gathered meetings where he brought people from various areas. He invited prominent human rights activists to such meetings. Kovalev, Borshev, and Ponomarev came to Dagestan responding to his invitations.

After his first elections to the State Duma in December 2003, he organized a series of litigations trying to prove numerous falsifications of their results. He lost but this campaign became a precedent in the political life of Dagestan.

Another fight against the corrupted political system in Dagestan he decided to give at the republican parliamentary elections in March of 2007. However, the party was removed from the elections.

Farid Babayev still could finish the elections to the city council of Dagestanskiye Ogni. The results were a little less than the 7% barrier, which vividly demonstrated that Yabloko simply could not resist the "correction" of final election reports.

He prepared a large battle at the elections to the State Duma of 2007. His tactics was aimed at creating a wide oppositional coalition around Yabloko party to oppose the president of Dagestan Mukhu Aliyev. This scheme started to get implemented, several influential people agreed to cooperate.

It is possible that this progress frightened someone among the authorities: if this person managed to develop such activity without money and a distinct party structure, what he can do when receives it all some day? In Dagestan they know only one recipe against pure politics, that is politics without armed and corruption support, and it is physical elimination.

ABDULLA DUDUEV

COOPERATE TO CHANGE THE SITUATION



On September 1st, during the days of mourning devoted to the sixth anniversary of the act of terrorism at school 11 of Beslan, when 334 people became victims, including 186 children, a representative delegation of the European Parliament led by the Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights Heidi Hautala visited North Ossetia at the invitation of several human rights organizations of North Caucasus.

President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek made a statement in support of the victims of those events. In his letter to the president of Russia Dmitry Medvedev, he urged "to provide a complete respect of the rights of the families of the victims of the Beslan tragedy and, finally, to make the truth about the events of September 2004 be discovered."

Mr. Buzek emphasized: "Six years have passed since the tragic event at the Beslan school, and the European Parliament has been seriously concerned with the ongoing violence in the North Caucasian region. Peace and safety are the necessary conditions for the full respect of human rights and the law."

The Voice of Beslan committee sent its one

more letter to Dmitry Medvedev. Over the past years the committee has been unsuccessfully urging the adoption of the federal law on the status of the victims of this act of terrorism and demanding a new investigation of all the circumstances of the tragedy in Beslan.

The letter reads: "The former country leaders have not solved the problems which have arisen because of this act of terrorism, but you also have been ignoring for two years our statements in support of an objective investigation, for the acceptance of the law on the status of the victims of this act of terrorism. In 2009, the fifth anniversary of this act of terrorism, you also failed to recollect the wounds of the Beslan tragedy."

The victims of the Beslan tragedy ask the Russian president to meet with their representatives to discuss the questions raised in the letter. According to Ella Kesayeva, head of The Voice of Beslan, the committee has two hopes: for Medvedev and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

DOSH interviewed **Heidi Hautala** about her first trip to North Caucasus.

How many days did you spend in the Caucasus and with whom did you meet there?

We stayed there two days and three nights, including a day in Nazran. Ella Kesayeva was our host there. From our point of view, she has been most persistent in demanding the truth about what happened in Beslan. We also met with other organizations, including Mothers of Beslan.

In addition to what you heard and knew earlier, did you learn anything new during this trip?

Yes, we have seen for ourselves how much the mistrust to the official investigation and what the authorities say is widespread there, in Beslan. I think that we should support those who sent their petitions to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg (ECHR) in their efforts to continue the investigation.

In your opinion, was it possible to avoid the tragedy should the authorities wanted to?

There are reasons to think so, but I think that the court role should be crucial here, only it should work properly. There are two reasons to assume participation of the authorities in these tragic events. First, it is suspicious that certain things were not transparent and others were not investigated properly. Second, the stories told by the victims and local residents very often direct to such conclusions. We know that courts are not independent in the Russian Federation. I hope that the European Court will take this circumstance into consideration, look into everything what is known about the tragedy in Beslan, and take it into

account when pronouncing its decision. I heard that there is a big support for the idea of paying indemnification to the victims. It is supported by both Lukin and the local ombudsman. But I should add that when you face the people who lost their relatives or even whole families as a result of an act of terrorism it is a dramatic experience.

What occurred in Beslan is in many aspects similar to what we saw in Nazran. We spoke with the people who lost their sons and husbands. They either disappeared or were stolen. Both in Ossetia and Ingushetia, there is a deficiency of the truth and there is no possibility to learn what actually happened and how the person disappeared. I was very much touched by the efforts of those courageous people who independently conducted investigations in the cases when the authorities did not want it. I had an impression that these people are under a huge pressure and exposed to intimidation and threats. The new resolution of PACE about the violation of human rights in North Caucasus says that it is necessary to better protect human rights activists. Their state should be the focus of attention of the European Union. Every week I receive reports how people in the Caucasus who work for the sake of protection of human rights are exposed to dangers. I hope that our diplomatic representatives in Moscow will take a serious concern about it.

Did you meet any high ranking authorities in Ossetia or Ingushetia?

We met with Professor Kesayev who initiated the investigation on behalf of the Parliament of North Ossetia. There is new data that we should study. In Magas we met with the ombudsman of Ingushetia Azamat Nalgiyev. There is no pluralism in Russian politics even at the local level. Nevertheless, it seems to me that president Yevkurov is trying to make something useful. He appointed worthy people to important posts. Certainly, I understand that there should

be an opposition to provide pluralism and fair elections are necessary. But all the same, my impression is that the president is trying to improve the situation in Ingushetia. Unfortunately, we had no time to meet with him.

Did you choose the route yourself? Did you face any obstacles?

Our safety was provided by UNHCR. Thanks to them we managed to familiarize ourselves with the problems that refugees are facing. We visited several camps of refugees in Nazran. It seemed improbable that the victims of the first Chechen war are still there. They do not

Both in Ossetia and Ingushetia, there is a deficiency of the truth and there is no possibility to learn what actually happened and how the person disappeared.

receive any support and nobody cares for them. It is a desperate situation. After all they got into this situation because of the actions undertaken by their own Russian government. And it is not clear why their situation is so gloomy after all these 15 years and they have no prospects.

The victims of the Ossetia-Ingush conflict cannot go back home either, while families from South Ossetia are being sent to Prigorodny District to settle there. I cannot believe that a responsible government can do so. Shortly before the murder, Anna Politkovskaya promised to take me to these camps of refugees. It was four years ago, and now I am happy that I managed to see what she wanted to show to me.

Did you have a desire to visit Chechnya or Dagestan?

Certainly it would be desirable, but it requires more permissions and coordination. And we did not have much time during this visit. But I am glad that we could talk to many people from Chechnya.

It was your first visit to North Caucasus. What were the strongest memories?

It is a region with a rich history. North Caucasus, South Caucasus, and the mountains between them... Politicians and authorities insist that the conflicts in this region have deep roots. Now they have become aggravated, and the reasons for that are the crash of the Soviet ideology and the breakup of the Soviet Union. In addition, the laws of the mountains are applied instead of the common law or state laws. The impression is that the Caucasus is a remarkable place but there are so many sufferings and conflicts there.

Why is it so?

Certainly, history has played a considerable role. As to what happened in Chechnya, I think, when this republic first put forward its demand for independence, there were quite reasonable leaders, in my opinion, with whom it was possible and necessary to carry on a dialog.

Now you have to deal with the ideas of Caucasian emirates and other similar stuff. Involuntarily, there is a question why the Russian authorities were then incapable to see what results their policy would lead to.

Certainly, terrorism in any way is unacceptable and is subject to categorical condemnation, but the struggle against it should go under the control of those who are capable and ready to guarantee the observance of the law.

Do you know that any criticism from the outside is perceived by the Russian authorities negatively and painfully?

It is a very good question. I think that the Russian civil society now gradually finds self-trust and expresses more firmly than earlier. There are more discussions in Russia now and their topics are wider. It seems to me that it gives hope. The Russian leaders have no right to assert any more that it is only the West who demands something from them. Let's hope! After all, the modernization that Medvedev is talking about is impossible without the civil society. The European Parliament and the European Union need to encourage even small steps of the Russian authorities towards

progress. Now, for example, reforms are declared: they are transforming militia into police. Here, I think, the European Union can offer practical support. On the one hand, we should criticize infringements of human rights. For example, we should not reconcile with

Let's take Medvedev at his word! This word is modernization. Is it achievable without the freedom of speech or without a civil society?

kidnappings: in each such case, the European Union should ask the Russian authorities very precise questions on what happened and why it happened, and insist on precise answers.

On the other hand, there should be room for cooperation. It is necessary to note that, for example, the Russian authorities have reacted to the recent statement of the European Union [the letter of the chairman of the European Parliament to the president of the Russian Federation about Beslan] more strongly than earlier in similar cases. Perhaps it is because the same questions are heard within the country?

I hope I am not too optimistic and do not get too far away from reality.

The official propaganda tells the Russian society that any criticism from the outside is an attempt to weaken the great power. Is it possible to overcome this wall of misunderstanding and to establish a meaningful dialog?

Let's take Medvedev at his word! This word is modernization. Is it achievable without the freedom of speech or without a civil society? Today the society is suppressed and deprived of the possibility to speak up.

No nanotechnology or science will bring any results under conditions when the right to self-expression is taken away from the people. As to propaganda, I well understand what you speak about. Here is one example of the news distributed by RIA Novosti news agency last year. First they complain about Islamic groups in



Dagestan that started a mass hunt for officials, employees of the administration and security officers. They report that a sniper shot the head of the local security service. Then they tell that terrorists also target human rights activists. Natalia Estemirova worked for the Chechen branch of Memorial, she monitored the situation in North Caucasus and was killed apparently because she informed the world community about the increasing violence. It appears that they represent her murder as an attack of terrorists. This is typical propaganda! I study Russian a little and sometimes I watch Channel One to understand how the Russian people are subject to propaganda (laughs).

However, propaganda affects the majority of the population. You can criticize as much as you like but it will not have any effect because your European colleagues and political leaders make their decisions for pragmatic reasons.

It is the bitter truth. We are reminded of it in every conversation. We should cooperate to change the situation. I think the time has come to create a joint European-Russian forum on civil society. I feel myself closer to the society rather than to the government.

I try to promote the idea of creating an open forum. Such environment can put pressure upon the leaders. This idea is being discussed in many places: in Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, Helsinki, Berlin, Bruxelles, Prague, etc. It seems to me that the time has come to gather all these isolated discussions and to talk. It is hard, first, because the Russian organizations that make up the civil society can agree among themselves not so easily. It is necessary to find consensus and to define what should be done collectively.

The European Union rather poorly understands the situation in Russia. One of biggest errors my Western European colleagues make is, when they speak about the civil society, they think that this is the same in France and in Russia.

They interpret political systems and do not understand that the opposition here is simply being beaten in the streets and that serious opposition cannot grow to political representation.

Nevertheless, I hope that this fall we will find a sort of preliminary consensus concerning this initiative to create a public forum. It is necessary to define what will be the focus of attention. It will be an open discussion.



DENIS ABDULLAEV THE VILNIUS WEEK

Several important events happened in the capital of Lithuania in September: the annual meeting of the Human Rights House Network (HRHN), an international conference on human rights and the second Belarus human rights forum with about two hundred participants, also organized by the HRHN.

Based in Norway, the Human Rights House Network comprises 90 organizations in 15 countries and operates in four regions of the world: Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, the Balkans, East Africa and the Horn of Africa, and Western Europe.

This year, it was decided to hold large scale actions at the Belarus House of Human Rights in Exile in Vilnius because it is a unique house of the Network forcedly working outside of the country.

The freedom of expression of opinions, the freedom of associations and meetings, and also human rights activities became the basic themes of the forums. During the discussions, a lot of attention was given to the role of non-governmental protection of human rights and the interaction of human rights organizations at national and international levels in the creation of mechanisms to establish the dialogue with the authorities. Experts also spoke about protection of human rights

activists who, while protecting the others, become victims of persecutions.

Maria Dahle, Executive Director of the Norwegian Human Rights House, wondered how to improve the overall cooperation of HRHN with the regional organizations, such as the Council of Europe, OSCE and others.

In her opinion, in the dialogue with the authorities, it makes sense to appeal to the international contracts which they signed, thereby having taken up obligations to implement them, and to the national constitutions which are the basis of the existence of the governments in all countries.

The participants in the HRHN annual meeting sent appeals to the presidents of Belarus and Azerbaijan.

Human rights activists urged Alexander Lukashenko to undertake urgent measures so that the republic could meet international standards in the area of human rights. The appeal states that despite the ongoing dialog between the Belarus government and the European Union, Belarus has not met the preliminary conditions of the EU that are necessary for including Belarus in the Eastern Partnership program. The following requirements were ignored: 1) to be the country without political prisoners; 2) to provide free-

dom of mass media; 3) to continue cooperation with OSCE on the reform of the election legislation; 4) to improve conditions of NGO activities; and 5) to guarantee the right to the freedom of assembly and political associations.

The appeal to Ilkham Aliyev was formulated in an even more rigid tone. HRHN noted that the situation with the freedom of speech in Azerbaijan worsened during the past five years. The appeal highlighted the tendency towards tightening the restrictions on the rights to meetings and associations is observed, the abuse of the criminal legislation for the purposes of politically biased court sentences when opposition journalists and human rights activists are accused of contemplating a state revolt, storage of drugs and other grave crimes.

The president of Azerbaijan was urged to complete the investigation of all the cases of violence and threats concerning human rights activists and journalists, including the 2005 murder of Elmar Guseynov, the editor of the opposition magazine Monitor; immediately to release from imprisonment Ruslan Bashiri, Adnan Khadzhezade, Emin Milli, and Eynulla Fatullayev, the latter should be released according to the decision of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.



ABDULLA DUDUEV

HUMAN MEASUREMENT STILL EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS



The first part of the annual Survey Conference devoted to human measurement in the OSCE countries took place in Warsaw in early October. The Conference discusses various burning issues of modern societies in the OSCE region, from political institutions and basic freedoms to humanitarian issues. For the first time in the past 12 years, under the decision of the OSCE Ministerial Council, the Conference was broken into three parts: Warsaw sessions from September, 30 through October, 8, Vienna sessions from October, 18 through October, 26, and Astana sessions from November, 26 through November, 28. The summit meeting will also take place in Astana on December, 1-2.

The initiatives of several international human rights organizations to convene

a parallel conference on human rights in Astana encountered a powerful wave of counteraction. Kazakhstan officials refused them referring to the impossibility of providing safety and the absence of vacancies at Astana hotels. Instead, it was offered to gather far away from the Kazakhstan capital, in the city of Almaty.

Human rights activists could not hide their indignation: "It is unprecedented that the presiding delegation behaved so aggressively." Some of them complained about the bureaucratic procedures of registration for Conference participants, which was inspired, according to human rights activists, by Kazakhstan officials aspiring not to admit its opponents to the forum.

The opponents of president Nazarbayev and his government could

hardly be seen or heard this year, unlike the last year's debate which occurred here between the government and the opposition. With the exception of one or two speeches, nobody expressly opposed the Kazakhstan authorities. Besides, all sessions looked as if they were the show case of the presiding country: half of the speeches were presented by delegates from Kazakhstan. All of them with the exaggerated pathos told about the progress their country reached in various spheres, about numerous independent political and social movements existing in their country, whose activities, as they said, were unlimited. That is why, as the speakers eloquently confirmed, all of them have the possibility to criticize the president. The speeches of Kazakhstan officials and representatives of NGOs could hardly be distinguished one from another.

Because of bureaucratic innovations, DOSH could not register in time for the working session on the struggle against intolerance and discrimination and was represented by a participant from the Finnish-Russian civil forum.

The topic we wanted to present became practically a taboo in the country which will soon finish its presidency in OSCE - about national minorities and their problems.

At last year's Conference, representatives of Kazakhstan distributed thousands of brochures stating that intereth-



nic peace and consent reign in this republic. However, this idyllic picture did not mention such tragic events as punishments of the Uyghur, Kurds and Chechens. In 2008, DOSH released a documentary film *Controlled Pogroms* about an attack of a brutal crowd on the Chechens in March of 2007.

Three hundred people accompanied by at least sixteen policemen attacked the Chechen family of Makhmakhanov from the village Kazatkom of Almaty District, killed three brothers from this family, smashed houses and plundered the property of other Chechens in the neighboring village of Malovodnoye. However, none of the policeman involved in this criminal act was brought to justice. Only three persons out of several hundred thugs were punished.

Last year, here in Warsaw, when Kazakhstan only started its presidency in OSCE, we planned to show the documentary *Controlled Pogroms* in which eyewitnesses of the tragedy spoke about it.

The assurances of the high-ranking members of the Kazakh delegation, who swore to one of brothers of the killed Makhmakhanovs that they would carry out a new objective investigation of those events, compelled us to cancel the film demonstration, though we could not trust their promises.

The worst of our fears proved to be true: over the past year no one in Kazakhstan has kept the promises. As is known, law enforcement and judicial bodies dependent on political authorities do nothing without instructions from above here, as well as in Russia.

The return to this topic was unpredictable for the Kazakh delegation whose reaction was predictable and to some extent amusing. The Russian and English texts of *Controlled Pogroms* and

copies of court decisions in the case of the pogroms in Almaty area were everywhere in the Conference hotel foyer. A member of the Kazakh delegation called several persons, among them there was even a journalist and a cameraman from the state TV, who, under the pretext of being interested, took away these unpleasant materials.

The discussion of the freedom of mass media in the OSCE region coincided with the anniversary of the murder of Anna Politkovskaya four years before. The Norwegian House of Human Rights together with DOSH organized an action in her memory. Anna's portraits were handed over to delegates to remind them of the murder of the journalist and human rights activist who became a symbol of courage and honesty in our profession. Many delegates recollected Anna Politkovskaya, Natalia Estemirova, Magomed Yevloyev and other journalists who were killed and expressed bitter disappointment that these murders remain unsolved.

Ane Tusvik Bonde, coordinator of the Fund of Houses of Human Rights in



Eastern Europe from Oslo, told about prosecution of oppositional journalists in Azerbaijan. She noted that the authorities in this country abuse the criminal legislation for intimidation of critics of the government.

Speakers from delegations CIS states extensively spoke about achievements in the development of the freedom of creativity and mass media in their countries and praised the quantity of independent mass media and various laws that ostensibly expand the possibilities of their activity. However, it is not a secret to anybody that there is often a difference, if not a precipice between such laws and their application in practice.

The representative of the Russian delegation in OSCE declared that the Russian Federation was seriously concerned by the facts of violence towards journalists and said that law enforcement bodies fight against this evil. The phrase that the president of Russia is an active blogger was obviously meant to demonstrate the freedom of speech in Russia at the very top. Thus, of course, nobody would dare to say that the Russian authorities at various levels by means of propaganda and other means create the atmosphere of animosity in relation to truly independent journalists and civil society activists. Violence concerning the latter is a quite predicted consequence of such a policy.

Dunja Mijatovic, head of the OSCE Bureau on the Freedom of the Media, brought up a long list with the names of countries and journalists who became victims for their professional work. She urged the states to fulfill the obligations taken on by them when joining OSCE, but she did not say anything as to what the Bureau could do for the improving the situation with restrictions on the freedom of speech and mass media. Later the journalists shared their thoughts that the institute of the representative of OSCE on the freedom of mass media should become an effective mechanism.

THE CHILDREN OF WARS

There is no childhood when there is a war. And there are no children, officially. There are the living and the dead. Even the wounded are considered as "still living." Childhood is not part of the concept of "establishing constitutional order" or "counterterrorist operation." There was no such line for childhood in these concepts.

These are the memoirs of a soldier from Ryazan OMON who was several times on a mission in Chechnya. He speaks about the children during the war, about those who trade cigarettes for cartridges to soldiers and about those children who in broken camouflage uniform of the Russian army trade cartridges for cigarettes.

It is the war. Our unit has arrived to the position. A soldier who arrived earlier is asking:

- And what is your name?
- Please, repeat.
- Well, should I call you by your name or something?
- Dima.
- May I call you just Dima or is it uncle Dima?
- Why do you think I am uncle to you? I came back from army service four years ago...

This dialog happened at a checkpoint near the school of the village of Zandak of Nozhay-Yurtovsky District of Chechnya in March 2001.

The soldier of internal troops decided to find out my name. He looked filthy, in his ruined camouflage and boots, with a knitted patchwork of old camouflage over his bullet-proof vest, the plates were accurately and secretly removed from it and stored under the box with cartridges. He is on guard in position and is losing no time while asking for a cigarette and my name, as we are to stay here together for the next three hours.

He is Vaska from Gryazi (Lipetsk Region). We soon became friends. He started with a story of how he once visited the zoo in Lipetsk: "There is a hamadryad sitting there with a huge bum!"

Then he told me what kind of jeans he would buy when he got back home from the army. He saw them on TV and described their fantastic color. Later he told me about his friend who was making ship models. The battery went dead and they had to swim in cold water to catch the ship model.

I looked at him. He did not mention anything about shooting, explosions, wounds, victims, bestial conditions of survival, hunger, dirt, or rats in the toilet.

He is a true teenager still, though he is 19 now. His mentality is different: it repels horror and he tries to imagine that he is not a piece of meat at this unclear war, but a human being with the past and, with god's permission, the future. Moreover, he wants to maintain this approach to life as long as he can.

We had a chance to meet the soldiers only the next morning. The fact that they earlier helped us to unload the weapons with ammunition upon our arrival (and borrowed two packs of cigarettes from me) did not count as meeting new people.

The door opened at eight in the morning:

- Should we clean today?
- What?
- Well, should we wash the floors or only sweep?
- ?

- Well, we cleaned it here for those who were stationed here before you and they gave us a cigarette for this.

- Strange rules you have here...

We discovered that a few soldiers from the unit that was stationed here before us used to clean the premise for a payment: one cigarette per person.

We first gave cigarettes to the soldier. He came up to the box with food that was standing in the corner as if he knew that food was in it. Upon arrival, we did not feel hunger and "the cult of food" was not manifest yet. Therefore, the box with food was underneath other boxes with weapons and ammunition.

The soldier stood silent and suddenly said:

- Alexander and Soo-oo-fya. Tasty noodles. Yesterday one of your guys gave a pack to one of ours.

Among the heap of weapons, grenades, cartridges, automatic machine guns, and grenade launchers, the hungry soldier's eye immediately noticed the name of a pack of noodles.

Having received two packs of noodles, in addition to cigarettes, the soldier did not leave.

- Perhaps shall I still wash the floors?

- We told you: take the stuff and do nothing, we will do everything ourselves.

- If the contract sergeants notice that that I do nothing, then they will be angry with me...

The soldier was begging to let him wash the floors. After all, he had to demonstrate to his sergeant that he was busy.



We gave him the opportunity to clean the room. A contract sergeant opened the door:

- Is this guy here? Is he washing the floors? Sorry, I thought he got lost.

- Oh, uncle Zhenya! Uncle Serezha! Many thanks for letting me stay here! This Rustam (contract sergeant) invented another mockery again. I would rather wash the floors here.

Is this a kindergarten or the army, I wonder?

At night I went to the checkpoint:

- Stop 4!

It is the password and you need to give a reply.

- Listen, friend, I forgot the reply, we are from the Ryazan OMON.

- Uncle, would you happen to have cigarette?

- Vasya, we agreed that you will call me by name.

- Yes, I forgot, forgive me.

THE LOCALS

To call Ilyas, the soldiers threw stones in the roof of the house that stood opposite the checkpoint, on the territory of the school in which we lived.

When Ilyas was not there, his father Pasha usually came out. The soldiers often called him uncle Pasha.

- Uncle Pasha! Hello! Is Ilyas there?

- No, he is walking somewhere. What do you need?

- Uncle Pasha! Could you give us a pack of Prima cigarettes?

It was an established and well-running business. The one-storey small house where uncle Pasha lived had a small dusty window to showcase the available merchandise: behind the glass there were empty beer cans serving as samples, various packs of cigarettes were pasted to the glass with the adhesive tape, chewing gum, small snacks, and the like trifles. Price tags were absent because the prices were known to everybody. For example, a two-liter bottle of beer cost 50 roubles, no matter what brand the price was the same. A one-liter bottle cost 35 and a half-liter bottle cost 25 roubles.

Khanpasha, uncle Pasha's neighbor, was selling Kizlyar three-stars cognac, 25 roubles for a half-liter bottle, in the original packaging. Exactly the same bottle usually costs 400-500 roubles here. The price for a half-liter bottle of vodka was 30 roubles, and if you wanted to serve it on the table, you could order any label to satisfy your mood: Stolichnaya, Russian, Wheat, Kremlin, etc.

Vodka, naturally, was manufactured here on the spot out of Ossetian alcohol. It took five minutes to produce a bottle while the customer was having a smoke

in the yard. Nobody confessed wherefrom they got such an assortment of labels.

Uncle Pasha would not hesitate to bring a pack of Prima for 7 roubles from his house to a soldier at the checkpoint (this soldier cannot leave his post). He could give something on credit if it was not too big. One day I observed a special operation: the soldiers were carrying a canister with gasoline for him. How much did he give them for it? I have no idea.

Real gasoline is highly appreciated here. It is possible to buy, of course, the so-called "ichkerbenzin," as the military call it here, which is local, freshly brewed gasoline. The car can even go on it but you will probably have to rebuild the engine a few times a year, as the driver of the head of local administration confessed.

The soldiers preferred to trade with Ilyas. His father refused to accept ammunition as payment. We could only guess where Ilyas took ammunition afterwards, though there were only a few options.

These boys in soldier's uniform could hardly know the real price of 5.45 or 7.62 mm cartridges. The seven-year old Ilyas probably did not know it either. Who set those prices? This is not known. For a pack of Prima they gave five or six car-



tridges. Naturally, the 7.62 mm sniper cartridge was more expensive. The soldiers were happy: they had enough cigarettes for a day or two.

Ilyas mastered his business at war.

Picture this:

- Ilyas!

- What?

- Bring a pack of Prima!

He brings the cigarettes.

- Listen! A pack was seven roubles and I gave ten to you, where is the change?

- Ten.

- I know: I gave you ten roubles. Give me the change!

- The price is ten roubles now.

- Stop it! I bought a pack in the morning, it was seven then!

- Ten.

- Ilyas, if you don't give me the change, I won't buy anything from you next time!

- OK, next time you will not buy anything from me.

The boy turned around and proudly left. The soldier continued his service on the post. However, when uncle Pasha would pass by and the soldier would complain to him, uncle Pasha would return three roubles to the soldier and once again warn him in a whisper: "Do not give cartridges to him!"

We got stuck during a clean-up operation at a house in which "the insurgents stayed and just left" because the officers of the administrative commandant did not arrive on the site in time.

One of our men complained: "I would attach a grenade to their bum for acceleration so that could run faster than these local kids."

Representatives of local administrative commandant's office give the order for a special operation. We get up at five

in the morning and about six we are in the village. The military also arrive on time but we cannot start the operation without the commandant's officers. Their majesties usually arrive an hour later. Looking at their faces, you can easily tell that they were heavily drinking the night before.

In the meantime, the local kids have plenty of time to run all over the neighboring villages and notify the villagers about the clean-up operation. I think they have enough time to print and hang the poster: "Welcome to clean-up!"

As a result, we more often walk, like idiots, along the villages where there are houses in which "in the morning all suddenly left for Dagestan to earn money."

Everybody understands everything. The only good thing is that all are still alive. The commandant's officers are brutes, to tell the truth: they bring heavy trucks to such houses and the soldiers take out everything from these houses, saying that it is evidence.

However, when field engineers find planted bombs in the house, these free-loaders show inhuman tricks of high-speed running away from a dangerous place.

We were sitting together with Andryukha. Yesterday we celebrated someone's birthday. We are not in the proper condition for a clean-up operation! Who could have known? We were supposed to be in the off-duty shift today.

We feel a terrible thirst. We are sitting and protecting the house from which the soldiers take out everything: insurgents were here supposedly before us.

A little boy about six-years old came up to us:

- Marshalla hujlda.

- Yoooo. Wait a second, we don't understand. Can you speak Russian?

- To buy?

- Cool. Do you have water?

- Nine - sweet.

- Bring a bottle.

He ran away. Five minutes later, he brought a 1.5-liter bottle of carbonated sweet water. He handed the bottle to us.

Many thanks. Afterwards he pulled out one rouble of change.

- Keep the change.

He did not understand. Their knowledge of Russian is very poor. He did not understand the phrase about keeping the change. He placed the coin on the ground in front of us while he kept looking straight into our eyes. Then he suddenly disappeared.

NEITHER WAR, NOR PEACE

Once a rather stupid soldier was playing with a sniper rifle and he shot at a car. The bullet hit on the head of the passenger in the front seat. A young girl in the back seat died several minutes later. The bullet passed through the roof, then through the girl and got stuck in the trunk.

A few days later at the very same place our armored troop-carrier was blown by a mine. All stayed live and were only wounded.

Uvais, deputy head of the village administration, secretly warned us: "We live peacefully with you. Bad people were stationed here before you, but we cannot hold peace now - the relatives of the killed girl will revenge. It is not us. Do not take this road again any more."

Then an accident happened with the soldiers who were protecting us from above in the mountains. While both of them went down to the base to get their dinner, someone placed a mine near the fireplace at their position.

When we began to accuse them of both leaving their position, they replied:

- We did it quickly! We only filled the kettles with porridge and quickly ran back.

There was an explosion. One of the soldiers (ironically he was a field engineer) lost his leg. We gave him injections with painkillers and carried somewhere to the nearest hospital. In the evening, his colleagues said about him:

- Sanka is lucky. He will go home now!

The doctor and four of us walked to the other end of village to help a sick

child. If we were to wait for the doctor from the district hospital or for the permission to use our armored vehicles to drive to the child's house, we could be too late. We got the permission of our immediate commander and walked to the other end of the world, with the doctor, across gardens and through fences, to the child's house. Nobody shot at us or attempted to blow us up.

After we helped the child, his parents who lived in poverty invited all of us to share the food that they put on the table: pickles, flat cakes, jam, and tea. We refused and left for the base. The next day the neighbor of this Chechen, whose child was rescued by our doctor, showed to our field engineers the place where mines and shells were planted along the road that we used every day to get to the checkpoint. The power of these mines planted in two places not far from each other was enough to blow up a heavy truck and throw it as far away as Georgia, which is nearby.

...

Local villagers turned to our soldiers for help. An accident happened at the edge of the forest. A child went there to pee. The mine that was planted there exploded. The mother rushed to her child and stepped over a mine as well. She was still alive, groaning and crying.

Our soldiers immediately departed to the place. Two field engineers walked in the front chain. The lace got loose on the boot of the experienced engineer who walked first. He stopped. The second engineer bypassed him and headed the chain. He could walk only a few meters when a mine exploded and tore off his foot. While the other soldiers were dragging him to hospital, he shouted: "I saw this mine!"

We could not rescue the lives of the wounded locals. However, the number of night bombardments reduced.

...

During a clean-up operation, in a poor house with earthen floors, we noticed that many children were running in the rooms.

- How many have you got?

The head of the family answered:

- Seven.

- You are a happy man! Look how many children you have got.

- Yes, I am happy (he sighed), I still do not know how it happens...

...

It is the morning. We are at the checkpoint. We are cooking food. Finally, the food is ready. Ten minutes later a delegation of soldiers from the neighboring unit arrived here. They are already experienced soldiers.

- Hello.

- Hello.

- Do you have a cigarette?

- The four of you came here together for one cigarette? Did you take your plates with you?

- Just one (confusedly).

- Give it to me. You will eat from one plate then. Here are two packs of cigarettes. I don't have any more. Distribute them among your guys. We will find more for ourselves.

- Uncle Serezha, is it true that Chechnya will be given back to the Chechens and we'll go home? My mom is writing so and asking...

...

We walked back to the checkpoint and stopped to get the water from the well in the center of the village near the damaged tank. Several young girls aged 12 or 13 with buckets formed a queue to get the water. We approached. We left our weapons in the car and walked slowly. The eyes full of horror looked at us. When five meters were left between us, the girls throw away their buckets and escaped behind the neighboring house.

- Girls, what is wrong? Come get the water. We will wait!

- It is impossible for them even to stand near you. - An old woman who was standing near the house behind which the children were hiding answered with a strong accent.

When we got the water, someone suggested:

- Let's fill their buckets with water!



We filled their buckets with water and put them near the well. Then we once again checked the damaged tank (once we noticed that its tower with the gun was suddenly turned in the direction of our unit). We returned to the car and left the village. As long as we could observe in the rear window, nobody in the village approached the buckets. I think that later they even poured the water out.

Dmitry FLORIN

P.S. This article is dedicated to the children of this war. This dedication follows the minute of silence in memory of the children of Beslan who are the children of this war as well.

P.P.S. There was a period when I was very distressed. Media outlets indicated that such articles about Chechnya were not in demand. Instead, they need something like this: "Today so-and-so happened in the Chechen Republic, according to expert, human rights activist, political expert, etc., this is an indication of, probably, is not excluded, according to some, this can lead to..." They need information occasions, speakers, experts, political scientists, comments, a balance of opinions, etc.

As a result, you call such an expert and he pours tons of bullshit on you!

What are we turning into? Into a cynical information herd without a human soul? If not in Moscow, truthful articles about Chechnya are still needed in other regions where people still have a human soul.

Abdulla DUDUEV

ALTERNATIVE CONGRESSES

During last year's meetings and negotiations in Oslo and London between the Chairman of Parliament of the Chechen Republic Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov and Prime Minister of the unrecognized Republic of Ichkeria Akhmed Zakayev, many observers predicted the fall of "the last symbol of Ichkeria" and the return of Zakayev from political emigration to the Chechen Republic under Ramzan Kadyrov's guarantees.

Both parties provided grounds for such assumptions. Akhmed Zakayev repeatedly made statements that the present head of the Chechen Republic, in fact, accomplished the decolonization of the native land and admired the pace at which Kadyrov revived the republic. However, he always noted that the question of his personal employment and return to Chechnya had never been neither major, nor even minor.

Abdurakhmanov, in turn, said that "Zakayev is not responsible for the crimes of which he is accused" (DOSH #3 (25) 2009, Chechnya Communicates with Ichkeria).

The parties then agreed to organize the World Chechen Congress in one of European capitals with the purpose, according to negotiators, "coordinating efforts and developing a uniform platform" on vital questions for the Chechen people. In the same interview, the Speaker of the Parliament said:

"Harmony in our society can be achieved through reconciliation."

However, a couple months later, instead of the unifying congress and reconciliation, the parties started a fierce fight as if they were sworn enemies. The Chechen Republic decided to do away with Ichkeria for good.

Abdurakhmanov made the following statement on October 30, 2009, in Grozny: "Those people who proclaim themselves the government and the parliament of Ichkeria have created themselves by phone. The only thing that they own is the phone via which they call each other. They do not own anything Chechen."

According to Zakayev, during his consultations with Abdurakhmanov, they discussed several questions: "I think that the decision on these questions, certainly, directly depended on the political will of the Russian government. But, probably, these questions have not found due understanding."

The president of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov angrily criticized Akhmed Zakayev who decided not to return to Chechnya.

Hence, it became inappropriate to talk about any sort of a unifying forum.

However, a year later it nevertheless took place. It was not just one congress. There were two congresses.

A short history note: the first World Chechen Congress was convened in

Turkey in 1995. Mohammed Shishani from the US was elected its president. He soon registered the organization in the USA, with headquarters in Washington, DC.

After that, the congress gathered several times in various cities of Russia even during the first war, stepping forward with critical statements addressed to the Russian authorities and with appeals to the world community to promote a peaceful settlement of the Russian-Chechen conflict.

The 2002 congress held in Copenhagen was notoriously loud and scandalous. Akhmed Zakayev who arrived from London to participate in the congress was arrested there on request from the Russian State Office of Public Prosecutor. Ruslan Khasbulatov participated in that congress representing Moscow. Deni Tepsa was elected the new president of the World Chechen Congress and Mohammed Shishani became its vice-president.

In late last September, the World Chechen Congress gathered in the Polish city of Pultusk under the direction of Deni Tepsa, while the authorities of the Chechen Republic decided to convene their own congress, the World Congress of the Chechen People, in Grozny.

Read below the reports from both forums.

REVIVAL IN PULTUSK

The congress that took place September 16-18th in a small Polish town of Pultusk and gathered representatives of the Chechen diaspora scattered worldwide can hardly be called a World congress. Not just because of the number of delegates. In addition to fifty journalists, the castle of Pultusk welcomed more than 150 representatives of the Chechen diasporas from Europe, the

USA and Canada. The real problem is dissociation of the Chechen community that has many reasons: from collisions of political and military doctrines to such banalities as personal mutual animosity among influential personalities.

Heidi Hautala, the Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights of the European Parliament, accepted the invitation to attend the congress. When

asked about the reasons why she decided to participate, despite rigid comments of the authorities of the Russian Federation and the Chechen Republic, on the one hand, and the apologists of fundamentalism and supporters of escalation of the armed opposition, on the other hand, Heidi Hautala replied: "It is necessary to welcome any attempt to return the situation in the Chechen



Republic and in North Caucasus in the focus of European attention. Besides, my decision to participate in the congress was motivated by a high degree of trust to its organizers, including Akhmed Zakayev. I have known this person for many years and I note the sincerity of his efforts to return the discourse about Chechnya to finding a political solution, instead of violence escalation. Now it is impossible to organize a meeting of the Chechen community that would be representative. However, this is not the reason to underestimate the value of the event that has taken place in Poland."

The atmosphere at the congress became even tenser when on September 15th, on the eve of the congress opening, the Russian government rigidly demanded from the Polish authorities to detain and extradite the prime minister of the unrecognized Ichkeria to Russia as its "worst enemy." This was probably meant to demonstrate the original proof that the new leadership of Poland really dared to "reboot" the Russian-Polish relations.

Subsequently, the life in the provincial Pultusk changed greatly. Strengthened police squads and special units armed with automatic rifles flooded the city streets. These units stopped the cars of the congress participants at the city entry points. On September 16th, it was hard to reach Pultusk without an adven-

ture. Some delegates had to explain to the police for more than four hours that they were not Zakayev and that he was not among them. The scope of this police operation made a big impression upon local residents.

Nevertheless, Akhmed Zakayev freely arrived in Poland several days before the congress. However, the zealousness of the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs could really prevent the meeting. I heard from several delegates that some of the potential participants could not reach Pultusk while others left ahead of time.

It was one of the reasons why Zakayev decided to appear in the Office of the Public Prosecutor in person. This decision confused his foes.

While the Chechen politician was in the hands of the Polish justice through the night of September 17th, the congress continued its work. The principal

questions discussed by the participants were formulated in the resolution. Their spectrum was wide: from "decolonization of the Chechen Republic" to the principle of the priority of nonviolent methods of conducting struggle and realization of real justice through the creation of an international legal body similar to the Tribunals on the former Yugoslavia and Ruanda. The resolution was accepted after midnight and after Zakayev's return from Warsaw. It contains several requirements: to the Russian state - to transfer Aslan Maskhadov's body to a new burial place, to the international community - to promote the creation of an international tribunal on Chechnya, and an appeal to the shattered Chechen people - to resume the search of a political solution of the conflict with Russia without resorting to violence.

Zakayev was released late in the evening of September 17th. The Russian requirement to detain him for forty days was not satisfied because the documents received from the Russian side did not contain anything except declarations on malignancy of the Chechen political emigrant and his terrorist nature. Moreover, such documents were already considered by the magistrate court of London in favor of Zakayev.

Akhmed Zakayev nowadays does not represent all of Chechnya. But Chechnya is not represented equally by any of the parties opposing to Mr. Zakayev, as many participants and delegates spoke here.

Among the Chechens who arrived to this ancient Polish city, it was not only



Akhmed Zakayev who had something to tell to the delegates.

Madina, a refugee from Ingushetia, lives now in Poland with her two children. We first met in December 2009, when more than two hundred despaired refugees from Chechnya, Ingushetia and Georgia peacefully hijacked the train to Strasbourg. Madina was one of them: "I am still in Poland and none of the problems have been solved. I move from one

city to another in search of work. The children are with me. The senior should go to school but cannot. Poland continues to refuse protection to us. They say that there is peace at our home."

Her Chechen friend Malika is also alone with children. Her husband disappeared six years ago and nobody has ever seen him since that time. Four years ago she managed to travel to Poland. Here, during the congress she found a

trace of her husband. Among the materials distributed at the congress, in a brochure about Chechnya published in English, she saw a photo with a ditch where there were several men with their hands tied up. They were about to be executed by getting them buried alive. Malika recognized her husband among one of these men.

Oksana CHELYSHEVA,
Pultusk, Poland

YOU FOLLOW THE RIGHT WAY

Delegates from 25 countries of Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia gathered in Grozny for the World Congress of the Chechen People that was convened under the slogan "The Chechen people in the modern world: political, economic and cultural processes." Deputies and senators from the Chechen Republic, Ruslan Khasbulatov and Salambek Khadzhiyev, representatives of public associations, artists and scientists from Chechnya were among the delegates.

Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov, the speaker of the Chechen Parliament, opened the forum and noted that the head of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov became the initiator of the congress with the purpose to analyze the processes of adaptation of the

Chechen diasporas living abroad, the activities of the Chechen government and the assistance required to integrate the Chechens into the social and cultural space of the countries of their residence.

According to Abdurakhmanov, "following to guidelines of the first Chechen president Akhmat-Khadzhi Kadyrov, the foundation laid by him, the wise and forward-looking policy of the head of Chechnya Ramzan Kadyrov, and also the paramount support from the federal center, namely, first of all, from the president of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev and the chairman of the government of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, have made irreversible the establishment of peace and well-being on the Chechen land."

In his speech addressed to the delegates of the congress, the head of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov emphasized that the Chechen people have always been successful in achieving three things: to be the masters of their republic, to be free in practicing the rules of Islam and to keep their ethnic identity.

Kadyrov continued: "Today we are the masters in the republic, we have full freedom and all possibilities to observe the rules of Islam. We can declare freely to the whole world that we are Muslims and Chechens. What do we lack, what else do we need? We want, first of all, the world to understand that there is no fault of the Chechen people in those tragedies of the various periods of our history. We are not guilty of deportations or the two wars that destroyed the republic. Secondly, we need to become a single amicable family and to protect what we have now."

According to the head of the Chechen Republic, "today some of those who called for war are hiding in Europe and do not stop attempts to split the Chechen people, use the best efforts to create in Europe a negative image of today's Chechen Republic."

Ramzan Kadyrov appealed to the delegates: "Such people should be brought to reason. It is your problem, all those who represent today the diasporas of the Chechens living in Europe. There should be no gangsters, rascals or slanderers



among us. I call upon all the representatives of our people no matter where they live to be consolidated, reject all ambitions, lay aside old insults, forgive each other, and live for the blessing of the native land. The main aim is to preserve your roots, do not forget about your origin, and be worthy representatives of your nation."

According to Ruslan Khasbulatov, the former speaker of the Supreme Soviet of Russia, in the history of the Chechen people there were no leaders who were ready to incur responsibility for any event in the homeland.

Professor Khasbulatov noted: "The first president of Chechnya A.-Kh.Kadyrov, who gave his life for the sake of restoration of peace and justice in the republic, became such a person. And the best monument to him would be the republic's restored and blossoming cities and districts. I am glad to see today's unification of the Chechen people and the successes in the republic development reached under the direction of our leader Ramzan Kadyrov. The Chechen republic should create its industrial base. For these purposes, in should become the priority to prepare experts in sciences and technology. Therefore, it is necessary to get our youth be engaged in technical research as it is the core of any economy."

Academician Salambek Khadzhiyev, who headed the pro-Russian provisional government during the first war, shared his pleasant impressions: recently he often visits the republic which, in his opinion, has become even more beautiful.

Developing the ideas expressed by Khasbulatov, Khadzhiyev declared that it was necessary to increase the scientific potential of the republic, including the creation and restoration of scientific research institutes.

The delegates from Poland, Austria, the USA, Kazakhstan, Jordan, Turkey, and representatives of the diasporas living in various regions of Russia, spoke about the life of the Chechen diasporas in their



countries, expressed admiration of the positive changes in the Chechen Republic, named it Ramzan Kadyrov's personal merit, and many times thanked him.

The delegates adopted the Charter of the World Congress of the Chechen People, elected its Presidium, the General Council and the Executive Committee. Ramzan Kadyrov was elected General Secretary and Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov was elected his first deputy. Khasbulatov, Khadzhiyev, the deputy of the State Duma of the Russian Federation Adam Delimkhanov, the member of the Council of Federation Aslambek Aslakhmanov, the actor Valid Dagayev, the triple Olympic champion Buvaisar Saitiyev, the mufti of Chechnya Sultan Mirzayev, and more than 30 other persons were elected to the General Council. The acting bodies of the congress were elected for the period of five years, and an extraordinary meeting of the World Congress of the Chechen People will take place in about three years.

The forum resolution, among others, contained the following appeals: to the authorities of Russia, the authorities of the Chechen Republic, the leaders of the Caucasus, the Chechen people, international organizations and to the entire world community "to promote the final

establishment of peace and consent everywhere in the Caucasus," "to expediently convene in Grozny an international conference to discuss political and international problems of the Caucasus and develop the general strategy of the further development of democracy in the region," and the request to the Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation "to create working groups on revision of court decisions on the cases concerning the Chechens that were opened during the antiterrorist campaign."

The resolution also mentions the necessity of appealing to the authorities of the Russian Federation to accept the program of returning from Europe to the historical native land of the natives of the Chechen republic who forcedly left the native land. It expressed gratitude to president Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin "for constant support of the Chechen Republic in the establishment of peace and in regenerative processes" and gratitude to the humanitarian organizations of the European countries for reception and placing of the Chechen refugees who forcedly left their native land.

Yakhya ZELIMKHANOV,

photos provided by the press service of the Parliament of Chechnya and Grozny-Inform news agency.

A CRY OF DESPAIR

Each of these two letters contains a cry of despair. They call for help and they accuse. An old woman, the mother who lost her children and for many years struggled in vain so that the case of their abduction be investigated and the police officers guilty in it be punished. The father whose sons were killed by agents of national security, others were thrown into prison, and the family was plundered. Although it is obvious that the charges are not substantiated, there is no reaction from the authorities.

The situations described here are both monstrous and common. In a normal society, it would be impossible to believe and be regarded as a painful delusion. Alas, we are deprived this soothing possibility.

Do we have the right to hope that our publication will change something? Saidat Timerbulatova and Umatgiri Kartoyev have not lost hope yet. We do everything that depends on us: we give publicity to their stories.



Timerbulatov (convicted to a lifelong imprisonment on the basis of the signatures which were taken under torture in the IVS of Gudermes) as victims.

My son Mekhdi, who is also recognized as the victim in these cases, repeatedly appealed to the head of the Investigatory Department and the Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Chechen Republic with petitions to be interrogated in Grozny where he would tell everything that he knew about the persons who abducted his relatives, would confirm his evidence, etc. But his complaints about the inactivity of the investigation (addressed to Grozny Investigatory Department, the State Office of the Public Prosecutor and to the Investigatory Committee of the Russian Federation in Moscow) were transferred to the same department where these cases remained for years without investigation. However, the Federal Law of the Russian Federation #59 dated 6/2/2005 forbids to direct complaints to the body whose decisions or actions will be appealed against.

My son and I have been appealing with numerous petitions to the investigation agencies in Grozny where we specify that they do not wish to make answerable those persons who abducted three of our relatives and cover criminals with their inactivity. We have been receiving inconsistent answers to our inquiries that only prove the determination of the authorities to make everything in order to protect from criminal prosecution the militiamen who abducted my children.

Over these 8 years, we have undertaken everything we could to achieve lawful investigation of the circumstances of the abduction (disappearance) of our relatives and bringing to justice the persons who committed these crimes, but the investigating bodies of the Chechen Republic are deaf to our requests and law requirements, and the higher legal bodies of the Russian Federation (Moscow) give to this their silent consent by transferring our complaints to the same department!

Aspiring to prevent my son Mekhdi from using his rights of the victim in these cases that have not been investigated till now and to

Dear DOSH,

The tragic circumstances that influenced my life and the lives of my children made me turn for your help. I am a widow and a pensioner, the mother of the Timerbulatov brother and sister, Ali Magomedovich, born in 1977, and Tamara Magomedovna, born in 1963. They were abducted by police officers in January 2002 and have been missing since then. The husband of my daughter S.-Kh. A.-Kh. Magomedov, born in 1956, was abducted together with them. The whereabouts of all the three of them is not known to this day.

The criminal cases #57005 and #57006 opened upon their abduction in 2002 remain without any investigation at the investigatory department of Grozny.

I will try to describe to you all the facts of rough infringements admitted by investigation agencies and public prosecutors of the Chechen Republic and the Russian Federation concerning my family.

On August 13, 2001, my older son (I have two sons, Mekhdi and Ali) Mekhdi Magomedovich Timerbulatov, born in 1970, was detained during a clean-up operation in the village of Belorechye of Gudermesky District of Chechnya and then placed into IVS VOVD of Gudermes.

During the investigation of the criminal case on charges against my son Mekhdi, my son, the daughter and the son-in-law were taken to the same building by police officers. They were exposed to tortures and humiliations in the presence of Mekhdi for the purpose of getting confession from him. My son did not commit the crimes that are incriminated to him. He wished to rescue his relatives and

signed all confessions that were demanded from him by police officers. After that Ali, Tamara and her husband were released, but soon abducted from the house by the same police officers. It happens after they complained to justice authorities of the Chechen Republic about lawlessness admitted in relation to them.

More than eight years have passed since then and nobody knows where they are!!!

Meanwhile, the criminal cases of their abduction opened in January 2002 were at one time ostensibly in progress by the public prosecutors of Gudermes. Then they were transferred to the investigatory department of the same city where they also remained without any investigation for more than two years until 2007. Finally, on June 3rd, 2009, these cases were withdrawn from Gudermes investigatory department on the basis of Article 61 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, because local employees were personally interested in the investigation outcome, and transferred for further investigation to Grozny investigatory department (9B Garazhnaya St., Grozny).

During these eight years, the investigation was unreasonably stopped and pro forma renewed, but it was only what was visible: no effective measures either for locating the abducted persons, or for the determining the persons who committed these crimes were taken. Thus, though these criminal cases were opened in 2002, they until now have been at the stage of preliminary investigation. After more than six years since the case were opened, the only result was (and that only because of our pressuring petitions) the recognition of me and my son Mekhdi

identify those who in 2001 brought the abducted to the IVS, the investigation agencies of Chechnya only pro forma send numerous inquiries to the investigating bodies on Yamalo-Nenetsky Autonomous Area where my son is serving his sentence. They want him to be interrogated about his abduction there so that he could not participate in the investigation personally and could not identify the police officers who abducted, beat and subjected them to violence!

Foreknowing that the investigating agencies of Chechnya do not wish to place criminal liability on the guilty (though he is ready to name their names, surnames, and positions) and will only answer that "the participation of the specified employees was not proved to be true, etc.," Mekhdi wants to identify them in person and refuses to give evidences in full while he is not given such a possibility. His arguments are as follows: "While these employees (the abductors) are free, especially if they still work in law enforcement agencies, my relatives are not in safety, and I am afraid that they can share the fate of those missing persons. The witnesses who were at IVS together with me in 2001-2002 and whom I can specify also risk suffering. For the guilty police officers not to escape criminal prosecution, I wish to identify them in person on site."

His recent appeals to the investigating agencies of Chechnya have been receiving the following answer: "Since you refuse to give full evidences, there is no basis for carrying out investigatory actions on site with your participation." When Mekhdi sent an appeal to the head of the Investigatory Department (where his case is investigated) where he provided the names of several employees involved in the abduction, the investigation of these cases was immediately suspended on the grounds that the persons who were subject to bringing to justice were not established!

I do not know what other grounds the investigating agencies of Chechnya need in the case of abduction, when three persons have been missing, no action is taken on these facts, and my son declares that he is ready to name and personally identify the guilty! What else, if not the concealment of the criminals, can explain such inactivity?

I appealed to the president of the Russian Federation, to the chairman of the government, the chairman of the State Duma, and many other bodies, but there is no answer yet. I am asking you to publish my letter. Perhaps somebody will respond to my trouble. It seems that the entire world has become deaf.

Saidat Timerbulatova

HELP!

From:	Umatgirey Kartoyev (kartoev.u.a@gmail.com)
Sent:	October 16, 2010 0:40:47 PM
To:	doshdu@hotmail.com

To the Editor-in-Chief of DOSH

I am the father of seven Kartoyev brothers four of whom were killed and three were arrested as a result of a special action on March 2-6, 2010 in the village of Ekazhevo in Ingushetia.

As of today, special service could not prove the participation of my sons in terrorist activities. And still they will be imprisoned.

Agents of national security plundered seven houses belonging to my family, then they destroyed them and set them on fire. We stay at night at our neighbors and relatives and we have nowhere else to go.

None of the Kartoyev brothers is a criminal and they have never been on trial. Even if they were guilty of anything, they could be easily caught and punished, after all they did not hide from anybody: they walked openly in the city and spent the night at home. Why did we deserve such and what is our fault? How I can support the widows and their children, when after all this I have nothing?! How and where should the children live now? They have neither a shelter, nor bread, or clothes. How will they go to school?

On March 16th, 2010, I sent an appeal to the Public Prosecutor of Ingushetia with the request to give out the bodies of my four killed sons but I did not receive any answer. I repeatedly met with the president of Ingushetia Yevkurov, wrote to the Office of the Public Prosecutor of Russia, the Investigatory Committee of the Russian Federation, the Memorial center, but there is no result.

Seven more persons from our village were taken away together with my three sons. All the ten arrested persons are kept in the Moscow prison of FSB Lefortovo on charges of blasting the Nevsky Express train in November 2009. It is not excluded that under tortures they confessed to everything that was incriminated to them, including the act of terrorism.

Sometimes agents of national security come to the ruins of our houses for "investigatory actions." They plant there whatever they want, photograph it and leave. Recently they came in a car, walked around the place, and the next day a unit of military men arrived, surrounded the area, and "found" there several brand new cartridges, parts of bombs, phones, wires, etc. When asked about the exact location of these cartridges and why they were so clean and shining, the agents of national security answered shortly and clearly: "It is none of your business!"

Regarding Buryatsky who ostensibly stayed at our place, I explain: on March 2nd, 2010, three of my sons were, and the fourth son was also killed the next day, and all of them were killed in our houses. However, no strangers were found there. That day a special action was taken at another place where, people say, this Buryatsky and several more people were found.

Our authorities want very much to connect it with my sons in any way. After taking away them among the ten fellow villagers on March 2-3, they purposefully placed them in the shooting gallery of FSB in Magas which was permeated with the smell of gunpowder so that they could later find particles of a suspicious substance on their clothes. Such are their methods. I could tell you other details but it will be too much for one letter.

What am I to do? I am a decrepit old man with a sick heart, and my wife suffers from asthma after that "special operation" and she can hardly walk. Now I walk around and I ask for money to pay the lawyers so that they could protect the arrested persons. The authorities give nothing to me, even the documents. I asked to return at least those five cars that were taken away by agents of national security. Alas, they did not do so.

Before we die, my wife and I would like to bury the dead and to see the survived sons, after all they are not guilty. My lost sons are being discredited also, all of those crimes that law enforcement agencies did not manage to solve, including murders, are being ascribed to them. After all, the dead cannot object. Obviously, that was also the purpose for killing them.

Please help me if you can!

Umatgiri Alaudinovich Kartoev

P.S. DOSH will forward these letters to the Offices of the Public Prosecutors of Chechnya and Ingushetia and to the presidents of both republics Ramzan Kadyrov and Yunus-Bek Yevkurov.

In the next issue of the magazine we will inform the readers about the reaction to these letters, and our correspondents will try to understand the circumstances of the course of investigation in the case of the Nevsky Express train.

MIREILLE PERRIER: ANNA HELPED ME TO UNDERSTAND A LOT

On August 30th, Anna Politkovskaya would have turned 52 years, and on October 7th we marked four years since she was murdered.

The murder of an outstanding human rights activist and journalist shook the entire world. Neither the customers and organizers, nor the executors of this crime (DOSH in detail wrote about the trial in the Moscow district military court) have been found yet. It is obvious that the case was at a deadlock. However, Anna's murder and the memory of her continue to excite millions of people all over the world.

This spring, the Parisian theatre La maison des m²tallos performed "Non reeducable", a play dedicated to Anna Politkovskaya.

The actress who played Anna reproduced the so familiar themes from the journalists articles and books: endless Chechnya, Nord-Ost, poisoning on the flight to Beslan, etc. Those who did not know the French language did not even require a translation: the drama on stage was very impressive. Many people had tears in their eyes.

Galina Akkerman spoke with Mireille Perrier, the French actress who played Anna.

Mireille, you have created a performance about Anna Politkovskaya. Who is the author of the play? What inspired the author?

The author is an Italian playwright Stefano Massini, and he was inspired by Anna's texts, her books and articles. He wrote a play, and I adapted it, because originally it was written for several actors and I am alone on stage. Besides, it was rather longish. It is too tiresome for me alone to remain on stage for more than an hour.

There was also other reason for rewriting the play. It is because of my personal tastes and preferences. I wanted to draw

attention not so much to Anna's tragic death, but to her constant fight for human rights and her commitment. I preferred to show her again alive in the final scene.

Did you perform this play at other theatres or in other countries?

As far as I know, it was performed in Belgium, but with several actors, men and women. This was the original version by Stefano Massini.

What motivated you to reincarnate into Anna?

As it often happens, the motivation was complex. At first I watched To the Memory of Anna Politkovskaya, a per-

formance of the Théâtre des Amandiers, near Paris, directed by the Swede Lars Norén. This is a play about the life of declassed impoverished people somewhere in Europe and is not connected in any way directly with Anna. Simply its heroes could have been the heroes of her reports and her human interest. Then I had a thought that I should turn to documentary theatre which narrates about the life of today's society.

After that performance I decided to read Anna's books. I was amazed with her commitment, her infinite readiness to help the poor and the humiliated and to protect their rights, especially the

rights of women. I was also impressed with her courage in protecting their interests before the power structures of Russia, considering how lonely she was in this struggle against general indifference to the destinies of these "small people." It shook me that she never despaired or receded.

I started to think about the phenomenon of such commitment. After all, it means taking huge obligations with a risk to be killed. It induced me to concentrate on the meaning of life and about the issues of life and death. I began to think about courage, the struggle for what we believe in, about why we became so cowardly here, in France.

And there is one more detail. When I first met you during the first performance of the play at the Parisian theatre Lavoisier Moderne, you said a phrase which amazed me. You knew Anna very well and you told me about one conversation with her. She said that if she behaved differently, she could not look in the eyes of the children. I could not forget this phrase. And now I often think of it.

I realized that some kind of a civil capitulation has occurred in our countries: we have plunged into our private lives and have put aside our public positions. We are no longer set a moral example for our youth. Therefore, the growing violence among young people should not be a surprise to us. So, Anna helped me to understand much about the society in which I live.

You showed the play in many cities of France. How did the French audience receive it? After all, Russia, and especially Chechnya, is an absolutely different world.

I noticed that the audience in Paris and in large cities understands the play differently than in provinces. In provinces, we usually have a full house and the people who come to this performance, as a rule, are already members of public associations and fight for human rights in their area. Both the performance and the discussion after it are important for such people. For them,

Anna is the person who sets an example of courage and provides to them the power to continue their human rights activities.

In large cities, it was more difficult for us to organize debates since the audience was uncommitted. But last spring, a miracle happened in La maison des m?tallos in Paris. The performance went there for three weeks, and, thanks to

debates. Finally we had a full house and nobody refused to leave after the performance. Many came repeatedly because every evening there had a chance to meet new people.

I do not know how to debate, I never studied it. During the debates, simplicity and naturalness made people feel comfortable and freely express their thoughts and feelings. People admitted



your help, we organized a variety of meetings where we even had people from Russia. After this performance the audience could meet the journalists, lawyers and human rights activists from your country who also possess Anna's uncommon courage. The audience was under a big impression after these evenings.

It often happens in France that debates turn into an occasion to show off, while the dialogue between the guest of the program and the audience is absent. La maison des m?tallos offered a remarkable setting for discussions from the very beginning. We gave the floor to everyone who wanted to say something, and more and more people stayed after the performance for

that they did not know something or did not understand. But when a person realizes it, he is capable to acquire new information.

You have been playing the role of Anna Politkovskaya for several years. What are your plans for the near future? What is your next project?

Now I am waiting for the play which will be devoted to the Gypsy question. The latest developments in France show how relevant this issue is.

But you will not stop this performance about Anna?

Certainly not! I have invitations from ten places, both theatres and festivals, for the next winter. This performance has a life and we receive new offers all the time.



BRUSSELS TRAM: FINAL DESTINATION – CHECHNYA

"My dear Brussels tram, only you know that there is a city on the earth where the sweetest cherry blossom, where acacia is smelling so wonderfully, where people leave their doors open and you can always come to see them without letting to know beforehand, where cheerfully laughing children and women baking delicious pita bread for wonderful ramson... Only you can bring me there".

"Summer passed... Good or bad, but we lived it through and it stayed in our memory, its rare sun and frequent rains, its joy and grief. I wonder how our memory can hold all that happens to us? All right and wrong, good and evil? Who puts it inside of us, sorting it carefully - "relevant/irrelevant", "far/ near"? Memory - is what we can trust. It is the only thing that we can undoubtedly say that it exists. With thousands of threads it thoroughly ties us with that what was way back and recently; millions of cells keep it for us taking out certain information in a certain period, very often not taking into account our wishes..."

This is an extract from "Brussels tram" by Tina Brussels, she is also Taisa Magomaeva - journalist, human rights advocate, poetess, prose writer, special counselor of deputy of Euro parliament on Chechen refugees in Europe, chief of European bureau of Caucasian independent journal "DOSH". But this all in the past... In August 2008 Tina's life stopped after a serious illness that she had been struggling with for about ten years.

"My dear friend! I invite you to travel "by the waves of our memory"! I will try to take out of it the most pleasant and cheerful as there is nothing in this world that I wouldn't do for you..."

Lines from the "Brussels tram" is not a turn of speech but sense of her life. In the year 2000 doctors in Moscow declared that she had four months left - it was a verdict. And Tina is only forty. She moves to Belgium, but not to die, to live and create overcoming exhausting pain. Operations followed one by one, then

hardest procedures of chemotherapy. But few people besides her friends and relatives knew this. On the public eyes always appeared charming blonde with a cultivated taste shedding delicate aroma of perfume.

Knowing that she had a cancer on the last stage, she hurried to do good: her telephone never stopped ringing - hundreds of calls per day from people who were waiting for her advice, help. Her computer hung from overloading; thousands of files of her countrymen from all European countries who lost hope to find protection from European bureaucracy but saw in her their last hope. And Tina regularly went to help them. How she managed to do it she didn't know herself. Brussels rented flat became a communicating courtyard or office where people got roof and food, found participation in their bitter lives, but most importantly - help with their problems with provision of the necessary facilities and entering in a new unusual for them life.

Chekhov library, 1980-es



Grozny city center, 1980-es



Грозненский Горком КПСС

Employing her invaluable knowledge of European languages and international laws concerning the rights of forcibly displaced persons Tina Brussels managed to reverse the situation when Chechen refugees were unnecessary ballast for Belgian society and they tried to expel them from the country. She initiates the process against Belgian police authority defending interests of her twelve countrymen, organizes Vainakh diaspora in Europe. Four years Tina was the president of Chechen association in Belgium. Made reports, spoke on the forums, conferences calling EU organizations to objectively investigate the situation in Chechnya and to help her countrymen. She organized numerous social and cultural events for Vainakh diaspora. Only relatives knew what physical pain she had to overcome not to show her pain to anybody and be a beacon for unfairly treated countrymen.

The last time I saw Tina in July 2008 when an imprint of death was already laying on her face. She was pale and grew lean but elegant as always. Aroma of perfume filled the room. She was liberal with her jokes, asked about her home, friends, asked to help to a three year old child that needed an urgent operation but she never gave a hint of her condition. Before that she called her friends in Moscow Israpil and Abdulla:

- Come, may be the last time...

They arrived immediately.

- And now we are sitting, exchanging glances in embarrassment, we can hardly recognize her, always alive and risible - remembers Israpil Shovkhalov. - She is inexplicably calm looking at us in silence her face terribly haggard, impressive earrings always making her face even more beautiful now underline her lifeless paleness. And here a Chechen calling by the phone all the time demanding to be urgently connected with Tina: saying that he is going to an interview in a commissariat and needs to ask an advice. We try to make him understand that she cannot answer, but he cries: "She knows me, give her a receiver, for a couple of

words only!" And others - many people - called, wanted to support her unselfishly, to come to see her. But Tina didn't want to appear to anybody as she was. When her tiny granddaughter cried she reached her arms to take her to calm down but couldn't hold and said with bitter smile: "I cannot be a grandma".

Brussels is her penname, tribute to the city that became the second home for Tina. Creativity and writing was an outlet for her. She had no journalistic titles or awards. But from under her pen appeared wonderful lyrical, full of tenderness poetry, art prose and what is especially rare in modern journalism - incomparable feuilleton. But probably the dearest for Tina and many others who had to escape during the war time from the hell of Grozny is "Brussels tram" from the cycle "Letters to a friend". The idea to go back to the city of her youth never leaved her, and this little sketch became a visiting card of the creative work of Tina Brussels. She returns us to that marvelous Grozny that doesn't exist anymore. It remains only in memories of its citizens and literary works of Tina Brussels.

One good friend of mine says: when he only wakes up, did not even open his eyes his memory already starts working. First, as vampires from a horror film, appear bad characters - reproaches - all that should have happened but devil forces interfered and made it impossible. Then - pictures of war that one desperately wants to forget and they not only stuck in the memory but every day carefully refresh. He says that his memory today fills only with negative information and there is less and less of good left.

...I have a weakness: I love to go by tram. For no particular reason enjoying myself. If in a city where I come there is no tram it becomes not interesting for me. City like any other, you finish your work and leave it with no regret. Of course you can go to the zoo, visit a couple of museums, eat a sandwich with Coca-Cola and do the citizens proud saying that they live in a best city in the world. Once being in Hong Kong on a very important business visit I surprised my colleagues when offered to go with the tram from the hotel to the office. How could I miss it - red, double-decker, open, as a cabriolet! What a bell it had! By the way, in this world everything can change but not the tram's bell. I think it sounded the same way last and before last century, it has the same sound in all the cities of the world. Only in Grozny a little different. A bit louder, a bit dearer.

...There is a tram stop near my house in Brussels. I do not need to go anywhere however I am waiting for the tram, touch the doors and from my touch they open as harmonic. I sit down at the window, the bell warns that the doors are closing and we start off. Creeping line on the driver's cabin says that the last station is "Yuzhniy vokzal" ("South railway station") I close my eyes. Why do I need train station, there is no my train. Bring me my Brussels tram to the city of my childhood... My station was called "Rabochaya" in the name of a very important street going to the train station. Everybody knew it, it was an orienting point for one explaining the address in that area. Up from this street - the Lenin's Palace of Culture with a beautiful park with amusement rides for children. There used to be children's music school, amateur art studio and many other things that are dead and buried now in Grozny.

So, the tram started to move and I go in the direction of the "green bazaar". Next stop "Grozneftianaya". Here there is a train station with the same name and ticket offices where you can buy train and air tickets. Next to it there is a big gastronomie, later on it will be turned into a hardware store, after that a restaurant... Further, walking through a small park - the "Peoples' Friendship Square" with the monument to the heroes of the Civil war - N. Gikalo (don't know what nationality he represented

but people thought him to be Russian), A. Sheripov and G. Akbriev. Russians called them "Gikalo and two jackals", while Chechens - "Two dzhigits leading the bandit".

Then, crossing the square - the Press house, the most beautiful building in Grozny. There used to be editorial offices of all the main newspapers of the Republic - "Grozneny rabochiy" (The Worker of Grozny), "Daymohk", "Serdalo", "Republic", the ninth floor was occupied by district rural committee of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) of Grozny. Tempers ran high when hard times came: some editorial offices were turned out, others changed their names, and still others split into patriots and betrayers. Today these ruins remind us that nothing in this world lasts forever. Rings the tram's bell, next stop "Dagestanskaya". Students of the oil technical school, vocational school 26, where they were training seamstresses, hairdressers and other tradesmen, are getting out. Next - Central park or "Green bazaar". You can buy and sell everything here, 'trade bad for worse', get news, even international, meet everybody and go in any direction from the old bus station.

If you get out and walk a little bit to the right along Rose Luxemburg Street you can get to Ordzhonikidze Avenue, where right at the corner there is a restaurant "Tatabanya" with a very warm atmosphere. The restaurant got the name of a small Hungarian twin city of Grozny. There they also called one of the restaurants by the name of our capital. A big and noisy delegation of elderly Komsomol members from the republic and their immediate families visited this ceremony.

But it's time to move forward. We are passing by the "Fashion House" on the right, regional committee of Komsomol - on the left. In the deep you can see the building of Drama Theatre of Kh. Nuradilov. Today it's the opening night of the season: "Bozh-Ali" by A.Khamidov with M.Davletmirzaev, A.Deniev,

Z.Bagalova in the main roles and admirable Mayma - R. Gichaeva. A big audience will be here today. At first, people will meet together in front of the theatre near musical fountain, then they will enter a beautiful foyer and will walk on the unique parquet flooring, one-of-a-kind, made from beech of Vedeno region. After that they will enter the auditorium and seat into the red velvet chairs, the performance starts and citizens of Grozny will once again admire the richness of the Chechen language, laugh at Bozh-Ali and Sutarby jokes, be proud of themselves, their wonderful theatre and their home town... On the right there is a children's puppet theatre. Little audience gets it as an inheritance from Chechen-Ingush Drama Theatre. Heroes of folktales live here - Zhora-baba, Malkb-Azni, Khin-Nana, Genie, characters created in the works of Chechen writers. Remember the two funny fellows - Big Abdurakhman and Little Abdurakhman? Well, they are right from here!

We move forward, to the "Central post office". We can go straight ahead, passing by the "Dinamo" stadium and get to the Pervomaiskaya Street with its famous maple path, by 41st school, 1st municipal hospital, schools No 12, 7, self-service supermarket - up to the canning factory. But our tram turns to the left; we go by the "Beauty salon", University of Marxism-Leninism (Later somebody decided to turn this building into Islamic university) - and here is the stop "Filarmonia" or "2nd school".

Ooh! How many young people get out of the tram here! They are students of the oil technical school, it's an endless stream - to the main building, a big massive building with the unique laboratories, rare equipment, mysterious underground rooms and facilities. In sum - an educational establishment of strategic importance. Besides, in a cafeteria of the institute there used to be wonderful buns with chocolate glaze and poppy seeds for 14 kopecks. Rather expensive, of course, but really delicious! On the opposite side

Grozny city center, 1980-es



across Ordzhonikidze square there is a new building. In front of it there is a stop of No2 bus that goes to Kalinin's settlement; trolleybus No 6 also stops here, it goes from micro-district to the train station and back. And this is a philharmonic. Oh, what performances were organized here! Once Muslim Magomaev tried to get in there, but at that time the oblast committee of the CPSU said he was not talented enough, so the poor singer had to go to Milan Opera theatre.

If you go right from the stop you'll see the old obkom building later given to the university, then Lenin's square, Arakelovskiy store, and on the left - famous store "Stolichniy" with delicious pastries! A little further - Zakharov's Museum of Fine Arts. In its storerooms used to be pictures worthy of being exhibited in famous museums, but they mysteriously disappeared during revolution (the lovers of fine arts suddenly appeared in Chechnya at that time)... Here is a "drukhetazbka" - a two-storey building, the main department store in Grozny. What "hard-to-get things" sometimes could be found there!

But... The doors close, our tram starts off, on the right we leave park on the embankment, on the left - Chekhov's park, Chekhov's library, theater "Cosmos" where Indian films were always running so touchingly loved by people of Grozny, swimming pool "Sadco" (I wonder if this drowned Old Russian hero had anything to do with Grozny), going by the bridge over Sunja, "next stop "Dzerzhinskaia", probably got its name from infamous jail NKVD, its building was just by-over Sunja.

Next stop - Universitetskaya ... I am wondering where students got such smart clothes on the poor soviet market? Fame about our beautiful girls spread about all the Caucasus, and in 1972 when, unexpectedly for all Chechens started 200 anniversary of "voluntary entry" of us as part of Russia and it wonderfully coincided with 50 anniversary of formation of the Checheno-Ingosh Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic,

the portrait of a beautiful Chechen student was published on the cover of the known soviet journal "Ogonyok". I think it was also connected with a "good" name of a girl - Sveta.

In front of the main university building through the park - was an old building with historical, chemico-biological departments, a student cafeteria with mustard on the tables was also in this building. By the way, it was really tasty - spread black bread with thin mustard. I recommend. To the side from the Lenin's prospect on the right used to be a theater "Rodina" here students often shirk lectures. On the left there was a big consumer services centre. Here one could order fashionable clothes in testing laboratory, do hair, repair TV, take a picture, try national food in a cafe?...

If you get out of the tram, cross the rails and go to the left along the A. Sheripova street you can find yourself in Kirov's park, but only you should cross a small footbridge over the river Sunja. Right after a short slope you are near the building of the TV studio of Grozny. There a beautiful woman, Lisa Berdukaeva, gave us her wonderful smile every evening. Amazingly naive but at the same time very touching music videos of Tamara Dadasheva, Ali Dimaeva and other famous Chechen artists were filmed in this park. Moreover, here used to be a small zoo with exotic animals, used to be pond with a boating station, you could jump from the tower, though with parachute, could see Grozny from the "Big wheel".

In the "Green theatre" used to give their concerts artists from Moscow - U. Antonov, A. Barykin, V. Leontiev, S. Rotaru, A. Pugacheva and even Ivitsa Sherfezy from Yugoslavia and Janosh Koosh from Hungary... The tram's bell rings. Once again. Ah, it's the last stop... What a pity! But I have to get out... Station square greets me with traditional for such places fuss and noise. People come and go, meet somebody and see off others... They take no notice of me. They just don't care about me, they can't

see my grief and do not understand that I am a person who can't get my home town neither from this, nor from any other train station. No train goes there and nowhere can I buy tickets for it. My dear Brussels tram, only you know that there is a city on the earth where the sweetest cherry blossom, where acacia is



Nuradilov Chechen Drama Theatre, before the war

smelling so wonderfully, where people leave their doors open and you can always come to see them without letting to know beforehand, where cheerfully laughing children and women baking delicious pita bread for wonderful ramson... Only you can bring me there..And only you know my secret - this town lives only in my memory..."

The "Brussels tram" brought Taisa Magomaeva back to her loved and extremely dear Chechnya, brought her back forever, to rest her soul in the land of her ancestors. But it became empty in Brussels without Tina, without her girlish ringing laughter, aroma of her perfume, her poetry, without courage of a fragile mountain girl Tina Brussels.

Rosa Malsagova, Paris

