

CHECHEN INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE

WORD

DOSH

DIGEST

ISSN 1818-5851



9 771818 585775



Anna, Anna...

ISSUE #2

THE TRUE MIRROR OF THE LIFE IN CHECHNYA

This Digest was prepared by:



Israpil SHOVKHALOV

- Editor-In-Chief of DOSH magazine. In 1990-1998, he worked at Chechen State Television and Radio as reporter, program presenter, and chief editor of youth and social programs. In 1998-2003, he was assistant to Russian Federation State Duma deputy (Yabloko party). In 2000-2003, he was editor of the press-service of the Russian Human Rights Research Center. Since 2003, he has been Editor-in Chief of DOSH magazine. In 2005, he was the finalist of Andrei Sakharov Award, Journalism as an Act of Conscience. Member of the Union of Journalists of Russia.



Abdulkhazhi DUDUEV

- Executive Editor of DOSH magazine. In 1994-1998, he worked at Chechen State Television and Radio as reporter, presenter of News information program, and chief editor of social and political programs. In 1998-2003, he was assistant to Russian Federation State Duma deputy (Yabloko party). In 2000-2003, he was editor of the press-service of the Russian Human Rights Research Center. Since 2003, he has been Executive Editor of DOSH magazine. Member of the Union of Journalists of Russia.



Svetlana ALIEVA

- Deputy Executive Editor of DOSH magazine. Member of the Union of Literary Workers and the Union of Journalists of Russia. She is the author of *As It Was*, a history of the peoples subject to genocide, repressions and total deportation in the Stalin era, in 3 volumes.



Ismail SHOVKHALOV

- Reporter and Photo Reporter of DOSH magazine in the Chechen Republic. In 2002, he graduated from Oriental Department of State University in Ankara. In 2004, he completed graduate studies at Humanities Institute (Turkey) and received his Ph.D in Humanities. He is the author of many reports in defense of war victims.



Tina BRUXELLES

- Special Reporter of DOSH magazine in Europe. President of the Chechn Association in Belgium.



Irina VASYUCHENKO

- Literary Editor of DOSH magazine. Writer, literary critic, translator, member of the Union of Writers of Moscow and the Union of Translators.



Mikhail NOVIKOV

- Consultant. Translation into English.



Vitaly KUZMENKOV

- Layout Designer.

OFFICE IN MOSCOW

4 Luchnikov Per., office 1
Moscow, 103982
Russian Federation
Tel.: +7 (495) 621.0424
Tel./fax: +7 (495) 625.0663
E-mail: info@doshdu.ru
www.doshdu.ru

OFFICE IN GROZNY

92 ul. Mayakovskogo
Grozny, 364051
Chechen Republic

Editor-in-Chief
Israpil SHOVKHALOV
E-mail: israpil@doshdu.ru

Executive Editor
Abdulla DUDUEV
E-mail: abdulla@doshdu.ru

Deputy Executive Editor
Svetlana ALIEVA

DEPARTMENTS

Society
Zoya SVETOVA
Maria KATYSHEVA
Inna BUTORINA
Murad MUSAEV
Mariam YANDIEVA
History
Stepan KASHURKO
Timur MUZAEV

Corespondents
Ismail SHOVKHALOV (Grozny)
Maret ISAEVA (Grozny)
Tina BRUXELLES (Europe)
Secretary
Georgy ZINGER
Literary Editor
Irina VASYUCHENKO
Layout Design
Vitaly KUZMENKOV

The magazine is registered with the Ministry of Press, Television and Radio Broadcasting and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation. Registration Certificate PI #77-15652, June 9, 2003.

Founder and Publisher
Regional Civic Initiative - The Right to Life and Human Dignity Public Organization

Board Chairman
Viktor KOGAN-YASNYY
Executive Director
Lyudmila ALDOSHINA

The opinions expressed in author signed materials and in interviews do not necessarily reflect the position of the Editorial Board of the magazine or its publisher. All materials published in this issue are protected by copyright and belong to the Editorial Board. Any reproduction in any way without the expressed written permission of the Editorial Board is prohibited. The use or quotation of the materials must contain a reference to DOSH Magazine.

The magazine is published quarterly in the Russian language since June, 2003.

CONTENTS

#3(9)2005	
Abdulla DUDUEV	
WAR GENERATION	2
#3(9)2005	
Ismail KURBAKHAZHIEV	
PARADISE LOST	4
#4(10)2005	
Maret ISAEVA	
MENTALLY DISABLED PERSONS. THE FINAL DIAGNOSIS?	8
#4(10)2005	
Abdulla DUDUEV	
GALINA STAROVOITOVA: IT IS THE SPIRIT OF RELATIONS THAT IS IMPORTANT	10
#1(11)2006	
Milana ARAPIEVA	
A CHECHEN AT OWN WILL	15
#2(12)2006	
Ismail SHOCHKHALOV	
RUSSIAN VODKA: FRESH BREATH FACILITATES UNDERSTANDING	18
#3(13) 2006	
Tina BRUXELLES	
ONE MAN IS NO MAN?	22
#3(13) 2006	
Tina ISMAILOVA	
ANNA, ANNA... TODAY YOUR HEROES CRY FOR THE FIRST TIME!	23
#3(13) 2006	
Abdulla DUDUEV	
THE MADNESS OF BOASTFUL SELF-DECEPTION	24
#3(13) 2006	
Milan ARAPIEVA	
UNCERTAINTY IS A SLOW TORTURE	26
#1(15) 2007	
Abdulla DUDUEV	
LIFE IN A GLASS HOUSE	29
#3(17) 2007	
Lidiya YUSUPOVA	
THE WOLF	30

The publication of this Digest was made possible through a grant provided by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Moscow.

Dear readers,

We are happy to present to you the second issue of DOSH magazine digest in English. Like the first issue, it is also published thanks to support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Moscow.

In this issue, we will tell you about probably the most serious and painful post-war problems of the Chechen society. There is a whole generation of children whom the two destructive wars have made invalids. According to official statistics only, there are over 20 thousand children of school age with different degrees of physical disability. They are deprived of all those pleasures of life that are natural to their peers all over the world.

Another problem is the search for the missing people. Over the past 13 years, many relatives remain in an inconsolable grief because they do not have an opportunity to find their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters not only alive but even their remains to bury them in a humane way.

The majority of the articles in this issue are dedicated to the memory of our unforgettable colleague and comrade-in-arms Anna Politkovskaya, an observer of Novaya Gazeta daily newspaper, who was killed in Moscow on October 7th, 2006. The perfidious murder of the most known throughout the world and, without exaggeration, the most courageous Russian journalist shook the entire world. This tragedy was especially painful to the hearts of the Chechens to whose tragedies, pain, and sufferings Anna Politkovskaya devoted the last years of her life.

In the digest you can learn about the events in Ingushetia that in the past six months has turned into the most unstable region in Northern Caucasus, into a true zone of "counter-terror" Russian style with all its typical attributes: sweep operations, bombardments of peaceful houses, arrests, abductions, and murders of innocent people. This issue also contains articles on human rights and political issues.

We express our deep gratitude to the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Moscow and to Mr. B?rd Ivar Svendsen, Counsellor of the Embassy whose help and support gave to the editorial team of the only Caucasian independent magazine an opportunity to publish the first and the second issues of the digest.

Yours faithfully,

Israpil SHOCHKHALOV
Editor-in-Chief



Dosh #3(9)2005
Abdulla DUDUEV

WAR GENERATION

On September 1, a new academic year started in all schools. In the Chechen Republic, children also went to school. However, thousands of Chechen children will stay outside of school walls again, just like in the previous years, not because of their fault or against their will. The war swept over several generations with the tracks of armored troop-carriers and produced many orphans, half-orphans, and

small invalids crippled by bombs, artillery shells, and mine traps placed all over the republic by those who had come "to liberate" them.

According to the official statistics only, there are 19,500 children-invalids in the republic. But this number is definitely underestimated, actually it can be one and a half or even two times higher. When there is an emergency or an accident in which children suffered, rescue teams together with doctors and psychiatrists are usually sent to provide urgent psychological help to the place of accident. After that a complex rehabilitation of survivors usually takes place. And who came to the aid of the Chechen children when they were bombed and, as it is said in a poem by Yuri Verolsky, a former professor of the University of Grozny, were killed wholesale and retail? Who is caring about their rehabilitation today?

Since 1995, many

Russian and international nongovernmental organizations have been bringing humanitarian help to the Chechen Republic, and it has been a substantial assistance. Now we are talking about the most bitter - about the fate of the crippled children. When the tragedy in Beslan happened, all of Russia, all of Europe, and all of world grieved. But the Chechens grieved the most because nobody else can understand the parents' pain of loss and suffering of their children of the brotherly Ossetia people like the Chechens understand it. It is really fair that almost all the countries of the world continue to help the victims of Beslan! It proves that humanity exists not only in words. There is a hope that due to this universal care the wounds can be cured.

However, it sometimes seems as if the world has got used to the sufferings of the Chechen children. Maybe because there is too much suffering (except orphans and invalids, forty thousand children (!) were simply killed), or perhaps the tragedy that has been lasting for ten years can no longer shock anybody. Anyway, haven't thousands of Chechen children become innocent hostages in the "struggle against international terrorism"? A General of the Russian army once said: "All the Chechen males from ten to sixty years of age are potential terrorists!" The indifference of the society forces to suspect that the saying of the gallant general has gradually got into the consciousness of masses.

Children feel and understand everything not worse than adults. These generations of war will grow up realizing that they are surrounded by a wall of cruelty and callousness of the adults. What shall we tell them then? Who will explain to a twelve-year old Said-Supian Sagipov what for he lost several the fingers of his hand and his left leg and why he was nearly burned down alive? And there are hundreds like him out there...

Isn't it a shame to the authorities of the republic, the federal authorities and all the mankind that 19,500 Chechen children cannot receive education because they are invalids?

We talked about their living conditions with Paula Viskhanova, assistant to the Chairman of State Council of the Chechen Republic on social policy, a member of the youth chamber of the State Duma of Russian Federation, the official who will not be exaggerating the problem. The conversation with Paula Viskhanova was reported by Maret Isaeva, our special correspondent in Grozny.



How many children started classes at schools this year? How many schools will operate in the republic?

According to the Ministry of Education and Sciences of the Chechen Republic, over 456 schools were open on September, 1st. There are 240,000 children of school age from 6 to 16 years in the republic. Of them, over 213,500 children regularly attend school.

Therefore, it means that more than 26,000 children do not go to school. Why?

The matter is that there is a huge number of children-invalids. According to the latest information from the Ministry of Labor and Social Development of the Chechen Republic, there are 19,000 of such children. And here I would like to talk about the problem of social protection of childhood. It is believed that throughout its history the mankind tried to give all the best to children. But judging how many children here live today, you cannot say that the society and authorities pay due attention to their care. In addition to children-invalids, there are 1,500 orphans in the republic, 28,000 half-orphans, more than 270,000 children come from large families - this is what statistics show. All of them live "below the breadline", in other words they live in poverty. If we sum up all our data, a terrible figure turns out - 330,000 socially unprotected children.

How many children became invalids due to the "antiterrorist operation"?

During the military operations, a half of the entire number of children-invalids became crippled. Even now, they, as a matter of fact, live in the conditions of terror, and the society and authorities do not try to change their condition. In my opinion, there is no excuse for it.

Are there any specialized institutions for children that are functioning now?

In the 1990s, we had 16 boarding schools. Only five of them are functioning now in rented premises. This number includes boarding schools in Grozny: one for blind and poorly seeing (29 Kirov St.) and one for deaf and poorly hearing children (33 Nevskaya St.). The



total number of children of these categories is 1,350 persons, of them 383 are deaf and poorly hearing. These children cannot study in rented premises whereas their former schools that were built especially for such children are no longer there. Besides, the conditions do not allow residing children at boarding schools. And many children have parents who are also invalids, such children should stay in boarding schools day and night.

Are all the sixteen boarding school buildings really destroyed? Why even the operating boarding schools are forced to rent premises?

No, four of them were destroyed by the war, the other remaining buildings are occupied by police and administrative structures. This was the topic of a special session of the commission of State Council of the Chechen Republic. Representatives of the military commandant's office were invited to attend this session, as well as of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, an invitation was also sent to Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation Ivanov and Minister of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation Nurgaliev. And here is an example for you: Ivanov replied that he had given an order to the administration of Oktyabrsky district to release their native building for the deaf children. But the administration, as it appeared, liked that their Temporary department was

located in the former boarding school building. The building suits them well. There is hospital 4 in another building and yet another building was occupied by the administration of Kurchaloy district. We are working towards the release of these buildings. So far unsuccessfully.

Are there any public or humanitarian organizations of a regional or inter-regional level in the republic that are engaged in children's programs?

I know nothing about such organizations. Certainly, there are organizations that are engaged in single action humanitarian aid but there are no organization that are engaged in massive children's rehabilitation or organizing tours of the Chechen children abroad. Psychological rehabilitation of children here, in the Chechen Republic, or with trips to other regions of Russian Federation is undoubtedly a good thing but it could have an absolutely positive effect if our children could have an opportunity to see a different life, a different world in other countries.

In your opinion, what is the reason for restrictions imposed on international children's programs in the Chechen Republic: the state policy and unwillingness of international organizations to interfere with it or because it is unsafe to develop any big programs in the Chechen Republic?

It is a very complicated question but is also a very good one. We saw how the entire world responded to the tragedy in Beslan. It was pleasant to see that the mankind woke up at last. But there were also the tragedies in Samashki and Serzhen-Yurt, not only born children but also not born children suffered. Where was the humanity of mankind then? Certainly, many condemn military actions in the Chechen Republic. Certainly, no mother is glad to what is happening but it is mass-media and illiterate politicians who coined the image of a Chechen-gangster.

Our tomorrow is today's children of the Chechen Republic. What it will be should be judged by our attitude to children. It would be desirable to hope for the best...



P.S. Numbers speak for themselves. As of August, 1st, ten Chechen children were sent for summer vacations to the All-Russia children's center Orlyonok due to the free vouchers allocated by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation. 366 children made a trip abroad through invitations connected with different specialized programs. Those were through the Ministry of Labor and Social Development. 19.5 million rubles allocated to the Ministry for the organization of summer vacations were forwarded to the Ministry of a Science and Education of the Chechen Republic. Through this ministry, as of May, 26th, 646 children out of planned 1009 traveled on vacation. According to the regional branch of Social Insurance Fund, as of August, 1st, 2005, 17,500 children out of planned 22,700 were sent on vacations trips. The most immoral about it is that this number includes the children of the Fund employees whereas there are 330,000 socially unprotected children and an 80% unemployment rate in the republic! Besides, according to the conclusion of the commission of State Council of the Chechen Republic, the vacation trip was not organized by the best standards.



Dosh #3(9)2005
Ismail KURBAKHAZIEV
(Photos by the author)

PARADISE



LOST

"You so much wished to see your native mountains" - this touching inscription in the memory of his only son was once left by doctor N.A. Vertepov in an alcove called The Temple of Air that he himself built on a high hill at a resort-sanatorium Sernovodsk-Caucasian in the 19th century. What a strange coincidence, the unique resort on the territory of the Chechen Republic had the same tragic fate as the doctor's son...

We passed numerous block posts on the Baku highway and less than two hours later we reached the place once known to all in the Soviet Union. Now its name is simple - Sernovodsk whereas several years ago it was called Sernovodsk-Caucasian resort. Probably many, just like me, will be surprised to learn that there was a health resort in the Chechen Republic where people from Kamchatka or Moscow aspired to come here before the tragic events of past decade and the diligence of our domestic mass-media gave the Chechen Republic the reputation of a place where there is no rest.

Sernovodsk-Caucasian was one of the oldest health resorts in our country. It was included in the catalogue of the best resorts-sanatoria of the USSR. Tens of thousands of people came here to improve health over the 50 years of its existence. Its water springs were really the pride of the republic. However, nothing is left of it now except those well-known springs.

Our arrival slightly embarrassed the local administration. "So you are going to write about the resort? You

see, the matter is that the resort as such no longer exists" - they told us. We did not hope to find it in an excellent condition. However what we saw in a place that, according to old residents, used to be quite recently a paradise surpassed our worst fears.

The History of the Resort

Long before the enlightened Russia learned about the curative properties of Mikhailovsky (Sernovodsk) hot springs, local residents had already used them. They didn't bathe but rather used the steam of the springs. They put a patient on a stretcher made of a wattle fence, wrapped him up in a felt coat and put above the spring. As we discovered in the survived historical archives, a well-known "people's doctor" Magomet-Mulla was engaged in healing here who during the greatest inflow of patients used to live in the tower built on the mountain above the hot spring.

Gottlieb Schober, the court physician of Peter the Great, was the first in Russia who described in 1717 the curative properties of hot springs of the Caucasus, including the hot springs of Sernovodsk. Though Schober provided to the tsar only hearsay about mineral springs and their properties rather than scientific research, many became interested in hot springs. Many researchers, including the famous traveler Johann G?ldenst?dt, visited this area after Schober. The first Russian doctor to use Sernovodsk waters for treatment

of patients was doctor Wehrsein. He compiled a description of Mikhailovsky (Sernovodsk) and Sleptsovsky mineral waters for Military-Medical Magazine in 1849. All the guidebooks about the Caucasus published afterwards described Sernovodsk hot springs as "one of the most curative on the Caucasus, giving good effect in treatment of orthopedic traumas, professional illnesses, skin and gynecologic diseases, gastrointestinal diseases, etc."

By the time when the rumor about the healing Sernovodsk springs spread by word of mouth far outside Chechnya that was still at war, the Cossack armies located nearby were already using them. Cossack villages were quickly built on the territories won from the Chechens. In 1845, Sunzhenskaya village was founded in the area, later renamed Sleptsovskaya, and a year later Mikhailovskaya village was founded here that gave its name to the local mineral springs.

In 1848, a Cossack military hospital with a bathing branch on mineral springs was opened in Mikhailovskaya village. It had about a hundred patients every year. Tenginsky infantry division, in which M.Y.Lermontov banished to the Caucasus served in 1840, conducted further development of Mikhailovsky and Sleptsovsky sulfuric hot springs. In particular, Mikhailovsky hot springs were fenced with a stone wall (thus, it closed access to them for the local people) and also the buildings with baths inside were constructed.

When in 1857 a hospital of the 2nd category was built in Goryachevodskaya village, the hospital in Mikhailovskaya was

closed and a year later it was replaced by an infirmary of the 5th Cossack brigade for 40 patients. To repair the hospital facilities, this division allocated only 45 rubles and 40 kopecks. After that the hot springs passed repeatedly from one owner to another, periodically closing and reopening. Soon the military-medical inspector insisted that a hospital of the 1st category should be opened in Mikhailovskaya and the hospital in Goryachevodskaya closed.

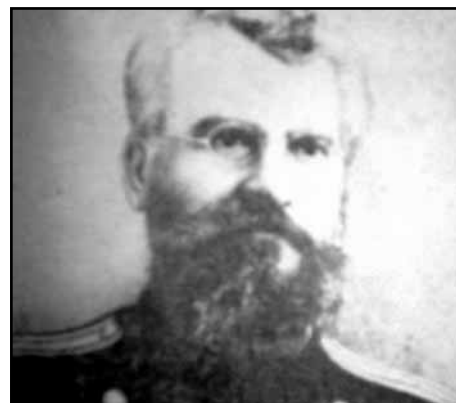
Because of absence of due financing the infirmary was gradually falling into decay and in 1869 the Commandment of the Caucasian military district sold the hospital for 187 rubles and 81 kopecks. This decision was an original answer of the military command to numerous petitions of local authorities for increased financing of the hot springs.

The indifferent attitude of the authorities towards the hot springs continued: the decision to allocate the area for mineral hot springs was taken on April 23rd, 1870, it was approved only on December 12th, 1875, and the site was actually allocated only in 1885 - 15 years later.

During this period, the facilities of the former infirmary remained in poor condition. As before local residents began to use the healing springs without any medical supervision. Only almost twenty years later, thanks to selflessness and huge efforts of doctor N.A.Vertepov, the resort was revived and functioned continuously until recently.

N.A.Vertepov

This person deserves a special story. In fact, his work, his presence, his spirit, and



his immense love to these places can be felt in every brick even of the destroyed resort. Being a well educated expert, he could find application of his knowledge in any other place, at any other resort. However he preferred a thorny path of the creator of a new health resort using the wonderful properties of Mikhailovsky (Sernovodsk) healing waters. This wonderful person laid the basis of future successes of the well-known resort.

After graduating from the medical department of Kharkov University, Nikolay Abramovich Vertepov worked in Veden fortress, and from 1891 to 1919 he was a local doctor of Sunzhensky district in Mikhailovskaya village (now Sernovodskaya). His son Alexander was born in Veden whose tragic destiny is closely connected with the destiny of the resort.

In 1892, Vertepov put here a barrack with two baths thanks to donations of private persons and with the assistance of railway administration and military exchequer. Later he constructed a special building where started to treat the patients with regular baths. In 1895, Terskie Vedomosti newspaper announced "the opening of a medical resort based on Mikhailovsky army hot springs." This was the beginning of one of the best and most popular health resorts in the country, with a powerful infrastructure and the miraculous qualities of its waters. All of this became possible only owing to the work and enthusiasm of doctor Vertepov. During 29 years of his life he gave so much attention, love and energy to hundreds and thousands of his patients!

Vertepov died in 1919 of typhus. He was buried here in Sernovodsk on an orthodox cemetery.

"The Temple of Air"

The story of the creation of this alcove is very interesting and sad at the same time. Nikolai Vertepov's only son Alexander who he immensely loved was born in Veden. The boy grew clever and was greatly fascinated with the Caucasian mountains. He simply adored them: he





could sit for hours admiring them. But he had a tragic fate. We know neither the details, nor the reasons that pushed him that way, but, anyway, in 1905 Alexander became involved in the murder of general-governor of Odessa Karangozov that was accomplished in the city of Kislovodsk. Alexander left the country through Finland to Belgium and then to France. All time that he was abroad he dreamed to see even once the Caucasian mountains which became native for him. But this dream could not be fulfilled. In 1914, Alexander was killed during the World War.

The news about the loss of his beloved son was a shock to doctor Vertepov. He didn't have other children and he decided to immortalize the memory of his son by constructing an alcove. He erected it on one of the high hills near the healing springs and named it "The Temple of Air" and inside of a vaulted roof on the second floor he fixed a bas-relief with an inscription: "You so much wished to see your native mountains."

The alcove became the symbol of Sernovodsk-Caucasian resort. A magnificent panorama of the Main Caucasian ridge and the so-called Black mountains opens from this alcove. On a clear sunny day you can see the two-headed Elbrus and the peak of Kazbek. Also visible from here is Tembolt-Lam, or as the Georgians call it, Tebulos-Mta which is on the border of the Chechen Republic and Georgia and is four thousand meters above the sea level.

Everyone who ever visited this place for health treatment climbed up to this alcove remembered the name of doctor Vertepov

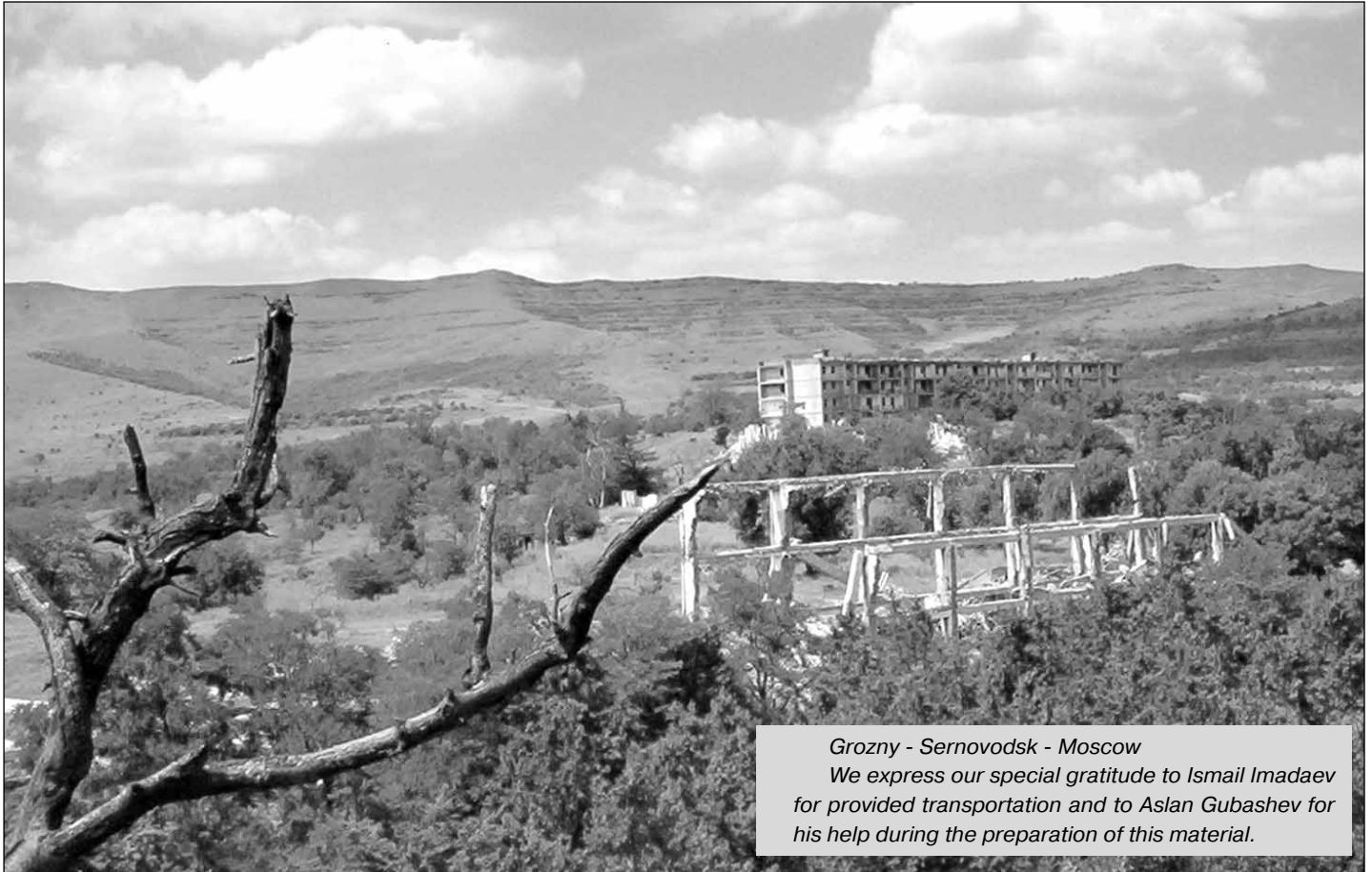
with gratitude. The alcove was perceived not only as a monument to the young man but rather as a monument to his father, the noble founder of the resort. There is something in this high-mountainous structure that reveals the greatness of his souls.

The alcove is still there, standing lonely, almost destroyed, still sadly overlooking

the majestic mountains. We climbed up to it along the once crowded and nowadays deserted alleys. It was not an easy task - both stairways leading upward were destroyed by a direct hit of a rocket.

Up there, having climbed up on the destroyed stairways and having read the inscription on the bas-relief that survived





*Grozny - Sernovodsk - Moscow
We express our special gratitude to Ismail Imadaev
for provided transportation and to Aslan Gubashev for
his help during the preparation of this material.*

by miracle, we could only think of how different Russian officers were! Someone two centuries ago thought about useful and necessary for everyone, while the others, not thinking about anything, released several rockets into this past. In the name of what? There is a proverb: "Do not shoot at the past from a pistol - the future will shoot at you from a gun." If it so, then the weapon from which the future should shoot at the barbarians who destroyed "The Temple of Air" probably is yet to be created by the same future.

It is similar to magic, the alcove still has not failed. Its condition is pitiable, however restoration is possible. There only needs to be a wish... It would be desirable to believe that it will be possible to return this heavily suffered relic to our republic which has already lost many of its historical values over these two wars.

When we reached the buildings of the resort, some young guys were destroying the "skeleton" of a well-known eight-story Assa deluxe hotel with their sledge hammers. The horrifying unpleasant deaf knocks of their iron "fists" echoed above the mountains. We came up closer. All the bricks were gone a long time ago. Now it was the turn for multiton concrete plates. The guys could not understand my surprise: here there are only ruins - who needs them? Once all of us needed it!

We moved further, despair reigned everywhere. Fatima Musaeva who worked here for 25 years at the local staff department told us there used to be a wood around the resort, about 700 hectares. According to her, still recently there were fruit plantations here, fresh fruit and vegetables got immediately from branches and beds directly on the tables of the patients. There were also the resort's own farms that supplied meat and dairy products straight to health-resort visitors. Also, there were two ponds with fresh fish. On the territory of the resort there was also a branch of the Savings Bank, a post office, a few shops, cinemas, a restaurant, and sports facilities. The resort provided 1,500 workplaces for the inhabitants of nearby villages who considered it a blessing. But now it is all in the past.

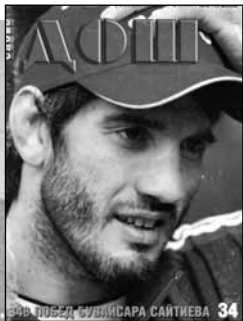
It was sad to see it and at the same time to recollect the crowds of schoolchildren that gathered in front of the Drama Theatre in Grozny - all of them went on vacation to Tiberda and Nalchik. Why not spend all that vacation money to restore the resort?! Spending would be justified hundredfold. Our children could come here and the budget of the republic could constantly grow. In such meditations we reached the well-known sulfuric springs. According to Fatima, about four thousand people came here for health treatment during one shift. And this number increased by tens times over a season. Now chaos reigns

here, and we are forced to go elsewhere to treat our sores but not here.

I wandered around this place as if it was the sunken Titanic...

On our way back we stopped at the administration of the village and Sunzhensky district where we were told that despite numerous requests and appeals to the government of the Chechen Republic, to different ministries, this resort was neither included in the Federal Program on restoration of the republic nor did it get at all into the list of the objects which are due to restoration in the foreseeable future. As we were told by Shirvani Umakhanov, first assistant to the head of administration of Sunzhensky district of the Chechen Republic, they even called the Danish council on refugees for help, let alone the republican authorities. According to Umakhanov, the district budget has no means not even for restoration of the resort but even to somehow counteract to the arbitrariness created there by local residents. The district administration with pleasure would meet with any investor who wished even on certain conditions to invest in restoration of the bath buildings.

A lot of water has flowed away since the time when the foot of the doctor-enthusiast stepped onto this ground. How long should these healing springs wait for a new doctor Vertepov. Its waters should not flow in vain...



Dosh #4(10)2005
Marek ISAIEVA

MENTALLY DISABLED PERSONS.



THE FINAL DIAGNOSIS?

When you walk along the sad streets of the crippled Grozny you sometimes catch a vacant stare, a strange grin, a grimace, or even an unexplainable aggression of a stranger directed at you. Then you guess: perhaps it is a mentally ill person?

It sounds more polite than a "madman", a rigid mot from the medical slang but you may name them as you like it is still a question of our impression only while the law allows you to pronounce such a diagnosis only after a set of tests and other special inspection procedures. There are 130 mentally disabled persons on treatment at Samashki Republican mental hospital (people call it Zakan-Yurt hospital). Before the war, in 1999, the number of patients here was almost half less. However, then the conditions of treatment were different, now much of what is needed in this specialized clinic is gone. There are great difficulties with equipment and medication supplies. Luckily, the team of doctors performing their professional duty every day is still there, only owing to them the hospital continues to function. Its head physician Adam Elzhurkaev appointed on October 5th, 2004 also manages to fulfill his almost impossible task.

As of today, two departments, men's and women's, function at the hospital. It may seem only natural but in fact it is a great achievement because earlier it used to be just one mixed department!

The medical staff, 120 people total, is all reliable, decent, and humane people. There are only seven doctors among them while the current number of patients requires that there should be not less than thirteen doctors. However, it is difficult to persuade, for example, a

gynecologist to come to such a distance hospital for a quarter of the rate.

There are no disinfection facilities or even a lab at the disposal while they are so much in demand. Sometimes the head physician calls the sanitation station at Achkhoy-Martan and they bring a mobile disinfection chamber, but to completely eliminate lice infestation, it is necessary to have one on site. Among the needed equipment are fixing beds, restraining straps, equipment for taking electrocardiogram, quartz lamps, and dry boxes. A permanent supply of water is also needed.

It should be noted that the hospital is indeed repaired: the kitchen and the wards are clean, there is a tidy dining room. The patients get food three times a day. Adam names with gratitude those who provided help. Basically support comes from Ramzan Kadyrov. It was him who organized the repair works in the clinic. Support also comes from the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Ministry of Construction, some other authorities, and simply from kind people. For example, the head physician told a touching story about one guy from Khambi-Irzi village brought once many sweets and fruits for the patients and refused to give his name: he said that he was doing it for God's sake.

Another department is under construction now, the foundation is already there and bricks are brought on site. There is still a lot to be done. Many patients are absolutely lonely: nobody comes to see 60% of them though they do have relatives. The medics explain the reason for such an attitude that contradicts the national mentality: many patients come from remote settlements, transporta-

tion is expensive, unemployment is high in the republic, everything is destroyed, and there are simply no means to get here...

This is the sad reality of the hospital today but there was a much more terrible story in the recent past. It is not forgotten and how one will forget such? Three participants of those events continue to work here and there are three patients who were the eyewitnesses. When the war began many employees left the clinic. Those relatives who could take the patients back home. Those patients who had no relatives a place to move and the medical staff who were the most devoted to their professional duty stayed. There were five doctors and nurses and thirty patients of different nationalities: there were a lot of Russians, Armenians, Chechens, etc.

The hospital was all covered with pasted red crosses, a red cross was shining brightly both on the roof of the building and on the ambulance car. There was a federal military post nearby at the crossroads. The guards were warned there was a psychiatric clinic with patients who had no place to go. In the evening of October 31st, having fed patients physicians led by head physician Rashid Dadaev decided to go to the village...

When they returned in the morning they were met with heavy gunfire from two sides at the gate of the hospital. There were federal military men in the hospital yard. Rashid Dadaev was killed right there, senior nurse Dagman Tezhurkaeva was heavily wounded, and main nurse Umar Uzarov and the secretary of the hospital Khadizhat Batsaeva received fragmental wounds. They were not allowed to proceed on the territory of the clinic but were given a cart to take away the body of the head physician.

All this happened on November 1st, 1999, and on November 6th Umar Uzarov, hardly having received medical treatment, came here again. "My soul wanted to be here, - so he explained it, - I felt pity for the patients." However, at the gate he was met with automatic gunfire, this time he was wounded seriously. Though he was bleeding profusely the military took him with them, as it appeared, for interrogation. Having exhausted the wounded physician with boorish, ridiculous inquiry, they released him and said not to worry about the patients any more, "the question will be solved."

Nurse Dagman stayed for two months in a hospital in Ingushetia. She survived but her health is terribly undermined: one of the bullets is still in her body and the doctors are not sure about the operation...

Meanwhile, Umar, the

main nurse, in spite of the assurances he received from the federal troops continued to worry about the patients. Having recovered after the wound he began to gather information about the survived patients of whom he and his colleagues cared so much trying as much as they could to ease their sufferings.

He found out that a part of the patients was evacuated. A few people ran away being frightened of the sudden chaos, shooting, noise, and rough shouts of aggressors. The fugitives were seen by the inhabitants of a nearby village, they passed by their houses in hospital clothes and their traces were lost. Nobody knows where these homeless, helpless people disappeared. But it is not all. A part of the patients of the hospital were shot...

There are things that are impossible and not necessary to comment.

The federal soldiers started to destroy the empty building. Unlike their unfortunate patients who ran away from this damned place and the armed crowd of those who could hardly be called humans, Umar Uzarov, Dagman Tezhueva and Khadizhat Batsaeva decided on their own initiative to rescue the hospital. The Ministry of Health supported them. On March 19th, 2001, the clinic opened again. The new head physician Ruslan Asiev was appointed to replace the killed Rashid Dadaev.

Those three patients who returned soon after the hospital reopened often tell how the soldiers were shooting the patients. One can feel in their passionate, agitated speech that those pictures again rise before their eyes in all horror. Usually such stories end with a strong attack...

Even the furious medieval rulers did not attempt upon a life of insane persons, they were considered blessed, and many believed that the God spoke through their lips... To kill



an innocent, helpless person who is like a child cannot quite understand what is happening is not just a sin but more than a crime. The army is supposed to defend the land and the people. And when such "defenders" rush into the hospital and shoot helpless patients? Thinking about it leads to despair. We can still be proud of those who carry out their professional duty, in the name of good and compassion, risk themselves, and try to rescue a human life and ease the sufferings... And the others shoot both at them and at those who they try to save.

Where is the border of war and peace, of good and evil? What happens to a society which is not noticing how it erases these borders? What can it be its diagnosis after so many tests offered by the wartime and the present, though only conditional peaceful time?

Is it all clear already, the illness is incurable? Is the diagnosis final?

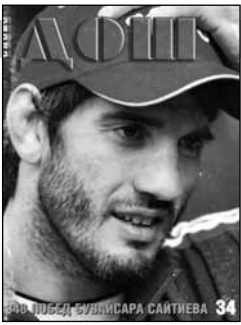
Recently, many charity events take place in the republic. There are many public organizations involved in charity activities. So, we are still humans. There are souls among us who are not disfigured by cynicism and cruelty, capable of compassion. Let them know that in Zakan-Yurt village there is a hospital which has gone through such inconceivable shocks and there are 130 sick human souls in it. No shows, no big expenses here are necessary. They only want to meet with healthy souls, to feel warmth and support, and to revive the hope that they too will find calm in their souls. And they also

need a simple disinfection chamber: healing sick souls is a complex and long process and it would be good if their bodies were no longer tormented by insects. The unknown guy from Khambi-Irzi brought to them what he could and did not name himself but all the 130 patients now know him. They now know what a healthy soul is.

Do we have such one?



Zakan-Yurt - Grozny



Dosh #4(10)2005
Abdulla DUDUEV

GALINA STAROVOITOVA: IT IS THE SPIRIT OF RELATIONS THAT IS IMPORTANT



Seven years ago, in November, 1998, Galina Starovoitova was killed in Saint-Petersburg. Cowardly murderers stealthily crept in the night darkness and an unwavering hand shot at the woman. Those who directed this hand knew: they were eliminating a strong and broad thinking opponent from their way. This highly educated and clever woman, one of the prominent politicians of that time possessed such a quiet courage that many men politicians could only dream of and she deserved a faultless reputation that is even rarer among our politicians than personal courage. It was hard to compete with her. As it turned out, it was easier to kill her.

Galina Vasilievna Starovoitova was an active participant in the democratic and human rights movement of the end of 1980s - beginning of the 1990s, a People's Deputy of the USSR and RSFSR, then a deputy of the State Duma, and the leader of Democratic Russia party. She also held the position of Adviser of President Yeltsin on ethno-political issues. She was well known and highly respected in Russia and in many other countries. She won support of many

peoples of the former Union and Russia and special respect due to her consecutive position on interethnic relations.

In the summer of 1997, two days before the end of my business trip to Moscow, when the State Duma was on vacation, I called deputy Starovoitova's office with a request for an interview. Her assistants told me that Galina Vasilievna was on leave and asked me to call back the following day. I did so though I was sure that it would be impossible to meet with her that time: the deputy is on vacation! I was greatly surprised when I got an appointment on the very same day.

We talked for over three hours. Galina Vasilievna amazed me with her modesty, spontaneity, openness, and an absolute competence and accuracy of political forecasts. We spoke about the events in the Chechen Republic, in the Caucasus and in Russia at the beginning of the 1990s, about the reasons of the war, its possible and inevitable consequences, and certainly about the means that could disseminate feelings of insult and enmity caused by the senseless massacre and about what could help the people to adjust to peaceful co-existence.

After that we met with Galina Vasilievna several times. And a year later the country heard the terrible news.

Today, watching the video interview from seven-year ago, I am sometimes surprised at the faultlessness of her conclusions and her foresight. When she is deceived, you can feel such humanity in her not fulfilled hopes for a faster celebration of good and peace in the world...

Below are excerpts from this interview. So, we shall listen to Galina Starovoitova who so many years back then clearly saw much of what now, even paid for by so many victims, the authorities fail to realize.

About the Events in the Chechen Republic in 1991

There was a revolution in the Chechen Republic which passed unnoticed. The events of a larger global scale took place at the moment: the USSR was breaking up, the disintegration of Yugoslavia and later of Czechoslovakia were just outlined, the struggle for independence in Ukraine and in the Baltics was developing. Neither here nor in the West due attention was given to similar processes going on in the Chechen Republic. And when they started to worry they made an overdue attempt to solve the problem by force. In the beginning of November, soon after the election of a new president Dudaev, S.Shakhrai and several other officials came to the Chechen Republic. The Supreme Soviet of Russia relied on Shakhrai's report and declared the elections in the Chechen Republic void. After that, under a rather active pressure of vice-president Rutskoi and other influential people in the republic, the army entered Chechnya. Several army units occupied the airport, there was an attempt to introduce the state of emergency.

I was visiting Sweden and Finland on behalf of B.Yeltsin at this time, I had meetings with heads of these states, explained what Russia's position would be after disintegration of the USSR, after the August putsch. It was a very important mission. Having heard about the events in the Chechen Republic, I called B.Yeltsin from our embassy in Helsinki and convinced him that it would be a terrible mistake and that the army should be moved out immediately while military action did not start yet. I quickly finished the visit and returned. Fortunately, the Supreme Soviet of Russia cancelled the operation and the army units were moved out in less than two days without a single shot. That time the threat of war was eliminated, certainly under the pressure of the democratic forces. But the generals firmly remembered it. Then, in the end of 1992, they made a new attempt to start a war by deporting the Ingushs from Prigorodny district. I interfered again and the generals could not forgive it to me. It was the cause of my dismissal from the Administration of the President. The positions of the party of war were very strong then and B.Yeltsin, unfortunately, gave in to their argument.

There were many tiny details in all of this. My opponents decided to slander me. The President of Northern Ossetia Galazov and several members of the Security Council, such as Georgy Khizha who directly participated in the events in the Prigorodny district (he was in charge in the zone of the state of emergency),

declared that I, having arrived in Vladikavkaz to the session of the Supreme Soviet of Northern Ossetia, ostensibly threatened the deputies during my meetings with them: "You are all communists, soon Yeltsin will disperse you..." They also claimed that I criticized B.Yeltsin's position by attacking his decree about the state of emergency. The President did not believe it at first when he heard about it: "It cannot be that my adviser could behave like this. She knows what a thin matter ethnic relations are." But when a second person, apparently irrespective of the first, gave him the same information (actually it was a plot) he said: "It means she should be dismissed. Who should I then believe if I cannot rely on the adviser?" This very moment someone handed to him a draft decree about my dismissal that had been prepared in advance. B.Yeltsin signed it. In fact, I wasn't even at all in Vladikavkaz, and I never said to these people what was attributed to me. In short, it was a multiphase operation to eliminate me which had been prepared for a long time and carefully by the party of war.

I worked as adviser to B.Yeltsin from 1991 till 1992. Two difficult years. By the way, there was not a single bloody collision because of interethnic relations in the Russian Federation during this period. Though there were difficulties with Tatarstan, Yakutia, Karachaevo-Circassia, and other regions. All these problems were solved by negotiations, in my office. And when the other forces began to press B.Yeltsin and to misinform him it was the beginning of quite a different politics. Even during this period, I tried to begin negotiations, called Dudaev on the phone. We actually already started negotiations with him in spite of the fact that General Prosecutor Stepankov had already written out a warrant to arrest him.

As far as I remember, it was in February, 1992.

It was during the meeting of the Supreme Soviet and B.Yeltsin's advisers. We were thinking how to resolve crisis situations on the Northern Caucasus. It was in Filatov's office. I said: "What are we waiting for? Let's start direct negotiations with the leaders, with the elected authorities. You make like or dislike Dudaev but he was elected by the Chechen people, he is a legitimate figure, you cannot resolve anything without him."

- He is an extremist, a Muslim fundamentalist, he does not agree to negotiations, - they said.

- And have you tried? - I asked.

They didn't know what to say and I continued:

- Here now, from this phone I shall call him.

- Are you nuts? He will not talk with a woman!

- Maybe not but I must at least attempt to call him.



And I am ready to bet that he will. Because he is a reasonable person, besides he is a general of the Soviet army.

I immediately called Grozny and introduced myself:

- Deputy, adviser to President Yeltsin - Starovoitova. I wish to speak with President Dudaev.

There was a minute or two of a light confusion on the other end of the wire, probably the assistants and secretaries were consulting. And then Dudaev took the phone. My colleagues who were present here listened to the conversation attentively. Certainly, they did not expect such a progress from the very first call made by not the very first person in the state. It appeared, it was so simple to pick up the phone and start speaking.

So, we began to talk with the Chechen President. I did not know him personally but, certainly, we knew about each other. At first Dudaev expressed gratitude to the democratic forces: to Afanasiev, Bonner, and me because we opposed chauvinism, we recognized the right of peoples to decide their destiny.

- It is very important for the peoples of Northern Caucasus that there are such people in Russia, - he said. It was very pleasant and touching. Then I suggested:

- Let's begin negotiations, Dzhokhar Musaevich. We shall form delegations and meet somewhere.

- Well, - he said, - but there is a warrant issued for me. They are searching for me. Let's meet on the territory of Estonia.

Estonia was already an independent state and left Russia. To start negotiations on the territory of another country would mean prior to their start to recognize that the Chechen Republic was an independent state that was not part of the Russian Federation.

- It is a very radical decision, Dzhokhar Musaevich, - I said. - Let's meet in any point of Russia, from Sochi to Vladivostok.

- There is warrant of my arrest written out, - he repeated.

- If I invite you, I will solve this problem, we guarantee safety.

And I invited him to my constituency, to Petersburg.

- I and the mayor of the city Sobchak will create conditions of safety. We shall try to cancel this foolish decision.

He became interested in such an offer. I continued:

- If you want, we shall meet where it is convenient to you. But we invite you to Petersburg where we shall greet you as the President elected by the people.

He told me that he should think it over, consult with his colleagues, and we agreed to communicate again. Everybody was sitting amazed: it turned out that a dialog was not only possible but also was so easily achievable! If they, including B.Yeltsin, could then step over their personal ambitions, I am sure we would have avoided the war, the problem would be solved.

But the next day Khasbulatov interfered. He made a speech in the Supreme Soviet, he rudely offended both Dudaev and the Chechen democracy and responded extremely contemptuously about the elections in the Chechen Republic... And when I requested to connect me again with Grozny I was told that they switched off from the governmental communication line in Moscow. I could not continue these negotiations. And those delegations that went there were not effective enough, they did not go on a due level or did not enjoy such trust. And this historical opportunity was lost. We were very close to simply agree peacefully. I do not know what we would agree about: an associated membership, any economic relations, or about any special status of the Chechen Republic. But we would not have allowed this terrible war.

Right after that they blocked my access to Yeltsin. His environment and the generals made everything that we could not communicate as earlier in private. And I was among very close advisers influential enough to suggest personnel appointments. Certainly, they have always been very jealous in such issues. Since this period (this is not connected with the Chechen Republic but rather with the military department) my opportunities have been very limited, therefore the President did not make an attempt to pick up the phone and call Grozny. Dudaev also kept up appearances. Certainly, I think it was his mistake - to switch himself off from the government communication line. It is wrong to voluntarily deprive oneself of information no matter what kind it was, good or bad. Who is informed is armed. I cannot say that other important people in Grozny behaved ideally either: they did not do everything depending on them to start negotiations.

About the Causes of the 1994-1996 War and Its Consequences

If you take a closer look, you will see that this war had several causes. Strangely enough, I would connect its start with the murder of Dmitry Kholodov, a correspondent of Moskovsky Komsomolets daily newspaper who discovered a lot about corruption in the army, in particular, in the Western group of armies. And he was killed, blown up by someone who no doubt was connected with the military department: a unique explosive was used that came from special labs and access to it could only be allowed to the military. I think the Office of Public Prosecutor knows a name of the murderer but, probably, this person holds such a high rank that they are afraid to make this data public. It was then when the call for Grachev's resignation was made for the first time (I talked about it at the meeting during Kholodov's funeral). The military needed, first of all, to switch the attention of the people from the crimes to something other and, secondly, to show that only the army could save the integrity of Russia and prevent its disintegration. They needed a small victorious war as it used to happen under the tsars. Economic difficulties also played their role, such as the "black Tuesday" and the falling ruble.

Always during the periods of instability, a totalitarian regime needs a war as a means to direct the negative emotions accumulated in society to another channel. The Chechen Republic was a good occasion and it provided some grounds for this purpose, so they decided to take advantage of the opportunity. There was also an external serious push which the West underestimated. I mean the summit in Budapest at the end of November, 1994, when for the first time the expansion of NATO to the East was declared. B.Yeltsin became very angry and said to his Western colleagues with whom he was on brotherly terms before: "It's too early for you to bury democracy in Russia!"

I was in America at this time, all the so different factors that in the consciousness of the Russian population perhaps were not interlaced were well visible from there, such as the "black Tuesday", the murder of Kholodov, the expansion of NATO, the sense of instability, and the feeling of national humiliation experienced by the Russians who appeared outside Russia after the disintegration of the USSR. And all this together feeds the chauvinistic communities like Zhirinovskiy's party. That many factors became intertwined. It seems that B.Yeltsin subconsciously decided: "Since you do not pay attention to us and wish to expand NATO to the East without taking our opinion

into consideration, likewise we shall not reckon with the Western press, human rights or universal values and we shall put things in order in our own house with those methods that we shall consider necessary." Approximately such a concept ripened in his head, though, probably, it was not even a concept but rather an intention. And then the President gave an order to do away with this center of instability. Here such orders are always given vaguely, without specifying what it means and how it needs to be done.

The generals, for their part, when they receive such sort of orders (in this case, it was Grachev who himself was interested in unleashing the conflict) do not require any specifications. What else can be easier - to completely destroy everything by bombing and then to see what would come out of it! Our army always acted in such a way when it entered into the capitals of union republics: Yerevan, Baku, or Vilnius. Our generals wish to sacrifice any amount of people, to impose fear, they are not used to complicate the task for themselves or to understand who is right and who is wrong. They simply destroy everything that will get in their way. They do not know other methods and do not want to know. Besides, certainly, the expert opinion was prepared poorly, there were no professional advisers, and nobody asked the opinions of ethnologists. So, Yeltsin was really misinformed, they managed to convince him that it was possible to solve there all issues with two armored columns over two hours... One could be under such a delusion only not knowing the history of the Northern Caucasus and the history of the struggle of the Chechen people for independence. So, these circumstances led to this tragic mistake. Probably, many will disagree with me but this is how I see the interrelation of all these factors.

This war was a huge moral defeat of the Russian democracy. We, democrats, could not prevent it and the voice of the people was not heard.

People did not want a war in the Chechen Republic, it is unconditionally so. I remember a unique case over the past seven or eight years when the people gathered in the same place both under red and three-colored flags. We together protested against this war: the party of Yavlinsky, Gaydar's party, Democratic Party, and communists - all came to the meeting. People were united in this issue. Certainly, there will always be extreme chauvinists or simply corrupt persons who would be lingering towards authorities. But the majority of the people, just like the majority of journalists, were against the war. Nevertheless, we did not have enough forces to be heard by the people in power. It is our tragedy. Since this moment we started to realize

the fragility of Russian democracy. Russia made its last leap to freedom during the February revolution of 1917 only to slide to Bolshevism and a totalitarian regime after that. If now Russian freedom chokes with blood and dirt of the Chechen war, our militarists must be guilty of it.

About the Peace Treaty Signed by Presidents Yeltsin and Maskhadov on May 12th, 1997 in the Kremlin

I think it was an important treaty. It admitted centuries-old conflicts between our two peoples, well, more precisely, not peoples but rather the wars between the Chechen people and the Russian empire. As a matter of fact it recognized the fact of several attempts of genocide of the Chechens: this is what we call the last war, Stalin deportation, and the results of the Caucasian war. While speaking abroad, in particular in America, I called it genocide. And I hope that still in this life I will see punishment for it: justice must triumph.

I think that an important step to peace was made. As far as I know the Caucasian peoples, the moral factor here is very important. We should repent for this war. B.Yeltsin needs to repent. Certainly, it is impossible to forgive for so many killed people, mothers lost their children... Nevertheless, if our authorities could recognize this mistake, it would be one more saving step. I know how honorable and forgiving the Caucasian peoples and peoples of Transcaucasia are and strong their traditions of honor and dignity are there. It would become much easier to conduct negotiations. I remember an article that I published in Moskovsky Komsomolets: "Russia and the Chechen Republic: a Fatal Embrace." I ended it with a question: "Where is our Willy Brandt?" Being the top person of West Germany in the 1970s, he arrived to Poland and went to the Warsaw ghetto. There, with all television cameras present, he kneeled for one minute as a token of repentance of his people for the crimes that had been accomplished by Hitler. This gesture of repentance was appreciated by Poland and all of Europe: Germany was allowed to unite. As of today, Germany is the most powerful state in Europe due to the fact that its historical fault was recognized openly. The Germans have not forgotten and are not going to forget it: at schools they use the example of Hitler and teach their children how politics should not be conducted. Each new generation of students in Germany studies the times of Holocaust and realizes all the horror of genocide arranged by the fascists who had

German surnames.

If we had our own Willy Brandt who would go to the destroyed Grozny and kneel at just any communal grave, I am sure that further negotiations would go absolutely differently and the situation would change radically because of this single, even not economic but purely moral factor. Perhaps, it is not what is actually written down by letters in this treaty but rather the spirit of relations that is important.

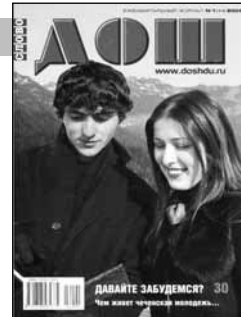
I was present at the inauguration ceremony of President Maskhadov. Many deputies received the invitation but only two women, Ella Panfilova and I, dared to go. We were so touched by the fact that the Chechen militia on all the intersections of this absolutely destroyed city were saluting while we were driving through! Nevertheless, I had a huge feeling of shame because I belonged to the country that has admitted this crime. Though I was against, all of us have our share of responsibility, so I was ready for any sort of reception. But we had a warm welcome and when I in a crowd I lagged behind the delegation and lost my way, the insurgents in camouflages with loaded automatic guns shouted: "Give way to an honest deputy of the State Duma!" There in the hall I sat down among simple people instead of in the first row of honorable guests. People so touchingly greeted me and asked to stay longer... It means that human communication is not broken off. It is more important than any texts or treaties.

The Chechen Republic is destroyed and it is a terrible view. It cannot be restored all by itself without external assistance. And certainly it is Russia that should help it first of all. Not the United Arab Emirates or Turkey...

By the way, heads of Muslim states did not arrive to the inauguration ceremony because all of them are afraid to spoil relations with Russia by making such a gesture. They will not give money other than in the form of charity and not in such amounts that could revive the Chechen economy. This is Russia's duty.

It is very difficult for me to speak about the Chechen Republic... I even have tears though it is very difficult to force me to burst into tears. It is our common tragedy! I wish the Chechens, despite everything that had happened, to find strength in themselves, not to become hardened, not to become embittered, and to continue to profess those kindness and honor that are inherent in this people. I wish mothers of the Chechen Republic to give birth to new boys and girls. So that a new generation of the Chechens that does not know this war and not having mistrust to other peoples could grow. And we shall teach the Russian children to trust the peoples of the Caucasus.

A CHECHEN AT OWN WILL



Dosh #1(11)2006
Milana ARAPIEVA

The story of this man who in his younger years made an absolutely unusual choice and kept fidelity to it throughout his life has always drawn attention of journalists. He, on the contrary, did not always agree to give an interview. Therefore, when in 1992 I was offered to go to interview him to Melchu-khi village in Gudermes district I could not refuse such an opportunity. The social and political conditions at that time were already disturbing and the republic was in a fever. The growth of criminality horrified. It became obvious that the authorities could not stabilize social and economic processes or organize a normal life to any extent. I wished to hear about all this from a person with a huge life experience and who had an unquestionable moral authority, one of those few whose conventional wisdom did not cause any doubts.

Our conversation turned out splendidly easy. We simply talked as it happens when old friends come to visit. After this meeting I wrote down our conversation and the following material appeared in a newspaper.

About a German Willy Weissert and a Chechen Mokhmad-Khadzhi

No, there are not two of them. Willy Weissert and Mokhmad-Khadzhi is one person. Practically all know him in the Chechen Republic. Not only know but pronounce his name with a constant, even an expressed respect.

A German boy Willy Weissert was born in 1930 in Zaporozhye where his ancestors had moved from Germany. In 1941 the family shared the destiny of the majority of the Soviet Germans: men were enlisted in labor army and women, children, and old people

were loaded in cargo trains or even in open coal cars and sent to the East. Teenager Willy was sent to Kyzyl-Orda area without any relatives or friends. He wandered all alone. He ended up in a Kazakh family and started to work for them for food.

1944 brought a new wave of deportations. The Chechens appeared in Ortakshil aul where Willy lived. The boy soon made friends with the Caucasian boys and the common misfortune fastened this friendship. They communicated basically in the Kazakh language which the German boy already knew and the Chechens quickly acquired it.

It happened so that Willy spent among them most of the time. Therefore, it is no wonder that he gradually began to acquire their customs in a somewhat natural way: he got up when seniors entered a room, he did not pass the road in front of seniors, and he took the place at the table which was specified by adults. He listened with enthusiasm to stories about the history and the character of the unfamiliar people and then became also interested in its religion. When he turned twenty years of age he clearly understood the Islam was the way that was spiritually close to him. Having realized it he decided to live henceforth according to its laws. In 1950, not knowing yet the Chechen language, Willy Weissert accepted Islam and a new name Magomed. In due course, he learned the language so that the Chechens say: "Mokhmad-Khadzhi knows Chechen better than many of us and he speaks it very beautifully, figuratively, and wisely." He married a Chechen woman named Tamara. He brought up eight children.

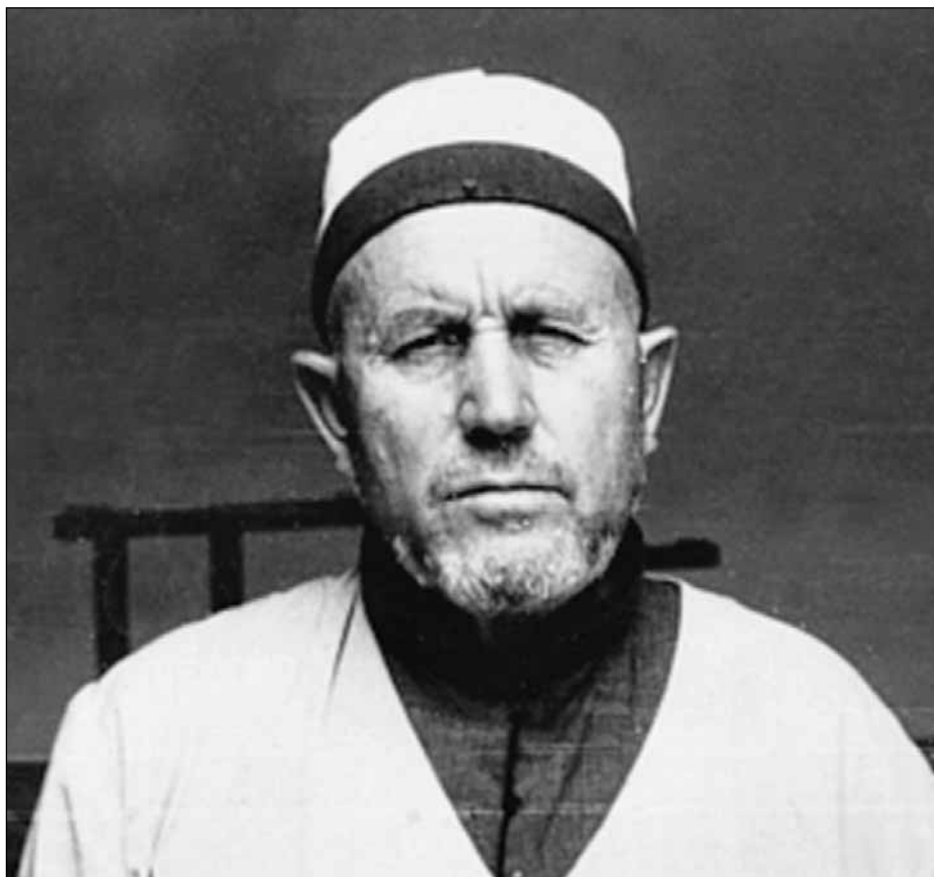
- Having accepted Islam, you could remain among the Kazakhs: they are in fact Moslems too. However, you became a Chechen. Why? - I asked.

He answered:

- The Kazakhs are good people. But they are different. I liked very much the national Chechen customs and traditions. Nowadays, many young people do not adhere to old customs and what comes out of it? Take, for example, the attitude towards weapons. Mountaineers have always liked weapons. But it was considered a shame to take a weapon in hands simply to frighten someone, to humiliate, to kill an innocent person, or to apply it against an unarmed. Such acts were under a strict interdiction. Even a quarrel was stopped if the opponent was not armed. Now tough guys show off their weapons anywhere and anyhow and intimidate defenseless people. Thus they stain their honor and first of all humiliate themselves...

Needless to say that we have havoc nowadays, everyone knows it. It is also known that life in the Chechen Republic is especially hard. In particular, because of criminality. Many try to leave or search for a calmer place. And not only representatives of non-indigenous people, the Chechens frequently leave as well. Therefore, I wanted to ask him one particular question: does Mokhmad-Khadzhi repent today the choice that he had made in his youth, would he wish to leave the unsafe region? Even in the 1950s he could meet with the lost relatives and now continues to stay in touch with them. It seemed incorrect to ask him directly about it but Mokhmad-Khadzhi himself anticipated such a question:

- I chose my road and I go along it without any regrets or hesitations. I am sure that the current difficulties and negative processes are all temporary. The proverb says: the place where there was a lake will not remain without a drop of water. The good and healthy that is incorporated in the people and has for centuries been its core, its "lake", will not dry up and cannot be eradicated.



Mokhmad-Khadzhi does not believe that time will put everything in its place while we should simply wait. On the contrary, he is convinced that nobody should remain an indifferent observer of the drama that is played nowadays. Everyone, as much as he can, should do something good and is obliged, if we use the previous metaphor, to irrigate the ancient Vainakh soil with even a drop of peace and humanity. He thinks that his obligation now is to bring peace to the conflicting sides so that evil generated by conflicts could not grow. So that blood could not flow. Every day Mokhmad-Khadzhi walks around to reconcile feudists and quite often people come to fetch him at night hoping that his wise words can stop the burning fire and bring reason to the excited heads. Each Moslem knows that it is a thin and delicate business. It cannot be entrusted just to anyone, not anyone will be awarded the honor to reconcile feudists.

There was one more thing I wanted to ask this wise person:

what is necessary to do so that not to be a stranger among another people, what qualities should be possessed? And he answered:

- It is necessary first of all not to avoid this nation, to merge with it. Do not dictate your conditions to the people and respect the customs that exist on the soil where you came to. Remember that these traditions developed for centuries and most suitable for this people and for this area. I do not wish to say at all that it is necessary to forget your native people and its culture. It is necessary to respect those among whom you live and not to impose your own rules on them. Some people now started to panic and rushed to leave. It is a mistake. In fact in those other places criminality also rules and they will have rough times there as well. No, it is necessary to get even more united with people among whom you live and together with it to fight for justice. In fact, those who disseminate violence are enemies for everybody, not only for the Chechens.

An Epilogue.

Two years later the war came to the Chechen Republic. It span like a storm crushing everything on its way. Now, eleven years later, when the hurricane of war seems to calm down you start to notice all the monstrous unattractiveness of it, how destructive its force was: the ruins of cities and villages, the wounded soil... And victims, victims everywhere... Death reaped a plentiful bloody harvest here. You look back at the past decade and you see with horror that so many people are no longer with us: someone was lost in fight, someone was struck with a casual bullet or a splinter of a shell, or someone's heart simply could not sustain... So I learned that the war took away Weissert, the person who had done so much good to others. I had only one short meeting with him and it left an important trace in my life. I felt that the world without him became poorer. I think that the sensation of loss is felt not only by Mokhmad-Khadzhi's relatives, not only by his fellow villagers who knew this uncommon person personally. It is a sensible loss for the entire republic. One of its many losses.

And in fact he could leave. It would not be so difficult. He could go even to Germany: this country accepted many Russian Germans. But he stayed. The war entered his house in Melchu-khi. As always true to himself, he opposed to evil resorting to persuasion, appealing to heart and reason of people. He went to the military and asked them not to bomb and not to destroy the village. He continued to reconcile the quarrelling Chechens, saved them from the expansion of vendetta. He talked with young people calling them to act reasonably, not to get excited, and to think of the consequences of their acts... Apparently, he did not

take good care of himself, absorbing all the excessive pressure that affected him. Soon after the end of the so-called first war Weissert passed away: his heart did not sustain.

I remember a sunny day in August of 1992. Together with Lema Aslakhanov I walked in a spacious court yard of a typical Chechen rural house. I smell the hay: it was just brought from the fields and the members of the household were stacking it under the canopy. A broad-shouldered tall person with light hair, quiet and thorough, came up to us. Is he a true German? Or is he a true mountaineer (they are in fact pretty often are fair-haired too). He was the Chairman of the Council of elders of the village, the spiritual instructor who worked hard to build a mosque in Melchu-khi, a well-known peacemaker among the locals whose reasonable word meant salvation... We do not know yet that the war is ahead of us, we simply talk about everything, about life. Most of all I admired in him his surprising integrity of nature which is indeed the strength of mind. Time proved that he honorably passed the chosen way to the end without doubts or hesitations and he did not recede. A pastor by avocation, he did not leave his educational and peacemaking mission in the severe and mad wartime.

Khozh-Bau-di Borkhadzhiev, the editor of Gums, a Gudermes newspaper, told me in a telephone conversation that Musa Weissert now enjoys an exclusive moral authority in Melchu-khi. A worthy son of his father, he heads the rural administration and is recognized as one of the most respected citizens in the republic.

Thinking of the destiny of Mokhmad-Khadzhi Weissert, Willy Weissert, I recollect the ancient biblical words: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God."

Let this serve us as a consolation.



Dosh #2(12)2006
Ismail SHOVKHALOV

RUSSIAN VODKA:

FRESH BREATH FACILITATES UNDERSTANDING



"We don't care about your grief"; "Death to insurgents"; "We can help to die. Khanty-Mansiysk Department of Internal Affairs OMON"; "Russian vodka: fresh breath facilitates understanding" - such inscriptions were spotted by human rights experts on the facade of the main building of the former boarding school for the deaf in Grozny. "ORB-2 - let you be damned forever"; "RUBOP, you will pay to us for everything. We shall revenge for all. Inshallah"; "Where am I? What happened to me? Am I alive or not? March 27, 2006" - these are only a few out of dozens of inscriptions that were discovered on the walls of the cells in the cellar.



Members of the composite unit of Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Region Department of Internal Affairs OMON are suspected of organizing a secret prison in Grozny where arrested persons were tortured. The Office of Public Prosecutor of the Chechen Republic opened criminal cases. The information about tortures by the militiamen is being investigated; however there is detailed information at present time and the guilt of the suspected militiamen is not proved yet.

The Temporary Department of Internal Affairs of Oktiabrsky district of Grozny was located in the building of the former boarding school for the deaf in Minutka Square. The militiamen occupied this building since the end of 1999 till the spring of 2003. Members of Siberian OMON also occupied the same building. On May 26th, 2006, employees of the operative group Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation of Oktiabrsky district of Grozny left the former building of the boarding school. The militiamen attached to the Chechen Republic from different regions of Russia served in this group. As soon as last militiamen deployed here left the building was immedi-

ately taken down. However, members of Memorial human rights center managed to inspect and photograph the isolation cells of the secret prison. The inspection of its cellars revealed various documents and inscriptions on the walls made by the arrested persons.

In their opinion of Memorial employees, the collected materials testify that people were tortured and killed here. Traces of blood were found on the walls of the cellars. Human rights activists also found a register with 104 photos and the list of names. It is not known yet who is listed there. This information was denied by the human rights representative in the Chechen Republic Nurdi Nukhazhiev.

On May 29th, human right activists photographed the cells and made the information about the discovered documents public. In the evening of the same day, the story about the cells where the arrested persons had been contained and about the discovered documents was shown on the republican TV. Only after that, on May 30th, representatives of regional administration, Office of Public Prosecutor of the Chechen Republic, militia, a group of mine engineers, and employees of FSB arrived to the building of

the former boarding school. They examined the building and the cells. Two immured cells were opened. In the evening, a group of military men arrived to the building and picked up the remaining papers. During the night of May 31st, someone destroyed the inscriptions on the walls in the cells. It was discovered by a team of construction workers in the morning of the following day who were so hastily sent there take down the building: auto tires were set on fire in all the cells so that the soot could cover the inscriptions. The workers who started to take away the building on May 31st confirmed that this could only happen at night or the early morning...

We asked Natalia Estemirova, employee of Memorial and member of the advisory council of the office of Human Rights Representative of Russian Federation Vladimir Lukin, to comment on this rather strange and sinister situation.

- What were the assumptions that you could find any proof of such evil actions after the military left the building?

- We knew that people disappeared there and that prisoners were held and crimes

were committed in the cellars since January 2000. So, we have two testimonies that exactly in these cellars the military cut off ears to three victims one of whom is still alive - Alavdi Sadykov (in the picture below). The two others, Edik (or Murad) Gelaev and Suleiman Seriev, were young men from Gikalo village. They were brought there on February 27th, 2000 together with twelve other fellow villagers. One old man was released the same day, all the others were tortured there, in the cellars of the boarding school. Before the eyes of many, the ears of Murad and Suleiman were cut off. In the evening they were sent to Khankala and the following day they were returned to the boarding school for further interrogation. After that they were taken to Chervlennaya-Uzlovaya train station where they spent 23 days in cars hidden from different commissions before they were finally brought to Chernokozovo from where part of the arrested people were released and the others were sent to prisons in Piatigorsk and Stavropol. All of them were charged under Article 208 of Criminal Code of Russian Federation: participation in illegal armed formations. Actually, there was no proof of guilt against anyone of them except the obvious proof of the fact that they had been terribly beaten.

All of them subsequently returned back

home except Gelaev and Seriev, nothing is known about them. Only last to year the Office of Public Prosecutor of Grozny opened a criminal case but soon after that suspended it as it was not clear who had detained them, etc. Later they concluded that Gelaev had been killed and changed the case to article 105 (murder). Now this case is also suspended. To tell the truth, it is not clear why the public prosecutor used article 105, since the case only contains the information that these young men had been brought to Grozny and then they disappeared.

In March 2000, Alavdi Sadykov was delivered to the secret prison and on March 11th his ear was cut off. In April of the same year Luiza Bapaeva, Alaudinova, and Gaisumova were brought there, people who were standing in line nearby for passports saw them. Alavdi saw L.Bapaeva there inside, he heard her shouting - since then these three disappeared as well. In September, Pashaeva and Kamilova, two inhabitants of Dzhalka village, were brought there and then their corpses were found near the prison. In December 2000, two boys 14 and 16 years of age disappeared in the vicinities of this division and were never found. In early January 2001, Zelimkhan Murdalov disappeared in the same building. His parents came and demanded that their

son be returned, then the military told Zelimkhan's father: "There are two corpses over there, go and look, maybe he is among them." Those were the corpses of the two disappeared boys whose mothers were watering with their tears the soil near the checkpoint of this division every day. Only after they were seen by A. M u r d a l o v, Zelimkhan's father, the mothers were given the corpses of their children. They were in a terrible condition.

Unlike other cases, Astemir and Rukiyat Murdalov were fortunate that the investigation of what had happened to their son was started. They made so much noise and involved so many forces that since

January 2001 the stream of bloody crimes there was stopped. The destiny of those victims whom I have listed is just a small fraction of what we know. In 2000 and the beginning of 2001, many people disappeared there: witnesses confirm that they saw them being brought there but nobody saw that anyone of them left the building.

From our sad experience we know that each time when brigades of contract militiamen or military leave, corpses or burial places are found on the places of their former disposition as a rule. In particular, this was the case when the military abandoned the building of the circus. A recent case, when the military men withdrew from Karpinsky Kurgan. There, where there was a blockhouse, corpses of people killed five years earlier were found, it was the time when their checkpoint was functioning there.

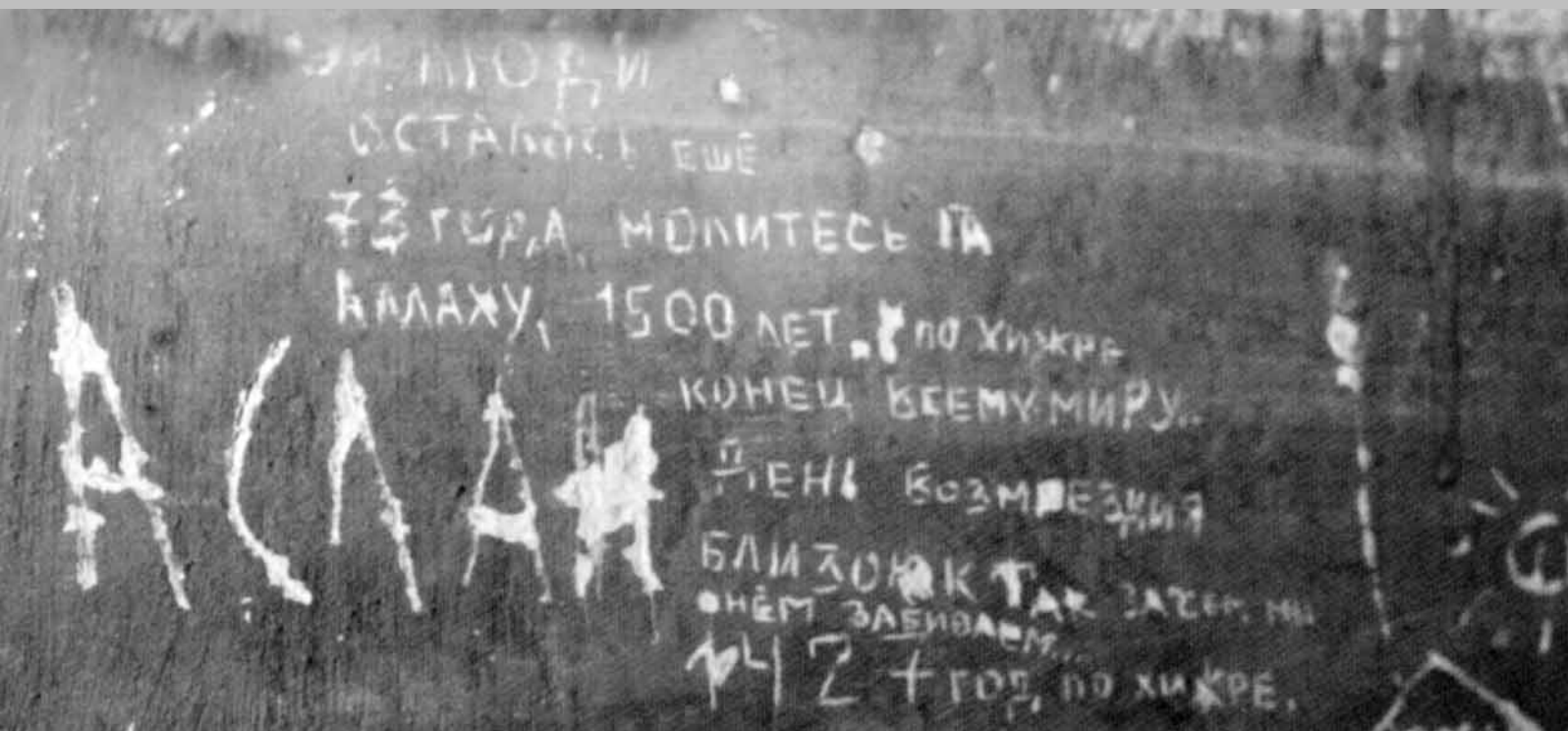
- Did you inform the authorities, the Office of Public Prosecutor?

- Certainly, serious investigation should take place there from where contract soldiers left. Earlier I informed the Public prosecutor of the republic and the deputy chief of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Chechen Republic Shamsadov that militia and the military were leaving two locations where they were stationed for a very long time and that there were many testimonies what in those places the citizens of Grozny had disappeared. It is Solyonaya Balka where the 21-st Sofrino brigade was stationed and that building of the boarding school near Minutka square where the operative group was deployed. But after the military left nobody did any serious job in the slightest degree. We have testimonies that there were burial places there but in fact it is necessary to search for them instead of coming and throwing a glance only to draw a conclusion that there was nothing there.

- As far as we know, your employees were one of the first who entered into the building abandoned by the military. What did you find there?

- Ideally, the first to come to such places should be militiamen and representatives of the Office of Public Prosecutor. When we entered there, chaos reigned inside: the military broke everything there before leaving. Windows and doors were pulled out or broken. It is typical of the military: they purposely break everything that can still be used by someone. However, it is clear: they tried not to leave traces. Alavdi Sadykov was forced to paint the wall six times, people were forced to immure cells and to plaster the walls. Nevertheless, a good brigade of criminal experts would manage to find many proofs there. For example, there were many traces of blood that could be examined to determine who had been tortured there. But absolutely nothing was done. And in fact, under layers of plaster it is possible to





distinguish the inscriptions of 2002-2003. And not only it is possible, they are obliged to do it but nothing was or is undertaken. We at once called the Office of Public Prosecutor and militia, representatives of other authorities came there on the following day. They are still gathering materials. Only if they find a corpse a case will be opened. However, when the job is done in such a way, it is improbable that they can find anything there.

- Was anyone found guilty or sentenced after so many murders?

- In 2004, it became possible to detain and deliver to Grozny one of the executioners from Khanty-Mansiysk composite group of militia Sergey Lapin. As a result of the trial he was sentenced to 11.5 years in prison for inflicting heavy physical injuries, excess of service powers, and forging of documents. Witnesses in this case were the numerous victims-prisoners of this camp, including those who had been directly tortured by Lapin, the people who saw Zelimkhan Murdalov, who were tortured together with this young man. Lapin was involved in these crimes. Lapin would not tell the court what happened to Zelimkhan or where he disappeared from Oktiabrsky VOVD after his interrogation. Now he serves his time. An international search warrant was issued for Lapin's superiors Prilepin and Minin. We continue to collect evidence. Some people only now dare to speak. Many are too intimidated.

- There was information in the press that the inscriptions were destroyed...

- Everything that was in the cellar was burned over three nights. The Militiamen were very careless concerning to documents: they simply abandoned there a huge part of their archive. When the temporary department seized their operations they demon-

strated the same negligence when they transferred the affairs: all cases, including search cases, were simply piled up. Many documents were lost. Nobody would even open criminal cases when relatives submitted applications. These people absolutely neglected their job though they received very high salaries. It is absolutely unclearly what the state paid them for.

After we photographed everything, tires were burned in the cells. It was made on purpose so that the inscriptions on the walls get smoked. It was silly because we already made our pictures public.

- What was that album or register with photos that was found there in the cellars?

- Those were the photos of people who represented an operative interest. There were no missing people revealed among them. Some of these people are sentenced, others are free, and several of them were not identified. We continue our investigation. The album that was in our possession was handed to the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Chechen Republic. As they said, it "can be useful while investigating the criminal cases about disappearance of people in Oktiabrsky ROVD." We handed to the Office of Public Prosecutor all the other documents found in the former boarding school. It is necessary to do everything possible so that the crimes were investigated, irrespective of who performed them...

- The human rights representative in the Chechen Republic Nukhazhiev declared that "no proof on the basis of which it would be possible to draw a conclusion that people had been tor-

tured and killed here were not revealed." Why did he deny your information?

- The crimes performed in these torture cells are not a simple testimony, it is the truth established in court. And it is very strange that the human rights representative does not know about it. He does not remember even A.Sadykov who is vainly attempting to arrange a meeting with him. Didn't he see his missing ear? Nukhazhiev knows A.Murdalov and well knows what happened to his son. There is enough evidence of those crimes. They only need to be investigated.





Dosh #3(13)2006

ONE MAN IS NO MAN?

**In one of her interviews Anna Politkovskaya said:
"I am surprised that I haven't been killed yet!"**

And it happened. She really felt the death of the brave but her unprecedented life broke the stereotype invented by cowards and conformists "One man is no man". Since the beginning of the second Chechen war she was the only journalist who constantly and unshakably fought against the powerful and brutal official propaganda supported even by "independent" mass-media. The information blockade created in the zone of the "counterterrorist operation", in the opinion of many, looked as an indestructible stronghold but Anna Politkovskaya punched a gap in this thick wall. She threw into the face of the world, that was ready to wallow in blunt indifference, the truth about what was happening behind the wall, she was telling about the tragedies and meanness of this war and about human destinies crushed by it. Her voice was hardly making the way through the rumble of TV, radio, and newspaper idle talk, state demagoguery, and cheap giggling. Nevertheless, her voice prevented modern Russia to forget itself in a disastrous dream of reason and conscience. It is first of all Anna Politkovskaya's merit that the tradition of human rights journalism is still alive today.

She fearlessly rushed to the aid of those who needed protection and support most of all. Her murder became a personal grief of hundreds and thousands of people all over the world and first of all of the Chechens, in particular, those whom she helped to search their disappeared relatives. Thanks to her, the lawlessly killed and hastily dumped in holes of mass burial places managed to find the eternal rest, were buried and mourned with due respect, while the alive sometimes escaped a bloody massacre. Perhaps there are still places somewhere in the republic where mass graves are not discovered yet people are lawlessly kept but Anna Politkovskaya is no longer with us... Of course, other journalists sometimes wrote about the monstrous atrocities of so-called second war and Anna Politkovskaya was not absolutely alone. But there was nobody else who could with such force, so convincingly and persistently resist to cruelty and cynicism of this massacre forcing many people in Russia and abroad to realize all the nightmare of the war and the scale of evil deeds. For us, as well as for many colleagues, Anna Politkovskaya was the

standard of courage, advantage, and adherence to principles. This is how she was perceived by the journalists who had the feeling of a professional and personal duty and honor. She alone did more than all of us could make together but still did not do due to different reasons.

Her death broke another stereotype: "there are no irreplaceable people." It is a lie! Nobody and nothing will fill the emptiness that emerged after her murder. Those who should and will try to replace Anna Politkovskaya by all means understand that this task costs the greatest efforts and is all the same impossible.

Many who smiled to the face of Anna Politkovskaya and willy-nilly expressed respect for her dangerous and noble activity, were actually galled by the inflexibility, cleanliness and humanity of her journalistic position that was inaccessible to them. They said behind her back that she was crossing the line and saw only the bad without noticing the positive phenomena that could justify what cannot have justification: prosecution, tortures, and murders of innocent people! Thus other colleagues tried to give out their cowardly flexibility for reasonable balance. Anna Politkovskaya was one of a kind who could speak the burning truth about the events in the country and there is a lot of them, "independent and oppositional" journalists and politicians who tell their foggy half-truth with sets of exceptions aimed only not to do much harm. Condemnation here is inappropriate: not all can be heroes. If you cannot do it, then envy silently: it is not necessary to hem and shrug shoulders indulgently when you face a rare example of the true professional valor, the one without fear and reproach.

We have always kept kind relations. But we shall not take liberties with you, dear colleague, as do some people who are sometimes deeply alien to you in spirit and views and now trying to pass for your bosom friends. Such unexpected posthumous friends always crowd in expectation of publicity around the tombs of those deserved glory during their lifetime.

We did not have the custom to call you Anya when you were near with us. For us you will forever remain dear Anna Stepanovna. We love you, we highly honor you, and we shall never forget you.

DOSH Magazine editorial team

Anna, Anna...

Today your heroes cry for the first time!

Dear Anna,

I will not receive any more letters from you... It is so difficult to get used to it! It is even more difficult not to write to you. In fact, yours was the last resort where I directed my complaints about this world.

I shall not say that we can change much but, you know, Anna, it happened so that your word became a small ray of hope on a big planet whose population was divided into the Chechens and all others. I know that your word was born in torments and is full of great pain for the mankind that does not know what it is doing. Your letters carried rescue for many who left the Chechen Republic, who were forced to search justice so far away from their native places!

Last time when you came to Bruxelles, we spoke about Poland and that the former Socialist countries turned into an ethnic ghetto for refugees. You were searching for Dzhambulat, the son of Zulai, the heroine of your article. Anna, I found him in Bialystok, he is sick... He read your letter and then he was telling me about you, about his mother... He also told me how he went to bury his brother... The other Chechens who live in the camp (there are so many of them in Poland!) nodded believing in the best: "Now you will certainly receive papers and the doctors will take good care of you! Anna Politkovskaya herself wrote about you!"

Anna, he was denied! But Dzhambulat is calming me down and repeats: "I will do it. I will prove that Anna was right!"

They refused to operate him. They claim that Poland does not have money for such an expensive treatment. He was told: if you wish to live, go back to Russia or the Chechen Republic, the war is over... Dzhambulat certainly wishes to live, wishes to live in his house in Atagi, and wishes that his children could go to school, the one that is near the post office.

He would rather again work at the cement plant and play soccer behind the village as before... "It is... nerves..." - Dzhambulat tries to cope with a shiver in his hands. - "The war is over... They killed Anna!"

In Warsaw I saw Zarema from Shalazhi, that woman who they wished to force to confirm that Elza Kungaeva was a sniper.

Her husband was not released. They had to pay ransom to retrieve the body... Zarema has five children, she was denied asylum too. Her senior daughter Malika is giving an interview to the Polish TV and is telling how she likes to go to school. She was the winner in the city contest of History of the Native Land - the history of Rzeczpospolita...

Zarema is reading your letter and she cries: "She knew the truth!" I think she will be all right. The lawyer is sure that she will definitely win the case with your acknowledgements. "Matka Boska! Anna Politkovskaya!" - He cannot believe...

You know, those boys who you sent from the Chechen Republic, they have not called me yet. I do not even know in what country they are now. Probably, they are fine. The main thing is that they did not get stuck in Poland.

Good news, Anna! The film director from Switzerland called today. He saw the video recording of our performance at Theatre de Poche in Bruxelles and suggested to make a feature film! He says that he saw you in Bern and considers it his duty to save everything connected with you. I so am glad that Islama from the tent town in Ingushetia will play Francesco again, he looks so much like a Chechen! Ah, Anna! There is your photo in the foyer of the theater. You smile so lovely and seem absolutely happy! There is a whole mountain of white and red roses in front of it.

- Let's praise the God that he sometimes gave her such joyful days! - Director Rolan says.

You know, Annemarie gave birth to a nice girl. We named her Marem, like the mother of the blessed Isa - Jesus. Annemarie and Jan also came to the square on your day...

And that Isa who have sent to Poland from Belgium died on October 6th. You remember we were going to address the Human Rights Court on his behalf? His kidnappers had been beaten off and hepatitis started to develop. Last week his dossier was sent



from Poland to me. The lawyer started to work on his case and was pleased that he had received a letter from you... They say that Isa was asking for the doctor for seven hours but he got to hospital only when he lost consciousness. It happened a day before you were... He did not learn about our trouble, he still had consolation, until the last minute he believed that you would help him...

There are many of them across all Europe, those whom you pulled out from hell and took care of as a guardian angel...

Today your heroes cry for the first time! They cannot reconcile to the cruelty aimed at you just like you could not forgive the cruelty aimed at them. They take your pain to themselves!

Anna, Anna... What can be done? How to heal this gap that has separated the Chechen Republic from the other world? It is very hard to be lonely among six billion people...

Your letters, your word that has become eternal are the hope that it will happen sometime.

I will wait for them as before!

Tina ISMAILOVA



Dosh #3(13)2006

Abdulla DUDUEV

THE MADNESS

What it is more necessary to a semiliterate, defective and at that the same time so cockily haughty mass consciousness? Is it public welfare, the rights and freedoms, or education? Or, as some groundless dreamers even say, repentance? What nonsense! Our fathers and grandfathers lived without it and we shall also manage. What is truly necessary is an enemy! You cannot do without him in any way. If we do not have an enemy, it turns out that we ourselves are guilty. All is bad with us and it obviously cannot be because we are the best, the most sincere, hardworking, wise, simply the most best, we are created for victories! Had it not been for him, the artful adversary, we would have shown our immeasurable superiority to the entire world!

But the enemy does not doze, he continues to do evil to us, all the evil is from him...

This delusion did not start yesterday and not even under the Soviet authority.

"Who is our internal enemy?" - The corporal of Russian imperial army offensively inquired looking over the soldiers that he was teaching. - "They are Poles, Jews, and students!"

Well, those are foreigners, whom else should be whipping boys if not them? And why students? They are supposedly the pride of the nation, its hope...

Because they are excruciatingly competent, they have impudence to argue, and being still young they have not got used yet to thrust their freethinking where it belongs when the superiors shout at them. Therefore they should be nailed down!

That empire failed. The Poles disappeared. The students were all universally driven in Komsomol. "The party reserve" did not suit to be an enemy any more. There were the Jews left: for several decades in the Soviet history they alone carried out the major function for the state. The habitual ominous role remained with them even when yet another empire came to its end. It is well known who disorganized "the indestructible union" and took away its riches all over the world! However, in the beginning the 1990s, the Jews had to squeeze a bit conceding championship to the Chechens. For many, the appeals to struggle against the Chechens - well, and nevertheless with the Jews, certainly, - have successfully replaced the "Russian national idea".

Now we've got another enemy - the Georgians. Being the new players in this field, they have even pushed aside the Chechens a little. However, if you look closer, the leading role of the Georgians looks somewhat temporary. In the eyes of the majority of certain patriots, the Jews and the Chechens continue to top the

black list. It is not a championship dispute, in essence, the basis of the "Russian idea" is the universal struggle against the "black asses." Even the obvious conventionality of all these spiteful ethnic divisions changes nothing. The faces of many leaders of Russian nationalist organizations of any sort don't seem to be purely Slavic: for example, Mitrofanov LDPR, Belov-Potkin from DPNI, Barkashov from RNE. There is a story when the late Alexander Mikhailovich Panchenko, a well known scholar of conservative views, came once to a meeting of supporters of the Russian race cleanliness. He listened to their nonsense and said: "Well, there is only one Russian in this hall and it is me, all the others are all the Merias and the Chudes (ancient Finnish tribes)."

The venerable philologist was offended not by the fact that the nature had not provided these advocates of "Russia for the Russians" with curly fair hair and blue eyes and not because any family tree investigation would possibly reveal brunettes. Panchenko loved and well knew his country, not only its present but also the past, and, unlike other "patriots", he also knew that there are no supreme and low nations: before the Creator the Russians are no better and no worse than "the Merias and the Chudes." No rusophobe can humiliate Russia to the extent the loud pseudo-patriots do by inflating interethnic tension in a multiethnic country and sowing the fascist infection in the minds of the title nation. And there are quite a few fanatical young people and adults, apparently quite respectable people, who believe the pernicious fabrications of such politicians. Nobody is asked himself why these patriots, ostensibly so anxious about the glory of their people and the state, are so indifferent to the well-being of their people, the Russians. Why do they so zealously lead to disorder in the country instead of directing considerable means and efforts to educational and medical projects to the advantage of the children of those families who live in misery in Russian cities and villages?

There is a possible explanation of this madness. The majority of people living in Russia is not accustomed to bother themselves with thinking about the meaning of what is happening. It was considered that it was the Tsar-father or the Central Committee of the CPSU who was thinking for us. These historical tendencies have prevailed in present Russia. Even those who quite recently were inclined to show their civil activity have abandoned the belief in having an opportunity of the society to influence the authorities in the slightest degree over the last years. The young people are not interested in politics, which is easily understood in view of the conditions in which they grow up.

OF BOASTFUL SELF-DECEPTION

Here is a typical opinion expressed by a young programmer with whom I recently traveled by train from a remote Russian city to Moscow. He said: "I strongly detest this campaign against the Georgians. It is clear that all this is dictated exclusively by the political interests of the authorities. I am sure that people can change nothing in this country. During the last elections to the State Duma I voted for Yabloko party. At the previous presidential elections I also voted for Yavlinsky. My friends laughed at me saying that I was out of my mind. I think he is too decent and intellectual for Russia. I will not go to the next elections any more. What for? The results are known in advance."

Unlike my fellow traveler, the majority of Russians were pleased with the strict measures of the authorities against the Georgians. After the harsh statements made by the President about the necessity of putting in order the situation at the markets and protection of interests of "indigenous population", his ratings jumped up to the level comparable only to the ones he achieved after his historical promise "to rub terrorists out in the outhouse". However, at the end of the second term of office Putin "rubbed out" almost all the opposition in the country, its independent press, and everything that can potentially create discomfort for the authorities. It resulted in a harmonious facade: the President communicates with the grateful people directly. And people are indeed grateful. They know what to ask the President and what to keep silent about. As one of pro-Kremlin TV political analyst noticed recently analyzing the dialogue of the people with the President, people began to think "more strategically". It means that nobody will ask a petty question, such as where do the riches taken from disloyal oligarchs do, why after the declaration of struggle against the corrupted officials the number of bureaucrats grew up almost by half a million, etc.

Only the artful foes of Russia can assume that the polite questions that the citizens addressed to their president and aired on state TV and radio had been prepared in advance. One should be a real villain to think that the inhabitants of Dagestan, one of the poorest regions of the country and 95% subsidized from federal funds, are less excited about the relations between Russia and Georgia than the harsh conditions of life and security issues in their republic. In fact, last month in Khasav-Yurt district alone forty young men were stolen by unknown armed men in masks! And all this, as it appears, can be forgotten only if we first sort it out with Georgia that causes all our troubles...

The question about fascist tendencies in Russia was still asked during the "direct line" but the President's answer did not contain any distinct phrase condemning this phenomenon. There is no doubt that fascist groupings accepted it as an indirect encouragement. Largely speaking, the President's statement about protection of the interests of "indigenous population" comes also from their ideology. Otherwise the gallant putinist Rogozin who was kicked out from the "elite" by his Kremlin curators would not risk to join the organizing committee of the right nationalist march in Moscow.

Those who are called the imperious and political elite of Russia merge today in a chauvinistic ecstasy. Not capable of making anything good and useful for the country and society, this clique has brought to light the shabby and repeatedly dishonored idea that can unite people only to their trouble. The invention of internal or external enemies never brought anything good or served to the prosperity of society.

Only those for whom the construction of a civilized, open civil society in this country is fatally dangerous can impress such illusions on people. Therefore, they also repeatedly claim the impossibility of introduction of Western standards of democracy in Russia referring to its position between Europe and Asia, which, from their point of view, assumes its "special way of development". This is yet another ideological myth so convenient to switch people's discontent from the real corrupted authorities to imaginary enemies. Those political analysts, publicists, journalists, scholars, and artists who pick up such ideas only reduce themselves to the level of domestic servants of the authorities. They substitute a serious and detailed discussion of the problems facing the society with a cheap populist hysterics unacceptable not only to professionals but also simply to decent man. For example, one of leading commentators of TV Channel 1 Maxim Shevchenko who on pair with Mikhail Leontiev exposing the global plot against Russia came to a conclusion that "we are called by the God to be a superpower". It is a pure blasphemy for a believer. And a non-believer, when he exercises in bragging of such sort, should better leave the God alone. Judging by their behavior and their speeches, today's rulers of the country, politicians, and propagandists look like boasters burdened by childish complexes who shout that their village is the coolest and if they wish, they will tear all neighbors. When you listen to this day by day you may come to realize that the political life in Russia is finally turning into a political garbage dump.



Dosh #3(13)2006
Milan ARAPIEVA

UNCERTAINTY IS A SLOW TORTURE

Madina Magomadova is the head of the regional public organization Mothers of Chechnya. She was born in Kazakhstan, what a twist of fate, on a collective farm named after Stalin. Her family had many children: Madina was the third child out of ten. After exile the Magomadov family settled in Shalazhi village because returning to their native Yalkhoroi village of Galanchozhsky district still remained under interdiction.

Since 1995, she has been searching for missing in action during the operations on the territory of the republic, first on her own and later as part of a public organization Mothers of Chechnya. She was a search expert in the conciliatory observation commission during the negotiations between Russia and the Chechen Republic organized in 1995 and since 1996 till 1999 she was vice-president of the missing search commission. The organization Mothers of Chechnya headed by Madina Magomadova actively cooperates with the Council of Europe, the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, and numerous other international organizations.

- Madina, how did it happen that you, a person of a peaceful occupation, became so active in public affairs at such a mature age? What made you switch your activities?

- It was my personal grief, just like for many of us in the Chechen Republic. After the attack on November 26th, 1994, the parents asked all our relatives who lived in Grozny to leave for Shalazhi. Senior brother Movla and the fifth brother Shamsa went to Grozny from time to time to check our apartments there. Then the federal troops entered in Grozny and the war began. Nobody could imagine then that the war would be so severe and that they would bomb us. Therefore, the brothers went there again though the relatives were against it. They were worried because of the information that came from Moscow. It said that the authorities started to detain the Chechens there. One of our brothers lived in Moscow and two sisters studied there. Movla and Shamsa wished to speak with them on the phone. They left for Grozny on December 27th. And they never returned. Now I blame myself that it was

my fault that they went to Grozny instead of Ingushetia. The matter is that in Ingushetia, right on the border, an armored vehicle moved over people and there was a rumor that it was even worse in Ingushetia than in Chechnya. I cried and begged them not to go to Ingushetia. They said: "Do not worry, we shall go to Grozny." And they could not get back. According to eyewitnesses, they got under shelling on January 2nd and 6th several times. They abandoned the car and continued on foot. They reached the center of the city and went to a cellar where our friend Tamara Goncharenko was hiding. Later she told me that she dried their jackets (it was sleeting that day), gave the bags with her husband's linen so that it could be clear that they were refugees, and they left. But did not go far away: the body of one of my brothers was found halfway between a beauty salon and the bridge. There is evidence that they were stopped in front of Kosmos cinema. The senior brother was killed at once (there was one gunshot directly in the heart), the second brother was wounded in the

left leg and thrown into an armored troop-carrier.

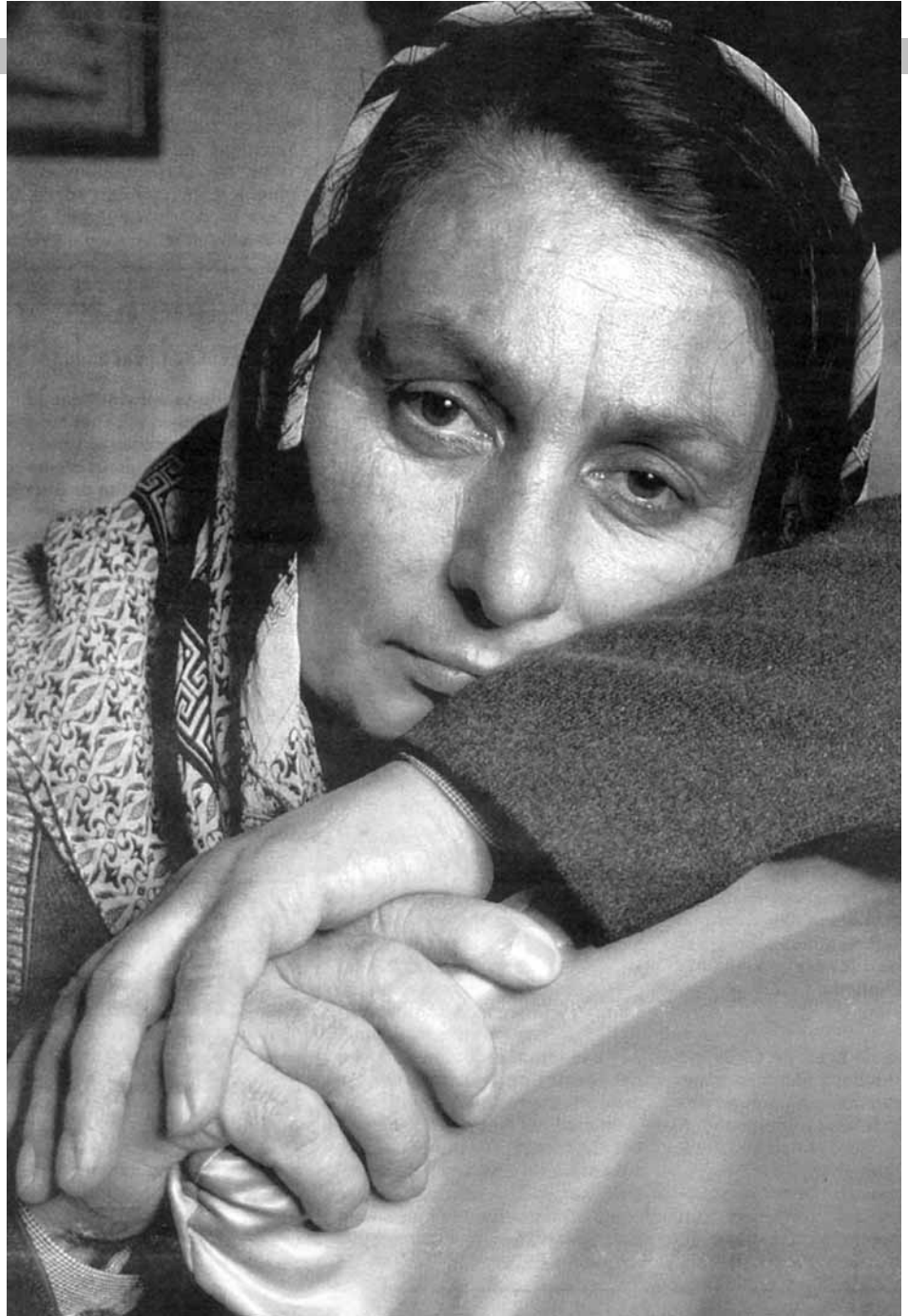
We were waiting for them at home. The father and I went to neighboring villages and asked if anyone had seen them. On January 10th, some strangers brought the body of the lost brother to us. They had no idea how it had happened. They simply found the address in his documents with Shalazhi registration.

Until that time I was, if it is possible to say so, politically neutral and was involved in communal activities just like any one else during the Soviet time. After the funeral of the brother, on January 18th, I left the house to search for Shamsa. The situation then was very terrible. My father's cousin was helping me. We found a car and went to see Tamara Goncharenko. The brother had left his note pad and travel passport with her, we took them back. Eventually we found out that he had been detained and taken to Mozdok. I went there. There they confirmed to me that he was there, they even showed to me a person similar to him from afar. But was it really he?

I do not know how I managed to survive. My grief, my tears merged with the streams of grief and tears of other sisters, mothers, and wives. This is how my human rights activities began.

- Mothers of the Chechen Republic is a well known organization. How was it formed? Why did you become its head?

- Many women, just like me, were searching for their relatives, both Russian and Chechen mothers. There was organization yet. We were gathering in front of the OSCE building in Grozny with the portraits of our missing relatives. My activity and the skills of a lawyer made me speak for the others and the women united around me. I was searching for my brother and did not



want anything else for myself, only to find him. All my life was devoted to this.

Men of our family were also engaged in the search: the father and brothers. The father and the senior brother went to Urus-Martan, Grozny, and the villages where corpses were usually taken. The younger brother went all across the Northern Caucasus, he was looking among the wounded and killed. I was confident that Shamsa was alive. I said: "He is alive, we should not be searching for him among the dead." The father replied: "You should rather say: if he is alive, he

will return, and if not, we should find the body at least." Every day the father and one of the brothers took the car, a carpet, a bed sheet, and left. When they returned, I pulled out all these things from the car. It was very hard. Uncertainty and a long funeral are very terrible, it kills people and torments their souls.

We wrote the first appeal on behalf of those who were standing at the OSCE building in the spring of 1995 and signed it "Mothers of Chechnya", yet not assuming that it would become the name of our organization.

Initially, we thought that we would find our relatives and go home. Once we came to Moscow to personally address the deputies of the State Duma. At this time, TV was showing the statement by Volkogonov, chairman of the commission on prisoners of war and interned. He declared that any male citizen detained in the area military actions either with weapons or without weapons should be considered as an insurgent. Having heard it we decided to visit Volkogonov's office. We were told that he could not receive us as private persons but he could if we represented an organization. Then we decided to create one. We did not register it because we thought that we would need it only for a short period of time to address the officials. But it was a mistake. In 1997, we registered the organization.

- How many did you manage to find over this time?

- Since 1995, we have been engaged in these searches but no one was found alive. We found many dead though. We were bringing dead bodies from the Rostov laboratory. Each case is a monstrous tragedy. Yakha Magomadova from Chernorechie had two sons and a daughter. She lost both sons. It happened in the spring of 1995 when there was a call for all to return since the war was over. She came back from Ingushetia and at night soldiers rushed into the house and took away her children. That very day she redeemed the daughter for one thousand dollars. There was a long search for her sons. In the summer of 1997, we brought their decapitated bodies from Rostov. They were recognized by their clothes. We brought about twenty bodies from this laboratory. We found victims throughout the entire territory of Chechnya. It took us eight months to force the authorities to exhume a grave in Моздоке: 28 anonymous tombs were found on a

local cemetery. On August 29th, 1999, we transported these remains a laboratory in Grozny but they remained without investigated because of a new war. They were buried again somewhere but we can not find out yet where.

- Madina, you obviously also studied the situation with prisoners. Can there be any of those for whom you search among them?

- Certainly, we are work in this direction. In Verkhneural'sk, for example, there is a prison where, according to the Russian laws, especially dangerous criminals are kept up to 5 years in solitary confinement. According to our data, over 20 people for whom we search are contained there. During the tsarist times, it used to be a political prison, it remained such in the Soviet times, and I am sure it continues to be a political prison today.

In 1997, we found out that in one of the colonies in Mordovia there were 280 people who were considered missing in the Chechen Republic. Three of us went there. A local journalist and militiaman helped us in our long and difficult research. Eventually our information was confirmed. I'll tell you how we worked. Our group divided approaching the colony: someone went to talk with neighboring inhabitants, someone went to the chief of the colony, and someone chatted with the guards at the entrance of the building. Later we compared the gathered information. Those with whom we communicated outside the colony were even telling us with pride: here we have a Georgian who is a mafia boss, there are 280 Chechen insurgents sitting in internal prison. It should be noted that after we, the three people from Grozny, left the journalist and the militiaman were arrested. Later the journalist wrote a big article about it. However, we did not get the most important thing for us: the list of the

contained Chechens. We do not have it even now.

When Maskhadov was in power, the organization Mothers of Chechnya insisted on carrying out several hearings in the parliament, we also organized search trips of mothers to Piatigorsk, Astrakhan, and Novosibirsk. We are waiting for a decision on a very important issue from the current authorities: it is necessary to create a laboratory for identification of the remains of the victims. I have arranged allocation of the money for it.

- There are several human rights organizations in the republic. Many of them assist in the search of the missing persons. Are there any other specific tasks of your organization in addition to the creation of a laboratory?

- I will go to that colony again. It is my duty. We should throw light on the situation around those Chechens. Perhaps those for whom we search are among them, including my brother Shamsa. You know, there was one old woman who went with us. Her daughter, a mother of four children, disappeared: she went from Novogrozny to Grozny to check the apartment and disappeared on her way there. This old woman said: "If only I could find even a small fraction of my daughter's bone and know that it is her bone, I would bury it and would come to the grave and I would cal down." Can you imagine it? Just think what torments of uncertainty one should gone through to say that? The uncertainty that is lasting for years is exhausting. It is a slow torture. Had it not been for my relatives who support me, I would hardly bear all this. I feel obligated to help these women. According to our data, 18 thousand persons are registered as missing and about a thousand of them are serving time in colonies without the right of correspondence.

LIFE IN A GLASS HOUSE

When lies and hypocrisy penetrate the state policy in such a huge and influential country like Russia, it is not only its "internal business". This example becomes an impulse for those who conduct similar politics in the West. We tirelessly proclaim that the country moves along a democratic way of development. At the same time, the state celebrates one of its official large-scale holidays in the day of brutal punishment of smaller peoples who keep suffering from territorial and ethnic infringement.

Many Russian and international mass media apprehended Vladimir Putin's statement at the Munich conference on security as the beginning of a new cold war between Russia and the USA. They noted that the speech was exceptionally tough. Someone recollected Nikita Khrushchev's historic escapade at the United Nations General Assembly on October 12th, 1960, when he was shouting in Russian and brandishing his shoe. On the other hand, as some experts believe, there is nothing essentially new in today's rhetoric. Putin merely repeated what he periodically had said during his entire presidential term about geopolitical affairs and the world order. His speech in Munich is remarkable only because he for the first time said it abroad.

We have got used to it, many even like it: it is so invigorating. But such revelations were like a sudden cold shower to the Europeans coddled in an atmosphere of diplomatic courtesy. They are still wondering what it was. When at the end of 1999 the Russian authorities took out the rusted toolkit of state construction of the Soviet empire and unambiguously started to crack down, the West pretended not to understand what was happening here. The second bloody war that was started in the Caucasus, a total and methodical destruction of independent civil institutes, the transformation of the parliament, the courts, and mass-media into departments of executive authorities, the dark circumstances around of the tragedies of Nord-Ost and Beslan, the legal charges against politicians and businessmen opposed to the Kremlin amid paramount and free blossoming corruption, the open intervention of the Russian authorities in the Ukrainian elections, the murder of Anna Politkovskaya, the scandal with Georgia, and now even with Belarus... The West looked at all this without delight but modestly and delicately: there's nothing to be done, such is their family life... It was only when the President of Russia came to them on a visit and right there told them the home truth, they all started to groan and lament. It is too late. They should have thought about it earlier.

It is known that certain Soviet intellectuals were dreaming of convergence so that the USSR in the long term would become a democratic country of the western type where the rights and interests of the citizen and the freedom of thought and speech would be the first obligation of the state. It seems that convergence is indeed taking place, only the process moves into the opposite direction. The proof is right here: the bloody military operations of the US and their allies in Afghanistan and Iraq with mass destruction of civilians in these countries, the prisons at Abu-Ghraib and

Guantanamo. This obviously falls short of the two Russian campaigns in the Chechen Republic. Their example probably became a moral justification for their own deeds in the heads of Western politicians.

It is as if they are telling their "great Eastern partner": Didn't you over ten years bomb one of your republics ignoring our objections and our appeals to solve the problem by dialog and to observe the Geneva convention and a heap of other international norms on protection of human rights? Didn't you wipe out civilians without discrimination killing even those with whom it was necessary to negotiate and settle the conflict? Didn't you write off all on bandits? Well, we shall also do as we like and consider it necessary for ourselves. What for to look back at international law if each treats it to his advantage?

Wouldn't it serve as a quite reasonable motivation and justification for "the mission of distribution of the western civilization and democracy into the world" for the US administration? It is hard to disagree with the statement of the Russian President that "certain norms and, as a matter of fact, almost the entire legal system of one state, first of all, certainly, the USA, has stepped over its national borders, as a matter of fact, in all spheres, both in economy and in politics." But here it would be reasonable to reply: "Look in the mirror yourselves", or, to use a European proverb that is more delicate, "Who lives in the glass house should not throw stones." In fact, the present Russia, having inherited from the Soviet system the same notorious double standards, operates so roughly and energetically in internal policy and the relations with the CIS countries to the extent, to which the USA so far, thanks God, is unwilling to. The invented and mythologized national interests have already totally crushed the citizens' rights, their social and household needs.

How long will last the persistent suppression of the long awaited necessity to restore the historical justice towards the entire peoples and individuals? Will there finally be the law on rehabilitation of repressed peoples? These problems are becoming more and more visible, interethnic conflicts flash in the country, still local now, but who will vouch for the future?

When lies and hypocrisy penetrate the state policy in such a huge and influential country like Russia, it is not only its "internal business". This example becomes an impulse for those who conduct similar politics in the West. We tirelessly proclaim that the country moves along a democratic way of development. At the same time, the state celebrates one of its official large-scale holidays in the day of brutal punishment of smaller peoples who keep suffering from territorial and ethnic infringement. Thus, the sadistic Stalinist policy towards them continues until now. Under modern conditions of "cultural transfusion", it leads to the degradation of political culture of world political establishment already noticeable with the naked eye. The walls in the glass houses are not only fragile, they are also transparent: the neighbors look at and influence each other, and bad examples, as is known, are especially infectious.



Dosh #1(15)2007
Abdulla DUDUEV



DOSH #3(17) 2007
Lidiya YUSUPOVA

THE WOLF

Illuminating the ground with its last beams and absorbing the dying away sounds of the day, the sun was smoothly falling over the mountain ridge. Twilight got denser giving way to the approaching night. The stars were lighting up high in the sky. The night chill was approaching.

He stretched out on the ground and looked at the vague silhouettes of the mountains listening to the night rustles. A gentle blow of the wind brought a smell. He lifted up his head and inhaled the air. He got on his paws, stood for a while, and went... He knew where was going. He went along a path that He didn't use for a long time. It was winding among bushes and the boulders that had rolled down from mountain tops. The coiling path escaped downhill and stopped at the bank of a mountain river. On the other bank of the river behind the wood, there used to be a settlement of people. He attempted to step cautiously. But at times stones slid from under the paws and gave him out with a treacherous noise. Having reached the river, He stood for a while in meditation peering into the dark outline of the opposite bank and, having bent down, stepped into the ice-cold water. The current strappingly embraced him holding down his movements and tried to carry him away breaking his paws against underwater stones. He tried to swim towards the shore as fast as He could. At last He got out on the shore totally wet and exhausted.

He sprawled breathing heavily and fell unconscious for an instant. It was as if He was falling into a chasm. Suddenly a spark that flashed in the depth of his consciousness startled him. He lifted up his heavy head and became alert but the noise of the river muffled all the other sounds. He walked unsteadily and somehow reached the wood to dissolve in its darkness. He stopped. He peered into these small hills. Something moaned inside. The impetuous melancholy was pressing him and He started to howl hysterically. He did not hear a lonely dog barking in the distance. He continued to call... This call, full of pain, spread all over the night wood. But there was no answer. He found a small deepening dug in the ground and crouched there. He became silent. The moonlight streamed from the height trying to break through the foliage of the trees. Shouts of an owl distributed him occasionally. A bird flew by noisily clapping the wings. The rumble reminding of the peals of thunder came from a distance. He was absorbing these sounds. But He had to go further. He got out of his shelter and climbed up on the ledge of a rock. Below, filled with moonlight, the destroyed dwellings of people could be seen. Trying to catch the attributes

of life He froze up like a sculpture... Now He caught familiar smells, they were brought by a light breeze from the village.

The suffering that filled his soul was coming out with a howl breaking the silence of the night...

He slowly wandered through the wood, sometimes stopped. His way ran into the mountains to the cave that He had abandoned long time ago. It is unsafe to go in the daylight, so He lied down and fell asleep. When He woke up He felt hungry. It was afternoon and the air was filled with the hum of the bees, a magpie was violently cracking somewhere. Despite the aching feeling of famine He did not want to leave his shelter. The memories were taking him afar...

It was a spring sunny day. They crawled out of the cave and played among boulders. The mother came and brought food. Pushing away each other they tore the pieces of meat apart. The mother was lying beside and looking at them only occasionally growling to preserve order. Having eaten they decided to gambol and began to jump on the mother's back. Suddenly she became alert. They too felt danger and rushed to the cave overtaking each other. She jumped and rushed in the opposite direction leaving far away from the den to take danger away from the children. She almost reached the bushes when a hot wave knocked her down. The pain pierced her body and an infernal fire flashed inside her. With a trace of blood behind her, she continued to creep in aspiration to get away from the den. Through a veil that was dimming her eyes she seen a man with the gun in hand hands approaching her. She made her last effort to grin, something bubbled in her breast, and the body started to tremble in death agony.

They gathered in the distant corner of the cave nestling to each other. A narrow strip of light was getting inside the cave and it sometimes faded. Someone was walking there covering the light, people's voices could be heard, and then there was silence.

Several days passed, they were afraid to leave the refuge waiting for their mother. Then they dispersed. He was the only one who returned to the cave, the two others did not appear any more. He spent a few days in loneliness. When He finally crept out of the cave completely weakened He was found by a man.

The abundance of alien smells tortured him in the human dwelling. He wanted to return to the cave. He stayed in the corner and refused to accept food. When adult people came nearer to him, He met them with an indistinct growl. Once a boy came and brought



meat. Having smelled meat, He wished to rush towards it the first instant but He constrained himself. The boy squatted down near him and moved a piece of meat closer to him. The boy was smiling, saying something tenderly, and cautiously stretching his hand. He gave an indistinct growl and the boy stepped back. He too was cautiously observing the boy without touching the food. The boy could not sustain and was the first to leave. He waited a little and rushed to the meat cutting to pieces with his teeth. It was the first time when He ate the food brought by the man.

From now on it was the boy who was feeding him. Little by little they got used to each other but the melancholy and the wish for freedom did not pass away. Sometimes at night He would dig the ground under the wall but in the morning the boy came and filled up the hole. Having understood the futility of his efforts He reconciled.

Time was passing quickly. He felt how his body was getting stronger and it was getting too tight in the closed space. The

boy noticed it and began to take him out of imprisonment for a walk. They could spend the whole day wandering among the rocks and in the woods. Above, eagles were flying in the cloudless sky. Below, herds of sheep were peacefully grazing. Having languished, the boy dozed...

In such minutes, captured by a sudden shiver, He strained and tried to set free but the jingling of the chain gave him out. The boy opened his eyes, smiled, stood up, reeled up the chain on his hand, and they walked back. Winter came and threw a white blanket of a snow over the ground. Inhaling the smells of the past summer and the smoke streaming from the chimneys of the houses, He whiled away the cold winter nights.

Once at dawn He heard an approaching roar. A gnash followed by the blows that made everything shudder around. Each time when the blows reached the ground, a wave ran on it and died away with groan somewhere in the depth. Now there is a blow somewhere near. An unknown force flapped the frozen ground upwards smashing all on the way. The

animals moored in the shed captured in flames while people were running in the yard trying to rescue them. He instinctively began to search where hide himself. He did not notice that a splinter touched his ear and tore it into two halves as if it were the tongue of a snake. Tongues of flame were greedily licking the walls approaching him. He was rushing about. The boy ran in, released him, and immediately jumped out: the shed was already in flames.

His body got frozen for an instant from fear. But having heard the boy calling him, He jumped off and made a leap through the fire. The fur lighted up. The boy rushed to him, covered him with his body, and somehow extinguished the flame.

He jumped up, made a step, and at once realized that the ground was burning under his paws. He dragged unsteadily behind the boy. They approached a group of men. Some of them had weapons in their hands. The men walked away from the village leaving behind them the lamentations of women and crying of children.

People's faces were severe, they walked silently. They passed the wood and approached the river. Its banks were covered with ice. His paws began to slide apart. The boy tried to help him but he was not strong enough. The people took off their shoes, threw the shoes on their shoulders, and began to get over to the other bank of the river. The boy and the wolf lagged behind. One of the men returned and together with the boy they lifted him. He resisted but the people managed to drag him to the other bank.

The animal followed the boy overcoming the pain in the burnt paws. The free open space around excited him and was wakening his natural instincts.

Having reached a big crevice in a rock people stopped. Below there was the village with curls of black smoke above it.

He was lying at the entrance and looking how they disappeared in it one after another. The boy stood at the entrance for a while and called him but He did not move from his place. After some hesitation the boy disappeared in the darkness of the cave too. Melancholy tormented the animal: He would leave but some unknown force tied him to the boy.

Suddenly the air was filled with noise. Huge birds were spinning in the sky above the village with menacing roar and they were spitting fire. He dived into the cave and for an instant went blind in darkness. The boy approached. He was saying something tender and stroking him on the back. The cave reminded him of his childhood. Back then they were hiding from the man who was their enemy. Now He did not understand who the danger was coming from.

Towards the evening it became silent. The people got out of the shelter. They returned with an armful of fur-tree branches and brushwood. They set up a fire in the distant corner of the cave. Having seen the fire He jumped up and rushed away from the cave. He stopped nearby and stretched out on the snow. The cold snow eased the pain.

Half-asleep He caught a delicious smell. He slightly opened his eyes, sighed with gratitude, and as soon as the boy left he rushed to the food.

In the morning the people went away. Only his friend stayed. The boy examined the area through the field-glass. The animal was vigilantly looking around too. Below, people and vehicles were moving around the village, the roar reached even here. The day passed in waiting.

The men returned in the evening. Their faces were severe. They sat around

the fire stretching their hands to the fire. They were eating silently.

Days and nights were passing slowly. Once the men came earlier than usual, they carried someone on their hands. He caught the smell of blood. They put the man cautiously near the fire and tied up his wounds moistening them with a harshly smelling liquid from the bottle. The wounded man groaned softly. The people sitting around the fire exchanged words rigidly, abruptly. At dawn, the adults left.

In the evening the man came to the senses and asked to drink. The boy scooped a mug of water from the bucket and brought it to the lips of the wounded man having raised his head with care. The man took a sip of water and said with a weakening voice: "Ла иллаха илла лах..." and then he became silent. The boy closed his eyes and bent the head to the opened palms began to read swinging his body: "Айзу биллахИ ми на ш а й т І а н н р а ж и й м и . БисмиллахИррохъманирохъийми..."

The men were very late that evening, it was early morning and they were not back yet. The boy was sitting at the fire stirring the burning branches. The men came in silently as usual, tired and wet. The boy got to his feet to welcome them. They did not sleep all night, someone was cleaning the weapons and the others were building a stretcher. At dawn they the dead man on the stretcher collected the things, prayed, and left taking with them the body of their comrade. This time the boy left too.

The animal remained alone. The day passed and the night came. The people did not come back. He was lying at the entrance and waited. But they did not come back either the following day or thereafter.

All the long winter nights He ransacked in search of food and was hiding in the cave in the afternoons. Sometimes He saw people from afar: they emerged accompanied by flashes of fire and the crash that was braking off the air. Feeling the danger He tried to leave farther away. From time to time He came down from the mountains into the wood. When spring came it became easier to get food. Wandering across the wood He could find the leftovers of food dumped by the people. He gradually began to get used to the roar and noise, now all this, to tell the truth, repeated less often and it was not as frightening as it used to be earlier. But each time he smelled people He immediately left trying to remain unnoticed.

He had a favorite place in the wood

where he sometimes could spend the whole day regaining strength. On one of such spring days He was dozing when human voices suddenly could be heard. He was immediately alerted and He picked up the ears. He could hear trees being cut. Engines were roaring filling the air in the wood with the smell of exhaust fumes. He cautiously left his shelter and stealthily began to creep up there where these sounds were coming from. From behind a dense bush He could see people dragging the cut down trees and branches, building a dwelling, and digging the ground. In a distance there were tanks roaring and periodically throwing up grey clubs of smoke. The instinct prompted that it was time for him to get out of here. He turned back and slowly trotted away.

He spent the day hiding in bushes and when darkness fell He headed to the mountains. Having stepped onto a stony abrupt slope He remembered the cold winter afternoon when they were climbing up on this path together with the boy and the other people from the village. His soul began to moan. The suddenly felt a grudge against the boy and all the people. He approached the cave and quite unexpectedly heard human whispers inside. His heart began to beat violently. He approached even closer and warily inhaled the air trying to catch a familiar smell. He listened more attentively and among these voices He distinguished the voice of the boy that now was a little bit coarsened and wheezy. He cautiously entered the cave. As before, the people were sitting around the fire. One of them turned back, noticed him, and joyfully exclaimed: "Borz is back!" All the men sitting around the fire turned at once and began smiling and calling him amicably: "Borz, come here!" One of them jumped to his feet and ran to him. It was him, his boy! Only now he was different, he matured. When he was stroking him and touching the torn ear, He felt that the boy's hand became heavier than it had been before. "Borz, you returned. I knew that you would come back!"

The wolf stood being afraid to move, He was overflowing with pleasure. The boy returned to the fire, took a piece of meat, returned to him, put the meat in front of him, and squatted nearby. In the twilight of the cave, the eyes of the wolf were shining green. They were stared at the boy without blinking. The wolf carefully took the meat, trotted towards the entrance, lied down, and began to eat slowly. He felt how the people were observing him. He felt the fixed stare of

the boy. After He was done with the food, He got up and went to his former place. He lied down keeping an eye on the people. A little later they began to scatter around. Some people left, the others went to sleep.

The boy heard his sigh, hesitated for a little, then seized an armful of branches, came up to him, and lied down near him. The fire was burning slowly, the people were sleeping. The night was moonless and the stars were flickering high in the sky. Suddenly He heard hasty steps: someone was approaching. He peered into the darkness and gave a soft growl. Several men came out from the cave. There was a stranger outside on the path. He approached and began to speak in a low voice. The other men stepped out from the cave. Soon all of them started moving downwards along the path. The boy came up to him, pulled him on the nape, and hurried away to join the others.

His heart sank and an aching pain began to spread all over his body. He saw them off with a long melancholic stare.

At dawn, the noise started again, calming down and renewing with a new force from time to time. There were new sounds in addition to familiar ones: the whistles were breaking up the pre-dawn haze and having touched the ground they ended with a heavy thunder and rolled around with an echo. The edge of the glowing sphere slowly appeared from behind mountain tops. Its weak beams were spreading across the sky penetrating the light white clouds and hundreds of gold strings started to drop on the ground caressing the tree tops. A light fog was stretching above the wood. Clouds of smoke were rising into the sky breaking the fog. He involuntarily shuddered with every new thunder. No, now it was not fear. Waves of silent fury were rolling one after another inside him. Almost without touching the ground He rushed there without any fear to fall off from the narrow path into the precipice. An unknown force was pushing him forward. He froze for an instant in front of the river and then plunged into the rapid stream desperately struggling with the current. He got out on the bank and continued to run.

A sudden silence made him stop abruptly. Tree branches were scattered all over the place. They had been cut off by shell splinters. Bark hanged down from some of the trees as if it was torn apart with huge claws of an unknown animal. The exposed gentle trunks exuded with juices similar to tears.

The smell of blood touched his nos-

trils. A man was lying on the pitted ground. He looked into the sky having widely stretched his hands as if he wished to embrace the immensity of life. His wide open eyes were one color with the sky. A light breeze moved his fair hair. The bloody stain on his breast was slowly growing and impregnating his clothes. The wolf passed by him and continued his way further. The same smell was everywhere. People were lying on the ground, empties were scattered all around. A tank with drooping tracks was exhausting smoke at a distance.

He searched for his friend among these people who had fallen asleep in a deep dream. An unfamiliar melancholy prompted that he was here together with the others. The boy was lying there having embraced the ground with his hands as if he tried to protect it with his body. He squeezed a knife in his hand. There was blood on the blade. The wolf came closer to him, sniffed, and sat down. His voiceless soul was torn into pieces and He lifted up his head and let this pain escape into the open space. It was ringing as it was getting higher to the sky.

Coming off the ground and picked up by the wind, the cry of his farewell was striving to the tops of the mountains as a sad message. It spread all over touching the destroyed cities and villages with its wing. The sadness of the forsaken animal was flowing above the green open spaces, above the birch woods that were rustling with catkins and silently crying, and it floated further above the boundless roads, overtook those who were moving along them, and plunged down into the cities shrouded by gray smoke.

It was the message of tears, grief, and sufferings.

Driven by grief, He hurried to abandon this place. There were people here and there on his way. When they saw him they started to shoot. Some of their bullets, having screamed, stuck into the trees, others, almost touching the fur of the fugitive, flew forward ahead of him. But one bullet reached him. Bleeding and exhausted he continued to move further.

Exhausted by the pain and hungry, He was lying between huge stones not far from a small river. To satisfy thirst, He several times crept to the river and returned to the shelter again. He kept licking the wound trying to get rid of the bullet but lost consciousness again and again. People found him in this condition. When He smelled them, He made an effort and forced himself to get up. He pulled together the remaining energy: He

decided to fight for himself. He grinned. Hardly keeping on his paws, one of which was hanging lifelessly, He prepared for a jump. Suddenly one of them softly called: "Borz!" His heart trembled and started to beat violently. He strained and moved forward trying to distinguish the one who called him by name.

The fog was dimmed the eyes, it was slowly covering the ground and falling into darkness. Having regained consciousness, He felt a bitter taste that reminded him of the cave and that wounded man. Beside him was the food left by the people. Several days later he could rise. Forces were gradually coming back to him.

When spring came, he started to feel sadness even stronger. He suffered from hunger all the winter, so He now went hunting every day to accumulate forces needed for a long way back home.

All night long till the dawn, there was light in the window of a nearly destroyed small house on the edge of the village.

She suddenly woke up. Without opening her eyes she said: "Ла иллаха илла лах." She lifted up leaning on an elbow and listened: it was silent. She got up from the bed, came up to the window, and removed the fabric that served as a curtain: the room filled up with moonlight. Peace reigned everywhere.

Suddenly a howl reached her ears from the darkness. Her hands started to shake. Being afraid to drop the lamp, she put it on the floor and fell asleep at once. She would recognize this voice from a thousand others! She caught her breath and rushed to the door. The iron hook got stuck and would not give in. This howl filled with suffering tormented her soul as if it was calling her. Her heart was beating fiercely. She strained her body and began to howl in return: the shout of the lonely hearts, exhausted and torn, merged together and dashed to the stars.

Her lips moved silently, the eyes were closed: she was praying to the Almighty for the souls of those who abandoned this ground and for those who remained on it, singed by the war and impregnated with blood, for mothers, for orphans. Released from terrestrial fetters, her soul was rising to transcendental heights.

Enclosed by tall crenellated walls painted in the color of caked blood, he contemptuously looks at the world with his bloody eye, announcing himself by the strike of the chimes that count seconds, minutes, and years. Of Life...

THE MOST POPULAR MAGAZINE ABOUT LIFE,
HISTORY AND CULTURE IN CHECHNYA

www.doshdu.ru

FIND OUT MORE INSIDE