

FIRST CAUCASIAN INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE

WORD

DOSH

DIGEST



OLEG ORLOV:
**"THE PAIN OF THE CITIZENS
OF CHECHNYA IS OUR
PAIN AS WELL"**

ISSUE #10

MURDERER – "HERO"

Former colonel of the Russian Army Yuriy Budanov - kidnapper, rapist and murderer of an 18 year-old girl from Tangi-Chu Village of the Urus-Martansky Region of Chechnya was shot to death in Moscow on June 10, 2011.

In 2003 the court sentenced Budanov to ten years in prison for murder, however, he got away with both the kidnapping and the rape, which he also undoubtedly committed. It was clear from the start: the main objective of the Russian authorities was not the true punishment of a war criminal, which can be said about most Russian soldiers sent to conquer Chechnya, but rather a mere profanity. The allegations that Budanov's victim was supposedly a sniper, and then his false statements, suggested to him by his lawyers, that he had suspicions about the girl's mother, are all myths, just like the tales about the "white stockings" that fought in Chechnya, about the well-trained Chechen Army, about the civilians which turn into guerrilla fighters at night etc. Myths, which are the result of propaganda, of which the main purpose is to justify the mass crimes against the civilian population of Chechnya, which essentially amount to genocide.

The cases of the bullets shot at the former colonel's head had not yet cooled and the murder was already attributed to the Chechens. This version seems credible only at first glance. Even the information available to the public today allows us to speak of the high professional level of organization of this murder, which completely rules out the version of vengeance: the phone call interception, without which it would have been impossible to know in advance about Budanov's plans to go to the Notary office, the behavior of the killer, who let his victim finish his cigarette

and did not turn once to face the security camera, which he obviously knew about, the fact that he committed the murder only after Budanov had left the zone covered by the camera, plus the whole cover-up story, thanks to which the criminals got away, changing and burning cars.

What do the relatives of Kungaeva, who have been living in Norway for the past ten years, have to do with this? They do not have the capabilities to avenge Elza's death, let alone in such an eye-catching way. And in accordance with the Chechen Adats and rules of blood vengeance, it is allowed ONLY on the part of the relatives of the victim.

Whoever committed this lawless act of lynch law and with what aim, it must be said that there were many people, who would have benefitted from his death. The existing system of power, under which political monopoly, preferential justice and overtures with fascists have become standard practice, is among the beneficiaries.

The former colonel, stripped of his military ranks, was buried with military honors, something that would have been impossible without official consent. He became a hero in the eyes of the majority of the people, not without the help of official propaganda.

What can be said about a country and about a society, which are ready to honor rapists and murderers of innocent women? Nothing, perhaps. By choosing their heroes they characterize themselves.

Editorial office in Moscow
RF, 103982, Moscow,
per. Luchnikov 4, entr. 3, room 1.
Tel. (495) 621-04-24
tel./fax (495) 625-06-63
E-mail: doshdu@hotmail.com

**Telephone of correspondent bureau
in Grozny:** +7 (928) 789-78-30

Editor in chief
Israpil SHOVKHALOV
E-mail: shovkhalov@hotmail.com

Executive Editor
Abdulla DUDUEV
E-mail: duduev@hotmail.com

Deputy Editor in chief
Svetlana ALIEVA

Department Offices
HISTORY/HUMAN
RIGHTS/SOCIETY/CULTURE
Maria KATYSHEVA, Zoya SVETOVA,
Lidiya MIKHALCHENKO,
Inna BUTORINA, Yelena SANNIKOVA

Correspondents
Maret ELDIEVA (Chechnya)
Marem YALKHAROEVA (Ingushetia)
Mussa MEISIGOV (Ingushetia)
Aida GADZHIEVA (Dagestan)
Ali MAGOMEDOV (Dagestan)
Nadezhda BOTASHEVA
(Karachayevo-Cherkessia)

Assistant Editor
Georgiy ZINGER

Literary editor of Russian texts
Irina VASUTCHENKO

**Translation from Russian
into English**
Svetlana ZAKHAROVA

Design and layout
Dmitry YAKOVLEV

The Journal is registered at the
Russian Federation Ministry for press,
television broadcasting and mass
media Certificate PI No. 77-15652
as of 9th June, 2003. Founder and
publisher Public organization
"Regional civil initiative - right to life
and social dignity"

Opinions expressed in the materials
of authors and interviews do not
necessarily coincide with platform
of editorial staff and publisher.
All rights reserved for this publication.
Reprinting without the prior
permission of editorial office is
prohibited. While using and citing
the materials one should make
an obligatory reference to "DOSH".

DIGEST #10 2012

2 HOW DZHOKHAR DUDAYEV WAS KILLED

3 AN ATTEMPT AT DIALOGUE

7 PREGNANT WOMEN ARE ALSO TARGETED

**10 OLEG ORLOV: "THE PAIN OF THE CITIZENS
OF CHECHNYA IS OUR PAIN AS WELL"**

19 WITH WHOM DOES THE TRUTH LIE?

21 FIGHTERS OF "DIRECT INFLUENCE"

26 PROTECTOR OF THE INNOCENT

30 THE PALE SHADOW OF TRUTH

**33 THE NIGHT, THAT DROWNED AN ENTIRE
LIFE IN DARKNESS**

34 THERE AREN'T ENOUGH SOUL HEALERS

37 THE UNEASY FATE OF ENTHUSIASTS

40 "HARMONY" IN THE CENTER OF GROZNY

**42 THE ROAD TO RECONCILIATION THROUGH
NON-VIOLENCE**



My unsuspecting son Gasan and daughter-in-law Saniyat, got up that damned morning in order to say their morning prayer. Saniyat exited the house with a jug in her hands, and suddenly shot at. My son heard the shots, ran out of the house and was wounded in the area near the heart - Mamat Baisultanov sighs, as he shares his memories for God knows which time.

According to Baisultanov, such frequent change of investigators can be explained by the fact that nobody wants to be involved in this case, nobody wants to incarcerate their own colleagues. So they find different excuses in order to avoid this unpleasant responsibility. The investigators themselves, as well as their bosses are deliberately delaying the investigation.



HOW DZHOKHAR DUDAYEV WAS KILLED

Meanwhile, Dudayev was giving interview after interview to Moscow and foreign media, in which he humiliated Russian generals. A criminal case was initiated against Dudayev, however the prosecutors complained that "he could not be found". People started laughing at our secret services. And then a tragedy occurred near the village of Yarysh-Mardy... The President was furious and ordered that Dudayev be liquidated. The order was given, the machine set in motion..." - Yuriy Aksenov recalls.

However, contrary to the above, according to the testimony of Vladimir Yakovlev, the order to kill the leader of Ichkeria was given to all Russian intelligence services at the very beginning of the war. But Dudayev was unreachable. "Special forces officers jokingly called him "Uncatchable Joe". He strung us about for a very long time. He possessed truly animal instincts. Once we determined where he was staying overnight, surrounded the village. Planted the radio beacon right under the house. Specified the target to the plane. The rocket shattered the house into pieces, however it was already empty..." - he recalls.

About the operation of the special forces of April 1996 in particular the officers said that they "covered" their square 30-40 kilometers South-West of Grozny. The village Gekhi-Chu was located right on the line separating the region that we were responsible for and that of our neighboring unit. According to intelligence data, prior to April 21 Dudayev had been there three times - to see the so-called military prosecutor of the Republic Magomed Dzhaniev. He came with around thirty of his bodyguards. At first we did not dare to go in there, we were afraid to scare them off..."

Meanwhile, "in a three kilometer radius around Dudayev everything was under the tight protection of Chechen guards! A mouse could not have appeared unnoticed! Our neighboring special forces officers were in more luck. With the help of local informants they had detected that Dudayev had spoken

on the phone several times from roughly the same place - a wasteland" - Yakovlev continued. According to Aksenov, they managed to bribe the Chechen informant for a million dollars. "Through our Chechen agents we managed to get the information that Dudayev was planning on making a call in that area. We even knew the approximate time. Full combat readiness was announced... That day we were all luckier than ever, both the ground troops and the pilots. As Dudayev was only approaching Gekhi-Chu, the plane in Mozdok was already taking off... We found out only later that Dudayev was there with his wife, assistants and bodyguards. They all came to the wasteland and uncased the satellite phone. That time Dudayev indeed spoke longer than usual. We heard the noise of a plane in the distance, then came the deafening explosion. In a couple of hours we got confirmation from "the other side" that Dudaev's body was being prepared for burial..."

At the end of the insight into the events of 1996, the author of the article wrote: "On April 22 Yeltsin was on an official visit in Khabarovsk. After a meeting with the administration of the region, the Kremlin delegation went to one of the local restaurants for lunch. When the party was in full-swing the President was suddenly approached by the officer in charge of government communication and informed that the Director of the FSB was on the other end of the line with something very important and urgent to report. Yeltsin left the room. A witness of this scene later recalled the following: Yeltsin was so agitated that he even forgot to close the door. He was practically screaming into the phone: "Is this for certain? Is it really true? ... Well, thank you. I owe you a medal!"... He returned to the table looking like a happy birthday boy, he even danced a bit. He immediately took the floor and proposed a toast, which started with the words: "Today is a celebration!". The next morning all news agencies reported the number one piece of news - Dudayev is dead..." - the author recalls.



AIDA GADZHIEVA AN ATTEMPT AT DIALOGUE

At the beginning of June a visiting session of the Presidential Council under the President of Russia for the Promotion of Civil Society and Human Rights took place in Makhachkala. For two days the numerous crowd of Moscow human rights activists met in the National Rasul Gamzatov Library, and tried together with the Dagestani public figures and officials to find a "consensus" and establish a peaceful dialogue in the Republic, torn by social and confessional differences.

On the first day of the meeting a great crowd of people gathered outside the venue, people who wanted to tell the guests from Moscow about the outrageous lawlessness that goes on in the Republic. However, the program of the event did not foresee presentations "from the street". When the crowd started heading from the library to the nearest mosque with the cry "Allah Akbar!" it seemed almost like a symbol: our government is incapable of ensuring the law. It is not even capable of listening to its indignant citizens, who are left with no other choice but to turn to religion, to the mosque, to the Sharia...

"Steps are being taken"

The Chairperson of the Presidential Council under the President of Russia for the Promotion of Civil Society and Human Rights Mikhail Fedotov, the Chairperson of the Moscow Helsinki Group Ludmila Alekseeva, the Chairperson of the Commission of the Public Chamber RF for Interethnic Relations and Freedom of Conscience Nikolai Svanidze, Chairperson of the charity organization for the help of refugees and forced migrants "Civil Assistance" Svetlana Gannushkina, Head of the Human Rights Center "Memorial" Oleg Orlov, Human Rights Ombudsman RF Vladimir Lukin and other prominent human rights activists participated in the session, which was opened by the President of Dagestan Magomedsalam Magomedov. He was rather optimistic in his description of the situation with civil society and human rights in the Republic:

- Practically all civil institutions are represented in modern Dagestan... It is one of the 18 regions of Russia, where the situation with the freedom of speech

is fairly smooth. Around 180 printed publications are issued on a regular basis, over 100 TV and radio companies with various forms of ownership broadcast their shows (the day before, at his meeting in the government house, Magomedsalam Magomedov provided the Moscow guests with a concrete example of the freedom of the Republican press: "Recently a lengthy court trial against a non-state weekly journal, Chernovik, was finally terminated, the court took the side of the journalists. This case proves that we indeed do not put any pressure on the press.")... We were among the first in the country to introduce the institute of Human Rights Ombudsman, which now functions properly in the Republic... Public councils are created under Ministries, state institutions and municipal authorities of the Republic. At the same time, the President continued, we have to admit, that the Dagestani people still experience violations of their legal rights and freedoms. This is stated in the reports of Human Rights organizations. The problem of missing persons is often raised. And, unfortunately, it does exist Believe me, we are doing everything in order to prevent that from happening. We demand that law-enforcement agencies work in accordance with the law, and that there be maximum clarity in all such cases.

According to Magomedsalam Magomedov, the main obstacle to the



dynamic socio-economic development of the Republic is terrorism and extremism:

- An absolute majority of Dagestanis condemn terrorism and support the activities of the authorities, aimed at ensuring security, law and order in the Republic. At the same time there is a growing understanding in society of the need for civil dialogue and peace among all confessions. This issue is of utmost importance to us... In particular, one of the steps in this direction was the creation of a Commission which assists in the adaptation to peaceful life of those people who have decided to give up terrorist and extremist activities. The Commission has been working for over six months, and there are already results: it managed to bring over thirty people back to normal life... Active measures are being taken to develop a dialogue among the representatives of different confessions of Islam. Recently a religious forum called Civil dialogue took place, whose participants promoted religious tolerance, mutual respect and the renunciation of violence ...

"Total mayhem"

Mikhail Fedotov thanked the Head of Dagestan for his personal involvement in the preparation of the session of the Council and said that it was a sort of rehearsal: Another session of the Council will take place in the Northern Caucasus on July 5 with the participa-

tion of Dmitry Medvedev, and "when meeting with the President we would not want to depend on the perception of the issues at stake, which exist on the territory of the Garden ring... A transition to the format of a dialogue, which the Head of the Republic had mentioned is very important. When people talk to each other they do not shoot..."

The main presentation during the first plenary session, entitled "Civil Peace and Harmony among Different Confessions" was delivered by the Chairman of the organization "Dagestan - Territory of Peace and Development", member of the Public Chamber of Dagestan Abas Kebedov - who can be seen as a symbol of the good intentions of the Dagestani authorities in trying to establish a dialogue with the "unofficial" clergy. His evaluation of the situation in Dagestan drastically differs from that of the President:

- Fifteen minutes ago two of our brothers were arrested, their beards were too long, although, I can assure you, not longer than the beard of the Patriarch of all Rus'... At the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan the President adopted a course of consolidation. But nothing has changed. I personally do not see that anything is being done. The total lawlessness of the law-enforcement agencies is growing.

Kebedov gave several other examples: in the settlement Sovetskoe fifty people were taken from the mosque to the police station, where they were

beaten and their beards were shaved off, girls wearing hijabs to school were threatened, and none of the people responsible were brought to justice, none of these violations were mentioned by the state news agencies. In Nechaevka a young man named Alim, a law-abiding citizen, went missing. His body was later found with multiple bullet holes. A special operation was conducted in Chontual, a family was taken away, a four-year-old boy was wounded, an OMON officer threw an eleven-month-old baby into the back of an "Ural" truck - and nobody has been brought to justice.

- Either the authorities are helpless, or the authorities need this and let it go unpunished, and will then remedy the results, or they do this as part of their strategic plan, - Kebedov said. - We have proposed an anti-crisis project to the government.

Kebedov believes, that there are three possible courses of events: war and the collapse of Russia ("And we see that military forces and military equipment is building up in Dagestan"), the course of Chechnya ("However, I do not believe that this territory lives by Russian laws") or the course of peace. Kebedov insists that the armed resistance is ready for dialogue, foreign ulama (religious scholars) are also ready to assist in the stabilization of the situation, however the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Dagestan continues its propaganda of hostility and religious intolerance, the imams are constantly heating up the tensions.

- We suspect that a unification of the people in epaulets and the official clergy might have taken place.... Maybe these are just rumours, but it seems that a delegation had been sent to us from Moscow, which was trying to convince the Federal authorities not to engage in a dialogue with us. Some people do not understand that it is time to stop looking for enemies in places, where there aren't any. We are ready for any kind of

of the official clergy, although they pretend not to see our outstretched hand.

This speech was the culmination of the meeting. No matter how hard other presenters tried to put to sleep the participants of the event, the conversation always went back to the topic raised by Kebedov.

I have been to Sovetsky Village - said a member of the Public Chamber of Dagestan Aluset Azizkhanov. - Did you know that in this village it is forbidden to play music at weddings? Children leave school and go to the forest (join the rebels). Why did you say that nobody wrote about this incident? It was in fact covered in the press.

- I said: "in government newspapers"...

- Lezgi Newspaper is a government newspaper.

- But I do not read in Lezgin ...

When leaving the session during the break the President of Dagestan admitted that he did not like everything that had been said during the meeting:

- I want to ease some of the wording: there is no preparation for war and there is no total lawlessness of law enforcement agencies. Then he promised to give instructions to deal with the situation in Chontaula.

"They do not let us leave in peace"

Meanwhile, a crowd of over a thousand people gathered outside. A rally organized by the Territory of Peace and Development, was scheduled to take place on the embankment near the Avar theatre. However, the celebration of the Day of the Protection of Children was going on over there, so the participants headed for the library, where the Human Rights activists were holding their meeting. However, they were not able to get near the building, their paths were blocked by police units. No one tried to break through the police chain and enter the library, but the atmosphere was quite tense. If the law enforcement officers had received an



order to force back the crowd a serious conflict might have occurred. People from the village Sovetskoe mentioned during the session, as well as representatives from many other regions of Dagestan were among the participants of the rally. For example, Zumrad Magomedova told the press, that she had come to ask about what happened to her son Arip Magomedov, who has gone missing in Moscow.

When leaving the meeting, Abas Kebedov asked the gathered crowd not to cause disturbances, urged them to go to the mosque and promised to join them later on. The men left the square in front of the library yelling "Allah Akbar!". When there was a break in the session, Kebedov went to the mosque on Kotrov street and once again called on everyone present to be patient:

- We must show them that we are not instigators of "fitna" (turmoil), we simply want justice. After all we are not slaves. If we succumb to our emotions, we will seriously harm our cause.

After that he asked that the rally members chose a few people from among their midst, who could present their main problems and concerns at the Council.

One of them, Gadzhimagomed Makhmudov, later said at the session:

- When people found out that I'm going to attend this meeting, they asked me to speak about their sorrows, gave me lists of people who had been killed or abducted by the special forces. The problem of Dagestan is that it is separated into several parts. They do not let us live in peace. I have been arrested and released three times. What does the police want from us? Why can't they explain? Young men are killed, their corpses are sold, can anyone say that this is not true? Our children are disappearing. Nobody knows what they are guilty of. If they are guilty,

let them be tried and judged, but it must be done in accordance with the law. Who protects the law nowadays? The Director of a school in the village Sovetskoe violates the law, when he says that he will "undress" the female students of the school. We on the other hand, as well as the independent media are protecting the law, since we urge everyone to abide by it. Hundreds of books are published under the control of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Dagestan and with its direct participation, there are three TV Channels, on which we are demonized and portrayed as English and Israeli spies. We are not allowed to say anything and our mosques are taken away from us. The authorities have the full support of the official clergy.

After lunch the participants of the session at the National Library discussed the issue of civil participation in the fight against corruption and the clan system. A plenary session entitled "The Respect of Human Rights as a Precondition for Ensuring Public Safety" took place on June 2nd.

The main intrigue of the second day was perhaps the squabble between the Editor in Chief of the Newspaper Chernovik, Nadira Isaeva, and the Head of the Information Analytical Division under the President of Dagestan Garun Kurbanov. Isaeva criticized the actions of the representatives of federal security agencies in the Republic. In her opinion, they come to the Republic in order to earn money on the murder of its citizens. These words triggered a very strong reaction on the part of Kurbanov. He asked Nadira Isaeva quite harshly why she and her followers didn't say anything about those who engage in banditry and murder of law enforcement officers. The Head of the organization Protection of Human Rights, Gulnara Rustamova, stood up



for the journalist and then left the meeting (during the session she presented the project Path to Peace, which presupposes the creation of a rehabilitation center in Dagestan for women of the Salafite communities. Mostly this means widows of militants, who become outcasts of society and an easy prey for drafters of female suicide bombers. The Head of the Human Rights Center Memorial, Oleg Orlov, called on Garub Kurbanov to be less aggressive and to remember that he is not at work and that the participants of the meeting are not his subordinates.

Many interesting opinions and proposals, often completely opposite, were voiced during the meeting. So opposite that, according to the Chairman of the Supreme Court of Dagestan Ruslan Mirzaev, the sides are unlikely to come to an easy agreement. A veteran of the Russian Human Rights movement - Head of the Moscow Helsinki Group Ludmila Alekseeva listened very attentively for two days to all of the detailed information that the Human Rights Activists, journalists and representatives of the Dagestani public on the one hand, and representatives of the Prosecutor's office, Investigative Committee, Ministry of Interior and Supreme Court on the other, had to convey and finally shared her impressions, which caused a whirlwind of applause.

- People here spoke of concrete problems, of outrageous human rights violations, of tragedies, which break your heart and make you want to scream, - began the human rights activist, her voice trembling. And you - she turned to the state officials - instead of answering the questions posed, you mumbled your incoherent standard responses, you read your prepared texts, which have nothing to do with reality!

Some of the guests from Moscow had to admit that they did not expect such intense emotions and incompatible positions. If this will promote the understanding on the "territory of the Garden Ring", that the situation in Dagestan has been driven to the verge, beyond which there will be no more

possibilities of peaceful settlement, that the Kremlin's incoherent policy in the Caucasus does not further the stabilization of the situation, - it can be said that the visiting session did not take place for nothing.

"A terrorist, who has taken up a weapon, is a terrorist, but the government cannot be a terrorist, the whole system has to function in accordance with the law.... "There exists a clan system in Dagestan. Clans are not groups of relatives, which gather for weddings and funerals, but a terrifying criminal bandit monster. Today 5-6 clans have taken over the entire Republic, they have left nothing for us. The only way out for Dagestan is to completely demount the system and eliminate its economic component. For that the only thing necessary is the political will of the Russian government."

Suleiman Uladiev, Co-chairperson of the Public Organization Dagestan - Territory of Peace and Development

"The leadership of Dagestan needs to state simply and clearly that we will choose to take only the secular path. So far we are witnessing the total onset of Islamists onto the institutions of power, which are not reacting in anyway."

Aluset Azizkhanov, Deputy Chairman of the Public Chamber of Dagestan

"Human tragedies stand behind every problem that is raised. The bitterness is great from both sides. The authorities are not perfect, to put it lightly, including their highest-ranking representatives. However, if the problem lay only in the authorities, one day they would change and we would all live happily. The problem is that we do not live in accordance with the law, nor in accordance with our conscience. Little by

little we need to change our country, our society and ourselves. Many contradicting opinions have been voiced here, however the opponents did not listen to each other. Nevertheless, it must be stated that a dialogue did take place. And this dialogue has to continue in the same format. People will never become angels, however we can try to ensure that they abide the law. "

Vladimir Lukin, Ombudsman of the Russian Federation.

"A full-scale civil war is going on right now in Dagestan. The formula of public dialogue is very simple. The state is putting an end to its lawless approach to the so-called "Wahhabists" and is coming back into the legal terrain, provided for in Article 28 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which reads as follows: "Everyone shall be guaranteed the right to freedom of conscience, to freedom of religious worship, including the right to profess, individually or jointly with others, any religion, or to profess no religion, to freely choose, possess and disseminate religious or other beliefs, and to act in conformity with them." This automatically legalizes the Salafite denomination of Islam, along with the Suffite, giving them equal status. If the representatives of the Salafite denomination are not persecuted and are given the chance to get legal status, they will loose the right to maintain armed resistance to the state and to society, i.e. to the waging of Jihad."

Isalmagomed Nabiev, member of the organization Dagestan - Territory of Peace and Development.



Wedding photograph of Gasan and Saniyat. "As a result of this special operation the pregnant wife of my son Gasan was killed, he himself was badly wounded, their property was ransacked, their house destroyed. My son was given a suspended sentence of one-and-a-half years, because a Kalashnikov machine-gun was found in his front yard, planted there by the same officers"

PATIMAT MAKHMUDOVA PREGNANT WOMEN ARE ALSO TARGETED

The Caucasus has always been known for its traditions and principles. Women have always been treated here with special care, despite all of the attempts to prove that women in the Caucasus have always been enslaved by men. Perhaps, against the overall emancipation, Caucasian customs do not seem too "democratic", however, this is not a simple issue. In the Caucasus wars could be waged because of women, and only in the Caucasus could a woman stop the bloodiest clashes with her head scarf. Nobody ever dared to step over a head scarf....

It is with great sorrow that we must admit that those noble traditions have stayed in the past. Today we live in a time when pregnant women are shot. And nobody bears responsibility for this.

The desperate, and yet stubbornly seeking justice, Mamat Baisultanov is known to many of the law-enforcement agencies of Dagestan because he is persistent in his attempts to make the above-mentioned agencies punish

those responsible for his tragedy. The gruesome murder of his daughter-in-law Saniyat, who was expecting her first baby, and the wounding of his son Gasan, in Khasavurt in 2006 during a so-called special operation, is a well-known facts not only in Dagestan. Before people responsible for such evil acts in our region would become outcasts, judged severely by society. Now they are "punished" by being promoted at work. After going through a vicious cycle of empty attempts to find justice and having failed to secure the punishment of the murderers of his daughter-in-law in his own Republic and country, Baisultanov was forced to go to the Court in Strasbourg.

- A grave misfortune came to our home on November 3, 2006 at five o'clock a.m. Law-enforcement officers conducted a special operation in the house of my son on Shorsa street, 83 in Khasavurt. As a result of this special operation the pregnant wife of my son Gasan was killed, he himself was badly

wounded, their property was ransacked, their house destroyed. My son was given a suspended sentence of one-and-a-half years, because a Kalashnikov machine-gun was found in his front yard, planted there by the same officers.

Although it was proven in court that he is not guilty of anything, he was still not released, because then they would have to detain the real culprits. That was not part of the plan of the "murderers in epaulettes". They were looking for an excuse to justify their actions, because the mobile unit posted for this special operation recorded during a preliminary inspection that there were no weapons in the house, except for an axe, and that there were two people inside the house, a man and a woman. They also stated that there was no need to conduct a special operation and withdrew.

Despite of that, after their withdrawal, the law-enforcement officers started the attack, without giving advanced

warning. My unsuspecting son Gasan and daughter-in-law Saniyat, got up that damned morning in order to say their morning prayer. Saniyat exited the house with a jug in her hands, and was suddenly shot at. My son heard the shots, ran out of the house and was wounded in the area near the heart - Mamat Baisultanov sighs, as he shares his memories for God knows which time.

According to Baisultanov, at first the officers said that they had the wrong address. Then they started saying that supposedly they had received information about militants hiding in this house. There was another version as well: that a special operation had never been planned in the first place, they were just supposed to check the house. And so they did, shedding the blood of innocent people.

- And how did you determine who was responsible for your tragedy? - I asked Baisultanov.

- Law-enforcement officers from five districts took part in this special operation. When my son's case was reviewed by the Supreme court of the Republic of Dagestan, it was established that the Kalashnikov machine-gun found in my son's front yard, had not been shot in that area, since there were no rounds in the cartridge. And among the 64 shot-shells found on the scene and confiscated, none of them were shot from the machine-gun, which allegedly belonged to my son. On the other hand, the ballistic expertise showed that 36 shot shells found on the scene, were shot from the service gun of the commander of the Special Firing Group of the Kazbekovsky region, Anas Satiraev, 5 shot shells were released from the weapon, which belongs to his subordinate Arthur Shepikhanov.

It was absolutely sure that Shepikhanov was covering Satiraev, while he was recharging his machine-gun. The other shotshells were from bullets, dating back to 1908. It was also established that these "antique" bullets

My unsuspecting son Gasan and daughter-in-law Saniyat, got up that damned morning in order to say their morning prayer. Saniyat exited the house with a jug in her hands, and was suddenly shot at. My son heard the shots, ran out of the house and was wounded in the area near the heart - Mamat Baisultanov sighs, as he shares his memories for God knows which time.

were shot by another subordinate of Satiraev, Abukov. In court Satiraev and Shepikhanov testified that they did fire the shots. They also testified that the mobile unit posted for this special operation also participated in the shooting. According to the testimony of the fighters of this unit, they entered the house only for a preliminary examination (control examination of the scene of the operation). They also stated that they do not use such weapons, their armor is all modern.

While they admitted that they had participated in the shooting, Satiraev and Shepikhanov did not express any remorse. Satiraev even insolently stated:

- Yes, I killed them off. Now prove it!

Mamat Baisultanov is sure that he acts in such a provocative way, because

he is absolutely certain that he will not be held responsible. He said:

- Other participants of the special operation, who also testified at the trial in the Supreme Court, said that it was Satiraev who shot my children. They also said that the investigator made them sign their testimonies, without letting them get acquainted with the content. That is how they fabricate witness testimonies. They also got a mentally ill person to testify that he supposedly saw that my son had a weapon. Also, one of the employees of the 6th department, who was a relative of the victim, started telling everyone that my son killed his wife himself, because he did not want them to be captured alive by the law-enforcement officers.

- I went to all the possible authorities, seeking punishment for the culprits - Mamat continues. - I got them to open a criminal case against Satiraev and Shepikhanov in 2007. Up until then, I got the same answer from all of the authorities - that everything has been done within the framework of the law. It must be noted that the criminal case was opened only after the murder of

According to Baisultanov, such frequent changes of investigators can be explained by the fact that nobody wants to be involved in this case, nobody wants to incarcerate their own colleagues. So they find different excuses in order to avoid this unpleasant responsibility. The investigators themselves, as well as their bosses are deliberately delaying the investigation.

the Minister of Interior of Dagestan, Adylgeri Magomedtagyr, who had always been against my case. He died on June 5, and three days later progress was made in the investigation. Since then, six different investigators had worked on this case.

According to Baisultanov, such frequent changes of investigators can be explained by the fact that nobody wants to be involved in this case, nobody wants to incarcerate their own colleagues. So they find different excuses in order to avoid this unpleasant responsibility. The investigators them-

selves, as well as their bosses are deliberately delaying the investigation. The Head of the Investigative Committee of the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Dagestan, Kasumbek Amyrbekov, is also only pretending to be making efforts to resolve this case.

- I had noticed several times that first he criticized the investigator for his irresponsible attitude towards my case, in my presence, and later sat with him and drank tea, - Mamat says. - In the end I was forced to have a row with him. I also showed Amyrbekov the decision of the Supreme Court on the suspension from official duties and the pressing of criminal charges against the staff-members of the ROVD of the Kazbekovsky district, who killed my daughter-in-law and wounded my son.

The murderers of the young pregnant woman, who was only starting to live her happy family life, were not only not suspended from their duties, but even promoted, despite the fact that criminal charges had been pressed against them. The judge of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Dagestan is not executing

any decisions, because the Head of the ROVD of the Kabekovsky district and his deputy, who also took part in the special operation, no longer work there, and the new management says that this decision was adopted before he took office and therefore he cannot suspend the culprits.

Mamat recalls that when he asked Abidyn Kachergaev, who occupied the post of Deputy head of the MoI of Dagestan at the time and was also the leader of the special operation: "Why did you kill my daughter-in-law?", he said that she was a female suicide bomber, panderess and militant.

- Although I knew that that was not true, still I thought that there must have been some reason for conducting the operation, - Baisultanov says. - I believed the uniformed man. I also asked him whether any of the officers had been wounded during the operation. He said that yes, two had been wounded. Right after the operation I visited all of the hospitals of Khasavurt, but did not find any people, who were wounded during this special operation. After that I went to the Prosecutor, who also assured me, that none of them got hurt. However, later on these same people started saying that my daughter-in-law Saniyat opened fire on them from a machine-gun, yelling "Allah Akbar!", after which they were forced to shoot her.

- I am very tired of all this - Mamat Baisultanov sighs, - and I no longer believe that the people who are supposed to risk their lives in order to protect the law of our country, but instead break it and become criminals in epaulettes, hiding behind their service ranks, will ever be brought to justice. In 2007 I sent an application to the European Court for Human Rights, located in Strasbourg, and have recently been informed that they have started reviewing my case. And so I live only through the hope that perhaps at least there they will be able to make the clumsy justice system work, which, in our country is of benefit only to state officials.



Saniyat with her mother-in-law on her wedding day



Mamat Baisultanov

Abdulla DUDUEV

OLEG ORLOV: "THE PAIN OF THE CITIZENS OF CHECHNYA IS OUR PAIN AS WELL"



In the previous issue of "DOSH" magazine we published an interview with the Ombudsman of the Chechen Republic Nurdi Nukhazhiev, who told us about the activities of his apparatus, about his vision of the Human Rights situation, the working conditions of Human Rights Activists and their cooperation and coordination with the authorities. In that interview Nukhazhiev once again spoke negatively of the Human Rights Center Memorial in Chechnya and its Head Oleg Orlov

This time we have decided to discuss the same problems with the Chairperson of the Council of the Human Rights Center "Memorial", Oleg Orlov, in order to give him the opportunity to respond to the accusations of the Chechen Ombudsman



After the murder of Natalia Estemirova in July 2009 the administration of Memorial decided to terminate the work of the Center in Chechnya, which was, nevertheless, reinitiated a few months later. What made you change your mind?

There were two reasons. First and foremost, the desire and determination of our staff members in Chechnya, their persistent recommendations to renew their work, particularly in memory of Natasha, played a very important role. They firmly believed that we couldn't just quit.

The second factor was the solidarity expressed by other Human Rights organizations outside of Chechnya, outside of Memorial, that declared that they are ready to work in Chechnya. As you can see, now many organizations are sending their representatives as part of the Free Mobile Groups (FMG) to work all across Chechnya, where they work on a rotation basis. Such solidarity is extremely important, since these organizations are based in different districts of Russia, they are highly professional and very efficient in their regions. The majority of them had previously specialized in the so-called militsiya (former name of the Russian police) lawlessness, now it can be called police lawlessness. After discussing the two above-mentioned factors amongst ourselves in Memorial, we decided to renew our work in the Republic.

By the way, I would like to immediately clarify, that the suspension of our work in Chechnya did not mean its complete termination. Our lawyers couldn't, they did not have the right to abandon the work that they had already started. They were already involved several civil and criminal cases, representing the interests of the victims. That work continued

The fact that during the suspension of activities we did not monitor the situation, conduct field visits or receive

citizens is another matter. Later we recommenced as much as possible all of these activities, although it is very important to understand two things. The murder of Natasha was indeed a very serious blow, a huge loss for us. And of course we understand that we cannot continue carrying out the same volume of work as we had before her death.

For example we do not have the right to believe that we are now giving a more or less full picture of what is going on in Chechnya, as we did prior to Natasha's murder. We used to make a chart of Abductions in the Chechen Republic. Even then we did not claim that the information contained in the chart was exhaustive. However, we were able to follow-up on a certain percentage of the abduction cases, according to our calculations around a third of them. We had a well-established methodology, we were able to provide numbers, and each number represented a concrete person. We were able to determine the dynamic - whether the number of such crimes was growing or decreasing. It is pointless to compare the numbers that are available to us now with those that we used to have. I do not believe that I have the right to make staff members conduct field visits to various regions of the Republic like they used to, in order to monitor the situation. Furthermore, we insist that our employees be more careful. The people of the Republic are now also not as eager to speak heart to heart. And they don't complain as much.

For example, we know that a crime has been committed. However, the victims do not go to Human Rights activists for help. Or they do go, but they ask that no information about what has happened to them be published or cited in any way. They say "Your people are being killed as well. You can't even protect yourselves, how are you going to protect us?", and partially they are right. Under such circumstances, how can you really obtain an

objective picture of the reality? We receive information about various crimes, including abduction of people, pretty often, however, provided that this information is not published.

Nevertheless, how many people in Chechnya have gone missing in 2010, according to information available to you? For example, the Ombudsman of Chechnya Nurdi Nukhazhiev told us that, according to his data, if you count those who were not later found, five people have gone missing.

We know, that out of those abducted, eight people have disappeared without a trace, six more people went missing in unclear circumstances. However, unlike Nukhazhiev, who claims that his information is exhaustive, I must emphasize that our data is far from being so.

And how reliable is your data?

Every number stands for a concrete person - Last name, first name, address, request to the Prosecutor's office to initiate a criminal case. We are able to achieve that for practically all cases.

Nurdi Nukhazhiev often criticizes the work of the FMG that you have mentioned, as well as the work of Memorial as a whole. In fact he spoke of this during his recent interview to DOSH magazine. The Ombudsman complained that you have a very subjective approach to everything that goes on in Chechnya, and that you positively refuse to cooperate not only with the authorities, but also with local human rights activists, he even lamented your arrogant attitude towards your Chechen colleagues and attempts to monopolize all human rights activities in the region. What can you respond to this?

I would like explain why lately it has been difficult for us to work and receive

even the amount of information that we used to receive before. It is not only an issue of security and my persistent recommendations to be more careful, although these factors definitely complicate the field visits of our staff members. The fact that people are frightened and scared to complain is also only part of the story. In Chechnya there is a slander campaign against us. When the President of the Republic calls me, as well as other employees of Memorial enemies of the nation, law and state on national television, of course people are reluctant to appeal to us for help. This also complicates our work, including our dialogue with state officials. We are always open to interaction, when possible even to cooperation with state representatives.

However, the title "Enemy of the Nation" frightens state officials as well. In our country such a stigma is no joke. In the unforgotten Stalin times people with such a label were often killed without a trial. One must stay away from such people. Therefore, the situa-

When there is something positive to communicate, we never keep it a secret, we are happy about any positive changes. Didn't we write that Grozny has been reconstructed? A great job has been done in reconstructing Grozny, as well as many other cities and villages of the Republic which had been destroyed. However, when negative changes are obvious, we don't have the right to conceal this information.

tion is in fact reversed - it is not we who are unwilling to interact with state officials, but rather they are intent on avoiding us. Because the authorities of the Chechen Republic are creating the necessary circumstances for such a course of events

Regarding our allegedly arrogant attitude towards other human rights organizations - that is simply ridiculous. We have always been very positive towards them, considered them our friends and colleagues. And what is this monopoly on presenting information about Chechnya, which we are supposedly securing and which Nukhazhiev keeps referring to? We say what we

believe to be right, however, we treat all other opinions with respect. In fact, we are even glad when other NGOs analyze the situation, even when they disagree with us. It is very important to point out: As you must remember, in the interview with Mr. Nukhazhiev in DOSH magazine some letter on the renewal of our work in the Chechen Republic was mentioned. A letter, which contained rather harsh assessments of Memorial. It was also mentioned that several of the people who had supposedly signed the letter, saw the letter for the first time only when it was posted on the Internet. It was sent from the office of the Ombudsman Nukhazhiev.

In court we asked Mr. Nukhazhiev about this incident, who, as far as I remember, responded that neither he nor his apparatus had anything to do with this letter, that as part of assistance provided to NGOs he gave them the right to send correspondence from his address. The website of the Ombudsman also contains a page,

where NGOs can post any information, and the distribution also happens without his consent. Although it is done from his address, it is done without his consent. However, in the interview he let it slip! He said: "How can they say that they didn't sign the letter! We called all of them, they all confirmed their signature." Is that what he calls being unaware and not involved? Of course he was involved if he had called all those concerned! Another question is whether he indeed called all of the signatories? Evidently, no. I cannot distrust my NGO friends and colleagues. Perhaps, no phone calls were made at all. When a person contradicts himself,

how can you determine where the truth lies? Did he lie in the interview or in court? One way or another, when that letter appeared, we knew right away that our friends couldn't have signed that. I trust them completely. And we sincerely hope to maintain our close relations and cooperation with them in the future.

Concerning the "slander" accusations, looking through our materials should suffice. Documents from various years, 2007 perhaps. That year we stated (this information can be found on our website) a drastic decline in the number of abductions. At that, we underlined, that this was a special policy of the government of Chechnya, which practically issued an order to the forces which formed part of the armed units under state command (at the moment they were adapting to the Ministry of Interior) to cease such unlawful activities. We wrote about this as of a positive change. At the time Ramzan Kadyrov and his people were fighting against a terrifying structure - the Second Operational Investigative Bureau (ORB-2). At that time Nukhazhiev and the Parliament of Chechnya started talking about torture. Thanks to their efforts the management of ORB-2 was dismissed. By the way, Kadyrov introduced the new head of the Bureau to its personnel. Instances of torture ceased and the ORB-2 turned from a scary torture facility into something significantly more decent. We wrote about that too. We were glad that the authorities of the Chechen Republic were using information provided by Human Rights activists, including Memorial, in their fight against torture in the ORB.

When there is something positive to communicate, we never keep it a secret, we are happy about any positive changes. Didn't we write that Grozny has been reconstructed? A great job has been done in reconstructing Grozny, as well as many other cities and villages of the Republic which had been

destroyed. However, when negative changes are obvious, we don't have the right to conceal this information. When the number of abduction and torture cases once again peaked in 2008-2009, we saw that things were returning to the way they were, to the use of illegal methods in the "fight against terrorism", and we wrote about that. And when all the blame is placed on the relatives of the members of Illegal Armed Groups, when there houses are burned down, how can we keep silent?

Some people want us to be a mirror, that reflects only the good. Authorities that use illegal methods always want to drape or shatter an honest mirror that reflects everything. Regarding the work of Free Mobile Groups, I simply do not understand what exactly Mr. Nukhazhiev is complaining about.

He said that the methods that these groups use, when they ride around on vehicles fit with special equipment are rather espionage-like.

Is it bad if people have a surveillance camera in their office or their car? Is it illegal? And what does espionage have to do with it? It is a standard security measure: every person that comes to the office is recorded - when and who came. Or who drove off in a car. The work of our colleagues is completely legal, strictly within the boundaries of the law, just like in other regions of Russia. This is the so-called switched-on supervision, when employees not only monitor and describe a situation from the outside, but also represent the interests of the aggrieved parties in criminal case and cases of abduction. In essence, this gives them the legal opportunity to participate in the investigation of said crimes. They are very good lawyers. In the framework of the established legal procedure they enter motions, requests, demands to conduct certain investigative activities. Then they monitor whether anything is

done.

According to Igor Kalapin, Coordinator of an FMG and Head of the Nizhny Novgorod Committee against torture, the investigator for particularly important cases always gets very frightened when he receives a motion to interrogate a junior member of the patrol regiment named after Kadyrov. "He will not come to see me" - he says. "How can that be?" - Kalapin protests. - That is impossible, there are laws that have to be respected!" - "Well, yeah.... If I insist, he will come. Then I will get beaten up." That is the situation with their legal system. This case, just like every other testimony of FMG colleagues, is documented, there is no room for empty assumptions in their work. So what is there to complain about?

Chechen state officials, and the Ombudsman in particular, insist that the main aim of FMG is not to help those, whose rights have been violated, but to earn money. They believe that "the soul of these people cannot ache for Chechens as much as ours."

First of all, what money? To be frank, I am at a loss. What can they earn there? They selflessly go there and provide assistance to the population or free. And why can't their soul ache? What a strange idea! Does that mean that Russians should protect Russians, and Chechens should protect Chechens? Perhaps, that is how the Ombudsman thinks, however, human rights activists have a completely different approach. Otherwise, in the horrifying years of the Chechen war, when Grozny was almost completely destroyed, we would not have set foot in there. We would have stayed in Moscow and out of there. But we were there! And the Memorial office was opened in Grozny in 2000, when hostilities were practically still ongoing and Grozny lay in ruins. The Chechens, Russians and Ingush all worked there together



Back then we already started dealing with crimes committed by army officers - just take a look at the cases, that we have submitted to the European Court of Human Rights. Most of the cases that we have won up to date, concern precisely the crimes committed by the federal forces. As an example, the name Shamanov is absolutely horrifying to Chechnya, where his people have committed many bloody atrocities there. We were involved in the Budanov case. As well as the case of policeman Lapin (on the abduction and murder of Murdalov). We must also remember the Oktabrskiy Regional Department of Internal Affairs - the terrifying Khanty-Mansiysk police unit. And the cleanup operation on Aldy in early 2000, which we dedicated one of our first reports on the events of the second Chechen war. In the end, thanks to the efforts of our lawyers, the citizens of this village won their case in the European Court.

Cases that are won there are not just and not so much about the financial compensations to the victims. More importantly, all of this is now documented and no one can deny that these

massive crimes in fact took place. It is a legal decision. And I hope that all of this will later be used in the work of some serious big tribunal on massive crimes committed in the Chechen Republic. Unfortunately, it is not that easy for us to prove the guilt of certain people, to put someone in prison or even to get recognition from the court that there is a particular culprit behind each tragedy. However, sometimes it happens. And all of this is done mostly by Human Rights activists, not all of them from Russia, by the way. There is a Human Rights Internationale, and I am sure that our colleagues from Chechen regional organizations would also confirm that it exists. We help each other. The pain and horror of the citizens of Chechnya is our pain as well. As I am sure that Chechen Human Rights activists cannot stay indifferent to the pain of people from other regions and other countries. We all strive to help each other.

Coming back to the issue of FMGs, I would like to draw your attention to two very important documents, which have been made public recently, thanks to their work. These documents are a great portrayal of the legal system that exists in the Chechen Republic. In April of this year several Human Rights organizations - The Committee Against Torture, Memorial, the Moscow Helsinki Group, Human Rights Watch and the Committee Civil Assistance referred to these documents in their appeal to the President of Russia, in which they demanded that urgent measures be taken in order to ensure the rule of law on the territory of the Chechen Republic.

The first document is dated August 2010. It is a letter sent by the Head of the Investigative Division of the Investigative Committee under the Prosecutor's Office RF in the territory of Chechnya, Mr. Ledenev, to the Minister of the Interior of the Republic, Mr. Alkhanov. Human Rights Activists got a copy of it, when they, as representatives

of the victims, were getting acquainted with the materials of one of many criminal cases.

In the letter Mr. Ledenev is informing Mr. Alkhanov about the fact that the staff members of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic are sabotaging all orders and instructions given to them by the Investigative Committee. He is referring specifically to abduction cases. He gives many examples of instances when inquiries or instructions are sent to the MoI, however, not only is nothing done, they do not even receive any response. How can that even happen?! An investigator of especially important matters sends a request to the relevant MoI Department, and he is not even dignified with an answer!

Ledenev wrote, that the indicated facts testify to the low level of organization of work and very formal attitude of the staff of the MoI of Chechnya to the completion of instructions given by investigators of the Investigative Committee. And this has a negative affect on the investigation of grave and very grave crimes.

The second letter, date March of this year, was sent to Igor Kalapin by the Deputy Prosecutor of the Chechen Republic.

In this letter Khabarov practically admits the helplessness of the bodies of the Prosecutor's Office and Investigative Committee when working on cases of abduction in Chechnya: "The investigative authorities do not undertake in due time necessary urgent investigative measures, necessary cooperation with operative services is not properly organized with the aim of solving crime, institutional control over the investigation of criminal cases is practically not carried out by the management of the Investigative Committee. <...> Persons guilty of allowing the violation of the law and ineffective investigation are not brought to justice. There are known facts about the covering up of abduc-

tion-related crimes by the staff of the Investigative division of the Investigative Commission of RF in the Republic. <...> As a result of the untimely opening of criminal cases, as well as the and inactive attitude of the investigators, the culprits hide from justice, and the location of the injured party is not determined." And so on and so forth.

These two letters demonstrate that the situation in reality is even worse than what has been described by Human Rights Activists. It's not that the legal system is not working properly, in the Chechen Republic it is simply dead. It would be interesting to hear how Mr. Nukhazhiev would comment on these documents.

I cannot help but ask you about the investigation of the murder of Natasha Estimirova. Have there been any developments?

We do not have enough information about it. We have not been acquainted with the materials of the criminal case. The lawyer representing the interests of Natasha's relatives, who were recognized as the injured party, requested to get access to at least part of the materials, however he was refused. He filed an appeal, however that did not bring any results. Since the refusal was confirmed through a court decision, it gave him the right to go to the European Court and file a complaint on ineffective investigation.

As far as we understand, at first the work of the investigative group was carried out quite actively and in various directions, in particular those related to the statements that had been made lately by Natasha: about unlawful execution without trial, abduction, torture, destruction of the houses of militants. All of these crimes had been committed by the law-enforcement authorities. The investigators got a lot of information from us on this issue, we were interrogated, confiscated copies of our documents and our correspondence

with the agencies of the Prosecutor's office. Of course there were other directions in the investigation, connected to the version, that the murder was committed by the militants. All possible versions must be thoroughly examined, including the version that high-ranking officials of the Republic were directly involved, - I have mentioned this numerous times in court.

Coming back to the issue of FMGs, I would like to draw your attention to two very important documents, which have been made public recently, thanks to their work. These documents are a great portrayal of the legal system that exists in the Chechen Republic. In April of this year several Human Rights organizations - The Committee Against Torture, "Memorial", the Moscow Helsinki Group, "Human Rights Watch" and "Civil referred to these document in their appeal to the President of Russia, in which they demanded that urgent measures be taken in order to ensure the rule of law on the territory of the Chechen Republic.

The first document is dated August 2010. It is a letter sent by the Head of the Investigative Division of the Investigative Committee under the Prosecutor's Office RF in the territory of Chechnya, Mr. Ledenev, to the Minister of the Interior of the Republic, Mr. Alkhanov. Human Rights Activists got a copy of it, when they, as representatives of the victims, were getting acquainted with the materials of one of many criminal cases.

In the letter Mr. Ledenev is informing Mr. Alkhanov about the fact that the staff members of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic are sabotaging all orders and instructions given to them by the Investigative Committee. He is referring specifically to abduction cases. He gives many examples of instances when inquiries or instruc-

tions are sent to the MoI, however, not only is nothing done, they do not even receive any response. How can that even happen?! An investigator of especially important matters sends a request to the relevant MoI Department, and he is not even dignified with an answer!

Ledenev wrote, that the indicated facts testify to the low level of organization of work and very formal attitude of the staff of the MoI of Chechnya to the completion of instructions given by investigators of the Investigative Committee. And this has a negative affect on the investigation of grave and very grave crimes.

The second letter, date March of this year, was sent to Igor Kalapin by the Deputy Prosecutor of the Chechen Republic.

In this letter Khabarov practically admits the helplessness of the bodies of the Prosecutor's Office and Investigative Committee when working on cases of abduction in Chechnya: "The investigative authorities do not undertake in due time necessary urgent investigative measures, necessary cooperation with operative services is not properly organized with the aim of solving crime, institutional control over the investigation of criminal cases is practically not carried out by the management of the Investigative Committee. <...> Persons guilty of allowing the violation of the law and un effective investigation are not brought to justice. There are known facts about the covering up of abduction-related crimes by the staff of the Investigative division of the Investigative Commission of RF in the Republic. <...> As a result of the untimely opening of criminal cases, as well as the and inactive attitude of the investigators, the culprits hide from justice, and the location of the injured party is not determined." And so on and so forth.

These two letters demonstrate that the situation in reality is even worse

than what has been described by Human Rights Activists. It's not that the legal system is not working properly, in the Chechen Republic it is simply dead. It would be interesting to hear how Mr. Nukhazhiev would comment on these documents.

I cannot help but ask you about the investigation of the murder of Natasha Estimirova. Have there been any developments?

We do not have enough information about it. We have not been acquainted with the materials of the criminal case. The lawyer representing the interests of Natasha's relatives, who were recognized as the injured party, requested to get access to at least part of the materials, however he was refused. He filed an appeal, however that did not bring any results. Since the refusal was confirmed through a court decision, it gave him the right to go to the European Court and file a complaint on ineffective investigation.



As far as we understand, at first the work of the investigative group was carried out quite actively and in various directions, in particular those related to the statements that had been made lately by Natasha: about unlawful execution without trial, abduction, torture, destruction of the houses of militants. All of these crimes had been committed by the law-enforcement authorities. The investigators got a lot of information from us on this issue, we were interrogated, confiscated copies of our documents and our correspondence with the agencies of the Prosecutor's office. Of course there were other directions in the investigation, connected to the version, that the murder was committed by the militants. All possible versions must be thoroughly examined, including the version that high-ranking officials of the Republic were directly involved, - I have mentioned this numerous times in court.

- At first everything seemed to be going fine: different versions are being investigated. But at some point they started to concentrate only on one version - about the involvement of militants. It was chosen as the main one. Then the information leaks began, which were meant to create the impression that the case is practically solved, the militants have already been found, the name of Alkhazur Bashaev started to be repeated more and frequently. We had doubts about whether this version was true. That is exactly why we wanted to find out how the other versions are being checked and explored. However, we were refused access to this information. I our opinion, until all versions have been thoroughly examined, one cannot not talk about an efficient investigation.

Thus, I do not know which direction the investigation is now heading. However, a year ago, on the eve of the anniversary of Natasha's murder we held a press-conference, during which we challenged, I believe rightfully, the version about the involvement of mili-

tants, at least in the way that it became known thanks to the information leak. We believed that it does not stand up to criticism. In particular, we cannot comprehend such childish games: the gun from which Natasha was shot, is found in a special hiding place thanks to the work of the FSB, the fake photograph ID of the murderer is discovered in the same place?! So it turns out that the person in the picture is the one who committed this scandalous murder, he did not get rid of the gun and then hid it together with his ID so that there would be no confusion? That is a bit ridiculous. The only thing missing, as Svetlana Gannushkina rightfully pointed out, is that he write and sign an honest confession, and leave it next to the gun and ID.

After we presented a series of serious arguments based on facts, this version died down. There were no new information leaks and we kept waiting for the investigators to announce that the crime has been solved, but no. Nothing has changed. We do not know whether they have completely abandoned this version or not. However, the fact that they refuse to acquaint us with materials of the criminal case gives us reason to believe that they do have something to hide.

What work is "Memorial" carrying out in Chechnya today?

Practically the same as before. We gather and publish information available to us about the violations of Human Rights. All of the information is posted on our website, recently, for example, we have published information on the abduction of another person in Chechnya. We provide legal assistance to people - not only with criminal, but also civil cases and housing problems. In Grozny the later is a very acute issue - as the result of wars, changes of power, flight and return of citizens has resulted in the fact that people often don't have documents of title for their apartments, or several

families have such documents for the same property. This gives rise to very complicated cases, with which we provide assistance and support.

We also continue working with the applications to the European Court, including applications related to old cases. Another case has been won in the European Court - on the death of people in the Katyr-Yurt Village. The incident occurred in early 2000, during a military operation with the code name "Wolf Hunt". The federals let the militants out of the besieged Grozny, they passed through a special corridor, which had been opened in advance, they ran into mine fields and were shelled and then our generals, including Mr. Shamanov, declared the complete defeat of the enemy. They failed to mention only one thing - that this wonderful "corridor" for the militants went through populated areas and settlements. At first they passed through Alkhan-Kala, then other settlements and finally Katyr-Yurt. All of these settlements were populated, Katyr-Yurt was even declared a safety zone, which received a great number of refugees. As soon as the militants reached these settlements they were shelled, bombarded, both militants and civilian were killed. This was practically done by the generals, who managed to lure the militants out of Grozny using such a cunning technique.

So, one of our first cases was related to the events of Katyr-Yurt. We won that case. It was one of the first three cases of Chechen nationals, considered by European Court. "Memorial" represented the interests of the victims. However, there were many other families in Katyr-Yurt, who had suffered from that incident and who did not submit applications to the Court. Our lawyers, first and foremost our leading specialist on the European Court in the Chechen Republic Dokka Itslaev, helped the those victims also submit their applications. Back then, in 2000, they could not have done it, because



first they had to exhaust all of the possibilities provided for at national level. Basing on future work on that first Court ruling, we achieved the reinitiating of the investigation of the criminal case, in the framework of which we demanded that they interrogate the people who did not submit their complaints right away.

Naturally, this criminal case also ended with nothing. No culprits were found. The authorities once again stated that the military forces had acted within the framework of the established order. However, this allowed the victims who had kept silent before, to submit their applications. In the end, this case was won, and the compensation that Russia has to pay to the plaintiffs turned out to be the largest one yet.

What is your opinion on the situation with human rights viola-

tions in other regions of the Northern Caucasus?

It depends. We have said before that the methods that Russia uses in the Northern Caucasus within the framework of the counterterrorist regime is basically state terror, unlawfully justified by the fight against terrorism. However, it has the opposite effect and leads to the development of extremism and to the growth of the support of terrorists from the population.. The military opposition has spread all over the Northern Caucasus.

In Dagestan the situation is very worrisome. Our last report was on Dagestan. Upon our initiative a round table with the participation of the President of the Republic took place on June 1-2 - that is in reference to our cooperation with the authorities: we are always open and willing to interact. The round table was held under the

auspices of the Human Rights Council under the President RF. Among many other issues discussed, was the problem of how human rights should be respected during counter-terrorist operations. The recent events in Dagestan give the impression that the Ministry of Interior is trying to provoke a civil war. Massive beatings of the representatives of the Salafite community, who were arrested right inside a mosque is exactly the same as what had happened in Kabardino-Balkaria on the eve of the bloody events of 2005. They burned their fingers so badly there! Why commit the same mistake twice? Back then law-enforcement officers grabbed civilians, beat them up, shaved their beards off and shaved crosses on the backs of their heads. The Dagestani Ministry of Interior is acting in a similar way/ It is criminal and stupid. We hope that the authorities of

Dagestan, who tend to say all of the right words, understand the harmfulness of such an approach. I would very much like to believe that together we will somehow manage to improve the situation.

In Ingushetia the number of assaults and terrorist attacks, which killed people, including military and police officers has significantly decreased over the past year. The significant improvement of the situation is obvious. Good work of the law-enforcement agencies, the elimination of Said Buratsky, and

ist opposition has significantly less followers in Kabardino-Balkaria and the support of their activities from the population is not that strong. We were quite alarmed by the appearance of the so-called "Black Hawks".* I hope that this proposal will be nothing more than somebody's stupid imaginary idea. Whoever is behind this project - the Ministry of Interior, the FSB or just common criminals, - any attempt to turn this idea into reality would lead to very dangerous consequences.

We have said before that the methods that Russia uses in the Northern Caucasus within the framework of the counterterrorist regime is basically state terror, unlawfully justified by the fight against terrorism. However, it has the opposite effect and leads to the development of extremism and to the growth of the support of terrorists from the population.

the capturing of "Magas" (nickname of the militant Ali Taziev, arrested by the secret services during a special operation at the beginning of June 2010 in his home village Nasyr-Kort in Ingushetia - remark by "DOSH") all contributed to this improvement. However, those were not the only reasons. The political course of Evkurov differs greatly from the political course of Zazikov. And the political course that he declared, his interaction with the public, his readiness to hold a dialogue - not threats, but rational conversations with families of militants, this political course is also paying off.

Kabardino-Balkaria is a different story. There we are witnessing a drastic increase in the number of assaults and extremism. Despite the fact that it seems as though a major part of their armed opposition has been destroyed in the course of special operations. We'll wait and see how it develops. However, the situation there is drastically different from the one in Dagestan. As far as we know, the terror-

The trial against you on the slander charges pressed against you by the Head of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov is coming to an end. What do you believe will be its outcome?

My attitude towards this trial is twofold. The very fact that this accusation is being reviewed in court is nothing more than an attempt to violate the freedom of speech. Its purpose is not just to put pressure on me, but also to teach everybody else a lesson. I know, that with some people it worked. Before saying something they started thinking, and not about whether they are violating the law or not, but rather assessing how dangerous it would be to express their opinion on a given issue. From this point of view that affect of the trial is negative.

However, there is a positive side to it as well. The trial is giving us an opportunity to express to the public in a very consistent and coherent way our evaluation of the situation in Chechnya, of the death of its legal system, of the

responsibility of Kadyrov for the negative human rights situation in the Republic. The court is an additional platform. Everything that happens there is posted on our website. Anyone can read it, compare the different opinions. And then, every objective, attentive reader will come to the same conclusion: the truth is on our side.

Concerning my forecast about the outcome of the trial, I believe, that the verdict will be "guilty". Not because I am guilty, I have not committed any crime, and any respectful legal scientist would agree with that. More than that, I believe that we were able to prove my innocence in the course of the trial. But the case is political in nature. That is why, no matter what happens in court, the verdict has probably already been decided upon. Although I do not think that the punishment will be very severe, that would look completely ridiculous and cause a scandal. Therefore, the punishment probably won't include the deprivation of liberty. However, anything is possible.

P. S.

While the journal was being prepared for printing, on June 14, at the Khamovnicheksy court of Moscow, a lengthy trial had come to an end, in which the President of Chechnya Ramzan Kadyrov had charged the head of the Human Rights Center "Memorial" Oleg Orlov with slander for the statement, in which the head of "Memorial" placed the blame for the murder of Natalia Estimirova on Kadyrov.

Judge Morozova ruled "not guilty", which means that "the guilt of the defendant has not been supported by the materials and documents of the case."

ABDULLA DUDUEV WITH WHOM DOES THE TRUTH LIE?

After the publication of the interview with the Ombudsman of the Chechen Republic in the previous issue ("DOSH" №1(31)2011), our editor's office received a lot of different comments from our readers to the issues raised by Nukhazhiev, in particular, on the work of Human Rights organizations in Chechnya.

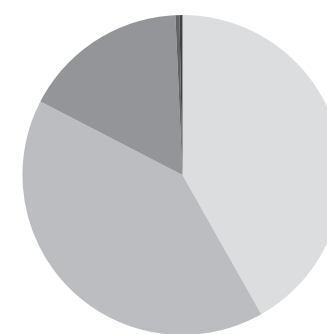
Upon the proposal of several readers the editor's office together with the volunteers of the Inter-regional NGO "Center of Caucasian Initiative" conducted a social survey - an opinion poll, aimed at determining what human rights organizations are really known by the Chechen population. In May-June, by the way of representative sampling 2000 people had been surveyed in different cities and districts of the Republic. The respondents were asked the following questions: Which human rights organizations do you know? And to which one would you turn to for help if your rights had been violated? We got the following answers to our questions:

We did not provide the respondents with variants of possible answers, all of them originated exclusively from the respondents.

It must be noted that: given that over two hundred NGOs, carrying out their activities in Chechnya (around twenty of them call themselves human rights activists) are registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic, an absolute majority of the respondents do not see the difference between the authorities, law-enforcement agencies and NGOs, a fact, which testifies to the very low efficiency of their work.

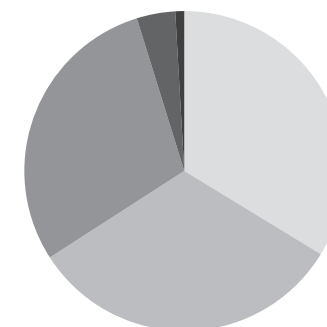
The reasons for this are different: starting with the political course of the authorities, which fosters a negative reaction within the people to any initiative that is not coming from them, and ending with the great number of accidental and often even dishonorable people working in the human rights sector, who undermine the very essence of human rights activism, this selfless act in the name of providing assistance to those in need.

Which human rights organizations working in the Chechen Republic do you know?



- 1 "Memorial" - 41,8 %
- 2 Apparatus of the Ombudsman of Chechnya - 16,7 %
- 3 Ministry of Interior - 0,3%
- 4 Prosecutor's Office - 0,4%
- 5 Do not know any - 40,8%

Whom would you turn to for help, if your rights had been violated?



- 1 To "Memorial" - 33,7%
- 2 To the Apparatus of the Ombudsman of Chechnya - 3,9%
- 3 To the Oil-regiment named after A.-Kh. Kadyrov - 0,9%
- 4 To relatives - 29,3%
- 5 To nobody in the Chechen Republic - 32,2%

Commentary

Taus SERGANOVA



The Editorial office of "DOSH" offered that I participate in the conducting of an opinion poll on the activities carried out by Human Rights organizations in the Chechen Republic. I have received requests to comment on various so-called newsbreaks before. Unfortunately, very often such newsbreaks are associated with tragic events, while others, independent of a concrete situation, logically ensue from the violation or complete ignore of the rights of citizens by state, defense and law enforcement officials both inside the Chechen Republic and beyond its boundaries.

I'd like to start with the results of the poll, which was conducted among students (200 respondents): 97% answered that they do not know any Human Rights organizations and would not appeal to any of them for help in case of necessity. 1,3% named "Memorial", 1,7% - named the "Oil Regiment", the "Anti-terrorist Center", the police. It became clear from this poll, that the respondents do not know the difference between NGOs and government institutions.

* The so-called counter-terrorist group called "Black Hawks", declared their existence after February 18, when a group of militants attacked tourists from Moscow in the region near Mt. Elbrus. As a result of the attack, three people died, two more were wounded.

On March 1, a masked representative of this group made a statement on the TV channel REN, in which he declared in a distorted voice, that his group was intent on battling militants in Kabardino-Balkaria, by using their criminal ways.

The results are very sad, however, not unexpected. In my opinion, they can be explained by the way that the situation in the Chechen Republic had changed: the beginning of the second military campaign, the beginning of the reconstruction of the infrastructure and the evolution of the different spheres of livelihood in the recent years.

There is a tendency in the world: the less rights and freedoms exist in a given place, the greater the number of Human Rights organizations that carry out their activities there (or at least of those who claim to do so). That is what happened in the Chechen Republic. Prior to 2006 famous international and Russian organizations actively worked in Chechnya; here most of the human rights violations were related to the punitive actions of the Federal defense and law enforcement agencies. The most noticeable was the work of the Human rights Center "Memorial", although many other organizations had already been registered in the Republic at the time.

Having worked a sufficient amount of time at the "Lam" Center of research and popularization of Chechen Traditional Culture, I can say that NGOs, including those on human rights, are very different. Among them exist organizations, which justify their title and do all that is in their power in order to reach the objective that they have declared. They have done a lot to widely publicize the fact of massive violations of Human rights in Chechnya and have provided people with real legal and financial assistance. Instead of reacting to their multiple signals and direct appeals, the Russian authorities have done everything to undermine their credibility and ruin their reputation.

However there have been other organizations as well, which did not carry out humanitarian activities as such, but let their members travel all over Russia as well as other states, and turned their nominally existing "Committees" into a good pastime,

financed by grants from foreign funds, while creating an image for themselves of those who had unveiled the identity of criminals. Such "doves of peace" have now settled down in various European countries (I'm not speaking of those, who were forced to leave because they were persecuted), or have built themselves a pretty comfortable livelihood in Chechnya, right next to those, who are responsible for the violation of the rights that they had fought for. It is because of such organizations that a general distrust of all Human rights activities exists in Russia.

With deep regret I have to admit that for such "fighters" the protection of human rights has long become a business. This had already been noted by the widow of Academician A.D. Sakharov Elena Bonner at the International Human Rights Congress in Moscow back in 2000.

It was not for money that in 1968 dozens of people went out onto the Red Square to protest against the bringing of troops into Czechoslovakia. It was not for prizes and awards that A.D. Sakharov protested against the war in Afghanistan and the death of thousands of Soviet soldiers there. It was not for future benefits and high positions that Natalia Estimirova carried out her humanitarian work. It was not for gratitude that the members of the "Lam" center had helped the humiliated and rightless refugees in Ingushetia and citizens of Chechnya in the most dangerous of times, at the beginning of the 2000s. The center had been created as an organization, the work of which was aimed at preserving the cultural heritage of the Chechen nation. I can continue with many more examples.

Human rights activists are very special people. They are characterized by a very high level of compassion, and it must be said that they are quite rare. Otherwise, a majority never would have let a minority deprive them of their rights, humiliate and destroy them. Once you take on such a mean-

ingful title, you have to deprive yourself of many things and take on a lot of risks. In the name of the principles and beliefs, which had made them choose this profession, many of them sacrifice their health, their freedom, their own lives and the lives of their loved ones.

It has already been mentioned, that those who are 17-25 years old know nothing about human rights organizations in Chechnya. One might rejoice at such ignorance, imagining a situation of all-Chechen equality before the law and its rigorous enforcement on a given territory. However, using filological terms, the context suggests other reasons for such ignorance. The youth, even its most active and intelligent part - students - believe the violation of their rights to be a natural, settled rule. They do not believe, they do not even allow themselves to suppose that anyone or anything can contradict this settled rule.

If any of them actually will seek assistance (1,7 %) it will be done through such security and law enforcement structures as the "Oil Regiment", the "ATC", the "Police", where they have either acquaintances of relatives. The younger generation has already learned the rules of the game: If such a problem needs to be solved, one must find the "right people", "reach an arrangement with those who can help." The main questions, asked in these kind of situations are not "why?", "what for?", "by what right?". The question "how much?" is a lot more relevant in Russia, then the eternal "Who is to be blamed?" and "what is to be done?".

If we are to accept the inevitable fact that in 20-30 years time the representatives of this generation will naturally become the leaders of the Republic, then we have nothing else to expect but a rather pragmatic, even cynical system of power, which does not believe in the rights and freedoms of the people and does not abide by the laws. Those very laws, lie at the basis of any civilized society. Because their elders also somehow did without...

During one of the trial hearings, the lawyer of the parents of Anastasia Baburova read out the threats that he had received. In a very rude and coarse manner the anonymous persons threatened to send him "down the same road as Markelov". A smug smile appeared on the faces of Tikhonov and Khasis at this moment, they could not and did not want to contain their joy.



ELENA SANNIKOVA FIGHTERS OF "DIRECT INFLUENCE"

The intense, dramatic trial for the murder of Stanislav Markelov and Anastasia Baburova lasted for over two months at the Moscow City Court. The jury found the defendants guilty.

The murder was committed in the center of Moscow, near the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, around Prechistinka street 1, during daytime on January 19, 2009. Stanislav Markelov was coming back from a press conference, which took place at the Independent press center. A few days prior to that colonel Budanov had been released on parole from a colony in the Ulyanovskaya district. Markelov, as the lawyer of the Kungaev family, actively opposed his release and insisted that the court accept his application for the revision of his parole decision. The press-conference had been dedicated precisely to that. Anastasia Baburova, a journalist, was planning to write an article on the subject. Stanislav Markelov was shot in the head at close range and died instantly. Anastasia Baburova died later that day at the First Grdskaya hospital as a result of a shot wound to the head.

The murderer disappeared unhampered from the scene of the crime. The security cameras of the metro station "Kropotkinskaya" recorded him, as he entered, by the ticket gate, on the station and then on the transfer from the "Biblioteka im. Lenina" station to the "Borovitskaya" station.

Previous press-conferences, held by Markelov at the Independent press-center in October - December 2008 concerned the topic of neo-Nazism in Russia. During this period of time he received a lot of sms messages, threatening his life. Anastasia Baburova also started receiving threats after she published her articles on neo-Nazism in the "Novaya Gazeta" Newspaper, with references to presentations made by Markelov.

On October 3, 2009 civil partners Nikita Tikhonov and Evgenia Khasis, were arrested in an apartment that they were renting in the North-western part of Moscow. During the search of their apartment, the police found weapons, ammunition, explosives, items of camouflage and fake IDs. Upon the arrival

of the unwanted guests Tikhonov tried to take out his gun, but was stopped. Nazi books and program documents of the rightist radicals were also confiscated from the young couple.

Nikita Tikhonov is a graduate of the History faculty of the Moscow State University and founder of the journal "Russian Character" (in 2003). A few years later a nationalistic organization of the same name was created, which Tikhonov insists he had nothing to do with. It was expected that Ilya Gorachev, the leader of the "Russian Character" would testify at the trial as one of the main witnesses of the prosecution, however, he left the country, explaining to some that he is being threatened by neo-Nazis, and to others - that he is being pressurized by the FSB. During the His testimony during the pre-trial investigation, as well as the video of his interrogations, in which he testified that Tikhonov had confessed to the murder of Markelov and Baburova were played during the trial.

Evgenia Khasis, a manager of a trading firm, was one of the activists of the

"Russian Verdict", an organization, which helped certain people, who had committed nationalism-related crimes, including murder of people, whose nationality or beliefs were not appreciated by the "heroes" (that is what such people are called in the environment of Tikhonov and Khasis). One day before the murder of Stanislav Markelov, Evgenia Khasis had travelled to a place of deprivation of liberty, in order to visit Vasilii Reutsky, convicted in the "Rukhin case", which should be told about separately.

On April 16, 2006 six nationalists attacked Alexander Rukhin and Egor Tomsy, who were going to an anti-fascist concert. Rukhin was killed with a stab to the heart, Tomsy was injured. The three attackers (including Reutsky) were found and convicted of "hooliganism". In court the interest of the injured party were represented by Stanislav Markelov. Among the neo-Nazis, who sympathised with the defendants and were present at the trial was Evgenia Khasis. In an interview various statements Stanislav Markelov spoke of the unlawfulness of separating the murder of Rukhin and the hooligan attack committed by the defendants into two different cases. Evgenia Khasis saw how eager Markelov was in his attempts to get them convicted for a graver crime. Nikita Tikhonov and his friend Alexander Parinov were put on the wanted list as suspects in the Rukhin murder case.

That is why Nikita Tikhonov had to live illegally, with fake documents. Two passports were found during his arrest: one to the name of Andrey Tarasov, the other - Valeri Komarov.

During the first days of his arrest Tikhonov confessed to the murder of Stanislav Markelov and Anastasia Baburova. He told in detail, how and why he had committed this crime and reenacted all of his actions at the scene of the crime. Two months later he withdrew his testimony. Evgenia Khasis flat-



On the photograph from left to right: lawyer Leila Khamzaeva, Humab rights activist Ludmila Alekseeva, lawyer Abdulla Khamzaev, Human rights activist Svetlana Gannushkina and lawyer Stanislav Markelov.

ly denied her guilt from the very beginning and up until the end.

Among the texts found on the USB devices, which belonged to Tikhonov and Khasis, were the program documents of the BORN (Battle Organization of Russian Nationalists). One of them - "the Strategy 2020"- contains the definition of the "direct action" program, which is based on the total elimination of "occupants and traitors".

The term "occupants" obviously stands for non-Russians, mostly gastarbeiters. The term "traitors" - the opponents of Nazism, such as Stanislav Markelov.

Among the texts, read out by the prosecutors during the trial, one of the most impressive quotations was the following:

"I shall now examine more thoroughly the notion of human targets, the obituaries of whom would serve as a great decoration to the morning press.... Since we are on the topic of court trials, we must mention such an important figure as the advocate. Many of our guys have been convicted because of the active efforts of the advocates of the injured beasts. By coming to a court trial, you can easily draw the faces, write down the names and license plate numbers of those, who are responsible for convincing

your friends. It is completely irrelevant who these activists are by blood. If they are Russian, the punishment for their betrayal of the interest of our nation should be even tougher. However, the meaning of working with these targets is not so much avenging your comrades, but rather intimidating their colleagues, so that certain people do not get the urge to work as experts or lawyers in trials against rightist radicals."

During one of the trial hearings, the lawyer of the parents of Anastasia Baburova read out the threats that he had received. In a very rude and coarse manner the anonymous persons threatened to send him "down the same road as Markelov". A smug smile appeared on the faces of Tikhonov and Khasis at this moment, they could not and did not want to contain their joy.

Notepads, full of notes scribbled in Tikhonov's handwriting, contained instructions of how to shoot through glass, which parts of the head to kick in order to cause a quicke death, how best to disappear from the scene of the crime, how to look and act in order to get lost in the crowd.

Nevertheless, during the trial the defendants denied their participation in the BORN. The prosecutors tried to refute this. For example, prosecutor Loktionov spoke of the flash card from

a mobile phone, found in the cosmetics bag of Khasis, which contained the photograph of the head of an Uzbek national, which had been left by the building of the Moscow Mozhaisky region municipal council on December 8, 2008. At the time BORN made a statement accepting the responsibility for this crime. The Prosecutor insisted that the photograph on the flash card belonging to Khasis, got there before it had appeared on the internet.

The defendant was aware of this event, he even corrected the prosecutors, who had confused the Mozhaisky region with the City of Mozhaisk. However, he claimed that he learned of this event from the Internet. Judge Zamashnuk did not allow the picture to be shown to the jury for ethical reasons.

Tikhonov and Khasis told the court that they had become friends and started living as husband and wife a few months after the murder of Markelov and Baburova. They had barely known each other prior to that and could not have committed any common actions. However, at the last court hearing the prosecutors presented Khasis' telephone bills of, which showed that during the entire defined time period of the crime, i.e. from October 2008, Khasis had been located twenty-four-seven in the exact same place on the Kashirskaya Highway as the apartment rented by Tikhonov. That is precisely the same spot from which, around three hours after the murder. During the trial, the prosecutors had asked Khasis several times, whether she had ever been to that part of the city. She responded, that she had passed through there on her way to Vidnoe, to the firm of her relatives. On January 19, 2009 she had been looking for a room to rent there. However, no phonecalls from Vidnoe had been found on her phone bill. After the demonstratation of these print-outs, Khasis became very nervous and started to chatter, that she had often spent the night there at a girl-

friend's house, who later left to Holland, however, this did not seem at all like the truth.

Nikita Tikhonov partially admitted his guilt in falsifying documents and keeping weapons. He also admitted that he sold weapons, since, having to live illegally, this was the only way for him to earn money for food and rent an apartment for him and his girlfriend.

However, the investigation did not reveal a single weapons deals closed by Tikhonov. Well, this wasn't even among the charges pressed against him.

Among other weapons found in his apartment during the search, the police found a Browning gun, made in 1910, which, according to his initial testimonies, was the weapon which he used to kill Markelov and Baburova. Later on, the expertise showed that the bullet extracted from the head wound of Stanislav Markelov had indeed been shot from this Browning.

The majority of the jury obviously found this fact to be more convincing than the repeated assertions made by Tikhonov that somebody had given him the Browning to be fixed a few days before his arrest.

The videos shot by the security cameras on Prechistinka and in the metro were demonstrated during the trial. The camera located across from the entrance into Barykovsky pereulok, where Stanislav Markelov was giving his press-conference, recorded a woman, who spent 50 minutes looking at something on the opposite side of the street and left in the direction of the "Kropotkinskaya" metro station precisely in those minutes and seconds when the camera in the house across the street recorded Stanislav Makrkelov and Amastasia Baburova moving in the same direction. Although faces are unidentifiable in these videos, the friends and colleagues of Markelov and Babburova present at the trial, recognized them immediately on screen. Four former colleagues of Khasis indicated that they recognized her in the

video by her manner of conduct.

According to the prosecution, the appearance of Khasis on the opposite side of the street served as a sign to Tikhonov, that he must proceed with the plan.

In his initial testimony during the investigation Tikhonov said that he walked towards Markelov and Baburova, approached them, passed them by, then turned around, followed them and first shot Markelov in the back of the head, then Baburova, who had turned to the noise, after what he fired the control shot at the Markelov.

As the prosecutor was reading this testimony the jury foreman felt sick. He was hospitalized and was not able to return to the next hearing.

In this testimony Tikhonov claimed that he was going to kill only Markelov, that Baburova was murdered by accident, just as an unwanted witness. However, the parents of Anastasia Baburova, who had participated in the trial, testified that their daughter was a prominent figure in the anti-fascist movement and that she was killed on the grounds of ideological hatred.

Upon the motion of the lawyers of the defendants excerpts from protocol of the interrogation of Natalia Estemirova had been read out during the trial. She had been summoned for interrogation at the end of January 2009, when she came to the funeral of Stanislav Markelov. The investigation had certain questions regarding her article in the "Novaya Gazeta" written in his memory. In the article she had quoted the malicious threats that Stas had received on his mobile phone, and suggested that his murder might have something to do with the Budanov case.

Natasha herself was murdered six months after the death of Stanislav Markelov. The lawyers of Tikhonov and Khasis insisted that the murder of Markelov seems to fit in perfectly into the same range as Politkovskaya and Estimirova. It has a Caucasian trace.

Their clients, on the other hand, have been wrongfully accused.

This version had also been considered during the investigators, before they find the traces leading to Tikhonov and Khasis. They had even travelled to Chechnya. Stanislav Markelov had regularly gone on mission to Grozny, worked with Natasha Estimirova, protected the interests of people, who turned for legal assistance to the Grozny office of the Human Rights Center "Memorial". However, in the list of these cases, it is very hard to find one which could serve as the reason for a political assassination. Perhaps only the Lapin, and the evn earlier Budanov cases. However, this version fell through for the lack of supportive evidence.

And yet there is a Caucasian trace in the case of Tikhonov and Khasis. An indirect one. It was precisely the war in Chechnya that gave society such a powerful charge of violence and evil, which practically drove it into the abyss of a civil war. The dominance of misanthropic propaganda in those years had greatly contributed to the development of neonazism in Russia. It is from their, from the outrage committed against Chechnya, that today's endless murders in the Northern Caucasus originate, as well as the bloodshed caused by national and ideological hatred all across Russia.

The Budanov case, which had played a noticeable role in the life of Stanislav Markelov, was mentioned more than once during the trial of Tikhonov and Khasis. Perhaps, partially, it was the reason of his death. It was when he entered this process in the summer of 2002 as the lawyer of the injured party that Markelov received the first serious threats, it was the first time that he himself experienced the blind and ruthless hatred of the neonationalists.

During the Budanov trial I could not grasp the psychology of the people, who call themselves Russian patriots and fiercely defend the colonel on trial.

I thought that on the contrary Budanov was supposed to make them furious, as the person who brought shame onto the Russian army. And it was completely impossible for me to understand their hatred towards the brutally tormented Chechen girl.

Who would have thought that I would see such people up close, ten years later at the trial on the murder of Stanislav Markelov.

Journalist Dmitry Steshin, close friend of the defendant Tikhonov, in his witness testimony told the jury that, first of all, Stanislav Markelov had defended the rights of the "female sniper" Elza Kungaeva, and that, second of all, the relatives of the "female sniper" had shamefully expelled him from the process, and nearly beat him up. This malicious and ridiculous fable was of course told for the sole purpose of tarnishing the memory of Stanislav Markelov.

His lawyer, Alexander Vasiliev also shamelessly called Budanov's victim a "female sniper". Unable to contain myself, I asked him during the break: what basis does he have to call Elza Kungaeva that? He answered my question with one of his own: " And why does the "Nobaya Gazeta" call Tikhonov and Khasis murderers?". He then suggested that I try typing Elza Kungaeva in a search engine. There, you will find the words "female sniper."

"But you are a lawyer!" - I could not hide my surprise.

To that the lawyer told me that he had not read the materials of the Budanov case, had not seen documents, which proved that Elza was not a sniper, and therefore, had the right to call her that, based on Budanov's words I did go to the search engine and found an interesting document - the first confessing testimony of the colonel, where he calls not Elza, but her mother, Rosa Bashaeva, a female sniper.

...I saw Stanislav Markelov for the first time precisely during the press-conference on the Budanov case in the sum-

mer of 2002. Back then he had just entered the process. I remember how happy everybody was that a second lawyer of the injured party appeared in the case, a lawyer who perfectly complimented Abdulla Khamzaev, with a particular strong suit in the precision of judgments and the statements.

Stanislav said, that the trial of Budanov is creating an outrageous precedent in Russian justice, when the motive of vengeance, which had always been treated as an aggravating circumstance, is now considered to be a justification.

" The law and vengeance are to incompatible notions. The only article that can separate them is "or". By choosing vengeance instead of law, we are guilty of precisely what the Russian propaganda has always blamed the Chechens for, when speaking of the institute of blood vengeance and the power of the Shariat", - said Stanislav Markelov.

At that same press-conference Abdulla Khamzaev explained that Budanov did not immediately come up with the theory about the "female sniper" which has become well-know by the public thanks him. During the first six months he claimed that the girl's mother was a female sniper, and he strangled his victim in an attempt to find out where her mother was. (By the way such testimony illustrates the bizarre mental state of the people working at security and law enforcement institutions, when torture leading to death, is not perceived as a grave crime). It was only when the noninvolvement of the Kungaev family in the actions of militants had become completely obvious to the invesotgators, did Budanov come up with the theory that the murdered girl herself was a "female sniper." The Budanov case contains a conclusion of the Military Prosecutor's Office of the Northern Caucasus on the fact that Elza had nothing to with the hostilities. Prosecutor Nazarov stated this during

the trial, although, as was explained by Abdulla Khamzaev and Stanislav Markelov, he was involved in the process more like a lawyer, grabbing at any opportunity to rehabilitate the colonel.

I still have the photographs from that press-conference, in which Abdulla Khamzaev and Stanislav Markelov are sitting side by side. Now that both of the lawyers are dead, there is no sense in remembering what exactly later caused their differences in this process, what did they disagree on and how justified was Khmazaev's anger at Markelov (the fact so inappropriately referred to by Dmitry Steshin at the trial). It is well known, that the Kungaev family was very upset by the disagreement between the two lawyers, and, after Khamzaev's death, they once again asked Markelov to represent them. When Stanislav was murdered, Visa Kungaev told Human Rights activists, that he was grieving his death, as though he had lost another child.

...I met the Kungaev family in early January 2003 at the "Bart" refugee camp in Ingushetia. I remember having doubts, as I approached them, about whether, perhaps, after surviving such a horrible tragedy they might treat Russians with extreme caution. Or that maybe that unnecessary visits burden them?

My doubts were removed almost immediately. The Kungaev family greeted me with such warmth and openness, that I felt like a welcomed guest in their tent. It was quite early, the children were still asleep on bunk beds, only one girl lifted her head and greeted me through her sleep. I was amazed by her beauty.

"At first Budanov had wanted to take her away - her mother told me, - and only when Kheda came running to the scream did he change his mind and grabbed her older sister."

Kheda is Elza's second name, used by her family at home. Visa and Rosa started telling me about what she had been

like at school and at home, how she about how she studied, how she supported them, by helping out with the younger kids. Visa quoted several excerpts from Budanov's testimony about how Elza had allegedly provoked him to kill her by using words, that she could not have even known.

Perhaps because of the lack of warmth in the winter tent (the gas stove was not working too well), or because at that moment I was looking at a large photograph of Elza on the wall, I began to tremble as I listened to Budanov's testimony retold by Elza's father.

However, while talking about the outrageous details of his daughter's murder and about the trial, Elza's father did not express at any moment or in any way even the slightest dislike towards the federals, or even less, towards Russians. On the contrary, with reverence and even warmth he remembered General Gerasimov and the soldiers of the unit that was dispatched in Tangi-Chu before the arrival of Budanov's regiment, the kind-heartedness of some of the military personnel. He spoke with compassion about the army recruits, who are sent to Chechnya to die

Therefore, I could not help being amazed at why this simple Chechen family is hated so much by the pseudo-patriots, that they even had to leave their home village of Tangi-Chu, after receiving massive threats

Certain types of ideologies tend to blind people with hatred, taking away their conscience, compassion and reason. Blindness of the mind in its turn gives space for fantasies to flourish. There are two Budanov cases - the first one is real, it contains a certain amount of volumes, with protocols of testimonies and expertise, which reconstruct the true picture of the tragedy. The second one is fabricated, it is retold time after time, completed by various nonsense about the female sniper, that had taken down half of the regiment,

and about the poor colonel, who had heroically strangled her. I suppose, that the colonel himself no longer needed these tales. All he needed was to do his time as quickly as possible and come back home.

In his initial confession during the investigation Nikita Tikhonov said, that he had chosen the day of the press-conference on the Budanov case for the day of the murder, in order to mislead the investigators. This sounds credible, however the following is even more likely: It is the neo-Nazis that have always treated Colonel Budanov as a hero, and Markelov's opposition to his early realease on parole could have served as yet another reason to kill him.

In essence, Nazism is the blindness of the mind and the perversion of the heart, which allow to glorify a cruel murder, turn a murderer into a hero and hate an absolutely innocent victim.

Perhaps, the Budanov case served as an impulse for the active anti-fascist that Stanislav Markelov took on. As a lawyer he had participated in only one trial against neo-Nazis - protecting the interests of the injured party in the Rukhin case. However, as a human rights activist he had given a great number of interviews on the problems of neo-Nazism in Russia, he raised this topic at conferences, he published articles, and, according to the testimony of the witnesses at the trial for his murder, he had initiated the opening of several criminal cases against neo-Nazis, involved in serial murders.

After becoming a committed anti-fascist, Stanislav Markelov rose against neonazism and fought with all his might, openly, devotedly and fearlessly.

Precisely for that he was killed....

P.S. The recent conference "Anxiety and Hope", dedicated to the 90th Anniversary of Academician Sakharov coincided with the birthday of Stanislav Markelov. The participants paid tribute to his memory with a moment of silence, twice.

He would have turned 37 years old..

ABDULLA DUDUEV PROTECTOR OF THE INNOCENT

Our colleague Zoya Svetova published a book called "To find an innocent person guilty". The emergence of this book is a significant, and to some extent, logical event.

The stories of a young scientist, Igor Sutagin, accused of espionage, and of a young Chechen woman Zara Murtazalieva, who came to the capital for self-realization purposed, and became a victim of the Russian judicial system merely because of her nationality: she was convicted for terrorism, - Zoya Svetova did not only write as a journalist about these stories of the



According to Zoya Svetova, the judges in Russia are the government's soldiers

mangled lives of innocent people, she suffered through them along with their unfortunate heroes. Just like Anna Politkovskaya she felt the pain of others with all her heart and rose in protest against the blatant injustice of the soulless government machine, calmly consuming human fortunes.

Sutagin and Murtazalieva are not the only ones, whose lives Zoya had followed. However, I believe that the tragedy of Zara Murtazalieva particularly affected her. Zoya regularly visits the wrongfully convicted Chechen woman at the Colony in Mordova, where Murtazalieva is serving her sentence, and tries to help her in any possible way, using all of her personal and professional connections and capabilities. In this zealous, active interest lies the essence of the spiritual connection of Zoya and Anna, the girl to whom not without reason, Svetova has dedicated her documentary.

Zoya Svetova is a journalist and Human Rights activist, which is also no coincidence.

"The daughter of legendary dissidents Zoya Krakhmalnikova and Felix Svetov, she had inherited their fearlessness and depth. She writes of things that we refuse to see", - says Victor Shederovich of Zoya Svetova and her book.

This book cannot be read a tremble in the heart. You read it without stopping and you get scared. Scared by the fact that all that is described in the story is catastrophically true, and also

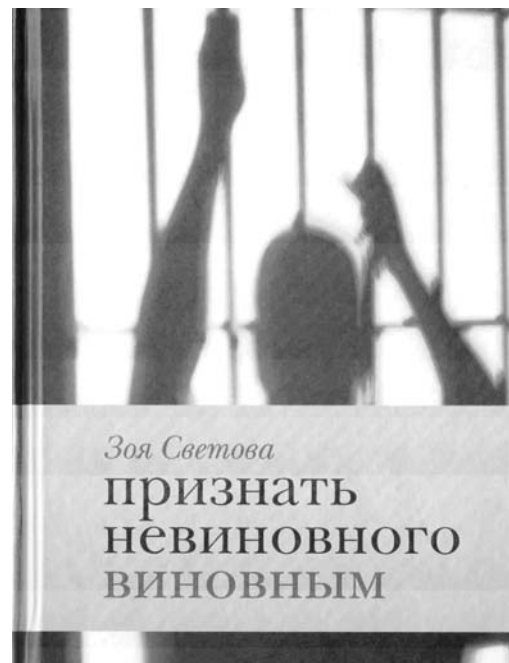
because you cannot rid yourself of the feeling of helplessness. The tragic fate of the heroes of the book can befall on literally any person. Any person, whose sole fault is that he is living in Russia ...

Zoya herself says that she wrote the book because the fates of Sutagin and Murtazalieva had captured her, in them she saw not only human life stories, but also scripts, so full of substance and drama, that they would be more than enough to fill an entire novel, or play, and not just merely a newspaper article.

"A person was accused of espionage, he was tried by a jury, most the members of which were special services personnel. An article and a book are very different. There are some things that I cannot prove and write in the article. I can assume how the jury is formed. However, I cannot put that in an article - I have no proof. There is only knowledge, based on experience, on the fact that I have often been present at court trial as an observer" - Svetova notes.

The main hero of the book is a professional judge, a woman. In the book she is given a different name, however, the prototype for her character was a real female judge, who had conducted many politicized court trials.

"She was the judge at the trials of Sutagin and Murtazalieva. She is a great professional from a legal point of view. And I am sure, that she knew, that these people were innocent. However, she is entrusted with special politicized trials. And I would be very much like to get inside her head in order to compre-



hend why she, who knows before-hand that these people are innocent, still sentences them to significant prison terms. I tried to understand the psychology of this person. I wanted to show that this is a person torn by guilt and her own conscience, who suffers from nightmares. That despite the fact that she is a judge, she is a human being," - Svetova says.

In Svetova's opinion, "in Russia judges - are the soldiers of the authorities. In my book I wanted to show that we do not have an independent judicial system", - Zoya Svetova explains. And

this she managed to do quite convincingly.

Well-known for his uncompromising principles and high level of professionalism, the retired judge Sergey Pashin writes about the book "To find an innocent person guilty: Psychological types and internal reasons behind the actions of the heroes are described with precision and substantial knowledge of court environment".

According to Pashin, the book brings back sad legal memories "and makes you think about the results of the reform of the court system, which I had always

Zoya SVETOVA:

"TO FIND AN INNOCENT PERSON GUILTY".

Chapter Ten. In the country of cons and cops

I asked the passenger car attendant to wake me up at five a.m. at Pot'ma Station. The train was heading further - to Saransk. A cold December morning. The train platform is covered with a thin blanket of snow. It's slippery.

- Do you need a lift?

And here I am, in a car with a local driver Nikolay, who has been living in Potma since he was born.

- There is no other work here. That is why a give rides for money - he confesses. Of course one could always go to work for paramilitary security services. Wouldn't really like to do that. My grandfather and father served in camps. They drank too much and died, never having reached the age of sixty. It is a difficult job.

Nikolay is driving me down the long famous Dubravlag road. How many camps are located here? - he asks and answers himself: Around 18, I believe, maybe more. Or can't remember everything. This is the cops zone, the next one is for foreigners. There are two or three male ones further on. It is only after all of these are passed that you approach Partsa, that is where the female colonies will start. The one in

Yavas is famous, exemplary. Mothers sit there with their babies.

I am cold and I watch the road with anxiety. On the right I see flashes, flashes, flashes. On the left - a forest. My father had often told me how he used to travel to Mordova with his eldest sister to see his mother - my grandmother. That was back in 1939. She was in the camp for the spouses of enemies of the state, and it was also located in Potma. This camp still exists. Now it houses a hospital for prisoners. Right before leaving I was rereading my father's book and remembered his gripping story about a particular visit: "Once my sister and I got onto a train at Kazansky railway station. I only remember the snowflakes falling in the beams coming from the street light, the thumping boots on the doorstep - the riflemen were getting warm, stretching, shaking off the snow, rattling with gunstocks - the house for visits, which we were taken to at night and left there in a separate room"

A mobile phone started ringing. It was Anya Svarovskaya. Her voice rang: "Listen, if you are standing right now, you better sit down quickly, or you'll



On the book presentation

viewed as my life's achievement. It is the truth about Russian injustice, about tailored cases", - notes the retired judge.

Below we publish a chapter from the book, dedicated to Zara Murtazalieva.

fall. I just read on the Internet, that criminal charges have been pressed against Kazbek Mikhailovich for coerced sexual intercourse with his subordinates!"

- What? What? - I couldn't understand what she was talking about. - Who is Kazbek Mikhailovich? What criminal charges?

- He harassed his female wardens, forced them to sleep with him, threatened to fire them. Do you remember him telling us about a pregnant girl he couldn't fire. That's where it's all coming from. What is there not to understand? He will be incarcerated if he doesn't bribe his way out of this situation. And that means that Alexei will once again have a new commandant of the colony. Do you remember how Kazbek had complained to us that being the Head is dangerous, it is a punishable post - Anya screamed into the phone - Where are you?

Finally I understood why she was so agitated. "I am approaching the Partsa settlement. I'm going to visit Fatima Mukhadieva" - I screamed in response and heard her gasp, hundreds of kilometres away from the snowy road of Dubravlag.

- What do all of the people who watch over cons do in their free time? It seems as though there is nothing here, but camps. There are no schools, no movie theaters, no libraries, no stores.



Zara Murtazaliev

- It's true, there are no libraries or movie theaters here - the driver agrees. - However, there are stores in the capital of the regions. A supermarket has recently been opened in Zubova Polyana. Vodka is sold everywhere. So what do they do? Exactly that - they drink vodka.

The ride was pretty long - a whole hour. I got nauseous and feel asleep. In my sleep I suddenly realized that I had forgotten to leave a note for my husband, asking him to go to the parent meeting at our youngest daughter's school. I grabbed my mobile, but then decided not to call - he won't go to the meeting anyway. I'll deal with her school when I come back. The New Year is approaching, so we'll hope that before winter break everybody is nice and happy. Somehow, it will get sorted out.

Thick forests, deep snow, and not a soul in sight. Once again I remembered my fathers story about his trip to visit my grandmother in Potma: "My mother came out of the camp gates right as we were coming back from the cafeteria. The gates made a grating sound as they opened and my mother came out - so small, in my father's deer fur-coat. She was pale, in spite of the cold. She was followed by a soldier with a huge rifle. It seemed so unreal: my small mother, in black children's boots, clumsy in another person's coat, and a huge soldier in a fine half-length fur coat holding a rifle, intended, just in case, for my mother."

- Ok, gorgeous, we're here! - I was woken up by a voice with some sort of particular accent. I woke up and understood, that I am spoken to by Nikolay, who has finally brought me to Fatima.

- Which zone are you going to, 13 or 14? They are located on opposite sides of the road. The fourteenth zone is the one with the Church. A woman from YUKOS did time there. I gave her lawyers a ride once. I remember, they were very upset that she had been deceived about her early release on parole. She had been promised, that if she behaved well, she would be released before she finished serving her sentence. In court, the administration of the colony stated that she had cleaned up her act, admitted her guilt. However, the judge did not release her. The lawyers said that she had gotten pregnant during a visit from outside. But what does the judge care? Let her give birth on sick leave. The judges here are all used to being bought. Nobody gives permission to release on parole just like that, for nothing. All of the prices are well-known. For every year of freedom they demand roughly one hundred thousand roubles. Then they share this money among themselves. For them, as well as for the prison staff this is one of their sources of income. As you know, their salaries are tiny. And who are you here to see?

I'm going to the thirteenth colony, thank you.

I was amazed at the awareness and knowledge of a random driver. Although, if you think about it, there was absolutely nothing strange about it. This whole region feeds on the zone, even a driver is informed of the camp prices. I asked him to pick me up at six in the evening. The train for Moscow left at nine.

I demounted the car and dragged along with my bag to the small wooden house for visitors. I noticed a similar

house when I went to another colony with Ana to visit Alexei Letuchiy. However, this female colony in Potma was nothing like that strict, male colony in the North of the country. The house for visitors and the administration building here were kind of poor and very plain. No "Arbat" lights or fountains with swans! "And surely there is not plane here", - I thought to myself.

A horse wagon exited the gates, carrying huge empty milk containers. The horse was steered by a woman wearing an stained black robe. I looked up and saw the tower, and there a female warden in camouflage uniform. Two other women, wearing the same greyish-green uniform, tarpaulin boots, garrison caps, with brightly colored lips and pistol holsters on their waists exited from the gates on the left. One of them was leading a huge, gloomy-looking German Shepard on a leash. The other looked me over and asked: "Are you here to see someone?"

- Yes.

- Then write an application.

I entered the little house, which turned out to be a room, rather than a house, but did have a radiator, as well as several stools and a table. Somebody's relatives were already sitting inside. They were taking food and things out of big striped bags. Every box of tea, every stick of sausage, tube of toothpaste, pair of socks or tights were recorded. The record is then given to a supervisor. I wrote an application to the name of the Head of the colony, and waited to be called to enter. I went outside and walked along the tall grayish-blue fence, separating the zone from the outside world. A decorate tree stood near the administrative building. It was then that I remembered that New Year's was only a week away.

" That means that Fatima will celebrate her third New Year's in prison. And she will have five more years to go."

The most striking part of my father's story about his visit of his mother at the camp was the moment of their

farewell: "I do not remember a word of what we said to each other, although we talked non-stop. But I will never forget the way we said goodbye. It was growing dark, the snow was blue and the lights were switched on over the watch cabin . We walked our mother back to the zone. And right in front of the gates, which had already been opened and would close behind her in a few moments, I suddenly painfully realized for the first time in my life that nothing could be done in order to prevent this, that no one can prevent this. I did not cry or grab onto my mother. I simply understood very clearly how useless any plea or protest would be here, in front of the zone surrounded with barbed wire, in front of the soldiers with rifles, and in front of these gates, which my mother will enter and stay behind."

I saw a woman in camouflage uniform running towards me. The same woman that took my visit application and promised to take it to the Head of the colony. The woman was waving her hands in the air and yelling something.

- Come on, take your bag and come with me, - said the warden. - Mukhadiev will be brought out in a moment.

Suddenly I became very frightened. I remembered that I really don't know Fatima that well, and have no clear idea what to talk to her about. However, it was too late to walk away. Even impossible. I had come too far.

I gave the passport, mobile phone and photo camera, which I had not had the chance to use: I was afraid that I would be reprimanded if I tried to photograph the administrative building or even the light blue little house called "Bath house for employees".

The warden took me to the room for visits with a big table, taking up almost half of the entire space. Another warden in a garrison cap and brightly-colored lips sat in the corner, looking at me with mocking eyes. As I found out later she was the head of the unit,

whose presence during all visits was mandatory. I sat at the table and waited. The metal door opened in a few minutes and a very beautiful girl was brought in. The first thing that caught my eye was her black hair, pale face and piercing glance. "She could be my daughter - it occurred to me. - She is of the same age as my eldest son."

- Hello, Liza, - Fatima said and sat down across from me.

- Hello, Fatima, - I answered.

And suddenly and very unexpectedly for me, we started talking. We spoke to each other as if we had known one another for a hundred years and had parted only yesterday. We did not pay any attention to the other two women present, who were literally staring at us, trying to grasp the essence of our hectic conversation. They did not interrupt us. And we spoke about everything. I told her what Grozny looks like nowadays, the barber shops and cafes that had opened there. I found out that Fatima loves to read, and has already read all of the books in the colony library. She confessed that she is afraid to make friends: the wound inflicted by the betrayal of Masha and Vera, who broke under the pressure of the investigation and accused her of trying to turn them into female suicide bombers, had not yet healed.

- You know, Liza, I do not harbor a grudge against them. And I still do not understand, whether we had met by accident, or somebody had asked them to do it. I forgive them. I also forgive the investigators who beat me and forced me to confess my guilt for the explosion in "Manezh". I hold nothing against the FSB officers, who regularly come to see me here and demand that I cooperate with them. They want me to tell them about Chechens, who are acquainted with militants. I refuse every time. I have nothing to say to them. The last time they cam they brought a picture of the mangled torn off head of a girl, who had blow herself up in Nazran. I explained to them that

as much as I would like to help, I will not be able to identify her. And so they left empty-handed. You know, I am even ready to forgive that judge. There is only one thing I cannot understand, how could she pass such a verdict? She knew, I saw it in her eyes that she knew that I was innocent.

- Fatima, I would really like to help you - I said to her when the three hours allocated for our meeting were up. - However, I do not have any power. I no longer work for the newspaper. And even if I still was, I wouldn't have been able to change your fate. I passed your diary to Kadyrov, just like you had asked. Now the only thing left is to hope that he will keep his word and help.

- A few days after my arrest my mother went to a fortune-teller. She told her: your daughter will be freed. But not soon. It will happen thanks to the help that she will receive from an unfamiliar woman and a red-headed man. Unlike my mother, I do not trust fortune-tellers. I no longer trust anybody. Except for you. I have waited for you so much. And am very happy to have met you. I do not know what awaits me in the future. You should know that there are a lot of innocent people in the colony, who are doing even worse than me. There are some who are never visited by anyone.

- Miss, it is already five o'clock. It is time for us to go home. The working day is over - the Head of the Unit finally says in a rather humane tone of voice.

- May I kiss her? - I ask.

- That is not allowed - she says and turns away.

I go around the table and come up to Fatima. I stroke her hair. And I see that she is crying.

- Your time is up - explodes the other warden and takes the Chechen girl away.

- Happy New Year's, Fatima! - I yell. But she cannot hear me. But I do hear, how the Head of Unit locks the door, which separates the zone from the room for visitors.

USAM BAISAEV THE PALE SHADOW OF TRUTH

The Article by Dmitry Florin on the "Shadow of the President of Ichkeria" hardly even touched me at first. On the websites and forums where former participants of hostilities in the Northern Caucasus tend to hang out, remembering the past, you see this kind of stuff all the time, even worse. After reading them you crawl out into the real world as if had been spat on and covered in dirt. This on the other hand is a rather neutral text, which you could criticize, but only for minor discrepancies and details, and solely because you're in a nasty mood. Perhaps the author had imagined a roof made of straw on one of the houses in our region. So what! After all, he's not talking about donkeys, which, according to frequent visitors of veteran websites, is the favorite mode of transportation of the Chechen people. He also not talking about sheep, the pasture of which is supposedly the only business and sole purpose in life of a Chechen national

Minor nonsense, like a roof made of straw, can be tolerated. What is more important is that the author doesn't descend to conscience lying and slander. As long as that doesn't happen everything is great, and you are thank-

ful to the author for just that. Everything else is forgivable. That was first impression. And, as it often happens with first impressions, it turned out to be wrong. But I understood that only after rereading the article more carefully, and not just looking it through...

I do not know whether it was Dmitry Florin's intention, but in his text he really embellished the truth about the actions of Russian military staff and police. He writes about the operation carried out by units under the command of Nikolay Bogdanovsky¹ and localizes it pretty accurately both in time and space: October 2001, the Nozhai-Yurtovsky district of the Republic. Unfortunately, it was practically impossible to enter this district for any person, who was not permanently registered there. I remember an extremely unsuccessful and risky attempt to do so, undertaken by the now-deceased Natalia Estimirova and Victor Popkov. They were detained at the post before the Dzhugurty settlement and were delivered to the location of the 15th motorized rifle regiment. After a brief interrogation they were both placed into a bmp (Infantry combat vehicle) and were held there for several hours.

¹ Nikolay Vasilievich Bogdanovsky, born in 1957, in the Podgorny village of the Altai Territory. Graduated from: the Suvorov Military Academy of Sverdlovsk, the Moscow Higher Command School, the Frunze Military Academy and the Military Academy of the General Staff.

He commanded the a motorized rifle regiment in the military district of the Far East, was the head of staff - deputy commander of the motorized rifle division. He was then appointed Head of the District training center for junior specialists and Head of staff - First deputy Commander of the Army.

Since January 2008 - Head of General Headquarters of the Ground Forces RF, and since April 2009 - Commander of the troops of the Leningrad military district. In January 2011, by Decree of the President RF he was appointed the First deputy commander of the Ground Forces of Russia.

In 2001 - 20032 Nikolay Bogdanovsky was in charge of punitive operations - cleansing in populated residential areas of the Chechen Republic.



Nikolay Bogdanovsky

Natalia Estimirova later recalled, that they were approached by drunk soldiers, who cursed and threatened to kill them. She was terrible frightened and was able to stay calm only thanks to Victor Popkov. In response to the insults he quoted biblical texts. His soft voice and quite unusual appearance for that part of the country - a black robe of an Orthodox priest, long grey beard and shoulder-length grey hair - in the end did their part. They were left alone and then released, after being ordered to stay in the Turti-Khutor settlement until the security check of their passport was complete. They were able to

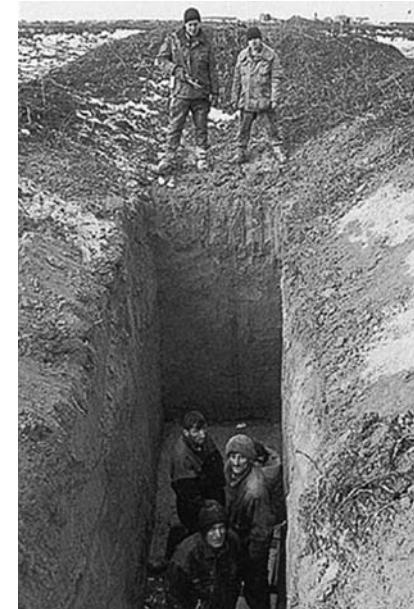
come back to the plain only two days later.

The Nozhai- Yurtovky District remained closed for Human Rights activists at later stages as well. The information received from there was fragmentary, came in portions, in separate episodes torn out of context. Up until today still nobody has managed to put them together into a single image. However, the facts that are available to us are enough to be able to conclude that in the mountains Russian soldiers behaved in the same manner as in the plains of Chechnya. That is, they robbed, kidnapped, tortured and killed. And could it have been any different, if the same units, under the command of the same Generals acted in all of the mentioned places?...

Thus, at the beginning of October Russian soldiers stormed the house of a citizen of Tsentoroya², and, after shooting him, burned down his house. Then they took his 45 year-old neighbor to the river bank between this village and the next and blew him up on a mine³.

On October 26, 2011 cleansing operations were started in Khidi-Khutor, Regit, Marzha-Mokhka, Enikali and Dzhaqlargi. The heads of the local administrations of these villages were not able to control these operations. As a result, dozens of people were arrested and beaten up. Not only men, but women as well. It is known that one of the people detained was taken away to the plains and disappeared without a trace.

The participants of these operations broke into the houses of the villagers, confiscated their food and jewelry. One of the officers in Khudi-Khutor declared at once, that the women should not oppose and first and foremost give up their gold. However, winter coats and rubber boots were also



part of their booty. They had been brought to the village and distributed to its citizens by representatives of humanitarian organizations shortly before the raid. I will agree with Dmitry Florin: sometimes only these kind of boots can save you from the Chechen dirt

Humanitarian aid was also taken away from the villagers of Yalkha-Mokhka. On November 5, before the end of the operation, the General in charge of command in this village, offered that the villagers create safe conditions for the retreat of the troops. Women, elders and children were lined up alongside the road leading to the plain. Under their cover the armored vehicles left for Akhkinchu-Borzoi. The soldiers at the end of the military column had captured and taken with them around twenty people from the road, as well as the village itself. They were released in two days. All of them were badly beaten up. As it turns out, they were taken to a place for drying tobacco nearby, where they were inter-



rogated and tortured with electric shocks and the hammering of fingers.

In the periods between cleansing operations the mountain villages of the South-East of Chechnya were regularly shelled. On November 8, at around six o'clock p.m., tank projectiles suddenly started exploding in the territory of Khidi-Khutor. Their fragments hit a thirteen-year-old boy in the head, arm and leg. In very critical condition he was taken to Gudermes the following day, and placed into intensive care.

On November 21 the Russian troops hit the village of Gansolcha. After only two days they had arrested 33 people. They were placed on the ground, face down into the snow, and beaten with thick wooden sticks. As a result, two of them ended up in the Gudermes hospital, while five more were forced to go through a course of treatment in the hospital of Nozhai-Yurt.

The troops had robbed all of the houses in the village. They took money, jewelry, audio and video devices. They ruthlessly destroyed everything that they were unable to carry. They broke, stabbed and stomped on the furniture and carpets, food products and clothing. Even a newborn baby's cradle got in their way - it was broken and thrown

² Must not be confused with Tsentroy (Khosy-Yurt), located in the Kurchaloevsky region.

³ The circumstances of the murders mentioned in the article, as well as the names of the victims are cited in the fourth and fifth parts of the chronicle of violence in Chechnya "People Live Here", published by the "Memorial" Human Rights Center.



The Nozhai- Yurtovky District remained closed for Human Rights activists at later stages as well. The information received from there was fragmentary, came in portions, in separate episodes torn out of context. Up until today still nobody has managed to put them together into a single image.

However, the facts that are available to us are enough to be able to conclude that in the mountains Russian soldiers behaved in the same manner as in the plains of Chechnya. That is, they robbed, kidnapped, tortured and killed. And could it have been any different, if the same units, under the command of the same Generals acted in all of the mentioned places?...

out of the window. But there was one detail that especially shocked all of the people of the village: the soldiers used axes to chop out of live cows pieces of meat for their "barbecue" ...

I know nothing about the operation to capture of the President of Ichkeria, which is described by Dmitry Florin in his article. I possess no such information. Maybe such an operation did take place in the village of Baitarki and its surrounding settlements, maybe it didn't. However, I can tell about the attempts to "catch" Aslan Maskhadov in Alleroya in mid-August of 2001. I will not speak about the looting - it is not interesting or new, just the same as everywhere else. Besides, the grabbing reflex of the federals no longer aroused indignation in Chechnya. People got used to it. But normal people can never get used to violence against children and sacrilege.

The citizens of Alleroya told about how adult males, perhaps not deprived of sentiment and probably suffering from the separation with their own children, used the children of others as shields when entering into the houses. They also spoke about how they practically destroyed a local school and soiled (literally) a mosque. Or how they broke into the mausoleum of Saint Abbas-Khadzhi at the village cemetery, and left drawings and inscriptions, insulting for Chechens and Muslims. The apotheosis of the operation, a very concise reflection of its essence was when several soldiers climbed up the minaret and started yelling "Achtung, Achtung!" and "Heil Hitler", accompanied by the laughter of the officers and other soldiers.

It is not at all my intention to accuse Dmitry Florin of not finding place for the description of at least one of these facts. Maybe, he does not want to

remember, who knows?.. Every person has the right to decide what to open to the public, and what to cover up, hold back for some time or conceal forever. But then you have to be prepared for the fact that, upon reading the article somebody will say "I do not believe what is written there." I do not believe that the spinners, after drawing shapes onto the sky, bombed only the uninhabited gorge, that before entering village houses, Russian soldiers and policemen did not throw hand grenades into the windows, that they did not insult the villagers or beat them up with rifle-butts, did not steal what the people did not manage to hide. Or perhaps they did manage to hide it, but the soldiers either guessed where or forced to reveal this information at gunpoint...

Half the truth is in essence still a lie. Especially when talking about Chechnya. It is very difficult to find a family in the Republic, a member of which has not been either murdered or abducted, a family that had not been robbed or even worse - deprived of its home. None of this is mentioned in the recollections of Dmitry Florin. The eloquent description of the deployment of troops, of how the military and law enforcement personnel took their positions and headed out to cleansing operations, is incomplete and leaves many questions unanswered: what happened next? Why did the mother and her children, mentioned at the end of the article, remind the author of sheep "attacked by wolves?"

Of course, I definitely do not believe that all federals are savages. However such cruelty and barbarity prevailed in their behavior, that everything else seems insignificant, uncharacteristic and even unnatural. Like, for example, a

giving a piece of candy from the dump to a child ...

The article "The Shadow of the President of Ichkeria" is not about the present war, in which the first and main object of attack was the civilian population. It is about an imaginary war, heavily pampered with romance and propaganda cliché. Even those parts of it that are true, are turned into a pale, deceitful shadow of the truth by the many omissions committed by the author. The offered candy, evidently, was supposed to symbolize the kind attitude towards the local population, and the toys made of clay, wood and wire (where on earth did the author see that?!) in the house with the straw roof - the extreme poverty in which the Chechen people were drowning, prior to the arrival of the Russian troops.

Are you ready to believe in that? I'm not.

P.S.

On February 20, 2002 the villagers of Tsotsin- Yurt discovered and gathered human remains for burial: a leg from foot to thigh, shapeless pieces of flesh, a skull fragment, locks of long dyed brown female hair with the remnants of a perm job. Parts of clothing were also found on the outskirts of the village, including fragments of a half-slip. According to the Prosecutor of the Argunskaya interdistrict Prosecutor's office, Rostislav Timshin (he worked there at the time), the human remains and the clothing belonged to the people, who were killed during a cleansing operation in Tsotsin-Yurt from October 10 to 15, 2001. The operation was conducted under the command of General Nikolay Bogdanovsky, the same person, who, if we judge by the recollections of Dmitry Florin, also operated in the Nozhai-Yurt district.

The "Memorial" Human Rights Center does not possess any information on whether these remains had been identified later on. Perhaps, someone from the "DOSH" readers knows something about this?

The official number of missing persons from the two wars in Chechnya - over 5000 people, however, the unofficial numbers go up as high as 18 000. The Grozny bureau of "DOSH" journal keeps its regular column "We search and wait for you". From each of our issues our readers will be able to get acquainted with someone's story, which must not be forgotten.

Continuation of story from "DOSH" Issues №№ 4(30)2010, 1(31)2011

Story № 7

The Endless Expectation of a Mother

Zoya Ismailova was born in 1950. Her husband Shamu Vakhaevich Ismailov was only one year older than her. Their entire big happy family (they had five children) did not believe that there would be a war. In their house № 4, located on the Pervy Tovarny lane of the Staropromyslovsky region of Grozny, there was no time for politics: life had become very difficult, they had to find ways to feed the family. And yet the war did start. It was very hard to understand why yesterday's friends had become your enemies, why the troops of your own country are shelling civilian houses. The family decided that it would be best to wait until these troublesome times would pass somewhere in the country. They went to the village of Goity, to stay with the relatives of Zoya. They stayed their a little while, when suddenly, Shamu decided to move back to the city.

- I will watch over the house. Otherwise, the looters will steal all of our possessions! - he explained to his wife.

No matter how hard his family tried to convince him not to go, his mind was set. He simply refused to understand that this trip could be dangerous. Once it became clear that his father is not to be stopped, Sheryp decided to go with him. What happened next is relayed in the following way in the official documentation on the subject: "On 03.01.1995 Ismailov Shamu, 1949 year of birth, together with his son Ismailov Sheryp, 1974 year of birth, left the village of Goity of the Yurus-Martanovksy district (where they were living as refugees) on a car number VAZ-2109, state № 3 86-35 CH.I. They were going home, to Grozny, in order to check on the house, however, they never made it. According to witness testimonies, they were detained by Russian military officers near the Lenin House of Culture of

Grozny." That is it. As if the record is about something simple and unimportant. As if people had not disappeared, as if real human lives do not stand behind all of this, as well as somebody's crime. The very style of such papers suggests, that such occurrences are quite ordinary and that nobody has to bare responsibility for what has happened...

- They left and I heard nothing from them. After a week I began to worry - Zoya's voice is trembling, like a tight cord, - I started writing letters and pass them through people, who had already learned how to live their lives from post to post (On every post, from morning to evening people gathered in hope to get any information at all about their loved ones). Soon I got the responses to my letters, which said that they are neither in Grozny, not with their relatives I started to search...

From that moment on Zoya has never stopped searching, for she is convinced that those responsible for her tragedy, should be punished. She went to all the administrations, police, Prosecutor's office, hospitals and morgues(yes, even that last attempt to either lose or save hope has been undertaken), prisons. And everywhere you have to "thank" people for information, which is not even always accurate or even true.

However, these hardships are not the only problem that she has been faced with. The most unclear part of the story with Zoya Ismailova is that she has not been recognized as a victim. In fact, she has two official evaluations from the Urus-Martanovsky and Staropromyslovsky districts, which state that she is not a victim. Such a heartless, dishonest attempt to brush the problem away; what is the big deal after all, so somebody disappeared while going from someplace to some-



where else, it didn't happen in our district anyway I never cease to marvel at the working methods of bureaucrats! After sixteen years of such trials, this woman has lost faith in just about everything: in state officials, in the police, in many people. However, she is absolutely resolute about one thing: about her determination to find the truth. And she will make the authorities and courts recognize her as a victim:

- I will go all the way to the international court, but I will not stop! I will not stop searching until I die!

On February 1, 1995 Sheryp would have turned twenty-one. But during our conversation not once did Zoya refer to her son in the past tense. As time has frozen, and her twenty-one year-old Sheryp will come back to her. Every year, when January arrives, the endless expectation of this mother becomes more intense, anxious in the hope that it will happen before February 1, and they will be able to celebrate her son's birthday with the whole family, so that Sheryp could finally turn twenty-one...

Maret EL'DIEVA

LIDIA MIKHALCHENKO

THERE AREN'T ENOUGH SOUL HEALERS

In April the "Center of Caucasian Initiative" organized the trip a relatively small delegation of social activists and journalists to two clinics, working in Chechnya. The Chief doctors of the hospitals of Darbankhi and Samashki villages willingly agreed to tell us about their work, its hidden problems and potential dangers.

The website of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Chechnya projects a very positive image. In its news section all you ever read about are the many successes of the local healthcare system and of cases of miraculous of recovery of both children and adults. Just like in the poem of Venediktov: "The blind can see, the dead awake..."

When you get to the village of

Darbankhi, which is located to the North-west of Gudermes, you realize that as always, reality has fallen a bit short of what had been expected.

The territory of the clinic is very picturesque. The blooming spring earth, fog between the hills, the new green mosque, red brick gates and ... And that's it. The beauty ends there. Chief doctor Gelany Sataev told us that out of the six hospital blocks that had existed before the war, only two had survived all of the bombings - a female and a male one. The air in the second block is so heavy and stale that it is difficult to stay there for more than a couple of minutes. The patients however have apparently gotten used to it. They are not allowed to take walks, since the personnel cannot rule out the possibil-

ity of escape. The faces of almost all of the patients are of a grayish color.

The Chief doctor says that the funding of psychiatry is carried out in accordance with the residual principle, therefore, the reconstruction of the hospital is taking very long. He points out, that there are no bars on the windows, that is all of the requirements of fire safety are met.

Right now the hospital has 180 beds (After its reconstruction within the framework of the Federal target program it will have 330). The medical staff consists of the following doctors: seven psychiatrists, one general practitioner, one gynecologist and one head of the laboratory.

Nobody in the Republic really knows how to properly treat post-stress disorders, that is a big minus for today's Chechnya. People, who have recently survived a war, basically the entire population, need psychological help, even if they still do not feel any symptoms, - specialists explain. Regarding psychiatrists for children, there practically aren't any in Chechnya.

There are several bald patients in the female block.

- They pull out their own hair all the time, therefore we have to shave them, - the doctor explains.

He nods at one of his patients:

- Of course, you are a normal person, soon we will release you.

The patients try to touch the guests from Moscow.

Surprisingly, there is no deficit in junior personnel. The unemployment level in the Republic is very high, so people actively agree to do any job. The minimum salary is 4400 rubles, for junior



В больнице Дарбанхи пока невозможно наладить прогулки, поскольку на территории идет строительство новых корпусов и гулять здесь негде.

doctors - 5-6 thousand rubles. They have to work 12 hours a day in the most difficult circumstances.

- It is true that the situation with the financing of food and drugs for the patients has improved, - the doctor states. 200 - 220 rubles a day are allocated for the food of each patient.

The Acting director of the Independent Psychiatric Association of Russia, Lubov Vinogradova, who has seen many similar institutions over the past years, claims that this number is higher than in many hospitals of central Russia.

Unfortunately, the hospital cannot buy the drugs directly. The Ministry of Health is responsible for this, and all of the purchases are done through a tender.

The Chief doctor says, that Aimany Kadyrova provides them with financial assistance. Apart from that, the local population also helps when it can. People bring food, ask what is needed and try to find it.

It is interesting, that to have a mentally ill relative is considered awkward and embarrassing in Chechnya. That is why the relatives of some patients do not tell anyone that their loved one is ill. Therefore, complete confidentiality is a must in this kind of treatment, and doctors always keep to it.

Doctors have noticed, that many

patients do not only suffer from mental ailments, but, for various reasons, have also lost all of their social connections. Even if they were released, some of them would have nowhere to go.

- Such people remain completely within our care and provision. Some of our patients are not even that ill, they simply need to be placed in a psychiatric hostel, however, there is no such institution in Chechnya, - says the doctor.

...

- During the second Chechen war all of the remaining patients had been gathered in one block. There was no electricity, the personnel had left. I was on duty. Suddenly a fire had started in the hospital. I came with a few other guys in order to evacuate the patients, however, they were very frightened, and refused to leave, clinging onto the beds. Therefore, we had to find the source of the fire and put it out. Overall, the patients did understand that a war was going on, they knew what was happening, - recalls the senior medical nurse of the hospital Magomed Kharasaev, who has worked in there for 46 years.

...

In Russia 90% of cases of hospitalization of mentally ill patients happen on an involuntary basis, however, some do sign a consent form a few days after arriving in the hospital.

According to the law, the decision about involuntary hospitalization is attained in court. However, if the person is aggressive and socially dangerous, he is first isolated, and then the court reviews his case.

Treatment as such is only possible at in-patient clinics. At home relatives of the patient follow all of the medical instructions only in 10% of the cases. Others, after noticing some positive changes, optimistically assume that the patient has gotten better and no longer needs to take his medicine. That can bring the medical progress achieved down to zero. But, what in fact should low-income people do, if in reality the much talked-of Law №122 does not work? Yes, such patients are supposed to receive medicine free of charge, however, pharmacies simply do not have it. And no one is accountable for that.

The Darbankhinskaya clinic covers the Sunzhensky and Urus-Martanovsky districts, however, in reality, no matter where the patient is brought from, he is accepted in this hospital.

The problem is that there are very few beds in the clinic, not enough to fit in all those in need of treatment. In Chechnya, before the war, it was possible to treat up to 1000 mentally ill people same time at in-patient clinics. Now this number is three times as small.

The second psychiatric hospital visited by the delegation of journalists and social activists, is located in the Zakan-Yurt settlement. The conditions inside the blocks are noticeably better here. Instead of stuffy, sealed off rooms - corridors and chambers, with a warm spring draft blowing through them. Still, the doors have bars, which allow for the air to come in, and prevent the patients from going out.

The patients here seem to be more cheerful and active.

The Chief doctor Adam El'zhurkaev is an active man, full of energy. He told us that the salary of his personnel has recently been raised, however, young specialists in the field of psychiatry,



Как говорит главврач Гелани Сатаев, из шести довоенных лечебных корпусов после всех бомбежек нынче осталось только два.

who are not from Chechnya, are afraid to come to the Republic.

It is amazing that, according to the doctor, nurses in his hospital earn 8-9 thousand rubles - twice as much as their colleagues from the first clinic. Furthermore, a house has been built on the premises of the hospital, for personnel, that has had the courage to come here from far away. There are 16 apartments there.

The territory is vast, the hospital has its own greenhouse, reservoir, vegetable garden. Labor therapy is used with the quiet patients. Everything that has been grown is sent to the kitchen, it is consumed and serves as an addition to the food purchased for the 220 roubles initially allocated everyday for the alimony of each patient.

El'zurkaev does not complain of poor financing. On the contrary, he speaks of expanding the hospital property.

- Soon we will build a hen house - he says, - we will buy chickens in order to have our very own eggs.

In his opinion, the main problem is of a different character: The Republic lacks psychiatrists, and therefore, the diagnosis of mental illnesses on early stages is weak.

The personnel of this hospital has grave memories about working here.

The senior nurse Dagman Tepsurkaeva told us that on November 1, 1999 the previous Chief doctor of the hospital was killed. The Federals ambushed him at the gates of the clinic, when he was on his way to work with his colleagues.

Back then there were 30 patients in the clinic. The doctors did not abandon them and continued taking care of them as much as the war would allow them. The mother-country in the face of the federals took care of them differently: executed their doctor, wounded the nurses and left the door open for the mentally ill patients. Of course, they had no place to go.



El'zurkaev does not complain of poor financing. On the contrary, he speaks of expanding the hospital property



The personnel of this hospital has grave memories about working here. The senior nurse Dagman Tepsurkaeva told us that on November 1, 1999 the previous Chief doctor of the hospital was killed

THE UNEASY FATE OF ENTHUSIASTS



I paid a visit to the Chechen Republic in early April, together with the representatives of the "Center of Caucasian Initiative." The purpose of my visit was to establish contacts and explore the possibilities for cooperation with NGOs, the work of which effects the sphere that I am interested in - that of mental health of the population. The initiators and organizers of the trip provided me with the opportunity to get acquainted with the psychiatric service of the Republic.

A trip to Grozny has been my dream for a very long time, which I was never able to achieve due to security reasons. Right now everything seems to be calm there, however, my colleagues and friends were surprised and tried to talk me out of it:

- Where are you going? Have you gone mad? It is very dangerous there!

Today's Grozny makes the impression of an absolutely peaceful city. It is clean, beautiful, intensely build-up. All of the external traces of war have been destroyed, however, the war has stayed in the hearts of the people, in their memories of their killed loved ones. Many people have gone missing, and their families are still hoping for a miracle.

The whole city is decorated with portraits of Ramzan Kadyrov and his father, sometimes accompanied by the portrait of Prime Minister Putin. Posters, quotations of Ramzan laid out with stones greet you in the airport and accompany you all the way, no matter where you are going: "My main weapon is the Truth", "My happiness is in serving my people". And the people demonstrate their gratitude and appreciation: "Ramzan, thank you for Grozny", "Dear Ramzan Akhmatovich, thank you for



On the photograph: Executive Director of the Independent Psychiatric Association of Russia, Lyubov Vinogradova, and Deputy Chief Physician of the Republican Psychoneurological Dispensary in Grozny, Kyuri Idrisov

the city of Gudermes!", "Our leader is the symbol of stability and peace".

During the war the psychiatric service was almost completely destroyed. Both of the hospitals of the Republic, located in Darbankhy and Samashky, were greatly damaged during the bombardments, the dispensary in Grozny was razed to the ground, and in Samashki the Chief doctor, as well as many of the patients were shot. Everything had to be created practically from scratch.

Today psychiatric help for the people of Chechnya is concentrated in two republican specialized hospitals and the Grozny psychoneurologic dispensary. There practically aren't any psychiatrists in the districts, therefore, in case of necessity the patients are taken straight to the hospital, located many kilometers away. In the territory of the Republic there are 440 beds for the mentally ill (180 in each republican hospital and 80 in the Grozny dispensary). That is almost two times smaller than in 1991, however, both hospitals

are building up, planning new blocks, so, with time, the number of beds will be brought back up to the pre-war level. Meanwhile, the situation is not comforting: the number of patients in need of care has increased, while the ability to provide this care has decreased.

Despite the fact that in Russia the psychiatric sphere has always been financed by residual principle, the government of Chechnya and the Kadyrov Fund pay great attention to this sphere. Thanks to this, medical institutions receive the financial means necessary to provide the patients with full nutrition (230 rubles per day per person - twice as much as in Moscow), as well as with the necessary quantity and variety of drugs. Money is also allocated for construction purposes, however, here there have been some misunderstandings. The newly rebuilt psychoneurologic dispensary in Grozny was constructed in accordance with the 1970s blueprint. As a result, there are no social and recreation rooms for the patients, nor rooms for

group psychotherapeutic and psycho-rehabilitation sessions. The cold water-hole was not foreseen in the budget and construction costs of the republican hospital (in Darbankhi Village), so the Chief doctor had to make heroic efforts in order to use hot water, which is received from local springs.

Charity is very well developed in Chechnya, compassion towards the ill, especially the mentally ill is part of the customs and traditions of the Republic.

During the second Chechen war all of the remaining patients had been gathered in one block. There was no electricity, the personnel had left. I was on duty. Suddenly a fire had started in the hospital.

I came with a few other guys in order to evacuate the patients, however, they were very frightened, and refused to leave, clinging onto the beds. Therefore, we had to find the source of the fire and put it out. Overall, the patients did understand that a war was going on, they knew what was happening, - recalls the senior medical nurse of the hospital Magomed Kharasaev, who has worked in there for 46 years

More than on one occasion, during hard times, the patients were brought food, household chemicals and other necessary things, and, what is noteworthy, not only by humanitarian organizations, but by regular people, who refused to even give their names. It is also customary to help with the construction works. One businessman build a mosque on the territory of the hospital in the Darbankhi village, so now the relatives, coming to visit the patients can also go and pray. The patients are not taken to the mosque, but they can pray in their ward, where all of the necessary conditions are created.

The main problem is the lack of personnel, first and foremost of doctors-

psychiatrists. The Ministry of Health understands the need to attract qualified specialists and has recently significantly raised the salaries in the psychiatric sphere. Now a young doctor earns 12 000 rubles, while a nurse - 8-9 thousand rubles, which is not that bad at all, considering the unbelievably high unemployment rate in the Republic. Nevertheless, that is not enough to attract high-class professionals, who still prefer to try their luck in other cities and countries. In the Republic, mostly enthusiasts, who love their profession, work in this sphere.

A Chair of psychiatry, narcology and medical psychology now functions within the Grozny dispensary. The Dispensary is supposed to become the main institution, that provides counseling assistance, and all first-time patients will go through its facilities. The dispensary has clinical psychologists and social workers, which are practically non-existent in both republican hospitals.

Thanks to stable funding the hospital doctors receive salaries, while the patients are provided with food and medicine, however, rehabilitation services are virtually absent, the leisure pass-time of patients is not at all organized. Plus, in Darbankhi, patients are not able to go for walks because of the on-going construction works, which have taken up all of the space. The territory in Samaskhy is very big and well taken care of, the gardens and farms are well-managed and provide the patients with meat and milk, fruit and vegetables, the hospital even has its own bread bakery. Nevertheless, treatment here also mostly consists of giving medicine and taking care of patients. There still aren't any specialists or proper rooms for psycho-rehabilitation sessions.

The particularities of local mentality and the high stigmatizing of people with mental disorders (the fear of receiving the "psycho" label) are the reasons for why people seek psychiatric



The territory is vast, the hospital has its own greenhouse, reservoir, vegetable garden. Labor therapy is used with the quiet patients

help only as a last resort, when a person can no longer be held at home. The mentally ill are concealed, their relatives ask for help in mosques and the Islamic center, where they are told that a djinn has invaded his body and try to banish it the best way they know how. They try to put the patient into a clinic as far away from home as possible, sometimes they even take him to another region. This especially concerns women. The number of women in hospitals is around three times as little as that of men. To put a woman in a mental hospital is considered to be especially shameful and embarrassing. Only very sick patients actually get to the hospitals. The Russian law on psychiatric help, in accordance with which all involuntary measures must be sanctioned by the court, does not work, however, we have not discovered any such violations or abuses: patients always give their consent to in-patient care, under the pressure of their families. In conflicting situations the administration of the hospital takes written

patient. The construction of a new psychoneurologic dispensary has recently been completed in the city of Shaly. This facility will assist in lessening the load of the hospitals, by taking in all of the chronic patients, who were placed there in accordance with social indications.

There are many NGOs working in Grozny. Among them are the so-called "grant-eaters", who receive big sums of money and work on odd projects. On the other hand, there are other NGOs, who are created upon request from the population and provide real assistance and aid. Among the latter id the Women's organization "Sintem". Its main objective is to raise the status of women in society, the protection of her interests, the involvement of women in social and cultural life. This organization provides actual help to women, who are having problems in their family lives, have been faced with violence, which cannot be overcome through regular means.

Sometime, those who came here for help, later stay to work here and help others. When we have funding people receive a salary. When there are breaks in funding they stay and work for free. They do not leave, because they feel the importance and demand for their work

and enjoy what they do. We have a whole unit of highly-qualified psychologists, whose professional level can be envied even by many Moscow specialists. They provide both individual counseling and psycho-correctional aid, as well as group trainings. The most popular trainings are the ones on personal growth, overcoming stress disorders, increasing tolerance etc.

The mental health of children is a major issue in Chechnya. Children, who were born and grew up during a war, in the atmosphere of fear and loss, could not avoid becoming victims of these circumstances. Many of them are invalids from childhood, they suffer from a delay in psychiatric development, intellectual insufficiency, hyperactive syndrome, and have serious trouble with social adaptation. Such children cannot go to kindergarten, they do not stay in school for long. They are transferred to correctional schools, however, even there, due to the absence of well-prepared specialists-defectologists, the children are not managing well the program, suffer from their own flaws and their inability to become a part family life, of the child community. о коллектива.

Extreme reverence towards children is also a typical trait of the Chechen character. Any child, that is left without parents, immediately finds a new family. We have no orphanages, we are capable of anything for the sake of children. However, what can parents or close relatives really do without professional help? Nevertheless, there are no child psychiatric services in Chechnya. We have only one child psychiatrist for the entire Republic, who is now on maternity leave and is not planning on going back to work anytime soon. When necessary, we are forced to seek the help of adult psychiatrists, who usually do not know the specific character of child illnesses and are therefore unable to provide qualified help. They limit their work to making a diagnosis and helping them register for perma-

nent disablement, which allows them to receive a certain amount of money.

Most parents know nothing about individual rehabilitation programs, and therefore, are unable to use them. There hardly aren't any child psychologists or defectologists. The only rehabilitation center in Grozny cannot manage the great number of children in need of help and is therefore not eager in advertising its activities. Many people have not even heard about it. As a result parents waste precious time and in the end are unable to help their children adapt. NGOs understand the importance of this problem and are trying to find the finances necessary to prepare highly qualified child psychologists and

The main problem is the lack of personnel, first and foremost of doctors-psychiatrists. The Ministry of Health understands the need to attract qualified specialists and has recently significantly raised the salaries in the psychiatric sphere. Now a young doctor earns 12 000 rubles, while a nurse - 8-9 thousand rubles, which is not that bad at all, considering the unbelievably high unemployment rate in the Republic. Nevertheless, that is not enough to attract high-class professionals, who still prefer to try their luck in other cities and countries. In the Republic, mostly enthusiasts, who love their profession, work in this sphere.

defectologists, as well as the creation of relevant child aid centers, however this problem cannot be solved without government support. If we do not deal with it today, its consequences will be irreparable.

Lubov VINOGRADOVA
Acting director
of the Independent Psychiatric
Association of Russia



LEYA GUREVICH "HARMONY" IN THE CENTER OF GROZNY

"Quiet! Training in progress!" - this warning hangs on one of the doors of the office of the women's NGO "Sintem" (which means harmony in Chechen) in Grozny. In fact, "office" - is a bit too much. A couple of rooms on the first floor of a residential building, each with an intense life of its own.

Here projects are discussed, visitors are received, telephone negotiations are held, some posters depicting children are drawn, carnival costumes are fixed etc.

The Head of the office, friendly Inna Airapetyan, greets us and invites us to the kitchen to have some tea.

Inna is Armenian by nationality, she grew up in Chechnya, graduated from the Chechen-Ingush University. Biologist by first degree, psychologist by second.

The war introduced its changes into Inna's plans. She gave up biology and started providing psychological aid to women. At first - only to pregnant women. That is how on of the most famous women's organizations of Chechnya came into being.

- Right now we work in several different directions. We have a school for mother and child, where we work hard with mothers to eliminate their illiteracy. This issue is very acute, since many mothers are fourteen, fifteen, sixteen years old. Sometimes they have a hard time adapting in a new family. Apart

from that we provide individual psychologist consultations. Self-help groups, ratings of personal growth. As much as possible we try to solve the problem of domestic violence.

According to Inna, one of the most frequently used methods of psychological help is Forum-theater. For Chechnya this method is new, however, in the West it has been used for a very long time and very successfully. The idea is that conflict and problematic situations are played through theatrical scenes. Women, who can relate to such scenes, may intervene at any moment and offer their own solution to the problem. The method is good, since the rules of the training so not presuppose mandatory participation in the game. You can always just stay as an observer and watch, to see what the other participants might offer, until you are willing to get involved.

- We are approached by women, who's children are either invalids, or are slow in their mental development. They complain that there is no child psychiatrist in the Republic. In order to get highly qualified assistance for your child, you need to travel to other regions. However, that can be afforded only by more or less well-off families. The majority of mothers are left one-on-one with the problem. They are torn between charity organizations and child centers of psychological correction.

Since 2004 over five thousand women have come to "Sintem" asking for help.

Every month three to four dozen new people come to "Sintem". And not only from work. Very often husband and wife come together in order to resolve personal and family problems. Although, for Chechnya, it is not the most prestigious way out - to involve a psychologist, a stranger in your personal life. But, in the end it does help, and those who dared to disregard this traditional convention, feel the positive results of their choice very soon.

Kheda Omarkhadzhieva, a psychologist at "Sintem" told us that very often, in trying to help people, she and her colleagues, apart from the main professional methods used, also refer to religion and to traditions. The specificity of the Caucasus forces the doctors to change the general recommendations of psychology specialists, and take into consideration the local mentality and character.

The psychologist says that most often she has to work with people who cannot cope with the loss of their loved ones, especially their children, who most probably died in tragic circumstances:

- The state of sorrow from the loss of a loved one is something you need to survive and overcome. In order to make this process at least a bit easier, we, for

example, talk about what the holy scriptures say about suffering in this world. Those who have suffered greatly on earth, have cleansed their spirits and have thus earned divine mercy. Apart from that, we remind them that after death there will be a new life, and those who have left for the other world always reencounter with their relatives.

"Pregnant women come to see us, as well as very young mothers with children. We let them use our costume photo-studio, thus giving them the opportunity of taking a picture of their child in some beautiful exotic costume, be it historic or carnival-type."

The costume collection is not that small - they all hang very tightly together on a three-meter-long pole. Kheda explains that they even lend some of the



Kheda Omarkhadzhieva, a psychologist at "Sintem" told us that very often, in trying to help people, she and her colleagues, apart from the main professional methods used, also refer to religion and to traditions. The specificity of the Caucasus forces the doctors to change the general recommendations of psychology specialists, and take into consideration the local mentality and character

The war introduced its changes into Inna's plans. She gave up biology and started providing psychological aid to women. At first - only to pregnant women. That is how on of the most famous women's organizations of Chechnya came into being

outfits to the children for their school events, since many parents do not have enough money to buy them a new wardrobe. For the lack of fancy clothing some don't even let their child attend the school Christmas tree party for example.

She takes out a long plush burgundy dress, very English style, from the depths of the stock. It is a gift from an English woman, who had this dress especially made for some important reception, and then donated it to "Sintema" for the children.

The next piece on the hanger is a real Caucasian "cherkeska" (coat), which the young actors just love to wear for their plays. All of the elements, inherent to the "dzhigit" look are authentic. While practicing for a role in a play, the children study the culture and traditions of their own people at the same time. After all, clothes, its style, tailoring, color and model tell a lot about the Caucasian mountaineers and the life they led in the past centuries.



DENIS ABDULLAEV THE ROAD TO RECONCILIATION THROUGH NON-VIOLENCE

An International Conference dedicated to the post-war reconciliation of the Balkan States took place at the end of April in Vukovar - a Croatian town, completely destroyed by the Serbian army during the war, that started 20 years ago. The event was organized by the peace-keeping organization "Pax Christi".

Vukovar was not chosen by accident - in the recent past, photos and videos of refugee columns from the destroyed city had shook up the whole world. Nowadays, the name itself serves as a reminder of the past wanderings, however this "Remember!"

does not only have retrospective value, indicating a certain event in the past. The wounds have not yet healed. The city is still divided into irreconcilable parts. However, the efforts of certain citizens and local authorities in establishing inter-ethnic contacts and mutual understanding give us reason to hope that kind expectations are not fruitless.

A total of 85 people took part in this event - representatives of Russia (including Chechen representatives), Lithuania, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The following topics were on the agenda: "Religion and extremism", "Ecology, justice and peacekeeping (eco-justice)", "Peace as a spiritual gain" and "Through justice, aimed at the restoration of values, - to the reconciliation of parties."

The main objective of the International "Pax Christi" Organization was to create an atmosphere of trust, in which topics so dangerous for vulnerable souls could be discussed in the presence of the clergy from various completely different Church institutions and religious communities, as well as

independent intellectuals and NGO representatives. From that perspective, the dialogue between the participants named did not have very promising results. Nevertheless, the meeting gave the participants a chance to discuss and assess the need for infrastructural changes, as well as the first steps to be taken in this direction.

They all agreed that it is necessary to strive towards setting up just court proceedings, which they believe to be the main means of reinforcing the correct motivation of actions, promote solidarity with all victims of war and provide as much assistance as possible. The Advisory Council defined in general terms the three directions of promotion of protective justice: 1) Equally objective attitude towards all war crimes; 2) the collection of information on the people who had gone missing and the circumstance of their disappearance; 3) the expression of solidarity and the prayer for all victims of war.

The participants of the conference paid a visit to the "Pole Ovchara" Memorial center, located five kilometers to the South-East of Vukovar. During the conflict this place had served as a concentration camp for all non-Serb prisoners. Two hundred of the prisoners were killed there and buried into the ground, while sixty-two people had disappeared. A constant

mass and prayer readings are conducted in the place of executions (The Co-President of "Pax Christi" Mary Denis is in charge of this process).

The Executive Committee of "Pax Christi" and the "Peace Fund" of Cardinal Bernardus Alfrink introduced the "Pontanima", an inter-religious choir, that has received the annual award of the fund, and which gathers singers from Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was doing a concert in Vukovar.

"Pontanima" - is a completely unique phenomenon. The concert of this choir consists of religious songs - Orthodox, Muslim and Catholic. The representatives of all these confessions participate in the choir. During the whole hour that the concert lasted, the audience listened heart-in-mouth, with

tears in their eyes. The very creation of the "Pontanima" choir was welcomed as an innovative peacekeeping project; the brilliant performance of the choir in Bosnia and Herzegovina made a noticeable contribution to the cultural life of the region, and promoted inter-religious dialogue and the further search for ways of co-existence. The members of the "Pontanima" choir make their own creative contribution to the reinforcement of agreement and mutual reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the Balkans and in other places, where human lives are destroyed. Its creative path demonstrates what the possible solution to the existing situation might be, since music has real peacekeeping potential, which contributes to a healthier spiritual climate.



"Pontanima" - is a unique inter-religious choir from Bosnia and Herzegovina, its concert program consists of religious songs - Orthodox, Muslim and Catholic.

Croatians reverently protect the memories about that war: in Vukovar you can see half-destroyed industrial buildings here and there - visual reminder about the terrifying tragedy, its witnesses and numb victims.



On November 4, 2010 the President of Serbia Boris Tadic visited the "Croatian Stalingrad" - Vukovar, for the first time and lay a wreath in the place of execution of two hundred Croatian prisoners of war and civilians in the "Pole Ovchara".

"I am here today, in order to bow down to the victims and pay tribute to them - Tadic said near the monument to the victims of Pole Ovchara. - I would like to once again apologize, and express my regret and my hope for the possibility of Serbia and Croatia opening a new page of their history." The wreath had the following inscription: "To the innocent victims. President of the Republic of Serbia Boris Tadic."

From the moment of the collapse of former Yugoslavia and the ending of the Croatian conflict of 1991-1995, Tadic became the first Serbian leader to have visited Vukovar and paid tribute to the murdered Croats.



Brief note

The international peacekeeping organization "Pax Christi" was founded after the Second World War. Its initiators were Marthe Dortel-Claudot, a religious French woman, and Pierre-Marie Th?as, Bishop of Montauban (also French). They contributed greatly to the early stages of the reconciliation process between former enemies. In 1944 Dortel-Claudot gathered religious people in order to pray in Germany, believing it necessary to arouse Christian sentiment in the Germans as well. That same year the Germans arrested Bishop Th?as, because he was actively helping the Jews. In the Compi?gne concentration camp he started a sermon, many participated in the prayer, however, when he would bring up that one must forgive his enemies, many people could not accept that. From then on Bishop Th?as thought of nothing else, but his work on the reconciliation agreement with Germany.

In 1945 Dortel-Claudot paid a visit to Bishop Th?as and asked him to lead a "Crusade of Prayer for the conversion of Germany." The Bishop agreed under the condition, that prayers should also be said for the decrease of hatred of the French towards the German people and for the inspiration of love for the Germans. He showed her that you cannot demand of people that they take one side or the other, but you can serve as an example with your good will and redemption. This movement was named "Pax Christi" or "Peace in the name of Christ".

In 1946 they undertook their first march: the representatives of 14 states gathered in the French city of Vezelay, because it was precisely there that in 1146 St. Bernard of Clairvaux called on the Christian people to clear places holy to them from the Turkish conquerors. The initiators of the "Pax Christi" movement requested permission for the participation of German nationals in this march as well, but were denied this permission: Germans were forbidden to cross the French border. Then, a request was submitted to the head of the nearest camp, to allow the participation of four German prisoners from the camp, upon their own desire to do so. They managed to get this permission only after four French nationals took their place in the camp. The representatives of every nation (now 15) were given a big wooden cross for the street ceremony - up until this day the crosses can be seen in the Cathedral of Vezelay.

At the first German congress of "Pax Christi", which took place in the village of Kevelar, near Aachen, Bishop Th?as publicly apologized to the German people present for all the unfair deeds that the French have committed against their fellow-citizens. It was a completely unexpected move! Germans later spoke of what a great impression his words had made on them: they felt at once that they are opening the way to real peace and are directed against the very possibility of a new world war.

Today this movement has spread across the entire globe. Its representatives are inspired for their service by the image of Jesus Christ and the New Testament, they actively oppose violence and are not affiliated with any political parties. Together with other peaceful organizations and movements they fight for the protection of human rights and work for the common striving towards peace of people of different religions and beliefs.

Work is being done in three directions: spiritual labor, education and action. In any conflicts the "Pax Christi" movement unites the representatives of different groups: tries to establish contacts with local movements for peace, analyzes the reasons for the conflict, organizes different rallies and meetings, converses with politicians - all of this is in the spirit of non-violence and respect.

THE END OF AN EPOCH



When this issue was about to go into print it became known that Elena Bonner, human rights activist and widow of academician Andrey Sakharov died on June 18th, after a serious illness, at the age of 88 in Boston, USA.

Elena Georgievna Bonner was born on February 15th, 1923 in the city of Mary, Turkmen SSR, USSR. Her father, Gevork Alikhanyan was executed in 1938, her mother Ruth Bonner was sentenced to eight years of exile. After the arrest of her parents Elena graduated from high school in Leningrad in 1940 and was accepted to the Faculty of Russian Language and Literature of the Pedagogical Institute. However, the Great Patriotic War started and Elena volunteered to go to the front. She served as a nurse in the Red Army and was shell-shocked. In the 1960s she joined the Human Rights Movement.

In 1975 Elena Georgievna represented her husband in Oslo at the Nobel Prize ceremony. In 1980 she went into exile with Andrey Dmitrievich to the city of Gorkiy. Four years later she was found guilty of slander against the Soviet regime in that same city. Along

with her husband she participated in many human rights organizations, in particular, in the creation of the "Memorial" and "Moscow Tribune" rights advocacy groups.

After the death of Sakharov in 1989 Bonner established and headed up the Andrey Sakharov Foundation. She was also a member of the Human Rights Commission under President Boris Yeltsin, however, on December 28, 1994 she left this post, refusing to work with the government that started the war in Chechnya.

When the second Russian-Chechen war was in full swing at the end of 2002, in an interview to the Internet publication "Washington Profile" Bonner accused the West of using a double standard in their approach to Human Rights in Russia and in other countries: "Slobodan Milosevic is now on trial, while Vladimir Putin is the best friend of the German Chancellor, the American President and the British Prime Minister etc. In my opinion, Putin is responsible for the deaths of more of his countrymen than Milosevic."

The famous human rights activist believed that the West does not want to notice that Russia is violating international conventions, which protect the civilian population, as well as refugees, and those who have found refuge in neighboring countries. She called this the demonstration of the "double standard approach and some sort of tactic of the democratic states, who are sacrificing key human rights values for their own immediate gain."

At the end of last year, during the rally "Moscow for all", which took place at the Pushkin Square on December 26th, in response to the massive nationalist rally at the Manezh Square of December 11th, Victor Shenderovich read out one of the last speeches of Elena Bonner:

"I am a Muscovite, a Jew of "Caucasian nationality". In 1941

I defended my country, in 1945 I wept with joy. In 1953 I protested against the so-called "Doctor's Plot". And during all of the years from the spring of 1937 I waited for my mother to somehow, somehow return from the Karaganda gulag camp, that she had been sent to. And when she returned and rang the door bell, I did not recognize her, I mistook her for a beggar. And all these years I wept in my sleep for my executed father. My father had a stomach ulcer, and in the evenings he used to ask me "Lusya-jan, prepare me a hot water-bottle, my stomach is killing me". I cried for my grandmother, who raised three orphans of the Great Terror of 1937 and who sighed her last breath during the blockade of Leningrad. And all my life I suffered - I blamed myself for my mother's arrest, for not having recognized her. For my father's execution, for his gravestone at the Vostrakovskoe cemetery, which marks an empty space. For not having stayed to die with my grandmother in the blockaded city of Leningrad. I had to save my Motherland! My Motherland! I no longer have the strength to save my Motherland. I do not even have the strength to fill my own water-bottle. And how do you save your Motherland anyway? I never knew and still don't. Count me in with those who will come to the Pushkin Square on December 26th. Consider me as one of those who came there, once again to save my Motherland, even though my legs have lost the ability to walk."

Elena Georgievna belonged to the rare cohort of people, who are considered to be the moral authority of society, of people who represent an entire epoch.

According to the will of the deceased, her ashes were buried in Moscow, at the Vostrakovskoe cemetery, next to the grave of Andrey Sakharov, as well as her mother and brother.