

DOOSH

DIGEST

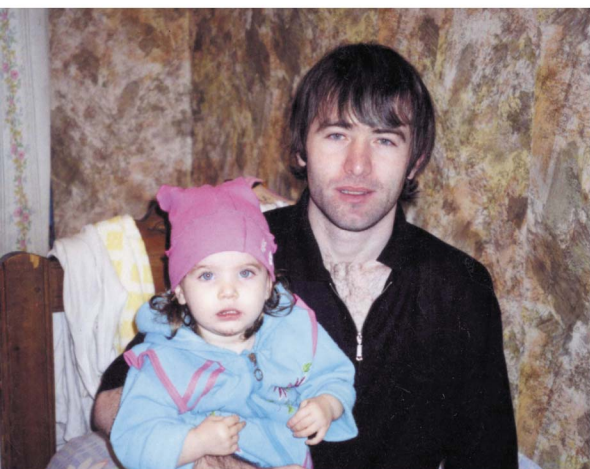
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WAR

GENERATION

ISSUE #4



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This memorial is a symbol of our survival, return and revival because our roots, our fathers and mothers, are in our land! The impressing artistic image, the hand growing from the ground, expresses this idea: we emerged from our future tombs, having risen from ashes like the mythical Phoenix bird. The dagger, which is a part of the national costume, is not so much a weapon here (the opponents of the memorial speculate a lot about it) but a symbol of fidelity to the traditions and the courage of those who managed to withstand without losing dignity.

Usam BAISAEV

WHERE IS THE FUTURE OF OUR MEMORY?



Dosh #4(22)2008

WAR GENERATION

It is common knowledge that there are many children-invalids in the Chechen Republic who received traumas during the two wars. However, the exact figure remains unknown: small victims of the 'counterterrorist operation' got lost among the total number of casualties. There are a few reasons for it. The available data concerning children who are not quite capable to recover from military traumas is very inconsistent: for example, according to the database maintained by *Doveriye* Regional public charity organization, there are over 740 minors registered as victims of mines and explosive for the year 2006. At the same time, the number of children subjected to prosthetics exceeded 2,500.

According to statistics published by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development of the Chechen Republic, the total number of children-invalids in the republic exceeds thirty three thousand. However, when we asked the Ministry about the number of children who became invalids as a result of the war, we were informed that they did not have such data: a fire destroyed the building of the Ministry in 2006 and the archive was destroyed in the fire and never restored. It is very complicated to get to the real cause of the injury of these children because the line "the reason of physical inability" often states "general disease." Here starts the chain entailing plural infringements of their rights. The lawyers from *Nizam* Regional Public Fund provide free consultations how to make a petition to the Office of Public Prosecutor and the court. Iton Ismailov, one of these lawyers, states as the main problem of such children the fact that the legislation does not stipulate the right of the civilians who suffered during the 'counterterrorist operation' to recognize them as invalids of war, that is to grant them a social category that is using higher privileges. To solve this problem, it is necessary for the invalids to get united and demand recognition of their rights with the Parliament and the government.

Last year, the lawyers from *Nizam* Regional Public Fund received 1,500 petitions, over 300 of which concerned the actions of the medical and social examina-

tion board. Under the law, the examination should be taken within one month while people have sometimes to wait for a year and even more time. The excuses for such delays may include long lines, understaffing, etc.

The invalids, however, believe that the only reason is corruption in the system. The lawyers from *Nizam* Regional Public Fund share this opinion. Though there is an appeal procedure, many people do not want to go to court.

It is connected, according to Ismailov, with the breakdown of the judicial and legal system as well as the absence of legal culture. He thinks that laws of the Russian Federation concerning the invalids do not work in general because there are no mechanisms of their realization. All the rights of invalids on the territory of the Chechen Republic are regulated by the legislation and executive authorities of the Russian Federation. There is an order of the Chechen Republic Government about privileges in employment: 3% of

the total number of workplaces in all organizations and departments should be given to invalids.

But this rule is not observed. Ismailov confirms that a lot of regulations do not have a mechanism of practical realization neither in the Russian Federation, nor within the limits of the Chechen Republic. According to the law, some categories of invalids have the right to preferential allocation of special vehicles. There is an instruction of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development of the Russian Federation that cannot be applied in the Chechen Republic yet.

In fact, a special body should be created that would be allocating transport, forming a waiting list and other lists, etc., but



all of this does not exist.

According to the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation, those invalids who suffered during the 'counterterrorist operation' have a right to indemnification in the amount of 2,000 roubles if they were wounded and 20,000 roubles if their relatives were

killed. However, in the opinion of the lawyers, even this pitiful right is very difficult to implement and it is required to present proof that the trauma was not received as a result of the actions by the insurgents.

Except for posttraumatic rehabilitation and prosthetics, we do not have active programs, neither state nor public ones, aimed to improve the social life of the invalids. The state only provides them with a pension, a scanty amount of money received by the invalids in the Chechen Republic.

Ismailov believes that the problems of invalids should be solved at the state lev-

el by means of thoughtful specification of corresponding items in all-Russian and republican laws. So far, we only stain ourselves with immoral indifference to the destiny of those for whose tragedy our society is responsible.

It turns out that thousands of young Chechens, whom the Russian state has crippled and has made orphans, are doomed to humiliating poverty and helplessness. The two bloody wars, that were with shamelessness and cynicism labeled 'restoration of constitutional order' and 'counterterrorist operation', imprinted their destiny with tank tracks and prohibited ball, needle, and cassette bombs (when

something similar and on a smaller scale occurred in South Ossetia, the same Russian authorities named it a genocide).

The confusion in statistical data about children-invalids testifies to the absence of social programs aimed to help this category of children in corresponding structures and departments of the Chechen Republic. Social adaptation of such children and providing them with human conditions of a life should become the priority for the republican government. The federal government whose actions caused thousands of children to become invalids should be obliged at least to finance such programs.

VICTIM OF THE 'CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER'

In 1995, Markha Mutalipova was less than two years old but the war did not spare her. Heavy military fighting took place in Vedensky district where Markha lived with her family.

Bombardments always began suddenly and the shells and bullets meant to 'restore the constitutional order' were coming from all directions. The villagers often had no time to hide in house cellars. There were many victims among the civilians, including children.

Did the one who was aiming Grad rocket launchers at their village suspect that there were no insurgents there and there was tiny Markha who was sitting on her mom's lap without the fear of a close danger? Or perhaps it was not Grad; military aircraft also performed spot strikes that usually reached the target: in fact, schools, hospitals, kindergartens are just little spots if you look at them from due height... Markha's native home became yet another such spot on that unfortunate day.

Those who saw the war will never forget it. The first Chechen war is remembered especially: nobody could understand anything and it was impossible to believe that this delirium was a reality. Why did they fire at villages where there were only civilians, why did children, women and old people die, why were they bombed by friendly planes with red stars on the wings?

The Mutalipovs' house was destroyed by a rocket. Markha's mother was killed immediately. The girl was found on the breast at the lifeless woman. Markha managed to survive but lost both legs.

There is a sheet of paper in front of me. It is her personality evaluation where everything that is going on in Markha's soul and head is squeezed into a few short phrases:

"The girl can be very attractive to those who surround her winning them with her unmasked interest to them and sincerity. Her imagination is well developed, she has an artistic style of thinking but she is very vulnerable and sensitive. She needs an opportunity to recover. The thought that she is not able to achieve her goals irritates her. It gives her a feeling of powerlessness."

These lines written by a decent wise man caused a feeling of powerlessness in me... He was not so wise to understand that Markha, as I am convinced, suffers the most from the fact that she simply does not understand what she was guilty of and why the society treated her like that. But life is thriving around and Markha vividly feels it. She is interested in people and her young soul is open and candid.

I did not ask Markha any questions. It was not she but others who told to me that Markha wishes to go somewhere to



a sanatorium, to meet other children with similar problems, to bring back many photos and addresses of friends, and to see the world.

Markha could only study at home. Now she is 15 years old. It is the age when the requirements of a person to peers, and to themselves especially, are sometimes unreasonably high. I did not dare ask her questions, I simply did not have the heart. I was afraid of reciprocal questions. Many children asked me these questions comparing themselves to the victims of Beslan and Nord-Ost. I could not find the answer. How can one explain to the Chechen children crippled by the war why they are not like others? Why the pain that they have to live with and that was caused for no reason is only their private affair?

HE HAS NO COMPLAINTS

Magomed Amirkhanov was born in the village of Goysk of Urus-Martan district on October 3rd, 1984 to a wonderful and well-respected family. In 1996, the school in this village was destroyed. Like all local children, Magomed could not go to school anymore. He was a poised beautiful 12-year old boy when another trouble happened to him. On November 21st, he was shepherding on the field not far from the highway as usual. There he stepped over that evil mine, both of his legs were immediately torn off above the knees. An elderly woman was also tending her sheep nearby and she rushed to him. Having heard the explosion, the relatives living nearby quickly rushed to aid. The boy was taken Urus-Martan city hospital. When Magomed came to senses the next morning, he saw his father at his bed. May Allah save any father from seeing his child in such condition! But it happened... The family helped to the boy to get through the trouble. The pain gradually ceased but it will hardly ever go away.

Having received medical treatment, Magomed returned back home from hospital but two months later he was taken to hospital again. The wounds did not heal and a new operation was required. Thanks to Allah and the love of the family, Magomed survived. In 1997, he was sent to Azerbaijan for prosthetics treatment. But those artificial limbs did not serve him long. According to Magomed, they were of poor-quality. In 2006, Magomed was admitted to the rehabilitation center of *We Shall Save the Generation* Regional Public Charity Organization. There he was taking computer classes and I met him in this center.

He was timid and reticent. He preferred to be alone and did not talk with anybody. Roza, the masseuse at this organization, and I began to talk with him and managed to persuade him to attend a sports hall. He gradually started to exercise though before that nothing was of interest to him.

Since this misfortune happened to Magomed he seldom left the house. He did not go to school because he felt uncomfortable among his peers. Besides, he could not get used to his artificial limbs in any way and moved around in a wheelchair.

In 2007, Magomed and a few more guys went to Saint-Petersburg for new prosthetics. It became possible thanks to the French organization *Handicap International*. This time his artificial limbs were good and Magomed liked them very much, but he lost weight and they became too large for him.

Magomed continues to live in Goysk. He started to learn Arabic on his own and would like to continue but there is no one to teach him. It could be possible to invite a teacher to his house but Magomed is too shy and short of means, in fact his pension is his only source of income and neither other income nor help from outside is expected.

I asked Magomed whether he had any dream and he answered indifferently: "No, Zulikhan. I do not have any dream or desire." He did not say that he wished to have a house, a car or a job or that he wished to study. In fact, the family lives



in difficult conditions and nobody in the family has a job. Sometimes his brother earns some money on the side somewhere but this is all temporary, the family does not have a steady income. Moreover, they have to rent a place to live.

Magomed is an unusual young man: like an old wise man he does not complain about life. He is kind, sympathetic and quiet. When someone complains about the destiny, he always says: "Life is very short. All that we have is from Allah." Having reconciled with his bitter destiny he does not aspire to personal benefit or wait or demand anything from anybody.

Does the society have the right to disregard such children and leave them without help? Anyone could have been in their place, so who can fancy that he is insured against such trouble? There are so many victims of this war in our republic! Are we, those who managed to survive, so heartless or powerless to leave them to the mercy of fate?

NEITHER LODGING, NOR JOB

Magomed-Emi Khizriev was born on May 22nd, 1986 and lives in the village of Andreevsk of Zavodskoy district of Grozny. When it all happened, on April 13th, 1999, he was only thirteen.

That day after dinner Magomed-Emi walked in the direction of the thermal power station of the factory to bring the cattle back home. On his way there his foot hitched on a wire. Having noticed it he tried to run away when there was a sudden explosion. People who were nearby came to help him and took him to city hospital. There the boy's right leg was amputated.

When he regained consciousness, the first question that worried him was whether he would be able to make a prayer. It is amaz-

ing that a 13-year old teenager in a shock condition after the hardest trauma would first think about his duty to Allah!

He spent a month in hospital. He was gradually recovering. Certainly, he could not run as before, but Magomed-Emi did not lose courage. He received his first artificial limb in 2003 in Ossetia, two more were manufactured later at a Grozny orthopedic factory but the quality of those products left much to be desired, so Magomed-Emi continues to use the first artificial limb made in Ossetia five years ago. It requires repair and is almost worn out from time. Like many other children in his situation, Magomed-Emi has no opportunity to travel somewhere for prosthetic treatment.

In 2006, Magomed-Emi took computer classes and began to study at Grozny Technical School of Computer Sciences. And there was an important event in his life: the young man met Deshi, in 2007 they got married and in the summer of 2008 their son Malik was born. The baby is 6 months old. The family with the baby lives in awful cramped conditions. Magomed-Emi submitted papers for improved lodging through *We Shall Save the Generation* Regional Public Charity Organization but is no answer from them yet. The family is short of money because Magomed-Emi does not work. And the family needs a new roof above their heads!

The hero of my story did not want his picture be taken.

ONE DREAM FOR TWO

Movladi Tepsaev is seventeen and a half years old. He lives with his family in Grozny. He is married. He has got parents, a brother and two sisters.

Everyone who knew him earlier say that Movladi was unusually strong and very beautiful. Many girls were attracted to him but in his soul there was only Marem, a girl of his age from the village of Roshni-chu. His life was full of meaning; a blossoming youth full of hopes, the school where he liked to study history and literature, barbell exercises, and ... love. Marem keeps in her heart the memories of their first meeting up to the smallest details. "On June 10th, 2006, I remember everything... I came to see my cousin. We decided to go shopping to the local Halal store and there I noticed him at once." I look at her, so young and unusually wise, and I try to understand where this strength of mind comes from. Marem continues: "I like to study history and biology, and I like to read Chechen fairy tales because human dignity is very much appreciated in them..." Answering my questions about how they got along with Movladi before the tragedy, she gets confused: "There was nothing extraordinary, just like other people we met, quarreled, and reconciled."

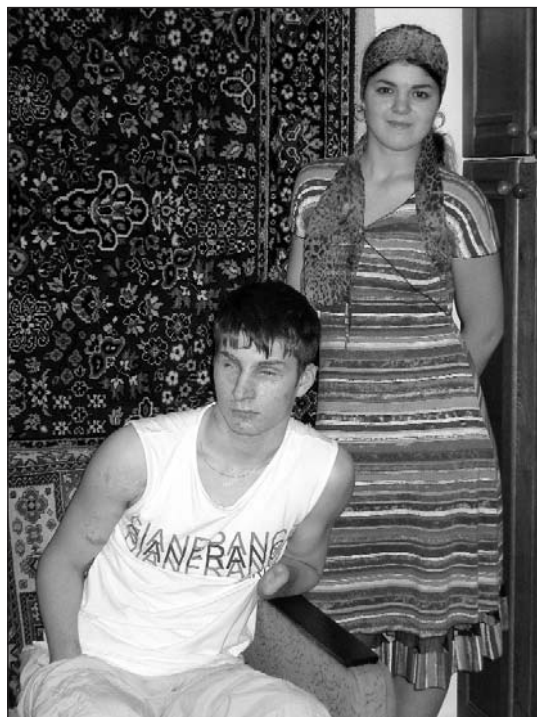
Everything was fine with Movladi until December 6th, 2007. Movladi and his friends were preparing for New Year celebration. The field near the town of Khankala was a dangerous place: cattle often exploded on mines and people sometimes picked up plastic mines nicknamed "petals". The friends were showing such mines to him and were telling that they were going to make fireworks with these mines on the occasion of the upcoming holiday when one of the boys' mobile phone rang. Movladi was about to leave for sports training and was facing the mirror to adjust his cap. He had no time to understand what happened. He regained consciousness because it became difficult to breathe. Later, when he, all stained with blood, was pulled out from under the debris of what used to be the house, Movladi kept shouting that there were his friends inside and begging the people to help them. He did not know that all his friends inside the house were killed. He did not know a lot more. He did not know that these mines scattered across all of the Chechen Republic can be triggered from a mobile telephone ring nearby: this is one of the forms of struggle against international terrorism - for those who covered the Chechen Republic with such "petals" it is absolutely not important who this Movladi is and what will become of him.

The days in hospital were long. More correctly, the nights. The darkness that does not know the dawn surrounded the young man: he lost sight. The consciousness could not reconcile with it. There were other wounds: he lost both wrists but blindness was the most terrible. Yakha, the mother of the crippled teenager, has been crying all the time since it happened. The father felt lost, he considered himself guilty: he could not prevent it. Movladi carried his pain courageously and without a single groan. His aunt Malika who experienced enough hardships in her life could not believe that her nephew would never see the light again. And there was Marem. The girl learned that Movladi had got into trouble the same night. She did not have a wink of sleep till the morning. She decided that she would marry Movladi. The guy's relatives and friends were confused and did not know what to do and how to behave. After long conversations and explanations they decided to show her the photos of her friend taken after the mine explosion. Marem's relatives were hoping that she would think twice after seeing Movladi crippled. She guessed their feelings and after seeing the photos reproached them: "Do you want me to change my decision? No way!"

Marem's decision was a huge disappointment to her relatives. They still cannot reconcile with it. The eyes of Movladi's young wife were shining with happiness. Love is whimsical and full of surprises. Yet there is something similar to light coming from within: this is the sign to distinguish the true feeling. Marem had a dream to become a doctor. When she told her husband about it he supported her and added: "Everything will depend on your skill to behave in public."

Wise Marem understood him right. "He cannot see. What will he do at home alone when I am in class? I decided that we will work together to implement Movladi's dream." I dared to ask: "What is his dream?" - "To gain the ground under his feet. To start his own business. To talk with President Ramzan Kadyrov." Indeed, it is not only wisdom that amazes you in this young woman but also the readiness to sacrifice her dream for the sake of the dear person.

Talking with Movladi was interesting too. He willingly told me about his interest in the times of imam Shamil and how he liked reading fiction. He recited the fable *"The Dragonfly and the Ant."* He often sees the same dream in his sleep. Before the tragedy, Movladi pasted two stickers



with the word "Allah" to the gate and the wall of the kitchen. Now in his dream he sees as if the walls of the kitchen and the gate dazzle with dozens of such stickers and someone invisible says: "These are the two that you pasted and these are the ones that I did."

I spoke with Movladi when he was preparing to fly to Germany for a medical examination. I hesitated to ask him what would happen if his hope could not come true but Movladi helped me:

"Recently I have been thinking a lot. I cannot complain: I know that the grass is green and the sky is blue, I saw the sun and moon, and I saw how our city is being restored. There are others who have never seen anything of that and they did not know this happiness." Listening to him I thought to myself: hopes probably do not always come true but dreams should come true! I wished to believe very much that the dreams of this guy who did not keep any offense against those who had scattered mines and started a war will come true. He only wants to learn to live decently with what the destiny prepared for him.

Movladi's aunt Malika called me one of these days and through tears informed: "The doctors say it is incurable. It is impossible to return sight."

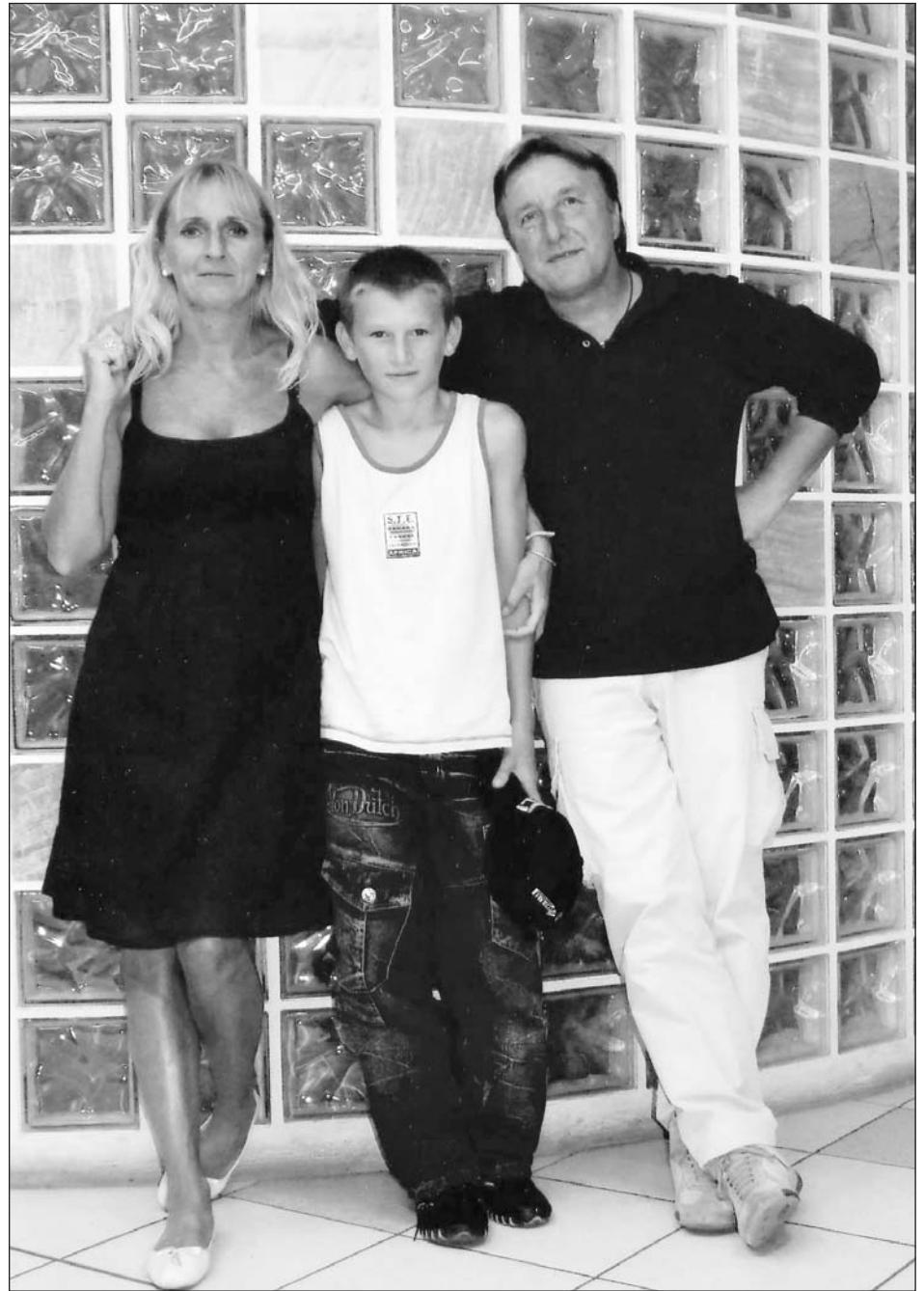
How will Movladi react to this news? What is Marem thinking about now? I will not be asking these questions, I will simply believe: everything will be fine. Though the hope deceived, the dream is still alive. Movladi is very brave and he will probably face this news bravely. Marem wisely decided that one dream for two should not be little at all.

WAR CAN ONLY BREAK

The place looks exactly as it was described to me: a big cemetery near the house, no pavement on the road, and many new buildings that remain unfinished. Here, at 120 Sheripova Street, lives Magomed Abuev, a boy born in 1995. The child of war, he was born when the military campaign started and he grew up in a military way, imperceptibly. The second war burst out soon after the first war. Both campaigns were remarkable in one way: they both have left many crippled fates.

Many years have passed but Chovka, Magomed's mother, still cries recollecting the day of June 15th, 2004. Apparently, it was a peaceful time already. Chovka tells: "The children were playing near a destroyed building." Tears drop from her eyes on her knees. That day Magomed suffered the most: he lost his leg. Chovka continues and tries to say the words of gratitude to everyone who helped in this or that way: to UNICEF, to *We Shall Save the Generation* Regional Public Charity Organization, to the center of prosthetics, and to those who during Ramadan once brought her 3,000 roubles and said that they were from President Ramzan Kadyrov. She thanks them all. She shows me lots of pictures: Magomed is almost in each of them. (Magomed was not at home then, he was in a sanatorium in Nalchik.) I noticed a beautiful woman and a man with Magomed between them in one of the pictures. Having noticed my interest Chovka explained: "They are Magomed's foster parents. They live in Italy. He visited them last September. He spent two weeks with them and returned so joyful. Now he is missing them very much. They often call and talk with him."

Chovka cries all the time. After Magomed lost his leg, his father died and the family started to experience hardships. The only income of the family of 7 persons was Magomed's pension of 4,500 roubles and the cow that was pur-



chased for the family by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Chovka took the entire burden on her shoulders. She did not have a permanent job and it was necessary to feed the family, so Chovka began to look after tombs at the cemetery nearby. She gets paid 300 roubles or more by the relatives of the people buried at this cemetery. "This is enough to buy bread. The children are sometimes ashamed of what I am doing but what else can I do. I always think of what will become of Magomed when I am gone."

I thought of other children, Iriskhan, Yusup, Zurab, and Movladi, and the distressful condition of their families. The girls returned home from school and began to tell about the teacher Subra

Usmanovna who, according to Magomed, was caring about him at school and how Magomed loves his mom very much. They showed me Magomed's drawings. There are many military helicopters, warplanes, automatic rifles, knives, and a Spiderman in his drawings. But after his trip to Italy he began to draw starfishes and unusual birds. He studies well at school. There is some nervousness in his behavior but Magomed is far from being shy and can stand up for himself. Several operations and the problems with his healthy leg impact the boy's behavior. He very well feels the pain and the sufferings that his mother experiences. He understands that she has five more children and they do not have their father with them. And there is nobody to support her.



My name is Zulikhan Ibragimova, I was born on January 12th, 1986.

I am 22 now and I live in the village of Gekhi-Chu of Urus-Martan district of the Chechen Republic.

I want to tell you how the war changed me.

I was 9 years old in July, 1995. I was cheerful and snappy. An awful fidget, I played since morning till late evening. I will remember this all my life. Children liked me very much, I was always in the center of attention and the neighbors called me "the laughing girl".

This lasted till July 3rd or 5th (I do not remember precisely), 1995 when the period of tribulations started for me. Our village was bombed and all of us rushed to the cellar, our neighbors also came to us. It was a dreadful day. It was tight and stuffy in the cellar. The clouds of dust in the air were so dense that we could not see each other. The children and I were crying and shouting, and we all were praying. My mom was trying to calm down the sisters, the brother, and the women. She is very courageous and does not think of herself. Explosions of shells and rockets caused a crack in the ceiling of the cellar and it started to move down on us making us bend to the ground. It seemed to us that the house was falling down on us. Suddenly there was such a huge explosion that it seemed as if the entire world fell apart and I thought that it was the end. As it turned out later, a depth bomb exploded in the kitchen garden behind our house.

I cannot find the words to describe all the horror that I went through. That day the war took away many lives. Our relatives who lived nearby were having lunch when a rocket hit their house. All the children were wounded and the father and the mother were killed. Everyone who loves his parents, and especially the ones who lost the mother, the father or both at once, will understand how it is hard to lose them suddenly.

Against the background of such tragic events that happened to others, you start to deal with your own troubles easier. I injured my leg but I did not realize at once how serious it was. Every night I felt pain in the leg. It was becoming more and more painful. When the war ended at last, mom started to take me to hospitals but the doctors could not diagnose correctly anywhere.

They offered different ways of treatment but nothing helped and the pain was becoming even stronger. Mom took me to every place in the Chechen Republic, even turned to healers but all was in vain. We did not have a car, so we travelled with mom by local buses. Mom was sick and could hardly walk. Both of us were suffering. I could neither walk nor sit. Sometimes the pain was becoming intolerable and it happened while on the bus. I cried in front of passengers of all these buses. Mom cried together with me. She did not know what to do. It was very hard for both of us and it lasted so for almost three years.

One day the doctors sent us to Moscow for consultations at Morozov Children Hospital. It was Lechi Dudaev, the Mayor of Grozny, who helped. There was a complete medical examination in Moscow but the doctors found nothing and could not produce a diagnosis. Then an ambulance arrived and took us to a country hospital (sort of a psychiatric hospital). They again took all the tests and put me in a gray ward where the nurse wanted to lock us outside. Mom pushed her away and said that we would not stay here. She took me by the hand and we left. The head physician run out, barred our way and cried that we would not leave and that the guards would not let us out from the hospital. Mom answered that we were not criminals to keep us locked here, so they let us go.

We left through the security check, the guards were on duty. They saw us but said nothing. We caught a taxi that drove us to Kazansky railway station where we got on a train that took us back home. I will never forget that day: how I cried at the station, how strong the pain in the leg was, how upset I was with the doctors, and how my mom embraced me and cried.

We arrived in Grozny, we got paid all our expenses (it was in 1998) and we immediately sent to Rostov Children Regional Hospital. There were 7 of us: my mom, I, four guys, and one more woman. We got a very warm welcome.

After the examination the doctors said that an operation was necessary. They suspected that there was a tumor in the left hip and wanted to take a test. I remember that whenever I woken up, be it in the morning, in the evening or at night, I saw mom at the window or at my

bed. She was almost always crying. In the morning her eyes were always red and swollen. Since I spoke Russian, I made friends with everyone. Since the Russians were at war with us, at first I thought that all of them were monsters and bad people but there I understood: all people are different. The doctors were trying to persuade my mom not to take me home and to agree to an operation. The doctors loved me, the head physician Lyudmila Aleksandrovna Boyko even cried asking my mom to agree to an operation. But I was categorically against. I am very grateful to them.

When we returned to the Chechen Republic, mom started to treat me with traditional remedies and to take me to sacred places of our republic.

By 1999, I stopped walking completely. The second war started and I was a bed patient. It was desirable not to touch me at all: an acute pain began from a slightest movement of the leg. Mom tried all her remedies but all was in vain. I remember how it was dark in the village because there was no electricity, and my father used a car battery to let us watch TV and neighbors joined us in the evenings. Our house was partially destroyed and only one room and the kitchen were suitable to live in. So I stayed in the same room where there was a TV. I recollect this time with horror: I was tormented by dreadful pains. Mom gave me all available anesthetic tablets but the strange thing was: they almost did not help. They worked for a short while, it was necessary to swallow tablets every 2 hours but the pain did not go. Mom was sitting beside me and crying from helplessness. The sisters, one in one corner and the other in the opposite corner, were crying quietly too. And the neighbors were also there watching TV with the father. Sometimes they left not being able to sustain my groans. This lasted for a long time.

Early morning of February 7th, 2000, our village was surrounded. Bombardment and gun fire started. We did not know what happened. As it we learned later, insurgents were passing through our village. When bombardment began, mother and father carried me down to the cellar. I shouted that they should not touch me but mom only repeated through tears: "The main thing is that you do not die and I shall bear the rest." Soon the neighbors came down to our cellar. At night bombardment intensified. The roar of shells, bursts of machine-gun fire somewhere very close, dust, stuffiness, and tightness, it was awful. We almost went mad: children shouted, women fainted, and mom again tried to calm down everyone. I put both hands to my head: I very much wanted to fall asleep and not to wake up, only not to hear and not to see all this. I felt

very pity for my mom. Looking at her, I began to calm children too asking them not to cry and to pray with me. I was asking Allah for the morning to begin sooner! It was my only request.

I counted minutes till dawn looking at the watch. I wanted to see the sun. One old woman among us in the cellar shouted all the time: "Let me out, I'd rather die outside than here, I cannot breathe here!" Her mad shouts lasted so long that mom could not here it any more and shouted back at her: "Stop it! Are you not ashamed of yourself?! Even the children try not to cry, they pray and you shout. Calm down."

It was dawn already but the bombardment did not stop. When I heard the noise of helicopters I first thought that they came to help us. But I was wrong: the helicopters started to fire rockets at us. It was most terrible. The roar from rocket explosions is pressing and I will never forget this awful sound. A girl who lived nearby came running to us, she was all covered with blood, she was wounded in the arm and their house was destroyed. She shouted that her grandmother was killed. All of us decided that we needed to get out of the cellar and run away from the village.

We ran out from the cellar, my mom carried me on the back having wrapped me up with a blanket. I felt pain all over my body and was asking my mom to abandon me. My sisters and the brother were running behind us. We were under fire from the helicopters. We ran to the neighbors' cellar where there were even more people. There was no room to sit down. My mom was standing with me on the back.

When it became impossible to breathe we jumped out from the cellar and ran down the river. Suddenly mom fell down with me and the helicopter lowered and continued firing at us. Mom covered us with a blanket and threw herself above it. This way we spent five minutes on the snow under a tree. When the helicopter flew away mom got up, put me on her back again, and we ran further. When we were crossing the bridge we saw three local men who were hiding in the hatch near the bridge. One of them lived very close and he told us to go to his cellar. We did so. In the meantime, one of these three was killed. Having noticed the soldiers, he ran down the river and they wounded him first in the leg and then came closer to him and shot him in the head.

It seemed to me that this terrible day would never end. Many were killed in our village. Local guys were taken to the edge of the field and shot. Three brothers from one house and two brothers from another family were shot. Dead bodies of insurgents, weapons, ammunition, and personal belong-

ings of the killed were scattered all over the village. And stains of blood were on the snow. I cannot stop tears when I think of it now. However, mom made some repairs in the two survived rooms. And again there were traditional remedies. One day mom came with a Russian old woman. She stayed with us for two weeks, pretended as if she treated me, and gave me 10 tablets of aspirin daily. Strangely enough, it helped me. Then the old woman left. She promised to come back but we ever saw her again.

Mom kept trying to cure me, we both did not want to give up. In the spring of 2001, I unexpectedly crawled out of the room, reached the stairs, and then, leaning on a chair, managed to cross the yard and get to the street. Since I did not leave the house for two years, I was like a phantom, all pale. But I was very happy. The parents got crutches for me and I began to learn how to walk anew. I was 15 years old. I moved to my aunt's place, which was near the school where I walked leaning on a crutch. I somehow finished the 10th grade, then the 11th, and afterwards I graduated from Urus-Martan Technical College. Now I am a trained bookkeeper-economist.

After the Technical College I completed courses of English and computer science. Over the past two years I have been walking without crutches but my problem is not solved, I still limp. I have been working with *We Shall Save the Generation* Regional Public Charity Organization in the project *Young Invalids of Northern Caucasus for the Development of Dialogue and Social Networks*. My salary was 3,000 roubles and sometimes I had to work even on weekends. I thought that the situation would improve in due course, and most of all I hoped that they would help me to travel for an operation. But these hopes could not be realized. In October 2008, I quit this job because of overload and unhealthy moral atmosphere. But I liked to work in this program, though it was difficult for me to walk, there I could somehow help those who encountered similar difficulties.

I do not consider myself unfortunate. The destiny offered to me meetings with numerous wonderful people and I keep a huge gratitude to them in my heart. I am especially grateful to Fatima Arsanukaeva, the person who brought me into journalism. It is a path close to my soul. However, I still cannot find the words to express how grateful I am to my mom. Such words probably cannot be found. Can this gratitude be expressed with words?

Certainly, and I do not hide it, my life received a heavy wound. Years have passed but it does not heal. Everything could be different had it not been for the damned war.



Zalina Islamova is 32 years old. In 1993, she moved from the village of Chervlennaya of Shelkovskoy district to Grozny where she lived with her aunt on father's side. She began to work as a nurse at a medical research institute in Grozny and worked there till August 1996. She always wanted to be independent since childhood and earned her money herself. On August 6th, 1996, Zalina together with her aunt and niece were walking to work as usual when they learned from passers by that the city had been surrounded by troops and fighting was going everywhere. They had to return home. Fighting continued for several days and on August 12th it turned into a nightmare. The village of Voykova where they lived was attacked by tanks. All this time this village was a reloading point for insurgents. It suddenly became quiet in the evening and all the villagers came out to talk and share their experiences. But Zalina's aunt advised her to return to the house: "It is too quiet, it is somewhat suspicious," - she said. "I'll be there in five minutes!" - answered Zalina.

The aunt reminded her that it was time for the evening prayer and the niece had to follow the aunt. They entered into the yard when the first explosion thundered. Zalina fell on the ground. Around her there were shouts, groans, cries, and explosions roaring one after another. Zalina was hiding her face in the ground.

GENERAL DISEASE

Her first and only idea among this madness was to save her face: she did not want to look ugly. She did save the face. But when she looked at her leg she saw a mess of bones, meat and blood.

Two or three minutes later all was quite again. Both the aunt and Zalina's niece were wounded, many neighbors too. A few people were killed. Zalina together with the others was taken to city hospital 5 where she received first aid. Later she was moved to a military hospital in the village of Tsotsi-Yurt of Kurchaloy district. The doctors tried to save the leg of the young girl but failed. On August 16th the leg was amputated and on August 17th Zalina turned 20.

"It was the birthday present from the war", - says Zalina with bitterness.

The mother and two brothers supported and helped her in this misfortune. Zalina was always laughing and joking, she tried not to cry so that the mother would not see her tears. She did not want to upset the mother and to cause her sufferings. Therefore she held all the emotions to herself. Zalina keeps thanking the doctors and the villagers of Tsotsi-Yurt for the support they rendered to the wounded during those days.

When the time of postoperative rehabilitation passed, she was examined by the medical-social expert commission and was assigned group 3 of physical inability though her leg was amputated above the knee. Instead of "consequence of military actions" the line "general disease" was put in her medical record. Why? Isn't she a war victim?

Zalina went for prosthetics to Baku and Vladikavkaz. She did not give up as it often happens in the majority of similar cases. She worked at a cafe where she had to stand on one leg the whole day. When the pain in the leg became unbearable she decided that it was necessary to continue education. In 2004, she started to study at Professional College 26, at its branch in Shelkovskoy district. She rented an apartment together with her cousin and she studied well. After graduation she received her diploma certifying she is a trained office-work specialist. She got a job at an orthopedic factory in Grozny. In May 2006, Zalina got married. She gave birth to a charming girl named Iman. But her personal life is unhappy.

Presently, the young woman is on an extended child care holiday. She lives while with her mother and two brothers who have their own families. Her daughter is one and a half years old and the duration of her child care allowance ended. After the New Year holidays she will have to go to the city and search for a job again, which implies renting an apartment. Iman will have to stay with her grandmother. Certainly, it will be hard to part with the daughter but she needs to earn money for living. The only thing that Zalina wants from life is her own place of habitation. To huddle in rented apartments in her situation is especially burdensome. She submitted documents to the Government of the Chechen Republic and it was decided "to solve her problem".

Zalina received a place to live in the village of Barozdinovka of Shelkovskoy district. She would have accepted it with pleasure had it not been for bare walls that were about to fall. So she had to refuse. Except for habitation, she achieved everything else all by herself. She found strength not only to live but also to study, work, and create a family. Very few are capable of this after such terrible blow that impacted this innocent girl at the dawn of her life.

Will anybody help her? Does it mean that the "general disease", the diagnosis against all reason and conscience that was imposed on Zalina mutilated by the war, has overtaken all our society?



TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL

Zulikhan Asukhanova will remember the day of September 21st, 1999 for the rest of her life. The mother was going to take all to Ingushetia that day. Refugees were already forming a long line up to the border with Ingushetia because the Chechen Republic was constantly under bombing and fire. Zulikhan very much wanted to go to the market together with her aunt. She managed to save a small sum of money because she wanted to buy herself a suit. Eventually they decided that the mother with a neighbor would go first and rent apartments while the children would take off the following day. Zulikhan went to the market together with her aunt.

They already finished shopping and were on their way home. This is when it happened. It is hard for her to recollect: how corpses stained with blood were all over the place, how the wounded were groaning and crying, and how those who tried to help were rushing from one to another among this horror. It was all mixed up. It was terrible and very painful. She received first aid at city hospital 9. She was given an anesthetic injection, and that was all.

There were too many wounded. The hospitals were full. A compassionate driver and the aunt were taking wounded Zulikhan from one hospital to another. She was accepted at city hospital 4. Later, there were too many lies about that terrible rocket assault at the central market and the maternity hospital that resulted in not less than 137 victims. And then neither the mother of the girl who was searching for an apartment for the family in Ingushetia, nor the father who was caring about the house suspected that a trouble had happened. But on her way back home, when the news about the tragedy at the market was already the talk of the city, the mother became very anxious. She still hoped that the sister and the daughter could get back home safely.

Zulikhan recollects how the door of the ward opened and the mother looked inside with a smile and how she managed to smile back. She could only



say about the amputated arm: "The doctors performed an operation because the bone had been completely ruined."

Later, when Zulikhan was already living in Ingushetia, she met Elizabeth Peterson. This meeting changed her life. She was speaking warmly about Elizabeth, her foster parents, teachers, and friends who she left in Switzerland where she spent five years. She studied at a grammar school for two years before she began to study at the Institute of Education at the Department of German and English languages. But she did not graduate for one simple reason: she became homesick and could not resist.

Her Swiss friends tried to persuade Zulikhan not to leave but she was full of hopes and firm to return home. There, in Switzerland, she together with other children was writing letters and collecting money for schools and libraries in the Chechen Republic. Zulikhan and her friend had a dream (and Elizabeth fully supported them in it) to create their own school in the Chechen Republic and to work there. This idea is still dear to her.

"I am very grateful to Elizabeth Peterson. She taught us a lot. She respected our love for the Chechen Republic and herself liked the Chechen Republic too. I miss her, of course," - admits Zulikhan with grief. - "There, in Switzerland, I saw, that humanity can unite people of different religions. Bu here..." She did not finish this last phrase. And it is clear why.

Then she attempted to work at school but the meaning of life she sees in being useful to the family and to help the deprived. Now she works as office-manager at the representative office of a German international organization and she likes this job very much.

Concluding our conversation Zulikhan said:

"I would like, if I could, to warn the entire world against a big trouble, which is war. I am sure that wars cannot bring good, they are hostile to life. We should live as if all our actions and ideas are visible to all. In fact, everything is indeed visible and everything is indeed known to God. Therefore we should be responsible for all."



I did not find Iriskhan at the specified address 22 Ioanisiani Street. I was told that he did not have a place to live of his own and he rented an apartment together with his wife in building #20 in the same street. A young girl opened the door and a cat came out to greet me. Iriskhan waited for me sitting in an armchair. His artificial limbs were beside him on the floor. I will never forget: Ingushetia, a camp, and the guys: Zulikhan, Aslan, Yusup, and Iriskhan. How passionately they wanted to live! There was one thing neither of them could get used to in any way: their artificial limbs.

We spoke and recollected how we lived in tents and participated in contests and concerts. I was impatient to learn what changed in his life and who that girl was. The guy willingly answered my questions. Seven months ago Iriskhan got married. His wife Khadizhat comes from Kotar-Yurt. They met in Nalchik at sanatorium *Narzan*. They were friends for two years. The relatives from both sides welcomed their decision to get married with respect.

Presently, they have neither a place of their own, nor a job. To tell the truth, there is only Iriskhan's pension: a little over 5,000 roubles, 3,000 of which they pay for the rented apartment. But the guys want to believe that all these problems are temporary. Three years ago, Iriskhan Aitaev requested financial aid from the Government of the Chechen Republic. He also hoped to receive a car from the government. The answer did not add optimism: it said that he was not eligible for a car and there was nothing specific about financial aid. Iriskhan did not have a desire to send any more requests anywhere. However, he is glad for others who all the same received such help. He says that they show on TV how the Fund named after A.-Kh.Kadyrov or the President of the Chechen Republic provide someone with an apartment or give money for treatment living expenses. This is how the feeling of gratitude for kindness to those who are in need emerges.

It all began in 2003 when Iriskhan together with other guys like him went to Vladikavkaz to study. They completed their second years of studies at the College of Electronics when the act of terrorism occurred in Beslan. The war decided everything for them: they had to go back home. Iriskhan never raised his voice while speaking. What an enviable endurance. After he returned, he soon left illegally for Austria where he hoped to receive the refugee status and to see Europe. But it did not happen. He had to go back home. Again.

I also learned that Iriskhan appeared in

LOVE OF LIFE

documentary films *Man* and *Seeds of War*. He has got a computer at home that was given to him by Dojnalla company as a gift. He and Khadizhat both like to do something on computer. It is obvious that they are not connected to Internet: you need to pay to get connected. Being connected would be a very good thing for them!

They dream of having a child. It is their common dream. But Iriskhan has a dream of his own: to travel, to see various countries and peoples, to study the way of life of other peoples, their life and culture, and to learn foreign languages. He has friends, those guys with amputated limbs who he met in the camp in Ingushetia. Later, they went together with him to study in Vladikavkaz. Perhaps it would be too long to list his sufferings. Khadizhat modestly said that all her dreams came true and she is waiting for Iriskhan's dream to come true. Once he wrote: "I am inspired by an immense love of life, by the support of my beloved mother, my relatives, friends, and my belief in the future." Since then the list has enlarged: there is Khadizhat and she lives by the dreams of her husband.

This is now, after 1999. And what was earlier? Everything was like with ordinary boys. Well, maybe not so ordinary. Iriskhan Aitaev was born in 1986. His father died of a heart attack in the beginning of the first military campaign. His senior brother was missing. It was not easy for the family, especially to the mother. In the beginning of the second war, the Aitaevs lived on Novatorov Street in Staropromyslovskiy district of Grozny, in one of the apartment buildings. The trouble came on December 11th, 1999. Iriskhan looked out on the balcony. Having noticed something sticking out from under the ground, he ran out onto the street, came closer, and discovered that it was a shell that did not explode. The boy stood on his knees, cautiously took the shell in his hands, and carried it away from the building. This is what he told then. After making a few steps, Iriskhan decided to throw the shell away. The shell was heavy and fell nearby. The boy did not even make a step



when a powerful explosion threw him to the ground. He received first aid in the cellar of the former maternity hospital of Grozny. Iriskhan was in a very grave condition and survived by miracle. But he lost one eye and both legs. He does not often talk about hospitals, doctors, and treatment. It is obvious considering his thirst of life.

We spoke for a long time and about everything. He willingly told about many things, especially the issues of morality and human decency that excited him the most.

He feels a bitter disappointment in people, in you and me. I listened attentively to his words trying to understand why his pain is so big. At some moment he said: "Who needs us? For disgraceful people, we are simply the means for achieving their personal prosperity. And for decent people..." He stopped, he did not finish speaking.

At home, recalling the smallest details of our conversation, I understood: he has got a gift of sensitivity and therefore our acts hurt him so much.

"God is the judge. Dishonorable people are worthy of pity. After all, everybody answers before the Supreme," - so Iriskhan told me when we parted.

I was leaving him with a strange feeling of incompleteness of our meeting. It seems to him that all are indifferent to him. Are we really?

Nevertheless, he loves life so much and he knows how to live believing in the better despite all exhausting hardships. His dream of traveling seemed to me even greater than inquisitiveness and a taste of novelty. Perhaps, it is a hope to find in a human soul something different from indifference and love of money, something real?

May God help him to find it.

EVERYONE IS GIVEN HIS OWN DESTINY

Ayub Gebertaev, officially Baudi, lives in the village of Alkhan-Yurt. He studies in the ninth grade at a local school. He is sociable and easy-going. He lives in a large friendly family: the father, the mother and 12 children. After talking with this war stricken teenager you are convinced that he looks at things as if he is an adult. Ayub believes: everything that happens is intended from above. Everyone is given his own destiny and it is necessary to accept it without cowardly complaints. Therefore, perhaps, he does not have idols or try to look like someone else. He thinks that everyone should look like himself. His best friend at school is Magomed Molaev who studies at the eighth grade. On that evil day of the year 2000 Magomed was also lucky: he managed to survive.

In Ayub's memory this date is connected with last hours of the lost childish carelessness. It used to be a cheerful time, especially for the boys who live next to each other and are friends. How many opportunities to have fun!

The games of wartime are hardly similar to those that children play in peaceful time. They require special bravery, weapons become toys, and they assume the presence of an enemy. And thank God, if the enemy is imaginary and fun shells are used. But war provides boyish games with special opportunities.

As is known, boys of all times and of all nations like to get into most unexpected places. Ayub and his friends got themselves into an abandoned building of the farm office. There they found a small storage of cartridges and shells. This finding turned out fatal for five boys.

Ayub does not remember the explosion. Neither does he know how much time he remained unconscious. Having regained consciousness, he noticed Yusup Viskhaev. He was on the ground in a somewhat strange position. Ayub could not understand at once that Yusup's guts were out. Ayub lost his left arm. He felt terribly thirsty. The boy rushed to the house, ran in, did not find anybody, and neither did he find water. He ran out of the house again. He only remembers how an unknown man pushed him with force into the car and took him to hospital.

No, Ayub is not afraid of memoirs, he often recollects that day, he sees again the boys who are no longer with us, Yusup, alive,

laughing, and especially often he sees Kanu, his best friend. The pictures of careless pre-war time are connected with them, but almost immediately his wounded memories return him to the explosion, Yusup on the ground, and his own arm all in blood. For some reason, Ayub did not feel the physical pain during that moment.

These pictures got imprinted into his consciousness deeper than others, those happy, pre-war ones. It is understandable, in fact Ayub was born in 1992 and the first war broke out in 1994, later there was the second war. Like thousands of his coevals, this boy did not have the time to understand or see anything except for a monstrous historical drama that also became his personal drama. Certainly, what happened was a shock to all villagers. It was a bigger shock for the boys who, on the one hand, survived and, on the other hand, went through a terrible tragedy at such an early age and lost their friends. It took a long time for Ayub to recover from this shock.

His life is not easy but he is very happy with his school. He says that he feels comfortable in class with the children. He likes History, Geography, and Algebra. He is very diligent. He likes to work with computers. Fortunately, there is one at his school and the teachers allow Ayub to work on it.



In his own words, he is not the brightest student. But he dreams that higher education would become available to all. He did not decide yet what his future profession will be. He only complained that there is no sports section in the village. He also dreams to learn to read the Koran so that he could study it in the future.

Ayub's phrases were short: no unnecessary words, exactly as many as needed, so that to answer a question in the most laconic way.

Having looked around, I noticed a lot. I saw, for example, that their house was decaying. I learnt that the father was

unemployed and the mother was engaged in private construction works. Why private? In fact, it is obvious: they pay little at state construction sites and she needs to feed a large family.

Ayub receives a pension, a small one, like all the invalids receive. The family is facing enough problems but Ayub did not mention them in our conversation. Perhaps it is my fault that I could not make him talk. But we should admit that Ayub no longer trusts adults though essentially only they can influence something.

He goes to school where he likes to study and has not a large friendly family. It seems to me that Ayub knows what he would like to be and simply thinks that it will be difficult for his relatives to collect the money for his college education. That is why he did not answer my question. We took the last picture in the school yard.

There were no classes that day and there were only a few children in the yard, but I liked this school all the same. It is great that these children managed to build such relations that Ayub feels easy and comfortable with them.

A HIGH EXAMPLE

Yakha Yusupkhadzheva was born on July 3rd, 1990 and she lives in the village of Stry Poselok of Staropromyslovsky district of Grozny.

She has a remarkable mother Kheda, a good-natured father Tagir and prankish brother Magomed nicknamed Dock. When you speak with them you do not stop being amazed by them.

The trouble came to this family in 1999 when the war entered into our lives. It was September, the villagers remember that rainy autumn day because aircraft started to fire rockets at Stry Poselok. It was then when the only nine-year old daughter of Kheda lost her left leg above the knee. Fifty eight people suffered that day together with Yakha, every other house was burned down, someone lost an arm, someone lost a leg, and someone lost their children or parents. The Yusupkhadzhievs were lucky: all of them survived. Yakha received support from her remarkable parents who cared of her and fulfilled all her follies. She was a closed, shy and nervous child and grew into a very beautiful, whimsical and clever girl.

Yakha's physical inability was not the only trouble in this family. On January 1st, 2002, when Dock was born, Kheda received too much narcosis. This overdose caused the development of cancer in the right eye of the baby and the eye had to be removed. Negligence or illiteracy of the doctors crippled the life of a small child with surprisingly beautiful black eyes.

I can not imagine how Kheda could sustain all this. But Allah gave her forces.

Dock is six years old now. Since his birth, every three months he has been traveling to Moscow for treatment. Certainly, the Ministry of Health provides with all necessary papers but there is not much use of them. The family has to pay for the road, food and lodging all the same and some charges for treatment are inevitable too.

Every such trip costs Kheda and Tagir about 40-50 thousand roubles. And nobody cares where they get all this money. Tagir works at construction sites the whole day and Kheda spends all day long on her feet as a salesperson at a kiosk. Yakha sometimes substitutes her there. In the winter, when the icy cold becomes intolerable, Kheda, to get a little warm, redirects gas to her kiosk on the street. Gas service people come, register the violation, and prohibit her to trade. They are right under the law but, from the point of view of humanity, what these people should do? How can they survive?

The neighbors felt pity for Yakha and her family: there are two invalids in the family and it is obvious how difficult it is for the young woman. Out of sympathy, the neighbors made a request to the gas company but received a cold answer: "It is not our fault that they became invalids. Make a request to the government or other organizations." So, crying Yakha and confused Kheda remain one on one with their troubles.

Well, it is possible to collect all necessary documents, submit them to the Government of the Chechen Republic where they will be examined within one

month and then directed to the Ministry of Health or the orthopedic factory. Eventually they will answer: "We do not provide financial aid. You should make necessary tests, get new recommendations or bring a document from the expert commission for prosthetics." It is easy to say than do! All this requires new spending: it is necessary to pay for the tests and new recommendations, the document from the expert commission, and travel expenses are not a trifle either. Besides, the efforts and money spent often do not pay off. Many invalids stay at home in despair and do not make any requests anywhere: they do not have either forces or money for this.

This year Yakha got admitted to Grozny Institute of Management and Law, she studies to become a manager. She needs to make two transfers to get to classes and the girl gets terribly tired but she does not give up: she has a goal.

Dock went to school for the first time. He is smart, quick learning, and cheerful. This boy is a worthy child of an unusual family able to overcome hardships. The Yusupkhadzhievs are extremely kind and sociable people who did not lose humanity or become cruel-hearted. Many should learn from them. They set a high example.



THE SUN WAS BURNING THE EYES

The summer of the year 2000 was unusually hot in the Chechen Republic. Either it was a natural gift or a natural catalepsy from what was happening (bombardments, shelling, cleansing, etc.). It was as though all rain clouds got frightened and abandoned the Chechen Republic. It was hot in the mountains too. It is impossible to forget or cross out from the memory the day of August 24th, 2000.

That day changed the destiny of a 14-year old boy and transformed him into an experienced man.

The day was sunny. The mountainous village of Ushkaloy of Itum-Kalinsky district is surrounded by tall beautiful mountains.

Yusup Ortzuev was the senior son in the family and many hopes were connected with him, especially his mother's hopes. He was hardworking and polite. A private farm helps to feed the family in village with ecologically clean food. That summer it was impossible to survive without a cow in the ruined Ushkaloy. The Ortzuevs had cows.

Because of the heat they had to use distant pastures. That day at sunset, Yusup, as usual, went out to meet the cattle. His sister Radima went together with him. She was 11 years old. The explosion came out suddenly.

"The Sun was shining so brightly that it was burning my eyes. My arm was torn off. Radima was down on the ground beside me. I examined her but I did not find any wounds. Her heart was not beating. Later I learned that she died at once from a wound in the head," - Yusup is speaking as if he is talking with himself. It is as if this pain of revelation is very strong. So many years have passed but the pain did not subside.

"I could not move. The Sun was burning my eyes intolerably. I thought that the end of my life. My whole life went before my eyes. I wanted to look back to say goodbye. The sunset was very bright. The Sun was burning the eyes." I now know that the eyes hurt because of a burn that resulted in partial loss of sight. Yusup cannot see with his right eye.

"I received first aid from the soldiers who



saw everything from a hill. They helped me on the spot and then took me to a hospital in the village of Borzoy. A few hours later they transferred me to a hospital in Khankala. They took Radima together with me, perhaps they did not understand that she was already dead or perhaps it was part of their procedure. The following I was transferred by helicopter, just like from Borzoy, to Vladikavkaz. Nobody of my relatives knew where I was or what happened to me. I constantly think about Radima and these thoughts are painful. So I stayed in hospital alone."

It took Yusup a long time to get used to that Radima was no longer with him. He had to adjust to a new life. Later there was Ingushetia, a refugee camp, military cameras, questions, questions, and lots of children like him who learnt the price of life and who appreciate kindness and are able to be kind and to find joy in life. In 2003, together with friends he went to study in Vladikavkaz but the tragic act of terrorism in Beslan made him go back home.

Now Yusup lives on a rented apartment for which he pays 5,000 roubles a month without telephone, electricity and heating payments. He lives together with his wife Makka, his mother and the sister. The father has another family. Their life is difficult considering the high rate of unemployment.

Yusup's mother looks after the friends' child and those 5,000 roubles that she earns go to pay the rent. Yusup's pension is 2,050 roubles.

They do not have a job. Meanwhile, the young couple is awaiting a baby. Certainly, Yusup needs to get group 2 of physical inability. The mother says that it would cost them 15,000 roubles. They do not have this money. Yusup does not believe that changing the group of physical inability requires any payments.

Yusup's wife tells that they filled out an application at social security office for employment but they never heard from this office since.

They met at a rehabilitation center where Makka was attending computer classes and Yusup was exercising. They were friends for two years and it resulted in making a friendly family. Yusup is surprised how many public and government organizations are engaged in helping the invalids and there are still no workplaces for invalids. Thank God, Yusup thinks, that the President of the Chechen Republic helps the invalids. Together with his friends he sees the evidence of it on TV. His dream is to find a job.

If the number of the programs that already exist is insufficient, it is necessary to develop new programs and to involve all public and state organizations in finding solutions to these problems.

I NEED TO LIVE

"The year of 2001 was full of fallacies just like that war. As soon as the situation in Grozny became more or less stable, our family come back home from Ingushetia where we lived in *Sputnik* tent camp. Soon the karate sports section that I used to attend earlier started its work again and I decided to continue karate classes. The good thing was that the sports hall was located close to our house. I was walking back home after exercises together with my twin-brother and a friend when I stepped over a mine. I was first taken to city hospital 9. Later I was transferred to a hospital in Nalchik where I spent six months. This changed all my life and the life of my family. It seemed to me then that my future came to an end instantly. But time and the care of those people who are not indifferent to sufferings of others have produced results: I am gradually getting used to my condition. Even with limited opportunities, life does not lose its value. I understood: I need to live."

The author of these lines is Zurab Ismailov, a young man born in 1986. I found him in a small town of Ivanovo of Staropromyslovsky district of Grozny. He is married. He has a little son, a five-month old Magomed-Emin. We were talking and the baby in his cradle was attentively listening to his father's voice.

In addition to the consequences of the explosion, Zurab is facing similar problems that affect many people in the Chechen Republic: there is no place to live of his own and it is difficult to find a job though he graduated from Oil Institute. He is a trained transport control engineer, traffic safety is his specialization. However, he "temporarily", in his own words, works as an employee of *We Shall Save the Generation* Regional Public Charity Organization. His salary is about 3,000 roubles, his pension 4,500 rounles and the child's allowance make the income of the family. Taking care of the baby requires additional expenses: vitamins, pampers, etc. Besides, Zurab goes to work in downtown, so a significant part of income is spent on transportation. Another huge expense is the rent. His wife Madina is a trained hairdresser but she is currently unemployed. By the way, Zurab met her at a hairdressing salon. They were friends for two years before they got married. Now that they have Magomed-Emin they should be even more responsible. Therefore it is especially important for Zurab to find a stable job. To increase his chances, Zurab decided to receive a second higher education in Psychology. I asked: "Why didn't you apply for a job with traffic

patrol, for example? Why not try to find a job close to your professional training?"

Zurab laughed back: "Do you really think that I did not try? They simply let me know that they do not need invalids. I understand that unemployment rate in the Chechen Republic is high and it means that even healthy people find it difficult to get a job."

He clearly realizes all the problems in the society and he does not think that when many people are facing hardships he should be an exception. He sympathized with all the children who became invalids as a result of this monstrous war. Besides, the majority of them did not have time to receive education and that is why there is no much need for them in the society. According to Zurab, the decree of the President of the Chechen Republic about employment of invalids does not work in real life. He himself had a chance to check it. He could have worked at Investigation Service of traffic patrol but he was denied this job because he is physically disabled.

Physically healthy people work at government bodies that deal with the problems of invalids and these problems are alien to them, which noticeably affects their job. Perhaps it would be wiser if these positions be occupied by those who experience similar problems and are able to understand all these difficulties. "First of all it is necessary to provide the invalids with the opportunity to receive education," - Zurab believes. Then he admits: "I do not understand at all why they do not admit invalids! We are much more diligent! When you achieve everything due to your own work and sufferings, you especially start to value life and everything what you managed to achieve. Therefore we are very responsible."

Zurab reads a lot and he likes to play chess. He is a devoted fan of Terek football team. He has not missed a single home game of the team. He is very grateful for such opportunity to Mayrbek Khasiev (Medical Expert Commission of Grozny) who provided him and nine more guys with free season tickets to all

home games of Terek. Also, Zurab is a big fan of Lamanan Az, a football team whose players are children with amputated limbs. He played in this team for some time before it became impossible for him to combine studies and sports.

It is very pleasant to communicate with Zurab: his erudition, the early spiritual experience and the wisdom obtained through hardships make him an interesting story-teller.

His mother works as housekeeper at school. His father is an engineer and he is also an invalid. Zurab has got a job not so much for the sake of the salary (very much she is scanty) but to distract from bitter thoughts and to be among people.

Zurab told me about his job and the so-called "Lessons of kindness" that he gave school 18 of Grozny together with the employees of *We Shall Save the Generation* Regional Public Charity Organization. I never heard a single complaint from him, even when he explained what difficulties he had to face. Where another would become indignant, he is only ironically perplexed and continues to dream of being useful to the society.

Recollecting the tragic events of 2001, he said: The brother got only light wounds and the friend developed a chronic disease. I lost a leg and an eye. We were children then. My hopes grew as I grew up. Sometimes I feel callousness of other people but I no longer pay attention to it. I need to live."

The war physically crippled innocent children and became crippled morally. We became callous and it is yet another consequence of the war. Perhaps we, who are relatively fortunate, should learn how to be kind and cheerful from these physically disabled children who grew up in misfortune. Let them teach us how to live.



THE UNAPPRECIATED WINNERS



The united team of the Football Federation of the Invalids of Russia became a prize-winner at the world championship that took place in November 11-21st, 2007 in the city of Antalya (Turkey). Adam Mezhiyev, a forward from Grozny, was named one of three best strikers of 2007 world championship having scored five goals. It would seem that the Chechen Republic, which usually so much appreciates the successes of compatriots, should triumph. Now the players from Lamanan Az football team of invalids with amputated limbs are facing other problems but then they were in perplexity: why Adam's magnificent success remained unnoticed?

In 2002, the purpose of creating this football team was the rehabilitation of children and young men who were injured during the military actions in the Chechen Republic. Originally, there were four players in the team. Both the Lamanan Az football team and the organization with the same name were created thanks to financial support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Its coach Ruslan Girzishev, former player of Terek football team from Grozny, took a responsible approach to training. Now the team has 18 players.

The team started to participate in official tournaments in 2004. It should be noted that the beginning was successful: the junior team of Lamanan Az became the bronze winner of the President of the Russian Federation Cup and the senior team (18 years old and above) for the first time participated in the championship of Russia and won 1st place in the first league, thus winning the right to represent the Chechen Republic in the championship of the best Russian teams.

In 2005, the junior team won silver medals in the President of the Russian Federation Cup, while the senior team took the sixth place among eight participants in the championship of Russia and reserved a place in Premier League. After that championship, team players Muslim Tsuntsaev, Adam Mezhiyev and coach Ruslan Girzishev were invited to play for the national team of Russia.

As members of the Russian national team Tsuntsaev and Mezhiyev became champions of Europe in 2006 and were promoted to the rank of Master of Sports of International level, and Girzishev to the rank Merited Coach of Russia.

In 2006, the junior team for the first time won a prestigious prize - the President of the Russian Federation Cup. In 2007, it also won the first Anniversary Cup of the President of the Russian Federation, while the senior team finished the fifth in the championship of Russia.

Victories will always remain victories but the team started to face the problems that may result in termination of the team, according to coach Girzishev. The matter is that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the main sponsor of the team, closed the program and the financing provided by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Chechen Republic suffices only for travel only to one out of five official tournaments. The team does not have an opportunity to organize full-scale training and there are regular difficulties with purchasing equipment and gear.

The players also have other problems, such as the absence of a place to live, small pensions, and taking care of the families. Many come to training from vil-

lages and it implies travel expenses. Because of these problems Tsuntsaev plays for the team of Nizhny Novgorod where he gets a decent salary, which is a good support for his family.

Ruslan knows almost everything about his players: Isa Mishaev commutes from the village, Adam Mezhiyev studies at Oil Institute, Sulumbek Mutaev was invited to Volgograd Academy Sports Club but Sulumbek rejected the offer because he wanted to play for the team of invalids of the Chechen Republic. "The active period of life of a sportsman is short," - says Ruslan, - "Therefore, it would be desirable that guys could live in normal conditions and could play without thinking of other problems, and not simply to play but to adequately represent the Chechen Republic. The guys can do it. It is insulting when everything is falling apart because of ridiculous problems."

Each of the guys holds on his shoulders the burden of the war that made them invalids. They managed to overcome this ordeal thanks to their will power and sports victories. Adam says that he managed to start his studies at Oil Institute thanks to his coach Adlan Dikaev and Khava Makhmudova. "Had it not been for these people, I would never have got admitted because I do not have money. But the problem is not solved all the same: I am a future architect but I will most likely become unemployed. This is because of the attitude to us invalids. I was in America where invalids walk wearing shorts, they can remove their artificial limbs right in the park, put them beside, and nobody will pay attention to it. While here we are facing problems each time we go somewhere in a wheelchair: everyone will be looking back you. Moreover, they would finger at you and draw attention of those who did not notice you. Or they come to stare at us or start to speak pathetically about our courage and so on. As if we are refugees



or foreigners, as if we became invalids somewhere out there and not in our own country, as if we had a choice whether to become invalids or not."

The more he spoke, the more I understood how difficult it is for the guys. Adam continued: "All unanimously admit that we need to be helped but it again looks as though we are refugees. But we are the same citizens of the native land like anybody else. We try, we prove it, but all our efforts remain unclear and unrecognized. We aspire to realize ourselves in sports and each time we feel pain for our coach Ruslan and for those few people who need to run, ask, and prove that our participation in this or that tournament is important. Sometimes all these efforts are in vain."

Moreover, the guys are still facing the problems were pointed out so many times: the artificial limbs produced by the orthopedic factory in Grozny are of bad quality and the factory condition is much worse compared to orthopedic centers of other regions. "All other centers are better equipped as though all the invalids of the Chechen war live there," - the guys say.

Listening to them I think of all the positive changes in the Chechen Republic over the last years. I compare and try to understand where this indifference comes from and what the reason of this alienated attitude to them is. Probably, the time changed or the mankind became different. The Chechen Republic is not exception to the rule. The guys do not need all this pity at all. Their spirit is strong, they are desperate and brave. All they need is the right to remain a team, to represent the Chechen Republic in tournaments so that the spiritual value of their victories could be recognized. It is time to understand that the invalids are the same people and the same citizens as we are. This is exactly what they expect from us to do. It is possible in the Chechen Republic because, according to the Vainakh traditions and the rules of our religion, we are simply obliged to do only good and kindness.



TO REMAIN A HUMAN

By the time when he turned 19 years old, Aslan Soltakhanov knew almost everything about war (he was 13 in 1994) but he knew nothing about mines. When there is no shooting around anymore, you normally do not think that a trouble can trap you in a familiar field, in the wood or in a roadside ditch where you have been many time.

In the early morning on June 8th, 2000, he walked out of his native house in the village of Shalazhi. The daily routine was very strict: first of all it was necessary to get a flock of sheep to a distant pasture. The trouble came when he was walking back home. Aslan stepped over an antipersonnel mine.

The further we get away from the war, the less we think about those horrors and sufferings that we went through. It is natural that human memory cannot reflect on the tragedy forever. But every time when you occasionally see in the street an adult or a teenager without an arm or legs, something breaks in your soul and you understand that this wounds more painfully than any memoirs.

That day Aslan experienced a great shock. After the explosion he fell down to the ground. He regained consciousness almost at once. He does not like to recollect those minutes. The only thing that he knew for certain was: if help ever comes, it will not be fast. Therefore, it is necessary to do something himself.

The guy had an incredible self-control because he managed to cope with what he saw then! One leg was torn off and the other was severely damaged. Aslan removed his T-shirt, tore it into pieces, tied up both legs and started to crawl towards the road.

He had a long way to go: the wood where he tripped a mine was twenty meters away from the road. At some moment he understood that would hardly manage to crawl to the road. He stopped and started to shout. Louder and louder.

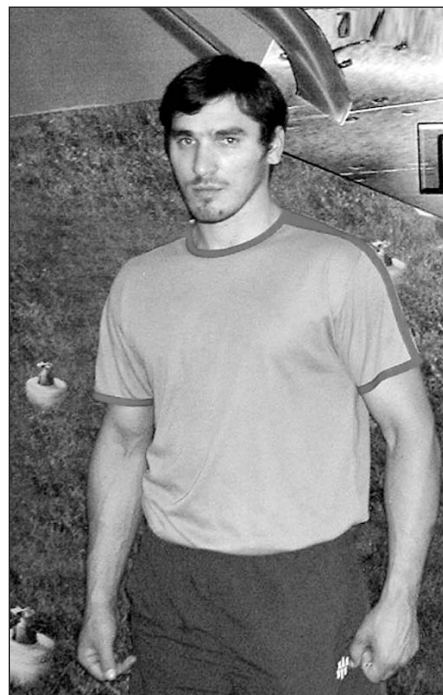
Two men ran up to him. They stopped a bus that was going along this country road, dragged the wounded guy in and took him to the military commandant's office where the guy received first medical aid. From there he was delivered to hospital.

The doctors examined him and said that Aslan's bones and nerve tissue

were broken. Besides, too much time passed from the moment of the explosion. There was no other way out but to remove the other leg.

To remain without both legs is a heavy ordeal even for an adult person. Aslan had to learn again how to live at the rehabilitation center and through long conversations with psychologists. Much time passed before he realized that life goes on and it is possible to like it even being an invalid. Or perhaps having gone through a stress one starts to feel the richness of life and the true meaning of life as an ordeal opens to him. It is a test of endurance, honesty, courage, fidelity, and the skill to remain a human in any situation. Aslan is coping with all this with an enviable courage.

He has got many true friends. He likes sports exercises. He studies the English language. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) helped Aslan to get artificial limbs for both legs. At first sight, you will not find any visible difference between him and any other person of his age. He is very sociable and open with the people around him. All his friends say that Aslan Soltakhanov is the most smiling guy in the world, and only his relatives know how sad his blue eyes can be. But he does not give way to despair. He is confident that, according to a Chechen proverb, the Supreme sends trials and troubles of life to those whom he likes the most.





Dosh #2(20)2008
Usam BAISAEV

WHERE IS THE FUTURE OF OUR MEMORY?

My friend was among the first who visited the demolished Grozny in March, 2000. He did not dare to stay for the night and he returned the same day. Shooting could still be heard in the city, search operations and robberies were still going on. The winners were celebrating their "great" victory.

His neighbors, refugees from a small tent camp on the territory of Ingushetia, came to listen to his story. And he told them about dead bodies along the road leading from Staropromyslovsky district to downtown and about the destructions that considerably surpassed those of the first war. Pictures of a complete devastation were rising before the eyes. How shall we live further and what to hope for? Is it worth hoping for anything at all? These questions were on the mind of his listeners. It was visible in their gloomy faces, in the dull expression of their eyes, and in that attention with which they devoured every word he said. Nobody dared to ask him about their district, about their street, or about their neighborhood. What does an apartment or a house matter when they destroyed their beloved city and continue to destroy their native land?

I remember my feelings (I think that others went through something similar). I felt powerlessness and pain, hopelessness, and full dependence on those who do not care whether I will live or not, or whether my relatives and those who I love and are dear to me will live or not. My mind cleared up when I heard: "Our churts are still standing!"



This unexpected news revived people and they started to ask questions. Is the Koran still in the same place, on the pedestal? Did the stele and the hand with the dagger survive? Though thousands tons of bombs and shells collapsed on Grozny, the Memorial to the Victims of Stalin Deportation, a symbol of our revival and returning to the native land apparently taken away forever survived. Though for a short time, a new war only started. Still ahead are, perhaps, the most difficult years, the years of terror. And nevertheless, then it gave us hope that we shall be able to resist the modern imitators of the tyrant condemned by the whole world.

At the end of May, 2008, they started to take down the Memorial. They did it in an ugly fashion, pulling out from the ground and heaping the tombs and turning out the walkway slabs that had been once carefully laid. The picture of destruction is reinforced by wheel tracks of heavy trucks that were driven to this sacred place without any regret and broken and scattered stele with the names of the places where massacres had been accomplished. The saddest thing is that this vandalism is created by us: some did it by order, others with crowbars and cables, and we do it with silence and readiness to close our eyes to what is happening.

The violence over our own memory, apparently, becomes our national obsession, some kind of a hobby. First we rename in honor of a Russian military unit a street where the Russian military shot and killed a dozen peaceful civilians. Then we destroy the Monument to the Victims of Deportation, i.e. to ourselves and our parents. And above all, we announce festivals in honor of the founding of Grozny that coincides in time with the date of burning of dozens of Chechen villages and farms and the creation on this place of a military fortress with the purpose, I will remind you, of a more ordered fulfillment of retaliatory expeditions against our ancestors. The spirit of General Ermolov again soars above the capital of the Chechen Republic. Maybe we should request to



restore his bust that was moved to Stavropol, which is pretty close if we want to bring it back?

The decision to relocate the Memorial to the Victims of Stalin Deportation was made by the Mayor's office of Grozny. They chose a really "worthy" place for the relocation: the southeast suburb of the city along the road that leads to the Russian military base. This is in immediate proximity from the local branch of Khankala garbage dump (believe it, it is its official name) where a trench is prepared to where they delivered gravel and plates. Though the work were suspended (it seems that the sky opposes this blasphemy pouring the ground with rains), it is obvious that the scope of works is huge. Only what for?

The meaning of any memorial or monument is concentrated in its name. A monument means a place that preserves memory. The word "memorial" is going back to the Latin language and has the same root: memory. For the people to remember about what happened, the visual impression is important. So, a monument should be located in a place that is always crowded, that is, in the historical, cultural, and administrative center, in the center of the capital, in the heart of the Republic! On the most expensive land, if you want it, since everything is measured in money today. This is standard all over the world. In Moscow, for example, the Monument to the Unknown Soldier, a symbol of national gratitude to all the Soviet soldiers perished in World War II, was erected on Red Square instead of any other area. Or in Washington, where all more or less known museums and pantheons in honor of the great sons of the nation are concentrated in a small area between the building of the US Congress and the White House. A similar approach is taken in many other countries whose level of civilization is defined by the attitude to the past.

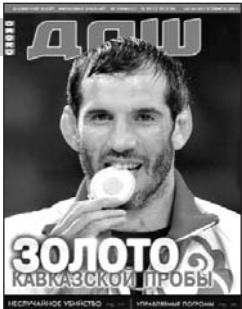
The location of the Memorial to the Victims of Stalin Deportation in the center of Grozny created many more opportunities for spiritual and ethics education of our young people. It is, in fact, one of the overall objectives of any construction of similar purpose. What is located nearby? There are several schools, two buildings of Oil Institute, a recreation park, the Republican Philharmonic Society, the territory of City Hospital 1, and the House of Pioneers. Several of these buildings are already restored and the others are subject to restoration. The largest mosque in Europe, for example, was constructed anew from scratch. Here, in the center of the city, the Monument is always visible not allowing to forget about the saddest

period of our history, about those who were burned alive in the Khaibach stable, who were killed on the territory of Urus-Martan hospital, who were shot on the way to the railway station or thrown out into the snow along railway tracks, who perished in Kazakh and Kirghiz steppes due to famine, colds and illnesses. And it is, in fact, a half of our people! What happened to us if we became ready to throw the memory of them out onto the backyards of the city closer to a garbage dump and stray dogs?

This Memorial is a unique monument. It was created as a result of a nation-wide movement that started back in the 1980s. Those who dared to remove tombstones from sidewalks and foundations were risking to lose their jobs. It became a mass movement during the Perestroika years. People brought churts (tombstones) from different places to Pervomaiskaya Street. Very soon all sidewalks and roads were covered with them. The monument was erected on the place where there used to be a cinema in the cellars of which people were kept and tortured in the 1930s.

The history of this monument is deeply exciting. Its artistic impact on people can hardly be compared to any other monument. The authors managed to convey the cruelty and insidiousness of Soviet rulers who moved into uncertainty and, as it seemed to them, forever deleted from history the whole people. To remove the last traces of memory, the tombstones of the ancestors were buried in concrete and asphalt or became the foundation for pig houses and bridges. This memorial is a symbol of our survival, return and revival because our roots, our fathers and mothers, are in our land! The impressing artistic image, the hand growing from the ground, expresses this idea: we emerged from our future tombs, having risen from ashes like the mythical Phoenix bird. The dagger, which is a part of the national costume, is not so much a weapon here (the opponents of the memorial speculate a lot about it) but a symbol of fidelity to the traditions and the courage of those who managed to withstand without losing dignity. It is not incidental that in old times it was allowed to carry a dagger only after 15 years of age when boys became men.

The Monument should remain in its former place and there is no doubt about it. But if, and I do not want to believe in it, it will be destroyed, those who will do it or will give such an order should understand that they acted not any better than Stalin's and Beria's executioners. Even worse: those committed violence over another people while these are doing it over the memory of their own people.



Dosh #3(21)2008
Zoya SVETOVA

ORDINARY MAYHEM

The Chechen court and prison doctors pronounced a death sentence to 28-year old Lechi Dzhanelaliev.

Beyond the Reach of Reason

There has been a lot written and spoken recently about the Chechen detention center in Chernokozovo. Some say that there is a shortage of free cells for those who wish to get there. This is true perhaps. Meanwhile, malicious tongues say that sometimes it is necessary to give a bribe to get into this "sacramental" colony. We do not know whether this is true but the story of Lechi Dzhanelaliev convinces: the situation in the penitentiary department of the Chechen Republic is far from being good. The doctors from Chernokozovo colony concluded that a paralyzed convict was able to sustain transportation and be kept in a Mordovian colony. Why didn't they keep their compatriot to serve time in the Chechen Republic? The doctors should have known that, based on his



diagnosis, Dzhanelaliev should have been released from penalty.

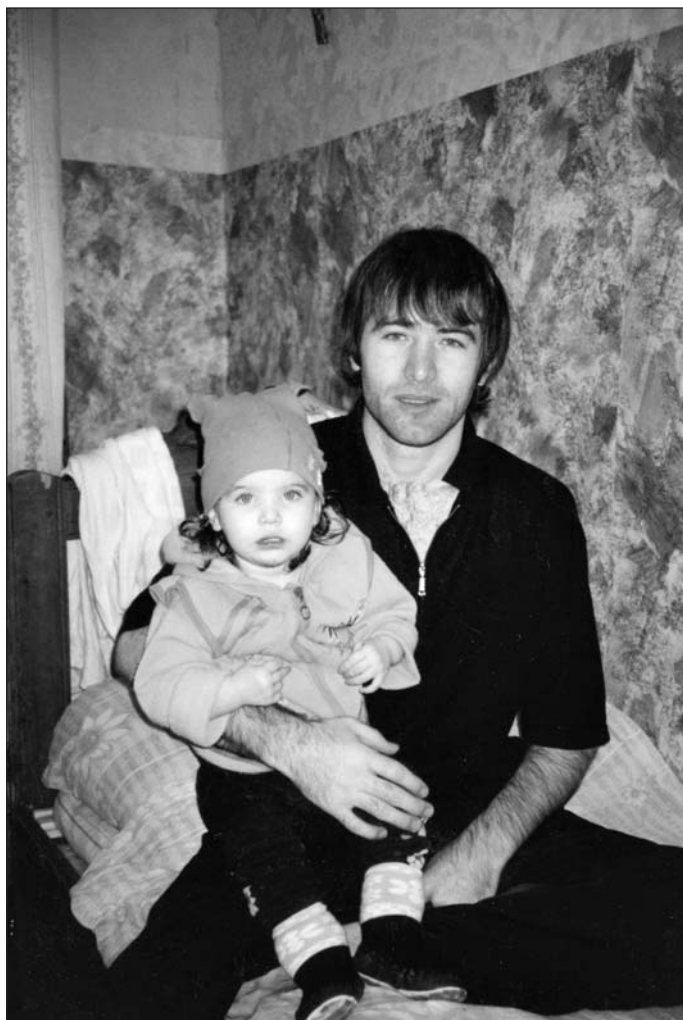
Zalina Dzhanelalieva repeats her story to journalists. In April, 2005, she and her husband Lechi returned from Khasavyurt to Grozny for a short while: "The husband received a phone call from his friend almost immediately on arrival. They did not see each other for a long time. They arranged to meet in downtown. Lechi told to me later that when they going to our house they got a signal to stop from militiamen on the bridge. Neither Lechi, nor his friend could notice this signal, so did not stop. It was dark. The militiamen fired at the car: the friend was killed at once and Lechi was heavily wounded. The bullet got into his head."

Medieval Cruelty

Lechi Dzhanelaliev was taken to city hospital 9 where he was operated. A few hours later a judge appeared at the doors of the emergency room. Right there at the bed, the judge ruled that Dzhanelaliev should be taken into custody. However, Lechi was not going to escape anywhere. After the operation he became paralyzed.

A month later, not paying attention to the protests of the doctors, investigators took Dzhanelaliev to Leninsky ROVD. There, he tells, he was interrogated though he was paralyzed. It means that they tried to beat out from him confessionary statements by all possible means. But 28-year old Lechi did not feel any fault. His friend was indeed on the wanted list and might have been somehow related to the so-called illegal armed formations. But Lechi was not.

Nevertheless, Dzhanelaliev was accused with three crimes: infringement on life of a law enforcement officer (Article 317 of the Penal Code), banditry (Article 209) and illegal possession of weapons



(Article 222). The incident at the check point was considered as banditry. According to the investigation, Dzhanaraliev and his friend fired at the militia check point. However, the prosecutor did not present to the court the weapon out of which Lechi ostensibly had fired at the militiamen. Dzhanaraliev was delivered to the court house from the remand prison on a stretcher.

The verdict of the court amazed everybody by its medieval cruelty: a paralyzed person was sentenced to 13 years of imprisonment. What for? In fact, he did not kill anybody. The circumstances of his "crime" look very ambiguous. Was the judge really intended to reach the target "plan" for the number of banditry verdicts?

Zalina tells that it was promised to the relatives to transfer Lechi to prison hospital in Georgievsk after the verdict. But the relatives were deceived, as usual. He was sent by regular transportation to a colony in Izhevsk. "It was terrible to see how the escorts dragged him," - says Zalina. - "They promised that he would be contained in hospital in Izhevsk but they kept him there for a week and when they heard him praying they sent him to prison again."

It took his wife a year to get the case revised and Lechi was transported to Grozny. In July 2007, Zalina stopped hoping for mercy from the Chechen justice. After examining the case, judge Madaev lifted the charge of illegal possession of weapons. In this connection, the judge lowered the sentence term by half a year: instead of 13 years Lechi received 12.5 years of imprisonment. What for? If he did not have a weapon, what banditry are we talking about then? How could he "infringe on the life of a militiaman" while sitting unarmed in the car?

Criminal Doctors

After the trial, paralyzed Lechi was brought to Georgievsk again. In March 2008, a representative medical board convened there and decided that, according to the Order of the Government of the Russian Federation "About Physical Examination of the Convicted Recommended for Release from Punishment in Connection with Illness," Dzhanaraliev should be set free. His diagnosis, "traumatic disease of central nervous system with expressed persistent phenomena of focal lesion of brain," is included in the list of diseases eligible for release from punishment.



According to Zalina, all the doctors in Georgievsk were sure that her husband could not be held in prison: "He cannot move without assistance, he cannot sit, he can only lie in bed. Nevertheless, he was returned from the hospital in Georgievsk to the remand prison in Grozny and was later sent to Chernokozovo."

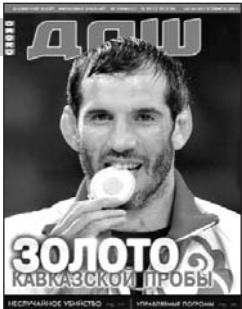
And then the most terrible happened: for uncertain reasons, the local prison doctors ignored both the Order of the Government of Russia and the opinion of the medical board. Having signed the paper stating that paralyzed Lechi Dzhanaraliev could be transported in a regular way and serve time in Mordovia, not only did they break the Hippocratic oath but also disdained simple human concepts about good and evil. They actually signed a death sentence to him.

Protecting her husband and trying to save him from sufferings that he endures each time when he is literally dragged during transportation from one prison to another, Zalina decided to seek help from the Human Rights Ombudsman in the Chechen Republic Nurdi Nukhazhiev. For some reason he could not find the only correct solution in this monstrous situation. He could not prevent transportation of paralyzed Dzhanaraliev to Mordovia. When Zalina sent another request to the Ombudsman to transfer her husband

back to Georgievsk, Nukhazhiev's office replied to her that she should write another application.

Lechi Dzhanaraliev is in Mordovian colony 21 now. According to his wife, he was supposed to be put in the prison hospital. Nobody knows how long he will be kept there. Zalina cannot go to visit him in Mordovia as often as she could when he was in hospital in Georgievsk or in the Chechen Republic.

Let's put aside the unsubstantiated charges and the doubtful verdict. Let us try to look at this case impartially. A competent medical board admitted that a paralyzed invalid of Group I should be released from punishment. But the employees of the local Administration of Federal Service of Corrections who were responsible for Dzhanaraliev, without batting an eye and, as a matter of fact, with total disregard to the decision of the doctors, transported him to Mordovia to his doom. And this is happening in the Chechen Republic whose President repeatedly declared that he "is thinking about the people and sympathizes with him." At the same time, the main Chechen human rights expert who was appointed by the President for the sole purpose to provide the observance of the rights of ordinary people is for some reason unable to change anything, though, apparently, a brazen violation of the law and disgusting cruelty are evident.



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Fatima MURZAEVA



WILL ANCIENT ZUMSOY SURVIVE?

It seemed that the process of restoration of the mountainous village of Zumsoy of Itum-Kalinsky district of the Chechen republic began at last. The villagers waited for this moment for almost three years. In the fall of 2005, the people whose houses had been destroyed abandoned Zumsoy and moved to foothill areas. At the beginning of the second Chechen war, Zumsoy experienced many bombardments, shelling and search operations. The events on January 14-15th, 2005 were the most terrifying for the villagers: it was first bombed from airplanes and then assault units landed. The military detained three adults and a teenager Atabi Mukhaev who was only fifteen years old. Nobody ever saw them since that moment, they are still considered missing. Isn't it strange when citizens are being detained and taken away for an extrajudicial execution by their military men and this crime accomplished in the presence of witnesses is called "to be missing"? However, nobody is going to answer this question.

There were other minor crimes committed: the villagers saw how the commandos were taking any valuable property from their houses and loading it in their helicopters.

It became impossible to stay in the village any longer after these events. People had to search for shelter in safer areas. The residents of Zumsoy moved to the village of Samashki of Achkhoy-Martanovsky district, Roshni-Chu of Urus-Martanovsky district and to Groznensky district.

Several families who had no place to stay on the plain continued to live in Zumsoy but they all left after the murder of the head of village administration Abdul-Azim Yangulbaev in the summer of 2005. Since then, the scattered across the republic destitute residents of this mountainous village have been living in temporary or abandoned buildings or with their relatives. Their only wish is to return to their native village with its unique landscape, unique beauty of the mountains and an ancient cemetery of the Zumsoy clan.

A wonderful view, healing water springs, green pastures, dense woods, and pure mountain air are the attractions of Zumsoy founded in the X century. It keeps the memory of both heroic and tragic pages from the history of our people. Uma Duev, a famous brother-in-arm of Shamil, lived in Zumsoy, he was subsequently executed by Imperial authorities together with his son and ten associates in Grozny. There are monuments of the Chechen architecture of the pre-Islamic period: the ruins of towers of the XIV-XV centuries and the tomb of the well-known Chechen religious personality Khoyku Ibrahim (Calling Ibrahim).

In 2007, Zarema Mukusheva, employee of legal department of Memorial Human Rights Center in Grozny, made a documentary film about Zumsoy that anyone can watch online (www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sO6XmiZwjK).

In February 2009, there was a meeting of represen-



tatives of Memorial with the leaders of the Chechen Republic in Grozny to discuss the problems of returning of mountaineers to their native villages, including Zumsoy. The President of the Chechen Republic declared that the authorities were ready to include Zumsoy immediately in the State Program of Restoration of Mountainous Villages and if there were at least ten families ready to return to Zumsoy for permanent residency, there would be houses constructed for them and ten more families would be assisted with housing in case of need.

In connection with this, on February 26th, 2008, there was a meeting of the head of Administration of the President and the Government of the Chechen Republic Izrailov with a representative of Memorial and the initiative group of residents of Zumsoy. The list of the first twenty families wishing to return to the village was handed to Izrailov who assured that restoration works would begin immediately starting with mine clearing of the territory of Zumsoy and the road to the village. At the meeting it was also defined which power structure would be further responsible for safety of the returning villagers.

On June 25th, 2008, representatives of Memorial went to Zumsoy to see how the promises given by the Government of the Chechen Republic were fulfilled and to talk with the residents.

The heard a sad story. 27 families returned to Zumsoy and waited for real help too long struggling with many difficulties before they began to leave the village again.

Presently, there are 15 families living in the village. Rukiyat Shovkhalova, resident of Zumsoy, testifies: "They did not restore the most important things: the school building, roads and the bridge across the river Zumsoy. To tell the truth, they brought materials for restoration of houses for ten families and unloaded them on the territory of the former school and administration. But nobody could take them from there because we do not have any equipment and the roads were not built. And there is more. The matter is that the initial list of these ten families keeps constantly changing. The Administration of Itum-Kalinsky district cannot decide who should be included in this list while we have been waiting here for two months already, and look in what conditions."

The original list was made up by the residents themselves with preference given to those families who were the last to leave Zumsoy in the fall of 2005. These families, in the opinion of fellow-villagers, especially need help with housing. Two of them insisted that the materials were brought on the construction sites but other families still wait: there are neither roads, nor equipment yet.

Several families cleaned up the territory and prepared trenches for the foundation. The authorities built a mosque but nothing was done to restore the houses. People use the building materials for the foundation but so far only one is ready for one house.

"We shall help each other. First we shall work at my place, then at the neighbor's place," - one of the residents of the village tells. Indeed, Beslan and Shadid help Zelimkhan with the foundation. But further construction is problematic: neither of them will have enough force or means. So, there is not much use of these foundations.

The residents of Zumsoy especially noted the support

they get from the chief Itum-Kalinsky district ROVD: "He brought food to us and participates in the restoration of the mosque, helps to put the cemetery in order. He helped to pass our request to D.B.Abdurakhmanov and he tries to support us in every possible way. We are very grateful to him for all."

He willingly shared his ideas how to get electricity to Zumsoy: "I measured the distance from the nearby village Bugoroy, where there is electricity, to here. It makes 4.2 kilometers. In my opinion, it is not too far."

The residents of Zumsoy wrote an appeal to charity organizations and all people of good will, and first of all to fellow countrymen, with the request to help with the revival of the village. It says in particular:

"We are not frightened by heavy conditions of life in the mountains: bad roads, high waters, falling rocks, and remoteness from the district center with the hospital and the market. The most important tasks are to build the village and to support ourselves. This will allow us to secure a footing on the native land



of our ancestors and to help the ancient village of Zumsoy not to die. Today we need support of young families in restoration of subsistence economy and the school building. All those native of Zumsoy! Wherever you were, do not forget: your roots are here. Your ancestors are buried here! We hope that you will not remain indifferent."

There are practically no employment opportunities in Zumsoy. Earlier, people were engaged in animal breeding and provided food for themselves. When they were hastily leaving the village in 2005, they had to sell the cattle for nothing. Today, when all the money goes on construction, it is too expensive almost for any family to buy a cow.

Because there is no road, food supply in Zumsoy is not organized. The hospital and high school are 15 kilometers away, in district center Itum-Kala. High waters and falling rocks often cut off Zumsoy from the outside world. In the spring of 2005, the village was cut off for almost a month as a result of a landslide on the road. Constant presence of equipment for clearing mountain roads is required but the district has very little equipment of its own.

Despite all hardships, the residents of this small village do not lose optimism and remain great patriots of their native land.



P.S. On August 14th, 2008, Zumsoy was subjected to massive bombardment by the Russian military units. Grad rocket launchers fired at the vicinities of the village from the village of Borzoy and bombing attacks were conducted by aircraft. Commandos landed at the hill dominating over the village. According to preliminary information, there were no victims. The reason for bombardment is not known.





INNOCENT INNOCENT



Five years ago, on March 4th, 2004, Zara Murtazalieva was detained in Moscow.

On January 17th, 2005, Moscow City Court sentenced her to 9 years of imprisonment for “preparation for committing an act of terrorism by way of explosion, for illegal purchase and possession of explosives and for involving other persons in committing an act of terrorism by way of explosion.”

Murtazalieva did not admit her fault.

On March 17th, 2005, the Supreme Court of Russian Federation affirmed the verdict of Moscow City Court but reduced the term of sentence to eight and a half years.

Since the summer of 2005, Zara Murtazalieva has been serving time in Mordovian colony #13 in the village of Potma.

On January 25th, 2007, according to RIA

news agency, Prime-Minister of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov stated that he would be trying to get the verdict revised and Zara Murtazalieva transferred to the Chechen Republic.

On November 27th, 2007, Ramzan Kadyrov, by then already the President of the Chechen Republic, said in an interview to MK Daily newspaper that he did not believe that Murtazalieva was guilty.

A female colony for 300 convicts has been under construction in Grozny for two years.

On October 7th, 2008, Zubovo-Poliansky District Court refused to release Murtazalieva on parole, which she was eligible under the law, because she did not admit the fault and she had disciplinary penalties.