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UKRAINIAN WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

VIOLATIONS (2017–2020)

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FOREWORD



In 2016, our book *Ordinary Fascism: [War] Crimes of Ukrainian Armed Forces (2014–2016)* was published. Unfortunately, over the past four years, crimes and human rights violations committed by the Ukrainian regime have not only become widespread but have become an integral part of power in Ukraine.

The ideology of the current Ukrainian government is based on a bizarre combination of Russophobic policies to combat the Russian language, create an atmosphere of hatred toward the Russian culture and Russians and glorify Nazi collaborators, including those recognized as such at the Nuremberg Trials, who have become official heroes of modern Ukraine (with celebration of state holidays on their birthdays, renaming streets, and creating state museums and monuments in their honor) and whose biographies are studied in schools and universities, as well as to proclaim the European and Euro-Atlantic policy of Ukraine (the latter is laid down in the preamble to the country’s Constitution). This ideology is implemented violently by killing, beating, and torturing residents of Donbass, opposition politicians, and journalists through numerous Ukrainian “Death Squads”, censorship and mass violations of freedom of speech imposed in the country, banning the dissident media, arrests of journalists, persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, etc.

Paradoxically, this system of constant, deliberate, and gross violations of the European Convention on Human Rights and

European countries' practices does not affect the Ukrainian regime to espouse its European identity and policy to join the European Union. Neither does the systematic destruction of Donbass civilians, its hospitals, kindergartens, universities, houses, and infrastructure by the Ukrainian Armed Forces during the ongoing civil war. All these actions are classified as war crimes under international humanitarian law. However, in today's Ukraine, any reference to the civil war made on-air prompts immediate verifications, a ban on the media and arrest of the person who raised the issue.

The emergence of the current Ukrainian regime is noticeably linked to the illegitimate 2014 coup d'état. A fair amount of the country's population considers the current government as illegitimate. The official repressive policy against Russians, Russian culture, Russian-speaking residents of Donbass, and simply people who advocate traditional economic ties with Russia; persecution of the Orthodox Church and the Russian language dramatically reduce the remaining legitimacy of the authorities. We are talking about a large amount of the population, if not most of Ukraine. It should be noted that the majority of the country speaks Russian. According to surveys, more than 60% speak Russian at home, and 84% of citizens use Russian in social media. More than 3.5 million people are victims of Ukrainian human rights violations in Donbass. The rapid and continuing drop in ratings of Ukrainian President V. Zelensky from 74% to 26% is revealing, which is also associated with repressive policies.

A brutal repression system allows the Ukrainian political class to continue enriching itself to stay in power. Simultaneously, its actions have led to a distressing economic situation, the collapse of industry, destruction of business, and a drastic decline in living standards. There are also direct beneficiaries of this system. These are the government officials who have created a repressive system. Some of them have become multimillionaires and billionaires over several years. The Ukrainian oligarchs who expose the country to high exploitation and the U. S. political elites who not only use Ukraine against Russia but are also directly involved in the plundering of billions of dollars.

The established system's beneficiaries are also numerous Ukrainian public organizations, which are actively used against opposition political forces, dissident politicians, and journalists. Ukrainian

society has become so exceedingly distorted that the terms “activist” and “volunteer” are recognized as those who personally participate or collaborate in Donbass residents’ killings and who beat and harass the opposition.

Ukraine’s judicial and law enforcement system is either actively involved in human rights violations or is demoralized and makes illegal, politically biased decisions. All these facts are also provided in the book.

Protests against this policy would be much broader if it were not for the brutal level of repression by the Ukrainian “Death Squads” and Special Services. People are scared that they or their relatives will be killed, tortured, arrested, fired, beaten, or harassed. Numerous examples of this are also given in this book. Many of the Ukrainian experts reasonably believe that the Ukrainian regime cannot exist without a system of suppression of the opposition.

All this happens with the direct support from countries such as the United States and many EU countries, which visualize Ukraine as an instrument of policy to combat Russia. As a rule, murders and other serious crimes and human rights violations are not discussed at the state level in Western countries, and the media’s unbiased materials are sporadic. In a few cases, international condemnation of Ukrainian crimes is expressed in formal announcements of regret and concern, and in such a moderate format that Ukraine does not even respond to these statements. For example, such were European countries’ reactions to the burning of more than 48 oppositionists in the Odessa Khatyn or the political murder of O. Buzina.

In cases where the statements are louder, such as the protests by Israel and Poland against the revival of Nazism, the Ukrainian state authorities, its media, and “death squads” conducted an open campaign of harassment against the representatives of these countries. At the same time, the United States and the European Union’s executive authorities prefer not to notice what is happening.

Ukrainian crimes and human rights violations in Ukraine are so widespread that this book’s limited space allows only a small portion of them to be cited. For example, the section on Ukrainian “Death Squads” describes only a few structures, of which there are, in fact, dozens. The presence of the words “ordinary fascism” in the title is no exaggeration. The comparison between Nazi Germany and present

time Ukraine is factually proven in the text of the book: Nazism and its glorification, the existence of anti-Russian ideology and anti-Semitism, Ukrainian “Death Squads”, whose members often don’t even hide the fact that they profess the fascist ideology, while the structures themselves act similar to the Nazi S.A. and S.S., mass torture and murders of oppositionists and dissidents, systematic shelling and killing of civilians in Donbass, censorship in the media and persecution of journalists, etc.

Producing this edition, we focused on presenting the facts rather than on the theoretical interpretation of what is happening from a historical perspective, which we plan to do in the future. They are all easily verifiable and derived from open sources and from numerous interviews with Ukrainian lawyers, journalists, political refugees, and former political prisoners, separately highlighted in the book. The authors also convey their gratitude to K. A. Frolov for his contribution in preparing the chapters of the book.

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of the Civic Chamber of the Russian
Federation*



This book isn't written by us. Its principal authors are those who witnessed the deaths of children under shelling, survived the hell of the Odessa Khatyn, experienced Guantanamo waterboarding; who lay on the cell floor after interrogation listening to the screams of tortured women, being scared to recognize his wife's voice; who buried Russian and Ukrainian girls who were raped and killed by militants of National Guard volunteer battalions; who lived under shelling

in Donetsk and Luhansk, or under the rule of the Bandera supporters who hate Russian cities and their residents, in Mariupol, Odessa, or Kharkiv, where they desecrated churches, banned the use of their native language, mocked the national memory, and staged Nazi processions.

Everyone who has come to the Donbass has heard such stories. A priest told me about waterboarding, which he had miraculously survived in the Mariupol prison. Missing People. Dead relatives. Humiliation and mockery of the sacred. This is the voice of Donbass, the voice of Ukraine, which they are trying to suppress with Nazi marches and anti-Russian chants. And this voice must be heard. These eyewitness accounts are very important for us too — to remember, to help. For our brothers in Donbass and Ukraine, who need to know that they are not alone. These testimonies are also needed as materials for future trials of fascism, which has reared its ugly head upon us. Even hypocritical Western human rights activists and politicians trying very hard not to notice the crimes of the Ukrainian Nazis whom they fed with cakes on the Maidan, are now forced to admit through the teeth tortures in the SSU prison cells, lack of effective investigation of crimes, and total impunity of the murderers and sadists from the “Death Squads”.

They are the true Nazi successors who do not even hide their allegiance to their idols' ideas. That's why they hate veterans, our collective Victory, and the St. George Ribbon. They lost in 1945 and hope for revenge. There is a story in the book about how Nazi thugs stormed a concert celebrating the lifting of Leningrad's siege, dispelled and hit elderly survivors of the siege. This will never be forgiven.

The "civilized West" turns a blind eye to the fascist spirit of "young democracy" — as long as it is not Russian, all means are good fighting against Russia.

This book deals with crimes against humanity. Systematic torture, disappearances, murders, extrajudicial executions, humiliation and inhumane treatment, discrimination, deprivation of freedom of speech and conscience. The perpetrators, whose names are known, have not been held accountable. On the contrary, they are today's heroes in Ukraine. They consider themselves winners.

But they forgot that God's mills grind slowly but surely. The Ukrainian heirs of the Nazis, who wear their insignia, practicing their ideology, and copying their inhumane practices, will be brought to trial. And the honest testimony of witnesses, carefully collected and documented, will form the basis of the prosecution in this trial in the name of humanity.

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"Brothers in Arms"*

THE UKRAINIAN REPRESSIVE STATE AND ITS “DEATH SQUADS”

“Death squads” (*los escuadrões de la muerte* in Spanish) is what armed groups engaged in extrajudicial killings, torture, or kidnappings for political repression, genocide, or ethnic cleansing are commonly referred to as. “Death squads” can be described as “units created or encouraged by the state to kidnap, destroy and intimidate”.

In the context of their methods, today’s death squads have become the “heirs” of the SA stormtroopers and the SS members in Germany under Adolf Hitler.

“Death squads” were especially active in Latin America. For example, in Brazil, *Esquadrões da Morte* (Portuguese, literal translation of “death squads”) emerged in the 1960s. In the 1970s, they emerged in Argentina and Chile, and in the 1980s, in Central America. They were often used by states to fight Communists and other opposition. In the 1980s, “Battalion 316” in Honduras, a “death squad” trained by the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency, assassinated politicians and opposition figures. Similarly, in El Salvador, “death squads” operated under the guise of the country’s army, also directly supported by U. S. arms and training under Presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, and George Bush. The official accusation (2007) of Chilean military dictator Augusto Pinochet, who also came to power with U. S. support, included the use of a “death squad” called the “Caravan of Death”, whose members, using helicopters as transportation, committed 97 political murders.

A book by the famous historian Bruce Campbell points out that extrajudicial killings can include murder, torture, rape, arson, in which

government intelligence agencies are directly involved in a significant number of cases

Below are numerous facts of the crimes committed by the Ukrainian “Death Squads”, which operate in contemporary Ukraine similar to the above examples from Latin America, and are even often called various “battalions”, just like the units of the Honduran army were.

The peculiarity of Ukraine is that the same punitive formation, with the same composition of members often exists both as a “Death Squad”, which is an official unit of the Ukrainian Armed Forces or Ministry of Internal Affairs, and as an existing public organization and even as a party. For example, the “Death Squad” “Azov” Battalion, later expanded as a regiment, is officially part of the National Guard of Ukraine, subordinated to Ukraine’s Minister of Internal Affairs A. Avakov, functions simultaneously as the National Corps party and The Social-National Assembly and The Patriot of Ukraine, which are ultra-right racist radical organizations. At the same time, the Death Squad’s leader A. Biletsky was simultaneously a party leader, the head of the public organizations mentioned above, and a Deputy of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the 8th convocation.

It should be noted that even the US Congress considers the Azov Battalion as being neo-Nazi and pro-fascist. In the case of the Right Sector “death squad”, it simultaneously existed as the racist Right Sector Party, the public National Liberation Movement and the armed Ukrainian Volunteer Corps, which was unofficially subordinate to the command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which conducted the operation in Donbass. The media also wrote that some members of the radical pro-fascist organization were officially registered with the Special Group Alpha, a branch of the Security Service of Ukraine.

Pavel Volkov, Ukrainian journalist, former political prisoner

Attacks on dissidents in Ukraine have not been prevented, and there has been an outrageous hike recently. When the Party of Shariy held an opposition rally in Kyiv related to protesting violence against journalists, the rally was attacked by the National Corps. We have such an organization, a political wing of the Azov Battalion. There were numerous attacks by right-wing radicals. Representatives of the Party of Shariy and the Opposition Platform – For Life. The most challenging

cases are in Kharkiv, where Nikita Rozhenko, a member of the Party of Shariy, was hit on his head with wooden bats. He hardly survived and nearly died. In Zhytomyr, someone under the calling sign Satan beat up the leader of the Party of Shariy in Zhytomyr in front of a camera. There was a severe assault in Vinnitsia. The organizer was the head of the local branch of the National Corps. In Zaporizhzhia, there was a night attack on people returning from a rally. That was the Kyiv rally when I was coming back together with them, so I felt it firsthand. I managed not to be injured but five people were severely injured. There were at least 15–20 people involved in the attack, it was a big group. They were armed with gas, rocks or bricks, sticks or bats. Some people had cuts on their ribs, and some suffered brain injuries. They attacked, screaming. The regional police department was nearby, and those who ran that way were not chased, but those who ran toward our avenue, the main street of the city, they caught up with them, right in front of the camera, and beat them up on the main street of the city.

It should be noted that the Right Sector still exists, has its own training facilities, and its members take part in the killing of civilians in Donbass. Even though its existence contradicts the Constitution of Ukraine, whose Article 17 stipulates “the creation and functioning of any armed formations not foreseen by the law are prohibited on the territory of Ukraine”.

Separately, the actual existence of “Death Squads” with the same leadership and members as in a political party and public organization typical in Ukraine also directly violates its Constitution, which states in Article 37: “Political parties and public associations may not have paramilitary formations”.

Andrey Alexandrovich Gozhy, attorney.

In Ukraine, there is a pool of such organizations, for example, volunteer battalions, Right Sectors, S14, National Corps, and others. Some of them are registered as voluntary organizations promoting the rule of law, let's say in Kyiv. They get funding, some clearly communicate with parties, with Ministry of Internal Affairs, with Avakov. And these people are storm troopers to do the dirty work, for the police and security services. The SSU officers can't assault an unwanted lawyer

who tells the truth in court and defends political prisoners, can they? That's why the S14 organization with a clear mission arrives and beats up a lawyer, like me, right in the courtroom. That was about a year and a half or two years ago. There's a video by Shariy. You can watch it. It is called "Once Upon a Ukrainian Court" or "Once Upon a Zhitomir Court", where he puzzled out this situation. They attacked a lawyer.

They freaked out because they got clear instructions. They took apart the office of the Ukrainian Bar in Kyiv and attacked Valentin Rybin, a lawyer. They also struck me. A criminal case was opened, and that was it. As the police told me, there was no political decision to punish these people. Their leadership should provide guidance.

This case was included in a report from the U.N. Commissioner for Human Rights. Yet, we remain with having a pool of those perpetrators who remain unpunished. This includes these fascist youths. Criminal cases are opened, but then no one takes any further actions. The police still can't figure out the persons who did it, although everyone knows their names. These are well-known people under the leadership of Yevgeniy Karas, head of S14. But the Avakov's police, alas, does not care about human rights and lawyers. These are organizations that serve the security services and the ruling regime. Pseudo-activists, pseudo-patriots, Anti-Terror Operation (officially named by Ukrainian authorities the ongoing armed conflict in the Donbass region of Ukraine) guys and others. These groups of stormtroopers I was talking about, created under the law enforcement agencies of Ukraine. They have no liability at all. From the murder of Oles Buzina to the murder of Pavel Sheremet and Kateryna Gandziuk, not mentioning the countless attacks, they are not liable for anything. Law does not apply to them. Violence is sanctioned by the state. It is typical of a regime that adopts a fascist philosophy.

The real head of our state, I call him the CEO of Ukraine, is Avakov. Avakov calls the shots, not Zelensky, unfortunately.

Alexei Samoilov, lecturer, Ph. D., former Ukrainian political prisoner

In Ukraine, such models are implemented when proxy paramilitary formations are created within the country. And so these proxy formations work for the SSU, Ministry of Internal Affairs and

the oligarchic structures. It's just that politicians with financial and economic resources have their own power formations. For example, the same National Corps, which is divided into four structures: there is a political grouping, purely paramilitary, embedded into the structures of Ministry of Internal Affairs, like the Azov regiment. Then they have several nationalist structures divided by territories and regions, National Corps, the national squads, etc. They engage in terror against the Russian-speaking population. Remember, for example, how May 9 is celebrated in Ukraine, in Kharkiv, how some holidays associated with either the Soviet Union or Russia are celebrated. Try to state something on these days and you'll see. If you have a car you will most likely have it burned. Most likely, you will have your ribs broken with a piece of rebar. The police interpret this as domestic hooliganism based on the personal dislike of an unidentified person toward you. And nothing else will happen. Again, absolute censorship is imposed. You have no right to raise those issues that Ukraine's political culture and practice now recognizes as impractical. Try raising the issue of social justice or the organization of a socialist or communist movement in Ukraine. Try raising the issue of World War II monuments. Try raising the issue of taking over the temples of the Orthodox Church.

Proxy paramilitaries have been established for decades, starting in the late 1990s. Even then, people were trained on purely Nazi ideology, if you are one of them, you can do anything, and if not, you're nothing. You're just biomass that can be destroyed. Sterenko's study case: when "one of them" kills a man and cannot be sentenced, he is immune. He killed a person with a knife, and hasn't been sentenced for several years. And when they tried to bring him to court, there was a wild flurry in the media. There were demonstrations on the media landscape and streets that this man cannot be sentenced because he belongs to Ukrainian-Nazis's caste. And those Ukrainians, or those non-Ukrainians who live there and do not accept it, you can do what you like with them. Sterenko is now being made into a politician. In fact, he's a common skilled killer who is totally cool about stabbing a man to death. The man didn't die from the wound, so he finished him off at the crime scene. For the simplest reason: because he thinks, it's okay. Sterenko is an untouchable.

Citizens of Ukraine burned citizens of Ukraine in Odessa. Those who burned, not only were they not punished, they are even elevated to the rank of heroes. And the very fact that citizens of Ukraine were burned by citizens of Ukraine is presented as a certain symbol: "If necessary, we'll arrange a barbecue for you in other cities as well". There was a clear division between those who are Ukrainian-Nazis and those who are simply citizens of Ukraine.

The creation of new organizations transiting militants from official or unofficial "death squads" to them is no less frequent. For example, the National Guard of Ukraine was largely formed based on Maidan Self Defense and ultra members of the soccer club Shakhtar, responsible for over forty people being burned in Odessa Khatyn (this tragedy is described in detail below). It is not uncommon for different groups of militants to move from one "death squad" to another. For example, the Right Sector included the OUN Battalion formerly known as the Azov-Sich battalion, as well as the Sheikh Mansur battalion, the tactical group "Belarus", and even a certain Military Feldgendarmarie. Another example of this kind of migration is that the head of the Azov "death squad" was the head of the Right Sector for Kharkiv, Donetsk, Poltava, and Luhansk regions earlier, in 2012¹.

In Ukraine there is also the practice of a "death squad" moving from one state structure to another. For example, the "death squad" created by adventurer Semyon Semchenko (he is actually Konstantin Grishin, later a member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the 8th convocation and first deputy head of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on National Security and Defense) called the Donbass Battalion was later subordinated to the National Defense Staff in Dnepropetrovsk Region, then part of it went under Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine A. Avakov, as the "Donbass Operational Battalion of the National Guard of Ukraine" (630 people strong), and the other part was subordinated to the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, where it was listed as the special squadron "Donbass" of the 24th

¹ https://zik.ua/news/2014/03/12/yarosh_sformuvav_grupu_pravyy_sektorshid_469693

separate assault battalion Aidar. One of the foreign militants of the Donbass Battalion was a former member of the 75th Ranger Regiment of the U. S. Army, a graduate from the West Point Military Academy, Major Mark Poslavsky.

Considering that the Death Squads are supported by various Ukrainian government security agencies, conflicts and rivalries often arise between them. For example, Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs Arsen Avakov accused the Right Sector and Dmitry Yarosh, who is under the patronage of the command of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, for the deaths of his fighters and suggested to stop “building a mythical legend on blood and grief”. It is indicative that one of the Right Sector’s most prominent figures, its coordinator in Western Ukraine, the recidivist Alexander Muzychko (byname Sashko Bilyi), was killed during an operation conducted by the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs. In turn, the Right Sector held a protest in front of the Administration of the President of Ukraine in Kyiv, demanding the resignation of Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs Arsen Avakov.

In extreme cases, after the crimes of the Death Squads were made public, they were reformatted or renamed. For example, the Tornado unit was formed within the Ministry of Internal Affairs from the fighters of the Shakhtyorsk battalion of the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs (a significant number of whom were previously convicted repeat offenders), officially disbanded for crimes. The Tornado unit was then disbanded for mass rapes (including children), torture, kidnapping, and murder of civilians.

Sergey Olegovich Yudaev, journalist, and former Ukrainian political prisoner

There was a Nazi in the cell, telling that they imprisoned two civilians, whom they suspected of separatism. They taped his arms and legs together and threw him in the barn. In a private house at some civilian’s house, as they need to drink and eat somewhere. They sat down to drink vodka, moonshine, and whatever they managed to steal from neighbors. They got so drunk that they went to kill their prisoners. One was stabbed, and the other wanted to put a grenade

in his mouth, but something went wrong. There were four of them, and in the end he was the only one left, wounded. He wasn't in prison for being involved in a double murder, but for killing a fellow officer with that grenade. That is what he was in prison for. And he told me specifically in his cell, and his cellmates backed him up with the same. He said that they approached the village without caring if anyone was there, even if it was an ambush, and they used an APC, RPGs, all the heavy artillery, grenades and grenade launchers to drop everything, and only then they went to check and see if anyone was there. I mean, there's scary stuff in there. The Shakhtyorsk Battalion was disbanded, then it was renamed. 90% of its fighters joined the renamed one. It was disbanded yet again, for looting, rape, murder, and so every other national battalion. They did such things there that there are no words for it. They're going to jail now. The accusations they have there are so... It's just starting to come up, and who knows what is next. But only a few are judged.

It should be noted that the number of Ukrainian “death squads” is quite large, for example the Right Sector alone, according to their official statements, at a certain period, had 22 battalions and three training centers¹:

Just as in Latin America, the Ukrainian “Death Squads” seek to create their own sources of funding and enrichment for their leadership. As a rule, these activities are on the edge of the law or are of an openly criminal nature, related to extortion or, on the contrary, security, involved in the redistribution of markets by force at the request of business structures, engaged in smuggling, etc. For example: in July 2015, the Right Sector was involved in a criminal story that took place in the Zakarpattie Oblast. The media wrote that fighters of the “1st Reserve Battalion of the Right Sector Volunteer Ukrainian Corps Zakarpattie were involved in an attempt to redistribute spheres of influence in the local smuggling market. After law enforcement intervened, the incident ended in massive bloodshed, during which several people were killed and injured,

¹ Uzhgorod News: “First Zakarpatsky. “The Right Sector is creating a battalion of the Volunteer Ukrainian Corps in the region”.

three police cars were destroyed, and a fire broke out at the gas station”¹.

Similar to Chile and El Salvador, Ukrainian “death squads” are supported, and in a significant number of cases are directly subordinates of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Internal Affairs or the Security Service of Ukraine, and members of these groups enjoy state support, up to and including de facto pardon for murder (both of opposition figures who are eliminated for political reasons or at the initiative of the state and those killed for profit at the initiative of the fighters themselves) — the few detained among them are often released after their arrest, the courts proceedings are dragged out for years, judges themselves are openly pressed to deliver the “right” sentences. There are many such cases, we will cite only a few of them.

Pavel Volkov, Ukrainian journalist, former political prisoner

When you talk to police investigators, you realize that they don't mind investigating, but they have superiors who give them certain instructions. And they won't do anything about it. Considering that the National Corps, and this is no secret, is associated with our Ministry of Internal Affairs, it is unlikely that anything will probably be done. Even the PACE recently said that as soon as the coronavirus quarantine is lifted, they are going to send a delegation to investigate terror committed by the far right.

No sentences are imposed on cases. Investigations are conducted formally. Applications accepted. Everyone understands which organizations are behind it, because they openly call for these pogroms, murders and so on. They keep posting videos, pictures of attacks, and so on. In my opinion, there is a direct reason to conduct searches of these representatives of organizations that call for these pogroms. But it is not done.

The situation with the attacks has become very heated, because there is a struggle with the opposition parties. People are very tired of nationalism. Now there is a great demand for peace, first of all. And it's not happening. That's why is the rating of opposition parties

¹ <https://korrespondent.net/ukraine/3538784-za-chto-ubyvaly-v-mukachevo-versyy-prychyn-konfl ykta>

growing very strongly, and I assume that these attacks are a form of struggle.

Murder of opposition journalist Oles Buzina

On May 6, 2019, the board of the Shevchenko district court of Kyiv granted self-disqualification of judge Yevgeny Sidorov, who considered the case of the murder of famous journalist and politician Oles Buzina, who had a critical position on the Ukrainian government. In doing so, the judge directly referred to the pressure exerted on him. Below, we will look in detail at what happened, both because it is indicative of the political murder itself, which is part of a massive campaign by the Ukrainian government to intimidate the opposition, and as an example of how, even when the murderers were found and their crime was proven, they not only remained at large, but on the contrary, received state support. The media also established facts of the murderers' connection with the SSU.

It is also indicative of contemporary Ukraine that, in the presence of 100% proof of the murderers' guilt, politicians, journalists, and deputies of the Verkhovna Rada launched a broad campaign for their release, without even challenging the fact of their guilt.

The killers of the journalist were Andrey Medvedko and Denis Polishchuk, members of the S14 Death Squad, which the Ukrainian government uses to eliminate and intimidate dissidents. The investigation established that before the murder they had called and met with E. V. Karas, the founder and leader of S14, and S. V. Bondar, OUN member (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists)¹ and a militant of Myrotvorets Regiment of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. A significant number of Ukrainian experts believe that it was E. V. Karas

¹ The organization was named after the OUN, an organization created in 1929 that collaborated in Ukraine with Nazi Germany and was known for its involvement in the mass murder of Jews, Poles, and Russians. A number of Nazi units, such as the 14th Waffen-Grenadier-Division of the SS "Galicia" were also formed from members of the OUN.

who was the main organizer of the murder of the opposition journalist Oles Buzina.

The arrest of the third participant in the murder was reported by Arsen Avakov, the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. The media¹ wrote that when the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs spoke about “the third suspect”, it was him. However, subsequently the “third suspect” (according to Avakov, the person involved in the organization of the murder, i.e. the key man) incomprehensibly disappeared from the investigation. Most experts are of the opinion that it was the leader of the “death squad” E. V. Karas.

The materials of the case contain data showing that the killers themselves underwent combat training at the training base of the Right Sector Death Squad. All of these organizations actively cooperate and often work together. For example, on March 16, 2017, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, the All-Ukrainian Association Svoboda, the National Corps, the Right Sector, the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, and S14 signed the National Manifesto.

Despite the fact that the murder was proven and the perpetrators were identified, the murderers have been at large for five years. It is also telling that in 2019 Ukrainian President V. Zelensky refused to meet with the murdered man’s mother, despite her appeal. In her letter to the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, she stated that the case is intentionally dragged out by the court, and the information about the involvement of the Ukrainian special services in the murder, in addition to the direct perpetrators, is “carefully removed from the case, and the relevant versions are not checked by the investigation”.

The murder drew an international response, as evidenced by the following statements by officials, cited on TASS pages².

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed hope that the Ukrainian authorities will conduct a comprehensive investigation into the murder of journalist Oles Buzina. Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General, in response to a question from TASS, said: “We very much hope that the Ukrainian authorities will conduct a full investigation into the incident”.

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20190220/1022752538.html>

² https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/1909780?hc_location=ufi



The signing of an agreement on cooperation with O. Tyahnybok (the Svoboda Party, on whose basis the Death Squads Sich and the Karpatska Sich Squadron were formed), Andrei Tarasenko (the Right Sector Party that lent its name to the Right Sector Battalion Death Squad), and A. Biletsky (head of the National Corps Party and commander of the Death Squad Azov battalion, which later became a regiment). The signatories also include S14 “death squad”



The body of murdered oppositionist Oles Buzina. The assassins were members of the S14 “death squad” Andrey Medved’ko and Denis Polishchuk. According to Ukrainian police documents, shortly before the murder they had met with the head of S14, E. Karas, which supports the assumption that he was the main organizer of the murder of the oppositionist

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatović strongly condemned the murder of Ukrainian journalist Oles Buzina in Kyiv. “This horrific act is yet another reminder of the dangers that journalists face in carrying out their duties. The murder must be immediately and thoroughly investigated by the competent authorities”, she stressed. Expressing condolences to the journalist’s family, she once again called on the Ukrainian authorities to ensure the safety of journalists in the country. “I reiterate my call for the authorities to find the necessary resources to investigate this murder. There should be no leniency for those behind the violence against the media”, Mijatović said.

The EU demanded an independent investigation into the murders in Ukraine of journalists Oles Buzina and Serhiy Sukhobok and politician Oleg Kalashnikov. This was stated by Maja Kocijancic, spokesperson for EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini: “We condemn these crimes and call for an independent investigation into the murders of journalists Oles Buzina, Serhiy Sukhobok and former Deputy Oleg Kalashnikov”. She stressed that the EU expresses “deep, sincere condolences to the families of the victims”, and also noted the importance of “respect for freedom of expression and media freedom” in Ukraine.

The international nongovernmental organization Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) condemned the murder of Ukrainian journalist Oles Buzina in Kyiv and called on the Ukrainian authorities to investigate immediately. “We condemn the murder of Oles Buzina and call on the Ukrainian authorities to immediately launch an investigation into the case”, Nina Ognianova, CPJ Europe and Central Asia Program Coordinator, said in a statement. “The authorities in Kyiv must take into account that Buzina’s murder could have been motivated by his professional activities and bring the perpetrators to justice”.

“The United States condemns the murders in Ukraine of former Party of Regions MP Oleg Kalashnikov and journalist Oles Buzina and calls on the authorities to investigate these crimes. This was stated by the Deputy Spokesperson of the State Department Marie Harf commenting on the request of journalists on reports from Kyiv. “We condemn the murder of a former MP and journalist in Ukraine”, the American diplomat said.

The murder of Ukrainian journalist Oles Buzina must be investigated thoroughly and impartially”. Rachel Denber, Deputy Director of the Europe and Central Asia Division of the prestigious international Human Rights Watch, told a TASS correspondent. “Oles Buzina was a fierce critic of the Ukrainian government. We call on the authorities in Kyiv to conduct a thorough, independent and impartial investigation into his murder. It should taken into account that Buzina’s motives for murder could very likely have been his opposition views”, Denber pointed out. However, all these statements did not lead to any results, and the Ukrainian authorities continue to block the investigation.

Oles Buzyna was shot dead with a TT pistol on April 16, 2015, at about 1:20 p. m. in Kyiv, near building No. 58 on Degtyarevskaya Street, where he lived. According to the e-mail sent out, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) claimed responsibility for this murder, as it did for the murder of opposition politician Oleg Kalashnikov. The UPA fought in World War II on the side of Nazi Germany, participated in the mass murder of Jews, Poles, Ukrainians and Russians in Ukraine, and was led by Roman Shukhevich, who served in the Nazi armed forces with the rank of Hauptmann. The majority of Ukrainian Death Squads, including the C14, consider themselves the successor of this organization.

Journalist, writer and politician Oles Buzina was a well-known figure in Ukraine. He actively criticized Ukrainian authorities and nationalist extremist groups. He graduated in 1992 from the philological department of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv as a teacher of Russian language and literature. He worked as a journalist in the newspapers “Kyiv Vedomosti”, “2000”, “Friend of the Reader”, “Leader”, “Natalie”, “Ego”, “XXL” magazines, he was an author columnist and blogger in the Today newspaper. He was the author and presenter of “Po sledam prashchurov” (In the Footsteps of Ancestors) show on K-1 TV channel. In 2012, he took part in the elections of People’s Deputies of Ukraine in the majoritarian Kyiv city constituency No 223.

Oles Buzina openly adhered to the view of the trinity of the Russian people (Little Russian, Belarusians and Great Russians), advocated the friendship of Ukraine and Russia, supported the federalization of Ukraine, its independence and bilingualism of Ukrainian culture, the

widespread development of the Ukrainian and Russian languages. The media wrote that while he “did not accept the 2014 coup, he criticized Poroshenko’s policies in publications and on TV broadcasts, called for the war in Donbass to be stopped through negotiations, for some kind of consensus with those who rebelled against Kyiv. It is noteworthy that his publications have repeatedly been the subject of legal proceedings, but the courts have recognized the reliability of the facts presented by Buzina”¹. In May 2009, Oles Buzina proposed passing a package of laws banning neo-Nazi organizations and propaganda of Nazism, as well as banning the promotion of the ideological heritage of the OUN as a totalitarian fascist party.

Not surprisingly, all this aroused hatred on the part of the Ukrainian government and its “death squads” — the radical organizations such as Right Sector, OUN, S14, and others.

In March 2015, a month before his death, Buzina spoke about censorship in the media in Ukraine, as well as attacks and threats to his life²:

“It’s really hard to work. A number of laws have been passed that restrict journalistic activities under the pretext of war. One part of being a journalist is that you have to listen to two sides of a conflict and give two sources of information. Under Ukrainian law, it is impossible to quote people who find themselves on the other side of the front line...

There are several TV channels — all subordinate to a limited number of Ukrainian oligarchs: Kolomoysky, Pinchuk, Akhmetov and Firtash. The paper version of the newspaper 2000, which was Ukraine’s leading journalistic newspaper, has disappeared. It worked under Kuchma, under Yushchenko, under Yanukovich. As soon as the last power changed, it was closed. The newspaper Kapital, a serious publication with a strong journalistic staff, was shut down. It is a return to the era of stagnation, when there is a correct, official point of view and no deviation. It’s just like in the 1970s, when two daily newspapers were published in Kyiv, The Flag of Communism and Vecherny Kyiv.

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200416/1027401335.html>

² <https://rg.ru/2015/03/13/buzina.html>

...I had to go through everything, I was attacked and threatened. Such is the life of a journalist. Extremely unpleasant, but it happens. I try to take a position that is sharp, but, from my point of view, just a certain, honest position”.

A few days before his death, Oles Buzina’s details, including his home address, had been posted on the Canadian-based Myrotvorets website, created with the initiative of Anton Gerashchenko, the Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs. The people listed on it are recommended for liquidation and arrest, and the total number of people listed is in the tens of thousands.

The screenshot shows the Myrotvorets website interface. At the top right, the site is titled "МІРОТВОРЕЦЬ" (Myrotvorets) and describes itself as a center for research on signs of threats to national security. The main navigation bar includes links for "Головна", "Про Центр", "Контакти", "Скарги", and "ЧИСТИЛИЩЕ". A search bar is visible on the left. The central content area displays a profile for "Бузина Олександр / Buzina Oles Alekseevich", added on April 14, 2015. The profile includes a photo of a man, his country (Ukraine), address (Kyiv, Degtjarska Street 58, 101), and phone number (+380444460847). Below the photo, there is a description of him as a separatist and a writer, with a link to his literary work "Бурдалак Тарас Шевченко".

The Myrotvorets website containing the data and home address of Oles Buzina was created with the support of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. According to many experts, this publication prompted Ukrainian extremists associated with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ukrainian “death squads” such as Right Sector, OUN, S14 and others to kill the journalist

It is interesting to note that Myrotvorets website database also includes the names of Western journalists who have published objective information, such as AFP, Al Jazeera, Le Monde, BBC,

Reuters, as well as a number of politicians. Among them is former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. Back in 2015, Georgiy Tuka, who participated in the creation and operation of the site, stated that of the people listed on the site, “more than 300 were either arrested or destroyed¹. ”When Valeria Lutkovska, the Verkhovna Rada Commissioner for Human Rights, sent a request to the Security Service of Ukraine and the Ministry of Internal Affairs to punish those involved in the publication of personal data on the Myrotvorets website and to block the resource in accordance with Article 23 of the Law “On Protection of Personal Data”, Deputy Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs Alexander Gerashchenko threatened to resign and said that the work of the site is “extremely important for the national security of Ukraine. Later, the Security Service of Ukraine issued an official statement saying that it did not see any violations of Ukrainian law in the activities of the Myrotvorets website. According to many experts, it was the listing on the site and the publication of the home address that prompted the murder of Oles Buzina, Oleg Kalashnikov, and many other opposition figures by members of the Ukrainian “death squads”.

Here are brief excerpts from the detailed investigation into the murder of Oles Buzina. The investigation was conducted by well-known Ukrainian politician Anatoly Shariy, whose opposition party activists are also currently being beaten and persecuted².

On April 16, 2015, a certain Viktoria Yefimovna called 102 and said that Buzina had been murdered at 58 Degtyarevskaya Street. A team also went there and began to investigate the scene...

The police examined Buzina’s clothes. There were five wounds, some through and some blunt wounds to the head. A ballistic examination was scheduled for the next day.

When the police began to search the streets, they came across the killers’ car, which was later identified by witnesses. A Ford Focus with Italian plates was found at 9, Eugene Potier Street. In the distance,

¹ https://vesti.ua/strana/96734-provokacij_a-ili-rasprava-pochemu-ubili-buzinu

² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bn7qOPOkW0

«МИРОТВОРЕЦЬ»
 ЦЕНТР ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ОЗНАК ЗЛОЧИНІВ ПРОТИ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ БЕЗПЕКИ УКРАЇНИ, МИРУ, БЕЗПЕКИ ЛЮДСТВА ТА МІЖНАРОДНОГО ПРАВОПОРЯДКУ
 Center for Research of Signs of Crimes against the National Security of Ukraine, Peace, Humanity, and the International Law
 Information for law enforcement authorities and special services about pro-Russian terrorists, separatists, mercenaries, war criminals, and murderers

СБ України — 0 800 501 482, e-mail: callcenter@sssu.gov.ua)

Головна Про Центр «ЧИСТИЛИЩЕ» «IDENTIGRAF» (надіслати дані)

Пошук (ru)

ФІО

Страна

Адрес

Телефон

Описание

Искать

Наші проекти

Центр
«Миротворець»

«IdentigraF»
система розпізнавання

MYROTVORETS
NEWS

Конституція України — Основний закон

КОНСТИТУЦІЯ УКРАЇНИ

Стаття 17. Захист суверенітету і територіальної цілісності України, забезпечення її економічної та інформаційної безпеки є найважливішими функціями держави, справою всього Українського народу.

Стаття 65. Захист Вітчизни, незалежності та територіальної цілісності України, шанування її державних символів є обов'язком громадян України.

21.04.2020 00:20 NATO

Якось так.

СЧИТАЮТ «ПРЕДЕЛАЕМИ»
 Утримувати сім «Миротворець» в Україні: це означає підтримувати державу, яка бореться проти російських терористів, сепаратистів, нацистів, військових злочинців, вбивць.

The Myrotvorets website was created with the participation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. Its slogan is “Ukraine ponad use!” that is “Ukraine is above everything! The slogan is a copy of a line from the German anthem of the Nazi Germany “Deutschland uber alles”, that is, “Germany is above all”. The site contains a publicly available database of “enemies of Ukraine”, whom it is proposed to kill or arrest. At the top of the site there is a special phone number of the Security Service of Ukraine

«МИРОТВОРЕЦЬ»
 ЦЕНТР ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ОЗНАК ЗЛОЧИНІВ ПРОТИ НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ БЕЗПЕКИ УКРАЇНИ, МИРУ, БЕЗПЕКИ ЛЮДСТВА ТА МІЖНАРОДНОГО ПРАВОПОРЯДКУ
 Center for Research of Signs of Crimes against the National Security of Ukraine, Peace, Humanity, and the International Law
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Головна Про Центр «ЧИСТИЛИЩЕ» «IDENTIGRAF» (надіслати дані)

Наші проекти

Центр
«Миротворець»

«IdentigraF»
система розпізнавання

MYROTVORETS
NEWS

Радіо
Миротворець

Знайте країну разом!
Ukraine NOW

Про безпеку України
НАШ ЗАХИСТ

SEA CRIME

Поиск

Григорьев Максим Сергеевич / Григор'єв Максим Сергійович / Grigorev Maksim Sergeevich

Дата рождения: 18.08.1975

Страна: **Россия**

Адрес: Московская обл., г. Москва.

Myrotvorets website page. The list of “enemies of Ukraine” includes one of the authors of this book, M. S. Grigoriev, Director of the Foundation for the Study of Democracy

clothes were found abandoned and covered with leaves. A chemical analysis of the mats was performed, and more than 20 pieces of evidence was discovered. The upholstery and steering wheel were washed out. The DNA of the cells on the wrench, which was also found there, has been established.

The second person's clothes, found at the scene, were hidden in a bag. There were no prints on the bag, which means it was done with gloves on. Two discarded medical masks were found, that is, the criminals were wearing medical masks. Traces of gunpowder were also found on the clothes, i. e. it was proved that these were the clothes of the people who had fired the shot.

Finally, Ford Focus, clothes and on the clothes traces of gunpowder. Traces of DNA were found on the jackets and pants found. The medical masks were numbered — mask one and mask two, and it was analyzed that the DNA on one of the masks matched the DNA found on the same pants and the same jacket. On the other pants and on the other jacket, respectively, they determined the DNA of the man who was wearing the other mask. Thus, the experts found out who owned each mask.

How did you find Evgeniy Karas? Law enforcers found the seller of the car in which Buzina's killers drove away. Particles were found in this car that were completely consistent with particles of clothing found near the car. Proved a connection between the car and clothing, and linked to medical masks. remembered Law enforcers began to investigate people who might have been involved in Buzina's murder. A person named Bogdan Grigorievich Skuba was taken, and his saliva was tested to determine DNA... A certain person, named Stanislav Gennadievich Pavlov. He was surreptitiously taken with a spoon to take DNA samples, etc. The investigation concluded that at this stage it did not have enough evidence to charge E. V. Karas.

The turn comes to Medved'ko. It turned out that the phone that was used to call the sellers of the Ford Focus was Medvedko's phone. But it was impossible to establish Medvedko's whereabouts. Therefore, investigators found Medvedko's mother, Irina Borisovna Medved'ko, born in 1969. Her DNA is a perfect match to the killer's DNA left on medical mask #2.

Control Main Directorate Duty Officer Work of the crime scene investigation team	CONTROL OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS dated 16.04.2015 Removed 22.06.2015 due to IDENTITY VERIFICATION. DANKO
departure	13:12 OTHER DIVISIONS OF THE Department of Internal Affairs 1, the DEPUTY HEAD OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTORATE, BILENKYI,
arrival	13:25 RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISTRICT DIRECTORATE, BULBICH; DISTRICT DIRECTORATE INVESTIGATOR, VLASYUK; DISTRICT DIRECTORATE CRIMINAL SUBDIVISION EXPERT, SIVALYOVA
end	13:45 OSIPENKO. THE DISTRICT DIRECTORATE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DEPARTMENT, ADAMENKO
Plot	
16.04.2016 01:18 p.m., received from service 102 Complainant: Victoria Yufimovna Maybrodskaya; committed on 16.04.2015 13:15 at the address: Apt. 64, 58 Degtyarevskaya St, Shevchenkiivskiy District. Qualification 102: "Murder" - SHOTS WERE HEARD IN THE YARD. I SAW THAT A MAN WAS LYING IN THE BLOOD. 103-GOROSHKO. 16.04.2015 The Report of Crime Investigator Adamenko that on 16.04.15 at 01:18 p.m., in 58 Degtyarevskaya St, using the firearms, two unidentified persons committed the premeditated murder of Oles O. Buzina born on 13.07.1969, in apt. 101, 58 Degtyarevskaya St, Kyiv. Not working.	
On April 16, at 1:15 p.m., via dedicated line "102", Vyacheslav Malinovsky (according to his oral information provided, other personal data are being established) stated that he had witnessed how two unknown men in cloth masks had killed an unknown man (personal data are being established) with shots (about three) from unidentified short-barreled weapon and disappeared in a car of Ford brand, license plate: bl108w. According to the search for the above vehicle the operational plan "Dragnet" was commenced in the capital at 01:20 p.m. Specialists of the relevant services were sent to the scene. To be added. The investigation is being conducted by the Shevchenkiivskiy District Directorate. Reported by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (01.30 p.m. Vanishin).	
Telegram to the NATIONAL POLICE OF UKRAINE No. 705 dated 16.04.2015 01:54:56 p.m.	
On April 16, at 1:15 p.m., received from service 102 Complainant: Victoria Yufimovna Maybrodskaya; committed on 16.04.2015 13:15 at the address: Apt. 64, 58 Degtyarevskaya St, Shevchenkiivskiy District Qualification 102: "Murder" - SHOTS WERE HEARD IN THE COURTYARD, I SAW THAT A MAN WAS LYING IN THE BLOOD: 103-GOROSHKO.	
Telegram to the MAIN DIRECTORATE OF THE NATIONAL POLICE IN KYIV No.246 dated 16.04.2015 01:55:50 p.m.	
16.04.2015 01:18 p.m., received from service 102 Complainant: Victoria Yufimovna Maybrodskaya; committed on 16.04.2015 13:15 at the address: Apt. 64, 58 Degtyarevskaya St, Shevchenkiivskiy District Qualification 102: "Murder" - SHOTS WERE HEARD IN THE COURTYARD, I SAW THAT A MAN WAS LYING IN THE BLOOD: 103-GOROSHKO.	
Head of the District Directorate R. Osipenko, Deputy Head of the District Directorate D. Shumeyko, Head of Crime Investigation Service of the Shevchenkiivskiy District Directorate V. Bilenkiy, Responsible on the Shevchenkiivskiy District Directorate S. Bulbich, and Crime Scene Investigation Team went to the scene in full force	
Telegram to the MAIN DIRECTORATE OF THE NATIONAL POLICE IN KYIV No.251 dated 16.04.2015 05:07:57 p.m.	
16.04.2015, The Report of Crime Investigator Adamenko that on 16.04.15 at 01:18 p.m., in 58 Degtyarevskaya St, using the firearms, two unidentified persons committed the premeditated murder of Oles O. Buzina born on 13.07.1969, in apt. 101, 58 Degtyarevskaya St, Kyiv. Not working.	
Telegram to the MAIN DIRECTORATE OF THE NATIONAL POLICE IN KYIV No.0 dated 16.04.2015 05:08:16 p.m.	

Telegram to the NATIONAL POLICE OF UKRAINE No. 727 dated 16.04.2015 09:48:03 p.m.

Report No. 705 dated April 16 reported the murder. So, on 16.04.2015 at 01:15 p.m., to the duty room of the Shevchenkiivskiy Regional Department of the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in Kyiv, via dedicated line "102," Malinovsky V'yacheslav stated that he had witnessed how in Kyiv, near building No. 58 on Degt'yarevskaya Street, two unknown men in cloth masks shot a man with a gun, and then left by car. This information was registered in the HSU to the Shevchenkiivskiy Regional Department under No. 17858 dated 16.04.2015. After the Crime Scene Investigation Team arrival to the scene near house 58 on Degt'yarevskaya St. in Kyiv, it was found the dead body of: Oles O. Buzina born on 13.07.1969, registered and residing at the address: Apt. 101, 58 Degt'yarevskaya St, not working; before 13.03.2015; the Editor-in-Chief of Segodnya newspaper. During the examination of the corpse with the participation of a forensic expert, 5 inlet openings were found: — in the temporal area of the head on the left side (1) — blunt wound, — in the neck on the left side (1) — through wound with an exit hole in the neck on right side — on the posterior surface of the chest under the left shoulder blade (2) — through wounds with outlets on the front of the chest. Thus one bullet got stuck at an exit from a body in clothes; — on the back on the left side in projection of the left kidney (1) — blunt wound. LID during the examination of the body, the following has been found: — a bullet of 7.62 mm, — the contents of the pockets: money in the amount of UAH 251. (notes of 200, 50, 1 UAH), a bunch of three keys and one magnetic key, pepper gun "Teren-4M"; pair of gloves, mobile phone "Nokia X1"; — sports jacket; — sports backpack with rubber slippers, towel. In addition, in the adjacent area it was found: — near the entrance No.3 (where the victim lived) an inscription with paint on the wall of the house "Buzina — Putin's cattle!" — from which the scrape of a paint and varnish covering is removed; — 18 cigarette butts; — garbage bin, during the inspection of the contents of which, 9 fingerprints were found on the empty bottles. Witness being questioned at the scene: V'yacheslav S. Malinovsky born on 09.11.1972, registered at: Apt. 32, 7-A Heroyiv Kosmosu St., residing: Apt. 105, 10-A Potapova St. Kyiv, who informed that on 16.04.2015, approximately at 1 p.m., by his own car Daewoo Lanos of blue color, license plate AA9169IT, he came into the inner yard of 58 Degt'yarevskaya St, Kyiv, to where he brought his friend Rauza. When the latter got out of the car and went to the entrance No. 3 of the above house, he remained in the car, which parked the front part towards the house between 2–3 entrances, and solved crossword puzzles. At 1:14 p.m., he heard three-four bangs. Looking up, he saw a man fall on the asphalt in front of his car. Next to him were two unknown men with blue medical masks on their faces. Both men walked towards the entrance No.3, next to which was parked a dark blue Ford Focus in a station wagon body. At that moment, one of the men who was taller turned around and, holding a revolver gun, approached the victim, who was lying on the asphalt, and fired another shot to his head. After that, he returned to the above car "Ford Focus" and got behind the wheel. Another man sat in the front passenger seat a little earlier. After that, this car left the yard through

Materials of the official investigation into the murder of O. Buzina: "...five entrance bullet holes: a blunt force wound is in the left temporal part of the head with an exit hole in the neck on the right side, two wounds are on the rear surface of the chest under the left shoulder blade with exit holes on the front of the chest, a blunt force wound is in the back, near the left kidney".

After that, the investigators decide to take biological samples from Polishchuk's mother. Investigators obtain a warrant to enter the home of Polishchuk's mother and seize biological materials for DNA analysis. Polishchuk's mother's DNA is a match for the medical mask and tracksuit.

So, investigators apprehended the two men who committed the murder. After that, audio and video surveillance of Andriy Medved'ko in his car is established. The investigation has these materials, and they have been submitted to the court.

A hat and a half-drunk bottle of water were also taken from Medved'ko's Mercedes. After that, the investigators decide to get Medved'ko's own DNA. The protocol specifies the probability of a DNA match, a random match is impossible.

Medved'ko's DNA is fully matched with the DNA found on the medical mask, as well as on the sports jacket that was left at the crime scene. DNA was also found on the mask and sportswear, which fully matched Polishchuk's DNA. The murderers are identified.

The defense began to apply for a repeat DNA analysis, but the mothers of Medved'ko and Polishchuk refused, and so a warrant was issued for an examination, but the court refused the prosecutor's office and the investigation. The suspects and their relatives stopped coming to court.

The report has testimonies of people who saw the Ford Focus and people parking the car. They described the two men who committed the murder.

Witnesses insist that one of the suspects was short and thin, i.e. like Polishchuk, unlike Medved'ko. There was a witness who saw the shooting, and he even described the gun.

According to DVR footage of cars parked in the yard, it was determined that a blue Ford Focus had been in the area a week before the murder.

But then a third witness appears in the case — a sales clerk, who says that two people who were driving a Ford Focus came into her store. She describes people who are completely unlike Polishchuk and Medved'ko. Clarification: The owner of the store is Olga Nikolaevna Kuchko Olga but more accurately Olga Nikolaevna Kotsko. Kotsko is the leader of the Right Sector in Kyiv.

Expert opinion dated 30.06.2015 No. 1114 mb p. 5 to 13

where p is the frequency with which the allele occurs in the population. Frequencies of alleles are given in the reagent manufacturer's instruction.

The incidence of the detected genotype P in the population is 1 of the P individuals, where $P = 1/P_{cum}$.

The calculations show that:

- probability of accidental coincidence of genetic characteristics of the sample of the buccal epithelium of Medvedko Andriy Oleksandrovych, born on September 27, 1989; and in the item No. 1 (according to the conclusion of the expert of Criminalistics research Centre of GUMVD of Ukraine in the city of Kyiv from 23.04.2015 No. 896 mb) makes 1.33×10^{-26} . The set of genetic characteristics found in these items is not more common than in 1 in 7.55×10^{25} persons;
- probability of accidental coincidence of genetic characteristics of the sample of the buccal epithelium of Medvedko Andriy Oleksandrovych, born on 27.09.1989; and in the item No. 1, 3 (according to the conclusion of the expert of Criminalistics research Centre of GUMVD of Ukraine in the city of Kyiv from 21.04.2015 No. 900 mb) makes 5.28×10^{-23} . The set of genetic characteristics found in these items is not more common than in 1 in 1.89×10^{22} persons.

Photo from Sharyi's YouTube channel. The results of the official examination of Medved'ko's DNA, proving his involvement in the murder of Oles Buzina

Lawyers come up with another defense scheme. They claim that the reagents used in the DNA analysis were brought into Ukraine illegally and do not have the appropriate certificates. With this assertion, as well as with reference to the scientific article of Doctor of Sciences Professor Mikhailichenko, they appealed to the court. A reply was received from the Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs that Mikhailichenko's article is absolutely theoretical and invalid as evidence. Also attached were about 11 copies of certificates obtained by Ukraine when purchasing reagents in the U. S. and used during DNA analysis.

The defense began to sabotage the process. From the lawyer's speech: "We're willing to provide DNA, but it's illegal, so we're not going to provide DNA". Lawyers refer to the fact that in 2015 DNA samples were already taken from their defendants and it was illegal. This investigation is over, so you don't have to provide DNA.

The court, under pressure, released the suspects first on bail, then on their own recognizance, and soon after the suspects simply stopped showing up in court. Even the lawyers stopped showing up for the trial.

But in the end, Polishchuk and Medvedko had their DNA taken at the court session. A re-examination was conducted, which converged with the previously obtained data. It didn't match This was the 5th DNA test to prove identity with DNA taken from clothing and medical masks. But the suspects were not taken into custody. The lawyer threatened the judges, by stating that he will send in the mob. For such threats a lawyer should be deprived of his lawyer's license, but this does not happen.

At the official lineup, the seller of the Ford Focus car was presented with photos of four people. He identifies Medved'ko.

Medved'ko's mother states that on April 16, her son was at the base of the Right Sector DUK. The intimidated judges pretend to believe it. Polishchuk's mother gives exactly the same testimony. Both say the same learned phrases that their lawyers have written for them. The murderers remain at large. And they also get money from the state budget for their projects.

Below we give another description of the investigation, made on the basis of official documents of the Ukrainian police, which were quoted

sports pants, item No.4: on the collar of a sports jacket and item No.5 on the cuff of the right sleeve of a sport jacket (results of the study according to the “Expert opinion” No. 897 mb of Criminalistics research Centre of GUMVD of Ukraine in the city of Kyiv dated 22.04.2015, as well as in the item No.1 in the wash from the surface of the towel (the results of the study according to the “Expert opinion” No. 20-590 dated 29.04.2015 of the Criminalistics research Centre of GUMVD of the MIA of Ukraine).

In a comparative study, it was found that the genetic characteristics (DNA profile) of the blood sample of Denis V. Polishchuk, born on 14.06.1990 (set out in the “Expert Opinion” No. 120 dated 26.07.2016 by the Kyiv City Clinical Bureau of Forensic Medical Examination), at all studied DNA loci identical to genetic characteristics (DNA profile) of cells with nuclei found on the reverse surface of the front part of sports pants, item No. 2 (results of the study according to the “Expert opinion” No. 897 mb dated 22.04.2015 of the Criminalistics research Centre of GUMVD of the MIA of Ukraine in Kyiv).

The cells with nuclei in these objects probably originate from Denis V. Polishchuk. The probability of random coincidence of allelic characteristics of the genotype of the subject with any randomly selected individual is the value of 5.01/10⁻¹⁸, i.e., an average of 5 people out of 10 000 000 000 000 000 000 have the above genetic characteristics.

Also, genetic characteristics (DNA profile) of the blood sample of Denis V. Polishchuk, present in the mixed DNA profile isolated from cells with nuclei found on the collar of a sports jacket, item 4 (results of the study according to the “Expert opinion” No. 897 mb from 22.04.2015 of the Criminalistics research Centre of GUMVD of the MIA of Ukraine in Kyiv) and in item No.2 on the medical mask “1” (results of research according to

DNA analysis materials. It was discovered that the DNA of Denis Valeryevich Polishchuk matched the DNA profile of a sports jacket from a Ford Focus car, which was used by Oles Buzina’s killers

in the presence of witnesses:

1) Alexander I. Yeriomin born on 28.10.1985, residence: Apt. 10, 19 Novovokzalna St, Kyiv, Tel. 050-10-18-200

2) Serhiy O. Robkonov, 04.04.1971, residence: Apt. 2, 220 Dashavska St, Kyiv whom in accordance with Art. 11,13,15, 66, 223 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine, their rights and responsibilities were explained, and the following photos of citizens for identification were presented:



The photo shows the materials of the official identification of Medved'ko with the man who sold him the Ford Focus car. The killers drove this car to Oles Buzina's yard

by the media¹. Particularly interesting is the description of how the court let the murderers get away with it.

On April 16, 2015, at 1:18 p. m., Victoria Yefimovna Maybrodskaya called the Kyiv police at 102. A woman reported that in the Shevchenkivskiyi district, near the building No 52 on Degtyarevskaya Street, shots were heard. There is a man lying in a pool of blood in the yard. The ambulance, task force, and investigators who arrived on the scene discovered that the person who had been assassinated had died before the arrival of the emergency services.

At 1:20 p. m., an interception plan was introduced. A group began working at the scene of the murder, which established that the murdered man was Oles Buzina, born on July 13, 1969. Oles Buzina had a pepper-spray canister "Teren 4M" ("rattling" mixture of pelargonic acid

¹ <https://rusplt.ru/policy/khronika-ubiistva-olesya-buzini-5e985.html>

morpholide and CS), 251 Ukrainian hryvnia in cash (banknotes of 200, 50 and 1 hryvnia). Also found was a bundle of three keys, a magnetic “tablet”, a pair of gloves, a Nokia cell phone, a sports backpack with rubber slippers and a towel.

As Olesya’s neighbors will tell the camera two hours later, he was a disciplined man and went for a jog every day around lunch time in a nearby park.

Vyacheslav Stanislavovich Malinovsky testified that around 1 p. m. he drove his Daewoo Lanos into the yard of building No. 52 on Degtyarevskaya Street and dropped off his acquaintance, who walked toward entrance No. 3. Waiting for his acquaintance to return, Malinovsky parked his car in front of the house between the 2nd and 3rd entrances and began to do crossword puzzles. At 1:14 p. m., he heard three or four sharp pops. Tearing himself away from the crossword puzzle, he saw a man fall in front of his car.

Next to the fallen man were two men wearing blue medical masks. After the shots, they went to the third entrance, in front of which a dark blue Ford Focus with foreign license plates was parked.

According to Malinovsky’s testimony, suddenly one of the shooters (the one who was much taller than his accomplice) turned around and, clutching a gun in his hand, came up to the person lying on the pavement again and shot him in the head. After that, he went to the car and got behind the wheel. The other, shorter one, got into the front passenger seat, and the car drove out of the yard.

The scale of the activities carried out by the Ukrainian police can by no means be called insufficient. A number of ballistic examinations were ordered. The skin flaps where the bullets entered were removed from Buzina’s corpse. The police department scrupulously collected nine cigarette butts and had the detected fingerprints analyzed.

A dark blue Ford Focus with Italian license plates was found near building 9, Eugene Potier Street. There, some distance away, were the items thrown by the perpetrators — a blue sports jacket with red stripes, black sneakers, and sports pants. Precisely what one of the killers was wearing.

The second killer’s clothes were also found. The clothes were packed in a plastic bag with no fingerprints on them. Used blue masks were also found there. The criminals used those masks to hide their identities. Traces of gunpowder were found on the clothes discarded by the killers.

An analysis of the mats and seats in a blue Ford Focus revealed nearly 20 items indicating that the people who dumped their clothes covered with leaves were passengers of that car.

The Ford Focus was examined with unprecedented care. The car's upholstery, handles, and steering wheel were washed off. All items were analyzed, including fragments of a mop, a metal pipe and a wrench found in the car. It was the clothes and masks that made it possible to determine the DNA profiles of the two men who were the direct perpetrators of the Buzina massacre.

The first person investigated was a certain Rovshan Rafael oglu Gojatov, born in 1984, a man who put up on the AutoRia. ua website and subsequently sold a Ford Focus car with the state registration number of the Italian Republic BL810BW. DNA samples were taken from him. This man had nothing to do with the crime. His DNA did not match the samples found in the car and clothing. Second in the sight of Ukrainian law enforcers was an acquaintance of Gojatov — Anatoly Glinyuk, born in 1983 — a man who assisted in the sale of the car and also had nothing to do with the murder of Buzina. These two, as well as several other citizens, voluntarily provided their DNA samples, proving their non-involvement in the incident that took place on April 16, 2015 near house No. 52 on Degtyarevskaya Street. The police began quietly obtaining evidence from citizens of operational interest. A huge number of people were checked, who in one way or another could have been involved in the crime. The key task was to find those who bought a Ford Focus from Gojatov and Glinyuk. They testified that the buyers were two people who contacted them by phone, which was later disconnected.

The “left” sim card with the number +38098-019-63-65, which was used to call Gojatov and Glinyuk, was simply thrown away. However, the users were not too sophisticated in matters of secrecy. They had no idea that they could be reached not only by a phone number, but also by IMEI 354208031087120, the unique number of the device. It turned out that in addition to the “pseudo” SIM-cards the duly registered sim-cards of Ukrainian mobile operators were inserted into the cell phone: the first: +38067-162-23-75, the second: +38096-564-70-61.

Thus, the focus of the investigators was the owners of the rooms, residents of Kyiv: Denis Valeryevich Polishchuk, 14.06.1990, Andriy Medved'ko, 27.09.1989.

Medved'ko, Polishchuk and other people with whom they had contact were under unspoken control. Operatives seized items and items that could have DNA such as cutlery, used napkins in catering outlets, cigarette butts, etc.).

Operational observation revealed that Medved'ko and Polishchuk demonstrated specific skills in the course of driving that allowed them to identify surveillance vehicles in the general flow.

The suspects telephoned and met with a certain Sergei Viktorovich Bondar, born in 1993, a graduate of the Kyiv National University, a man who was a member of the Azov battalion (Azov "Death Squad" is widely known as a pro-fascist formation). Bondar was a junior lieutenant in the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine since 2014, was in close contact with members of the OUN and Aidar groups, took part in the ATO, was a fighter in the Myrotvorets regiment of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, and was an informant for the SSU.

The phone with IMEI 354208031087120, which was used by the alleged buyers of the Ford Focus, using other SIM cards, also communicated with Yevgeniy Vasilyevich Karas, the founder and informal leader of S14 "death squad", who headed the national hundred named after Sviatoslav Chrabry during the "Revolution of Dignity" in 2013–2014.

It was impossible to establish or deny the involvement in the crime of Andriy Oleksandrovykh Medvedko, born on September 27, 1989. The investigators called on his mother, Irina Borisovna Medvedko, born in 1969, a Kyiv resident, to take biological samples from her. Her DNA fully matched the alleged killer's DNA, who left his traces on the tracks on the tracksuit and medical mask # 2 used during the liquidation of Buzina.

Since we couldn't get DNA from the kidnapped Denis Valeryevich Polishchuk, born on June 14, 1990, we visited his mother, Olena Vladimirovna Polishchuk, born in 1967. She lived on Kosmonauta Volkova street in Kyiv. The investigation team went to the prosecutor for permission to secretly enter her home (during the absence of Elena Polishchuk and Kolesnikov). Permission was obtained. Polishchuk's mother's DNA fully matched the DNA of the man who wore the found medical mask #1 and the discarded tracksuit.

This is how the direct perpetrators of Oles Buzina's murder were identified. The DNA samples taken by Medved'ko confirmed his



The photo shows the killer of the opposition Ukrainian journalist Oles Buzina. Associated with the extremist organizations Right Sector, OUN, S14 and the Mirotvorets regiment of the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs, Dennis Valeryevich Polishchuk, born on June 14, 1990, and Andriy Oleksandrovich Medvedko, born on September 27, 1989.



The photo shows deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine wearing T-shirts with the image of the murderers of opposition journalist Oles Buzina and the inscription “Freedom to patriots”. The Ukrainian media noted that more than two dozen Deputies including Igor Lutsenko, Igor Mosiychuk, Boris Filatov, Andriy Ilyenko, and Volodymyr Parasyuk, supported the murderers.

involvement in the murder 100 % Polishchuk's DNA indicated that he was the second perpetrator of the murder.

After the murderers were detained with 100 % proof of their guilt, a campaign of support for them began in the Ukrainian media, deputies of the Verkhovna Rada and government agencies.

Let's continue to retell the article detailing how the murderers were freed and escaped punishment¹.

The court, having before it the actual full picture of the crime, does not take into account the DNA tests performed in a tacit way, and begins to insist that the results be obtained again in an official manner. This requires judicial authorization, which the Pechersk District Court of Kyiv does not give.

And then it turns out that the reagents that were used to test the DNA of Medved'ko, Polishchuk, and their mothers were brought into Ukraine under questionable certificates, which reduces to absolute zero the legal value of the whole range of obtained evidence.

So what are the certified ways to perform DNA testing? Aren't there any in Ukraine? They are. But the suspects don't want to give them up. And to force them to give DNA? There is no basis. The pressure exerted by the "progressive Ukrainian public" on the court forces the release of the murder suspects, after which they chose a strategy of deaf defense. Failure to appear when summoned for questioning. They ignored telephone calls.

Ukrainian media² described in detail how the release of the killers was organized, how the investigation was blocked, and how it was discovered that the killers had handlers in the Ukrainian power structures.

For example, Andriy Medvedko was under secret surveillance by Ministry of Internal Affairs and the SSU. However, this surveillance was filmed on April 8, 2015, the very day the would-be assassins first appeared near Buzyna's house on Degtyarevskaya Street in Kyiv to "investigate the area". Despite the results of DNA testing and identification by witnesses, both killers denied their involvement.

¹ <https://rusplt.ru/policy/khronika-ubiistva-olesya-buzini-5e985.html>

² <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200416/1027401335.html>

Medved'ko claimed that he was at a Right Sector training base in Dnipropetrovsk oblast, and Polishchuk was on a “combat mission” in Donbass. Nevertheless, both were arrested, but not for long. Extremist organizations and politicians organized a campaign in their support, claiming “persecution of Ukraine’s patriots. Before the end of 2015, both suspects were released from custody, and preventive measures were seriously relaxed. The documents of the Buzina murder case were transferred to Odessa for some unknown reason. The repeated DNA sampling of Polishchuk and Medved'ko in 2016 had to be carried out forcibly, as they resisted the law enforcement officers. In May 2017, then Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko had to answer a question about Buzina at the Verkhovna Rada, and a month later the head of the UN Human Rights monitoring mission Fiona Fraser expressed her concern about the lack of a proper investigation into the case. Only on November 28, 2017, the Kyiv prosecutor’s office sent the charges against Medved'ko and Polishchuk to the Shevchenko district court. In 2019, the judge in the case recused himself.

On the eve of the 5th anniversary of the writer’s death, “Strana. ua” asked Olesya’s mother Valentina Pavlovna Buzina some questions. To quote the mother’s words:

“The third lineup of judges has already changed... You know, to be honest, I don’t know who else to turn to, who to talk to about this. I missed the last two sessions because I was in the hospital. My health was taken away from me. My blood pressure is skyrocketing. I feel my age and my trouble. The last hearing was at the end of February. And then the lockdown began. The next one was scheduled for April 3. And now I don’t know when there will be a meeting at all. I just have no faith. I don’t trust the authorities. I learn from the media that these two men who are accused of murder are also on some kind of community councils, paid by the state for their work. And did anyone think, what’s it like for me to sit and watch these people for so long, every court session?!”¹

¹ Five years later. The killers of Oles Buzina have still not been convicted | World | Politics | Argumenty i Fakty. https://aif.ru/politics/world/pyat_let_spustya_ubiycy_olesya_buziny_do_sih_por_ne_osuzhdeny

Not only are the murderers of the opposition journalist currently at large, but they continue to be openly patronized by the Ukrainian government — they are officially part of the commission under the Ukrainian Ministry of Veterans Affairs under President Vladimir Zelensky, they receive state funding for their projects, the concert organized by Medvedko for the neo-Nazi band “Sokira Peruna” was performed by Ukrainian Prime Minister Alexei Goncharuk, and on September 30, 2019 A. Medvedko officially became a member of the Public Control Council of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine. The media wrote that D. Polishchuk’s organization “Union of Veterans of War with Russia” started to receive financial assistance from the Ukrainian state.

Odessa Khatyn

The 2019 Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stated:

“Delays in investigations and trials in cases related to the May 2, 2014 violence in Odessa continue. As of February 15, 2019, nearly five years after these events that led to the deaths of 48 people, not a single government official has been prosecuted. On January 16, 2019, the Odessa Court of Appeal overturned the decision of the Kyiv District Court of Odessa to return to the prosecutor’s office the indictment of three employees of the State Emergency Service accused of negligence, and decided to start a trial. OHCHR notes the lack of progress in the case against the sole “pro-unity” activist accused of murder: two hearings were postponed due to the court’s failure to select a jury and to the disruption of hearings by “pro-unity” supporters. On December 17, 2018, about 30–40 supporters of the accused disrupted a meeting in the Malinovsky District Court of Odessa. When the panel of judges tried to leave the courtroom, one of the supporters approached the presiding judge, got in his way, and began arguing with him. The judge was only able to leave the courtroom when the defendant and his lawyer intervened... On January 16, 2019, the case was remanded for reconsideration due to procedural issues”.

We are talking about the mass murder of oppositionists, which in the media was called the Odessa Khatyn. Khatyn is a village in Belarus where the 118th Schutzmannschaft Battalion, which included members of the OUN, and the SS Dirlewanger Battalion burned or shot 149 residents alive. In 1943, they surrounded a collective farm barn, rounded up the villagers, mostly women, children and the elderly, and set it on fire.

It was by analogy with these tragic events that the arson of the Trade Union House in Odessa by members of the Right Sector, the Maidan Self-Defense and Ukrainian soccer ultras were named. According to witnesses, these units were coordinated by the head of the Maidan Self-Defense and, after the illegal coup, the Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, A. V. Parubiy. In May 2014, opposition protesters protesting against the illegal coup in Ukraine tried to hide from the attack in the Trade Union House, which was surrounded by them. According to various estimates, the number of people killed in the fire, those who died from injuries from jumping out of the fire from the upper floors, and those who died from beatings ranged from 48 (according to official data) to 100 (according to eyewitness accounts) and more than two hundred who were injured.

Here is a description of the events by a direct participant in the events O. Musica. He testifies that the actions against the oppositionists were organized in advance and that the Ukrainian special services assisted the killers¹:

“Around 5 p.m. I gathered about 20 people from the brigade that guarded Kulikovo Pole, and we walked down Pushkin Street toward Grecheskaya Square to see what was going on in the center. And when we got to Greek, we saw what was going on there...

A fierce shooting. Within minutes, three policemen with gunshot wounds were led past me. One lieutenant colonel was lying under the “Antoshka” store, all green, screaming in pain, he had a wound under his vest, apparently with buckshot. Dmitry Fuchedzhi, deputy head of the Main Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the Odessa

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20181110/1021689925.html>



A member of the “death squad” throws a Molotov cocktail bottle into the House of Trade Unions in Odessa

region, head of the public security police, walked past me, holding up his shot hand. There were about 10–15 SSU “Alpha” commandos running among us, all in black, with small shields and automatic rifles. They did nothing, in spite of the stones flying toward us and them, as if they were guarding someone.

I would like to note that the Maidan activists “worked” very professionally: they built “pyramids” of shields that completely covered their ranks, and then a shield was moved back here and there, from where a fighter would quickly aim and make a shot, after which the “window” was closed again.

Ukrainian “death squads” set fire to the Trade Union House in Odessa. As a result of this crime, between 48 (according to official data) and 100 (according to eyewitness accounts) people were killed

There we lasted until six, maybe eight o’clock in the evening; I lost all sense of time that day. Then we jumped out of that hell, ran to Kulikov Field. The women, teenagers, and old men who remained there, adult men being few in number, built barricades out of improvised materials, but what kind? It’s only half a meter high.



Ukrainian “death squads” set fire to the Trade Union House in Odessa. As a result of this crime, between 48 (according to official data) and 100 (according to eyewitness accounts) people were killed

Then we went back to the House of Trade Unions and moved the barricades to its entrance. At first we defended ourselves on the steps of the House of Trade Unions. This defense lasted 15 to 30 minutes at best, because you throw one stone and fifty are thrown at you, plus Molotov cocktails and explosive packets laced with metal fragments. Then we went into the building, boarded up the front doors (with refrigerators, tables, whatever we could) and barricaded ourselves in... The attackers entered the building from the courtyard and broke the huge windows on the flights of stairs, then started throwing everything they had into the building from outside. I personally saw a Soviet-made army smoke bomb fallen next to me, a cardboard tube about forty centimeters long and five centimeters in diameter. Such a bomb makes a loud pop and starts to emit sulfur-based green gas, which makes it impossible to breathe, it eats the eyes.

With me in the fourth-floor office, where we were sheltering from the smoke and fire, were three other people — a young guy, an activist Alexander from our All-Ukrainian Rodina Party, and an elderly man. The elderly man when we were already hanging on the window sill,

almost had his skull caved in with something — obviously not a stone, it is very difficult to reach the third floor of a Soviet building.

Through the windows you could see that everyone who came down from the building to the ground, the women were beaten and the men were literally beaten to death. I saw a guy running away, run to the middle of Kulikovo Field, was caught by about thirty people, knocked him down, jumped on him, then left him and went away — only pieces of debris remained.

...I went through the floors to look for my brother, who had run into the house before the storm, first to the lower floors, then to the upper floors, up to the attic. I saw dozens of corpses, turned them over, looked at their faces, using my phone as a torch, looking for my brother.

I ran into a group of “Pravoseks” on the way. Since I graduated from a Ukrainian school, I spoke Ukrainian, and when I was asked “Who are you, little fella?” “Svii”. So we parted ways. On the way, I heard them



*Bodies of people killed by Ukrainian death squads
in Trade Union House in Odessa*

say, “Okay, we’ve finished our work, now it’s the turn of those who are collecting documents. That is, there were groups that were clearly engaged in certain work: some were killing and sweeping the premises, others were collecting documents and taking phones from the dead, and so on.

When I was already walking down the stairs, the light suddenly came on, and it turned out that behind me, with my face black with soot and smoke and my shirt wrapped around my head, were five Pravoseks. Good thing we were met by officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (majors, colonels), and I was detained (characteristically, no “Pravoseks”) and began to be escorted to the first floor. It was probably the only thing that saved me from being killed. As we were leaving the building, we ran into two SSU officers. They also let the “Pravoseks” through — they turned down the collars of their clothes and showed them something. And us survivors were taken through the ranks to the police station.

Uncle Tolya from Odessa, born in 1941, who I knew from Kulikovo Polje, was in the cell with me. He was born when his father was defending Odessa from the Germans. And he was charged under the same articles as me: part 2 of article 294 (mass riots, if they caused death or other grave consequences) and part 1 of article 115 (premeditated murder)...

...SSU officers, but from Odessa, not Kyiv. They asked me two questions: what can I say about the basements in the Trade Union House (I was surprised by this question) and how many people I think died? “I can only speculate, of course”, I answer. — But if about 450–500 people entered the building, and if about 200 people are now in hospitals and 60–70 are sitting here, and about 50 people were able to jump out of the building and escape, it means that more than 100 people died. In response to this, the SS officer replied only: “Okay, go”. Apparently, this death toll was not unexpected for them.

Also interesting is the interview below of a participant of the events, who states in detail who exactly was the organizer of the Odessa Khatyn¹:

“— *Who led the Maidan structures in Odessa?*

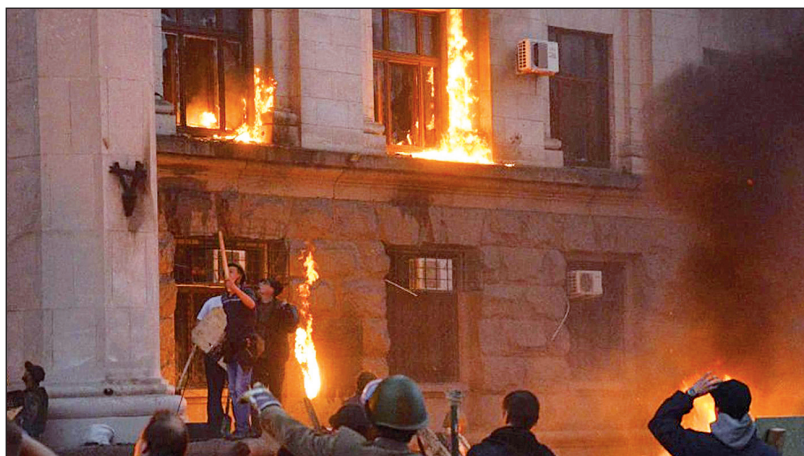
— I will name them in descending order of importance: Ruslan Forostyak, Andrei Yusov, Vitali Svichinsky, Sergey Gutsalyuk, Vitali

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/interview/20190502/1023496844.html>



The organizers of the Odessa massacre were the head of the “Maidan Self-Defense” and, after the illegal coup, the Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine A. V. Parubiy (left) and the commander of the 7th hundred “Maidan Self-Defense” Yevgeniy Deidei (right). Deidei also later became a member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

Kozhukhar, Yevgeny Rezvushkin, Mark Gordienko, and Sergey Sternenko. There were other comrades, like the criminal Babeyko brothers. Only Kozhukhar is from Odessa, the rest are newcomers. The most dangerous was Forostyak, a racially-ideological Lvivite who had settled in Odessa. At one time he was involved in local business and acquired connections with the leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. A very murky man, but who has connections to Turchinov, Parubiy, Pashinsky and Kolomoisky. Later he picked up Mark Gordienko and made the “Public Safety Council” (PSC) under him. In April 2014, he coordinated the activities of all the Euromaidan organizations in Odessa and liaised closely with Kyiv. Yusov, Svichinsky, and Gutsulyak were people of Eduard Gurvits (former mayor of Odessa). In 2013, Gurvits leased his team to Vitali Klitschko to create the UDAR party. Kozhukhar created his own organization “Self-Defense of Odessa”...



Windows of the second floor of the Trade Union House, where the oppositionists had been held and which had been set on fire by members of Ukrainian death squads with Molotov cocktails

In mid-March, we focused our attention on Right Sector, whose headquarters was in Olgievskaya Street, near the House of Clowns, while at the same time not forgetting to monitor the large hotel complexes of Odessa. As a result, we recorded a delivery of firearms. About 200 fighters from the 7th Hundred of the Maidan Self-Defense settled in the Pavlov House hotel. They provided security for the Euromaidan protesters' actions. At each rally there was a minibus with guns, and the police turned a blind eye.

“Who was the main organizer of this training?”

“In my opinion, the brains behind the operation was the Euromaidan headquarters, headed by Ruslan Forostyak, which was created under the cover of the “Council of Public Security” (RPS) at 36 Zhukovsky Street. Keeping an eye on the facility was problematic. It is near the SSU, and a counter-surveillance group was constantly on duty there. But we had an acquaintance in the headquarters of the RGB who sometimes shared information with us. The agent was not allowed to attend management meetings, but some information reached him. It was from him that we learned that Forostyak coordinates all actions with Parubiy and Turchinov, and also keeps in

touch with Kolomoisky and Pashinsky. It turned out that Forostyak is the coordinator of all radicals in the Odessa region. In addition, his headquarters had an arsenal of weapons that the guys from Western Ukraine had given him.

We learned from our agent that after the March events in the Donbass, a group of 40 men from Mykola (Nikolai Volkov), a centurion, came to Odessa. It was coordinated by the RGB. The main task of the group was to guard the Regional Government Department, where two vans with Kyiv license plates, in which up to 12 armed men were sitting, were constantly on duty. Two more vans were parked near the RGB headquarters at 36 Zhukovsky Street. Once a day they changed. There were also sniper points set up in two building opposite the Regional Government Department. Once we organized a provocation: we reported to the SSU about armed people near the Regional Government Department who were going to seize the building. And what do you think? Half an hour later, a gray Volkswagen with Alpha drove up to the Regional Government Department, which said a friendly hello to the fighters and drove back. We reported to the People's and Odessa Druzhyny about armed Euromaidan activists near the Regional Government Department, but they were not interested.

— *Why was Forostyak gathering storm troopers in the city in March and April?*

— His goals coincided with those of the National Security and Defense Council, headed by Parubiy, to strangle all pockets of resistance in Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, and Odessa. The main goal was to disperse the tent city on Kulikovo Pole. The total number of fighters by April 26, we estimated at 1,200...

It turns out that 60 people from Rivne were sent to Odessa to subdue the Separatists, and there were 10 firearms in the unit. He also named the date of the event — May 2. Incidentally, the “interrogation” took place one day before the information about the Unity March, scheduled for May 2, appeared on the Internet. I was alerted to this date. The next day I called the city’s transportation companies asking to rent a bus for May 2, but all the buses were booked. And on April 27, messages about the Unity March on May 2 appeared in the Euromaidan groups in Odessa on Vkontakte...



Burning tents of the protesting opposition in Odessa. Set on fire by members of Ukrainian death squads. Oppositionists took refuge in the House of Trade Unions, which was also set on fire

— *Was what happened on May 2 a planned action or was it a mistake by the perpetrator?*

— Judging by the fact that back in the 20s of April we recorded gas masks at the 14th Hundred self-defense and by mid-April all the activities of the Odessa Euromaidan were controlled from the headquarters of the RHS, I am fully confident that the events of May 2 were prepared and implemented in advance under clear guidance and according to a previously written script.

— *Is it true that Parubiy was in Odessa during the May events?*

— Yes, that's true. Parubiy arrived in Odessa on April 29. He visited the headquarters of the WGB and brought a shipment of body armor. I don't know exactly when he left Odessa, but I know that on May 2 he was in the city and controlled the actions of militants.

— *How do you know that?*

— Ruslan Forostyak, head of the RGB headquarters, told the press about it himself... Judging by their behavior, reaction speed, and indefatigably, most of the Euromaidan attackers were under the influence of amphetamine. They could run and throw rocks at us for



A still image from an amateur video shoot. On the ground are the bodies of oppositionists who managed to escape from the fire, but were severely beaten or killed by Ukrainian death squads

hours without getting tired, while we, who were “clean” in terms of doping, had to change after every half hour, because the constant running and throwing of rocks quickly drained our energy. Also, I noticed it right away, the ultras were throwing rocks at us from a distance we couldn’t get to them. That is, the puny kid was throwing the stone one-third farther than me, a trained boxer. There’s no way I can explain it other than the effects of amphetamine.

According to the media, the tragedy was orchestrated to intimidate the Russian-speaking opposition in Ukraine. For example, one of the creators of the already mentioned the Mirotvorets website with a database of opposition activists “to be eliminated” and the head of the military-civil administration of the Luhansk region, Georgiy Tuku, appointed by the president of Ukraine, openly says that a “second Odessa” may be organized against the Russian-speaking opposition:

“...They don’t understand it any other way. First of all, it is necessary to be guided by strict wartime rules. Potential separatists and their

supporters should not just be disenfranchised, but should be separated from the rest of the population in special camps. They must be isolated! In the region itself, introduce a strict order — to give the military and civil-military administrations exclusive powers, introduce curfews and military field courts. All the orders and rules I have listed should be maintained until the last “vatnik” dies out. If the ‘vata’ gets bolder, we’ll give them a second Odessa¹.

The media reported that the Odessa Khatyn case is deliberately dragged out, passing from court to court, where judges are bullied and therefore refuse to try the case, and the main version the Ukrainian investigation is proposed as a “spontaneous combustion”, even though numerous arson attacks on the building by members of the death squads are recorded on video footage: “Initially, the investigation into the case of mass riots and the death of people in the Trade Union House was carried out by the investigation department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the Odessa region, and then by the Main Investigation Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. The case was subsequently handled by 140 investigators and prosecutors. It grew to 31 volumes and in December 2014 was transferred to the Primorsky District Court of Odessa. However, it was not possible to assemble a panel to hear the case after a series of self-recusal of the judges in the Primorsky Court, and it was transferred to the Malinovsky District Court, where in January 2015 they began to read the indictment.

After an entire year of consideration of the anti-Maidan case in the Malinovsky Court, the judicial panel, which was trying to conduct the case objectively, recused itself under pressure from street radicals. Then the case was transferred to the Black Sea district court, where the trial began again, with the reading of the same indictment. After another year and a half of a new trial, in 2017, all of the defendants were acquitted because of the extremely poor quality of the pre-trial investigation and a variety of inadmissible evidence.

It should be noted that the materials of the case of the fire in the Trade Union House are classified, but criminal cases have been opened against employees of the Ministry of Emergency Situations and

¹<https://riafan.ru/499710-georgij-tuka-my-ustroim-na-luganshine-vtoruyu-odessu>

fire brigades, the first of which violated official instructions, and the second — firefighters — for a long time physically could not get to the Trade Union House, also a criminal case was opened against the head of the Odessa police, who did not properly organize the police, which led to many victims.

It is noteworthy that the cause of the fire in Trade Union House is considered to be spontaneous combustion, although numerous videos show Euromaidan supporters throwing Molotov cocktails at the Trade Union House¹”.

In this case, the majority of defendants are the injured oppositionists, and members of the “death squads” are exempt from liability, even if they are known to be guilty. Journalist Viktor Kuznetsov writes:

“The current Ukrainian justice, as much as it would like to, could not leave the issue of the fire and the numerous deaths in the Trade Union House open. In order to justify the mass deaths by an ordinary fire and to hide from the international community the facts of the mass murder of Odessans by Ukrainian nationalists inside the Trade Union House and its deliberate arson, the Prosecutor General’s Office developed a scheme according to which the main culprits of numerous causes of deaths were firemen, employees of the State Rescue Service (SRS), and... communists and regionalists (members of the banned in the Communist Party and members of the former Party of Regions. — *Editor’s note*).

The latter, namely the late Vyacheslav Markin, Alexei Albu, and Yuri Trofimov (who were forced to leave Ukraine) are being held responsible for the seizure of the Trade Union House and the organization of the mass unrest that led to the deaths of people. A particular cynicism of this story is that it was Markin, Albu and Trofimov who were accused of killing 44 people in the House of Trade Unions, who, according to investigators, died of a fire and fell from a height. As for the firefighters who were unable to force their way through a crowd of angry nationalists to the scene of the events, they, too, according to the investigation, were responsible for the deaths of 44 people. But both the firemen and the employees of the State Emergency Service had nothing to do with the results of the arson of the building. Someone else set it on fire.

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20190505/1023510296.html>

As for the investigation of the crimes committed by representatives of Euromaidan in Odessa on May 2, 2014, the Ukrainian investigation is all but closed. All those who were actually involved in the deaths of people (they set fire to the Trade Union House with the Kulikowskis trapped there and/or beat those who managed to escape) are recognized as heroes.

Particularly revealing in this matter is the criminal proceedings against Sergei HodiyaK. KhodiyaK killed at least four people during the mass riots on May 2, and wounded the head of Dumskaya newspaper Oleg Konstantinov and two police officers. Under these circumstances, he was detained in Odessa on May 18, 2014, and taken to Kyiv for investigative actions and the election of a preventive measure. However, on May 20, under pressure from the radicals, the Kyiv Pechersk District Court released the murderer under house arrest, and six months later, when his arrest term expired, HodiyaK became a free man.

At the beginning of 2015, his case went to court. But by this point he had become a real hero to the radicals of Euromaidan and had also acquired the status of assistant to MP Mosiychuk. Radicals put on a real show at court hearings, harassing witnesses and relatives of the dead Kuliks who came to the court. With the full connivance of the law enforcement officers, they organized corridors of shame for witnesses for the prosecution, and beat, shoved, spat on, and humiliated relatives of the victims. MP Mosiychuk even gave a “lesson in patriotism” to the judges in the HodiyaK case, after which they recused themselves. As a result, HodiyaK’s case changed four courts in three years, and 13 judges in his case recused themselves. At present, the case of the murderer of the Euromaidan is being considered by the Malinovsky District Court of Odessa. About 50 aggressively minded radicals come to every court session along with HodiyaK to put pressure on the court and jury. And thus the free murderer calmly and openly organizes pressure on witnesses and judges.

Another equally disgusting and bloodthirsty murderer on May 2 was Vsevolod Goncharevsky, a Euromaidan activist who used a metal pipe to stab people who had fallen out of the windows of the Trade Union House. Criminal proceedings against him began in the summer of 2014, but, as in the case of HodiyaK, thanks to pressure from nationalists,

the Nikolaev court left Goncharevsky under house arrest, and in 2015 dropped the criminal case altogether.

It is interesting to note that members of “death squads” in modern Ukraine avoid responsibility not only for political murders and acts of terror against dissidents, but also for domestic murders. One example of such impunity is Sergei Sternenko, who actively participated in the murder of oppositionists in the House of Trade Unions. At the time, he was the head of the Odessa branch of the Right Sector death squad. In 2017, he participated in the attack on a deputy of the Belgorod-Dnistrovsky Executive Committee Vasily Kaschi. Serhii Sternenko and other militants broke into the building of the municipality, beat an elderly deputy, doused him with brilliant green and tried to throw him into a garbage can. In 2017, Sternenko was arrested for the pogrom in the Odessa city garden, but was later released on bail in the amount of 600 thousand hryvnias paid by the governor of the Odessa region, Maxim Stepanov. Sternenko then personally stabbed Ivan Kuznetsov, a resident of Chernomorsk. Despite the fact that the murder was proven and admitted by Sternenko himself, he has been at large for more than two years, and the trial has been delayed. Moreover, the Security Service of Ukraine, which received two cases related to the murder, recognized him as a “witness” in one of them, and in the other... as a victim.

The British BBC wrote about the murder and its investigation in its material:

“...“Sternenko, defending himself, began to fight them off indiscriminately with his knife. The attackers, who had not expected such active resistance, fled. When he caught up with Kuznetsov, Sternenko, being indignant about the attack on himself, on the grounds of sudden animosity toward Kuznetsov, caused by his illegal actions and with the purpose of revenge against him for it. acting deliberately. made (a knife) at least three blows on the torso of the latter”, says the report of suspicion handed to Sternenko. One of those blows turned out to be a lethal one for Kuznetsov. Called by Sternenko, a police patrol found his body 99 meters away from where the fight began.

The investigators claim that after the murder, Sternenko deliberately made two cuts on his hand — “to make his actions appear to be in a

state of necessary defense”. Moreover, the prosecution believes that the activist’s knife was a cold weapon. On possession of a cold weapon without authorization, a person can be prosecuted with up to three years of imprisonment.

...Despite Sternenko’s obvious guilt, the death squad militants and the Parties of Poroshenko, Tymoshenko, and Vakarchuk openly spoke in his defense. In the above-mentioned article BBC, they wrote: “And after the three parliamentary parties were in his support in the last two weeks — Sviatoslav Vakarchuk’s Voice, Petro Poroshenko’s European Solidarity and Yulia Tymoshenko’s Batkivshchyna (Fatherland), it became clear that Sternenko’s criminal case had become a factor in the political life of Ukraine”.

Certain parliament members, including representatives of Volodymyr Zelensky’s Servant of the People, stated their readiness to bail him out¹”.

Serhii Sternenko, to me, is an example of that generation of Ukrainians who can set things right. These people were born and raised in independent Ukraine. More than anyone else, they have a great demand for justice, security, and real state efficiency. When such people in their hometowns or villages start calling things by their proper names and actively preventing theft, they get in return assaults, attempted murders, and persecution by police and prosecutors”, Ulyana Suprun, former Health Minister, wrote on Facebook.

“On the day of Sternenko’s trial, hundreds of his supporters gathered outside the building of the Shevchenko district court. What was going on there looked more like a political rally, with the “hero of the occasion” Sternenko himself (officially, he has the status of a suspect) coming out to the participants from time to time. When activists were not allowed to drive in a car with sound equipment into the courtyard near the court, dozens of young people blocked the traffic on the street near the court and lit pyrotechnics. Some of them were wearing masks, not just because of the quarantine.

Prosecutor General Ruslan Ryaboshapka, appointed by Volodymyr Zelensky, claimed in an interview with Levyi Bereg online media (LB.ua) after his unexpected dismissal that “he was approached by

¹ <https://www.bbc.com/russian/features-53141228>



Serhii Sternenko is the “Right Sector” militant who took part in the Odessa Khatynia

people who asked to influence this investigation”, while refusing to specify who exactly approached him with such a request¹”.

S. Sternenko himself openly thanked those who helped transfer the case from Odessa to Kyiv to the Security Service of Ukraine (to close the case. *Author’s note*): “Thanks to people’s deputies Igor Lutsenko [former Batkivshchyna deputy], Andrey Denisenko [former head of the Right Sector regional organization, former unaffiliated deputy], Vladimir Parasyuk [Euromaidan activist, former unaffiliated deputy], Andrey Biletsky [leader of the nationalist party “National Corps”, former deputy], Yegor Sobolev [former deputy from Samopomich party], Andrey Ilyenko [former deputy from the Freedom party], Mustafa Nayem [former deputy head of the Bloc Petro Poroshenko faction], Igor Guz’ [former non-party deputy], Oksana Korchyinskaya [former deputy of the Radical Party], and many others for supporting and appealing to the Prosecutor General’s Office about the need to transfer the investigation to a body not connected to Odessa”.

¹ Ibid.

The press stated that “Now the SSU is working on two cases related to the incident. The first was about the murder of Ivan Kuznetsov, and the second was about the attack on Sternenko. The other day the murdered Ivan Kuznetsov became a suspect in the latter case, and the nationalist was recognized as a victim on May 18. As for the Kuznetsov murder case, everything remains unchanged: Sternenko remains in ‘witness’ status¹”.

Azov Death Squad

In October 2019, the U. S. Congress urged the State Department to recognize the Ukrainian National Guard’s Azov Battalion as a terrorist organization. The State Department was petitioned by 40 members of Congress, led by Max Rose, Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

In 2015, at the initiative of Democratic Congressman John Conyers and Republican Congressman Ted Yoho, the U. S. Congress passed amendments to the H. R. 2685, Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2015² According to these amendments, the U. S. will not have the right to equip and train the Azov detachment militants. The congressman’s message in connection with the passage of the amendment is also noteworthy: “The White House passed my amendment banning aid to the Azov Battalion, a far-right militia of supporters of white supremacy on the front lines in the Ukrainian conflict³”.

In 2017, a similar situation took place: the House of Representatives of Congress prohibited the Ukrainian authorities from spending U. S. funds to support the Azov nationalist regiment. A provision to this effect is contained in the Pentagon’s appropriations bill, which was included in the general draft budget. “The funds under this law cannot be used to supply arms, conduct training, or provide any other assistance to the Azov Battalion”, is stated in the approved document text.

¹ https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2020/05/18_a_13087717.shtml

² <https://ukrainian.voanews.com/a/azov-uriad-ameryky-conyers/2817613.html>

³ <https://twitter.com/RepJohnConyers/status/608981664107229184>

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 16, 2019

The Honorable Michael Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

We write to ask why the State Department has failed to include certain overseas violent white supremacist extremist groups on the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) list.

The recent attack in Halle, Germany, which killed two innocent people, is just the latest example of white supremacist terrorism. Like the previous shooter in Christchurch, New Zealand, the attack in Halle was livestreamed and the killer posted a hateful anti-Semitic manifesto, in this case to a German message board (Kohlchan, the German 4chan equivalent). As SITE Intelligence Director Rita Katz's stated: "the similarity between this video and New Zealand attacker's underscores that these are not isolated attacks by people merely holding similar beliefs. Today's attack is another installment from a global terrorist network, linked together via online safe havens much like ISIS." The spread of anti-Semitic, white supremacist terrorism from Pittsburgh to Poway to Halle is a global threat spread by foreign groups who have free reign to recruit Americans over the internet.

Today, if an American citizen swears allegiance to the Islamic State (or another Foreign Terrorist Organization on the list) and spreads their message of terror, there are several resources available to the Federal government to counter the threat. However, if that same American citizen swears allegiance to a violent white supremacist extremist group based overseas and spreads their message of terror, the Federal government does not have access to the same tools.

Terrorism is terrorism. On September 10, 2019, the Committee on Homeland Security received testimony regarding the nexus between white supremacists in the U.S. and foreign organizations. On September 18, 2019, the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Intelligence & Counterterrorism and the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and International Terrorism received further testimony detailing the transnational relationships among white supremacist extremists.

As you know, the State Department's criteria for inclusion on the FTO list are simple: be a foreign organization, engage in or retain the capability and intent to engage in terrorism, and threaten the security of US nationals or the national defense, foreign relations, or the economic interests of the United States. There are numerous examples of foreign white nationalist groups that fit these conditions. The American people deserve an explanation as to why these groups are not included on the FTO list.

An appeal by more than 40 members of Congress to the Secretary of State of the United States to have Azov recognized as a terrorist organization. In the letter, they also qualified Azov as an ultranationalist structure recruiting neo-Nazis and practicing torture

For example, the Azov Battalion is a well-known ultranationalist militia organization in Ukraine that openly welcomes neo-Nazis into its ranks. The group is so well-known, in fact, that the 115th Congress of the United States stated in its 2018 omnibus spending bill that “none of the funds made available by this act may be used to provide arms, training or other assistance to the Azov Battalion.” The United Nations has chronicled human rights abuses and incidents of torture in this group’s relatively short history. Despite these facts, Azov has been recruiting, radicalizing, and training American citizens for years, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The Christchurch, New Zealand massacre was a turning point for counterterrorism efforts. In his manifesto, the shooter claimed he had trained with the Azov Battalion in Ukraine, and he routinely wore a neo-Nazi symbol associated with them. Both the Poway, CA and El Paso, TX shooters said they were directly influenced by the terrorism committed at Christchurch. The link between Azov and acts of terror in America is clear.

The Trump Administration’s National Strategy for Counterterrorism, released in October 2018, mentions two neo-Nazi groups, the Nordic Resistance Movement and National Action, whose “use of violence and intent to destabilize societies often puts American lives at risk.”

As you know, our allies are taking steps to address the threat posed by transnational white supremacist extremists. In 2016, the United Kingdom designated National Action as a terrorist organization. National Action has links to American neo-Nazi groups, including the group James Alex Fields belonged to when he drove his car into protestors in Charlottesville in 2017, killing Heather Heyer. Canada also recently added international neo-Nazi groups to its federal list of outlawed terror organizations. Law enforcement agencies may go after assets of the listed groups, and it becomes a crime to support the listed groups financially or otherwise.

This is not the first time Congress inquired about the State Department’s treatment of overseas terrorist organizations. On March 20, 2019, House Foreign Affairs Chairman Eliot Engel wrote to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to make addressing the global threat of white nationalist terrorism a foreign policy priority and suggest the State Department develop a list of white nationalist terrorist groups to designate as FTOs.

It is imperative that we understand how the State Department is evaluating the threat posed by violent foreign white supremacist groups and why these groups are not included on the present FTO list. Given that the threat picture has evolved substantially over the past 18 years since the September 11th attacks, and as we learn more about connections between certain overseas white supremacist groups and domestic terrorists, it is time we take the threat of violent white supremacist extremists more seriously.

We respectfully request a response no later than November 4, 2019.

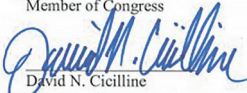
Sincerely,



Max Rose
Member of Congress



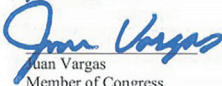
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



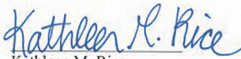
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



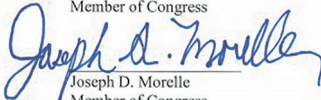
Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress



Katie Hill
Member of Congress



Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress



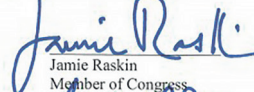
Dean Phillips
Member of Congress



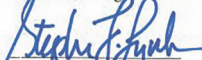
Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



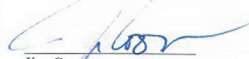
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



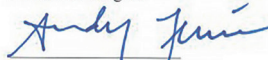
J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



Jim Cooper
Member of Congress



Andy Levin
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



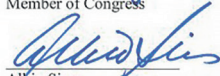
Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



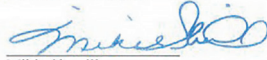
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Xochitl Torres Small
Member of Congress



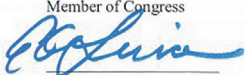
Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress



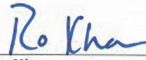
Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



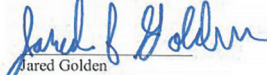
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



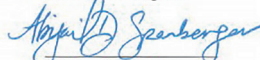
Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



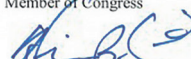
Jared Golden
Member of Congress



Abigail Spanberger
Member of Congress



Conor Lamb
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



To quote an affidavit from FBI Special Agent Scott Bierwirth, dated October 20, 2018, regarding Azov and National Corps contacts with American racist groups: “Based on my training and experience, I know that the Azov Battalion is a paramilitary unit of the National Guard of Ukraine, known for its association with neo-Nazi ideology use of Nazi symbols. It is believed to have been involved in training and radicalizing organizations advocating white supremacy in the United States”.

On August 11, 2014, journalist Tom Parfitt described a visit to the Azov base in Urzuf near Mariupol and a meeting with its commander and fighters in his article “Ukrainian Crisis: Neo-Nazi Brigade Fights Pro-Russian Rebels¹”, published in The Telegraph: The Azov battalion flag bears the neo-Nazi symbol of the wolf’s hook, and its members are open supporters of white supremacy or anti-Semitic...” Parfitt spoke with one of the battalion fighters, call sign Phantom, who told the British journalist: “Personally, I am a Nazi”. He “respects” Hitler for his policies and expressed the opinion that the extent of the Holocaust was “very much in question”. On September 3, 2014, the journalist featured reporting for TV2 Norge Norwegian TV channel where he got into the training of Azov fighters in the presence of the Battalion’s Deputy Commander for morale building, Oleg Odnorozhenko. One of the Azov fighters had a Third Reich flag with a swastika drawn on his helmet, while another had an SS symbol.

These videos were also shown in the evening news of Today program on German TV Channel ZDF, which caused a scandal due to the fact that German law bans the demonstration of Nazi symbols.

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20191028/1025467221.html>

The Norwegian citizen Joachim F rholm’s statements to the pro-Nazi Radio Wehrwolf, quoted in Slate France article “How the Ukrainian conflict became a laboratory for far-right terrorism”, of June 28, 2020, are also indicative. He calls himself a “national socialist revolutionary” and “admires” what Breivik has done. He is suspected of agitating American white neo-Nazis to send to the ranks of Azov in Ukraine. “I found myself leading a small group of volunteers from all over the West: the goal was to get some combat experience and send some of the guys back to pass on skills and knowledge”, F rholm told the audience about his time in Ukraine. “In some ways, it is a laboratory of fascism. There are optimal conditions over there”, he added. In its article “Azov Regiment Fights for Ukraine and White Europe” of December 26, 2019, the Norwegian publication Fri Tanke wrote that a Swedish neo-Nazi, Michael Skillt, was among the Azov fighters.

The Norwegian Fri Tanke wrote that over the years, the Azov Death Squad has developed “extensive connections with European and American far-right groups”². According to the FBI, the Azov regiment trained American “white nationalists”, contributing to their radicalization. Its secretary, Elena Semenyaka, repeatedly traveled to Western Europe, where she met with various extreme far-rights. According to the Bellingcat website, the unit has been working with American right-wing extremists since 2015 at least. Among the partners is the Atomwaffen Division, a marginal and militant group that splintered off from the Alt-right movement and espoused a nihilistic form of neo-Nazism, propagating extremism and violence for violence’s sake. Several members of the group were convicted of murder.

In this context of interest is the personality of Azov regiment commander Andriy Biletsky. As is customary in modern Ukraine, he simultaneously holds the rank of police lieutenant colonel. He was the National Corps leader, the racist social organizations The Social-National Assembly and The Patriot of Ukraine, and a deputy of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the 8th Convocation. Biletsky openly holds National Socialist and racist views.

¹ <https://inosmi.ru/politic/20200628/247668065.html>

² <https://inosmi.ru/social/20190226/244643071.html>



Members of the Azov Death Squad with a Nazi swastika and a NATO flag

A Ukrainian fascist website¹ with the logo of the Azov regiment published a racist anti-Semitic manifesto, signed by him, calling to start “cleansing the nation”:

“All our nationalism is nothing — a castle in the sand, which doesn’t rely on blood or race.

...The treatment of our National Body must begin with the Racial Cleansing of the Nation. And then a healthy National Spirit, and with its culture, language, and everything else, will revive in a healthy Racial body. In addition to the question of purity, we must also pay attention to questions relating to Race capacity. Ukrainians are part of the European White Race (and one of the largest and highest quality).

...In this critical century, the historic mission of our nation is to lead the white peoples of the world in a final crusade for their existence. Marching against the under-men led by Semitic”.

In another piece signed by him, he speaks out against migrants and glorifies “blood purity: “Migration is definitely a negative factor for the existence of our people and our country. It undermines the biological,

¹ <https://archive.fo/20130423165229/http://rid.org.ua/>

economic, and civilizational foundations of our nation's existence. The migrant issue is indeed a key one. It is our creed that we destroy everything that destroys our people. As you know, everything can be restored — the economy, order in the streets, demographics, a strong army and navy, nuclear weapons, but the only thing that cannot be restored is blood purity.

Yuri Mikhailovich Apukhtin, former political prisoner

Biletsky, born and raised in the Kharkiv region, organized The White Movement group, then it was called The Patriots of Ukraine, and now it is called Azov. This is a Nazi who preaches the ideas of the white race.

The base were fans of Metallist Football Club. They staged a provocation, and they came to the square. The square was entirely controlled by us. They started shouting and attempted to assault one of the guys. We followed them by car. They had their headquarters there, in Rymarskaya, and they settled there. Our people surrounded it, started a siege on the house. They started shooting back and killed two of our men during the exchange of fire. One is from Kharkiv. The other is from Zaporizhzhia. Minister of Internal Affairs A. Avakov gave the order, the police came and released them all and took them away. I tried to talk to the SSU afterward: "Why don't you open an investigation: two people died; we know who shot them and how". Our statement that two people died was, and nothing happened. The year before, they almost killed a veteran who came to talk to them, by stabbing him with a knife, and hitting him with a hammer.

The collection of his texts and manifestos with the emblems of the Azov regiment published by A. Biletsky's organization is named briefly and clearly: "Word of the White Chief". The book of articles blatantly proclaims white supremacy under Ukrainian leadership. A. Biletsky actively uses the pseudonym "White Chief" or simply "White" for himself personally.

Let us quote several abstracts from this openly pro-fascist book by A. Biletsky, who holds national-socialist views and cynically uses such terms as "bad human material:



Cover of the book of articles by A. Biletsky called “Word of White Chief”

“National Socialism will prevail over many of the shortcomings of the masses, but it cannot wholly free itself from their influence... Social benefits are mass-oriented, encouraging the birth of a child in the first place, bad human material. This is what we could observe in Ukraine’s recent past. ...So what is “love for niggers” at the legislative level for? They want to break everyone who rose up to defend themselves, their families, their right to be masters of their own land! They would like to destroy the natural resistance of the nation to everything alien, to do to us what was done to Old Europe, where emigrant hordes are a nightmare for the French, Germans, and Belgians, where cities are rapidly ‘getting black’...”



The photo with fascist emblems shows the congress of A. Biletsky's The Patriot of Ukraine, held back in 2008. At the time, the organization was marginal

Since 2002, A. Biletsky had been the head of the Kharkiv detachment “Tryzub imeni Bandery” (Trident named after Stepan Bandera). On December 27, 2011, Andriy Biletsky was arrested on charges of assault on Deputy Serhiy Kolesnik under Article 187 of the Criminal Code (banditry committed by a prior conspiracy of a group of persons). The reason for the attack was an argument on the Internet, during which A. Biletsky stated that “Kharkiv citizens would have a better fate if fascists dominated Ukraine”. In response to S. Kolesnik’s anger, he offered to come to his office at 18 Rymarskaya Street. According to S. Kolesnik, eight people dressed in black uniforms were beating him in the courtyard of A. Biletsky’s office. Kolesnik was taken to the hospital being unconscious. The assailants were arrested. Then Biletsky was also arrested as the organizer of this attack and banditry. Biletsky was kept in detention until the Maidan victory. He was released under an amnesty on February 24, 2014, as a “political prisoner”.

According to most experts, before the illegal coup in Ukraine in 2014, A. Biletsky and his organizations were small marginal structures.

They became known only during the Euromaidan coup. On March 12, 2014, A. Biletsky was appointed Head of the Right Sector (East) security bloc in four regions: Kharkiv, Donetsk, Poltava and Lugansk regions.

Anton Borisovich Guryanov, human rights campaigner

We are all now observing the Party of Shariy's activities in Ukraine, which is not separatist and has nothing to do with Russia. It has a completely different agenda and so on. Nevertheless, the Nazi youths make an effort to press them. In this sense, nothing has changed since the first two people were killed by the potential "Azov" on Rymarskaya Street in Kharkiv. That is, the first blood was drawn in 2014. Not far from the Opera House and the Historical Museum. The Azov office was located there, where the provocation was carried out. They were called The Patriots of Ukraine at the time. The Anti-Maidan came to demand an explanation as to who these people were and why they appeared in the city armed with weapons, and which different types of weapons were fired on the target. Two Anti-Maidan activists were killed, and a policeman was injured.

I am not a supporter of the Party of Shariy and do not support their ideas, but nevertheless. These Nazis brutally beat N. Kharkov, the chairman of the party cell. There are pictures on the Internet, you can see them. They practically brought the guy back from the dead, who was virtually mincemeat. And no one was punished for it. Total impunity reigns on that side. In fact, it is convenient for the Kharkiv authorities because they can solve their problems, purely economic ones, in the same way. Hiring Nazis because they are under the same roof can solve practical problems, press, kill people, and won't take anything for it. They are aware of this perfectly well, and they take advantage of it. For example, the city councilman Andrei Lesik was attacked. He was doused with brilliant green, beaten up, and it's all on the Internet. Again, no one was held responsible for this. All because they are representatives of the authorities of today. Nothing has really changed.

After the Euromaidan victory, A. Biletsky headed the Azov Death Squad, established within the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs'

structure on the initiative of its Minister A. Avakov. At the same time, the recent prisoner was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel of police. The degree of support that A. Avakov provides to the Azov “Death Squad is such that he even publicly justifies their pro-Nazi views. Here are his words from an interview with the Ukrainian magazine Focus:

“...Yes, most of the guys gathered at Azov have a certain worldview. But who told you that you could judge them? Don’t forget what the Azov Battalion has done for the country. Remember the liberation of Mariupol, the battles near Ilovaysk, the last attacks near the Sea of Azov. May God grant anyone who criticizes them do 10 % of what they did¹.

In Ordinary fascism. War Crimes of Ukrainian Security Forces (2014–2016), one of the many accounts of the abduction of civilians by the Azov death squad, which worked together with the Security Service of Ukraine, is presented:

“Juvenile Andriy Tsayukov (17 years old) was seized for stating his opinion on the Internet. He recounts: “I was captured by Azov militants on October 30, 2014, in my home. They broke into the house, threw everyone on the floor, and tied their hands. They demanded that I give them the phone, to which my group in Vkontakte is linked. They seized a phone with a sim card. I was brought to the Mariupol SSU. On November 8, the investigator M. M. Anischenko forced me to sign that I allegedly voluntarily agreed to be arrested for 74 hours. That’s where I signed the documents — the charge that was brought against me”.

The Azov Death Squad is widely known in Ukraine for kidnapping, killing and torturing people in Southeastern Ukraine, as well as for its “secret prisons” where this torture is carried out. One of these terrible places was the Mariupol airport prison, where there were torture chambers and burial grounds for those who could not withstand the torture.

Here are the materials of a journalistic investigation in total, which describes a press conference of former Lieutenant Colonel of the Security Service of Ukraine Vasily Prozorov, who presented data about

¹ <https://www.vesti.ru/article/1817916>

the torture prison of the Azov Death Squad, as well as the testimony of victims who have been in this prison¹.

“When I saw the pictures of this corridor on TV (which Prozorov showed. — *Editor’s note*), my hair rose up. Those plastic doors... I sat whispering: “Oh God, here’s my cell”, recalls Mariupol resident Tatyana Ganzha.

“The hallway is light, and there are a lot of plastic doors out of it. I realized it was a fridge. A scary place”, she continued.

Ganja spent ten days at the Mariupol airport and never thought she would ever see her prison from the outside or even on TV. She was a member of the Ukrainian Communist Party, now banned... In October 2014, she was detained by Azov.

Ganja describes what happened at the airport as “a real hell, a place of death”.

I can’t tell you all the horrors. The bridge of my nose has been broken, and I am deaf in the left ear. It’s really very painful memories. I won’t tell you everything. But it was a BSU boy who took me to the bathroom down that corridor who told me, ‘two days before you, a girl was beaten to death here, also Tatiana,’” she recalled.

The torturers constantly threatened Tatiana with a pit or a ditch where they threw the bodies of the dead. They were hinting that she would soon join their ranks, then promised to subject her to the psychological torture of throwing a prisoner to the dead while a person was still alive.

“As far as I understood from their conversations, there’s some kind of ditch covered with lime”, Tatiana specified.

When asked how many are buried there, she answered: “A lot. People went missing even before my captivity. I heard that a lot of them were buried at the agricultural base, too. It’s over hundreds, but this is just my opinion”.

It was not until November 8, 2014, that she was taken from the airport to the SSU — for investigative purposes. She was released in an exchange between Ukraine and the Donetsk People’s Republic on December 26, 2014.

“The comrades from Azov took everything from my house (in Mariupol. — *Editor’s note*) — the heating system, windows,

¹ <https://ria.ru/20190717/1556523534.html>

doors”, Ganja added. Prozorov also said that members of “volunteer battalions” sent home appliances as trophies, such as microwave ovens with dried-up sandwiches.

Olga Seletskaya was detained on August 29, 2014, in the city center. The same Azov. She spent twenty-four hours in a secret prison. The next day she was handed over to the SSU. The protocol was drawn up on August 30, and according to the document, Seletskaya was allegedly taken off a bus in the suburbs of Mariupol.

“Over there (at the airport — *Editor’s note*), without drawing up a protocol. They threaten you, can bring your family, your husband, your children, and torture them in front of your eyes. They intimidate and break people morally and physically. And when they bring people to the SSU, then they draw up papers.

It was as if you had just been detained. For example, as in my case, supposedly I was taken off the bus. And where I had been for 24 hours before that, no one knows. As if I fell into space, disappeared”, says Seletskaya.

According to her, one of the most prevalent torture methods used by torturers is drowning in a barrel or torture with a wet cloth. A cloth is placed on the lying person’s face, and water is slowly poured over it. The person chokes. “Water gets into your lungs, and you lose consciousness. They were interested in information about weapons and where the money was”, she specifies. Olga remembered the call signs of the two hangmen — Butcher and Doctor.

“These were horrific tortures. I had a chance to talk to other victims as well. They called us, “books”. And our confinement facility is a “library”. They told me about the brutal torture, about what was going on there... I saw many in the SSU basement who also passed through Mariupol airport. People were severely beaten and maimed. I heard that they didn’t return after the interrogations”, she testified.

Elena Blokha, a well-known journalist in Donetsk and editor-in-chief of the Municipal Gazette, also recognized Prozorov. On August 2, 2014, she was detained at a checkpoint near the village of Mangush on the outskirts of Mariupol. The journalist with her son and driver had taken the usual road to Crimea, without even thinking that the Azov

48. Continued reports of detainees being held in unofficial places of detention remain of high concern, with more acute risks of torture and ill-treatment, and no indication that this practice has been decreasing. These places are clearly not accessible to Ukraine's National Preventive Mechanism and international organizations. HRMMU received reports that in November 2015, 27 detainees were being kept in the SBU premises in Kharkiv, with allegations that some were subjected to torture and ill-treatment⁵⁴. One of the detainees was allegedly repeatedly detained after having been sentenced to a conditional sentence⁵⁵ by a court in Pavlohrad. HRMMU interviewed a member of an armed group who, as he was seeking to leave Mariupol in June 2014, was arrested at a checkpoint operated by the Azov battalion. He reported having been taken to the Mariupol airport, where he was allegedly tortured and ill-treated for a month and a half⁵⁶. In September, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on summary executions was denied access to the military base in Mariupol airport where, according to reports received by HRMMU, detainees have been kept and ill-treated since summer 2014.

49. HRMMU continued to receive reports of *incommunicado* detention. For instance, in Lysychansk (Luhansk region), on 19 July 2014, the Ukrainian army detained a man. On 20 July 2014, photographs of his identification documents (passport and military documents) were published on non-governmental websites supporting the security operation, with a

⁵¹ HRMMU interview, 25 September 2015.

⁵² HRMMU interview, 28 August 2015.

⁵³ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16460&LangID=E#sthash.OlrAXYnl.dpuf>

⁵⁴ HRMMU interview, 2 November 2015.

⁵⁵ Conditional sentence implies the release from custody.

⁵⁶ HRMMU interview, 22 October 2015.

The Human Rights Monitoring Mission reports in Ukraine (The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights/OHCHR) repeatedly mention Mariupol airport as a place where Azov tortured Ukrainian citizens.

controlled the road. Blokha had long been blacklisted for her unbiased coverage of events in Donetsk.

“One of the capture team — a rather stout middle-aged man with a bulldog face — slapped an SSU ID card in front of my eyes, saying that everything was fine. We just had to go with them. Half an hour later, we arrived at the airport in Mariupol. We entered the territory through several checkpoints, which had fences made of sandbags and anti-tank obstacles with barbed wire. There were armed men in masks at the checkpoints, and they only let us in after our guards presented their “credentials”. Fighters in camouflage have long been nothing new for residents of Donetsk. However! These were particularly aggressive. We were not welcomed warmly at the airport. There was already a whole unit of men dressed in camouflage uniforms and “balaclavas”.

Shouting and banging could be heard from the side of the airport building as if someone was being beaten”.

...Elena Blokha even visited the infamous refrigerators where prisoners were held: “In a 3×1.5 meter room lined with white tiles (it looked like a warehouse), there was only one chair where a girl with a pale face was sitting. “Keep it open, please!” she pleaded, turning to the young man.

“Be patient. You have to be strong”, he answered mocking affectionately and shut the door tightly. It became absolutely dark and very stuffy. There was no ventilation.

Her cellmate told Blokha that they took her “to the firing squad” twice, trying to get her to admit that she was a DNR saboteur: “They promised to bury me right there in a trench, and no one would find me if I didn’t agree to work with them”, Yulia said, breathing heavily.

Blokha’s son also had enough — he ended up in the men’s cell, where there were eight other people:

“Some of them, according to my son, were severely beaten. One even had broken ribs sticking out. The other had broken legs. I don’t know who these people are and what happened next. I can only guess. But one thing was clear. These guys could really go missing, as it happens to many who end up in the captivity of such “volunteer” battalions. It should be noted that Mariupol has been particularly hard hit by

51. A man, who had been detained by the Ukrainian military in November 2014, in the Government-controlled village of Soloviove (Donetsk region), claimed to have been brought to the village of Pisky, where he was kept in a basement for two days. Four masked men kicked him and beat him with a wooden board, cut with electro shocks and pointed a gun to his head. He was also allegedly threatened with sexual violence⁵². A man, who had been arrested by unidentified Ukrainian servicemen in the Government-controlled city of Mariupol on 24 November 2014, claimed that for 11 days, he was subjected to torture and mock executions at Mariupol airport. He was later charged with terrorism and illegal possession of weapons, and detained in the Mariupol SIZO. In March 2014, he signed a plea bargain and

⁴⁸ HRMMU interview, 10 August 2015.

⁴⁹ HRMMU interview, 1 June 2015.

⁵⁰ HRMMU has regularly attempted to check the information on detainees kept in SBU premises in Kharkiv. Various SBU officials repeatedly denied presence of detainees in this building, though HRMMU has credible information from people who had been previously kept in this unofficial detention facility for periods of time varying from several days to several months.

⁵¹ HRMMU interview, 3 June 2015.

⁵² HRMMU interview, 4 June 2015.

From the report of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (OHCHR): "...Threatened with sexual violence... Man reports that he was tortured at Mariupol airport for 11 days".

repression from the Right Sector members and the national battalions”, Blokha concludes.

The events at the Mariupol airport and other secret prisons in Ukraine (and the self-proclaimed republics) were constantly under the scrutiny of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (OHCHR). They were recorded in the mission’s reports.

Fiona Frazer, Head of UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, told RIA Novosti that over five years, “several hundred cases of arbitrary detention and/or incommunicado detention and related human rights violations and abuses (such as torture and ill-treatment) by both the government of Ukraine and armed groups of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic and the self-proclaimed Luhansk People’s Republic have been recorded.

Including the OHCHR documented 16 cases of arbitrary detention and/or interrogation of individuals at Mariupol airport. “They all date from 2014, 2015, and the first half of 2016. The shortest period of detention was a few hours. The longest was one month”, Fraser noted.

Let us recall what Vasily Prozorov said at the press conference. For a long time, there was a secret prison at Mariupol airport — a “library” where “books” were kept — such a cynical name given to captured Donetsk People’s Republic militiamen and ordinary citizens suspected of separatism. Here, they were tortured to extract confessions and simply to avenge the defeats of the Armed Forces of Ukraine at the front or to fulfill their sadistic tendencies. The prisoners were kept in two separate cooling rooms — they seemed suitable because there was no furniture in them and the doors were hermetically sealed, not even allowing heat to pass through.

At the press conference, Prozorov showed photographs of nine prisoners from the “library” — people of different ages, from a teenager in a khaki T-shirt, for which he might have been detained, to two old men. But all of them showed signs of severe beatings. RIA Novosti found those who identified some of the “books.

According to Prozorov, there were also secret burials on the airport grounds of those who could not withstand torture or were simply killed by the sadistic wardens. The secret “library” was run by members of the ill-fated Azov Battalion, with the patronage of the SSU — as a rule;

service between areas under Government control and those under the armed groups.⁸⁹

118. In the absence of any formal notification of a crime, law enforcement officers are reluctant to open an investigation. The case of the Mariupol airport is illustrative. It is allegedly used as a military base, where numerous human rights violations have been reported, including illegal detention, and ill-treatment amounting to torture committed by the Ukrainian military against alleged members of the armed groups. HRMMU submitted a letter to the Office of the Military Prosecutor of the Southern Region to examine the place in relation to these allegations. On 10 July, HRMMU received an official response stating that the Office of the Military Prosecutor had not received any complaints or notifications regarding human rights violations committed at the airport and that no investigative actions had therefore been conducted. According to the Military Prosecutor for the Southern Region, criminal prosecution is highly dependent on submissions from victims, as a basis on which investigations were to be launched. In the course of the reform of the Office of the Prosecutor

The reports of the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (OHCHR): “The case of Mariupol is illustrative.

It is assumed that it was used as a military base. Numerous human rights violations were reported including unlawful detention, and ill-treatment amounting to torture”

the Azovs did all the dirty work. At the same time, the SSU officers handled the confessions of the prisoners. Several days, if not weeks, would pass between the actual detention and the official registration. Simultaneously, their capture was often recorded on the Azov battalion videos or even in SSU press releases. The following “gray” interval was spent being tortured to be prepared for official interrogation by SSU, making them more talkative.

A journalistic investigation¹ quotes the testimony of Pavel Karakosov, a resident of Mariupol and veteran of Afghanistan, who worked as a cab driver and was also imprisoned to be tortured by the Azov Death Squad:

“There were already grim rumors in the city. There have been haunts like: This is not a phone conversation — want to go to the airport?” recalls Karakosov. A client had arranged in his presence for his relative, who did not seem to be involved in anything serious, to be released from the airport. Negotiations went through an official of the Mariupol Mayor’s office, and the ransom was handed over even before the trip. Karakosov remembered that day quite well: “A relative and the one who negotiated went with us. He called and said which car should be let through. The detainee was taken out of the airport building and led to a car. 35 to 40 years old. Beaten up badly. As far I could understand, he was there for three days. He couldn’t and wouldn’t like to say anything.

Another customer, a certain local taxi driver, was more talkative. He told me that he recently went to Zaporizhzhia to get a new passport. On the way back, at one of the checkpoints, his document aroused suspicion, as if it was a fake, issued to a Russian saboteur. The pensioner was brought to the airport and beaten for a couple of days, demanding him to confess everything. He had nothing to confess, and when the executioners were convinced of that, they let him go. “They took away the two thousand dollars he had with him, but he was still happy — they let him go alive!” — Karakosov recalls. And soon he himself became a prisoner of the airport.

Azov detained him on August 11 in the car companies’ territory, where Karakosov went to his friend to repair the car... Karakosov spent seven days in prison at the airport — in the very cold cooling rooms that Prozorov mentioned.

¹ <https://ria.ru/20190718/1556525020.html>

They brought me (after my detention — *Editor's note*) to the airport, threw me at the entrance, shouted at me: “separatist”. They started beating me up — 15 people. After they had had enough, they went down to the basement. Throw me into the cooling room. The chamber is about three by five meters, with no air access, tightly closed... There was already a prisoner there, badly beaten. He could not talk. His face was very swollen from the beatings. The eyes are slits”, Karakosov describes his first encounter with prison. Then he had to get acquainted with the whole range of torture used by the security forces.

“The practice was related to the American practice at Guantanamo. Spread a man face up in the shape of a star, cloth over his head, pour water over him. It feels like you’re being drowned. Together with the intense retraction of air, water particles enter, the brain perceives this as drowning. I had a microstroke during the torture. As if they stuck millions of needles in my head”, he details.

Another torture is “scissors”. Two paralleled rails. “Your palms are placed on the rail, the other rail is lowered from a height and your fingers are crushed”, Karakosov continues.

Or needles under the toe nails. It feels like you have veins pulled from your neck through your whole body. Yes, I’ve had it done. I’ve experienced it myself. Cutting legs and other limbs with an angle grinder is a common practice”, he claims. And shows the scar on his leg from the cut of a chainsaw, the threat of my leg being cut off terrified me.

“...The Azov Battalion was such a release for the SSU. They could do anything. And the SSU can always say that it’s not them. It’s the Azov Battalion, and they disobey the SSU”, he speculates.

Karakosov also believes that there are secret burials of prisoners who died or were killed during torture at the airport: “Those who died of torture at the airport were found in the streets of Mariupol simply as unidentified corpses. They were dumped out of the car somewhere on the road. A lot of people were missing in the city. That’s the stench of death. Yes, the smell of rotting flesh. I assume that you will find mass graves somewhere around the airport building if you look hard enough.

After a week of torment, Karakosov was transferred to the Mariupol SSU — a detention protocol was officially drawn up, and the detainee was transferred to the Kamensk Detention Center on the outskirts of

Mariupol. The man was in such bad condition that they initially refused to take him in, as they feared he would die.

Human Rights Ombudsman of the Donetsk People Republic, Daria Morozova who deals with prisoner exchanges, also believes that the prison at Mariupol airport is still in operation. According to Morozova, “The Donetsk People’s Republic is seeking 249 people who were definitely detained on the territory of Ukraine. I’m confident it’s not the only place. We will learn very soon about several other such places in the city of Mariupol. For instance, a young woman was detained last year. The SSU took her to the village of Berdyansk. We couldn’t find her where she was for about a month. Then it turned out that it was an illegal place of detention of the SSU. The person was being beaten and tortured for a month. It is a young woman. Everything possible to apply to her was used. And they were starving her to death”, says Morozova.

According to her, there are many neglected recreation centers in the settlements on the coast of the Azov Sea. They all were deployed there — Azov, Aidar, Tornado, Donbass. And in 2014–2015, each had its own secret prison there, where they tortured people”.

The media quotes the testimony of a former employee of the SSU of Ukraine¹:

“The word ‘library’ at 77, Georgievskaya Street (the city department of the SSU. — *Editor’s note*), and at 33, Architect Nielsen Street (The SSU Office in the Donetsk region. — *Editor’s note*) was used when they wanted to say that a person was detained. “The library” is not one particular place. In the school building, both the airport and the Azov Base on the Left Bank, the Ordzhonikidze district of Mariupol was named like that. There was also a private house on the way out of Mariupol to the Volodarsky (Nikolsky) district, where Azov was also deployed. I don’t know where exactly the detainees were brought from. They said, “From the library”.

According to him, the prison at the airport was established immediately after the Azov seized Mariupol. There was also the headquarters of Sector M and the attached forces’ headquarters, i. e., the volunteer battalions attached to the military and the SSU.

¹ <https://ria.ru/20190719/1556525107.html>

Azov was only brought in to perform the “necessary” tasks, for example dealing with detainees. Everyone suspected of having contacts with the Donetsk People’s Republic in Mariupol, Pershotravenskii, Volodarsky, and Novoazovskiy districts went through the prison. By my estimates, there were at least 120 involved”, continues a former employee of the SSU. “They asked to be sent to the detention center rather than be returned to the airport”.

The journalistic investigation already quoted above cites the testimony of Kirill Filichkin, a thirty-three-year-old resident of Mariupol. He was tortured among the first, on May 7, 2014, when the Azov Battalion occupied Mariupol. The following material is to give proof of this¹.

He was personally interrogated by the controversial Ukrainian politicians Oleg Lyashko and Igor Mosiychuk (now a deputy of the Verkhovna Rada, and at that time, one of the founders of the Azov Battalion and its Deputy Commander). The video of the interrogations appeared on YouTube and in the autumn of 2014 served as part of the evidence of Filichkin’s guilt when he was prosecuted for his involvement in capturing five Ukrainian soldiers whom Filichkin urged to join the Donetsk People’s Republic militia. Witnesses identified him in the videos with Lyashko and Mosiychuk, and it is even recorded in one of the verdicts. But there’s just one minor mismatch: the clips were taken as early as May 7, but Filichkin was not officially detained until August 17, 2014. He spent all these months in various secret prisons.

When I came to, I realized that it was the Mariupol airport. It was Oleg Lyashko in front of me. Igor Mosiychuk, it was him who commanded these people in black uniforms”, Filichkin told RIA Novosti.

After filming the video, Filichkin was handed over to the rank-and-file Right Sector fighters. Filichkin was brutally tortured and beaten.

“They put their fingers on the butt and hit with the other (buttstock. — *Editor’s note*). They cut the tendon in my hand with a knife bayonet, “so I wouldn’t pull the trigger”. I still can’t bend my finger. Mosiychuk personally stuck a knife bayonet into my leg”, the young man recalls and shows his scars.

¹ <https://ria.ru/20190719/1556525107.html>

The beatings had continued later, on the way when Filichkin was taken to Kyiv. “To keep me awake, they hit me in the neck with butts. Stabbed me with a bayonet. I asked them, “Why are you doing this?” They said, “We’re just bored””.

“There were 19-year-old kids there, ultras, soccer hooligans. It’s fun for them to fight, to beat people up. The girls, who were listed as medics, took part in the torture”, explains Filichkin.

There were recently amnestied criminals in the Azov and the Right Sector ranks. The new Kyiv government needed to replenish the ranks of the “volunteer battalions urgently”, and former convicts did not care whose side they were on, as long as they could rob and torture. “They were bragging that a month (a month ago. — *Editor’s note*) they were put in cells, and then they were told — do the same what were you doing, but in Donbass: “Even if we kill you, we won’t get anything for it”. Many of them demonstrated their ID cards to the Ministry of Internal Affairs... They bragged, ‘I already have two cars,’” Filichkin describes his communication with his tormentors.

He was brought to Kyiv in such a condition that the Temporary Detention Facility did not accept the prisoner for fear he would die in his cell and the responsibility would fall on the staff of the detention center. “I had broken ribs and a punctured leg”, Filichkin specifies. He got off easy, though: Kirill knows a burial ground at the Mariupol airport for those who died in the “library”, unable to withstand torture, or were shot by prison guards.

“They dug a pit and threw the bodies in it. When the pit was full, it was filled with concrete and covered it with soil”, Filichkin recounts the testimony of his eyewitness friends, including those who were forced to carry out the bodies of the dead. In particular, eyewitnesses claim that there is such a burial ground right by the runway. But there is hard to say how many victims are buried there. “In 2014, at its peak, six to eight people per day vanished in Mariupol. Some came back. Nobody knows anything about the others. People (in captivity. — *Editor’s note*) took out arch supports, cut their veins because many couldn’t stand it morally”, Filichkin adds. As for him, he spent a total of three and a half years in prison. On June 8, 2015, he was sentenced to 12 years in prison, and on December 27, 2017, he was released on exchange.

After his release, Donetsk doctors documented his scars and signs of torture. “Filichkin’s body showed multiple scars in the area of the head, arms, and right hip, which are the result of the healing of bruised wounds formed by the impact of blunt objects. There were also scars, which are a result of the healing of wounds caused by stabbing objects”, reads the medical report.

RIA Novosti found another detainee of the Mariupol “library”, who saw the graves at the airport with his own eyes. He describes in detail how he was thrown into graves filled with the bodies of men and women who could not withstand torture, tortured with electricity, and strung up on a rack in the prison of the Azov Death Squad:

“Mikhail Shubin, born in 1965, also a former resident of Mariupol. He once served in the Soviet Airborne Forces and even fought in Afghanistan. In 2001, he moved from Russia to Mariupol, his wife’s homeland, and received Ukrainian citizenship.

...Shubin was subjected to the most brutal torture at the airport, which lasted for two weeks. The Azov activists demanded information about “handlers, contacts, and assignments”, but Shubin had little to tell, except for the purchase of guns and ammunition at the Mariupol market. Back in the early summer of 2014, Shubin was summoned to the local military commissariat in Mariupol and offered to join Azov as an instructor — the battalion took untrained volunteers, who needed the experience of people like Shubin. Due to his Soviet background and Russian origins, Shubin did not think by any means that he was on his way with the Azov. He refused to cooperate and may have already aroused the suspicions of the SSU and the Right Sector Operatives. Azov got hold of him in August 2014, but his arrest was not formalized until three weeks later, on September 9.

“I know five burials there — under the runway of light aircraft. I spent twenty-four hours in the same pit with dead bodies. This is a series of torture and psychological pressure”, Shubin told RIA Novosti. He describes the pit with the bodies as follows.

“It’s small in fact, three by three, four by four (meters. — *Editor’s note*). I was walking (under escort — *Editor’s note*) with a bag on my head. The ground disappeared below me, and I fell down. I fell down on something so weird, soft, slurping. I touched it with my hands — human limbs, bodies. Women, men lay down. Someone’s stomach was

ripped open, a throat was cut, a neck was broken — all kinds of injuries. Six or seven people”, recalls Shubin... He was regularly brought in for “interrogations” — his tormentors did not want so much information from him as they took pleasure in bullying the “separatist. They often started the beatings before the interrogation to make the detainee more talkative — SSU investigator Romanenko, who handled his case, observed the torture. “I was beaten, then I could then Romanenko’s voice: ‘Enough, bring him in,’” says Shubin. The worst was the electric shock.

“They bring me into the office, make me undress. Then they knock me down and there’s already a bucket of water spilled on the floor. They used a welding pin on my penis and poked the other end in my heel. The feeling is quite unpleasant, let’s put it this way, killing sensations. I was lying there all twisted. Literally twisted”, remembers Shubin.

A lighter option is torture with a taser. “Once it got to the point where the battery died on this taser. They poked and poked me, then gave up”, he adds.

“Or there was the rack. The metal angle beam on the telpher (hoist — *Editor’s note*) with the rib facing upward. It is stretched between the legs, and the feet are handcuffed to the floor. And they lift the telpher so the handcuffs are taut, and you sit on this beam”, Shubin specifies. It feels like they’re cutting you in half”, admits a former inmate of the “library”.

He remembered his tormentors forever. Their call signs, or rather nicknames, coincide with those mentioned by Olga Seletskaya. It may be the same people. “They called each other Butcher and

Doctor”, says Shubin. Two weeks later, he was sent to the Mariupol Detention Center. “They drove us for half a day because they refused to accept us in prison: ‘they’ll kick the bucket, and we’ll be responsible for them.’ We were all blue. Dark, beaten. We were brought to the emergency hospital in Mariupol on Novoselovka. There was talk — how much work can we do, let’s take them to the plantation and bury them”, he recalls.

Shubin believes these threats are real: “There have been cases. Our guys then found corpses in the plantation, limbs”. But he was lucky — he was taken to the temporary detention center. “That’s where I slept for the first time in a long time”, he laughs. At the end of 2014, he

was handed over to the Donetsk People’s Republic as part of the next prisoner exchange. “I was treated in hospitals in Donetsk for three months¹”.

The Azov Death Squad’s militants were also notable for a number of crimes that were not determined by any political reasons. For example, the Anna News news agency published the testimony of Ivan Ruslanovich Sabirov, who talks about mass graves of the murdered, as well as about the beating, rape, and murder of a girl in the village of Rozovka. Here is the full transcript of this interview:

“Question: Do you know anything about the crimes of the Azov Volunteer Battalion? Did they commit any crimes?”

Answer: They did.

Question: Do you know anything about it?

Answer: (Surname — unintelligible) raped a girl. He ordered her shot.

Question: Introduce yourself.

Answer: Ivan Ruslanovich Sabirov.

Question: What is “Azov”?

Answer: Azov Battalion.

Question: How did you get in?

Answer: I joined voluntarily. My friends were there.

Question: Who took you in?

Answer: Rafelevich.

Question: Who is Rafelevich?

Answer: The head of the reconnaissance team.

Question: Where does he live?

Answer: I don’t know where he lives, but he has a dacha in Rozovka.

Question: In Rozovka near Yenakiyev?

Answer: Yenakievo is that way. He took us with him. They injected us with some drip feeds. Here’s a scar from a catheter.

Question: What did you get?

Answer: Some kind of drip-feed — I don’t know. I didn’t want to drink, eat, sleep, or anything like that after them. I got it, Artem Udovichenko, then Vlad Spiridonenko got it too. The three of us were injected with these drip feeds.

¹ <https://ria.ru/20190719/1556525107.html>

Question: How often did you get it?

Answer: Twice a day.

Question: Have you ever wondered why you had been injected?

Answer: We were curious, but we were not told why. Not at all. We asked, “Why? We were told that’s the way to go.

Question: How did you feel afterward?

Answer: I felt dizzy and nauseous after those drip feeds. Then it was gone in an hour. I didn’t want to eat, sleep, or drink.

Question: What do you know about what the Azov Battalion was involved in? I mean looting, murder.

Answer: Artem Udovichenko told me. He was there, was present at the mass grave in Rozovka. There are three mine galleries or shafts. I don’t know. Then they looted — they went into stores and took vodka. That kind of thing — alcohol, that kind of thing. Without the sellers’ permission.

Question: You say you shot a girl. Who ordered you to fire the shots?

Answer: We were affected by the drug.

Question: Whose idea was that?

Answer: Rafelevich’s.

Question: How did that girl get to you?

Answer: We came to this dacha, where Rafelevich lives in Rozovka. I don’t know the street. He showed the house’s location on the map. The street — we used to come there at night time. Old people live there. No young ones can be seen. I saw the girl for the first time.

Question: What did you do with the girl before she was shot?

Answer: Yes, Rafelevich was doing something to her in the basement. She cried and shouted a lot, I don’t know what. We didn’t even go down there.

Question: What condition was she in when you saw her?

Answer: She was all blue. Her arms were blue. I don’t know what he’s done to her, but she was all blue.

Question: Where did you shoot her?

Answer: At the little pond. That pond is like your office. A little lake. That’s where we dumped her.

Question: Where did the girl’s body go?

Answer: We dumped her into the pond.

Question: How did you dump the body?

Answer: It was wrapped in a cellophane bag. Nothing was tied up. Just dropped it off”.

However, the criminal activities of the Azov Death Squad, which is under the direct protection of the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, are not limited to kidnappings, murders, and torture in Southeastern Ukraine. The terror unleashed by it and associated with a network of radical organizations against dissenters is taking place all over Ukraine.

For example, on April 27, 2020, a coach with members of Patriots For Life, which interacts with the Opposition Platform — For Life, was attacked on the Kharkiv-Kyiv highway. The coach was shot at with automatic weapons, four people were seriously wounded, and the coach with people was set on fire with a Molotov cocktail. Video footage in the media shows a Molotov cocktail thrown at the coach, shots being fired, with a passenger on the ground in the middle of the road and being kicked. The people on the coach were on their way from Poltava to a political party event in Kharkiv. Verkhovna Rada Deputy from Opposition Platform — For Life, Ilya Kiva accused the Azov fighters of the attack and added that members of this battalion “for six years seized businesses, took property from people, stole wood and sand all over Ukraine, destroying the ecosystem, robbed collectors and remained immune all this time, covered by the state system”. After accusations emerged from opposition deputies of the Verkhovna Rada, the leader of Azov A. Biletsky stated that “...the Security Service of Ukraine, which should deal with this, the Prosecutor General’s Office will have the will, conscience and character in this regard and will award these guys with medals for fighting separatism, and that’s it”.

The media wrote that a wave of attacks on regional offices and brutal beatings of members of another opposition party, the Party of Shariy, took place in Ukraine at the behest of Azov Death Squad leader A. Biletsky. For example, on June 25, the party cell coordinator in Kharkiv, Nikita Rozhenko, was attacked. The young man was assaulted right next to the city police’s central investigation department and was taken to hospital in a severe condition.

These attacks are actively encouraged by other death squads and radical organizations, such as offering cash rewards via social media for

the best videos of “humiliating the Party of Shariy”. Several websites directly held a contest for the best attacks on opposition activists, promising T-shirts as a gift for beating them up.

In most cases, Death Squads members receive no punishment for their attacks, including murders. In the rare cases that go to trial and judges are not afraid to rule, it is disproportionate to the act. For example, on November 7, 2016, an Azov fighter cut the throat of a resident whose political views he did not like on Victory Avenue in Mariupol. Despite the fighter’s apparent guilt from the Death Squad, the Ordzhonikidze district court of Mariupol qualified the murder as murder over self-defense (Article 118 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine), which provides for liability in the form of imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years. However, the court then rejected this punishment and released the militant, applying the so-called “service restriction for two years”. This means that he cannot be promoted to a higher rank during this time¹.

It is interesting to note that members of the Death Squad themselves spread many accounts of attacks to spread fear among the Ukrainian population. For example, a video posted by Azov militant Oleksandr Tarnovsky shows a man tied to a post with a sign that reads the inscription: “I’m a vatnik”. Many experts draw an analogy with the behavior of Ukrainian nationalists during World War II, who took part in punitive actions on the side of the Nazis and practiced massacres when they also hung signs on people: “I’m a partisan”.

Ruslan Petrovich Kotsaba, opposition journalist

Now the gangs of neo-Nazis, who lowered down a bit after Zelensky’s election, have reared their heads. It was very noticeable today when we organized a campaign in front of the National Council, which revoked our broadcasting license. There were five warnings from the National Council: you showed the Victory Parade in Moscow, which is banned, then the Victory Parade in Minsk.

They say it’s war now, and you can’t criticize during the war because you’re playing along. And what is the enemy? We know what

¹ https://timer-odessa.net/news/uchastnik_ato_otdelalsya_shtrafom_za_ubiystvo_jitelya_mariupolya_857.html

the economic balance is in trade between Russia and Ukraine. It's the common people who don't know that it's all just a game. The purpose of the campaign is that we didn't want to be banned from the TV channel. We believe that we are an unbiased channel; we try to give parity so that there are different views. We are against a military solution to the economic and political problems in Donbass, and we are against these games of the oligarchs. There were fifteen of us. TV channel employees, journalists. The neo-Nazis barged in, dispersed us, confiscating our speakers and amplifiers, and spraying us with gas canisters. The police were in on it. When one of our employees was sprayed with a gas canister, a police officer was also sprayed, yet he did not arrest the man. Because it was Azov and S-14.

The crimes of the Azov Death Squad are not only political in nature. Those they merely see as a threat to their organization are also attacked. The Ukrainian public organization Left Bank, which also consisted of Euromaidan fighters but suffered from the Death Squad, attributes this to the fact that they may have interfered with the Death Squad's political activity and the elections to the Verkhovna Rada of its leadership. They say that the attack was personally led by the leader of the Death Squad, A. Biletsky:

“On election day, there was a bandit attack on representatives of the GF (Ukr. gromadske formuvannya, i. e., civil formation. — *Author's note*) Left Bank... The city administration asked Left Bank to ensure public order in all Kyiv districts, including Obolon' residential area, on election day. However, we worked in our native Dniprovsky district during the presidential election. During the day, representatives of the Azov Special Regiment of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, led by parliamentary candidate Andrei Biletsky, attacked the Left Bank crews twice. As a result, three of our fighters were put into hospital in the Emergency Care Hospital with brain concussion, skull and brain injuries. One of them had broken ribs, all the blows were inflicted with gun butts”, the Facebook page of the Dniprovsky District Self-Defense reported on October 28, 2014.

One of the victims described the second, bloodiest of all the attacks on October 25, 2014: “There were three of us in the car. Suddenly, the car was surrounded by 50–70 people armed with guns, pistols, and

batons from all sides. Most of them had Azov stripes. Without any warning, a round of shots was fired at the right side of our car. Then they dragged us out of the cabin and threw our faces on the pavement, after which there was a clash — they kicked us, beat us with rifle butts and a “telescope” (telescopic baton. — *Author’s note*) When I tried to raise my head, I was immediately hit with somebody’s heel.

Biletsky came up several times and asked, “Well, are they lying? Good. Flipped their car over? Okay...” Nothing was done without his command. They kept us lying on the pavement for 40 minutes. When we were already starting to freeze, someone from the Azov militants checked with Biletsky, and only after his command did they lift us up and put us under the wall. You couldn’t even move. We were told, “If you turn around, we’ll shoot you on the spot”.¹

Its former members eloquently describe the “customs” adopted by the Azov Death Squads. They are confident that it was at the behest of the Azov leadership that Yaroslav Babich (call sign Balkanets), the former deputy head of the Azov Civil Corps (CC) headquarters, was murdered and found hanged in his Kyiv apartment on July 26, 2015. People previously associated with “Azov” are convinced that this happened because he learned about the criminal schemes of enrichment of the “death squad”:

“Yaroslav had his fingers clenched unnaturally into fists. The suspicion was a relatively wide rope with a knot tied in the front, which did not fit tightly around the neck — that’s not how a man could hang himself”, Larisa, the widow of the deceased, told Hromadske Radio on August 10, 2016. The pathologist advised: “If you’re a smart woman, don’t bring it up (and I don’t agree with this version), and we’ll do you a favor: cover it up as a suicide”. Yaroslav’s brother became furious: “What are you talking about?!” And the pathologist replied: “Hush, hush. I was writing what you guys were saying”².

The truth about Babich’s death surfaced only two years later when the conflict between Biletsky and a number of his prominent associates escalated. On May 23, 2018, Oleg Shiryaev, who led the Azov Civil Corps in 2015–2016 and then the National Corps until September

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20190316/1022987191.html>

² Ibid.

2017 in the Kharkiv region, wrote on Facebook: “I left the National Corps because, as a result of my own investigation, I began to speculate that it was at Biletsky’s command that Yaroslav Babich was killed in 2015”. Besides, Shiryayev revealed hidden schemes to enrich Biletsky and the Belarusian neo-Nazi Sergei Korotkikh (call sign Botsman), the latter known for his criminal preference activity, who had been Azov intelligence commander in 2014–2015.

On June 7, 2018, Oleg Odnorozhenko, Biletsky’s longtime (since the mid-’0s) closest associate, who had served as moral deputy commander at Azov since 2014, but who also parted ways with White Chief a year later, told the same story in detail on Facebook: “What struck me at the very beginning and made me leave the ranks of Azov was also the atmosphere of total suspicion in the regiment’s ranks. (And also. — *Author’s note*) the irrepressible desire on the part of Biletsky and his cronies to hush up the case and silence all those who asked uncomfortable questions, especially Larisa (Babich’s wife. — *Author’s note*). I decided after my last conversation with Biletsky in August 2015, in which I raised the need to help Yaroslav’s family. After answering that “help will certainly be provided, but after Larissa shuts up and does not touch matters after Babich’s death”, I had no choice left.

According to Odnorozhenko, he didn’t learn anything more until the fall of 2017: At this time, the information from witnesses about Sergei Korotkikh and Sergei Korovin being near Yaroslav’s house on the night of the murder appeared. Soon it was discovered that Botsman and Horst (calling signs of the fighters — *Author’s note*) were in Yaroslav’s apartment at the time of the murder. During the same period, many former Azov activists began to recount the circumstances of the murder they had heard from Sergei Korotkikh’s entourage. In particular, the “testimony” of Yura Akadem became known, who flaunted that Botsman was “in the mood”, so he killed Yaroslav relatively quickly. The collection and correlation of information coming at this time allowed us to recreate the prerequisites and the course of Yaroslav’s murder. By mid-September 2017, we already had an almost complete picture of the crime”.

“The Azov Death Squadron is also known for its looting. For example, former deputy battalion commander Yaroslav Gonchar, explaining his version of leaving the battalion, said that he had been

tortured in the battalion for his disagreement with looting and open support of National Socialism. In an interview with the Reporter. Gonchar said: “...Those who claim that the Azov Battalion is warm and fuzzy are blatantly lying. The battalion has turned into a gang, accepting only extreme rightists. If a person does not adhere to National Socialism convictions, he will not be accepted into Azov.

...I and 15 other fighters left the battalion because of disagreement, including on an ideological level, with the actions of the commanders and their underlings. Instead of fighting, they engage in looting and plundering. In my presence, two trucks with looted property were taken from Yanukovych’s wife Lyudmila’s dacha in the village of Urzuf. The property was also stolen from Yanukovych’s hunting grounds in Starodubovka. When I stated that such actions and open support for National Socialism in the battalion were unacceptable, they tied me up and threw me in the basement. I was tortured there¹”.

Vladimir Yuryevich Lyapin, lawyer, Zaporizhzhia

“We’ve had several high-profile criminal cases where the National Security Forces did robberies with weapons on money collectors, on jewelers. Two years on, they’re all at large. At first, the court chose a restraint measure – detention, but two years have passed, and they’re at large.

And Tatarintsev, who did not have a single drop of blood on his hands and never held a weapon in his hands, spent 3.5 years in a pre-trial detention center, with no alternative. I have been following the criminal case of Andrei Tatarintsev, a businessman, for more than three years now. He is accused of transferring fuel to a children’s hospital for a blood transfusion station on territory, not under Ukrainian control. He had a business in Sorokino: small wholesale of gasoline and diesel fuel. He is a diabetic. The case was transferred from Kyiv. The military prosecutor’s office detained him in Kyiv, and the Supreme Court assigned him to the Kuybyshevsky district court. He is in the pre-trial detention facility in Volnyansk. From Volnyansk to Kuibyshev, there is more than 150 km. The trial begins at 10:00. At 6:30, he

¹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20140621215841/http://reporter.vesti.ua/57448-azov-mariupol-zachistka>

is picked up by a UAZ truck and driven 2.5–3 hours, depending on how the route develops. Everyone knows that diabetic patients must receive a diet five times a day. He can take its pills after meals. Here he comes to court, and he has no food or pills.

The court fixes it every time they make a separate court ruling so that the pre-trial detention facility provides treatment. The pre-trial detention center reports that he is healthy as an ox. Everything is fine. It's just a formality because we do not influence the pre-trial detention center, and we can't do anything. And when they bring him to court, every time an ambulance arrives. Every time. His glucose level is up to 15 at most, but it's more than ten all the time, and his blood pressure comes to 180. Naturally, we can't start a trial under these conditions. He gets an injection. The court extends his restraint measure and adjourns the session again in a month or two. We have not been able to start a judicial investigation for three years. What human rights can we talk about? We wrote to the ombudsman, to the prosecutor, we brought doctors, but nobody bothered.

We are beginning to examine the very first document for Tatarintsev, the protocol of his detention. Our Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates that if you have a very serious crime, which carries a penalty of more than ten years, you must have a lawyer. They write Part 3, Article 258 in the detention report: "assistance to a terrorist organization", but he has no lawyer. The first document is based on which he was detained. I make a motion to declare this evidence inadmissible, and the panel of judges, instead of admitting it, come out and say: "Prosecutor, well, will you call a lawyer, or what if he was there?" These are human rights. There are audio recordings, video sessions.

He is being tried for giving fuel to a children's hospital. You see, in Ukraine, these are considered "terrorist organizations" in the Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republics. Although, our state can not recognize it as a law. We have a separate procedure for recognizing an organization as a terrorist organization. The Prosecutor General shall file a complaint with the Supreme Administrative Court of Ukraine demanding that the organization be recognized as a terrorist organization. Only after that the people who take part in it can be held criminally liable. Our state cannot accept for some reason.

We understand the why. Trade and turnover is going on, electricity goes there, coal back.

We have displaced judges who moved from Donetsk and Luhansk to what we call Ukrainian-controlled territory, but they still have property there. Apartments, houses. They pay utility bills. They have relatives over there. Are they also sponsoring a terrorist organization? Any person who has paid money in non-controlled territory falls under Part 3, Article 258: “financing a terrorist organization”. Tatarintsev has two judges. When I ask them these questions, they put their head down. What freedom, what human rights?!

A farmer was convicted. The Kuibyshev Court, which also judges Tatarintsev. He had the same thing: Part 3, Article 258 “assisting to a terrorist organization”. He had a field on two sides. One side of the area was in the Donetsk People’s Republic, it was an uncontrolled territory, and the other was in Ukraine. He cultivated one field and paid tax to both the Donetsk People’s Republic and Ukraine. The man was given eight years for cultivating the field. What for?

The courts do not touch people who belong to the National Battalions, and the prosecutor’s office treats them loyally. This is a fact, 100 percent.

The Right Sector Death Squad

The Right Sector Death Squad is similar to the Azov, managed by the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs, and is no less well known. He is also involved in the murder, kidnapping, and intimidation of dissidents in Ukraine. However, it is linked with the Security Service of Ukraine. Its founder and leader (in 2016, he headed the new “Yarosh State Initiative” movement), Dmitry Yarosh, was the head of the far-right organization Tryzub (Trident). Yarosh was closely associated with the Ukrainian security forces and was officially an advisor to the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, as well as the leader of the party of the same name as the Death Squad (the current leader of the party is Andrei Tarasenko) and a member of the Verkhovna Rada and deputy head of the Committee on National

Security and Defense. This post did not stop him from calling on the international terrorist Doku Umarov in the social network VKontakte to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia: “As the leader of the Right Sector, I urge you to intensify your struggle. Russia is not as strong as it seems. You now have a unique chance to win. Take this chance!” In May 2015, the international non-governmental organization Amnesty International published a report “Ukraine: Breaking Bodies: Torture and Summary Killings in Eastern Ukraine”¹. Here are excerpts from this report concerning the Right Sector:

“Amnesty International is particularly concerned about the Right Sector, a volunteer force that was created from pro-Kyiv nationalist political groups. The Right Sector’s former prisoners describe in detail a horrific range of abuses, including staged executions, hostage-taking, extortion, ruthless beatings, death threats, and denial of emergency medical care. Using an abandoned pioneer camp near the village of Velikomikhailovka near Dnipropetrovsk as a temporary prison, the Right Sector reportedly held dozens of civilian prisoners hostage, extorting large sums of money from them and their families”.

“Witness L. P. was held in this prison for over a month. Almost all of the prisoners were civilians, who were captured for trivial reasons — having photos of separatists on their cell phones, participation in marches of the Party of Regions. L. P. describes how those captured were regularly beaten: “They were hitting everybody just to scare people... One elderly prisoner was so badly beaten that he was unconscious for several days and could not walk for over a week. People had their bones broken and were not given medical treatment”. According to him, members of the Right Sector systematically extorted money from people in custody and collected ransom from prisoners’ relatives. “We had to hand over our credit and debit cards and pin codes”, L. P. said, “People lost all their savings. According to the same source, the cell was small and overcrowded in the basement, with only six beds. People had to use plastic bags to collect urine and feces, and they had no means to wash or shower. Some prisoners were taken out to work; others stayed inside all the time. At one point, a source told Amnesty International the women

¹ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur50/1683/2015/en/>

were put in the same room in the basement among the men and under the same conditions”.

Here are some more testimonies of victims being tortured from the Amnesty International report:

“Dmitry Dyryavko was seized at a checkpoint near Debaltseve when he tried to take his family members to Russia to avoid the fighting. According to him, he was captured by soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. He was subsequently handed over to Right Sector fighters, who said they were from the Right Sector’s Galychyna battalion. He says that they spoke openly about being from the Right Sector. The victim’s teeth were broken as a result of being hit with the butt of the gun to his face. He told Amnesty International:

They took me out of the car with a bag over my head, tied my hands behind my back, tied my legs, and said: “We’re going to kill you now, and no one will care”. They told me to pray, and then they started beating me and shooting me. Bullets were flying near my head, and I can’t hear in one ear now. They threatened to bury me alive. They threw me into a pit, and one of them said, “You don’t want to be in Ukraine. You’ll be in the grave”. They buried me entirely in the ground, and I lost consciousness.

The book “Ordinary fascism. War Crimes of Ukrainian Armed Forces (2014–2016)” also provides a number of testimonies of people who were victims of abductions and tortured by this Death Squad, as well as witnessed murders.

For example, P. B. Gilev, a well-known Ukrainian coach, recounts:

“...It was pure kidnapping. They dragged me out of the bus and threw me on the ground, put a bag over my head, my hands were tied, and I learned that I had been transferred to the Right Sector purely out of the conversations. And those — who did what they want were sadists.

They enjoy bluntly beating people up, that is, seeing a person suffer, humiliate him, I don’t even know what they wanted from me. They said what they wanted, answered their questions, not just beat them but stupidly injured them.

I wasn’t there alone. There were staged executions. We were all shot at several times, and one of us got hit. He ran, and they shot him again, dead.

They're not too polite. For them, human life is nothing, an empty place, an empty sound. They're not responsible for that — so they shoot, and they shoot. Nobody asks them: "Why did you do that?" That is, people do what they want. This gang is not just a problem in Ukraine, which is not coping with anyone or anything. I wish the international community could hear. Because when they run, they will all run to Europe. They have tasted blood. They don't know how to obey anyone, no laws at all. It will be a big and very serious problem for the public, for the civilians of Europe.

They were especially happy when they found out that I was a karate coach, World champion, and European champion. Here they rushed to torture me with great affection. I think they were annoyed that I kept getting up, and they didn't know what to do with me, so they used bats, butts, and edged weapons. They would come every 25 to 30 minutes and beat me for half an hour, just for some devil's experiment.

Anatoly Kuz'min recounts how Right Sector militants shot one of the prisoners while drunk: "They took me away, brought me in, locked me in a freezer, put me in and kept me there. They beat me, beat in the ribs on both sides with a foot. Then they strangled me with a bag, pressed me with handcuffs, and lifted me up. When my jaw was knocked out, I could barely chew.

Then they moved us, they said, to Izyum. We were kept in the basement like a boiler room. Every time they'd get drunk, they'd come over and poke fun at us with blanks. The ceilings were shot at. Then Right Sector came, also drunk. Katya from Kramatorsk was there. She was shot on the spot when they got drunk.

Three people came in with AKs, and one of them had a PM pistol with live ammunition. They went around the cells shooting, then they reached the cell where the woman was. As far as we could hear, a shot was fired at the ceiling, then we heard a gunshot and a sound like wheezing, and one of the cellmates said the last words she said was: "What for?" That's it. The next day they walked around as if nothing had happened.

Olga Verbitskaya recounts: "I was captured by the Right Sector. They kept me in some tunnels for seven days. No food, hardly any water. It was really cold. They gave me injections, drug injections. They beat me with a rebar and kept me for seven days without registering me

anywhere. At any minute, they could have taken me out, shot, thrown me into some garbage can, and that would be the end of it. Then they transferred me to the SSU.

It is interesting to note that the fact of torture, widely practiced by the Right Sector, was not only not hidden, but was actively disseminated by the Security Service of Ukraine to intimidate the population of the southeast of the country. Many witnesses say that threatening to turn them or their children over to the Right Sector for torture was a standard element during their interrogation by the SSU.

For example, Konstantin Simenov, who was tortured and beaten, says that SSU officers threatened him that they would “cut his wife and children’s heads off”: “On May 26, 2014, I left for the city of Kharkiv for family reasons. Four people knocked me down, and for ten minutes, they were beating me with everything they had — both feet and hands. They broke my rib, put a gun to my head, and told me they would shoot me.

They brought me into the building, and there were people in uniform. They beat me, ruptured my left ear membrane, I did not get out of bed for four days. They beat me badly. They said, “If you don’t admit anything, we’ll cut off your wife’s head and her little freaks’ heads, if not us, then the Right Sector will, as we cooperate with them”. The names of Andriy Biletsky, who is now the commander of the Azov Battalion, were mentioned. I feared for the lives of my children, my wife. I signed”.

Vladimir Dubov, a resident of Odessa, testifies: “On July 21, I was detained by SSU officers at my home in Odessa. They threatened me that they would tell the address of my wife and children to the Right Sector.

Oksana Griban’ was intimidated in a similar way: “They took me to Volnovakha. They told me that if I didn’t answer their questions, they would bring my husband and son and give them to Right Sector.

Radik Udovichenko describes how he was strangled with a rope and thrown into the water with his hands tied: I was arrested for lack of documents. After the arrest, they took me to a room and started beating me, strangling me with a rope, throwing me into the water with my hands tied, shooting me with a gun, threatening to send me to the Right Sector to torture or kill me. They forced me to sign”.

The victim Alexander Shalunov testifies: “I have nothing to do with the militia. During the arrest, my wife and 13-year-old daughter were roughly placed on the ground at gunpoint. The SSU charged me under Part 2 of Article 258 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine. The investigator Ismailov said that I was here, and my wife and daughter were outside, and he would give them to the Right Sector. He said that he would give my daughter to the Right Sector, where she would be torn apart, after which I testified”.

Witness Vladimir Bezmyanyi describes how the SSU officers broke his ribs, forbade him to be hospitalized, and also intimidated him with the Right Sector: “On October 23, I was detained by the Odessa regional department of the SSU. After being detained, I was beaten physically, kicked and beaten with the butts of machine guns. As a result of the beating, his ribs were broken, and his spine was injured. For several days I could hardly move around. I was sent to the hospital, where they wanted to hospitalize me, but the SSU officers prohibited it. They threatened me that they would give my family’s address to the Right Sector headquarters.

It should be recalled that the Ukrainian state’s arming of the Right Sector Death Squad fighters in 2014 and its existence for a long time was a direct violation of the Constitution of Ukraine. Article 17 states that “the creation and operation of any armed formations not provided for by law shall be prohibited on the territory of Ukraine. This fact is confirmed by Ukrainian Defense Minister Stepan Poltorak’s statement of April 29, 2015, where he affirms that the Right Sector was not part of the Armed Forces or the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine.

Anton Vyacheslavovich Polovenko, political refugee

I left Ukraine because I underwent nine interrogations at the SSU and the worsening situation and blatant aggressiveness on the nationalists’ part.

There was an attack on me in a cafe downtown. The nationalists recognized me. I had a body on my shoulders: “Anton Polovenko? Get up, we’re gonna kill you!” The owner of the cafe called the police. The police never showed up. More Nazis came in two cars. We have the Right Sector, the Mykolaiv-1 and Mykolaiv-2 battalions, and units of nationalist parties in Mykolaiv. I had to go.

Valery Vladimirovich Kaurov, Union of Orthodox Citizens of Ukraine

People are just terrified. How can you teach history and twist the outcome of the war! They glorify the Banderites, the pseudo-heroes. The hero-city Odessa fought the Bandera fighters actively, resisted. There was a partisan war. And here we are now. People can't go out on May 9. They get beaten up. The monuments are being brought down.

No one punishes Sternenko, the leader of the Right Sector in Odessa. They are already mutating into other nationalist organizations there. He is a far-right nationalist. He was released from the courtroom to the jeering of the nationalists who blocked the courtroom. In addition to the crimes he committed against Odessans, he constantly terrorized them and assaulted veterans, and stabbed a man to death. He was justified. He walks freely, and no one persecutes him anymore. Impunity is complete. He organized the beating of veterans on May 9. His militants keep coming and attacking the demonstrators, even though they are the minority. Our citizens outnumber them. A huge number of people come out on May 9 and April 10, the day of the liberation of Odessa. They take to the streets to honor the fallen heroes. Because Odessa is a hero city, there is a belt of glory around it. For 73 days, it defended itself against the Nazi invaders. The Nazis did not take it. It was left by order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. To save Sevastopol, the Separate Coastal Army was relocated there as quickly as possible, and the Germans entered Odessa in November, completely unaware of where the Army had gone. Desert streets. There is no one there. No Army. The only people left are partisans.

The nationalists try to block all patriots coming in. And people come with their pictures of veterans, with red flags, with St. George ribbons. St. George's ribbons and red flags are banned in Ukraine. This is criminal prosecution. People can go to jail for that. A person who hangs a St. George's ribbon on his chest can be arrested. And if the nationalists see it, they tear the ribbons off. They attack veterans. Veterans wear the uniforms that they fought in. They put on their medals. They're being attacked.

Law enforcement does nothing. They, at best, disperse the conflicting parties in different directions. But, as a rule, if someone is

arrested, it will be the one who was assaulted Administrative protocols are constantly being drawn up. And if someone dares to hold a Soviet flag or a St. George's ribbon, they will be prosecuted.

Regarding those burning in the Trade Union House in Odessa, some were arrested right away and accused of separatism. Some remain in prison. Some were exchanged with the Lugansk People's Republic and the Donetsk People's Republic. And those who burned them, who shot at them, not a single one was jailed". The peaceful protesters who were burning at the Trade Union House stood their ground, not touching anyone. An angry crowd, heavily armed, came to them, threw Molotov cocktails at them, and beat them as they fell out of the windows. Then they went to the hospital, already beaten. Then to jail as separatists. As a result, many of them are still in prison or missing. Some managed to get out of there.

Zelensky is in no way interested in the fate of the case of the people burned in the House of Trade Unions.

Anzhela Ivanovna Polovneva, a political refugee

To suppress any resistance by the Nazis, no one disciplines them. They are covered by the SSU, the police, etc. That is, if you remove these gangs, the people will ask the questions that are relevant to them. They are not subject to any punishment for all actions. The same ATO activist kills a man, or there was a case where an ATO activist hit a pregnant woman for asking him to give up his seat on public transport. I don't know, but it's probably one of the crazy bunch, too. A normal person is not capable of that. This is a person with an unhealthy psyche or accustomed to absolute impunity.

The biggest story was about Sternenko – he killed a man. He still hasn't been punished in any way. On the contrary, he was promoted to Kyiv. This is one of the former leaders of the Odessa Right Sector. At one time, he ran up drug trafficking. He went to all the rallies, drove the grandmothers and grandfathers nuts, tore off the St. George ribbons. They could have beaten up an old man, poured brilliant green on him, and done anything else you wanted. They took away the banners, acted creepy and aggressive toward Russian speakers. If you take it by Odessa, these are the three most characters: Sternenko,

Rezvushkin, Gordienko. That is just the people who make outrageous things, who engage in raiding. And everything that happens is a result of their impunity.

Just like other death squads, the Right Sector engages in racketeering and extortion. The fate of the coordinator of Right Sector structures in Western Ukraine, Oleksandr Muzychko (nicknamed Sashko Bilyi), who previously commanded the UNA-UNSO Viking group in the detachment of international terrorist Shamil Basayev and was in charge of guarding terrorist Dzhokhar Dudaev, is telling. According to the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, “Muzychko brutally tortured captured servicemen of the Russian Federal Forces, after which he killed them. During this period, Muzychko personally tortured and then killed at least 20 captured federal soldiers, demanding the information he needed. During the torture, he broke officers’ fingers, cut some officers’ throats with a knife, and shot some of them.

In 1995, Belyi was tried for beating a customer in a cafe in Rivne. Two years later, Muzychko opened fire in the Ukrainian capital, but the case was closed due to insufficient evidence. From December 1999 to June 2003, Muzychko was kept in the Rivne Detention Center. He and six accomplices were accused of extortion. In January 2003, the Rivne court sentenced Muzychko to up to three and a half years in prison. In 2007, he was accused of involvement in the seizure of the Rivne Foundry.

After the illegal coup in Ukraine, he was noted for a number of crimes and even beat up the prosecutor of the Rivne district in his own office. People’s Deputy of Ukraine Gennadiy Moskal stated that “we constantly receive reports from the residents of Rivne region about the atrocities of Muzychko, who declared himself the gauleiter of Western Ukraine¹”. We know of a case when a group led by Muzychko walked into the tax police’s front office in Rivne, took the keys to an arrested Nissan-Terrano car, and stole it. “On the same day, this group visited the head of the Dubno Inter-District Department for Vehicle Registration and Driver Examination Traffic Police Zhupanyuk, forced him to write

¹ <https://www.obozrevatel.com/politics/53642-moskal-trebuat-ot-gpu-mvd-i-snbo-polozhit-konets-beschinstvam-muzyichko-na-rovenshine.htm>

a resignation letter and took \$10,000. “For the needs of the revolution and the victims, in return for not going to his home and not bothering him anymore”, Moskal claims. He notes that the same thing happened to the head of the Rivne traffic police. Muzychko extorted money from officials, stole cars from businessmen, freely purchased weapons, and walked around the city with them. As mentioned earlier, Muzychko was killed during an Ministry of Internal Affairs operation. According to experts, this was a retaliatory action on the part of Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs A. Avakov is associated with his rivalry with the Armed Forces of Ukraine, supporting the Right Sector.

Tornado Battalion

One of the few cases of condemnation of Death Squad militants in Ukraine is the highly publicized case of the Tornado Battalion.

Anatoly Matios, Chief Military Prosecutor of Ukraine, commented on the reasons for the detention of the Tornado Battalion:

“...The detainees were beaten on their legs, buttocks, thighs, and genitals. The men were also tortured with electric shocks. Those detained in the basement were stripped naked, placed on the concrete floor, and doused with water. After that, they touched different parts of the body with bare electric wires. The prisoners screamed as the torture caused them unbearable pain and suffering. What is the tragedy of this situation? The illegal deprivation of liberty without any legal basis or reason, the abuse and torture in the form of sexual violence against males, and the murder of one of the persons after such torture. And the worst part is the fixation by the criminal canons of conspiracy, the tying on blood, the fixation of these shameful, low, terrible crimes on video recordings.

In the opinion of a simple layman, the worst crime this group is suspected of is torture in a particularly perverse form and manner. A man who was chained to the gym equipment in this school’s gym in Perevalsk was raped unnaturally. An innocent man was dragged to school, beaten, then tied to a “horse” gymnasium, strung up and raped on both sides in the people’s presence, then killed. I find it hard to speak. This was all filmed on camera, after which the man was killed.



In the photo: Ruslan Onishchenko, a senior lieutenant of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, a former repeat offender convicted of rape, and commander of the Tornado Death Squad

In the photo: Ruslan Onishchenko, a senior lieutenant of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, a former repeat offender convicted of rape, and commander of the Tornado Death Squad

The press quoted the deputy commander of the Tornado, call sign Mojahed: “...Without torture, life would not be life. There’s nothing like having someone’s life in your hands to raise your spirits”.

The media presented the biography of the senior lieutenant of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine:

“Born on March 12, 1972, in Torez. Rruslan Onishchenko was engaged in the organization of illegal mining on the territory of the cities of Kirovske and Krasny Luch. He was the one who covered the “kopanki”, (small illegal coalmines), ruthlessly exploiting the homeless and beggars who worked for food. He was a member of an organized criminal group of a bandit nicknamed “The Footballer”, a crime boss who operated in the Luhansk region. Arrested. On November 25, 1994, in Snezhny, the city court pronounced his sentence under Part 1 of Article 222. Unlawful handling of weapons. And under Part 2 of Article 142. Robbery. And under Part 3 of Article 144. Extortion. And under Part 2 of Article 206. Hooliganism. In total, the future policeman “ran up” six years in prison. But he was released earlier. In 1996, he served only two years. In 2005, he was prosecuted under article 146,

part 2, “Illegal Deprivation of Liberty or Kidnapping”. Ukraine’s Chief Military Prosecutor Anatoly Matios said that every fourth Tornado fighter had a criminal record, and unit commander R. Onishchenko had been prosecuted five times¹.

The opinion of volunteer Lilia Bolbat, known online as Lilia Ukrainskaya, who helped the Death Squads out of ideological motives, is revealing. Here’s what she says about the Tornado Battalion:

“It is no longer a secret that many went to war, not for their country. Not for their home or family! They came here for a profit! And robbery, violence, kidnapping for ransom, looting, and murder began. No, they didn’t touch the separatists. They hurt everyone who had wealth. As a volunteer, people started coming to me screaming for help: they took my car, robbed me, stole my equipment. I was horrified to realize that “ours” were doing it. Shall I tell you how a dozen military men stole a young girl and raped her for ten days until the child died...? Tell them how armed men came to Mariupol food outlets and put a gun to the owner’s temple, forcing them to feed them. and then they had drinks there every day for a month. How they stopped every passing car on the road and robbed the occupants of their money. How they participated in hostile takeovers. And how they imprisoned people in basements, assaulting them and robbing them of their possessions. Truthfully, is that not insane? Shocking, isn’t it? Yet that’s how it was!”²

Interestingly, Tornado was created based on Shakhtyorsk, a special police patrol battalion within the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, and cases of looting became known. Shakhtyorsk was created in the Dnipropetrovsk region after the victory of Euromaidan on June 16, 2014. Like many other death squads, they received special military training, and their members received ranks of the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs. Shakhtyorsk became known for looting, kidnapping and other crimes. For example, the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union reports the kidnapping of Marinka residents who in turn used them as human shields to shield themselves from snipers by Shakhtyorsk militants.

¹ <https://eadaily.com/ru/news/2015/06/22/maksim-ravreba-tornado-v-stakane-vody-kogda-bandy-stanovyatsya-batalonami>

² <https://lenta.ru/news/2016/08/10/volonter/>

On October 17, 2014, the Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs A. Avakov issued an order to disband the battalion due to looting: “The Shakhtyorsk Battalion, which had fought successfully at Ilovaysk, was disbanded by ministerial order because of repeated cases of looting in Volnovakha and where other problematic situations had also taken place”.

None of the members of Shakhtyorsk were convicted, and the Tornado Battalion was created on that basis. Most of its members transferred to the new battalion, and former Shakhtyorsk Battalion’s commander Ruslan Onishchenko was also appointed commander. Daniel Volya, a member of Tornado Battalion, said at a press conference: “We are a newly organized battalion. It consists of soldiers who served in Shakhtyorsk Battalion and fought in Ilovaik. We have a lot of experience”.

The Ukrainian media stated that the Tornado Battalion set up a torture chamber in the basement of a school in Lysychansk, where they raped and tortured local civilians, including minors and people of retirement age, regardless of their gender.

Alexei Nikolaevich Samoilo, Lecturer, Ph. D., Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner

They formed the Tornado Battalion, a small group of militants consisting of thugs, thieves, and rapists. Look at their pictures, a mean-looking bunch. Typical gangsters with criminal faces. Even the Ukrainians imprisoned them. The battalion has gone downhill, they are simply thugs, thieves and rapists. The militants responsible for carrying out this barbaric violence in the city of Torez and regions with their zone of responsibility. And what offenses did the Aidar Battalion commit? Looking at the number of deaths on its record...

A changed structure, a changed political-military force, an armed-political reality of Ukraine began to take shape. I believe that this situation will only get worse. The SSU traditionally remained a structure that combines various counterintelligence types, including the Sonderkommando established in the Counterintelligence Department led by Alexei Petrov, headed by Colonel Pukhnyat. Currently, Alexei Petrov is the governor of the Zakarpattia. Both the foreign intelligence services and the Main Directorate of Intelligence have traditionally been under the control of foreign forces. It has become ridiculous:

with U.S. diplomats handing out graduation certificates coming from the National Academy of Security Service of Ukraine. Infiltrating their agents into Ukraine, and there are a lot of them. Now the Americans are taking over. They appointed Valery Kondratyuk leader and initiator of sabotage and terrorist actions as Head of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine. He was responsible for the Crimean sabotage.

The Radical member of Verkhovna Rada, an active participant in the Euromaidan Tatiana Chernovol said on air at 112 Ukraine TV Channel, “When the Tornado commanders were arrested, their cell phones were confiscated. We discovered an obscene video, which is now held in the case file. These are videos of various sexual orgies and rapes. And let me tell you, even babies were victims. I understand that the mother with her baby was forced to do whatever the perpetrators wanted due to the threat of her child’s death. The video included rapes with underage girls... They are not human, they are beasts¹”.

Ruslan Onishchenko stated at the court session, “Let all Ukraine know who we really are, unashamed of our deeds, and we want the people of Ukraine to weigh it all up, observe, evaluate and decide what we are; heroes or looters”. It is interesting to know that in the spring of 2015, two months before his arrest, Tornado Battalion commander Ruslan Onishchenko was awarded the medal “For Sacrifice and Love for Ukraine” by Filaret, the primate and Patriarch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church — Kyiv Patriarchate”.

The Ukrainian death squads listed above are only a few examples of the many structures of this kind that exist in contemporary Ukraine. These structures are backed up by the Ukrainian authority and are involved in the abduction, murder, torture, and the assault of political opposition and civilians. Here are some revealing interviews.

Nikolai Grigorievich Mashkin, Editor-in-Chief of the Rodnoye Pribuzhye Newspaper

The Ukrainian authorities control the Nazi gangsters. What official SSU and the police can't do, the gangs can – being on the Ministry of

¹ https://aif.ru/society/people/nelyudi_iz_tornado_kak_ugolovniki-izvrashchency_stali_geroyami_ukrainy



The Tornado Death Squad militants were put behind bars during the trial

Internal Affairs and the SSU payroll. They get paid unofficially, in large amounts. They sometimes relocate nationally, positioning themselves as battalions, and sometimes as a social movement, depending on the assigned tasks, and are given very specific tasks by the SSU

Dmitriy Yanovich Luzhetsky, Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner of Ukraine

When the SSU interrogated us during the first two months, the SSU investigator stated, “You should be thankful we detained you. Because if it hadn’t been for us, you would have been detained by Lviv Battalion. I think you probably know what that would mean”. And in fact, when the Lviv Battalion got someone from the separatists... If any of our guys were taken by the Lviv Battalion, those victims were never seen again.

The Lviv Battalion is a similar organization to the Right Sector. It’s one of the violent battalions that brutally crackdown on their victims. What is meant by crackdown is that those who were taken never returned to be seen again. Or, at best, they returned crippled

so severely that it was permanent. Many of the victims who survived due to the first exchange were taken out of the actual pits. I spoke to many of the victims after the exchange and realized that they were extremely fortunate. Many others were not so lucky. There was even a man with his left arm twisted the other way at 180 degrees. He said it was like in the movies when there's a pit and you're trapped in it, and there's a cover on top of it. Many of the victims experienced this. They even mentioned secret SSU prisons, which were closer to the front – Kharkiv, and Zaporizhzhia. We were just lucky that we were detained far away from the war. We were detained by a Right Sector activist who was a member of the SSU. By the way, many of the Right Sector activists had the SSU ID cards.

Alexander Mayevsky, a Witness to the Burning of Protesters in the Trade Union House Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014

In Odessa, we have memorial events every 2nd of the month after the burning of the victims on May 2, 2014. Every Sunday, we have demonstrators coming out on rallies against the government, exposing what's going on in the country. May 9 is like May 9. Odessa always comes out to celebrate Victory Day. April 10 is also a holiday, Odessa Liberation Day. Odessa comes out for sure. We are being filmed by various intelligence services: who visit and attend these events. The situation is as follows: the president is fed up with people constantly going to the Kulikovo Field and rioting against the authorities, demanding an investigation on May 2. They are well aware that many of them will face up to a life sentence for May 2. That Kyiv was in charge of the operation, and it wasn't just a coincidence that it all happened. They were well aware of that.

At a certain point, the Kyiv authorities recruited about 80 people from the western regions. They recruited ex-prisoners, the most brutal fighters, drug addicts, and people who had been in prison. They were paid to break women's arms and legs. So that they would just stop going out to protest. And fortunately, I was just there for a day. There were hardly any men there. Mainly women apart from one man who was set on fire in the Trade Union House on May 2. He had his head bashed in and treated later. Luckily, a police colonel came up to me

on that day and said, "Alexander, we respect you, but now go away!" I said, "Why leave?" "You are aware what's going to happen next..."; and points to approaching fighters. Well, of course, I immediately saw that the fighters were not local, and besides, I already recognized those Nazis faces who follow us every weekend at our events. It's easier with the locals, but when strangers arrive, especially when you can see from their faces that they were drug addicts who were paid to confront us only for them to disappear once pay-time was over. He confronted them, shouting, "Walk away!" I asked him, "Would you walk away?" He, being a militia colonel, said, "I don't know, but I am warning you, we respect you, walk away". Well, I assessed the situation that if I couldn't do anything today, the day would end badly, with half of these women in hospitals dying of fractures and injuries. And on that day, it was fortunate that the military arrived, that being boys recruited into the army, you could see from their faces that they had only served a couple of months, the kids were just 18 years old, led by their captain. I approached the captain and asked, "Do you have a mom?" He said, "I have". "What would you do if your mother was murdered before your eyes?" He said, "I'd tear the culprit to shreds".

"So look, you see women, old people; there are 60–80 y.o. grandmothers, elderly people coming to the Kulikovo Field. And here are the junkies, so these women will be in the cemetery or hospital by nightfall". "Where did the orders come from?" "I have informed you of the reality. What you do now is up to you". He got the message. And just at the moment, the crowd began to approach the Kulikovo Field with loudspeakers with groups of 15–20 people getting out of the buses. The captain called back his greens, who had just been drafted into the army, talked to them for a long time, as I saw, and prepared them for a serious battle. Thank God the guys weren't timid. Like the Romans, they stood between us, the women, and the gang that came up. Usually, the memorial event lasts about 40 minutes. We were standing for about 4 hours, and a woman had an eye wound with some head injuries, not severe, and they forcefully took our flags away from us. Women ran up to me, "Sasha, I got hit in the eye and hurt my leg"; however the women were not seriously injured. I kept quiet and couldn't tell you what was really going to happen that day. Of course, there was a serious battle going on. We held the crowd back, and they stood there for four

hours. Precisely, as junkies they were paid for 3–4 hours, they began to disperse. I managed to get home – my spinal cord was hurting, and I survived May 2nd for the second time. I was tired and exhausted and could barely make it to my bed. Yet I was happy that I was able to save these women, and that they all came home alive.

Now they're looking for guys who are not indifferent to Russia, and they're trying to deal with them. As far as I know, looking at Facebook: they keep shooting. When the president is weak, then whomever he may be, can do whatever he/she wants. Zelensky has no impact on this situation anymore today. He's weak. Because even when there was information that the Nazis were having a meeting, and said, "Why did we put Zelensky in? He gives everything to the Americans, and we get nothing. Why don't we switch to Razumkov to run the country?" That's the rumor going around. People just voted for Zelensky because they voted for anyone but Poroshenko.

Besides fulfilling a criminal "order" from the Ukrainian state, the "death battalions" often carry out private "orders" for their enrichment without opposition from the official authorities. It is not uncommon for them to try to illegally take over someone else's property and use it to their advantage. Here is some telling evidence.

Sergey Olegovich Yudaev, Journalist and Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner

Kharkiv means Barabashova, a market with traders and a lot of workshops that serve this market. They sew everything from boots to hats for men, women, and children. All clothes. They produce a lot of plastic products. Not only is the market considered the healthiest in Europe, but almost 8–10% of Kharkiv citizens work for this market, making something. And while the reallocation is going on, the typical racket of the 1990s is flourishing. If the Nazis come up to you and say, "Just pay" or if you don't pay, in the best of cases, your assets will be taken away from you. Somebody will come from Avakov or somewhere else and tell you nicely to pay 10% of the value of your business, and that's it. Otherwise, just pay. If you don't pay, your workshop might be burned down, or you might be crippled. Azov controls everything in Kharkiv. It's now called the national squad.

Biletsky is in charge now. No one has ever concealed that Biletsky is Avakov's right-hand man. His personal confidant. Being the Azov, they revealed themselves in the East. Raping and looting. And suddenly, becoming the national squads. Biletsky is their thought leader. They are all simply Nazis, having the Azov's symbol on their armbands. They've got Nazi ideology. Everyone understands very well that they have got machine cards and ID cards in their pockets covered up by the Minister of Internal Affairs. Who would dare stand up against them? And they look upon themselves as demigods, especially those who are close to top management.

Those two guys whom they murdered in 2014, Biletsky killed them. He was personally present. There were 32 people in the building waiting for the police to arrive. They fired upon us with rifles, machine guns, and pistols. They had a lot of guns, with two gun safes in the building. Biletsky was there personally with the commander of the Right Sector in the Kharkiv region and 30 more people with them. Two policemen were wounded. One of them died six months later from his wound, buckshot into the head. The police came under the command of Avakov's former protégé. There was a district police chief, who later became the head of the Kharkiv police. Eight in police uniform came in, and 10 in police uniform came out. In other words, they dressed Biletsky and the others in police uniforms and quietly took them aside. These 30 individuals were put into three police vans and taken to different district departments in Kharkiv. They went to check what's going on. Kernes kept promising that everyone would take account of it. Within 28 hours after they had been taken away from there, the last of them were released. The militiaman died six months later. Not one of them has been convicted of killing our men to this day.

Anna Leonidovna Boryak, Attorney, Kyiv

I had a case in Odessa. I defended people who were suspected of receiving an improper benefit. The case was damaged, and representatives of the prosecutor's office began to threaten that if I continued with this policy, I would be in trouble. They brought "activists" onto me, coming straight into the courtroom, to hang up posters and block the exits of the court with KAMAZ vehicles. And two police squads took us out of the court. Afterward, I was shot at with a

bullet through the window. They use the services of these radicals. The radicals we have now are paid representatives of interested parties.

Dmitriy Yanovich Luzhetsky, Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner of Ukraine

There is Parus shopping center in Kyiv. There's a company called Megalife, and we did business with them on construction projects. And the next time we had a meeting there, it was somewhere around 2014, April or May; I don't remember exactly when we had a meeting at the Parus Business Center somewhere in those months. As we were leaving, they grabbed us and threw us into a bus. We were threatened and then forced into signing our business over to the Right Sector. The only thing that saved us was when those guys grabbed us and put us in the minibus; I told them: "You should have thought this through, there are video cameras in the business center, and you have a minivan and license plates to be seen". For the time being, we were safe.

However, death squads are not the only tool the modern Ukrainian state used to intimidate dissenters. Lawyers and human rights activists discuss in detail how Ukraine's state repressive system operates.

The absolute power of the security services and the repressive judicial system in Ukraine

The main repressive instruments of the Ukrainian state are the odious Security Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. Here are just a few revealing assessments given by lawyers and human rights activists, who describe in detail how opposition members are kidnapped and tortured, how the country's laws are violated, how Ukrainian death squads are led, etc. It is no secret that the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, A. Avakov, personally initiated the creation of several death squads, including those based on former criminals, as well as those who were put into the hands' Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine.

Vladimir Yuryevich Lyapin, Attorney, Zaporizhzhia

They've got a man in custody and holding him somewhere. Then you find him in the district department and take him away if there is no criminal case. That's what the SSU guys usually mess around with.

If the case is handled by the SSU, there's a 100% certainty of an arrest. We now have a colleague who resigned from the SSU and became an attorney. He says he had a feeling that if he had given a blank sheet of paper to the judges and said it was a claim and they should arrest the man, they would have him arrested. However, you need grounds to arrest a person. Let's say, for example, the well-known Volkov. I told them that no laws had been broken. They said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, okay, no, well, let him stay. It's the SSU".

Nikolai Grigorievich Mashkin, Editor-in-Chief of the Rodnoye Pribuzhye Newspaper

The Security Service of Ukraine is engaged in kidnapping. I wanted to point out that there was a court decision about me: to release me on personal recognizance, the analog of the Russian "under travel restrictions". On leaving the court, they grabbed me, put me in a car, and took me to Kharkiv.

Yuriy Mikhailovich Apukhtin, Former Political Prisoner

We also had Egor Logvinov. We were exchanged together with him for Donbass. Then a law came out that proclaimed you couldn't hold on bail. This was eventually repealed. The mother mortgaged her apartment and put in a deposit. Put in, it's okay, and he's out on bail. He should be released from prison. The SSU arrived, the nationalists gathered. They offered him, "Let us give you a ride, get you out of jail safely". He tried to resist, but they put him in the car. He noticed that they passed through Kharkiv and went to the border. 40 km to the border, and he was handed over to the border guards. He was accused of crossing the border illegally. They took him back to prison and put him in jail under a new article of law. That's what people have been going through.

Alexander Mayevsky, a Witness to the Burning of Protesters in the Trade Union House Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014.

The human rights violations in Ukraine started in 2014 and continues today. When the criminal groups and their friends of Poroshenko seized power, everything continued in the same manner. New leadership with Zelensky as a weak president changed nothing. The Nazis were frightened at first, saying that the new president would put them all in prison. When they realized he was weak, they began to rally under the presidential palace. The president showed his weakness. New parties appeared, Shariy formed his own party.

“The Nazis in Ukraine are beating people up, snatching them in different cities, and beating them almost to death. The Nazis are again in complete control of the government, and Zelensky is weak and can do nothing about it. No one will investigate Nazis because most of them are related to the government. That is, they are under the SSU and the police. Someone might get caught, then released without any follow-up. They smashed someone’s head in, and they were supported. Supposedly there would be a trial, and then because the cases were not proven, they were released. If one of our men, let’s say, is against the government, there’s a 99% guarantee they will be put in jail. I am against them for the authorities, and I am for Ukraine and Russia to live in peace. I am for the Slavic world. They indeed destroy such people: either in prison, or they beat them to death.

You can get killed for your views. After May 2, when it was a week after the burning of people in the Trade Union House in Odessa, they searched the city for anyone who attended the May 1 memorial at Kulikovo Field and killed them. I was terrified; they tried to kill me five or six times. One time there was an attempt to run me over with a car because I sued the Ukrainian authorities in Kyiv. I sued Minister Avakov, Turchinov, and Yatsenyuk for the events of May 2. It’s been about three or four months since the events of May 2. I sued them in Pechersky Court in Kyiv. The trial was hushed up, of course, because to sue the Ukrainian authorities is a pointless option.

There are videos of police standing 200 meters away from the House of Trade Unions. People were burned. Led by people from Kyiv, special services dressed in civilian uniforms, and all kinds of bosses

from Kyiv and the Odessa police were standing around and doing nothing. And at that moment, we were burning alive in this building, just burning up. I was the first to see these victims dead. When I left, there were bodies around, piled for 7–8 bodies each on the stairs. It was impossible to pass body after body. I saw it all firsthand; when victims were jumping out of the windows, I was on the third-floor staircase with them, I saw it all in front of my eyes.

In Ukraine, the death toll is hushed up. In this case, the entire top leadership of Ukraine would have been sentenced to life in prison. That's why the bodies were hidden. Ministry of Internal Affairs members said that the bodies were transported from Odessa to Kyiv. The bodies were taken away to different villages to hide the actual number of the dead, almost as far as Kyiv. According to the Ministry of Emergency Situations, there were 116 people in the first 24 hours, as they blurted out. Only for the first 24 hours. We will only know how many were for real after the fall of the current Ukrainian government. The employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs must have the data. Two people, I know for sure, can be added to the list. There are photos of them. They are missing on the May 2nd. In 2014, I was in the building until the end of the fire. I wrote a book on this subject, and it's called "Alexander Mayevsky: Rising from Hell of the Odessa Trade Union House". I described it there, from the beginning of the fire to the end.

The ordinary police officers did not escape from threats made by the Ukrainian intelligent services, who also feared for their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

Igor Gennadievich Polovnev, Odessa Resident, Political Refugee

I have lived in Odessa since 1983. I was forced to leave it after the events of May 2, of which I was a participant. We were taken from the burnt Trade Union House at night and taken to the pretrial detention center in a police van. The first night we were in the corridor beaten, wounded, and affected by carbon monoxide, I think, on the second floor of the pretrial detention center. We slept on the floor with our clothes on, some without shoes, beaten and wounded. Of course, they didn't give us anything to eat or drink. There were severely beaten

people, and there were elderly people. There was a man in his 70s with medals. There was Yakimenko, who has diabetes. The reason I got this information... When they started questioning us and drawing up protocols, it turned out that the man had diabetes and needed medical help. He got nothing. I spent another two months spitting black, sort of plastic, black clots. I don't know what it was. My eyesight still hasn't recovered and it's deteriorating.

On May 2, the police were utterly indifferent. No one performed their duties. While I was being released, my wife approached a policeman and asked why they weren't doing anything then and now. He replied that he had a wife and children and was told that they would be killed if he resisted. People whom I partly understand have become real hostages to the situation. This is true terrorism. People who were obligated to perform their official duties were put before the fact: if you perform your direct duties as you should, your family and friends will be killed.

Lawyers and human rights activists testify to the existence of thousands of political prisoners in Ukraine and detail how the country's repressive judicial system functions and how legislation is violated. The political processes described in this book clearly demonstrate that when it comes to fighting dissent, Ukraine's judicial system is completely decorative — innocent people are convicted on bogus cases and under absurd pretexts, while murderers from the death squads are acquitted and go free. Judges and attorneys themselves refuse to handle political cases and openly say that they are under pressure. Here are just a few examples.

Valentin Vladimirovich Rybin, Attorney

My car was burned right in the underground parking lot at the end of 2018 for my activities, for defending political prisoners in criminal trials. There were threats, and I even had to use security for a while. They threatened me with physical violence, in courtrooms, on the street, in phone conversations, and on social media.

The system of law enforcement agencies in Ukraine is dysfunctional. For example, crimes against dissenters, attacks on representatives of opposition parties, and the destruction of their property are not

investigated by law enforcement agencies. The National Police are doing their utmost not to investigate such serious crimes against people properly. Crimes against representatives of the Party of Shariy, The Opposition Bloc – For Life. Local party offices are being attacked, vandalized. Even the former head of the President's office, Andrei Bogdan, had his car burned right in the yard of his house.

On the other hand, there are specific politically motivated criminal cases. For example, cases against law enforcement officers who are prosecuted for their actions during Euromaidan. That is, the wording of the accusation sounds like the wording of a political accusation. Charges are framed in such a way that they can be fitted under a certain article in the criminal code. It is clear to investigators, prosecutors, and judges that there were no elements of crime in the activities or actions of the law enforcement officer or other political prisoners.

In such proceedings, the rights of the participants are commonly violated. That is, the claims they file are rarely granted. You know that we had a procedural provision until June 2019 that allowed people to be held in custody without any alternative under several articles. Most political prisoners were detained under specific articles of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, which excluded the possibility of alternative measures of restraint, except detention. It allowed enough to put severe pressure on people who had a different opinion. Accordingly, trying to speak out in some way about this process was quite fraught for those people.

Vladimir Yuryevich Lyapin, Attorney, Zaporizhzhia

The human rights situation has deteriorated in recent years. As an attorney, I can tell you that it refers primarily to the rights of people charged under political articles. It's not that they are violated; they are not observed at all. In Ukraine, people who have committed criminal offenses, particularly serious ones like murder, robbery, looting, are not in custody. Take the latest event. Sternenko and other big names are suspected of the murder of Sheremet. Ukrainian courts select non-custodial measures of restraint in their cases. There was no such thing under Yanukovych. We could get the truth. During Yanukovych, the number of acquittals was higher than now. The judge can't make a legal ruling because if the prosecutor

writes a complaint, the judge can be punished. And if a attorney writes it, no. They don't even open such a proceeding. Our judicial system has no independence.

At the same time, there is no alternative preventive measure for those accused of assisting the Lugansk People's Republic and Donetsk People's Republic but detention. Naturally, there is no question of any respect for human rights in pretrial detention centers.

In Zaporizhzhia, alone, there are more than ten political prisoners in one pretrial detention center. You know, if the case has some kind of resonance, they can release it, but not like that. Pavel Volkov, a journalist, spent more than a year in prison! When they were just choosing a restrictive measure for him, I told the court, "Guys, look what you're doing! There are no appeals in the examination. There are statements and such responsibility for statements. Are you kidding?" Who listened to me? They come to the court session, speak, point my finger, read these examinations word for word, based on which the SSU officers detained him. People do not understand how this can be. Nevertheless, he served more than a year.

Anna Leonidovna Boryak, Attorney, Kyiv

There is no law enforcement system in Ukraine. In principle, we cannot talk about human rights because there is no working law enforcement system. If we're talking about the judicial system, it's more based on people who have a conscience.

Right now, I'm taking part in the case on the side of the victim whose son was killed. But since the person involved in the murder is a relative of a representative of the military power in Ukraine, the case is not being investigated. It was closed twice. There is a body, there are the circumstances of the murder, and there is no investigation. Only because a particular person from a specific circle is most likely involved in this crime. There are the untouchables.

Attorney Rybin's car was burned down, and there were murder threats. I got shot at through windows when they didn't like my legal position on the case. We have a attorney whom the authorities cannot protect because when I was shot at through the windows, the investigation was not continued in the criminal case, and no one was brought to justice.

Our bar is built on a centralized system. There is the National Bar Association, and then there is the Independent Regional Bar, which the National Association also co-founds. The government decided to break up the National Association by Act No. 9055. Attorneys would have been disciplined. Now it would give law licenses to former employees of the prosecutor's office or the SSU, tear down all local agencies, and provide them to the right people and prosecute them as they should. The Bar would have been destroyed. They hired some inexpensive experts from Europe, who nodded, saying that it was a great law. And when we communicated with them, we realized that they were far from being attorneys. They were just hired as a cover to nod their heads. We are currently battling with an American anti-corruption court. An enterprise created with foreign capital has been introduced into the national system and is subordinate to a foreign state. There is very serious pressure on the Bar. They're wondering what to do with us now.

Dmitriy Yanovich Luzhetsky, Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner of Ukraine

A Lugansk businessman lived in Kyiv, his equipment was performing some work, and the Lugansk People's Republic administration hired a tractor from him. He was mainly blamed for promoting or financing terrorism. He paid a fine of 700,000 and was released. One person from the Donetsk region was detained for communicating with someone on the phone from the Donetsk People's Republic. He was in our pretrial detention center, too. He was just discussing with a man there as he saw the convoy had gone. He was arrested, charged with terrorism. The man was sentenced to seven years. He refused to be exchanged because his wife was threatened. He was driven with us to be exchanged. He refused officially, in front of the television, and went back to prison.

Yuriy Mikhailovich Apukhtin, Former Political Prisoner

I was driving my car when two cars pulled up, boxing me in, then the SSU officers came out, confiscating my phone; they said, "Come

with us". Naturally, I went to deal with the situation. There was nothing to charge me for. They took me to various SSU police stations which took a long time. Eventually, they brought me to the Kyiv district in Kharkiv and accused me of organizing pogroms. There, two buses were seriously smashed up. What I saw was that the crowd went there, but I had nothing to do with that. At that moment, I was holding a rally. And there was an audiotape in court that recorded what I was saying. It wasn't anywhere near that I was calling for the pogrom of buses.

A man, an ex-criminal, had been visited two days before, and he was intimidated. The SSU officers took him out into the woods. They showed my picture and said, "If you testify, we won't touch you, but if you don't testify, you'll go to jail". He told me all this in court; we crossed paths with him in jail, he said it all. And I was kept there for six or seven hours, standing literally in the police station while they were finishing him off so that he would testify against me. By the end of the day, they start interrogating me, the prosecutors and investigators show up and bring in their attorney. This lasted for four hours, and then it was nighttime. "Okay, let's go sit in the next office". I was interrogated four times in different structures. I described word for word, for every minute, what I was doing. Here, I say, "Can I go quietly in an hour?" "No, you stay!" Without documents, without anything, you sit here until morning. There were two police officers nearby. The SSU officers had left by this point. The following day, they took me to court and blamed me for pogroming the buses out of the blue. And the court was already deciding to arrest and put me in a pretrial detention center.

They conveyed to the pretrial detention center, called for an escort convoy, and took me to the pretrial detention center. Then the criminal says, "I will deny everything in court". And in court, he gets up and talks, admits to everything, that they prompted him what to say and forced him to testify. The ones he gave before, he refuses.

The prosecutor's guys have already backed it up, and they found three more of my opponents, the Kharkiv Nazis. They said clearly everything, they were prompted that I went to the administration building and told them to smash up the bus. Just these testimonies, nothing else. I pointed out to them that they have a video in court of me leading a rally. This video clearly shows the time when the bus was

being smashed and when I was standing. But this testimony of three people was the basis for my conviction. I was released on bail for the first time. Then I was arrested for the second time. We were sitting with a man talking on a bench, suddenly four people come up from behind, grabbed him by the arms, punched him in the solar plexus, in the teeth, and in the face. They didn't say anything: they dragged us into the car, and there were two people already lying there, tied up with duct tape, and they went straight to the SSU.

One of ours got pulled out. A bag of sand was opened, and his head was in the sand. Imagine, a man suffocates. Then they took us upstairs, where the SSU pretrial detention center was, even though by law it shouldn't exist anymore, and they had no right to keep us there. They threw me into a cell. I was already in jail when they showed on TV how OSCE representatives came to check whether the SSU had jails. They show that there is nothing. That is, they were still in effect, even though they were already officially banned.

Alexei Samoilov was in one of the cells. It was as if his eye had been completely knocked out. Everything was swollen; you couldn't see his eye at all. He was beaten up and black and blue. Officially, there are video cameras on both sides of the cells in the pretrial detention center, and everything is recorded. About an hour and a half later, I can hear screams. They beat. They go around the cells and beat. There's a corridor with five cameras on one side and five on the other. Shouts and screams can be heard: they keep beating. We were at the very end when they passed us. We asked, "And here?" "We'll get in here, too". They came to us, straight up to Samoilov, and started beating him, already battered to the max, kicking and punching him, the two of them. It was Colonel Pukhnaty, head of SSU counterintelligence, a rather famous surname. When they took me away in 2017, I asked where he was, and he had already been transferred to Kyiv. He was the head of Ukraine's counterintelligence.

When they captured me, he was beating me up. Just two people were kicking and punching. When they left, they kicked me in the kidneys a couple of times, and I couldn't urinate for 24 hours. There was such a "press room" in the pretrial detention center. A lawyer was sitting there on purpose, and he was beating our guys to give the correct testimony.

Three times I have been charged with calling for organizing to overthrow the constitutional order. And under this article, my case was shut down right away, and then put me back in the pretrial detention center for the third time. I was kept there for three years. There were trials between April and December 2017. And by hook or by crook, they showed witnesses who said that I called for the buses to be smashed up. Apart from the testimony of these false witnesses, there was nothing. Then they decided to prove that my speeches contained calls to overthrow the government. They recorded, presenting seven tapes. They said, "Is it you speaking?" "Of course, it is".

They took the first one to the examination, and it gave the conclusion that there were appeals. When my attorney and I began to work, the conclusion was declared illegal. It was annulled in court. For starters, to hold me, they made one up. They give all my speeches to "Hon. Prof. M.S. Bokarius Forensic Science Institute", two of their PhDs specialists researched over there. After three years of research, and already in 2017, they were called to court. These experts said that there were no calls to overthrow the government in any of the speeches. They confirmed on the stand. There was only one call – not to go to the May 2014 voting for Poroshenko. They said it was not a call to overthrow the government.

And despite this, the judge and the prosecutor concluded that I was guilty, despite one person recanting his testimony, and there was no examination. The final court session was set for May 2017. They declared: guilty. I was scheduled for a trial at 10 a.m. They brought us all to court. They usually bring in mostly 10–12 people, and all of them are criminals, of course. And they didn't have a trial all day. The SSU, the police came, and they wouldn't let anyone go anywhere. It was then explained that the judge had been given clear guidance: she was preparing to accuse me.

So I had to be jailed in any case. And the deadline was already approaching, a day counted as two days. I could have been released on time served. There was pressure on the court. Especially since I saw that it was appointed at 10 a.m., and in the end, it was already 5 p.m. when the trial began. She rewrote the indictment, as the attorney said later. And somewhere towards the end of the day came a crowd of journalists. The SSU officers came up and arranged

everything. Enemy of the people is out there. And she read out her sentence: I'm guilty on all counts, I'm charged on two counts, and I'm sentenced to six years.

After that, we began to do the appeal. The appeal didn't go through; it ended up taking place only in December, six months later. They kept me in the pretrial detention center, stalling for time. Meanwhile, having read the case, I have seen a lot of interesting things. There was even an order to send in special forces from Vinnytsia that "they were well-armed", although no one was armed. "If anything happens, shoot to kill".

There's a law when you're in a pretrial detention center, a day counts as two days. Here I was sentenced to 6 years, and technically I should be serving three years in jail. At the beginning of December, my sentence was over. Everything was coming to an end. We wrote letters to the Human Rights Institution in Kyiv. No clear answer was given.

In autumn, the SSU officers started coming in, questioning everyone, "Who agrees to an exchange for Donetsk?" I agreed at first, and then as December approached, I realized that the term was running out, so I wrote a statement that I was refusing the exchange. On the day of the trial, they took me away. Usually, they take a crowd of 15–20 people to the court of appeal, but suddenly they took me alone with a huge guard. Everything was completely isolated, I was the only one on trial. They took me upstairs, and in the corridor, there was a man in civilian clothes, and the convoy led me to him. He said, "You probably know who I am?" "Obviously, the SSU." "Didn't you write an application for an exchange? We can exchange you today". I said I still had a statement in which I recanted. "I don't have such a statement; I don't know anything".

He said, "You should understand that if you refuse... You'll be sitting here for a long time. So if you agree, if you don't mind, we'll exchange you. Otherwise, the court will approve the decision, and we'll take you back to the pretrial detention center, then show you another count, we can dig up another dozen counts. And you will stay here indefinitely".

They conducted a trial, and the whole case began. Nationalists came in, shouting. And this man was sitting in the hall, and he was not going anywhere. The court ended, they made a decision the prosecutor

didn't expect: to find me not guilty under the article "incitement to overthrow the government", to leave only one article, which was for pogroming buses, which had witnesses, to reduce the sentence for one year, to five years. Considering that I had already served more than five years, by the recount, I was released from the courtroom. That is, I was actually a free man, but this comrade was waiting. They warned the attorneys to take my passport. The attorney took out my passport and handed it to me. The SSU officer said, "Give me that passport; I'll keep it safe", and he took my passport away. Then I went to court and got a certified copy of my verdict from the court of review to reduce my sentence. "Come on, let's go!" We go out. There's a jeep downstairs, with four more SSU officers nearby. And straight on to Donbass.

A young man told me that he had participated in rallies a couple of times in Zaporizhzhia. They took him and kept him for almost three years in Zaporizhzhia, in the pretrial detention center. Then he got on the exchange list, but they didn't tell him about it. One day approached him, put a plastic bag over his head, and said, "Let's go!" They get into the UAZ vehicle and drove away. He says he heard a conversation: the SSU officers were sitting there, they drove half an hour, they said, "We won't go to this range; you can hear the shots. Let's go to the next one". Imagine hearing a conversation like that at the age of 22. And that's how they mocked him, brought him back, all the same, exchanged him, gave him back. This guy told me himself. This is the method of impact. He's just a kid, really.

Spartak Golovachev was released on bail, but then, six months later, they came to his apartment to search for something he had there. They planted two fuse grenades in the children's toys. They accused him of keeping weapons, and the lawsuits are still in progress. These are the methods of impact – by any means required to keep the person in jail.

Golovachev had two girls in Kharkiv, one was graduating high school, and the other was 14 years old. The nationalists would come to their school and write on the walls that these girls were the enemy, affecting them in class. One of the girls even got sick on a nervous breakdown. That is, they come, children are placed against other children, they explain to the teachers. Then his wife got sick on a nervous breakdown. Imagine their daughters being picked on by other students. And he was in jail at the time.

There were two women in jail with me who participated in rallies. Marina advocated for the protection of women in pretrial detention center. And there are a lot of violations. She said that they were trying to imprison her in the worst cells by any means, with the worst possible criminals. Make her keep her mouth shut. There were two exchanges, but she was not given one. She was eventually exchanged only last December. That is, there is an impact here – they create unbearable conditions for the woman. First of all, in the cell, that is, pitting cellmates.

Further on. At one time, the secretary of the Kharkiv regional committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, Alla Aleksandrovskaya, was in prison for about six months. We've known her for 20 years through her work as a deputy on the regional council, back in the '90s. She was accused of being given money from Moscow to vote in one village council in the Kharkiv region to support the Russian language and support relations with Russia. And that money, 9–10 thousand, as if she had handed it over, and a person was found who confirmed that she had handed it over. She was charged with anti-state activities and taken to the pretrial detention center. Think about it, a woman of 72! Eventually, they let her go on bail, with an electronic bracelet, like mine. So she's still on house arrest. At her age. Her son was eventually banished. He was forced to get out of Ukraine, so he had to leave. He was put on the international wanted list.

Pavel Vadimovich Volkov, Ukrainian Journalist, Former Political Prisoner

My accusation can be divided into two parts. The first is my publications, the blogger stuff I published in one magazine. I closed this blog a year before my detention; it just became irrelevant, I lost interest in maintaining it. One of the episodes I am charged with is the phrase about Crimea being part of the Russian Federation, according to the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Or, for example, the phrase that the most industrially developed enterprises in Donbass remained in the non-controlled territories. This is an assault on the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Naturally, the examinations that were done showed that there were no calls. But that didn't stop the SSU

and the prosecutor's office from signing a bill of indictment or the investigating judge from sending me to the pretrial detention center based on that bill of indictment. While everything was being figured out, 13 months had passed only in the pretrial detention center and about three years of general court proceedings.

The second is aiding and abetting a terrorist organization. That in 2015, I was filming reports on the front lines in Donbas, near the airport, interviewing people, etc. And when we watched these tapes in court, the judges were surprised enough, because all the servicemen I filmed were talking, "We want peace, just don't shoot us; we won't respond. Ukraine is our brother; in Russia, our brothers".

Anton Borisovich Guryanov, Human Rights Activist

The government lost all legitimacy after 2014, in my opinion. And until the Maidan is condemned and there is a chain of criminal power, nothing good will happen to those who opposed this power, raising their voice against this unlawful rebellion. I can tell you that my comrades who remained in Ukraine for various reasons are subjected to repression.

Valery Vladimirovich Kaurov, Union of Orthodox Citizens of Ukraine.

Whoever resists is subjected to the harshest repressions in Ukraine. And if someone goes out to a rally, wears a St. George's ribbon, comes out to defend the monument to Zhukov in Odessa, immediately there is persecution against him. It goes that far; people who wear St. George ribbons or go out with a red victory flag on Victory Day, on the day Odessa was liberated, because Odessa is a hero city, are immediately arrested. While the nationalists assault and abuse, and no one cares. The murderers walk around Odessa, humiliate the citizens, and tour all over Ukraine with their ultra-nationalist actions, and no one will do anything to them. Meanwhile, the slightest statement in favor of the Russian language, of friendship with Russia, in defense of historical truth, in defense of veterans of the Great Patriotic War is grounds for immediately being declared a separatist, the hand of the Kremlin and subjected to crackdowns.

Sergey Olegovich Yudaev, Journalist and Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner

In recent years, if someone dissents, he goes straight to jail. This way, they would immediately bring home a kilo of TNT and be accused of being a separatist and an FSB agent, and that's it. And a person is immediately put in jail. Article indictment and you are sent to jail. And it is relatively straightforward nowadays. People from the Party of Shariy are now being hit in every region, and very seriously. Nearly murdered. And if they caused conspiracy from the point of view of the Ukrainian government, they would all be put in jail. For dissent, precisely categorical dissent, and other ideas different from them, not overlapping with theirs in anything, they don't get beaten; they go to jail.

Some of these Battalions are close to Avakov. Some are close to the Presidential Administration of Ukraine through their patrons, and some are close to the Cabinet of Ministers through their patrons. As a rule, all the leaders of such national battalions are under someone who has weight in command. And no one is sued. Well, sometimes they find a scapegoat, dig into him, and put him in jail. And the picture was shown, and they got rid of the unnecessary person, the man went to jail. The same Biletsky and all his right-hand men, the same Melnichuk, feel fine because their patrons in power are still in control, with connections, with opportunities. No one touches them, and if you dig into it, there's an awful lot going on. I don't know how they will be in the world beyond, and I don't see how they could live in this world. In the world beyond, they will surely be in for the worst. There's nothing sacred about people there at all. So only those are judged who are undesirable at a given moment. Those who work for their patrons don't even have a case against them.

Anton Viacheslavovich Polovenko, Political Refugee

Ninety percent of the political prisoners held in Ukraine, now estimated at 5–7 thousand, their cases are drawn out, not brought to their logical conclusion. It's advantageous for the authorities. The evidence is weak everywhere. It is more for the views that such an act of intimidation is carried out. Frenzy is created by the hysteria

that many Russian agents are violating the territorial integrity of the country. At my first interrogation with the SSU, they asked me what I meant by federalization, which I called for. They tried to take separatism out of federalization. It is more for the views that such an act of intimidation is carried out. And then, I was asked whether I wanted the Mykolaiv region to secede from Ukraine. To which I replied, "How do you envision this? The Mykolaiv region is actually inside Ukraine and has no borders with Russia. How do you take it and separate it, even if you wanted to?"

My acquaintance, a rather interesting man, sculptor Dmitry Korenovsky, lived in Mykolaiv. He made several sculptures that are very famous in the city. For example, the monument to Margelov, a bust of Suvorov, then there is "Woman with Child" in the first maternity hospital, also a very famous work, a monument to Cossack Mamai in the park which also belonged to him. He is a public personality in Mykolaiv, the man who was busy either sculpting something or going to social events. The only thing you could really accuse him of was openly expressing his views. His views were very negative on the coup that happened in Ukraine, on the Ukrainianization process. He was simply speaking openly. So they made him into an entire spy.

In 2016, we had a major case in Mykolayiv to expose a Russian spy network. And he appeared there as the leader of that network. Three people were arrested, and Alpha from Kyiv came. He was planted with some tapes, which you can't see, but they just put them on the table, some weapons were found, and most likely planted. They almost made them into a reconnaissance and sabotage group. In Ukraine, a consistent system of intimidation is constantly being pursued so that people cannot even think about communicating with Russia in any way, to constantly build up the image of Russia as an enemy who does not sleep but thinks about how to take over this Ukraine. That's what's being hyped up all the time.

His confinement in prison was quite harsh, he complained to me. The cells were very cramped; he was put up with criminals, especially for the psychological impact. There was an exchange in September 2019. Now he lives in Novorossiysk, he is engaged in his direct business – molding busts of Suvorov, and became friends with the Suvorov society.

Here are typical stories of political prisoners and political emigrants in modern Ukraine by Sergei Yudaev, Oleg Muzyka, Dmitry Luzhetsky, Sergei Moiseyev, Nikolai Mashkin, Alexei Samoilov, Ruslan Panchuk, and Alexander Petrunko, which they told in detail for this book. In these stories, both the absurdity of the accusations and the fabrication of cases are apparent. The crimes committed by the Security Service of Ukraine, including kidnappings, torture with electroshock, drownings, strangulations, and brutal beatings, are vividly visible. The intimidation of attorneys who refuse to record evidence of crimes is evident. The peculiarities of Ukrainian propaganda, actively presenting innocent people on television and radio as FSB agents, are also evident and flagrant violations during the trial and facts of theft of property of convicts by employees of the security services themselves. The former political prisoners emphasize that everything in Ukraine cannot be called an accident — it is part of a cynical but rational strategy of the Ukrainian leadership, which will simply lose power if the repressions stop.

Sergey Olegovich Yudaev, Journalist and Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner

I have a passport of being a citizen of Ukraine. This question was not an issue prior to Maidan. It didn't matter whether you had a Belarusian, Ukrainian, or a Russian passport. No one has ever stressed this. No disagreements have arisen. There wasn't even a reason to think about anything. But the Maidan started.

At first we watched it all on TV, how it all happened there. For us it was a daily thrashing – wow, we think they're going to do strange things again. We woke up. It all ended up in Kharkiv. We didn't believe that it would reach us, we thought it would be limited to Kyiv, but it happened as it happened. In Kharkiv, too, massive people's unrest began.

And when guests came to us from Kyiv, from Western Ukraine, and tried to tear down the monument on our square, at night, there was a call on the Internet, "We have the Maidanovites here in Kharkiv! Help us defend our city!" And everyone started gathering at the square. And in an instant, spontaneously, instantly, there were rallies of thousands, two, three, five, ten thousand people gathered. It lasted several days,

and unfortunately, it so happened that no one covered everything objectively. I thought, why is it that dozens of media outlets cover everything that happens on the Maidan and dozens of channels, TV channels, Telegram channels, Internet resources, but no one covers anything from our position. There are one-off, isolated cases, a couple of photos posted, some posts on social networks. I decided to do streams, online broadcasts. In the end, all of these streams were deleted,

despite my complaints demanding that they be returned, that they be restored. There was a long history there, but they remained. There were kind people downloading everything when I streamed it all. And so it happened that I went around, showing everything, all the hot events in Kharkiv. Somewhere, collisions happened – got into the car and drove there. Showed it all there. And so it slowly began to turn out that some information was brought to me. As a result, willy-nilly, maybe even against my will, people began to consider me almost as one of the leaders of the entire Kharkiv Anti-Maidan.

And the events of April 2014, when the situation was already very tense, there was Avakov's TV channel ATN, where they humiliated us all a lot and insulted us in their reports. We went to them to protest, but unfortunately, there were many provocateurs there with us. From the first to the last day of our existence, provocateurs were constantly present with us. There were a bunch of people like that with us back then, too. We came and started summoning the general director to voluntarily give up all these reports and, accordingly, that he should hand over this TV channel to the city at all. It's even come to this. We were just finished. We called him in, and we're waiting for him. Provocateurs started destroying equipment in the studio. There's a whole floor in the big building. The pogrom starts. The militia came running. I understand that this is a very serious set-up, that we are just being dirtied. And then I get a call from the square.

The Kharkiv regional administration is taking over. Why take over? We went there every day when we needed to. They're starting to take over, and they've already set fire to it. I rush over there. The ground floor is on fire. There are a lot of obscure people. Who are

they, where are they from? But that's not the main point. We stay overnight in the administration. All the drunk people and strangers were kicked out. In the morning, the Jaguar Special Operation Forces arrive, and they capture us all. And they hung two articles on me. One was hooliganism on the ATN channel, and the other was the organization of mass disorder and the seizure of the Kharkiv regional administration building. And so it turned out that the accusation was written down minute by minute: the beginning of the assault, the beginning of the arson, the time of the call to the fire brigade, etc. Even the pro-Ukrainian journalists were shocked. It's precisely the same as the minutes of my other accusation. What time did I come into ATN? What time did I call the director?

I am the only person in the background who has been convicted of two different crimes committed at the same time in two different places in the city.

My prison epic was underway. They put me in solitary first. It's all so civil and polite. They are afraid to do anything with their own hands. They sent a man to me, and he had an active form of tuberculosis. They placed him in my cell. It's just the two of us indoors. I started to figure out how it had happened. And he's a recidivist; he's already on his fourth term. Since he has tuberculosis, he needs to be isolated from others in a special room. I asked then why he was brought to this particular prison and why he was put in my cell. I'm not even saying anything about him being a recidivist that he should be separately incarcerated. And you're putting a patient with an active form of tuberculosis on my back. Of course, the inspectors come almost once a week. That's what they say that they had received a command from above, and they had nothing to do with it. They gave a command and wrote a report that such-and-such and such-and-such should be put in such a room and keep them together. They fulfilled the order.

Provocateurs were also sent. I wrote an application later on. I pointed out that I was in my cell alone, and once a month, I got another provocateur for three or four days: either a lunatic, or a TB patient, or a kid the whole prison was aware of. You can put twenty of them with me, but what's the point? Just to get on my nerves? That I would lose control there, break my arms and legs, and what it would

end up with... There were fights. A couple of our guys got into press huts, and they were beaten badly.

Oleg Anatolievich Muzyka, Political Refugee

In Germany, I received the official status of political emigrant in May 2017. For the first time, we were invited by Tatyana Arkadyevna Zhdanok, a Member of the European Parliament. The Odessans came at the time, relatives and friends of the victims. I met with them in the European Parliament. People from different states started inviting me to different states, cities. During that time, I visited 18 states, cities – I don't even know how many. There were hundreds of meetings, speeches, discussions, and photo exhibitions.

I couldn't go back to Ukraine because I was threatened. Unknown people came to my registration address. Threats are still heard, even here in Europe, when I hold rallies and actions, they take my picture, approach me point-blank, point fingers, say, "Should have burned you". That is, threats of reprisals, deprivation of everything I've got. The threats were thrown at me so much that I had to divorce my wife, to ensure no imprint on my family. My daughter received a call. In the village where I come from, there are constant threats against my mom. She calls, crying and saying that they follow her around the village. There were those at the time who cried out, "This is the mom of a separatist". I asked her to keep quiet and get on with her life. Today she hears again that everyone is cursing the current government, Poroshenko, Zelensky. My mom would like to remind them, "How did you accuse my sons, and today you don't like that power?" And I tell her to be quiet and just live her life without getting into a discussion with these people.

I met Zelensky here in Berlin on June 18, 2019. He came to power, became President, and I met him, handed him a letter. I have the entire video, and everything is recorded. I gave him a letter on behalf of political emigrants and, on my behalf, handed him the book that we here in Berlin published in Russian and German, in Greece it came out in Greek, "Odessa, May 2, four years and five years after the events". Two weeks later, I received a reply from the President's Office that my letter had been forwarded to the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine. Two weeks later, I received a letter that it had been sent to the Odessa

Prosecutor's Office, and all within a month and a couple of days, it was over. Then I received an answer from the Odessa Prosecutor's Office that the criminal cases against me were closed on May 9, 2014. However, the criminal case on the events of May 2, 2014, in Odessa continues. The hint is that you can come here and be invited as a witness, but you won't be able to come out; you'll be a defendant. The criminal case against me – there were 6–8 articles – “mass riots resulting in death”, “murder”. Just a nightmare.

Based on May 2, I don't even hope that the investigation into the events at the Trade Union House is complete. I don't even believe it.

Ukrainians who live in Germany, and not only Ukrainians, the liberal crowd from Russia, are all united: representatives of terrorist Ichkeria, Ukraine, and the liberal group from Russia, they constantly take part together. I know that people came to Europe from Ukraine; I helped them at events or met them at the OSCE and the UN. There were times when they said, “Let's take a group photo of Ukrainians who were together today at the OSCE or the UN”. I will warn right away that if anyone takes a picture with me, they may ask questions. There was the fact that I was meeting with a man again at the UN six months later, and that man told me, “Oleg, I'm sorry, I won't take any more pictures with you; I had enough last time. For three hours, I answered questions about how I know you, and what we talked about”.

My story is as follows. Since 2009, I have been involved in public and political activities in Ukraine. Since 2010 I was an assistant to a deputy of the Odessa city council and the head of the coastal organization of the all-Ukrainian party “Rodina” (Motherland). Therefore, since 2010, I have been an Assistant Deputy in Odessa, and, of course, I have been actively fighting against Ukrainian Nazism. Protecting the Russian language, helping war veterans, children's pioneer camps, health resorts, health centers, boarding houses – such was the activity I conducted. And when the Maidan began in Kyiv, Odessa and the southeast looked from the sidelines at what was happening in Kyiv. We weren't particularly happy about Yanukovich's rule, but we didn't openly defend him either. We defended ourselves first and foremost. But when, already in February, drastic events in Ukraine, an armed seizure of power, and open Ukrainian nationalists

came to power, the southeast rose up, and such a movement as the anti-Maidan was formed.

In Odessa and on Kulikovo Field, a square near the train station, an anti-Maidan was organized. I was one of the activists who spoke on stage. I urged people to oppose Ukrainianization and Leninopad (mass toppling of Lenin statues). The main events took place in Odessa on May 2, 2014. We were not ready for armed resistance. We mostly had information confrontation, and we were preparing for the local council elections; the Mayor was elected, the Deputy Corps on May 25, 2014. The main goal was to form a candidate for deputy, and we put our own candidate for Mayor, Rostislav Barda. And the Anti-Maidan movement "Kulikovo Field" was not ready for physical, much less armed confrontation.

No matter what they say, I even argue with my colleagues all the time on this subject because I did stop people until 4 p.m. Accusations began to fall on me that I was a traitor and not letting people into Greek Square, but there was no one to go with; there was an adult squad, 20 people, who just guarded the tent city. But after 4 p.m. I made the decision that I would go downtown with this squad. When we arrived, we saw hell. Together with everyone, I defended the building of the Trade Union House. By a fortunate coincidence, I survived. Dozens of people died. I was detained by the SSU officers at night, in complete darkness over there. I watched the nationalists mocking our dead comrades. I lost my brother in the turmoil. It turned out he had jumped from the third floor, now disabled, but still alive. Then he was detained and taken to 44 Preobrazhenskaya Street, where he was kept in cell No. 10 in the city department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. On May 4, 2014, two days later, he was released. Until May 21, I was still in Odessa, but illegally, because the SSU and the Ministry of Internal Affairs had handed over all the lists of our activists to the nationalists. We still can't find some of the guys, and we don't know what happened to them. Sixty-seven of us were released. Twenty people don't answer to any contacts and don't show up anywhere. No one knows where these people disappeared to.

I am now observing from social networks the pressure on the Party of Shariy: attacks on his activists, how they are beaten, offices are

being destroyed. How many times has Anatoly Shariy been beaten up and urinated on, detained, and handed over to the SSU? Anatoly Shariy says that they file reports with the police and the police officers when they refuse to enter these crimes into the unified register of crimes. In the Odessa region alone, four churches were looted and burned. There's the persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Avakov gives reports, announces that there are those detained for making statements on social media. Every month they detain about a dozen people. If it's not made public, we don't even know these people. We have been liberating and supporting people who get caught up in the information space. And there are some people we don't even know, but they're in jail there. The last exchange, which was in December 2019, there Odessans were released, 11 people. Some people were released that I didn't even know. Then they started writing to me from Donetsk and Horlivka, saying that they met me in their offices in 2010. A typist girl and a typing pool served five years in prison in Odessa as a member of the Communist Party of Ukraine. We might not know about these people. They are being hanged not for political reasons but for criminal ones: terrorism and infringement on the integrity of Ukraine.

After I lived through May 2, I began to understand what society and people are capable of in general. So let me put it this way: in any country in the world, between 5% and 10% of the population are interested in politics. This 5–10% who live in Ukraine, some profess the ideology of nationalism, which turns into fascism, while others profess the anti-fascist, anti-war movement. Both are active, but as it turned out, the supporters of nationalism and fascism are more aggressive, more radical, and ready to use physical violence against their opponents. And we don't.

The Communist Party is banned in Ukraine, the Union of Left Forces stopped, and pressure is put on the Party of Shariy. As soon as they see that any political force can gain an electorate, the authorities come under pressure. Supporters of Ukrainian nationalism guard the government today; the Azov Battalion and National Corps Battalion destroy the offices of these political forces, they beat them up. It's all there on social media.

Dmitriy Yanovich Luzhetsky, Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner of Ukraine.

In 2014, we did not support the Euromaidan; we supported the legitimate constitutional government and supported the constitutional system and order. The Right Sector attacked us, and we received death threats against our families, our lives.

When we were in Moscow, we helped refugees with housing. We were looking for a place to put them, and we helped them partially with our finances. People also brought something, helped, and we passed it on. And Ukraine accused us of financing terrorism, naming in such a way the assistance we were providing at that time to people who needed help, who suffered from the actions of the Ukrainian authorities. Ukraine accused us of terrorism, even though we had never been to Donbass before the exchange.

In 2014, on July 25, as I remember today, at about 3 p.m., the Security Service of Ukraine raided a cafe. They put us face down. We were accused of being FSB agents. They wanted us to confess that we were FSB agents. They took us to the quarry and tortured us there because we refused to admit it. They were pressuring us to tell them that we were FSB agents. Many of them got some kind of promotion and certain stars after our detention.

It was funny when they were taking us to court for the appeal in convoy, the police guys were looking at us and asking, "Are you really FSB agents?" And I am looking at them with my green eyes, "Guys, do I look like some FSB agent? Where am I, and where is the FSB? What do you mean? Get down to earth already!"

We were detained at 3 p.m. I was planted with ammunition. I understand that it was a pretext for detention because there were no grounds for our confinement. After the quarry, we were brought to the Ternopil branch of the Security Service of Ukraine, and between 7.30 p.m. and 8 p.m., we were provided with an attorney. There you sign a contract with a attorney, there's a clause where you can indicate bodily injury, so it's all recorded at once. The attorney arrived, I unbuttoned my shirt: there were black, green spots in my chest cavity and in my abdominal cavity, where the stomach is. I said, "Take pictures with your phone, fix it, and it's all written

down!" The attorney tells me this, "I'd be happy to do it under other circumstances, but you do realize that if I take all these pictures and fix it for you now, I won't get out of here myself". I said, "Okay, that's it. Let's write the contract".

When one is beaten, there is still a certain threshold of some kind of pain. And you feel this pain for a while, and then you go into a trance state. I don't know how to describe it adequately. And you simply don't care about that pain anymore. You don't perceive it.

Not only were we beaten up in the quarry, but we also had a mock execution. They took their machine guns, put us facing the cliff, and shots rang out. They strapped your hands behind you, put you with your back turned: you look in a pit, they throw a grenade nearby, you fall, lie there and wonder when it's going to blow up. You don't know whether it's blown up or not. You're lying in that hole, you open your eyes, and you can't understand: is this it, is death happening like this... And you're right where you were, and they get you and start working certain punches on you again. The most painful part was when they twisted your arms backward, one kicked you in the chest, and the other kicked you in the back of the head from behind, folding your arms like this. Also, when one kicks you here at the same time, and the other kicks you in the back of the head. It's just the ringing goes in your head; you lose your orientation, you don't know where you are, what's wrong with you. And then you're standing there, and you don't even care anymore, you think: come on, hit it, shoot it. After that, they took us to the SSU office, where they also tried to interrogate us. We had black bags on our heads all the time.

When we were detained, the SSU immediately propagated themselves. The day they detained us, they immediately released on the Internet, on television everywhere that they had detained FSB agents. It was under Kyiv's control. They even put up posters all over the city how they detained us, they placed a splash page on the electronic boards: "The FSB agents were detained", and a picture of us lying face down on the floor being poked with a machine gun. It was also aired in the minivans. There were monitors on the buses. It was aired all over the city.

Our first trials passed rapidly. They convicted us without us; without our presence, we did not get acquainted with the materials. The court

sessions lasted two and a half years at first, and then we were quickly convicted within three days. We weren't taken to court sessions.

When they brought us in with a running temperature, it was Wednesday. The doctors came, the ambulance took our temperature, the doctor listened and gave a preliminary diagnosis: pneumonia. The doctor said that they couldn't take part in the court session. In spite of this, the court continued the session and set new ones for Thursday and Friday. I say in court, "Are you kidding me? Why are you bringing us here? To let us die? Don't take us at all. I don't want to come to you while I'm sick". The judge considered that I was rude at that moment, we were excluded from the courtroom, and the trial continued without us. They took us back to the pretrial detention center, and then I learned that they were taking us back to court on Friday. On the way, we learn that we have been convicted. On Friday we arrived, waited all day, we weren't even called. It was in December 2016.

I had never been to Donetsk. That's the funny thing, and when on appeal, we had our verdict overturned because the records were damaged; our attorneys claimed that we were tried without our presence. According to the Criminal Code, we were also not given the last word; this is a direct violation. We were just handed the minutes on December 21, 2016. Please meet us; goodbye, you are convicted. I was sentenced to 15 years, and my brother got 14 years.

There were tortures at SSU: they put a cloth and poured water on us, waterboarded us, they put needles under our fingertips, into heels and beat us on our kidneys. And when you're already unconscious, they'll pour water on you. My brother had his eyelids taped, his eyes were red, and they glued his eyelids not to be able to close his eyes. You sit for 2–3 hours, and your eyes get tired. You can't blink. But as it turns out, my eyes are dry, and it burns, and it's unbearable pain. It was just torture for fun. This was at the interrogation by the SSU.

And in a pretrial detention center, you come under the jurisdiction of the penitentiary services. At that time, Ukraine had a penitentiary service. Then it was taken over by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. At that point, the penitentiary service was in charge of you, which means you're only tortured, tormented, beaten for the first three days. This is when we were under the jurisdiction of the SSU. When we got to the pretrial detention center, it was a different kind of

torture. They put us in solitary confinement. We spent the first seven months in solitary confinement. According to the regulations of the pretrial detention center, TV, parcels, packages are allowed. And when we were detained, they tore my shirt, and I wore it for a month in the pretrial detention center.

We were not allowed to send parcels; it was the decision of SSU investigators. According to the pretrial detention center regulations, once a week, they take you to shower, so-called "baths". Once a week, they take you to the laundry, where you can wash your clothes. You should be given soap, toilet paper, a blanket. All we were given were two sheets and one pillow, which fell apart. Nothing else was given or allowed for a month.

The food is so disgusting that you don't eat at first because it's awful, especially when they bring you soup and there's a worm floating in it. Over time, you get exhausted, the body makes you eat. You eat and then vomit that you almost throw up your stomach. And they torture you with it for a month, because relatives can't bring any parcels without permission. A month later, I wrote an application to the human rights service in Kyiv; a representative arrived, took pictures, wrote down my claims, since he is obliged to respond and there is a statement, and it doesn't matter for them if a separatist or not, the pretrial detention center was forced to go soft and allow parcels. I remember when the first parcel arrived. They brought me a bag of food, my wife set it for me, and I had tears in my eyes because the mashed potatoes you pour in with boiling water were like a blessing compared to what they gave me.

Then they locked us up in the punishment cell. In prison, you communicate with your neighbors through the windows, through the wall. You're a living person, and you go crazy when you don't talk to anyone. They don't give you books. They don't provide you with anything. And you talk to those on the walk, and I had windows looking out there. And they locked me up in a punishment cell for five days. It was close to winter, and it was terribly cold then. They gave me a sheet, and I slept wearing a jacket and sneakers. It was so cold. I would wake up at night, go to the radiator in front of the toilet, hug it. The toilet smelt terrible, but I didn't care because it kept me warm at that moment.

And even when they closed us down, when they took us to the pretrial detention center, I didn't know where my brother was. I asked the staff a question about the pretrial detention center and the administration, and I was told that I should not care about it. I literally didn't know where my brother was for two months because we were driven separately to the appeal. We had walks in the yards, I had windows looking out on the first two yards, and I didn't see or hear the rest. When we went out with my brother to the yards, I have a tattoo on my arm, and my brother has one, too. He has the words from the Bible there, and I have the words "Who Dares Wins". We would go out into the courtyard and he would write the words from Psalm 90: For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. And I saw, and started writing the words from my tattoo and what cell I was in every yard I was in. And so, in time, we met each other. He just happened to be in the walkway where it stated what cell I was in. I ended up with a window overlooking the exercise yards, and he was celled across from them, and a window on the other side. And that's how I met him, found out that we were both alive and everything was fine.

Everything was taken away from us: home appliances, the car, business, everything was confiscated. We had an Audi A8. While we were still in jail there, I found out through friends that someone from the SSU was driving our car around the city.

Sergey Valerievich Moiseyev, Political Emigré, Former Chairman of the Kharkiv Regional Public Organization Rus Triedinaya

Our organization Rus Triedinaya was closed by the decision of the Kharkiv court in 2018. What we said about the federalization of Ukraine was seen as separatism. Victor Starchikov from our organization was detained, they beat him in the pretrial detention center, broke his nose, and tortured him. Then Alexander Petrunko was tortured. He was also detained, he was tortured in January 2015, he was taken to the pit, allegedly to be shot. He was tortured like in Guantanamo. This is waterboarding, hitting the groin with a stun gun, being poured with ice-cold water in winter, being led out to be shot near the pit, and being shot with a gun near the ear. They tortured him for twenty-four hours. Because he didn't confess to anything and there was no factual

evidence on him, he was tortured unofficially. Nobody processed him. They just grabbed him, put him in a car, took him out in the middle of nowhere, blindfolded. And in some room, a basement, they performed all these actions upon him.

A lot of people have been through the torture. In Kharkiv, one of my close acquaintances, with whom I started, is Alexei Lukyanov. Missing, we knew nothing about him, there was no information for a month. It turned out that he had been taken to a war zone by militants and was kept in a pit. They just put him in a zindan, in a pit, and there it rained on him and everything, they beat him up all the time, he was literally blue from the beatings. Then, when we raised the cry, raised the wave, one of the SSU officers, as well as many of the SSU, sympathized with us. He called Alexei's relatives, they found him, brought him into the public eye. They had to transfer him to more human conditions, to the SSU, and then he was exchanged for Ukrainian military prisoners.

Yuri Mikhailovich Apukhtin had approximately the same situation, only he served three and a half years in total. We had Alexei Samoilov, pro-rector of the Slavic Academy in Kharkiv, an intelligent man, but among other things he was also planted with explosives and accused of keeping it. A very rude planting: a group went to his house and immediately put it in the bathroom, then said that it was already lying there.

In Kharkiv, our National Russian Cultural Society is headed by Mikhail Godunov, who was also planted with explosives and a criminal case was opened. Dmitry Gubin, a journalist, was also given explosives and told that the explosives belonged to him. They act absolutely rudely and unscrupulously, with particular cynicism. When Petrunko was detained for the first time, he asked what he was detained for, they had nothing on him. They put the Novorossiya newspaper in his pocket and told him, "Well you see that you have the Novorossiya newspaper in your pocket. You're a separatist, so there's something to detain you for". The SSU acted very harshly, rudely and with particular cynicism. Sometimes militants acted.

Since 2014, we have seen many attempts of meetings cracked down on in a very brutal way. Any gatherings that are not established from above or are not in the trend of the national policy that is now welcome in Ukraine are brutally suppressed, people are simply

beaten up at once. I remember a couple of years ago, the Vitrenko Party tried to lay flowers at the Eternal Flame in Kyiv. They came and were immediately beaten up by the Nazis. A gang of Nazis came, and they started tearing up posters and beating people silently, without speaking. It's a common practice. The number of cases is enormous. It was called the Bloc of Natalia Vitrenko. She was active politically, she had a bloc, she had her own party, she was active until 2014. She, too, was prosecuted under the articles "threat to territorial integrity and national security".

The Communist Party and symbols are officially banned. Our party leader, Alla Aleksandrovskaya, is under criminal investigation. She's been in the pretrial detention center for a while, she's about 70 years old. She has now been released, but the case is still ongoing. As the leader of the Communist Party, she fell under a criminal article for threatening national security. They recently detained a group of veterans on their way to celebrate the anniversary of the Prokhorov battle. The Kharkiv veterans were on their way back, and they were detained because they were carrying medals, and the medals had banned symbols. A group of deputies was detained, there was deputy Mikhail Isayev, he is 90 years old. He was detained, and now a criminal case has been opened against him. He faces up to five years in prison with forfeiture. It was for his medals that he was detained. He is now in jail.

The militants, on the other hand, operate outside the law. They pressurize people, beat them up, intimidate them. There is the Party of Shariy, and one of the leaders of this party in Kharkiv organized a rally in Kyiv. After that he was caught in Kharkiv and brutally beaten to within an inch of his life with a bat. He was in intensive care in a very serious condition. So he was beaten for dissent. Beaten by Nazis. We know that several battalions are active in Kharkiv: Azov, Aidar, Kharkiv-1, Kharkiv-2, Skhidna Varta. They are militants. They are supervised by Arsen Avakov, who heads the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine.

That is, these are unofficial structures, but in many ways they are more effective than the official ones, because they very quickly explain to people what happens to them if they do not bend to the general line.

They are under the leadership of Arsen Avakov, acting on his command, carrying out instructions. The same Stormtroopers that were in Nazi Germany, the same Hongweibians that were in China at one time.

Nikolai Grigorievich Mashkin, Editor-in-chief of the Rodnoye Pribuzhye Newspaper

I was arrested on February 2, 2015. I gave an interview here in Moscow to Anna News channel, actually, since I used to work as the editor-in-chief of a regional Mykolaiv newspaper. I was the editor of Ridne Pribuzhya, that is, Rodnoye Pribuzhye. This is the official newspaper of the regional council. I am careful enough in what I say that it falls under value judgments. All my statements are already checked off automatically, there's nothing to pick on. There is no corpus delicti as such. There was no call to overthrow the existing system. The suspicion that was presented to me is nothing but laughter. It said I was a terrorist.

There is no corpus delicti in my actions. There was no agitation. There was nothing. There was an interview. I am, among other things, a member of the Union of Russian Writers. I just gave an interview to Anna News channel. It was on this interview that the accusation was built. I was charged with terrorism. The YouTube interview was removed pretty quickly, but on RuTube, it survived. There's nothing there that can be charged. I was arrested in 2015 and was exchanged on September 8, 2016.

I was arrested in Mykolaiv and taken to the SSU office in Kharkiv. For three months I was jailed in Mykolayiv. The rest of the time I was in Kharkiv. Officially there was no SSU prison.commissions came there. We were brought up and taken either through the underground passage to the assembly hall of the Regional Department of Internal Affairs, or to the second floor to the rooms of the investigators. They distributed us. With bags on heads, as it should be. We sat there, there were special plastic handcuffs for that. They present the premises to the commission as if there were no one there. In the end there was an uproar from the UN. Because the people who came out after the exchange told it all.

It was pretty hard when they put me in a cell for especially serious criminals, so I was sitting with people like that. These are aggravated

murderers: dismembered, killed and burnt. Some of them were on their eighth term there.

There was a practice of taking them into the shower and beating them there. Some never came back. I don't remember his last name, but he was quite elderly, he had a pacemaker. After the beating, he just died. One of the guards kept giving us an example of him and saying that we weren't here and that he had been taken to the gray zone and thrown out, and that would happen to anyone who said anything. In that time, probably six people were killed. People were brought to us from all over Ukraine. We were called the "exchange fund". That's exactly the trade, because a senior officer, for example, was traded for me.

Most of the people who were in jail with me in Kharkiv, there was no crime in their actions. They are often just grabbed on the street. To a large extent, these are those who have made a name for themselves at mass events. There were those who spoke out, there were those who simply attended. It varied. There were those who didn't speak out anywhere. I have a story, it's now published in Berega, where a 17-year-old boy lived in a town that had changed hands several times. According to his story, they kept him in the basement of the garage for about 40 days. He was placed in our cell. Yes, in Kharkiv. At the time when the Aidar activists came in, he was 17 years old. His story is this: he's quite a big guy, a miner's hardening, and he was captured and held by the Aidar activists in the basement of a garage. He was chained in this basement, and women were being raped in the upper part of this garage. They had a different kind of fun with him: in the morning they took him outside, put him on his knees, and hit him on the back of the head with a two-liter bottle of sand. It was such a pastime to see what would happen first: he would throw up or faint. They bet and tortured him. He was in that situation for 40 days. When he came to us, they planted him like he was normal. The investigator summoned him, but he did not incriminate him, and not only him, but most people. There was nothing to say that you did this and that. And there was no crime in my actions. This Vadim was put with us, there was a ten-bed cell, and there were 38 people there. He would wake up at night and sometimes throw himself on the next bunk, on the man who was lying there. No one wanted to be

around him, he's a big, strong guy. The situation was a mess. When he started screaming loudly at night, I tried to wake him up. He had terrible nightmares.

I have it all written in my story, you can see it on the website "Russian Sunday", "Someday" I think it's called. If you're interested in getting an idea, you open a search engine on the Russian Sunday website, and there you enter: stories "Uncle Vanya", "Cherry Tree" by Nikolai Mashkin. He was transferred to solitary confinement. He attempted suicide there. And then we ended up in different cells. I do not know his fate. What happened after my exchange is a mystery to me. They disbanded everything there afterwards. A UN brigade came, and the noise was so strong that they just drove up to the SSU and demanded that they be escorted there. They said if there's any break, they'll leave here, they'll tell you all about it. Because whoever came out, they told everything about. That people were taken by underground passage to the Department of Internal Affairs building, and it was quite a difficult situation when they were transferred there. There were bags on my head, it was hard to breathe, I was confined to a chair while lying down, I wanted to go to the bathroom. In case you, excuse me, shit yourself, you get kicked around for quite a while. This is not such an easy situation.

In another cell there was a priest from near Kharkiv. There was a tiny fraction of people who fought and prepared resistance, but for the rest it's impossible to say why they were imprisoned. There is no such thing as "what for?" For instance, a man who digs wells. The investigator asked him questions about "who, what, how". When he was on his way home, there was a rally in Kharkiv on the square nearby. And he stopped and stood there, caught on camera. That's it. Then, when he started to be questioned, they demanded such testimony from him that he could not give. He was blue from the beatings, even dark. He couldn't sit down.

Another Muscovite, who was also released on exchange. He was captured, arrested in Odessa, he was on holiday there with a child. He was forced to sign all the confession documents because of the threat of reprisal against the child. He went on holiday to Odessa. We started with a conversation in a cafe, and it started with "Moskals", etc. He just bluntly replied. Expressed an opinion on this whole thing, this hatred.

First he was in the pretrial detention center in Odessa, and then he was also, like me...

Alexei Nikolaevich Samoilov, Lecturer, Ph. D., Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner

A new format of neo-Nazism is developing in Ukraine, where Nazi ideas are fundamental, both in political groups fighting among themselves, conflicting in the struggle for power, and in a very large, significant part of society. From all segments of the population, from the most disadvantaged but nevertheless infected with the idea of Ukrainian neo-Nazism and Ukrainianism, to those who classify themselves as advanced intellectuals.

I actively positioned myself as an opponent of the coup and a constitutionalist. The fact is that nowhere, by no means, does the Ukrainian Constitution say that such a rise to power is constitutional or even possible. This is a state crime, anti-constitutional, which was committed on February 21. Nevertheless, it did happen. And I didn't accept it, nor did a fairly large and significant portion of people at the time.

In Kharkiv, I was engaged in political activity. On June 28, 2014, an assault group got into my house. It was about seven or eight people dressed in appropriate uniforms: special helmets, bulletproof vests, armed with submachine guns, in combat gear.

They blew up the front door; we opened the other one ourselves. There were quite a few people at my house at that time, we were having a family party. I came from Donetsk that day, I was away for a long time. There were about 15–20 relatives there, children, nephews, my granddaughters. They rushed in, sorted everyone into their rooms...

Of those 15 people who came in, several were in civilian clothes, some of them were filming, some of them introduced themselves as investigators, some as heads of technical groups, some people did not introduce themselves in any way, but then it turned out that they were the SBU operatives headed by Colonel Ilya Fedorovich Pukhnaty. He was at the time the head of one of the specialized units to capture people like me. That is, he was a regular executioner from Kharkov.

Subsequently, he was promoted and went to work in Kyiv. The search began, oddly enough, with my son's room, then my daughter's, then they got to my room. What they were looking for is unclear,

because they didn't find anything, but what they went in for, they did. In the bathroom, in one of the dressing cabinets where the couple's hygiene products were, they allegedly found two checkers of TNT and two blasting fuses for them.

Clearly, it was planted. It was a usual provocation, they always do it, and do it very clumsily, because in Ukraine at that time the concept of law, the code of criminal procedure has been de facto abolished. De facto the authorities there can do anything. Those who do not accept the power that came with the coup can do nothing. They are no longer fully-fledged citizens; they are second-class persons.

*You could do with the second-class persons the way they had done to me later. The Ukrainians are split between first-class Ukrainians and second-class non-Ukrainians, even if they are Ukrainians in fact, they are indulged in chest-beating, know *Ukrainska Mova* (Ukrainian language) and *Zhovto-Blakitny Prapor* (the blue and yellow bicolor national flag) is also symbolic for them. They do not accept the principles of the Maidan and do not accept the coup of 2014 and its consequences, and its consequences are the new President, the same Zelensky. This split-up happened immediately. It was planned. It was ready.*

Eventually, I was taken out of the building. Down, beside the building, the area had been already swamped up with people; there were two minivans. They knocked me down in public and started kicking me with their boots. They broke the bones of my face, knocked out my teeth. I was handcuffed, of course. They beat the crap out of me in public while my wife, neighbors, relatives were present. It was a demonstrative beating.

I don't mean to speak about myself, mentioning that it's tough, but of course, it's tough, and it hurts when you get hit on your head with military boots and when your bones are fractured. You lose sight in one eye and spit out your teeth after a while. All this can be seen in the photos from the trial. But it's not about me; it's all about the system.

People like me were excluded from the image of being human in the law enforcement community. The legal fold can be freely interpreted by those who hold power in Ukraine. This concept is not the same as in Russia or Europe. Here we get double talk. This is not the legality we understand here or what is applied in Europe.

In Ukraine, this is a series of ideas and unspoken, undeclared methods and ways to fight those who did not accept the Nazi coup of February 2014. Fighting with dissidents. They could do anything with us: assault us in public, assault us viciously in front of our relatives, neighbors, and friends, assault us in the car, finish us off on an asphalt-paved plot in front of the famous secret SSU prison entrance, where I spent several months. In the Kharkiv SSU.

Simultaneously, thousands of people have passed the same destiny, if not more horrible, together with me or afterward. I think I've got off lightly. I can walk, I have parts of my body functioning, even though I limp and have false teeth. My coxa was fractured, my hip was broken. When they came to put me to the Poltava detention center No. 23, I was immediately sent to get medical screening. When I arrived, I was black and blue. They said that I would pass a medical screening.

I heard how the SSU officers were trying to arrange that I would be taken in without medical clearance. I heard the assistant who was examining me, a lieutenant colonel, I won't mention his last name, personally said, "If they were to write a complaint against me, and then they would drag us through the courts. We'll accept him if he gets his medical clearance". And I was sent to get my medical clearance in prison. X-ray, medical check-up. The dark-colored left thigh was fractured. A dark face without any teeth. My right elbow was broken, the handcuffs damaged both wrists, and the lumps left by handcuffs are still there. All of that was done in a zesty manner. But I still got off lightly.

Several people were killed as simple as that in the Lviv detention center. A vast number of people went missing and were slain in horrible agony. My friend went through a real concentration camp. For more than 20 days, he was in a concentration camp. They lived in pits and were assaulted daily. Outside Izyum. Alexey Lukyanov. Father Theofan from Mariupol. He told me some horrifying things about what he'd been through. He wasn't killed or tortured to death just because he had a chaplainship. He said that when he tried to lie down on the mattress in the cell, he could not because the mattress was damp and realized that the mattress was covered in blood because, before that, someone had been murdered there. Mariupol

was famous for being an assassination zone. Even when I was in prison, I realized this pretty well.

They get you in handcuffs, and you know that you will be assaulted because the handcuffs are clamped and tightened immediately so that your fingers go numb. If you are taken out of the cell by guards, it means that either you will be assaulted or something worse might happen to you. If they put iron handcuffs on you, then you're lucky. You will be thrown back into the cell, and the handcuffs will be removed, as handcuffs should be given back.

But if the operatives who came in sneakers put plastic handcuffs on you, that's the worst thing. Most likely, they still have a bag in their back pocket, which they will put over your head and drive you away. Most likely, you won't come back. I don't think anyone knows where they are now or what happened to them.

I know that the Luhansk SSU officers who adopted Nazism participated in the murder of my good friend Mikhail, Associate Professor, a Luhansk University lecturer. We often saw each other; he came to see me in Kharkiv, I went to visit him in Luhansk. He said that they would probably kill him. That's the way it happened. They did not get dirty, and they even entrusted it to groups brought up on the anti-human Nazi ideology. These are precisely the groups. There are lots of under Avakov. Groups under his leadership are in the structures of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The SSU has its own groups. Similarly, the oligarchs, both the all-Ukrainian oligarchs and the rich people, have their own structures for doing dirty tasks in the regions. So, the SSU officers had practiced transferring dirty tasks to ordinary Ukrainian police goons. That is, those who were hired for this case.

When they stopped assaulting me in the SSU prison, I was handed over to the Poltava detention center No. 23. They purposely took me out of Kharkiv to make it difficult for relatives to communicate with me and bring care packages. But relatives came, brought packages, so I was just staying in jail. At first, I was in bed and, funny enough, I had a thorough rest, fortunately. After a week, I realized that I was somehow alive. I stayed in the detention center No. 23 in Poltava together with ordinary criminals.

I was charged with Part 2 of Article 263, "keeping of explosives". This is the reason my case was seized. And then they start blowing

whistles. Ammunition is planted everywhere and on everyone, in their apartments, their pockets, and car trunks of thousands of people like me. And their cases were closed under these Articles, and then they began making up their accusations... I was charged with Article 110, "endangering the constitutional order". However, they failed to prove anything.

In 2014, there was the first significant exchange. And every one was taken out, and I was left alone in the cell. And that was the hardest bit. I heard the prison buses left, and I was left alone in my cell. After that, I was transferred to another cell, a solitary cell where I spent 56 days; a severe test, both psychological and physical. To be honest, especially during the first few weeks, I realized that, most likely, they would kill me. When I was in solitary confinement, I could hear the bags being put on the prisoners' heads. I've seen operatives go around with this kind of thing. They have plastic clamps, only wide, and black bags which they put on their heads. It's very unpleasant to realize that this can happen to you. There was a shower room nearby, where people were often tortured and assaulted.

It's scary; you can hear it so clearly even where they assault the prisoners – to the ribs and the stomach. And it's nighttime in prison. When it's quiet, you can hear it. When a person hits his head against a wall or falls on the floor, you can also hear it. And there is a pipe over there raised by a meter; they fasten you up to it by your wrist: you can neither sit down nor stand up, you just up in the air. And it's very convenient to assault you with anything, either with clubs or with feet.

The women were screaming, and I was concerned about my wife. I didn't know where she was, whether she'd left or not. As crazy as it sounds, when they were screaming, I tried to tell from her voice whether it was my wife or not. And then it's crazy, of course, but thank God it's not mine, although it's terrible to hear tortured women screaming. They were placed on the opposite side, which is called the "valley" along my corridor. Several women were within a few cells away from me.

And I do not know who was tortured there. I was exchanged and taken to Donetsk. There was no trial. It was a kidnapping, an attempt of psychological pressure, to force a confession. Why they decided to get rid of me in this way, I am sure that my wife did exactly the right

thing. She found the mental strength not to remain silent, as many did and as I asked her. No way, she began writing to the Embassy, to the UN, and the OSCE. Several people joined in, including from the Russian side, who were utterly unfamiliar to me at that time, and Ukrainian real human rights activists, several movements in Kharkiv, all joined in.

The case was publicly disclosed. I was visited several times by representatives of the OSCE and even representatives of the UN in the Poltava prison. I think that such publicity and media attention, primarily in Russia, at that time, made my physical removal to be not entirely appropriate to the political authorities in Kyiv. So it happened that they exchanged me on December 26.

Ruslan Anatolievich Panchuk, former political prisoner

I am a Kharkiv resident. I am Russian, with a Russian grandfather, a Russian mother. And when the events started in Ukraine, in Kyiv, of course, we watched it on TV and cried. When you watch TV, it seems that everything is far away.

But “Friendship Trains” started to arrive. The “Friendship Train” is a train filled with militants in full uniform coming to the city. It doesn’t matter whether it’s a big or small city. They immediately got off the train, went to the city center, and started bringing down Lenin’s monument. If the residents defended the monument to Lenin, it means that the city is defiant, and the city will be crushed. If the people hid away, it means that the city has surrendered,

this is roughly what happened to us. Our city leaders gathered in the Sports Palace on February 22 and then went straight to the square in a direct procession. They took ropes, paint and decided to ruin our monument. Residents of the city were outraged, started to chase them. Taxi drivers tried to drive cars directly on them. They hid in the regional administration, and traitors opened the doors to them.

Before that, there was a terrible feeling of fascists taking over the country. I walked around and cried, being frustrated. My daughter found a call on the Internet for me: people and peaceful citizens were called upon to protect the city, to protect the monument. On the morning of February 23, we all gathered, got acquainted, and realized that a small mesh fence was erected around the monument. We were told

that bandits had arrived, destroying our city and seizing the regional administration. The police were confused, demoralized. They were ordered not to get involved.

We had never seen anything like that before – people threw Molotov cocktails at living people, and the police did nothing. It was terrifying. Then the townsmen began to gather. Veterans came wearing their awards and asked to release the regional administration, and these bastards grabbed these grandfathers and pulled them to their den.

And the people who were around couldn't tolerate it. They pushed through these barriers and rushed over there towards the administration. These bandits were dragged from the regional administration to the square and handed over to the police. We were naive, we thought that the law prevails in the country, and they had been immediately released.

Then people started disappearing. We just come, and the person is not there. There was a guy who used to be a peacekeeper, he's ex-military, and he's gone missing. He turned up a few days later. He was as white as a sheet, with a blank look. He said he wouldn't get involved in anything else. It turns out that the SSU officers captured him. He was maimed in the basements. They did terrible things to him, so he was not himself at all. I could understand he was being bullied physically because this chap was massive, solid, but his face was like a white sheet after that. He was so morally destroyed that he said he couldn't take it anymore, got up, and left.

People started to disappear, and finally, it was our turn. There were several of us. I didn't know that the two of my guys, the Shekhovtsov's father, and son, had been taken away the day before. Sergey is the father, Valery is the son. It turns out that they were taken to the area of Old Saltovo, we have an artificial lake over there, called Pechenezhskoe. And there was the Dnepr Battalion over there.

And they put the guys up for a grilling: they assaulted them on the concrete road. In the meantime, there was a table with vodka and snacks laid on the grass. They drank, had a snack, and carried on abusing them. The father, Sergei Shekhovtsov, was a very small man, and he was lying on the concrete, and they were jumping on him with their feet. At some point, his heart started to stop. The victims were physically and mentally destroyed.

It was time for me as well. I went to the bus stop to meet my friend, Gennady Broder, who was also with us. He arrived by car. As soon as I got in the car, the windows were immediately smashed. Even though we were unarmed, we were shouted at, "Get out". I opened the door, "I'm not fighting". I was wearing a T-shirt and shorts. I was blacked out because my jaw was dislocated, and I was thrown to the ground. I couldn't remember what happened to me next. I remember being punched, kicked between the legs, in the back. My back is still broken.

At first, I could not understand what kind of people they were dressed up in sweaters, balaclavas, with combat pistols. They put a bag on my head, fastened the handcuffs behind my back, and put me on my knees. I thought they were going to shoot me. A voice was heard, "SSU".

I thought, well, thank God, at least, it was not the Right Sector, at least there would be some kind of legality, but I was wrong. I was put in the back seat of a car and interrogated. You know how they ask questions. I tried to answer, but not clearly because of the bag, and they punched the words back into my chest.

They didn't need my answers. I could figure out from the quiet conversations they had with each other that they had already known everything about us. They were just mocking me. They broke my ribs with one of their punches. I thought my mouth was going to bleed.

If it hadn't been for my wife, who ran out of the house and started screaming, they would have continued assaulting me. I nearly fainted. That is, when they began to show me that some papers had to be signed, I couldn't do anything. My hands came out of the joints. They twisted off my hands like this. If you want me to sign something, get my hands back into joint. They unfastened the handcuffs and put my hands back in place.

I didn't care what I signed at the time. I had a concussion. My face was smashed in, and my jaw was dislocated. I looked like Shrek. We were put there. There was some form of interrogation; we signed something. I don't remember anything. I didn't understand what was going on. Some weapons, some machine guns. They brought us

to a detention center, and when the guards saw us, they refused to accept us. Regardless of age.

One of our comrades was with us, a detective, a former police major, a retired person. While being transported, he had a heart attack. He was in terrible condition, an ambulance was called. He was an elderly man. He had been assaulted on the head. I am sure that he was not involved in anything. A supporter – he has never even been to the square.

I've been assaulted like a sack of potatoes. I've already said goodbye to my life, to be honest. There were guards in the detention center. They are still Soviet people. When they saw all this, they were shocked. I was crippled on the next day. Literally until morning. I lay down with no memory. In the isolation ward, there are normal beds: single-story and soft, with a mattress. In the morning, I opened my eyes and tried to get up. Like an ordinary person, I tried to put my foot out of bed, but I couldn't move my leg. They said I started screaming. The guard came running, asking, "What's wrong with you?" I said, "I can't move". I called an ambulance, a doctor arrived. The doctor, thank God, turned out to be a normal person. He looked at me, amazed that I was all black and blue. He injected me with analgesic, anti-inflammatory stuff. They lifted me by the back of my head like a plank and put me up. There was a horrible pain in my body; I couldn't move. I was so severely beaten that I couldn't move.

Another friend of ours is Sasha Razbomiy, who previously worked as a supply manager, so he was able to read documents very carefully. If I didn't read anything that I signed, Sasha read everything carefully, down to the last comma. The address was not his when they came to the rummage. The name was written by mistake. They continued the search, handcuffed him, put a box of ammunition in the back of his hand so that he left fingerprints, and took him away.

At the trial, he stood up and told the whole story. The judge turned to the prosecutor, "Does the Prosecutor's Office pursue a charge?" The prosecutor said that he did not pursue it, yet he remained sentenced to two months. Then the secretary came to him and said, "Guys, no offense, the judge will lose his shoulder boards".

That's how it was when we were arrested. The pressure was put on the court. We had never seen any lawyers. When we were brought to the detention center, where the cells were filled with ordinary criminals, we had to wait several hours while making inventory lists. I had already fallen asleep in the box; there was a bench there while waiting for my turn. We were so beaten and maimed that the paramedic attended to us for a long time. Thank God that there are normal people, even in prison. When we were brought in, I was called to go away to have a word.

They can see that we are activists, and at the same time, we are human beings, that I do not break the law, I do not deny the authorities, that I fight for constitutionality, for legality. They met all this with affliction and said, "Sorry, there are only upper bunks. Will you get in?" Well, what do you do? I'll get in. I was very grateful to him that he put me in a small cell. There was a militia member and a minor criminal. No one bothered me. I felt terrible. I was dying. I could barely get in, sat on the bunk, but could not lie down. All my bones were in such a state that I could not lie down. Bunks are steel plates welded in a row with gaps with a thin mattress on the top. I just couldn't lie down. I somehow curled up in the morning because I lost my strength.

Something was happening to my body that I then asked the nurses what had happened to me, and they said that my body was dying. This could happen to a person in such a situation. That's the feeling.

I don't know how I survived. I had a strong body. I was a sportsman. I couldn't get up or lie down. My jaw was dislocated, and I couldn't understand why I couldn't open my mouth. Sometimes, a small window opened. When the nurse came, she asked if we had any complaints. I told her I couldn't open my mouth. The doctor came, looked through the window of the hut, and said, "Put something warm". And that's it! And everything remained the same, no help. I got sick in the cell; it was cold, the drafts were terrible.

I fixed my jaw myself, being a former employee of the Ministry of Emergency Situations. I pulled it down, a little forward, and it snapped back into place. I held it as best I could. I just didn't realize that it could be knocked out. I thought my mouth wouldn't open because of the bruise. They assaulted me so hard that my skull was ready

to burst. They interrogated me, and I couldn't understand what they wanted from me as they walloped me on my head. They have tactical-field gloves with plastic plates.

They struck me on the head so that I couldn't see the light of day. I couldn't understand what they were trying to get out of me with such assaults, what kind of testimonies. My shoulders were dislocated, and my ribs were broken. I had only aspirin and analgin before it happened, now my blood pressure jumps to 170, and my legs are damaged. The guys are all in similar condition. Gena Broder, the driver who picked us up. He had a retinal detachment in his eyes. He had minus six in eyesight, and they assaulted us.

I am accused as if we were going to engage in terrorist acts, change of regime in Ukraine, separatism. We wanted federalization within Ukraine. I realize that people on the other side of Ukraine are not like us. They are neither Orthodox Christians, nor Catholics. They love Bandera. We demanded federalization: on May 9, they have Bandera, and we have veterans. We had already agreed to this.

They just came being armed. Do you know how the mopping up of Kharkiv took place? Police officers arrived from Vinnytsia, Poltava, Sumy, and our people were replaced. Kharkiv Golden Eagles almost staged a shootout with the Vinnytsia Jaguars. Just at 6 am, the Vinnytsia Jaguars smashed into the administration building, and there was a private military company that did not understand either Russian or Ukrainian.

Why I know it: I was standing talking to women who were making coffee and sandwiches for them to leave, and a man with a machine gun pushed me, he was wearing a mask and couldn't understand either Russian or Ukrainian. The women were kicked out and began to mop up the regional administration, where the protesters were.

And then the corpses were taken out of the yard. Those who resisted were killed. They secretly took them out of the yard quietly. I know that 70 people were detained, and 14 of them were immediately released. They were provocateurs, agents who were introduced to the protest movement. I saw them, but I could not understand that they were provocateurs; we were naive.

We sincerely demanded something, caught Banderites, disarmed them, took off their vests, handed them over to the SSU. We thought it was some kind of law, and we didn't even assault them. We couldn't even allow any atrocity. Before that, I was just an ordinary father, a husband, and a hard worker. I can't imagine the level of brutality you have to go to hit a man with a stick... We resisted, fought with them, defended our own Kharkiv police, who tried to play a trick on us. We were defending our city when the newcomers started to destroy it. These visitors started shooting at the police with traumatic weapons and throwing explosive packages. That is, they are beasts.

We were threatened with a sentence of up to 15 years and intimidated very much; it was terrifying. Especially when I was summoned for questioning, and the first question was from the SSU officer, "Well, are we putting your wife in jail?" My heart almost stopped at such a question, and I was in tears. I have a child, is that my wife's fault? They talk like that; they'll make prostitutes out of my daughters and everything else. And all our people were intimidated like that.

In SSU, they assaulted my friend when he refused to give evidence. He was hit with a stick right in the office. They told him straight out that he didn't know where he was. He huddled in a corner between the table and the wall, just to get less. He wasn't aware who hit him because the security guard came out and put on a mask to show no evidence that he assaulted him. Alexander Razlomiy, now lives near Belgorod. We've got:

Alexander Razlomiy, Gennady Broder, two of the Shekhovtsovs: Sergey is the father, Valery is the son. And there was also Gennady Onishchenko, a former police major, a detective, an elderly man. They bullied him so much that they almost gave him a heart attack. They hit him on his head very hard. They assaulted everyone. We were in such a state that the guards in prison refused to accept us. We were just a bloody pulp. I have a release certificate where I look like Shrek. I was shaved then, photographed, and my face was swollen, my jaw pushed to the side, that is, a real Shrek.

There was a man celled together with me, a militiaman; his name was Alexander Marchenko. His friend was assaulted so severely that

his body was disposed of. They were celled together in the SSU. he wife of my friend came for a visit, and he went missing. How can a person disappear from the SSU? How could it be?

It was the SSU that committed the atrocities in Izyum. The Izyum SSU is just something else. If they committed atrocities in Kharkiv, they acted like nazist in Izyum. Everyone knew that the Izyum SSU were beasts. The guys from one cell said they were taken to the prison by the Izyum SSU officers. They were thrown into the car, smashed, and wounded. The SSU officers threw crates from a man-portable air defense system on top and sat on people. They rape men. There is a video: there Valera Ovralenko was given an interview, gray, stuttering, he was kept in a pit, under the open sky, he smelled like a decomposed corpse. It's mind-boggling.

One guy said that the SSU tore his passport, pushed him down into a hole, and covered him with earth. Especially in Izyum, the atrocities were easier in Kharkiv. People were thrown into a concrete pit, where the corpses were already half-decomposed, and buried alive. The girl was serving tea there, and they killed her. The SSU officer was playing with two pistols and shot her in the head.

He killed the girl for nothing. These are the guys who were celled with us in Izyum; they told us such things. You know, there are people, and there are inhumans. It's just terrible. That is, we were exhausted and assaulted, but we realized that we still got off lightly.

Alexander Viktorovich Petrunko, Former Political Prisoner

Human rights violations in Ukraine are clear. Now, in 2020, the situation has deteriorated. It has not improved or stabilized. It has deteriorated compared to 2014. Now there are almost open violations of human rights in Ukraine.

Every person who tries to show their disagreement with the current policy of Ukraine immediately falls into the category of the enemy. He is labeled as an agent of Russia and the Kremlin. And immediately, they begin to press him. For this purpose, nationalists are used under the leadership of the SSU or Avakov.

Avakov himself is the very source of human rights violations in Ukraine because many things are done at his behest by the Nazis.

They use the tools of the Nazis, nationalists, and all those who shout “Glory to Ukraine”. Beneficial since they can say that they have nothing to do with it, that this is a crime war. There is a strict screening of everything that can somehow damage or enter the political platform.

When they spoke or made films about the Donbas, some European journalists immediately fell into the category of enemies of Ukraine and should be put in jail. Or they ended up being put into Myrotvorets (Peacemaker) database. You know perfectly well what Myrotvorets is, where all the information is laid out. A person becomes an enemy and is persecuted.

Power in Ukraine is now held only in one way – by force. That is, they have chosen this method, I am sure, being advised by America. Using harsh methods, which is uncompromising, intolerant, leads to destruction, so now everything is coming into play in Ukraine. Anyone who does not meet specific standards will be destroyed. And the authority will give its go-ahead for this.

And Europe will make some comments on this. Please pay attention to how many times a note of protest was submitted; Europe spoke about certain journalists. But Ukraine is a country where norms of international law don't exist.

When I was tortured, I experienced this when I was detained without trial and investigation, forcing any confessions out of me by violence. It was torture, that is, I was drowned, shocked with electricity. They staged me being shot, my body parts being cut off, I was psychologically pressed up, strangled, etc. Therefore, I would like to emphasize that these violations of human rights in Ukraine do take place. Moreover, they intensified.

I was abducted by people who didn't identify themselves. They put a bag on me and took me away in an unknown direction. I described all this, filed a complaint with the OSCE in Kharkiv, but, unfortunately, they didn't even want to listen to me, I think. I did a forensic examination of the torture. I was tortured for a long time, almost for 24 hours. It was from January 18 to January 19, and then on January 19, I was thrown away with a bag on my head. And until that time, there was torture, an indirect meaning of the word.

When they took me, they started assaulting me in the car and saying that they would bury me now in the pits. Whether you have a lawyer or not, it doesn't matter. Every person who has attracted attention undergoes thorough unofficial pressure first. It can be assault, abduction, or torture. No one is interested in human rights.

I mean, they brought me in, stripped me naked, tied me up with duct tape, and gagged me. And then there were processes – electricity was used, I was lowered into cold water and drowned. They said that my genitals would be cut off, then they would suffocate me. They asked who I knew from the militia, secret meeting places, passwords, asked about money, and so on. They asked me what I didn't know, that I should say something. But since I didn't know anything, I was ready to accept what was there, saying that it was God's will.

And in the morning, at 4–5 o'clock, as it was getting light, they put a bag on me again, after pouring in a bottle of vodka, knowing that I was not a drinker, I never drank. They put a bottle of vodka into my mouth. They waited for me to leave, but I didn't, because they poisoned me.

They put a bag on my head and threw me out of town on the circular road. They received the order because they coordinated all their actions over the phone with their superiors. That is, the method of torture was no longer like assaulting, but like in Guantanamo. So as not to leave any particular traces.

But of course, they left traces, so the lawyer insisted that I do a forensic examination first. I made it, and I have all papers in my hands. I described everything in detail, after which I had to leave before I got really bad. Because I was later put on the wanted list. I'm listed in Myrotvorets there.

What are the human rights in Ukraine? There is no question of rights because you are taken somewhere in the pit. I have many acquaintances, my friends from Kharkiv, who have been kept in the pits for over a month. Because these prisons are unofficial, they can be in the form of ATO bases, military bases, pits. The room where I was tortured had no windows, only a door. There was blood all over the walls, so I wasn't the first one there. You can see the

blood. They brought me to the torture room, literally to the torture room.

It was in Kharkiv, maybe near Kharkiv. I do not know where it was. Maybe it's a summer camp that's been turned into a base. I can say that they are allowed to do everything. "There is such a task – to extinguish all the separatists and all the discontent. We give you all the tools to do so. Accordingly, the result is important for us". I was personally told that the first time I was arrested, then the second time I was taken, it was Avakov who ordered it. We held events, "Forgive me, Mother Russia", they are on the Internet. After that, Avakov ordered, as the people from the department explained to me, to destroy. I mean, people like me shouldn't exist.

Ukrainian human rights activists and former political prisoners give a detailed assessment of what is happening in the country. Let us quote these indicative estimates and generalizations.

Yuriy Mikhailovich Apukhtin, Former Political Prisoner

Political activity in Ukraine is prohibited. Only structures and people who support the current government can act.

Now there is an extreme wave of so-called "volunteers". This is all for American and European grants, which massively buy clothing, food, and even equipment for the military who are in the Donbas.

This is officially allowed. And political and human rights activities in general from the view of protecting the rights of people who are determined to interact with Russia are suppressed. That is, you can't talk about it. They find any way to keep a person's mouth shut.

Igor Gennadievich Polovnev, Odesa Resident, Political Refugee

There was intimidation, and it continues in Ukraine. People are scared to go out. People are intimidated. They are still scared, and they are afraid to say something, they are afraid to put on some kind of symbols, they took away Lenin figurines, pennants, which people were proud of from their offices, like a teacher I know, even an elderly

lady, who is 70–80 years old. Suppose they don't put you in jail. In that case, good guys with nationalistically correct beliefs will come and straighten out your brains, or vice versa – straighten you out on the asphalt, as it is done with those representatives of the Party of Shariy or The Party – “Pro-Life”.

In the Odesa region, a pensioner hung this banner for the holidays at his dacha, and a case was opened against him. Specifically, everyone from my family hid away. Everyone stays at home, and no one says anything. There are no beacons, and people try not to be spotted on Facebook. Life is getting worse. They squeeze out everything from the farmers. The harvest is squeezed out, the fields, the land. The nationalist battalions squeeze it out.

Anna Leonidovna Boryak, Lawyer, Kyiv

In Ukraine, human rights under the European Convention are not just violated. They don't exist. They are missing as such.

Consider, for example, the right to a fair trial. The government declares and guarantees this right to the people. The judicial system is being forced to serve the authorities' interests, not the interests of the law in our country.

The government has the right to use force. In our country, the radicals have the right to use force separately from the authorities. There is a “right to kill”. This right belongs to someone unknown, radical organizations that break buildings, premises, windows, assault people. And no one has been prosecuted.

It is enough to look at the press and understand whether people have been punished after public situations of causing bodily harm, property damage, and murder. Radicals came to us, seized the premises, lawyers, right in the premises of the National Bar Association. The police were called and did nothing. A whole group of lawyers were captured by deranged radicals, kept all there.

Andrey Alexandrovich Gozhy, Lawyer

In Ukraine, there are clear manifestations of fascist tendencies. Paramilitary organizations have been created under pseudo-patriotic flags, which work in conjunction with the Ukrainian law enforcement

agencies. Either side does not hide this. And they do the dirty task of suppressing dissent. That is, they attack objectionable activists, public figures, lawyers, and journalists. They are being killed, as has happened many times in Ukraine. The work of the police, justice, prosecutor's office, and security services are highly inefficient, unprofessional, and as corrupt as possible.

Alexander Viktorovich Petrunko, Former Political Prisoner

Human rights in Ukraine do not exist as long as this power exists, which is increasingly becoming a Nazi power. Only in this way can they hold power. If there are human rights, they will immediately lose power. Therefore, they can not allow this to happen in any way.

RUSSOPHOBIA, THE GLORIFICATION OF NAZISM AND ANTI-SEMITISM IN MODERN UKRAINE

It is no exaggeration to say that the modern Ukrainian ideology is based on the idea of Russophobia with the simultaneous glorification of Nazism and its accomplices, as well as the notion of European identity of the Ukrainian people and the irreversibility of the European and Euro-Atlantic course of Ukraine (the latter is enshrined in the preamble to the Constitution of the country). According to these ideologies, both the Ukrainian government's actions and the country's political space are built. By them, the repressive policy of the state, the work of the intelligence services, and the actions of the death squads and state propaganda are organized.

One of the elements of Russophobia imposed by the Ukrainian state is the reduction and denigration of the role of the USSR and the Ukrainian people, who fought against Nazism during the Great Patriotic War, and the exaltation of Ukrainian nationalists who collaborated with the fascists, fighting against the Russian language and imposing Ukrainian, the persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Alexander Viktorovich Petrunko, Former Political Prisoner

In Ukraine, everything that concerns the Russian language, culture, and history should be erased. Any names, military leaders, monuments. In fact, everything associated with the history, culture, religion of Russia, the Russian language, everything that concerns Russia. This is the enemy.

I always resented Oleksander being written in the Ukrainian passport but not Alexander. I always resented it: How is it? I don't understand; my name is Alexander, it's a Russian name, why should it sound in Ukrainian? Because when my USSR passport was taken away, and I was given a new passport, I paid attention to it. How is that? If you don't like it, get out of here, that's what they told me. But since I had a family and a small child, I had to stay at that time. Therefore, any mention of Russianness of the pedigree will be eradicated. I advised everyone who wants to kill, destroy everything Russian, fight with the Donbas. If you want to defeat all the Russians in Ukraine, take a small blade and cut your veins for one reason. When you have the last drop of your Russian blood to fall, you will defeat the Russians. You can destroy the Russian in the Donbas, in the whole territory of Ukraine, but you can't defeat him in yourself because you have to kill yourself. A lot of you have Russian origin, and your religion is the same, so the task is to split, destroy, take away the borders, destroy the churches, and persecute the Orthodox parishioners. The situation will continue to deteriorate with regard to all Russian.

Their task is to separate them forever, irrevocably, completely. Everything Russian is being destroyed to raise the generation of people who will kill for a particular nation – Ukraine. And at the same time, they will know from the cradle that Russia is worse for them than Hitler, the fascists, although evil is trying to shift its blame to good. Therefore, there can be no rights in Ukraine now. Now the only right is to destroy everything Russian. And the more you destroy, the more you will be a hero and get benefits.

Anton Viacheslavovich Polovenko, Political Refugee

There was such a story when in one school, it was a Ukrainian lyceum; they organized a collection of children's crafts for the ATO fighters.

There were various plates as crafts. One of the plates that made a lot of noise and about which, while I was still there, I wrote a statement, was a compote called "Blood of Russian babies". Then the whole situation was hushed up.

The trouble is that today there is not just a rigid Ukrainization at schools, but children's consciousness is being changed. The history and historical approaches have been changed. A certain mythical story

is being created. Russia has always been the enemy of Ukraine; there has always been a confrontation, where Ukraine is an ancient European nation. The results of the Great Patriotic War are being reviewed. Even President Zelensky said that the USSR attacked Ukraine. Ukraine suddenly found itself separated from the USSR and became the object of Soviet aggression.

Modern Ukrainian ideology inculcates the myth, which contradicts the decisions of the Nuremberg trial and numerous facts, that the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists fought against the fascists. With the latter's help, the Ukrainian government was created, the continuity with which the current government of the country sees. Within the same myth, the USSR and the Russians were the enemies of the Ukrainians. For example, in the textbook by V. S. Vlasov and O. M. Danilevskaya for the 5th grade, it is indicated: "Under the tutelage of the OUN, the Ukrainian government was created, and with the beginning of the Soviet-Nazi war, the formation of the Ukrainian army began. From the first days of the war, detachments of Ukrainian partisans appeared on Ukrainian lands. At the end of 1942, such detachments formed the Ukrainian Insurgent Army — UPA. UPA detachments liberated Ukrainian cities and villages from the Fascist invaders, protected the civilian population. However, the Soviet government did not want Ukraine to have its army. Therefore, when the Nazi invaders were expelled from the Ukrainian lands in 1943, the Bolsheviks began to fight with the UPA. This shameful war against its own people continued until 1953. It led to new victims and became another evidence of the Bolshevik terror".

In reality, instead of the "Ukrainian government" during the fascist occupation of Ukraine, there was only a statement made in Lviv. It was not taken seriously even by the German troops, whose units included its initiators.

On June 30, 1941, the Nachtigall Battalion, together with the Brandenburg-800 Abwehr Division entered Lviv, left without a fight by the Soviet troops. On the evening of June 30, 1941, in the building of the Lviv organization "Prosvity", Ya. Stetsko, in the presence of Abwehr officer Dr. Koch and Wehrmacht officers, read out the "Act on the Proclamation of the Ukrainian State" and appointed himself

“the head of the Ukrainian state government”. Then the chaplain of the Nachtigal Battalion Grinyoch conveyed greetings from Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych. Let us quote the full text of this Act, which demonstrates relations with the German fascist troops as allied and establishes “close cooperation with the National Socialist Greater Germany, which, under the leadership of its leader Adolf Hitler, is creating a new order in Europe”:

1. By the will of the Ukrainian people, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists under the leadership of Stepan Bandera proclaims the creation of the Ukrainian State. All generations of the best sons of Ukraine laid their heads. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, under the leadership of its Founder and Leader, Yevgeny Konovalets, led a stubborn struggle for freedom in the last decades of the bloody Moscow-Bolshevik enslavement. Calls on the entire Ukrainian people not to lay down their arms for so long until a Sovereign Ukrainian Government is established on all Ukrainian lands. The Sovereign Ukrainian Government will provide the Ukrainian people with peace and order, comprehensive development of all their forces, and satisfaction of all their needs.

2. In the western lands of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Government is being created, which will be subordinate to the Ukrainian National Government, which will be made in the capital of Ukraine — Kyiv.

3 The newly created Ukrainian State will work closely with the National Socialist Greater Germany, which, under the leadership of its leader Adolf Hitler, is creating a new order in Europe and the world and helping the Ukrainian people to free themselves from the Moscow occupation. The Ukrainian National Revolutionary Army, which is being created on Ukrainian ground, will continue to fight together with the Allied German Army against the Moscow occupation for a Sovereign Conciliar State and a new order worldwide. Long live the Sovereign Conciliar Ukrainian State! Long live the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists! Long live the head of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian People Stepan Bandera! Glory to Ukraine!”

We remind the reader that in modern Ukraine, on January 22, 2017, a memorial plaque was unveiled to Nazi collaborator Yevgeny Konovalets on 24, Sichevyh Streltsov Street, in Kyiv.

Alexei Samoilov, Lecturer, Ph. D., Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner

In Ukraine, the process of dehumanizing, deleting people from the human list continues. The formation of a new neo-Nazi Ukrainian ideology continues there. There are Ukrainian Nazis who actively or passively accept Ukrainian neo-Nazism, where there are four basic postulates: the right of absolute force, the right of absolute superiority, the right of total violence, the right of unlimited expansion And all the rest... Who they are, ethno-confessional affiliation does not make a big difference. The marker becomes political expediency. Of course, Nazi Ukrainian was created as an anti-Russian ideology. And those who are now promoting Ukrainian nationalism are talking about neo-Nazism. When and what marker to apply and stick on the forehead of the next victim does not matter. Now it is Shariy, a political opponent of the Zelensky group and the oligarchs behind it. Traditionally, the enemies are both Russian citizens and people who hold pro-Russian or pro-Russian views. They are also excluded from the category of people based on their religious affiliation. First of all, this is the ROC. The most important thing for them is to devalue, dehumanize, defame, slander, and trample the Church in the mud, and then all the people who follow it. Traditionally, again, it is the Russian language. It is a serious marker. The Russian views, the Russian language, and the ROC are a triune unity that defines the absolute enemy of Ukrainian.

In the materials of the Nuremberg trial, the leaders of the Ukrainian nationalists S. Bandera and A. Melnik, who was glorified by the modern Ukrainian authorities, are classified as paid agents from the Gestapo, and the phrase “nationalist, fascist groups” was used concerning their organizations. We remind the reader that on December 9, 2019, the Sixth Administrative Court of Appeal of Kyiv confirmed the legality of the decision of the Kyiv Administration to rename Moskovsky Prospekt and General Vatutin Avenue in Kyiv to the avenues of Nazi collaborators Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych.

In his testimony at the Nuremberg trials, the former colonel of the German army, E. Stolze, testified: “I received instructions from

Lahousen¹ to organize and lead a special group under the provisional name “A”, which was to prepare acts of sabotage and work on decomposition in the Soviet rear in connection with the planned attack on the Soviet Union... The order stated that to deliver a lightning strike to the Soviet Union, the Abwehr-2 while carrying out subversive work against Russia, should use its agents to incite national hostility between the peoples of the Soviet Union. Following the instructions mentioned above of Keitel and Jodl, I contacted Ukrainian nationalists who were in the service of German intelligence and other members of nationalist, fascist groups, whom I attracted to perform the tasks set out above. In particular, I personally instructed the leaders of the Ukrainian nationalists, German agents Melnik (nickname “Consul-1”) and Bandera, to organize provocative actions in Ukraine immediately after the German attack on the Soviet Union to undermine the nearest rear of the Soviet troops, as well as to convince international public opinion of the alleged disintegration of the Soviet rear”². To the question of the Prosecutor General of the USSR R. Rudenko: “Do I understand correctly that the formations of Ukrainian nationalists were created on the instructions of the German command?” the witness Lahousen replies: “They were Ukrainian descendants from Galicia. These were organizations of descendants from Galicia who worked for the Abwehr. These were saboteurs who were supposed to be engaged in sabotage. In the territories with which Germany was at war, for example, Poland”³.

Gestapo agent A. Melnyk is the official hero of modern Ukraine. His activities are cited as an example for young people. For example, in December 2020, the country’s National Museum opened an exhibition dedicated to him, “Andriy Melnik is a warrior and sobornik”.

Several documents and testimonies indicate that Germany took an active part and provided material support from the very beginning of the existence of Ukrainian nationalist organizations. For example, in the reference report on the Ukrainian question No 10 of November 19,

¹ Major General Lahousen — Head of the 2nd Counterintelligence Division and Deputy to Admiral Canaris

² The Nuremberg Trials: Proceedings V. 1 2nd edition, revised and enlarged, M: State Publishing House of Legal Literature, 1954. Page 381.

³ The Trial of German Major War Criminals, Nuremberg, Germany, November 20 to December 1, 1945, Ninth Day: Friday, 30th November, 1945.

1933, it is written: “About ten years ago, an agreement was concluded between the former head of German counterintelligence and the head of the OUN, Colonel Konovalts. According to this agreement, the Ukrainian organization received material support, for which it supplied counterintelligence with data on the Polish army. Later, the organization also took over the preparation of combat and sabotage missions. Monthly payments have reached 9,000 Reichsmarks”¹.

In the minutes of the interrogation of I. V. Kutkovets, dated February 1, 1944, recorded: “Long before the German-Polish war of 1939 in Western Ukraine there was an organization of Ukrainian nationalists, the so-called OUN. This organization was led by Colonel Yevhen Konovalts (former commander of the 1st Rifle Corps of the Sich Streltsy). After Konovalts was killed in Rotterdam in 1938, the organization was headed by Konovalts’ former Chief of Staff, Colonel Melnik. The highest governing authority of the OUN was Kraevy Provod. The OUN put prime tasks to combat against Polish statehood, for the national liberation of the Ukrainian lands that were part of the territory of the Polish state, as well as for the “liberation” and “unification of all Ukrainian lands into a unified Ukrainian, so-called Conciliary State”. Since ancient times, Germany, claiming to seize the rich Ukrainian lands, was interested in the existence of the OUN, meaning in the future to use it combating for the creation of an “independent” Ukraine in its own interests. Based on this, Germany fully supported the OUN in its practical activities, provided shelter for nationalist emigrants, and financed the OUN. The published Surma newspaper, bulletins, and other nationalist literature were printed in Germany. Some of the nationalist literature was illegally published in Lviv, Krakow and other cities of Western Ukraine”.

There is no doubt about the appeal of the current hero of the Ukrainian government, A. Melnik to Adolf Hitler, made on July 7, 1940: “The Ukrainian people, who, like other nations, have fought for their will for centuries, taking to heart the idea of creating a New Europe. The task of the entire Ukrainian people remains to implement this ideal in real life. We, the old freedom fighters of 1918–1921, ask

¹ Central State Archive of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine. F. 4628. On. 1. Article 10.

to be honored together with our youth to take part in the crusade against Bolshevik barbarism. We would like, together with the legions of Europe, to go shoulder to shoulder with our liberator, the German Wehrmacht, and be able to create a Ukrainian armed formation for this purpose”.

It will be interesting for the reader to know that the text of the oath of the soldiers of the SS Division ‘Galicia’, the birthdays of the leadership of which are official memorable dates in modern Ukraine, contained the following words: “I serve you, Adolf Hitler, as the Fuhrer and Chancellor of the German Reich, with loyalty and courage. I swear to you, and I will obey you to the death. So help me God”¹.

The misanthropic Russophobic and anti-Semitic ideology of the OUN, which has been glorified in modern Ukraine, can be clearly seen from the study of their own documents. Let us quote, for example, the instruction “Struggle and activity of the OUN during the War” (item 16 of the section “Instructions for the first days of the organization of state life”), issued in May 1941, which explicitly states that Russians, Poles and Jews are to be exterminated:

“National minorities are divided into: a) friendly to us, that is, members of all enslaved peoples; b) hostile to us — Moskals, Poles, Jews.

a) They have the same rights as Ukrainians, they can return to their homeland.

b) They are destroyed in the struggle... To destroy, first of all, the intelligentsia, which should not be allowed to enter any government institutions, and to make it impossible for the intelligentsia to appear in general, that is, access to schools, etc. For example, the so-called Polish villagers must be assimilated, informing them, especially in this hot time full of zealotry, that they are Ukrainians, only of the Latin rite, forcibly assimilated. Destroy the leaders. Isolate the Jews, remove them from government offices to avoid sabotage, especially Moskals and Poles. If there was an irresistible demand to keep a Jew in the economic apparatus, put our policeman above him, and liquidate him in case of the slightest offense. The leaders of certain areas of life

¹ Ukrainski Istorik Magazine New York; Toronto; Munich, 1981. No. 1. Page 163.

can only be Ukrainians, and not foreign enemies. Assimilation of Jews is excluded “¹.

These facts, as well as many others, show that Russophobia, hatred of the Russian state and people were the main element of the ideology of the Nazi collaborators, whom modern Ukraine considers as its national heroes. Simultaneously with the glorification of the Nazis and the state-cultivated hatred of Russians, a pro-European vector is declared. Let us quote a typical assessment of the current situation.

Sergey Olegovich Yudaev, Journalist and Former Ukrainian Political Prisoner

Now the Ukrainian nation is all pro-European. They say that the Mosks are cattle and livestock, but the Ukrainians are well done. But after all, neither Muscovites, nor citizens from Tomsk or Tula work in Poland, do they? And no one goes there to Poland to pick strawberries and apples, only the titular Ukrainian ethnic group works as slaves to the gentlemen. Something went wrong somewhere. Here they are now angry and furious. Now we have even those who once supported the Maidan, they now have everything turned upside down in their heads so much that they understand that they jumped somewhere wrong.

The state policy of Russophobia is imposed through a mass propaganda campaign of harassment of those who oppose it, through censorship in the media, arrests and attacks on those who oppose it. For example, activists and offices of the Opposition Platform — For Life were often subjected to such attacks. On May 23, 2020, another attack was made on the Party’s office. The Party’s representatives accused the police of assisting the attackers, as they blocked the Party’s security service, and “instead of the bandits, they detained 11 people who resisted the bandit attack, who tried to prevent the illegal illegal

¹ 4 TsDAVOV. F. 3833. Invt. 2. D. 1 L. 38; ОУН в 1941 році: документи / Інститут історії України НАНУ; упор. Веселова О., Лисенко О., Патриляк І., Сергійчук В.; передмова С. Кульчицький. Київ, 2006. Part 1. Page 103–104 Cit. by: The Forgotten Genocide: Volkhynian massacre of 1943–1944: a collection of documents and studies / comp. by A. Dyukov. M.: Alexey Yakovlev, 2008. Page 64

actions of the national radicals”¹. The latter, as stated in the statement of the “Opposition Platform”, “freely attacked the office workers and the security service, tried to blow up the office, using explosive packages, threw flares and smoke bombs into the windows, doused the building with paint”. On June 23, 2020, the office of the Sharia Party in Zhytomyr was also violently attacked². The video of the incident from the surveillance cameras was published on Facebook by the Head of the Party Anatoly Shariy. The video shows two men, athletic build entering the building where the Party’s office is located and beating a party representative. Later, Olga Shariy told about the identity of the attacker in her Telegram. This is a member of the Azov Death Squad Roman Borovik with the call sign Satan. A number of similar examples are given in the chapter on the Ukrainian death squads.



In the photo, an assaulted member of the Party of Shariy

¹ https://yandex.ru/turbo/rubaltic.ru/s/news/23052020-posle-napadeniya-na-ofis-medvedchuka-v-kieve-gospitalizirovan-odin-chelovek/?utm_source=turbo_turbo%D1%8D

² <https://strana.ua/news/274624-na-hlavu-zhitomirskoj-jachejki-partii-sharija-napal-uchastnik-azova.html>



Anatoly Shariy

Forwarded from OLGA SHARIY



Roman Borovik. The call sign is Satan. Azov.

A dirty, smelly, stupid animal. In a normal country, he would have been celled. In Ukraine, he assaults up people one by one.

He openly assaults our leader of Zhytomyr on video.

He hasn't even been detained today.

We're waiting.

t.me/ASupersharij/3550

62.9K  Jun 22 at 20:53

Screenshot from Anatoly Shariy's Facebook page. Photo of a member of the Azov Death Squad, who assaulted a member of the Party of Shariy.

One example of Russophobia is the repressive measures against people from the Donbas. At the same time, the Ukrainian government creates unbearable conditions of existence even for those who do not participate in opposition events at all. The following is a good example.

Marina Leonidovna Berdetskaya, a Resident of the Donbas

When we arrived, the hospitals did not accommodate us. Neither in Kharkiv, nor in Odessa. We applied, but they said that the residents of Luhansk are not accepted. That is, we can not go through any treatment, rehabilitation is not provided to the child. 8 years old child, infantile cerebral palsy.

Another example of Russophobia is that the Ukrainian authorities also massively violate the rights of Ukrainian-speaking pensioners who are residents of Donbas, denying them the right to receive a pension and thereby putting them on the verge of starvation.

Lyubov Fedorovna Eremenko, Physician at Luhansk City Hospital No. 4.

The majority of the Ukrainian civilian population support the Russian language, they only agree for peace with Russia, as it was in the distant Soviet times. Russian is the first language that everyone uses at home and at work. 90% are for the Russian language only. Only for peace with Russia.

Situation with the payment of pensions is just a disaster in Ukraine. Pensioners who go there (to the territory under the control of the government of Ukraine. – Ed. Note) to receive a pension in winter, they will freeze, they will be nervous. They come with colds with all sorts, ranging from acute respiratory infections to sinusitis, to bronchitis and pneumonia. In the summer, the heat and psychological stress are constant as they cross the border back and forth. In summer, there are heart diseases, hypertensive crises, and strokes. And there are quite a lot of dead people, as long as they pass. Every month about five people die crossing the border. This is moral and physical stress, because it takes a very long time to stay in any weather conditions until they cross the border. It takes at least a day to cross the border, from six

to ten hours to cross from one end to the other. It's only one way. It doesn't work in one day.

Glorification of Nazism and its accomplices

An integral part of the modern official ideology of Ukraine is the glorification of Nazism and its accomplices. An eloquent example of this is Resolution No. 2364 on the celebration of memorable dates and anniversaries in 2020, adopted by the Verkhovna Rada. This resolution fixes the policy of the Ukrainian state to glorify Nazi accomplices. Separately, we emphasize that the recognition of the Nazis as modern “heroes” is supported by the majority of the modern government of Ukraine. It is indicative of the fact that 305 deputies of the Verkhovna Rada out of a total of 450 people voted for Resolution No. 2364.

The head of the Ukrainian Jewish Committee, Eduard Dolinsky, gives an analysis of a number of these official “holidays”:

- 280 years since the birth of Maxim Zheleznyak, the leader of the Koliivschyna, the organizer of Jewish pogroms and the mass murderer of the Jews of Uman in 1768;
- February 6 is the 100th anniversary of the birth of the Nazi Vasyl Levkovich, a war criminal from the Ukrainian auxiliary police of Dubno, organizer and participant of the mass murder of 5 thousand Jews of Dubno and many thousands of Jews of Rivne;
- February 20 is the 115th anniversary of the birth of the Nazi Ulas Sam-chuk, editor-in-chief of the pro-Nazi Rivne anti-Semitic newspaper “Volyn”, complicit in the extermination of 25 thousand Jews in Rivne. His works are included in the Ukrainian school curriculum in Ukraine;
- February 24 is 110th anniversary of the birth of the Nazi and war criminal from the Nachtigall Battalion and the 201st Battalion of the auxiliary police, Vasyl Sidor. He took part in the massacres of Jews, Poles and punitive operations against partisans and civilians in Belarus;
- May 16 is 130th anniversary of the birth of the Nazi Cyril Osmak, one of the leaders of the Ukrainian National Rada in Kyiv in

1941–1943 under the leadership of the war criminal Andriy Melnyk;

- August 12 is 130th anniversary of the birth of the Nazi Alexander Vyshnivsky of the SS division ‘Galicia’;
- September 23 is 120th anniversary of the birth of the Nazi Volodymyr Kubiyovich from the SS division ‘Galicia’;
- September 26 is 130th anniversary of the birth of the Nazi Ivan Poltavets-Ostryanitsa, a Nazi collaborator, “friend” of one of the main ideologists of Nazism, the author of “racialism” and “the final solution to the Jewish question” Alfred Rosenberg. Ivan Poltavets-Ostryanitsa was the head of UNACOR, an organization of Ukrainian Nazi Cossacks. As part of UNACOR, there were battalions of the Ukrainian auxiliary police that took part in the massacres of many thousands of Jews in Volhynia, Zhytomyr, Bila Tserkva, and Vinnytsia;
- November 12 is the 100th anniversary of the birth of Vasyl Galasy, an activist of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, one of the organizers and participants of the Jewish pogroms in the Ternopil region and the massacres of Poles;
- November 17 is the 110th anniversary of the birth of Yaroslav Starukh, an activist of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, organizer of the Jewish pogroms in Western Ukraine in the summer of 1941;
- December 12–130th anniversary of the birth of the Nazi Andriy Melnyk, the head of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, a war criminal, organizer of mass murders of Jews, in particular in the Babi Yar. “Bukovinsky Kuren” is a unit of the OUN headed by Melnik, it took part in the massacres of Jews in Kyiv, Zhytomyr and Vinnytsia.

The official response of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry to the statement of the Embassies of Israel and Poland is also indicative. In early 2020, the Embassies issued the following statement: “Remembering our innocent brothers and sisters who were tortured from 1939 to 1945 in the occupied territories of Poland, which today becomes part of Ukraine, we believe that honoring people who actively promoted ethnic cleansing is an insult. Representatives of different levels of government in Ukraine celebrate historical events that should be condemned once and for all”.

The official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Kateryna Zelenko, said that these people are heroes and part of the revival of the memory of the Ukrainian people: “The revival and preservation of the national memory of the Ukrainian people is one of the priorities of the Ukrainian state policy. Each nation and each state independently determines and honors its heroes”.

This statement provoked a subsequent reaction from the Polish Embassy: “It is hard to believe that such words could have come from the mouth of a Ukrainian diplomat”, the Embassy said in a statement published by the Polish Press Agency. “If they [the words] were true, it would mean that the Ukrainian diplomacy refers to the national heroes of the ideologues of Ukrainian nationalism, the victims of which were tens of thousands of Poles, Jews and thousands of representatives of other peoples”, the Polish Embassy said in a statement. There was no reaction from the Ukrainian side to this statement, since this is exactly what modern Ukrainian ideology is — the murderers of hundreds of thousands of civilians are declared national heroes of the country.

So that the readers could understand what “heroes of the Ukrainian people” we are talking about, we will give for example the text of the “Act on the atrocities of Ukrainian nationalists-Bandera supporters, committed against peaceful Soviet citizens of Polish and Ukrainian nationality, prisoners of the Red Army in the village of Mogilnitsy in the Budanovsky district of the Ternopil region”, sent by the head of the political department of the 1st Ukrainian Front, Lieutenant General S. Shatilov:

“We, the undersigned inspectors of the Political Department of the 74th p. corps, Major Shklyaver B. G., Captain Karamin N. V., Captain of the medical service Weizman M. N., Captain Sokha, Chairman of the Mogilnitsky Village Council, Comrade. Perlitsky Mikhail Onufrievich, citizens of the village of Mogilnitsy Kashtalina Magda Knatovna, Knatyshin Teodor Pavlovich, made this act that on April 25, 1944, 4 pits with 34 human corpses were found in the forest near the village of Mogilnitsy, 2 pits with 12 human corpses were found in the village of Mogilnitsy, one pit with 11 human corpses was found in the horse cemetery and one pit with 38 human corpses in the forest of the village of Mogilnitsy. In all the pits, there are up to 100 corpses of men, women and children, brutally tortured citizens of the village of Mogilnitsa and

its surroundings, as well as captured Red Army soldiers. It is revealed that during the German occupation of the village of Mogilnitsa on the night of March 17–18, 1944, a gang of Ukrainian–German nationalists committed mass murder and robbery of citizens of the village of Mogilnitsa, mainly the Polish population.

A gang of murderers broke down doors and windows, broke into apartments, shot, cut and killed people with axes and knives, including young children, old people and old women, after which the corpses were loaded on carts, taken away and buried in pits. In order to hide their crimes, some families were burned in sheds and the burnt corpses were buried in pits. All these terrible atrocities were accompanied by mass looting of property belonging to the tortured families.

Among the corpses were also found two captured Red Army soldiers, whose names are not found. There are knife wounds on the bodies, showing that they were stabbed with knives. All the extracted corpses bear witness to barbaric, purely brutal methods of killing, such as:

- Bronya Kashtarina — the corpse is half-burned, but it shows traces of heavy beatings: the skull in the crown area is broken by a blunt object, there are traces of knife blows on the neck, the right thigh is broken.
- Zbeshko Kashtarin— a 6 months baby, there is a clear evidence of a blow with a chopping weapon (such as an axe) on the spine of the corpse in the lumbar area. The corpse of a 6-month-old with a severed spine was folded in half and thrown into the pit.
- Anton Zelensky, 39 — the fingers of the right hand were cut off on the corpse. The tibia of the right leg is broken, and there are many more stab wounds — cut and stab wounds.
- Vladislav Orkush, 67 years old, and Osip Orkush. 75 years old — the skulls of both corpses were severed by a chopping weapon (such as an axe), there are traces of feathers from pillows in the wounds. A bucket of blood was found in the pits near the corpses. This indicates that the bandits, in order to cover their tracks, collected human blood, which flowed from the corpses. Whereof the present act is about drawn by us¹”.

¹ Archive Service of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. F. 32. Invt.11302 D. 196 L. 200–203.

The official hero of modern Ukraine is also the Nazi Ulas Samchuk, the editor-in-chief of the pro-Nazi Rivne anti-Semitic newspaper “Volyn”, an accomplice in the extermination of 25 thousand Jews in Rivne. In 2020, its 115th anniversary was celebrated with great fanfare. Modern pseudo-historical propaganda calls him nothing less than “Ukrainian Homer”¹. Here is an assessment of what is happening by the Ukrainian political scientist Vladimir Kornilov. He writes that it is possible to argue for a long time about how “homeric” the cannibalistic works of this author were, but the indisputable fact of his biography is close collaboration with the Nazis.

It is pointless to deny this, if only because in 1941–1942 Samchuk published his apologetics of Hitler openly, in the newspaper “Volyn”, which he personally edited, not just hiding under a pseudonym (as more far-sighted collaborators), but even flaunting his ideological closeness to the Nazis. So, in the first issue of this newspaper, which was published by the Goebbels propaganda department in the capital of the “Reichskommissariat Ukraine” Rivne, Samchuk modestly placed two portraits next to each other — the Fuhrer and himself. All this was accompanied by a laudatory ode to Hitler under the personal signature of the editor-in-chief of Volyn.

And such odes Samchuk published almost in every issue. Analyzing another speech of Hitler, he proclaimed: “This is the invincible spiritual and moral power that has shaped and tempered that nation for centuries. These are the multiple generations of immortal bearers of the creative spirit of that nation, which in its completion stands today at the head of historical events under the leadership of its mighty Leader”.

After such praise for the leader of Nazi Germany, it is difficult to doubt the collaboration of the “Ukrainian Homer”.

And here is what he wrote in March 1942: “The Fuhrer of Great Germany, with his chivalrous soldiers, has brought us freedom. **DON’T FORGET THAT!** (highlighted in the original. — Author’s note) We thank the Fuhrer Adolf Hitler and the victorious German soldiers, cultivating our land with redoubled care”. Again, there are many such panegyrics written by Samchuk.

¹ <https://ria.ru/20200220/1564978524.html>

But in addition to the unrestrained praise of Hitler and the ideas of Nazism, the editor-in-chief of Volyn constantly promoted the ideas of the Holocaust. He joyfully welcomed the extermination of the Jews of Rivne and Kyiv. Many of his notes and articles are devoted to the ideological justification of the Holocaust. “Where the Ukrainian state is being built, there are no (Jews) there”, Samchuk’s newspaper wrote on November 27, 1941. It is not surprising that the Israeli Embassy protested against the inclusion by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the anniversary of this figure and several similar collaborators in the list of memorable dates for this year.

This, in turn, caused resentment among the ideologists of modern Ukrainian nationalism. Irina Farion, an activist of the Svoboda party, called the Embassy’s statement “boorish” and stressed, “Do you hear, the State of Israel? The Volyn’ newspaper has become a mouthpiece for the ideas of Ukrainians in the struggle for their united Ukrainian national power”.

Despite the calls of Israel, not the roundest anniversary of Ulas Samchuk in Ukraine was celebrated on a grand scale. Many events were held in the Samchuk Museum, including schoolchildren’s involvement — they even organized a table game tournament in honor of the Nazi collaborator. The Union of Writers of Ukraine and the mass of the leading mass media responded to this anniversary.

After the illegal coup in 2014, a campaign of mass renaming streets in honor of the Nazis from the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists was launched in Ukraine.

For example, a street in Ivano-Frankivsk was named after Vladimir Kubyovych, who was one of the initiators of the creation of the SS Division ‘Galicia’.

On May 23, 2019, another monument to one of the leaders of the OUN, Roman Shukhevych, was opened near gymnasium No. 2 in Ivano-Frankivsk. The participation of the OUN in the mass murder of civilians is documented in various countries. For example, the head of the Yad Vashem memorial complex in Jerusalem, Yosef (Tomi) Lapid, stated that facts were indicating a deep and intense connection between the Nachtigal Battalion led by Roman Shukhevych and the German authorities, and also linking the Nachtigal Battalion under



The hero of modern Ukraine, the Nazi and war criminal Volodymyr Kubijovyč, was one of the SS division ‘Galicia founders’

Shukhevych’s command to the pogrom in Lviv in July 1941, which claimed the lives of approximately 4 thousand Jews. Lapid also relied on documents available in the archive concerning the Nachtigall Battalion and Roman Shukhevych. “We have a whole dossier, from which it follows that Shukhevych was one of those involved in the massacres. Until that time, the Ukrainian side did not ask us to hand over these documents. If such a request is received, I think we will grant it,” Yosef (Tomi) Lapid, the head of the Yad Vashem memorial complex in Jerusalem, told Deutsche Welle radio.

The opening of the monument caused a sharp reaction in Poland and Israel. Polish Ambassador Bartosz Cichocki and Israeli Ambassador Joel Lyon wrote a letter to the Mayor of Ivano-Frankivsk, expressing their deep dislike for such a policy. “With this letter, we express our protest against your decision. We want to remind the



A street in Ivano-Frankivsk, named after Volodymyr Kubijovyč, one of the initiators of creating the SS Division ‘Galicia’

children of Ivano-Frankivsk, their parents, grandparents, that Roman Shukhevych is personally responsible for taking the lives of thousands of their kind, with bullets, fires, rapes, tortures, and other brutal methods, just because they prayed to God in Polish or Hebrew”, the Ambassadors said.

In 2016, Alexander Suvorov Street in Kyiv was renamed after Mikhail Omelyanovich-Pavlenko, the organizer and participant of mass shootings of civilians in Ukraine and Belarus Great Patriotic War¹. Before the revolution, Omelyanovich-Pavlenko served in the Russian army, took part in the Russo-Japanese and World War I. Still, in 1917, having reached the rank of colonel, he defected to the Ukrainian People’s Republic and began to cooperate with Symon Petliura. A

¹ <https://russian.rt.com/science/article/573311-ukraina-geroizaciya-nacisti>

year later, he betrayed his colleagues for the service of Hetman Pavel Skoropadsky but then abandoned him, returning to the Petliura team. After changing the flag once again, Omelyanovich-Pavlenko took part in the aggression against Soviet Ukraine — now on the side of Poland and then moved to Czechoslovakia. In the 30s, the former Petliurist turned to Adolf Hitler with a proposal to create Ukrainian units under the patronage of the Third Reich. In 1942, he headed the military unit “Ukrainian Free Cossacks”. He engaged in the formation of security battalions that participated in the massacres of Jews and punitive actions against the civilian population in the occupied Soviet territories. Omelyanovich-Pavlenko was one of the coordinators of the SS division ‘Galicia’ and participated in creating a separate SS Cossack division.

It is interesting to note that cooperation with the Nazis of “heroes” is not hidden but even separately emphasized as a positive fact. For example, back in 2019, the Museum of Local Lore in Slovyansk, Donetsk region, opened the exhibition “Defenders of Ukraine of the 20–21st centuries¹”. The organizers of the exhibition believe that Nazi collaborators also defended Ukraine. The exhibition shows the military uniforms and weapons of the Deutch Waffen SS Division’s Galicia employees. The division’s volunteers took the oath of allegiance to Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany. There is a photo in which the Ukrainian “defender”, the organizer of the Holocaust and the killer of millions of Ukrainians, Reichsfuhrer of the SS Heinrich Himmler, welcomes the Ukrainian “defenders”— the soldiers of the SS Division ‘Galicia.’

Neither are the Nazi views of modern Ukrainian citizens a problem for the current Ukrainian government. For example, the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, awards the football player Roman Zozulya, who does not hide his Nazi views and support for the Right Sector Death Squad” with the Order of Merit. In 2015, Zozulya founded the Narodna Armiya Foundation, through which he provides assistance to Ukrainian militants in the Donbas.

Recall that in mid-December 2019 in Spain, the referee stopped a football match of the country’s second division because fans of the Rayo Vallecano team called Roman Zozulya, the Ukrainian striker Albacete,

¹ http://www.stoletie.ru/tekuschiiy_moment/nacistskij_kalendar_verkhovnoj_rady_638.htm

a Nazi. After that, the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, in his telegram channel, published a message in support of Roman Zozuli, calling him a “real patriot”.

According to the Deputy Director of the Center of Ukrainian and Belarusian Studies of the Lomonosov Moscow State University, Bogdan Bezpál'ko, the process of perpetuating the memory of right-wing radicals and Hitler collaborators in Ukraine is expected. “The Ukrainian authorities are no longer afraid to discredit themselves. Today in Kyiv, it is an honor to be a Nazi. And while Ukrainian politicians oppose Russia, the West turns a blind eye to this,” Bezpál'ko explained¹.

On December 16, 2020, the UN General Assembly adopted a Russian draft resolution on combating “the glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to the escalation of contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance”. One hundred thirty countries voted for the fight against the glorification of Nazism. The resolution calls on States to “eliminate all forms of racial discrimination by all appropriate means, including, if circumstances so require, by law”. It also expresses “deep concern about the glorification in any form of the Nazi movement, neo-Nazism and former members of the Waffen SS”. It refers to “declaring or attempting to declare members of the said organization and those who fought against the anti-Hitler coalition, collaborated with the Nazi movement, and committed war crimes and crimes against humanity as members of national liberation movements”. The document also indicates concern about “the increasing attempts and cases of desecration or destruction of monuments erected in honor of those who fought against Nazism during the Second World War, as well as the illegal exhumation or transfer of their remains”. The resolution also highlights the General Assembly’s concern about “using information technology, the Internet and social media, especially to reach out to children and young people, by neo-Nazi groups <...> to increase the impact of their hate speech and the recruitment of new members in different countries”. At the same time, a reservation is made that the Internet can also be used to combat such groups. The General Assembly recommends “taking appropriate concrete measures, including in the

¹ <https://russian.rt.com/science/article/573311-ukraina-geroizaciya-nacisti>

legislative field and the field of education, < ... > to prevent the revision of the results of the Second World War and the denial of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed during the Second World War”.

It was evident that the decision adopted by the UN General Assembly calls for a fight against the modern ideology of Ukraine. It is not surprising that Ukraine and the United States of America, which stands behind it, were the only ones to vote against the resolution. A similar situation was in 2019 when 121 states supported the fight against Nazism and its glorification.

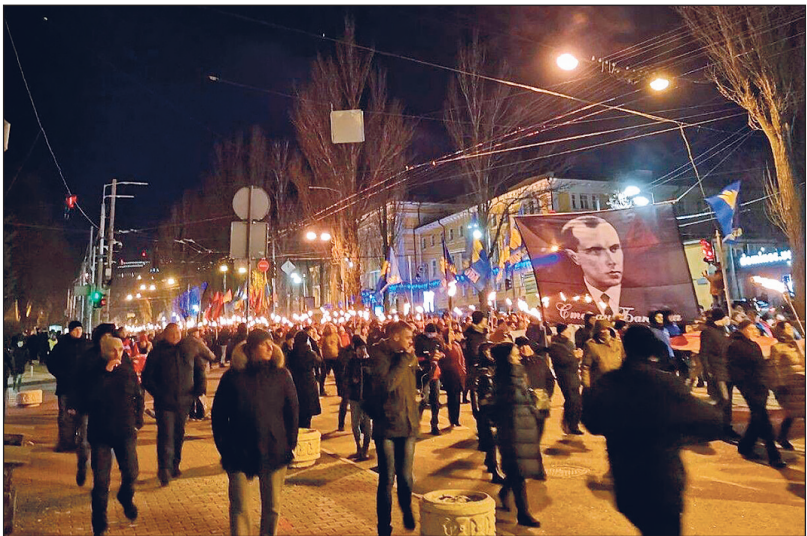
We remind the reader that in early 2020, the city authorities of Kyiv and Lviv, together with Ukrainian extremist parties, held an annual traditional celebration and march in honor of the birthday of Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera. The next day, Israeli Ambassador to Ukraine Yoel Lyon and Polish Ambassador to Ukraine Bartosz Cichocki issued a joint statement condemning the Ukrainian state authorities: “It is with great concern and sadness that we have noted that representatives of the authorities of different regions of Ukraine, including the Lviv Regional Council and the Kyiv State Administration, still celebrate historical events and figures that need to be condemned once and for all”. The Ambassadors pointed out that on December 24, the Lviv Regional Council adopted a resolution on allocating budget funds in 2020 to honor “the memory of the Nazi collaborator Andrei Melnyk, as well as the xenophobic, anti — Semitic and anti-Polish writer Ivan Lipa and his son Yuri Lipa, who is the creator of the racialism of the Ukrainian race”. The appeal also states: “Remembering our innocent brothers and sisters who were killed in 1939–1945 in the occupied territories of Poland, which are now part of Ukraine, we, the Ambassadors of Poland and Israel, believe that honoring people who actively promoted ethnic cleansing is an insult and leads to the opposite of the desired result in the fight against anti-Semitism and the process of reconciliation of our peoples”.

On December 11, 2018, the Lviv Regional Council declared 2019 the year of Stepan Bandera connected with the 110th anniversary of his birth. On December 13, 2018, Israeli Ambassador to Ukraine Yoel Lyon stated, “I was shocked to hear about the decision of the Lviv region to declare 2019 the year of Stepan Bandera. I cannot understand how glorifying those directly involved in terrible anti-Semitic crimes helps

the fight against anti-Semitism and xenophobia. Ukraine should not forget these crimes committed against Ukrainian Jews, and in no way admire them, paying tribute to their initiators”.



Banner in Honor of the Birthday of Nazi Collaborator Stepan Bandera, Posted in 2020 on the City Administration of Kyiv



Torchlight Procession in the Nazi-style in the Center of Kyiv in Honor of the Birthday of Stepan Bandera

Simultaneously with the glorification of the Nazis and their accomplices in modern Ukraine, there is a campaign of harassment of participants of the Great Patriotic War. They are often attacked and insulted by the inaction of the official authorities. Here are just a few examples from recent years.

In February 2020¹, several dozen pensioners and veterans of the Great Patriotic War decided to honor the memory of the Soviet sailors. The latter fell during the defense and liberation of Odesa during the Great Patriotic War. The Odessans brought portraits of Marshal Georgy Zhukov to the Walk of Fame of the Central Park of Culture and Recreation named after Taras Shevchenko, whose bas-relief was recently destroyed by Ukrainian nationalists, and also flags of the region and the USSR. Naturally, Ukrainian nationalists immediately came to the Monument to the Unknown Sailor. There were some insults to the elderly by the radicals. It is noteworthy that law enforcement officers calmly watched as a group of nationalists mocked the Odessans. The radicals shouted, “Happy May 2” (on this day in 2014, the Ukrainian Nazis burned people in the Odesa House of Trade Unions), “Bandera is a Ukrainian hero”. In Dnepropetrovsk, the Ukrainian Nazis disrupted a peaceful event dedicated to the 74th anniversary of lifting the siege of Leningrad. Militants in balaclavas and masks broke into the Teacher’s House, where a concert for veterans was held, organized by deputies from the “Opposition Bloc” in the Dnepropetrovsk City Council. This was announced by the co-chairman of the Opposition Bloc faction in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Vilkul on his Facebook page.

Anton Borisovich Guryanov, Human Rights Campaigner

Veterans of the Great Patriotic War are regularly attacked. I am monitoring this situation in Kharkiv. Especially during the holidays on May 9, August 23, on the day of the liberation of Kharkiv from the fascist invaders; War veterans are constantly attacked because of their existence; the mere presence of the Victory of the Soviet Union over Nazi Germany, whose servants were the current heroes

¹ <https://newsland.com/user/4298107968/content/pozornaia-ukraina-v-odesse-natsisty-napali-na-pensionerov-i-veteranov-vov/7040793>

of Ukraine, is an aggravating factor in itself. The people who saved this land from destruction, and the people who lived on this land from complete extermination in concentration camps, are being humiliated, insulted, and physically abused by Banderites. Soon young people will be brainwashed by propaganda and believe that fascism, Nazism and nationalism, and all kinds of radical right-wing ideology are the only correct solution. The left ideology, the Communists, and everything associated with it must be exterminated. This is a gross violation of human rights, of all possible civilized frameworks. In Ukraine, the authorities are condoning this because it is an officially supported ideology. Zelensky continues to support Banderites. The untouchability of these thugs creates impunity and lawlessness on the streets, which they create, including the veterans of the Great Patriotic War.

In January 2018, in the city of Dnipro, radicals disrupted a peaceful event dedicated to the 74th anniversary of lifting the siege of Leningrad. Below is a description of this event by the deputy of the Verkhovna Rada from the “Opposition Bloc” Alexander Vilkul:

“Militants in balaclavas and masks broke into the Teacher’s House, where a concert for veterans was held, organized by the foundation and deputies from the “Opposition Bloc” in the Dnepropetrovsk City Council. A concert was attacked, attended by 65 elderly people who survived the blockade and now live in the Dnieper. All these people are over 80 years old¹”.

Here is another description of the attacks and bullying of veterans in modern Ukraine on Victory Day on May 9:

“Neo-Nazis attacked participants of the Immortal Regiment rally in the center of Kyiv, near the Arsenalnaya metro station, where the march began. Hundreds of citizens and tourists witnessed the ugly scenes of the attack on the elderly.

“I will not take off the St. George ribbon. It is a memory of my father, “ one of the women shouted as they grabbed her hands and tore out the portrait of her father.

¹ <https://rusonline.org/ukraine/v-dnepropetrovske-neonacisty-napalina-veteranov-i-detey?qt-lenta=0&page=32>

“Aren’t you ashamed of what you’re doing, you scum?” Another woman screamed as the portrait was torn from her and broken on her knee.

Eventually, the column began to move. Shouts come from the crowd, “Shame!”, “Fascism will not pass!” In response, the neo-Nazis shout, “Glory to Ukraine!”, “Death to the crooks!” and so on. In response, the crowd sang war songs: “Victory Day”, “Holy War” and others. The entire center of Kyiv was covered with leaflets calling on neo-Nazis to come to the Arsenalnaya metro station tomorrow at 9 am to deal with the participants of the Immortal Regiment march¹”.

Here is an illustrative article by Grazyna Myslinska in the Polish edition of Gose Niedzielny, which is dedicated to the fate of veterans of the Great Patriotic War living in Western Ukraine:

“Veterans of the Great Patriotic War in the West of Ukraine live out their last days with the feeling they have lost. “Fascism has won again”, said Galina Chernenko, a Red Army nurse. She was born in 1924, started the war in 1941 near Kharkiv, and ended it in 1945 in Berlin. I met Galina on the Hill of Glory, the cemetery of Soviet soldiers in Lviv. She was wearing a black uniform without decorations, carrying a bouquet of lilacs to the graves of her comrades-in-arms. It was May 9, the 70th anniversary of the surrender of Nazi Germany. Activists of the nationalist Svoboda Party in Bandera uniforms were on duty at the gate.

They did not allow people to enter the cemetery with the orange and black St. George ribbon, which turned from a symbol of victory over fascism into a symbol of the separatists and Russia, which waged an undeclared war with Ukraine in the East of the country. A squad of police in full uniform stood ready in the shadows under the cemetery wall. The situation was not conducive to conversation, so we agreed to meet at Galina’s house²”.

Vladimir Yuryevich Lyapin, Lawyer, Zaporizhzhia

In the press, it constantly appears that the national battalions assault people for Soviet symbols. The Pioneers, the Komsomol brought

¹ <https://riafan.ru/755943-unizhenie-i-nenavist-kak-neonacisty-izdevalis-nad-veteranami-voiny-v-kieve>

² <https://rusvesna.su/news/1494396250>

me up. I have two grandfathers who fought during the war. One died in the war, the other was in a concentration camp, survived, thank God. My grandfather's medals, I remember, were with the St. George ribbon. We must also make distinctions. These politicians, Yatsenyuk, and all the others, there are many photos where they are at events with St. George's ribbons until 2014. Now they have introduced this... nonsense. It is taken and especially thrown to the people, like a bone. Let's get the aggression out there.

Memories and dreams

The veteran lives on the second floor of a five-story “Khrushchev” (houses built in the USSR in the 1960s). Her apartment is small: two small rooms, a kitchen of symbolic size, and a small bathroom. “Imagine”, says Galina Chernenko, “ that we lived here for some time, six of us: me, my husband, two daughters, and two mothers — my mother-in-law and mine”. The apartment resembles an antique shop, and there is a lamp radio with a magic window and a Rubin TV set.

For a 90-year-old resident of Lviv, Galina Chernenko (nee Kozlova), Victory Day will always remain a holy holiday. Every year she puts on her dress uniform and goes to the Hill of Glory to visit the graves of her comrades.

“For the last few years, I’ve been hiding my medals in my bag”, says Galina. “In previous years, it happened that different people, most often activists of “Freedom”, tore my uniform because they were annoyed by my medals, especially the medal For the Victory in the Great Patriotic War with the St. George ribbon”.

The medal For Victory over Germany in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945 was established by the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on May 9, 1945. This was the most common award in the Soviet Union — until 1995, it was awarded to 15 million people (including soldiers of the Polish People’s Army, Armia Ludowa).

During the war, Galina was a nurse. She was mobilized in 1941 and went through the battle path from Kharkiv to Berlin. The route to the German capital passed through Majdanek and Warsaw, for which she received a medal.

“I didn’t count how many wounded I managed to carry out from the battlefield”, she says, “most likely, it was about thousands. As a result, after the war, we were unable to have children for a long time. I gave birth to my first daughter, Lena, at the age of 36. Three years later, the youngest, Alla, was born”.

Galina’s father and brother died in the war, and only her mother survived. Galina remembers how after the liberation of Kharkiv, she ran home in a field uniform with a machine gun.

“My mother almost fainted; she thought I was dead”, the woman recalls. “She was making porridge and gave me some. I had a little, and I had to say goodbye”.

The last time she saw her brother was in March 1943, he was standing in the back of a truck, and she and her squad were walking along the side of the road. “We waved to each other, and he smiled at me so well. The image stuck in my mind. A few months later, my brother died”.

The Front was moving West. A new danger has appeared in Volhynia. “We had to beware of the Bandera detachments that attacked surreptitiously. It was very easy to get shot in the back, “ recalls Galina. “Now you understand why I’m shaking from the sight of these mummies standing in the gates of the military cemetery”.

In Galina’s memory, the Majdanek concentration camp is imprinted. Paper bags with human hair, mountains of dead bodies, prisoners who looked like the living dead, and a sadistic guard.

“She chose young women and inflicted terrible injuries on them so that they could never have children”, says Galina. “I treated the wounds of these women, and they told me about her. I can only say one thing: the guard did not wait for the trial. The guys shot her under the barracks. It was impossible not to shoot her”.

Another strong memory was the passage through Warsaw in January 1945. “I saw many destroyed cities, but Warsaw was a special case. There were no such ruins anywhere”. As Galina says, the war had only one plus. It was simple: here are your friends, over there are enemies. “If it weren’t for our victory, we wouldn’t be talking to you today; you just wouldn’t have been born”, says Galina.

After the wave of “Leninopads”, (toppling of Lenin statues) it was the turn of the decommunization of the names of streets and squares. For example, in Chernivtsi, the street of Nikolai Vatutin (a Soviet

general who died at the hands of Banderites in 1944) was renamed Stepan Bandera Street¹.

Persecution of the Russian language

Part of the policy of Russophobia, which is de facto official in modern Ukraine, is the persecution of the Russian culture and language.

In August 2020, for example, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine published illustrative Guidelines on teaching history in the 2020–2021 academic year with a call to combat the use of the “hostile” Russian language and historical “myths” about the significant figures of Russian culture². This was announced on his Facebook page by a Ukrainian journalist, Denis Zharkikh, the host of Po Suti (In Fact) on the 112 Ukraine Channel: “I got acquainted with the Methodological Recommendations on History issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and was shocked. Openly and shamelessly, children are instilled with the idea that “ Alexander Pushkin is an enemy, who wrote his works in the enemy’s language, thereby insulting the dignity of Ukraine”. And this nonsense is drummed into children at school, tests and exams are conducted to check how deep such propaganda has sunk into their tiny heads, which are blank sheets, and they need to fill them with entirely different things”.

Andrey Alexandrovich Gozhy, Lawyer

“With human rights in the humanitarian sphere, there had emerged a widespread semi-Nazism, especially with regard to Russian speakers. This is the closure of schools, kindergartens, and the prohibition of education. We have adopted stringent language legislation, it is not consistent with modern human rights, especially if we are talking about European standards. If we are talking about Finland, where there are 5–7% of Swedes and Swedish is the second state language,

¹ <https://rusvesna.su/news/1494396250>

² <http://tezars.ru/novosti/obschestvo/novyie-metodichki-minobrazovaniya-pushkin-vrag-ukrainyi.html>

I generally find it challenging to find a country in Europe where any linguistic minority. However, Russian speakers cannot be called a minority, would have such language restrictions. Many countries have two or three official languages, not to mention official languages, including in countries with armed conflict.

Belgium has three official languages. Europe, it is like this, there are no problems with this. People, there have no time to bother with this medieval obscurantism, past ages. Here, Germany may be better known. Bavaria is a powerful Bavarian dialect, which differs from the classical German Hoch Deutsch in about the same way as Russian and Ukrainian. No one there is upset about this; let's put it this way. The Germans are not upset about anything. They are very busy with industry. The Donbas is such an industrially developed region, the same Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv, where the predominance of the Russian-speaking population is most pronounced. They are beginning to be oppressed in Ukraine. Bavaria is also a pronounced engine of German industry. "BMW" and so on. The difference, visible to the naked eye, is that no one forces you to retrain in the state, correct, classical German, although the Germans do not always understand Bavarian.

Yuriy Mikhailovich Apukhtin, Former Political Prisoner

There is pressure on teachers. Teachers who were in contact with their colleagues in Russia were accused of separatism, and they were called to the SSU to talk to them, and they were told that they should not contact or travel. Conferences and meetings were held, they came to Russia, and this was immediately stopped. And those who continued found a way, and they were fired. Teachers of the Russian language and literature have been dismissed.

Now a law has been adopted that you can only communicate in Ukrainian everywhere. A person from among the Nazis enters the store and demands that the seller/cashier communicate with him in Ukrainian. The seller does not communicate, and he does not know Ukrainian. He immediately writes a statement, calls the authorities, and the person is fired. There were such cases both in Kyiv and in Kharkiv. All the ways they squeeze out the Russian language from communication.

It should be noted that Russian is the second most widely spoken language and the mother tongue of a third of the country's population. The study of the content of social networks from the language point of view for 2020 is indicative¹. According to these data, only one in six posts is written in Ukrainian. That is, 16 % is in Ukrainian, 84 % is in Russian. Among personal user accounts, the ratio is even more different: Ukrainian is used for 7 % of the content. In comparison, 93 % of the content is written in Russian. The situation is about the same among the accounts of organizations; 15 % of the information is in Ukrainian, and 85 % is in Russian.

Even now, considering the already adopted laws that are repressive against the Russian language and the large-scale propaganda and information campaign of Russophobic orientation, a significant number of Ukrainians believe that the Russian language should have the status of an official language. For example, according to the probably underestimated data of the Razumkov Center's sociological survey (Dmitry Razumkov, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine from the Servant of the People party in power), almost 33 % of respondents in August 2020 believe that Russian, along with the state language, can be official at the country level or the level of several regions.

According to a 2008 GALLUP Poll, 83 % of the respondents preferred to use Russian for interviews with the Institute's representatives. According to a survey conducted in 2004 by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS), 43–46 % of the Ukrainian population uses Russian at home. According to this study, Russian is the primary language for communication in a significant number of Ukrainian regions: Dnipropetrovsk region is 72 %; Donetsk region is 93 %; Zaporizhzhia region is 81 %; Luhansk region is 89 %; Mykolaiv region is 66 %; Odesa region is 85 %; Kharkiv region is 74 %. According to the Public Opinion Foundation in 2002, 75 % of the population in the regional centers of Ukraine prefers to communicate in Russian (and only 9 % prefer Ukrainian). According to the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of

¹ <https://strana.ua/news/299450-v-svoikh-sotsialnykh-setjakh-ukraintsy-predpochitajut-russkij-jazyk-ukrainskomu.html>

Ukraine, about a third of the Ukrainian population considers¹ Russian as their native language. More than 60 % use it in the family.

However, the Ukrainian authorities are pursuing a purposeful policy of persecution and discrimination of the Russian language. Since September 1, 2020, all schools have switched to the Ukrainian language of instruction. This is provided for in the Law of Ukraine No. 2145-VIII “On Education”, which was adopted by the Verkhovna Rada on September 5, 2017. The postponement is prescribed only for schools where children are taught in the language of national minorities, official in the EU. For example, in Hungarian, Polish. Russian is not included in this list. Meanwhile, the schools continued to recruit the first grades with the Russian language of instruction, taking advantage of the fact that according to the law on secondary education, it is possible to form Russian first grades. But in high school, these same students will have 80 % of the subjects on the Ukrainian “mova”. For native speakers of the EU languages or, for example, Crimean Tatars, the conditions are much softer (their quotas for their native language will be higher)².

Over the past four years, Ukraine has also officially banned the import of more than 4 thousand titles of Russian books, and since 2011, the total import of books from Russia has fallen fourfold.

Valery Vladimirovich Kaurov, Chairman of the Union of Orthodox Citizens of Ukraine

Regarding the Russian language, it is clear that the main uprising in the Donbas began with the repeal of the Kivalov-Kolesnichenko law, which gave the Russian-speaking population, at least to some extent, exercise their rights which was already severely infringed. Because for many years in Ukraine, the number of Russian schools, teaching in Russian in universities, and the use of the Russian language was systematically reduced. Officials were required to speak only Ukrainian. And there were a lot of such moments that hurt and continue to hurt

¹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20080229064509/http://dif.org.ua/modules/pages/files/us5.pdf>

² <https://strana.ua/news/295998-russkij-jazyk-v-shkolakh-ukrainy-novyy-movnyj-skandal.html>

the Russian-speaking population today. And now it's all gone into hypertrophied form.

The most striking example at the moment is that the bill that the Verkhovna Rada wanted to pass to suspend the draconian law on the Russian language did not pass. This means that all Russian people will lose the opportunity to study in Russian in educational institutions in Ukraine. All Russian schools and classes will be abolished, and teaching will be carried out only in the Ukrainian language. It's a significant disaster for the Russian children, who speak Russian in their families. In their circle, they will not be able to study it, be illiterate, write and read with mistakes, talk with errors, and will have a split consciousness. This is a direct violation of human rights and the declaration of sovereignty, which says in black and white about the right of people to speak their language and that all peoples living in Ukraine are equal among themselves. This is the most obvious example of bullying the Russian-speaking population and the Russian language. The Russian channels are banned, broadcasting in Russian has been reduced, radio broadcasting has been reduced, and people cannot watch all movies in Russian in cinemas. They should only be dubbed in Ukrainian. And the same Odesa, and the same Kyiv, more than half of the population there speaks Russian and considers it their native language. And against half of the population, there are such violations of human rights. But this is not only in Ukraine; it is also happening in the Baltic States. And the West is silent on this topic and does not react in any way.

Despite this about half of the pupils continue to talk in Russian. In October 2020 a national conference, Rech, or Speech, was held in Ukraine¹. In the conference Oksana Danilevskaya, Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, claimed that in most of Ukraine's schools, children study in Ukrainian. But experts have confirmed that, overall, schools are still in fact bilingual. "If, when Ukraine first declared independence in 1991, just 47 % of pupils studied in Ukrainian, now the figure is about 90 %", she continued. Ms Danilevskaya added that in

¹ <https://strana.ua/news/295932-shkolniki-ukrainy-obuchajutsja-na-ukrainskom-no-hovorjat-vse-ravno-po-russki.html>

Ukraine a rather paradoxical situation has arisen, in which “diglossia — a linguistic phenomenon in which there is a clear tendency for different languages to be used in different situations- is becoming normal in educational institutions”. “Ukrainian, whether good or bad, is used in specific situations, and pupils are taught in this language. But Russian is the language used in breaks between classes and in out-of-school activities, which teachers use to speak to parents and which children use among themselves”, added Ms. Danilevskaya. Need we say that, as a result of these discussions, taking place as part of an official Ukrainian event, it was concluded that more needs to be done to clamp down on the use of the Russian language?

Sergey Valerievich Moiseev, political emigré, former chairman of the Kharkiv regional public organization Rus Triedinaya

In 2009 we at Rus Triedinaya published a book by Alexander Karevin, called Rus, but not Russian. He is a historian from Kyiv, who, step by step, demonstrated how the Ukrainian language came into being — it was created artificially on the instructions of the Austrian military. They tried to prosecute our organization, and me personally, for publishing that book. The criminal case was launched in 2009. Avakov was the governor of Kharkiv region at that time. And it was he, in person, who issued the order to take action against me for my thought crime.

I was accused of being a “threat to national security”. Several times they made to appear on live television for a whipping, and they brought in respected Ukrainian historian to prove how wrong my ideas were. But — and this was all live — they failed to prove anything of the sort. It ended with Tribuna TV — the name of the program — being taken off air, and the presenter being dismissed. This broadcast had the opposite effect from what its creators intended — I was able to explain my opinion and back it up with evidence. I was prosecuted for publishing and promoting books. Yushchenko was in power at that time. So back in the Yushchenko administration they were already persecuting me for my ideas.

Now in Ukraine the only discrimination is against Russian-speakers — no other languages are treated in this way. Because the Russian language, according to the current Ukrainian authorities, and

the architects of the country's independence, is a threat to national security. In their view, the Russian language, and Russian speakers, represent an ideology, culture and mentality that are alien to them. Although in reality Ukrainian is a variety of Russian. Hungary has stepped up to defend the Hungarian speakers in Ukraine – they are trying to make an exception for Hungarians. Hungary was vehemently opposed to this process, and there they are trying to tone it down and hush it up. As for Russian, on this point Ukraine is completely opposed to compromise.

Ukraine has now passed a law prohibiting the use of the Russian language. This includes a ban on the sale of literature produced in Russia. Kharkiv's book fair is now almost dead, as it sold mainly books brought in from Russia, which is what people from Kharkiv wanted to buy. And since it is now prohibited to bring books from Russia to Kharkiv, and no-one in Kharkov reads books in Ukrainian, the book fair has practically died. Russian language schools are closed, as are Russian classes. One person I know, who is quite well off, has sent his daughter to study in America, so she doesn't have to learn to speak Ukrainian. Children are now legally prohibited from speaking in Russian even in school corridors. Another acquaintance works in a university -and she told me that they listen to people and fine them for, for example, speaking Russian on the university premises. Several thousand hryvnia. Taking into account local salaries, that is quite a lot.

In cafes, cinemas and all public places, by law only Ukrainian can be used when serving customers. There are lots of videos on the Internet, showing, for example, a shop assistant serving a customer in Russian, and some Ukrainian nationalist starts to get angry because she is breaking the law. He calls the police, tries to get them to open a case, films everything and accuses her of breaking the law.

When my daughter was at school she had a history teacher called Lepko. In his history lessons he told his pupils that Russians are, as a nation, alcoholics, layabouts and debauchees – and he was quite serious about this.

Recently the Party of Shariy proposed giving the Russian language some kind of official protection in Ukraine, as it is in, in fact, spoken by more than half the country's population and so should have a

corresponding legal status. Immediately after this Ukrainian Nazis started rounding up and punishing Shariy's supporters.

Pavel Vadimovich Volkov, Ukrainian journalist and former political prisoner

Some discriminatory laws, which were completely new, have been passed. Under the law on middle education, in schools children are being segregated according to their nationality. There is now not a single school still teaching in Russian, even though ethnic Russians account for half the country's population. That is, children from Ukrainian speaking families study entirely in their native language, and those from Crimean Tatar families also have to ability to study a significant number of subjects in their native language. Then there are children from families speaking European Union languages, such as the Rumanian and Hungarian speakers in Western and South-Western Ukraine and Transcarpathia. The Ukrainian Language Law, which proposes a full transfer to Ukrainian in all public spheres, is totally discriminatory. The same policy applies to all other areas, from the media to the civil service – a complete shift to Ukrainian.

On 25 April 2019 the Upper Rada (the upper chamber of Ukraine's parliament) passed in its final reading a repressive law, On Measures to Ensure the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language. It absolutely prohibits the use of Russian in state and local government authorities, educational institutions, hospitals and also in the customer service sector. Let us look at some very telling extracts from that law;

“Article 1. The Ukrainian language has the status of sole state language in Ukraine.

1. The Ukrainian language is the sole official (state) language in Ukraine.

2. The status of the Ukrainian language as the sole state language is founded on the self-determination of the Ukrainian nation people as a state.

3. The status of Ukrainian as a state language is an insuperable element of Ukraine's constitutional structure as a unitary state.

4. The status of the Ukrainian language as the sole state language in Ukraine is founded exclusively on the Constitution of Ukraine.

5. The procedures for the functioning and use of the state language are defined exclusively by law.

6. The deliberate distortion of the Ukrainian language in official documents and texts, and specifically, deliberate failure to comply with the rules of Ukrainian spelling and the standards that apply to the state language, and also the creation of any obstacles to or restrictions on the use of the Ukrainian language, shall entail liability as established by law.

7. The status of the Ukrainian language as the sole state language means that it must be used throughout the territory of Ukraine by state and local government authorities when exercising their authority, and also in other public arenas specified by this Law.

8. As the sole state language, the Ukrainian language serves as a language of communication between different ethnic groups as a guarantee of the human rights of every Ukrainian citizen, regardless of their ethnic origin, and as a factor promoting the unity and national security of Ukraine.

Article 2. The area of application of this Law

This Law regulates the functioning and use of the Ukrainian language as the state language in the areas of public life specified in this Law, throughout the territory of Ukraine”.

Article 57 of the above law also regulates the “procedure for imposing fines on economic agents for infringements of the law on the use of the state language in the area of customer service”.

“An resolution on the imposition of fines shall be issued by the Authorized Body if, following a consideration of the case, it is established that there has been a violation of this Law. The format of the resolution on the imposition of fines shall be confirmed by the Authorized Body. In the event of a repeated violation within one year of the requirements under Article 30 of this Law, the Authorized Body shall impose on an economic agent carrying out economic activities in the territory of Ukraine a fine of from three hundred to four hundred times the net minimum wage for a citizen”.

Need we point out that this practice is incompatible with both international and European rules?

Yuriy Mikhaïlovich Apukhtin, former political prisoner

When Poroshenko signed the Language Law requiring schools to use only Ukrainian in their lessons, it was clear that this measure was

directed at Russian and no other language. But while it affected Russian schools, it also affected Hungarian schools. There is a fairly small Hungarian community in Transcarpathia — about 10–12 %, so if the total population is 2.2 million that makes 150–200,000 people. They live in villages where everyone speaks only Hungarian, and the schools also taught in Hungarian — no-one knew Ukrainian or Russian. The Hungarian raised the question of why people were being deprived the right to use their native language. This problem also related to Northern Bukovina, in Chernovitsy Region, where people spoke Romanian. There was a long dispute between the governments of Ukraine, Hungary and Romania. The disagreements ended when the Language Law was amended to postpone its entry into force for Hungarians and Romanians by 3 to 4 years, while for Russians the prohibition remains.

Oleg Anatolievich Muzyka, political refugee

Odessa has 123 different ethnic groups. For Odessa, Russian is the language of international communication. In shops, in medical centers and state organizations, people from Odessa have always found it easiest to talk in Russian. It is also a reminder of the city's history and of its founders. In Catherine Square there is a fine monument to the founders of Odessa — representing Catherine the Great herself, and around her the founders of the city. Up until 2014 we fought against the policy of forced Ukrainization, which began under Yushchenko. There were- and still are — situations like this: a restaurant in Odessa has a menu — you can see this on social media — with two prices — say 50 hryvnia for potatoes (in Russian), but if you order “kartoplya” (i.e. potatoes in Ukrainian) it's only 45 roubles. That was literally written right on the menu. And when local opposition journalists started to write about this the restaurant owner started dodging the issue and said it wasn't intended seriously, it was just a joke. But in reality, this is no joke. I know some people who work in a state organization, and they tell me that everyone talks in Russian but completes all the documents in Ukrainian. Old ladies from Odessa come in and ask for help with documents, because they can't understand what it says in them. That's the result of this kind of pressure.

Some patriot type, not from Odessa at all, can just walk into a shop and demand to be served in Ukrainian. And now under the law

on forced Ukrainization, and the Education Law, since September 1 2020 all schools in Odessa have been required to teach only in Ukrainian. That is, nothing should be in Russian. They forget that all technical and business literature was written in Russian. Maybe an agricultural country like Ukraine doesn't need businesses any more. They have already disappeared. I have nothing good to say about my compatriots who live here in Europe. Even now, during the coronavirus pandemic, I meet a lot of people from Western Ukraine here, and ask them how they managed to get here when the borders are closed. We are a resourceful nation – they go via Hungary, and then through Austria to Germany. This route costs 350 euros per person, and the traffickers provide them with fake documents. They do not go through Poland. The Poles know that their documents are fake and deport them immediately. Many of them have a second passport – either Hungarian or Romanian. I come across these as well. I have got to know a lot of them since I have been here, and know how they get here, what they do and how they work. That is, they headed for the Maidan to for the good of Ukraine, but support the economy here in Europe.

On December 6 2020 the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe issued a declaration calling on the Ukrainian authorities to revise the State Language Law. In its Conclusion the Venice Commission states:

“The experts of the Council of Europe call upon Ukraine to prepare without any unnecessary delay the Law on Minorities and to consider postponing until adoption of the Law on Minorities the implementation of the State Language Law’s provisions which are already in force. The authorities are recommended to revise the State Language Law and prepare the Law on Minorities, and to consult all interested parties, especially representatives of national minorities and indigenous peoples”.¹

The Venice Commission also recommends “removing the article establishing liability for deliberate distortion of the Ukrainian

¹ <https://iz.ru/951636/2019-12-06/venetcianskaia-komissiiia-prizvala-kiev-podgotovit-zakon-o-iazykovykh-menshinstvakh>

language in official documents and texts”, and “reconsider the quota requirements for content in the Ukrainian language in the light of the principle of proportionality”.

Oleksandr Mayevsky, a witness to the burning of protesters in the Trade Unions Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014

Now we are going to see a total ban on the use of Russian in Ukraine. In schools children are going to be taught only in Ukrainian. There is a colossal amount of pressure being put on the Russian language. Odessa is a multi-national city – we have about 160 different ethnic groups. We all use one language to communicate with each other, and it is, of course, Russian. We are all being pressurized to speak in Ukrainian. I personally have no problem with speaking in Ukrainian. But nevertheless it is Russian that binds us all together and which we all speak, which we use whenever a lot of people get together. That is the situation we are in at the moment. In Odessa itself everyone speaks in Russian. But if you need to go to a government office or hospital, they will make you speak Ukrainian there, and fill in all the documents in Ukrainian.

Moreover, in the opinion of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, Ukraine needs to comply with its demands and publish print media in minority languages and in Ukrainian on the same day, and also to reconsider its requirement that all geographical and place names be written only in Ukrainian.

The Venice Commission considers that private individuals must be allowed to use a minority language when speaking among themselves, including in public places when other people can see and hear them, and that the right to publish campaign materials in languages other than the state language should not be restricted to those territories with a compact ethnic minority population.

The Venice Commission of the Council of Europe also issued a critical conclusion on the Education Law, passed in 2017¹, in which it emphasized the fact that Russian is more widely spoken than Ukrainian:

¹ <https://rg.ru/2017/12/08/venecijskaia-komissii-rekomendovala-kievu-ispraviv-zakon-ob-obrazovanii.html>

“Article 7, as adopted, is quite different from the draft on which minorities were consulted. It contains important ambiguities and does not appear to provide the guidance needed from a framework law in the application of the country’s international and constitutional obligations. The Commission states in its report that the Law “contains some guarantees for education in the minority languages, mainly limited to primary education, though the exact scope of such guarantees is not as clear as it could be”

The document also notes that the Article on the use of language in education “provides a legal basis for teaching a number of subjects in official languages of the EU, including in Bulgarian, Hungarian, Romanian and Polish”, but that it contains “no solution for languages which are not official languages of the EU, in particular the Russian language, as the most widely used language apart from the state language”. In the view of the Venice Commission, this “less favorable treatment of these languages is difficult to justify and therefore raises issues of discrimination”, and to change this it was necessary to make amendments to Article 7, and replace it with a more balanced version.

“It is important that the implementation of the Law does not endanger the preservation of the minorities’ cultural heritage”, stated the Venice Commission, emphasizing that it was also essential to “continue ensuring a sufficient proportion of education in minority languages at the primary and secondary levels, in addition to the teaching of the state language, and, to improve the quality of teaching of the state language”.

Anna Leonidovna Boryak, lawyer, Kyiv

As far as the rights of Russian speakers are concerned, there has been a change for the worse. You know about the laws that have been passed. It is clear that if this law is applied then part of the population will not be able to speak its native language, and fiction will not be published in Russian.

We could also cite the highly articulate comments made by Francesco Palermo, the former head of the Council of Europe’s Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection

of National Minorities, in an interview conducted by the German broadcaster Deutsche Welle:

“— The draft law on the State Language of Ukraine proposes penalties for violations of its provisions. Is this approach normal for national laws relating to language?

— I know of several precedents in which a law on the state language provided for penalties for violations of its provisions. Such laws have been passed in Latvia, Slovakia and Tajikistan. But in not one of those cases was there any question of imprisonment. International organisations are unanimous in their view that this practice fails to conform to international standards. In particular, the Council of Europe’s Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and the OCSE High Commissioner for National Minorities have pointed out that although the state has the right to strengthen the official language, as an instrument for the creation of a national identity, it must not do this at the expense of minority languages. Moreover, such sanctions are inconsistent with international law. A language can only be promoted by means of incentives and rewards.

However for the Ukrainian political class repressive measures against Russian speakers play a key role in “promoting” the Ukrainian language. For example, the nationalist politician Irina Farion, a former deputy from the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) believes that Russian-speaking Ukrainians should be “hit in the face”. Those were her words in an interview with Zolochiv. net, published on the channel’s YouTube account¹. Specifically, in answer to the question of whether it is worth talking to people who insist that it does not matter what language Ukrainians speak in, Irina Farion, Doctor of Philology and a Professor of Lviv Polytechnic University, declared that she would not talk to such people.

“Just take off your shoes and hit them in the face. That’s all. It is pointless to speak to such people, or try to prove anything to them. They should be marginalized, they brought war to Ukraine. They are the authors of war. They are the authors of more than 11,000 killed at the

¹ <https://strana.ua/news/180721-natsionalistka-farion-snova-predlozhila-izbivat-russkojazychnykh-ukraintsev.html>

frontline. The only language such people understand is that of force”, she said.

“My motto is clear: do not give them an education, do not give them work. If you can’t speak Ukrainian you won’t get in anywhere — you won’t get into university, or technical institute, or even a vocational college. That way we will stop all the idiots, political hotheads and mental defectives from climbing up the social scale”. This question can be solved simply and easily. We just need enough will and perspective, and to adopt a proactive and comprehensive approach.

Valentin Vladimirovich Rybin, lawyer

We no longer have any education in Russian, and so people who speak Russian as their native language can no longer get an education in that language.

In the past we had no problem with being a multilingual country, and there was a lot of literature in Russian. Now we have hardly any. Is this a violation of international law? What do you think? Of course it is a violation when we have international agreements enshrining the right to be educated in, speak and read in one’s native language.

At the end of 2019 Tatiana Monakova, Ukrainian Government Commissioner for the Protection of the State Language, stated that within two or three years the country would start charging fines of between \$145 and \$500 for violations of the Law on Measures to Ensure the Functioning of Ukrainian as the State Language¹. It may get to the point where people are committing a crime by asking for help in a state hospital or medical clinic.

Andrey Alexandrovich Gozhiy, advocate

Ukraine is protecting its media space with the help of Ukrainization quotas, since the main readership of printed media and the main audience for television and radio programs is made up of Russian speakers. And it is no secret that 60% of the country’s population are either native Russian speakers or bilingual. This policy is also being used for the purpose of censorship. We have an official index of

¹ <https://asd.news/articles/ukraina/illyuzii-kievskogo-zverintsya/>

banned books and movies. In order to import books from Russia, you need a special license, which is a direct violation of the Constitution.

In Lviv Ukrainian nationalists go on “street raids” in which they attack anyone they hear speaking Russian — they call this “preventative action”. Here is a report on one of these incidents¹.

On Sunday November 3, 2019, in the center of Lviv, unidentified persons smashed the guitar of a street musician who was performing songs in Russian. Bohdan Fedun, the head of Sokol NPO (National Public Organization), commented on the incident on the web site 032.ua.

“We spoke to him on an previous raids, we already came here, when his equipment was smashed. That time we were in the next street, we also talked to street musicians. One member of our organization was standing, watching to see if the musicians were going to sing in Russian, when he saw some unidentified patriots smash his equipment, and then we went up to him straightway, said Bohdan Fedun. According to Sokol NPO’s Facebook page, the organization’s activists regularly conduct these raids.

“On November 3 there was another raid against street musicians singing in Russian. The activists walked along central streets in Lviv. Fortunately, after a few of these raids in the center of our city, it is now very rare to hear songs being performed in the language of the occupiers. Preventative measures have also been taken in respect of a few musicians”, according to the organization.

Anton Borisovich Guryanov, human rights campaigner

The repression is continuing. It is not just Russian speakers that are being discriminated against. Hungary and Poland have also declared that this policy of forcing people to use Ukrainian in regions where the majority language is Hungarian, Polish Tatar or some other language is an infringement of human rights.

And this law is not being ignored, it is in effect, it is still being applied, this policy is being blindly pushed forwards in the education

¹ <https://strana.ua/news/231715-vo-lvove-radikaly-razbili-instrument-ulichnomu-muzykantu-kotoryj-pel-po-russki.html>

system. Not long ago there was an attempt to do something about the language issue, but the usual nationalists made such a fuss that the Higher Rada took the matter off the agenda. That's why things are so bad here. In Ukraine radical nationalism has turned into Nazism, and it's running rampant. That's why we had the Russian Spring. It's not just ethnic Russians, a lot of Ukrainians talk in Russian and consider it to be their native language. The distinction between Russian and Ukrainian is fairly vague. The rights of people who consider Russian their native language are being violated. This is one of the stumbling blocks in the conflict, because it is a violation of human rights to forbid children to speak, think, and be educated in their native language". And no-one is going to accept that.

Despite the opinion of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, and despite the fact that the Education Law and the Ukrainian Language Law are in violation of the Law on the Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, passed in 2003, as well as Article 10 of the Ukrainian Constitution, which says: "In Ukraine, the free development, use and protection of Russian, and other languages of national minorities of Ukraine, is guaranteed".

Anzhela Ivanovna Polovneva, political refugee

I was born and grew up in Odessa. I never wanted to leave that city. My husband and I were in business there. We each had our own business. We paid taxes, worked, and never thought about leaving Ukraine. Nobody offered us a job abroad. We were in our own country – we had children, a home, and businesses there. We did not ask for any help from the government. We managed to get by. We worked hard, made a living and didn't expect any miracles.

This whole situation, everything that happened, was very painful for us. As we see it the Maidan was an anti-constitutional coup. It was the peak of all those nationalistic tendencies that have been a part of life here since Ukraine became independent. In 2004 we had what you could call the first signal of what was going to happen. Our older child was in Year 4, and we were told that Russian language classes would be cut down to 1 hour a week. What can you learn in 1 hour of Russian a week? The child won't know Russian,

and he won't know Ukrainian either, he will be illiterate. And his class teacher told us that if you want your children to know Russian properly they are going to have to study at home, and also have extra paid lessons at school. We agreed, and so our child had 2 hours of Russian a week. In Soviet times, we spent the same amount of time on Russian as on Ukrainian. That's why I can speak Russian and Ukrainian equally well. But later on people started to use, not Russian nor Ukrainian either, but a strange kind of hybrid. It's ugly to listen to. Before long you could hear this hybrid language on television, it was being thrust upon us. And in 2012 television started to be dominated by people from Western Ukraine. When they spoke they started introducing new words, words that really grated on the ear. There is Ukrainian, which is a musical language, and there is the gvara – [a Polish dialect] they speak in Lviv. Ukrainian is a melodious, beautiful language, but this gvara really sounds awful, it contains lots of foreign words from Polish and Hungarian. On television even the deputies in the Rada started to speak in a way that was just painful to listen to. Even I, who had never formally studied Ukrainian, heard the word "gvozdik" (Russian for "nail") instead of "tsvyakh" (Ukrainian for "nail") just 2 hours after I started university, and I realized that it is not the same thing. And then they started to rewrite history.

They started making films in Ukrainian. Russian-language films were prohibited. There were very few Russian schools, and the ones they were had got so bad that no-one wanted to send their children there. When they started rewriting history we took our child away from School No. 55 and sent him to School No. 65, a Russian school. But in the end we had to take our child away, before the end of the school program.

They promote and sponsor Ukrainian, and all the rest. We looked for a school where they at least taught in Russian. Because physics, mathematics, chemistry – it's hard, in fact almost impossible, to study these subjects in Ukrainian. And now there is not going to be any teaching in Russian. Only in Ukrainian, with some exceptions for national minority languages – Hungarian, Bulgarian, Moldavian, but on no account for Russian. So Russian is now really falling into decline.

It is prohibited to bring in literature from Russia. But very little is printed in Ukrainian – this is true not just for serious literature and light reading, but also for specialist, medical and technical publications. There is a big problem with this now, because nothing is printed in Ukrainian, and Russian books can't be imported. It is getting ridiculous – even medicines produced in Russia and labelled in Russia are being withdrawn from pharmacies. That was just last year. Russian is considered the language of the aggressor, everything has got to be removed, you can't sell anything.

Even an unspoken wish can be treated as treason. In Odessa, when people switched on a song in Russian, the nationalists came and started making a fuss. This was in a cafe. The television is whipping this whole situation up all the time.

Ruslan Anatolievich Panchuk, former political prisoner

An acquaintance of mine has a daughter who lives in Kharkiv. They are always trying to cancel Russian. His daughter is now getting really upset about this, she says that if they cancel all lessons in Russian, she will study in English, as a matter of principle. A lot of teachers secretly continue giving their lessons in Russian. They come in and ask their pupils which language they want the lesson in. Because it is forbidden to teach in Russian, everything has to be in Ukrainian. And lots of technical terms just don't exist in that language. There is no equivalent for these terms in Ukrainian. You can't teach programming in Ukrainian. And the teachers' solution is to ask the children what language they want to study in.

In Ukraine we have had a lot of discussions about Federalism. We believe that everyone has a right to their opinion. I respect other people's opinions. When I meet a person with a different religion, I respect their faith, and I ask that they do the same for mine. But our opponents see things differently. They have absolutely no respect, say, for my opinion. They refuse to reason, instead they are full of anger and resort to insults and disparagement. I reason with their opinion, and try and behave like a modern, sensible person, but people like that have no use for logic. They just answer reason with anger and behave aggressively. We try to understand them, listen to them, attempt to argue with or persuade them. We are Orthodox Christians, and

approach people's problems with understanding, but our opponents just get angry and refuse to compromise. They are opposed to reason and are malicious and crazy. There is nothing but only rage and aggression in them.

Persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church

One consistent element of Ukrainian Russophobia is the way the Ukrainian authorities are sponsoring persecution of the Orthodox Church. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church has more than 12,000 churches, 254 monasteries, 17 seminaries, 12,411 clergy and 4,600 monks and nuns. The Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is elected by the Ukrainian bishops and is ordained by the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC — Moscow Patriarchate, UOC MP or the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church) is a self-regulating church within the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). According to the Charter on the Administration of the Canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church:

1. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church is independent and self-governing in its administration and structure. 2. The highest authority in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church belongs to the Church Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, headed by the Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine. 3. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church is linked with the other local orthodox churches through the Russian Orthodox Church”.

Except in three regions in Galicia (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and Ternopil regions) the UOC is the dominant religious confession throughout the country.

For many years now the Ukrainian authorities have sponsored persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate and supported a variety of schismatic movements. The first example of this kind of activity was the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, which was headed by Filaret, a former hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church who had served as the Metropolitan of Kyiv and Galicia and Patriarchal Exarch of all Ukraine, between 1966

and 1990, and then the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church — Moscow Patriarchate. In 1992 he left the Russian Orthodox Church and formed the Ukrainian Orthodox Church — Kyiv Patriarchate, which is not recognized by any of the local Orthodox Churches. In 1997 he was defrocked and excluded from the Russian Orthodox Church (anathematized).

In 2018, with active support from P. Poroshenko, the President of Ukraine, the Kyiv Metropolitanate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Orthodox Church of Ukraine, or OCU, also known as the Most Holy Church of Ukraine, or MHCU) was formed, and was recognized by the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Among those that participated in its formation were priests from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, and from the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (which had been dissolved before the beginning of the proceedings) and also two former hierarchs from the UOP MP. After P. Poroshenko failed to win in the presidential election, the Kyiv Patriarchate left the Russian Orthodox Church, and its head, Filaret (Denisenko) accused the Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew, of deception and of establishing a branch of his own church, rather than an independent church, in Ukraine. Currently the Kyiv Patriarchate is involved in a bitter dispute with the Russian Orthodox Church.

After the 2019 Ukrainian presidential elections, Kirill, the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, issued an address to the new president, Volodymyr Zelensky, in which he expressed hope for an end to the persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church — Moscow Patriarchate. “I express sincere hope for the end of the sorrowful period of persecution and discrimination against the Ukrainian citizens who belong to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The Ukrainian people, who have supported your candidature, pin on you great hopes for improving their life. You have been given a historic chance to unite the nation and make a personal contribution to the solution of economic and social problems in the country and to overcoming the existing conflicts and divisions”.

However, although President Zelensky did, for a short time, attempt to maintain a policy of equal relations with the different religious



Frame from an amateur video recording of the seizure of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church- Moscow Patriarchate in the village of Luka-Meleshkovskaya in the Vinnitsia district of Vinnitsia region.

denominations in Ukraine, the subjection of priests to persecution, the intimidation and physical assaults and the seizure of churches have continued. The Orthodox commentator Dmitry Skvortsov gives a detailed analysis of the current situation¹:

“In the first year of his term, President Zelensky genuinely did try to treat all religious confessions equally. Moreover Sergey Trofimov, the deputy head of the presidential administration, was a member of the canonical church, and he tried, as far as possible, to oppose violations of the law in relation to the church. But it was not long before nature began to assert itself. The nature of “Ukrainism” as an anti-Orthodox doctrine, and the nature of the “Ukraine” project as an instrument for undermining the Eastern Christian civilization.

This dominant current took over, and channeled President Zelensky’s policies in a “correct” direction. And if, a year ago, it was still possible to describe President Zelensky’s team as representing a range different conflicting interests, now it is much more homogenous — and easily led by the new US administration.

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/interview/20201204/1029852155.html>

Andrey Alexandrovich Gozhiy, advocate

The Russian Orthodox Church is being persecuted: removal of churches, ecclesiastical raiding, prosecutions, and summons for “chats” with the Ukrainian Security Service. Zelensky’s regime is doing nothing to oppose illegal takeovers of churches. A particularly infamous example was the frenzy over Easter, when Poroshenko’s propaganda television channels broadcast insulting lies about priests and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and there were cases of arson and other attacks on churches. Everything we see happening is consistent with a typical Fascist agenda. But there is nothing we can do – Zelensky represents the oligarchs. So why should he change his policy? We will be a banana republic – but without bananas. Zelensky is pushing forward a total colonization and privatization of the country. Now we will see land being sold off to benefit national corporations.

Many of Poroshenko’s staff have joined Zelensky’s team. As far as religion is concerned, the relevant government department is now headed by Olena Bogdan. And one of the authors of the church decree, Andriy Yurash, a Uniate [Eastern-rite Catholic] and the director of the Department for Religious Matters under Poroshenko, has returned to power.

And now we can see the first results of this restructuring. There is Zelensky’s visit to Farar [Lebanon], during which he invited Bartholomew [the Patriarch of Constantinople] to Ukraine, even though Bartholomew is a declared enemy of the largest confession, in Ukraine — the UOC — MP, which has more members than all the other confessions taken together. And then there is the dismissal of the deputy head of the presidential administration, Sergey Trofimov, mentioned earlier. And the recent visit by Denys Shmyhal, Ukrainian Prime Minister to Bartholomew.

Although Zelensky has always made it clear he is not a member of any church, he took the step of inviting a foreign religious leader to Ukraine, even though the majority of Ukraine’s Christians consider Bartholomew to be the initiator of a religious war in their country.

...About 80 parishes voluntarily joined the Most Holy Church of Ukraine when it was founded by Bartholomew and Poroshenko. That is



Frame from an amateur video recording. Members of the S14 “death squad” cut open the doors and help to seize a church of the UOP - Moscow Patriarchate, in the village of Kolchugin, in the Turiisk district of Volyn region, Ukraine.

less than one per cent of the more than 12,000 parishes of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church — Moscow Patriarchate. About 200 parishes have been taken over or illegally transferred to the Most Holy Church of Ukraine. That is less than two per cent of the parishes of the canonical UOC — MP. Of those 200 parishes, the majority are in the western Volyn and Podolia regions. In Galicia most of the Orthodox churches were seized by Eastern-rite Catholics back in the 1990s.

Naturally the parishioners who have lost their churches have seen a big change in their lives. They have to pray outside in the churchyard, or with the parish priest in his home, or go to a service in the next village —

or further afield, if that one has also been seized. As for the church as a whole, the most recent wave of persecution has merely served to bring Orthodox Christians closer together and strengthen their loyalty to the true Faith.

Sergey Olegovich Yudaev, journalist and former Ukrainian political prisoner

The Orthodox Church is being subjected to terrible attacks. People come into the church and say that they want to force it to join the Kyiv Patriarchate. The local worshippers refuse to hand their church over. And it starts. Someone gets hit in the face, there is a lot of shouting. In Kharkiv region, when I was in prison, there were 15 such incidents. In Kharkiv region the locals really resist all these attacks on the Orthodox church, because they learned a lot in the year following the Maidan. People who used to be indifferent soon realized that it was important not just to stand by when these things were happening and they joined the defenders. A lot of attacks on churches in Kharkiv region were successfully resisted. Things were terrible in Central and



Frame from an amateur video recording. The Ukrainian police refuse to admit worshippers from the UOC - Moscow Patriarchate to the church which has been seized from them in the village of Zhydychyn, Volyn region

Western Ukraine. If they didn't succeed they just set fire to the church. In the Western Ukrainian villages the churches are quite small, and most of them are made of wood. They just burned them – if we can't have it you won't have it either. Mostly it is nationalists who do this.



Frame from an amateur video recording. Members of the S14 “death squad”, in the presence of the Ukrainian police, refuse to admit worshippers from the UOC -Moscow Patriarchate to the church which has been seized from them in the village of Zhydychyn, in the Kivertsy district of Volyn region

Law No. 4128, passed by the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) in 2016 provides a legal basis for the seizures. It was this law that set out a specific procedure for the seizure of Orthodox churches by the schismatics¹. The law simplified the procedure for making amendments to or reregistering the charters of religious organisations. The fate of the parish could be decided by the congregation by a majority of votes in a parish meeting, not by the bishop or Metropolitan. Under the draft law, membership of the congregation is determined simply by self identification and by participation in its religious life. Since most

¹ <https://www.pravmir.ru/verhovnaya-rada-i-tserkov-chto-proishodit/>

parishes do not have fixed congregation lists, people from outside can come to the parish and vote to change its allegiance.

Once the public became aware that draft law No. 4128 was about to be discussed and voted on, more than 300,000 people signed petitions opposing the proposed changes on the ground that they were discriminatory, but that did not have any effect.

Pavel Vadimovich Volkov, Ukrainian journalist and former political prisoner

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate – is being persecuted. There are frequent seizures of churches. Priests loyal to the Moscow Patriarchate are being forced out and their churches seized. The media are running a non-stop campaign to blacken the name of the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

The Verkhovna Rada's passing of Draft law No. 4128-d (on the subordination of religious organizations and the procedure for the state registration of religious organizations having the status of a legal entity) on January 17 2019 does not make the situation any easier, but instead supports new schisms and is aimed at undermining the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church. 229 deputies voted to approve the draft law. During the first round of voting it was supported by 223 deputies. The speaker, Andriy Parubiy, returned the draft law for re-voting several times, until it was approved. Under the new version of the law, for a parish to change its allegiance, a 2/3 majority of the votes cast by members is sufficient (as opposed to a simple majority, as in the previous version of the draft law). The draft law provides for a temporary prohibition on any transactions involving parish property — after the parish changes its allegiance none of the real estate belonging to the parish may be sold, taken away or pledged. If some members of the parish do not agree with the change, then they can form a new religious congregation, which has the right to enter into an agreement under which it can use the church building jointly with the other congregation.

Anton Viacheslavovich Polovenko, political refugee

First of all the majority of the seizures took place in Western Ukraine, and then it was the central regions, and now it is the South-East of

the country. Aggressive guys come in specially, full of aggression and looking for a fight, ready to beat up priests. The churches are taken over by force.

Commenting on the approval of the amended version of the draft law, Archpriest Aleksandr Bakhov, head of the Legal Department of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Archpriest, said: “under the pretext of making it easier to transfer allegiance and supposedly to simplify the procedure for registering the charter of a religious congregation, the national deputies are trying to achieve a large scale re-registration of all religious organizations in Ukraine within a year. — paragraph 2 II of the Closing Provisions of draft law No. 4128-d”¹.

Archpriest Aleksandr is of the opinion that the law has been passed exclusively to “indulge and inflate the membership of a single religious community”. “As we can see, an attempt to provide a mechanism for changing subordination has ended up creating an unnecessary administrative burden and complicating the procedure for registering the charter of a religious organization”, he added.

Anzhela Ivanovna Polovneva, political refugee

Our Orthodox monastery in Odessa was subjected to arson attacks carried out by nationalists. The site has a monastery, several small churches, a seminary and dormitories. They burned down the maintenance buildings next to the dormitories and if they hadn't changed their mind those would also have burned down. They also burned some cars and outbuildings. Everyone helped fight the fire – the fire brigade, the monks and people from the local businesses.

However, despite the Ukrainian government's persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, and the forced takeovers of churches, which are taking place with the connivance of the police and on many occasions with the involvement of Ukrainian “death squads”, only 84 parishes have voluntarily left the UOC. Of these, 28 were parishes with no archpriest, and 56 were parishes with an archpriest. Considering there are more than 12,000 parishes, this is a

¹ <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5354976.html>

very small number. However, the above law has been used to seize more than 220 parishes. According to the UOC Chancellor, Metropolitan Anthony (Pakanich) of Borispol and Brovary, “to date 122 churches have been taken over using raiding tactics... There are cases of secret re-registrations, in which the local authorities re-register a UOC parish without the knowledge of anyone in the parish. This has happened in 220 parishes”¹.

Valery Vladimirovich Kaurov, Union of Orthodox Citizens of Ukraine.

As for Orthodox believers, that is a whole different issue. The Russian Orthodox Church, of which the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is an inseparable part, is the only organization in the post-Soviet space that was not split up: the Soviet Union, and all its 15 republics, ceased to exist, but the Russian Orthodox Church retained its presence and its parishes in all those 15 former republics and throughout the world. Moreover, it has managed to unite with the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. The latter Church’s parishes have joined the ROC, which has remained undivided. The UOC is the largest autonomous self-regulating church within the ROC, and has more than 12,000 parishes and monasteries. That represents 35% of all the parishes in the Russian Orthodox Church. And this spiritual umbilical cord has been attacked. Under Poroshenko the nationalists achieved what they had been dreaming of for a long time, and they tried to separate the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the ROC and found an autocephalous church.

To achieve that they resorted to intimidating and beating members of the clergy. There were many such cases – it is hard to remember them all now – in which the local authorities were given instructions from above with a target for the number of parishes to be transferred to the new Orthodox Church of Ukraine. As long ago as the Kravchuk administration three Western Ukrainian dioceses: Lviv, Chernobyl and Ivano-Frankivsk – were split up and more than 3,000 parishes were taken away from the Orthodox church by force. Some of them joined the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. Then these

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200109/1026253635.html>

congregations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church organized themselves and established their own parishes and churches. That happened in these three regions, these three dioceses in Western Ukraine, and in other places where they had their churches taken from them. And now a second wave has begun. In 2015, before the presidential elections, when Poroshenko was travelling around the country with the church decree, there was, in effect, a second attempt to take these churches away from believers. Moreover there were frequent cases of priests being attacked and beaten. You just need to look on the Internet – there are lots of examples.

There was not one region or diocese in Ukraine which was able to avoid the serious consequences of the foundation of the autocephalous church. Naturally, the most serious consequences were felt in Western Ukraine. And the South-East of the country was least affected. Nevertheless, this wave swept across all of Ukraine, taking over our communities, our churches, harassing the clergy, putting pressure on churchgoers. They beat up and maimed believers, broke into churches, and interrupted services”.

The Church stood firm, and only two hierarchs moved over to the new schismatic body known as the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. It is headed by the false Metropolitan Dumenko. Two former Metropolitans, Simeon and Alexander (Drobinko), one from Kyiv, and one from Vinnytsia, transferred to the new church. Simeon, by the way, tried to take control of the Cathedral of the Transfiguration, but the newly appointed archbishop in Vinnytsia prevented him from doing this. They did not allow him to take the church with him. In the church the choir refused to sing and even the subdeacons refused to help the schismatic Simeon.

The UOC has, on more than one occasion, showed its strength, leading hundred-thousand-strong processions of the Cross through Kyiv and throughout Ukraine.

To quote the official position on abuses of human rights of Bishop Victor, the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church’s representative office for relations with European international organisations:

“In 2020 I approached the international community in the name of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and asked for support in bringing

an end to the ongoing violations of believers' rights in Ukraine. Sadly, the seizures of churches, the beating of Orthodox believers, the burning of churches, and the passing of discriminatory laws are all continuing. And we are extremely concerned about the fact that the Ukrainian authorities are not taking proper action to prevent these violations of law. These violations started back in 2015, when the supporters of the so-called UOC — Kyiv Patriarchate, which is not recognized by a single local church, seized about 40 of our churches and tried to burn down hundreds of them. Then activists from the so-called Orthodox Church of Ukraine — which was founded at the end of 2018 by President Poroshenko and Bartholomew, the Patriarch of Constantinople, by merging two non-canonical organizations — continued with their church seizures. As a result of this, over the last few years the Ukrainian Orthodox Church has lost 122 churches, which were forcefully transferred to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, with multiple violations. Moreover, 220 parishes of the UOC have been illegally re-registered by state bodies as belonging to the OCU.

The reason for these acts of hatred directed against our Church is that we uphold our historic canonical link with the Russian Orthodox Church. The UOC enjoys administrative independence, and for the last 30 years it has been governed from Kyiv...

The situation in Ukraine is characterized by attempts of politicians at the highest level to restrict the legal rights of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and to give an advantage to the so-called Orthodox Church of Ukraine. This is being done in various ways. For example, Ukraine has passed a law requiring all religious organizations forming part of our church to include in their name a reference to the fact that they are part of the Russian Orthodox Church. This is being done in order to prejudice public opinion against our worshippers, by making them appear to be a pro-Russian force in society, thus playing into the hands of military sentiments, sowing hatred and enmity against our members and encouraging the seizure of churches and their transfer to the nationalist-supported Orthodox Church of Ukraine. The application of this law has now been suspended by a court ruling, but this has not resolved the problem definitively, as the Ukrainian legislature has not demonstrated any intention to repeal this discriminatory law. The Ukrainian authorities have also blocked several Ukrainian Orthodox

Church dioceses or monasteries from registering their charters, and as a result our central legal organizations are in effect unable to carry out their functions.

There are also the regular attacks directed against our Church communities by various radical groups, often supported by clergy and activists from the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, which result in new bouts of confrontation.

As before, the main problem is the authorities are turning a blind eye to flagrant violations of law, namely the seizure of our churches, in full view of the public, by persons who not only make no effort to hide their identity, but also post information about their crimes on social networks. If the authorities responded to these crimes as required by the law, then many problems could be resolved in a civilized fashion”.¹

Oleksandr Mayevsky, a witness to the burning of protesters in the Trade Unions Building in Odessa on May 2, 2014

Poroshenko set up a church in his own image. Even killers and members of the security forces are welcomed by his priests. For them, it is a profitable business. As for thinking people, people in their right senses, few of them get involved with this new church. We go to our Orthodox churches as before. In various regions the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is literally stealing the church from our parishioners. Criminal groups, resembling private armies, just turn up. These guys are involved in extorting money from businesses. They come to a village with a fairly small population, maybe the village has 100–200 churchgoers, and there are 300 people in the band, and they take over the church and install their own priest. The locals are ordinary people and they are powerless against these armed bandits.

Yuriy Mikhailovich Apukhtin, former political prisoner

They work like this – in a village they call a meeting of the congregation and send in 1020 people. These people announce that they have formed their own congregation, and they go to the church and expel the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate

¹ <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5728169.html>

priest. This happens on a regular basis in villages. They intimidate the priests and tell them to transfer their allegiance to the other church. If he refuses they intimidate the parishioners. Farmers are simple people. It's not easy to live in a village. They have 4 or 5 hectares each and grow something on this land. These people burn the crops. They threaten to beat the children.

Let us look at just a few of the many cases in which priests of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church — Moscow Patriarchate have been beaten and intimidated. These are just from 2020.

Remember that these seizures have been going on since 2014, ever since the illegal coup in Ukraine, and in most cases the authorities have either been involved or at least turned a blind eye to the events. On many occasions members of the Ukrainian “death squads” took part in the seizures.

On December 12 2020 the Holy Assumption church in the village of Mikhalych, in the Storozinetsky district of Chernovitsky region, was stormed. The congregation of the canonical Church, which had been illegally reregistered as belonging to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, had been defending their right to observe the Orthodox faith since February 10 2019. As is clear from a video which the church published on its Facebook page, dozens of raiders, all wearing red arm bands, entered the church grounds with instruments to break down the church doors. Since 10 February 2019 the UOC congregation in the village of Mikhalych had been holding prayer services for peace in the Bukovina region and in support of their right to freely observe their Orthodox faith. The congregation had been illegally reregistered as belonging to the OCU against their will, and the supporters of this new organization regularly conduct raids aimed at seizing control of the Holy Assumption church. During the most recent attempt, activists broke down the church doors with an improvised battering ram. On December 23 2019 the Mikhalych village council supported the transfer of the plot on which the church is built from the UOC to adherents of the OCU¹.

¹ <https://spzh. news/ru/news/76434-rejdery-iz-pcu-shturmujut-khram-upc-v-mihalyche>

On December 10 2020 the altar of a new church was consecrated in a persecuted community in the diocese of Ivano-Frankivsk, in the village of Grinyava, in the Verkhovinsk district of Ukraine's Ivano-Frankivsk region. The service was held on December 8 2020, exactly a year after the church buildings, which belonged to a Ukrainian Orthodox Church community, were seized in a raid by schismatics¹.

On the same day, in the urban settlement of Yasiny, in the Rakhovsky district of Ukraine's Transcarpathian region, a new church built to serve the Georgievsky Ukrainian Orthodox Church community was consecrated. About one and a half years ago the Georgievsky community in Yasiny was deprived of its church as a result of a raid by schismatics. In addition to the Georgievsky community, two other parishes in the Yasiny deanery of the Khust diocese of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church also lost their churches. All three parishes were reregistered as belonging to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, although in reality the communities remained part of the canonical Church and services continued to take place.

On November 17 2020, in Alexandria in Ukraine's Kirovogradskaya region, the Church of St. Anastasia Pharmakolytria and St. Fyodor of Perga was robbed. According to the senior priest, this was not the first time the church had been attacked.

On November 9 2019 militants from the Right Sector group were involved in an attempt to seize the church of St John the Theologian, of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

“When we arrived the locks on the church doors had already been cut and there were people inside”, said archpriest Daniil Ilynsky, the priest in charge of the church. “The group that attackers who seized the church was led by two so-called priests from the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, along with several young activists and people claiming to be representatives of some kind of militant group”. Later we learned that they were from the Right Sector “death squad”. On November 29 supporters of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, equipped with an angle grinder, came back to the church of St John the Theologian and seized it again. On December 14 worshippers from the UOC were able to regain control of the seized church and they held a service in it, but

¹ <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5733309.html>

the next day the entrance to the building was blocked by about 100 law enforcement officers. On December 16 the Kostopil local government organized a meeting attended by senior civil servants from the region, representatives of the police and two rural religious communities, which resolved to seal the doors of the OUC church of St John the Theologian until an official response was obtained from the Ukraine's Ministry of Justice¹. On the night of January 2–3 2020, about two dozen young male supporters of the Ukrainian government-sponsored Orthodox Church of Ukraine, armed with clubs, attacked worshippers loyal to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate who were holding a vigil outside the church of St John the Theologian, in the village of Mashcha, in the Kostopil district of Rivne region². According to witnesses, aggressive activists armed with metal bars and wooden clubs disconnected the street lighting around the church and then started beating up the men who were in the metal caravan by the church. Two police officers, who were also guarding the church, took refuge in their police vehicle, and watched what happened from there.

On September 29 2020 the Pechersk Police department, in Kyiv, opened a criminal case and launched an investigation in relation to threats made by Pyotr Sokolovsky, a priest of the schismatic Orthodox Church of Ukraine, against Archpriest Pavel Bely, a priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, serving at Kyiv's church of Saints Andrei and Vladimir.

Pyotr Sokolovsky, who serves in the Kolominsk district of Ivano-Frankivsk region, had used the Facebook social network to send archpriest Pavel Bely the following private messages: “Listen, Pavel Bely, do not do too much on our land, because you will be white at all when you are in Ukraine's black earth”., and “You will be in our gun sights, get ready to be buried in the black earth. We will take care of you”.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church priest published screenshots of the messages on his Facebook page on September 13 2020. On

¹ <https://spzh.news/ru/news/67221-storonnik-pcu-ustroil-draku-vozle-opechatannogo-khrama-upc-v-mashhe>

² <https://spzh.news/ru/news/67573-storonniki-pcu-zhestoko-izbili-veruju-shhih-upc-dezhurivshih-u-khrama-v-mashhe>

September 25 archpriest Pavel filed a declaration with the police concerning the threats.

On September 26 2020 supporters of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine captured the Church of the Blessed Alexander Nevsky, in the village of Belovezha, in the First Bakhmachsky district of Chernihiv region, which had been restored by the efforts of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. A group of raiders seized the key to the church door from some builders who were completing work in preparation for the consecration of the altar of the restored church, on September 27. We do know that a television camera crew from Ukraine's Channel 5, as well as Nikolai Velikovich, a Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) deputy from Poroshenko's European Solidarity party¹.

On September 26 2020 in the village of Belichi, in the Ivanichevsk district of Volyn region, activists from the Orthodox Church of Ukraine used lockbreaking tools in an attempt to take control of the Church of St. Michael, belonging to a congregation of the canonical church². Archpriest Pavel Melnik, the priest in charge of the Church of St. Michael, had served in the parish for more than 30 years. A year ago a small delegation from the schismatic Orthodox Church of Ukraine in the village tried to persuade him into joining the newly-formed church organization and transferring his church to it, but he refused. But the matter did not end there. Despite the fact that more people in Belichi supported the Ukrainian Orthodox Church than supported transfer, on May 16 2019 the regional authorities transferred the community of the canonical church to the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. "We held a meeting of the congregation in the church. Of the 177 persons present, 176 voted to remain within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Supporters of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine held a meeting in a club, attended by just over 90 people, and they voted to transfer our congregation, and we were reregistered", said the priest. According to him, many of the documents in accordance with which the regional administration transferred the parish to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine were fake.

¹ <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5701786.html>

² <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5698036.html>

According to the outreach department of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, on October 4 2020 supporters of the schismatic Orthodox Church of Ukraine attempted to seize the church of Saint Sergius of Radonezh, in the village of Galinovka, in the Volodymyr-Volynsky district of Volyn region. The schismatics have been trying to reregister the local congregation to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and take control of the church building since March 2019. Despite having no grounds for claiming ownership of the church, on Sunday, while the Divine Liturgy was being celebrated in the church, supporters of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine cut the tires of the priests' cars and burst into the church.

Led by several priests of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, the raiders shouted out insults, threatened Ukrainian Orthodox Church clergy and believers and even resorted to force — two of the priests had their vestments torn. The police did not get involved in the conflict and took no any action in response to the illegal attacks on the clergy and on church property¹.



Members of the Right Sector “death squad”, who took part in the seizure of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the village of Gnezdychno.

It is important to note that the members of the Ukrainian “death squads” not only make no attempt to hide their involvement in the

¹ <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5700998.html>



Militants from the Right Sector “death squad”, accompanied by police, seize the church belonging to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the village of Gnezdychno, in the Zbarazh district of Ternopil region. The seizure was accompanied by beatings of worshippers

seizure of churches belonging to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, but, aware that the current Ukrainian authorities will take no action against them, they also openly publish reports and even video recordings of their attacks on the Internet.

For example, after the seizure of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the village of Gnezdychno, the radicals published the following announcement:

“March 3 will go down in history for the village of Gnezdychno as a day of unyielding struggle for our own Ukrainian faith. The Ukrainian community showed strength and courage by defeating all the challenges and provocations of the pro-Russian community, led by their priests. The war is continuing, not only in the East, but here on the home front. We must understand that the enemy is near, and make every effort to win”.

As readers will remember, on March 3 militants from Right Sector seized the Church of the Holy Transfiguration, in the village of Gnezdychno, in the Zbarazh district of Ternopil region. In a video published on the Internet militants can be seen beating worshippers and driving them out of their church¹.

In 2020, right on the roof of the seized Ukrainian Orthodox church in the village of Gnezdychno, in the Zbarazh district of Ternopil region, Bohdan Yatsikovskyy, a deputy for the Ternopil region from the Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko, sang a song about killing Russians and Jews.

On 6 August 2020 militants from the National Corps went to the home of Maksim Iorenko, a priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox church in Zolochiv, Lviv region, and destroyed the fence around his house. Shortly before this attack by nationalists, Iorenko had been threatened by the local authorities and representatives of the Greek Catholic community².

On July 16 2020 the Cherkassky court sentenced the children’s writer Oleh Slepynin, who had criticized the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, created by the authorities, to two months’ house arrest.

¹ <https://spzh.news/ru/news/60591-pravyj-sektor-otchitalsya-o-perevode-v-pcu-khrama-v-gnezdychno>

² <https://materik.ru/analitika/ukraina-kak-bazovyy-placdarm-religi/>



Militants from the Right Sector “death squad” drive Ukrainian Orthodox Church members from their church in the village of Gnezdychno, in the Zbarazh district of Ternopil region

On July 26 2020 supporters of the schismatic Orthodox Church of Ukraine seized two Ukrainian Orthodox churches in the Volyn and Vinnitsia regions¹. Early on a Sunday morning schismatics broke the locks on the doors of the Church of the Elevation of the Cross in the village of Zabolotsy, in the Ivanichevsk district of Volyn region, and entered the church. According to members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church congregation, before the seizure the radicals had not made any threats or declared their intention to seize the church. The illegal reregistration of the Church of the Elevation of the Cross from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine was carried out with the support of the local authorities on April 5 2019.

Schismatics burst into the Pokrov Church in the village of Novozhivotov, in the Oratovsky district of Vinnitsia region while the priest and congregation were celebrating Divine Liturgy in the courtyard of the sealed church.

According to witnesses, the raiders erected a tent in front of the Ukrainian Orthodox believers and started to pray. As the parishioners were preparing to take Holy Communion the schismatics rushed to the doors, cut through the lock with an angle grinder and entered the church. The police did nothing to prevent this lawless behavior. Members of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church congregation who tried to enter the building to take photographs of what was happening were refused admittance.

On May 22 2020 Yu Pogulyaiko, the head of the Volyn region local government, issued an order transferring two churches that had earlier been taken from Ukrainian Orthodox Church communities to the schismatic Orthodox Church of Ukraine, which had seized them, for its permanent use². The churches in question are the Cathedral of the Trinity in Berestechko, in Horokhiv Region, and the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin, in the village of Borovichi, in the Manevichsky district of Volyn region, both of which are architectural monuments of local significance. The congregations of the seized churches remained loyal to the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

¹ <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5669821.html>

² <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5632382.html>

On May 4 2020, in the course of an attempt to seize the Church of the Archangel Michael, in the village of Zadubrivka, worshippers were savagely attacked by supporters of the schismatic Orthodox Church of Ukraine¹.

Metropolitan Anthony of Borispol and Brovary, Chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, emphasized the fact that the attack on the church took place on the day on which Leonid Delikatny, the archpriest of the parish, had died.

“The attackers, hoping that the grief of the community, which was preparing for the funeral of their priest, would prevent it from effectively resisting the raider attack, acted brazenly and cruelly. When they failed to get what they wanted, the criminals took out their anger on several parishioners of the Church of the Archangel Michael, who were on duty that day. The Orthodox believers were severely beaten. What is more, one of them was wounded in the head with a knife”, said Metropolitan Anthony. The hierarch added that, as far as is known, none of those involved in the raid were arrested.

Metropolitan Luka of Zaporizhzhia was a witness of what happened in Zadubrivka: “As for the events in the Church of the Archangel Michael, in the village of Zadubrivka: The campaign against the Church of Christ is continuing in our country. After a series of arson attacks on churches and monasteries, now we are seeing physical assaults on believers. What happened that night in the church in the village of Zadubrivka, in Chernivtsi region was a real terrorist attack. The electricity was disconnected, roads into the village were blocked, two busloads of armed terrorists brutally attacked parishioners with clubs and metal rods, some people suffered knife wounds, tear gas was used to force out women from the church building, the fire brigade was called but the attackers took no notice of their demands, and people were hospitalized with serious injuries. All this happened, not in the depths of Africa or Asia, but in a country which has been talking about its decision to turn towards Europe for the last year. All these events are the fruits of the persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church”².

¹ <http://eparchia.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5646139.html>

² <https://materik.ru/analitika/ukraina-kak-bazovyy-placdarm-religi/>

In many cases the seizures of churches belonging to the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church take place in the presence of heads of rural committees and of Ukrainian regional districts. For example, back in May 2018 Serhiy Kondrachuk, the head of the local government in Zdolbuniv (Rivne region) sent a declaration to the Ukrainian Security Service requesting that churches belonging to the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church be searched in order to seize forms with signatures protesting against the creation of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. The Orthodox commentator Dmitry Skvortsov¹ has written that the name of Kondrachuk is linked to church seizures in at least five villages. His boss, O. Mulyarenko, the head of the Rivne region government, sent the heads of regional administrations illegal “recommendations” to conduct “inventories of the ecclesiastical real estate and physical property of religious organizations”. Under the pretext of “carrying out an inventory” a church in the village of Kurozvan, in Rivne region, was broken into and seized in the presence of civil servants and police officers. The head of the rural council of the village of Radomyshl, in Lutsk district, who led the seizure of the village church, threatens to draft into the army those residents who oppose its transfer to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. And the head of the town council of Berestechko, in Volyn region called a rescue brigade from the Ministry of Emergency Situations to break down the doors of the church.

In April 2020 there was a series of arson attacks throughout Ukraine on churches belonging to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. For example on April 24 2020 the Holy Dormiton Monastery in Odessa was set on fire². On April 21 2020 there was a fire in the territory of the Hamaliivka convent, in Sumy region. On April 15 2020 the Ukrainian Orthodox church in the village of Lukivtsi, in Bukovina, which was more than 120 years old, burned down. The main theory is that this was an arson attack. On April 12 2020, in the village of Lypky in the Hoshchanskyi district of Rivne region, outbuildings of the Holy Dormiton monastery were set on fire. According to witnesses of the

¹ <https://www.fondsk.ru/news/2019/03/21/shokirujushchie-obstojatelstva-zahvata-pravoslavnyh-hramov-na-ukraine-47832.html?print>

² <https://odessa.online/v-odesse-tushat-pozhar-v-svyato-uspenskom-monastyre-video-obnovlyaetsya/>

event, this was a deliberate arson attack, and there was no burning of grass in the area. Moreover, when the burnt remains of the building were inspected, a bottle was found, and it is likely that this had contained an inflammable substance¹.

We point out that earlier there have been cases in which priests of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church were tortured.

For example Hieromonach Feofan (secular name, Georgiy Kratirov), from a monastery in the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church diocese of Donetsk. In 2015 father Feofan was kidnapped by officers of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and tortured. He describes what happened:

“It happened next to the monastery. Some Ukrainian Security Services officers came, they pointed their guns at me and handcuffed me. But they said nothing about any kind of punishment, nothing like that. In other words, they kidnapped me. I was able to remember their faces very well. One of the people who kidnapped me is now working in the monastery as a bell ringer.

After that they went through my house and my cell in the monastery, took everything they wanted, especially items of value — things that they thought they could make money from. They put me in a minibus, next to me there was a soldier with a machine gun, its safety catch was off and it was pointed at me. They took me to Blagodatново like that, and there they put me onto another minibus and took me to the Ukrainian Security Service office in Mariupol — at 77 Georgievskaya Street.

The torture was the worst thing that I have experienced. When they are torturing someone for several hours, and you know that you are going to be next. And nobody, apart from Satan, their master, knows what those evil people are capable of. First they put me in a holding cell, a former arms store, and from there they took me to the firing range to torture me three days in a row. They hit me with clubs or plastic sticks on my knees, sides, they tortured me with electric shocks, then they waterboarded me. That involves putting the victim on the floor with their hands behind them, fastened together with handcuffs, put a cloth over your face and pour water over you until you start to drown. It

¹ <https://spzh.news/ru/news/70399-v-rovenskoj-jeparkhii-gorit-lipenskij-monastyry>

was only after three days of torture that they took me to the investigator and retrospectively arrested me”¹.

Archpriest Vladimir Maretsky, a priest of the Luhansk diocese of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church, was also tortured.

He described how he was seized and then “taken to the torturers in a place where they all ran to. Including Nadezhda Savchenko, who they called “Bullet”. It was she who hit us on our genitals, trampled and jumped on us. She suggested selling us for our organs, but they refused to allow this. Then she wanted to have us shot, but again they refused. Then she threatened to have us thrown out of a helicopter in the middle of a transit flight “like before” (they carried us with sacks over our heads). I do not know what she meant by “like before”, it seems that there had been such cases. But here fellow officers also rejected this idea.

They were not her fellow cutthroats from the Aidar battalion, but soldiers from the Ukrainian Security Service — the organization where we were taken. They understood that once our kidnapping was reported in the media (something like — a large group of “terrorists” has been captured) then they would no longer be able to kill us. So you could say that they saved us like that. It was the first time I had seen Savchenko, but I will remember her my whole life. She was their gun pointer, she corrected their aim. Savchenko was the most aggressive, she was a real man-hater. She was not some kind of schizophrenic, but she really had a sadistic side to her.

...To say that they beat us is not enough. They killed us. They shot us, they broke our bones, they beat us, not only using their arms and legs but with gun butts and whatever they had to hand.

From the SBU I was sent to Prison 27 — Kharkiv’s central prison — and from there to a prison camp. In the morning they gave me a piece of bread with tea, and in the evening a piece of bread with salt. In the SBU base they found subtle ways to torture us, to force us to admit to being terrorists. But they had no proof, we had simply been travelling in a car, with no weapons. But I am still a wanted man in Ukraine, there are posters with my face on them. They released me after four months,

¹ https://tsargrad.tv/articles/svjashhennosluzhitelj-iz-donbassa-pytki-samoe-strashnoe-chto-prishlos-perezhit_175560

as part of a prisoner exchange. They took us back to the SBU, did not give us back our documents, in fact, they did not give us anything back, some of us had our hands bound with zip ties and others with handcuffs. They exchanged us outside Donetsk”¹.

Many other priests from the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church have been subjected to pressure by the SBU and have had to leave Ukraine. For example, Oleg Trofimov, a well-known missionary, commentator, and the author of the article “I am a pastor to convicts, Russian patriots and Soviet citizens” is listed on the “Peacemaker” web site as a person who should be eliminated. Archpriest Georgiy Dorosha was arrested by the SBU during a service on Holy Thursday. “They arrested Father Georgiy during the reading of the 12 Holy Gospels of the Passion, searched his house was searched, took him to Odessa started fabricating a criminal case in which he was accused of having grenade throwers in his possession. The worshippers tried to get him released, and drove along with him to Odessa in their cars², said some of the members of his congregation, in the diocese of Odessa. Father Georgiy was later released due to the lack of any evidence that he was guilty of any crime, and also in view of the fact that the worshippers had started blocking the main road between Odessa and Ismail over Easter. Archpriest Andrei Novikov was required to appear at the SBU headquarters in Kyiv for questioning, and so was threatened with inevitable arrest. He was forced to leave Ukraine.

In 2020 in addition to the many violent seizures of churches, priests loyal to the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church, or members of their families were also subjected to violence and intimidation. In most cases, the Ukrainian authorities take no steps to stop it such attacks, and none of those involved are brought to justice.

For example, in September 2020 several armed soldiers who were taking part in exercises in South-Eastern Ukraine beat up a UOC priest in Kyiv. According to media reports, the victim incurred serious injuries as a result of the attack. Despite this, the priest refused to formally report the attack to the police, saying “God will be their judge”. The priest said that five people had taken part in the attack. His attackers,

¹ <https://www.kp.ru/daily/26503/3372020/>

² <https://od-novorossia.livejournal.com/583932.html>

however, claimed that they were justified in their action: “He serves the UOC—MP, and that gives us the right to do what we did”¹.

On September 4 2019, in the village of Sadov, in the Lutsk district of Volyn region, a group of young radicals came up to the home of Archpriest Vladimir Meles and, showing him their grenades, threatened to use them against the priest and his family if they did not agree to vacate the church house, which they were living in quite legally. The persons who seized the parish church of the Icon of the Virgin of Kazan continue to terrorize Archpriest Vladimir Meles, the parish priest, and members of the congregation, who remain faithful to the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church. They are continually threatened, the windows in the priest’s home have been broken, and Archpriest Vladimir’s son, still a child, has been beaten.

On May 14 2020 Anatoly Pavolvich Borisenko, the head of the security service of the Cathedral of the Holy Transfiguration and administrator of the Sumy diocese, died². He had been savagely attacked by soldiers and went into a state of coma, and died without ever regaining consciousness. Anatoly Pavolvich Borisenko was savagely beaten in the premises of the cathedral, and went into a coma as a result of the serious injuries which he incurred. It was later discovered that the attacker was Pavel Myasishchev, a soldier in the Ukrainian National Guard, from military base 3057. The criminal was arrested and held in a pretrial detention center, but was soon released.

Reviewing the events that have occurred in Ukraine, it can be concluded that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church — Moscow Patriarchate, the religious denomination with the largest number of adherents in the country, is being subjected to systematic attacks, initiated by the national authorities, and carried out with the involvement of the security services and the “death squads”.

This is a direct violation of Article 11 of the Constitution of Ukraine, which states that “the State promotes the consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, its historical consciousness, traditions and culture, and also the development of the ethnic, cultural,

¹ https://tsargrad.tv/news/pravo-imejut-ukrainskie-voiny-sveta-edva-ne-zabili-vernogo-cerkvi-svjashennika_279151

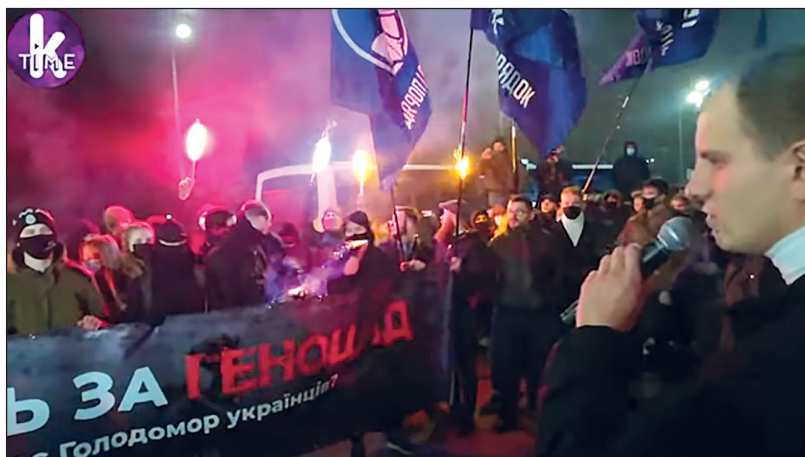
² <http://eparchia.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5638421.html>

linguistic and religious identity of all indigenous peoples and national minorities of Ukraine”, and of Article 24, which states that “citizens have equal constitutional rights and freedoms and are equal before the law. There shall be no privileges or restrictions based on race, color of skin, political, religious and other beliefs, sex, ethnic and social origin, property status, place of residence, linguistic or other characteristics”, and also of Article 35, which declares that “everyone has the right to freedom of personal philosophy and religion. This right includes the freedom to profess or not to profess any religion, to perform alone or collectively and unimpededly religious rites and ceremonial rituals, and to conduct religious activity”.

The Ukrainian authorities’ conduct is also in breach of Article 2 of the Declaration of Universal Human Rights, which states that “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.

Ukrainian anti-Semitism

In addition to the ongoing celebration of Nazism and the climate of Russophobia, instances of anti-Semitism are currently increasing in Ukraine. This fact seems particularly ironic, given that a significant proportion of Ukraine’s political and financial elite is made up of persons from Ukrainian Jewish families. Nevertheless, the majority of these people are taking no action to stem the rise in anti-Semitism, but tend instead to view it as a part of independent Ukraine’s historical ideology. For example, President Zelensky, who was born into a Ukrainian Jewish family, has every opportunity to fight against anti-Semitism, but has not taken the necessary action. Even more paradoxically, there are many examples of people with a similar family background to that of Mr. Zelensky supporting and directly sponsoring radical anti-Semitic groups and the racist “death squads”. For example the oligarch Igor Kolomoisky, who was born into a Jewish family and is President of the United Jewish Community of Ukraine, has financed the Right Sector “death squad” and his close associates



A demonstration organized on January 6 2021 by the Ukrainian S14 “death squad”, outside the Israeli embassy in Kyiv. In the demonstration personal insults were directed at the ambassador, as well as the ridiculous demand that Israel should “apologize for the genocide of Ukrainians”.

Gennady Korban and Boris Filatov have participated directly in the group’s operations.

On January 6, 2021 the Ukrainian S14 “death squad” besieged the Israeli embassy in Kyiv. They claimed that this was a response to the Israeli ambassador’s criticism of a march in support of Stepan Bandera,

and the attackers' main demand was that Israel should "apologize for the genocide of Ukrainians". This ridiculous demand was made by Yevhen Karas, the leader of the S14 "death squad" in a speech made outside the embassy, in which he personally insulted the ambassador, calling him a "stupid liar".

Readers will remember that on June 3 2020 the Israeli ambassador to Ukraine said... "In your country, Ukraine, anti-Semitism is on the rise, if you are rewriting history — that is anti-Semitism. If people write insults on synagogue walls, if they talk about how many Jews there are in Ukraine's business community — that is anti-Semitism, and it's not normal. If you have people selling post cards with Nazi symbols right next to the Maidan, you should not wait until somebody goes to the police and files a complaint. The police should go there automatically and treat it as a case of anti-Semitism".¹

A demonstration organized on January 6 2021 by the Ukrainian S14 "death squad", outside the Israeli embassy in Kyiv. In the demonstration personal insults were directed at the ambassador, as well as the ridiculous demand that Israel should "apologize for the genocide of Ukrainians".

Back in 2018 56 members of the US Congress signed a letter to the Congress expressing their concern about Ukrainian state authorities' support of anti-Semitism, worded as follows:

We urge you to join us and human rights organizations in standing against anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and all forms of intolerance by calling for the Polish and Ukrainian governments to unequivocally reject Holocaust distortion and the honoring of Nazi collaborators and fully prosecute anti-Semitic crimes. We also ask that you detail what steps are being taken by the United States (U. S.) government to monitor instances of Holocaust distortion and ensure that the U. S. is not supporting or funding groups and individuals that promote or justify anti-Semitism. We believe these steps must include a firm request that these offensive laws be repealed.

...State-sponsored Holocaust distortion and denial taking place in Ukraine is accompanied with other forms of anti-Semitism. As Israel's Department of Diaspora Affairs has pointed out in its annual report on

¹ <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/2970673.html>

anti-Semitism, the whitewashing of the Ukrainian “heroes” has coincided with the increasing incidence of anti-Semitism across Ukraine. This includes desecration of Holocaust memorials and Jewish places of worship, such as the desecration of a holy tomb in Uman with a swastika-carved pig’s head, a January 2017 march in honor of Bandera, during which participants chanted “Jews Out!” as well as last summer’s firebombing of a Lviv synagogue during “ShukhevyehFest”.

Last November, Radio Free Europe reported on the presence of torches and Nazi salutes at a 20,000-strong march in honor of the 75th anniversary of the UPA. These torchlight marches are closely linked to organizations such as the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion, an armed group that was prohibited from receiving U. S. weapons and training by the recently signed Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018. Rather than disband Azov, the government incorporated it into the Ukrainian National Guard overseen by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The group is widely known to be closely connected to Minister of Internal Affairs Arsen Avakov.

...Therefore we respectfully request that you respond to our serious concerns with a detailed description of what actions the State Department is taking to work with the Polish and Ukrainian governments, and other governments in the region, to combat the rise of anti-Semitism and Holocaust-denial and distortion¹”.

The position of the former President Petro Poroshenko is no secret, and it was during his administration that the increase in anti-Semitic statements and crimes began, and the government adopted a policy of turning a blind eye to, and even openly supporting anti-Semites². It was he who awarded the Order of Freedom, Ukraine’s most prestigious honor, to Vasyl Kvasnovsky, a well-known anti-Semite and Russophobe. In order to assess his “work” it is enough just to look at the titles of some of his books, which include “From Gloom to Light:

¹ <https://khanna.house.gov/media/press-releases/release-rep-khanna-leads-bipartisan-members-condemning-anti-semitism-europe>

² <http://antifashist.com/item/na-ukraine-fashizma-net-poroshenko-vruchil-vyshshuyu-nagradu-avtoru-knig-o-moskovsko-zhidovskom-sindrome.html>

Muscovite-Yid Syndrome of the Ukrainian Holocaust”, and “The Scheming Twins, Communism and Zionism”.

However, the same process, including open or tacit state support for such phenomena, is continuing under President Volodymyr Zelensky. For example the man appointed by Zelensky as Prime Minister of Ukraine, Oleksiy Honcharuk, is an example of the kind of people that the Ukrainian state chooses to support — he personally opened a concert by the neo-Nazi rock group Sokira Perun. This group’s song lyrics leave no doubt as to their ideology:

The spider’s web of lies is encircling the world,
Zionist rubbish!
Baseless slanders have tuned you into a sheep,
a toy in the hands of Yids!
They said, “How we suffered
At the hands of the Aryan soldiers!
Nazism should be forgotten for ever”.
But that will not happen, while we are alive!
Six million words of lies,
Which the Yids invented,
About the holocaust and Zyclon B.
And you ask them, where is the proof?!
Six million words of rubbish.
That’s how Europe was rid of this plague!
Lets shine the light of truth!
White society, white Europe.
We have a right to our home!
Payback time has arrived, a holy war.
The question is this — them or us?
We will be victorious, or we will be right.
A war for race and nation!

It is not surprising that the anti-Semitic views of the political elite, supported by the Ukrainian state, are leading to open displays of anti-Semitism from a very wide range of people from different backgrounds and different parts of the country. We will cite just a few examples from 2018 and 2019.

- On January 9 2018 Serhiy Krupko, deputy head of the Chernivtsi region Department of Tourism published a poem on his Facebook page, including the following lines: “May Russkies howl like wolves, / and may Jews scream like pigs. / There is a holiday in my land today, / They are singing carols all over Ukraine”;
- On February 2 2018 Chortkovski Bulletin, the leading newspaper of the town of Chortkov (Ternopil region) published an editorial “Yids or Jews?”, in which the editor Maryana Polyanskaya asked the question: “Why are there so many Yids in our governments?”;
- On February 3 2018, in Ternopil, a monument to the victims of the Holocaust was defaced. A Nazi swastika and SS symbols were daubed on the monument in red paint;
- On February 19 2018 notices and posters calling on people to carry out violent attacks on Jews were found displayed on a bus stop on Kontraktova Square, in Kyiv.
- On March 7 2018 the following notice was seen written opposite the entrance to a synagogue in Chernihiv: “Jewish ghetto!”;
- On April 18, 2018 the Jewish cemetery in Rivne was desecrated — unknown persons dug up a mass grave containing the remains of 18,000 Jews in Sosenki Grove.
- On April 23 2018 in Poltava vandals desecrated a plaque honoring Jews — victims of Nazism. Swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans were scrawled on the monument;
- On April 28 2018 the prayer hall above the grave of the famous Jewish Rabbi Magarsho, on Ostrog (Rivne region) was vandalized.
- On April 30 2018 in the center of Cherkasy, unknown persons wrote the slogan “Yid Horde, get out!” in red paint;
- On July 23 2018 buildings on Chernyakhovsky and Osipov Streets, in the Primorsky district of Odessa were daubed with anti-Semitic slogans: “All Jews will be burnt up” and “Kill the Yid”, as well as swastikas.
- On September 6 2018 an unknown person telephoned I. a member of the Jewish community from Kyiv, identifying themselves as a “prosecutor” and made death threats, with references to his ethnic origin.

- On September 13 2018 the following inscription was found on a map in Kyiv’s Metro system: “Kill the Yid and the profiteer!”;
- On September 16 2018 the book “The Global Muscovite-Jewish and Nationalism as Freedom”, which contains numerous quotations from Adolf Hitler’s book *Mein Kampf*, was found on the shelves of the Akademkniga bookshop in Kyiv.
- On September 23 2018 a member of the public, Ya, reported anti-Semitic graffiti — “Kill the Yid and be happy!” on Paton bridge, in Kyiv.
- On September 23 2018 anti-Semitic graffiti was found in a Kyiv train carriage: “A Jew? Kill them!”;
- On October 1 2018 residents of Cherkasy received anti-Semitic letters sent through the post by unknown persons, containing printed copies of the article “The Eternal Yid”, dated 1943, from the newspaper *Novoye Slovo*.
- On October 4 2018 anti-Semitic slogans in Ukrainian were found in the street and in a metro carriage in Kyiv: “Send them to Babyn Yar: the gypsies, the comrades, Abraham and Sarah”;
- On October 7 2018 an anti-Semitic slogan, “Kill the Yid”, was found on the wall of the Palatz Ukraina Metro station, in Kyiv.
- On November 12 2018 an anti-Semitic slogan was found on the front of a payment terminal in the Lukyanovsk Market district of Kyiv: “The only safe Yids are dead ones!”
- On November 16 2018 an anti-Semitic slogan, “Kill the yid”, was found on the wall of a building in the Darnitsky district of Kyiv;
- On November 18 2018 a so-called national assembly was held in Mikhailov Square, in Kyiv. The participants shouted slogans against “filthy Yids, the Judaic band, masons, Chabad”, and demanded the “reinstatement of the nationality record in people’s passports, the return of power to Ukrainians, and an end to the genocide being carried out by Yids”.
- On November 27 2018 an anti-Semitic slogan, “Yids. Death” was found on a No. 41 trolleybus in Kyiv;
- On January 20 2019 the leader of a demonstration in Uman declared: “Yids, let us say it as it is, are ruining our faith and our country. They do not see us as in charge here. That is why

we need to show them that if they don't observe these rules then we will have to get tougher with them". The leader of the National Militia in Uman, Evgeny Ustimovich also addressed the demonstrators: "We will strive for what is ours, and those bastard Yids who arrested and humiliated Jesus Christ should answer for what they have done. They have desecrated our faith, they have desecrated our freedom. They are a disease for our city, and a disease needs to be cured. If it is gangrene, then the afflicted flesh needs to be cut off and forgotten about. I ask you to support us at this time. Those Yids are going to face a court";

- On January 30 2019 Rostislav Novozhenets, head of the Ukrainian Republican Party and a candidate for the post of President declared that he wanted to fight against the Jewish and Russian stranglehold: "In the government, for example in the Ukrainian Presidential Administration, the senior positions are almost exclusively occupied by Russians and Jews. The head of the Audit Chamber, President Petro Poroshenko himself, and the Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman are all Jewish. We can see the Russian stranglehold over senior positions in the Ukrainian Armed Forces and Security Services — even when we are at war with Russia. That is why I have chosen "Ukraine for Ukrainians" as the main slogan in my election campaign. If I am elected then all senior appointments over which the President has any control will be reserved for ethnic Ukrainians!";
- On February 11 2019, in the town of Bucha, Kyiv region, Arkady V., who was wearing a skull cap, intervened to protect some Armenians who were being harassed by a group of young people. When he offered to call the police, they shouted to him: "You are a Yid. Go to Israel. Our leader didn't burn enough of you in his ovens". When they were called, the police did nothing about this anti-Semitic incident;
- On February 13 2019 in Kolomiya, Ivano-Frankivsk region, drawings of figures throwing the Star of David into a waste paper basket were discovered in a Jewish cemetery.
- On February 14 2019, in Kyiv, hospital staff refused treatment to Vadim M. and called him a "Yid", "Crafty Jew" and "Yid spy";

- On February 28 2019, Lyudmila K., a resident of Lutsk, wrote a complaint about Jews to Valeriy Sushkevych, the Ukrainian Government Commissioner for the Protection of the Rights of Disabled People. In her complaint, she wrote: “The Yid- Jews in Lutsk are victimizing me and my family. They are mangy scum and do not just break the law for the sake of gain but destroy the health of anyone who is not Jewish by nationality. They are worse than the Nazis... I demand an end to this Yid genocide”;
- On March 16 2019, in Bohuslav, Kyiv region, a memorial plaque in the Jewish cemetery in Stadionnaya street was found broken;
- On March 18 2019, at 75 Gagarina street, graffiti reading “The Jews’ genocide of the Ukrainians” was discovered;
- On March 20 2019, C., the founder and leader of the unregistered political party “United Slavic Front” and the religious organization “Religious Union of God-chosen Ukrainians (not Jews)”, and the administrator of the website of the same name, published materials on the Internet which were calculated to defame and denigrate Ukraine’s Jewish Community;
- On April 24 2019 swastikas were found drawn on the ruins of a synagogue. The numbers 14/88, which are used as a greeting in Nazi circles, were also found written on the walls.
- On May 21 2019 the monument to the Jewish victims of the Nazis in the Grieving Mother Park, was desecrated. The vandals wrote the words “Death to Yids” and drew SS symbols on the monument;
- On July 10 2019 an advertisement for the Union of Self Reliance party, on Mechnikov street, was vandalized with swastikas and the word “Yid”, and the word “Yid” was also written on a banner for Andriy Moskalenko, an election candidate from the same party;
- On June 21 2019 an unidentified man threw a stone through the window of the Beys Stern Shulman in synagogue in Kryvyi Rih. In the hall of the synagogue were found stones wrapped in pieces of paper on which were printed threats to the Jewish community;
- On June 29 2019 residents of Chernihiv found sheets with the words “Free Ukraine from Jewish control” in their post boxes;

- On August 21 2019 in Nikolayev region a monument marking the Jewish communal grave on the border between Vradiivka and Kryve Ozero districts was desecrated with swastikas;
- On August 30 2019 an anti-Semitic slogan — “Yids, get out of Ukraine!” — was discovered on the wall of a shop in the Khyazhny market;
- On September 5 2019 an anti-Semitic slogan was found at an exit from the Metro in Kyiv;
- On September 13 2019 Igor Bargo, the head of a Jewish religious community in Vinnytsia, was subjected to anti-Semitic insults by a police officer;
- On September 15 2019 a monument in the village of Bogdanovka, in Nikolayev region, marking the place where 54,000 Jews had been shot, was desecrated;
- On September 30 2019, the words “Death to the mangy Yids” and “Kill the Yids” were found on the post marking the boundary of Novomyrhorod district, in Kirovohrad region;
- On October 17 2019 the monument to victims of the Holocaust at Pesachnaya Gora, in Yavoriv, Lviv region, was desecrated;
- On November 23 2019, during a demonstration, a man displayed an anti-Semitic poster bearing the words: “Zionism is the author of the Holodomor in Ukraine” and depicting the Star of David.
- On November 25 2019 swastikas were drawn on a monument to the Jewish writer Sholem Aleichem, opposite the central synagogue in Kyiv;
- On December 6 2019, near the railway station in Kyiv, there was an attack on a group of activists who were handing out campaign leaflets in support of the blogger and politician Anatoly Sharia. The group of activists included Dmitry G., who the attackers identified as Jewish. The attackers also shouted anti-Semitic insults at him, including “Dirty Yid”;
- On December 24 2019 a swastika was painted at the entrance to the synagogue.

A similar incident occurred in 2020. For example on January 10 2020, in Uman, Cherkasy region, some 30 people attacked a group of Jews who were praying at the tomb of Saddik Nachman, the Hasidic

leader and great-grandson of the movement's founder. As a result of the incident, four people were injured and taken to hospital. On April 19 2020 unidentified persons tried to start a fire in the synagogue in Teatralnaya street, Kherson. On June 25 2020 the synagogue in Ivano-Frankivsk was covered with graffiti. On June 28 2020, during morning prayers, a man with an axe broke into a synagogue in Mariupol and struck the security guard several times. On August 31 2020, a car parked by the Jewish Community Center and belonging to the community leader was set on fire.

We will also cite a few of the many hate crimes committed in Ukraine over the last few years which have been officially recorded by the OSCE as instances of anti-Semitism¹: a physical assault on a Jewish activist by a group of people who tried to carve a swastika onto her breast using a knife, the destruction of a monument to Jews and Poles killed in 1944, an attack on a synagogue; the theft of tombstones from a Jewish cemetery and their use to “repair” a road, the destruction of a memorial to the Holocaust in a Jewish cemetery, the throwing of a smoke grenade into a building where a lecture on the Holocaust was being read, the writing of anti-Semitic slogans on the offices of a political party, repeated desecration of a memorial to the Holocaust with Nazi graffiti, etc.

On April 19 2020 Vasyl Ivasechko, deputy head of the Ternopil branch of the Ukrainian national organization Prosvita published a message calling on people to kill Jews and Russians on his Facebook page: “My idea is this: the Ukrainians need to harden their resolve and eliminate the Yids and Russkies. In my view the biggest problem in Ukraine is the Ukrainian Yids and Russkies. The Yids are sitting there one on top of the other — and we wonder why we are poor. In August 2020 he also wrote: “I call on all Ukrainian women to stop getting friendly with Jews, Russkies and Blacks...” It is worth noting that this organization is financed from Ukraine's state budget. According to Eduard Dolinsky, the Director of the Ukrainian Jewish Committee, it receives more than \$1 million every year.

A statement by Vasyl Ivasechko, the deputy head of the Ternopil branch of the Ukrainian national organization Prosvita, financed from

¹ <https://hatecrime.osce.org/ukraine>



Vasyl Ivasechko

19 · 🌐

**I call on all Ukrainian women to stop getting friendly with Jews, Russkies and Blacks and the rest, to abide by Shevchenko's covenant – learn from others, but do not reject your own
Glory to Ukraine!**



A statement by Vasyl Ivasechko, the deputy head of the Ternopil branch of the Ukrainian national organization Prosvita, financed from the Ukrainian budget, in which he called on people to kill “Yids and Russkies” and told Ukrainian women to “stop getting friendly with Jews, Russkies and Blacks”

the Ukrainian budget, in which he called on people to kill “Yids and Russkies” and told Ukrainian women to “stop getting friendly with Jews, Russkies and Blacks”

In November 2019 a Ukrainian court ordered the reinstatement of Vasyl Marushchina, an employee of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry who had been dismissed for anti-Semitism. He had expressed his ideas openly, publishing a number of posts of Facebook, including: “God, punish the Yids”, and “Babyn Yar — It wasn't the Yids who were killed there in 1941, it was the Ukrainians, from 1918–1941”, “Yids are shit” and “The Yids declared war on Germany in 1934”.

At a regional level the modern Ukrainian state spending a huge amount of money organizing parades, setting up monuments and opening museums — all celebrating anti-Semites. For example, at the end of

2020 a monument to the anti-Semite Mykola Mikhnovsky was unveiled in Zgurovka, in Kyiv region. It was he who formulated the slogans “Ukraine for Ukrainians” and “All men are your brothers, but the Russkies, Poles, Romanians and Yids are the enemies of our people”. In 1904 he founded the Ukrainian National Party, which supported terrorism.

Earlier, on September 8 2018, during a ceremony to unveil a monument to Mikhnovsky in Kyiv, Roman Koval, the leader of the ceremony, quoted him: “They do not like it when followers of Mykola Mikhnovsky repeat his simple truths. As Mikhnovsky said, ‘All men are your brothers, but the Russkies, Poles, Hungarians, Romanians and Yids are the enemies of our people, as long as they rule over us and exploit us’. I repeat: ‘as long as they rule over us and exploit us’. And they are doing just that — ruling over us! And exploiting us!”

Another example was the dedication of a monument to one of the key figures in the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Mykhailo Kolodzinsky. His attitude to the Jews is expressed in its clearest form in his book, “Ukrainian Military Doctrine”, first published in 1940 and republished in 2019.

“The wrath of the Ukrainian people against the Yids will be particularly terrible. We should not allow this wrath to cool down, but, on the contrary, we should intensify it, as the more Yids who are killed during the uprising, the better it will be for the Ukrainian state”.

The deputy head of the Ivano-Frankivsk regional government expressed a similarly unambiguous attitude to ideas of this kind during the unveiling of a monument and the opening of a museum dedicated to Mykhailo Kolodzinsky in 2017: “The memory of Mykhailo Kolodzinsky burns like a flame and we are making every effort to ensure that it never goes out and that every young person recognizes it and inherits it. The best memorial to him will be sincere labor to achieve that better future for the sake of which Kolodzinsky, while still young, gave up his life.

The Ivano-Frankivsk regional government opens a monument and museum to one of the leaders of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, the anti-Semite Mykhailo Kolodzinsky, who wrote: “The more Yids who are killed during the uprising, the better it will be for the Ukrainian state”



Monument to Mykhailo Kolodzinsky, the ideologue of Ukrainian nationalism, author of the slogans “Ukraine for Ukrainians” and “All men are your brothers, but the Russkies, Poles, Romanians and Yids are the enemies of our people”. It was unveiled in Zgurovka, in Kyiv region, at the end of 2020

In January 2019 a memorial plaque to Dmytro Dontsov was erected on the facade of the Ukrinform national information agency, in Kyiv. Bohdan Chervak, First Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for Television and Radio, addressed those present: “He understood very well that no foreign ideologies, no foreign doctrines will help us win our

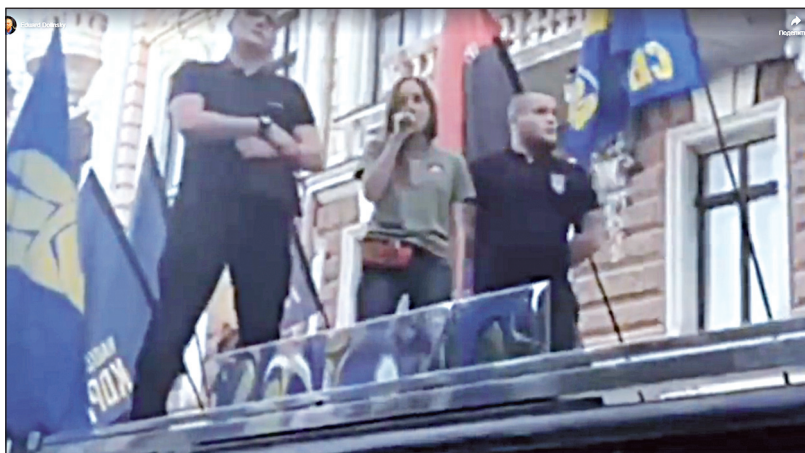


The Ivano-Frankivsk regional government opens a monument and museum to one of the leaders of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, the anti-Semite Mykhailo Kolodzinsky, who wrote: “The more Yids who are killed during the uprising, the better it will be for the Ukrainian state”

state. Only one doctrine, the doctrine of the Ukrainian national idea, is able to consolidate and unite the nation around its state”.

Eduard Dolinsky, the head of the Ukrainian Jewish Committee, has called Dontsov “an anti-Semite, a loathsome fascist and a Nazi collaborator”. It was Dmytro Dontsov who wrote the following: “The International Yid movement is a force of decadence that has fallen on Germany like a swarm of locusts”, “The Jews castrated the spirit of the people, tainting literature and the press with their Yid cosmopolitan soul”. Dontsov was responsible for developing the concept of Integral Nationalism, which called for the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists to fight alongside the Nazis. He lived in Berlin during the Great Patriotic War.

In the same month, in Kyiv, an equally solemn atmosphere prevailed during the opening of a bas-relief to commemorate Symon Petliura, who organized anti-Jewish pogroms. According to the Commission of the Red Cross, around 50,000 Jews were killed in the pogroms carried out in winter 1919 by soldiers of Petliura’s Directorate. Symon Petliura



Right Sector call for Ukraine to be cleansed of Yids

himself was shot in Paris on May 25 1926, in revenge for the killings of Ukrainian Jews. The killer was acquitted by a French jury.

Those parties and politicians who are connected to the Ukrainian “death squads” are particularly virulent, and quite open, in their anti-Semitism. For example, during a “Ukrainian Order March” on May 2 in Odessa, organized by the Svoboda party, the National Militia and the Right Sector party, Tatiana Soykina, the leader of the Odessa division of the latter organization publicly declared: “We are confident that we will bring real Ukrainian order to Odessa. Ukraine will belong to Ukrainians and not to Yids! Glory to Ukraine!” During the march itself the crowd chanted “Knives out for Russkies”, thus demonstrating that Russophobia and anti-Semitism in Ukraine are closely connected.

In a revealing comment, Dmitry Spivak, an ex-deputy of the Odessa city council, emphasized that such anti-Semitic statements are quite normal for politicians in Ukraine today: “This is not the first time. It’s all been leading up to this. Do you remember? Our national artist Skripka talked about a “Ukrainian language ghetto”, and Savchenko talked about “non-Ukrainians in power” and mentioned “Yids”, and Yury Bereza talked about the “Night of the long knives” and Niotsoi, and Farion, and the torch processions, and the slogans.

And then everyone kept their silence. The deputies, the ministers, the politicians, the journalists. They thought that these are just phases. And, at an official level, the authorities said nothing. And, for a state which experienced the horrors of Babyn Yar, this silence is criminal. Now the whole world is sounding the alarm. Israel, Germany, Poland, the US Congress, they are all declaring at the top of their voices that anti-Semitism, racial discrimination and xenophobia are running riot in our country. In their reports the US Department of State and the Israeli government also express their concern about the glorification of Shukhevych and Bandera, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, and the celebration of the “Galichina” division of the SS.

The date which the extremists chose for their march is significant. Readers will remember that on May 2 the Right Sector “death squad” group participated in an arson attack on the Trade Unions Building, which contained participants in an opposition demonstration. Between 48 people (according to official figures) and or 100 people (according to witnesses) were killed in the fire or as a result of beatings.

It should be noted that in 1941, 35,000 Jews were shot or burned alive by German and Romanian soldiers, supported by Banderites. In the Bucharest People’s Tribunal, held in 1946, one of the charges against Ion Antonescu, the Romanian Prime Minister, Gheorghe Alexianu, the Governor of Transnistria, and General Nicolae Macici, commander of the Odessa garrison, was that they “organized the repression of the civilian population in Odessa in 1941”. They were condemned to death on May 17 1946 for these crimes.

Anti-Semitism, which has historically formed an element in the ideologies of Ukrainian nationalism and of the pro-Bandera movement, is now widespread among the political elite in today’s Ukraine, who express their views openly. Moreover, anti-Semitism and Russophobia are, as a general rule, closely linked.

One example, which has become notorious, took place in August 2020 — is the performance on stage, at a public event, of a self-written anti-Semitic and Russophobic song, “How they hanged the Yids”, by Bohdan Yatsikovsky, Deputy Head of the Ukrainian Commission for Mineral Resources, a deputy of the Ternopil local government,



The public performance of the anti-Semitic and Russophobic song “How they hanged the Yids”, by the Ternopil deputy Bohdan Yatsikovsky. The Ternopil region council found nothing objectionable in this song and demanded an end to the prosecution of their colleague.

and head of a division of the Oleh Lyashko Party. The words of this extremely unpleasant song leave no doubt as to the ideological stance of that party deputy, and we quote them in full.

Everywhere our power is blooming,
The Yid is shouting, don't hit me, don't do it,
and in a little garden, in a quiet corner
a rope is waiting for him, waiting.
The Russkie is walking through the village, singing,
a shot rings out and he is no more.

No less typical for modern Ukraine is the fact that even after the deputy Rinat Kuzmin reported the matter to the police, the latter did not consider that a crime had been committed. It is interesting to note that after the Public Prosecutor for Ternopil intervened, the Ternopil region parliament appealed to the national Public Prosecutor and the Ministry of Internal Affairs to bring an end to the prosecution of Yatsikovsky. The Ternopil deputies do not see anything criminal in Yatsikovsky's conduct and demand that the investigation into their colleague be stopped, otherwise it will constitute "political repression".

The deputy himself has openly admitted in posts on social networks that he sung the song, and describes this anti-Semitic and Russophobic song as "a well-known Ukrainian song which many people in our region sing fairly often" and accusing the people who filed reports with the police as "pro-Kremlin provocateurs". Need it be said that Bohdan Yatsikovsky did not incur any liability for his actions and still serves as a deputy and the Deputy Head of the Ukrainian Commission for Mineral Resources?

ATTACKS ON FREE SPEECH AND PERSECUTION OF JOURNALISTS

We have already discussed in detail the killing of the journalist and public figure Oles Buzina by Ukrainian “death squads”. This is far from the only case in which journalists have been killed, beaten or otherwise persecuted by the Ukrainian authorities.

On October 16 2020 Benjamin Moreau, the deputy head of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine expressed his concern about the lack of an adequate reaction on the part of the country’s law enforcement bodies to the persecution of journalists. The UN representative read out his declaration in a meeting of the Verkhovna Rada Committee for Free Speech. “Our primary and main concern is the physical attacks on journalists, bloggers and representatives of the media. Very recently, the journalist Vadim Komarov was the victim of a savage attack, and died several months later”., he said, as quoted by “Ukrainian News”. Moreau pointed out that in its reports the UN has consistently stated that such incidents are unacceptable.

“We always emphasize that as long as those responsible for carrying out attacks are protected from prosecution for their past crimes it will be impossible to ensure journalists’ safety”, he said¹. In his address to the Verkhovna Rada, Benjamin Moreau also reminded deputies that the web site Myrotvoretz publishes personal data concerning Ukrainian and foreign citizens, including journalists. “Unfortunately the contact

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20191017/1025359879.html>

details of many journalists are still published on that web site, and this puts their safety at risk”, he stated.

The deputy head of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine referred to the beating of Vadim Komarov in Cherkasy. Komarov, an investigative journalist, was hospitalized and placed in intensive care with an open head wound to his head and damage to the brain, and remained in a coma until he died in May 2019. His colleagues are convinced that the attack was connected to his professional activities. He was beaten several days before the planned publication of his investigation into the illegal conduct of vice mayor Yury Botnara, a member of the pro-fascist Svoboda party, was due to be published. Earlier, in 2016, the journalist had survived an attempted shooting. After his death, Sergey Tomilenko, head of the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine (NUJU) made the following statement: “Physical aggression against journalists in Ukraine has reached an unacceptably high level. And the systemic culture of impunity serves to provoke further attacks. The NUJU continues to call for special parliamentary hearings to be held on the issues of journalists’ physical safety, and free speech. We continue to demand not empty words but real protection for the rights of Ukrainian journalists! The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Désir, has also demanded that Ukraine conduct an adequate investigation into the incident. “I condemn this very violent attack on the journalist Vadim Komarov in Cherkasy, which left him in a coma. This was an attempt on the life of a local investigative journalist who was well-known for his reports on corruption. This premeditated attack is a cause for special concern and must not be left unpunished. The investigation was promptly initiated and I call on the authorities to do their utmost to fully investigate the crime”, Désir stressed.

Between 2017 and 2019 the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine recorded 250 attacks on journalists. This is just a fraction of the true number of attacks. For example, it does not include the many attacks on and killings of journalists that have occurred in the parts of south east Ukraine that are controlled by the government. Nevertheless, even the official figures give an idea of the general situation.

In the period from January to August 2020 alone, the NUUJ recorded 56 attacks on journalists¹.

At the beginning of 2020, the Deputy Chief of the Main Investigation Department of the National Police of Ukraine announced that since the beginning of 2020 bodies forming part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs had started pre-trial investigations in 173 criminal cases involving persons obstructing the legitimate activities of journalists. These included 132 cases involving interference with the work of reporters and 41 involving threats or violence directed against representatives of the press. The first deputy chairwoman of the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine has drawn attention to a dramatic increase in the number of attacks on female journalists. For example, according to the Index of Physical Safety of Ukrainian Journalists, over a period of 10 months in 2019, 28 female journalists were physically attacked while carrying out their professional duties. The journalist Lina Kushch believes that there are two reasons for this trend: crimes against journalists go unpunished, and the police who witness the attacks take no action.

Murders and assaults on journalists

The majority of attacks on journalists in today's Ukraine are directly connected with the independent position taken by the journalist or media outlet in question — they are attempting to analyze what is happening in the country in an objective way. It frequently happens that assaults are planned and carried out by militants from the "death squads" and other extremist and pro-Fascist organizations, on the direct orders of the Ukrainian authorities.

In the morning on July 8 2020 the well known journalist Anatoly Shariy published a video² in which he accused the office of the Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky of ordering his murder. According to media reports³, as proof of his claim he published a statement made by a Ukrainian citizen to the Mossos d'Esquadra — the Catalan police

¹ <http://nsju.org/bezpeka/vid-pochatku-roku-zafiksovano-56-incydyentiv-fizychnoyi-agresiyi-do-zhurnalistiv-nszhu/>

² <https://youtu.be/tkMSYWqqS8g>

³ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200709/1028207289.html>

force. That Ukrainian was Alexander Zolotukhin, who was wanted by the police in Ukraine in connection with a number of offences including vandalism, kidnapping, violent robbery and intimidation, theft of vehicles and membership of an organized crime group. He was later put on Interpol's wanted list. On April 22 the Spanish national police force announced that they had arrested Zolotukhin. However he was later awarded refugee status in Spain. In his declaration to the Spanish police he admitted that he had been ordered to kill Shariy by people connected with the Ukrainian Presidential administration. At the end of his video Shariy played Zolotukhin's video statement.

"A member of the SBU contacted me, I won't reveal his name so as not to hinder the investigation — as I have already said in posts on my Facebook page, I am cooperating with the European special services in full, and I think this video will be the subject of an investigation as it concerns the planning and ordering of the political murder of Anatoly Shariy, by none other than the Ukrainian Security Service.

That lieutenant colonel came up to me, and we started talking. I recorded all the messages we exchanged and all our conversations, and, naturally, I am handing these records over to the Spanish investigators. He ordered me, as someone with military experience and who lives in Spain <...> to draw up an action plan for killing Anatoly", Zolotukhin said.

The journalist Ruslan Kotsaba has survived a large number of such attacks, and none of the perpetrators have been brought to justice. For example, on his Facebook page he described how he was attacked in July 2017: "Yesterday evening I was attacked by nationalists from S14. His description of the incident was quoted by the media outlet Vesti.ua: "I was going home, and at Poznyiaki Metro station two people came up to me, both a bit taller than me, and started to provoke a conflict. One of them said "What are you doing in my home city, you separatist?" and started pushing me. I said, hey guys, go about your business. The second one tried to hit me, but I was able to turn aside <...> They gave me a cut lip. People carried on walking past. The next train came up, and people got out and they pulled me away from my attackers. There was a policeman sitting on the steps, watching what was happening. I went up to him and said, look, those two men hiding behind that column, tried to assault me. I want to file

a declaration, please identify them. We went up to them, and they had already another of their associates. I recognized him, he was on almost all the videos from the courtroom where my case was heard”¹. According to the journalist all three of them jumped onto the next train to arrive. “The police officer tried to grab one of them by the arm, but he pushed him away and, with the words ‘thanks to the police for their help’, the young guys disappeared”, said Kotsaba.

“I feel I am being watched all the time. They have been intimidating me for a long time, to get me to leave. They say directly, either get out and carry on ranting from abroad, like Shariya, or we will treat you like Oles (Buzina. — *Editor’s Note*)” the journalist says.

The involvement of the S14 “death squad” in intimidating the journalist is no secret, and they do not attempt to hide it. For example, during the court hearings in the case against the journalist at the beginning of June 2017 (he had called on Ukrainians not to participate in the war in the South-East of the country) members of the S14 “death squad”, personally coordinated by their leader Yevhen Karas. People who called themselves veterans of the Donbass Battalion “death squad” also came to the hearing. The radicals were chanting “Separatists to jail” and “Death to the separatists”.

But the threats did not end with that attack. In March 2019 Ruslan Kotsaba publicly called on the Ukrainian Security Service to protect him and his family from the attacks by radicals. Kotsaba informed them that he was still being subjected to attacks because of his professional activities. In particular, he has been threatened by Maksim Nikonovich, a member of the nationalist Svoboda party, who threatened to behead Kotsaba and his daughters².

On September 25 2019 another provocation was directed against him. In his interview³, the journalist described this event in detail and also talked about the links between the Ukrainian Security Service and the S14 “death squad”:

¹ <https://vesti.ua/kiiev/245383-my-tebe-stsenarij-buziny-ustroim-zhumalist-kotsaba-rasskazal-o-napadenii-na-neho-v-kievskom-metro->

² <https://vesti.ua/strana/330131-otrezhut-holovu-zhurnalist-kotsaba-zajavil-o-presledovanijakh-video>

³ <https://ukraina.ru/interview/20190925/1025117419.html>

“When I had just been released from prison, and was working in Kyiv, I was trailed by surveillance operatives to keep a record of all my meetings, who I spoke to etc. Once I tried to shake them off, when they were following me from the metro station. And when you are shaking off your “tail” there are moments when you can look at the person who is following you straight in the eye and she knows that you have seen him. They normally work in pairs, and when that happens they normally pass you on to their partner. At that moment I took a good look at that officer and remembered his face. And that was what alerted me today, next to the Golden Gate to the fact that he was one of them. Because the people in S14 are slaves to the system in which they work. They will do whatever they are told to do. Moreover, I was also alerted by the fact that they were not wearing the khaki uniform of the Municipal Guard (apart from Bondar, who was wearing a camouflage jacket) but ordinary dark-grey and black clothes. You can find a recording taken by the surveillance camera above the Metro entrance, and Bondar himself made no secret of the fact that he was recording or conversation on his phone, as he needed to prove that he spitted at me.

I had crossed paths with Bondar before, at the station, when I was on the way to the court. Then he said to me that the superintending officer for my case was coming, and that they would arrest me for three hours and then imprison me for failing to turn up to my hearing. Just imagine what kind of information they have about people, if I had booked my ticket over the Internet, and Bondar knew exactly what platform I would be waiting on and what train I was taking. I remember that one of those freaks who intimidated me on the platform was there today.

The second time I crossed paths with Bondar was outside the building of the Supreme Court, during the hearing in the Kolmogorov case, when Bondar attacked me in the presence of those “boneheads”. I was filming a report, and they started shouting “Get out of here, separatist”, and spitting, kicking me etc. I think this was related to the evening broadcast of my program on News One, in which I was very critical of Yevhen Karas, their boss. They began by saying: Let’s go away from here, we need to talk”. They are certified law enforcement officers, something like the people’s patrol we had back in the Soviet Union.



Frame from a video recording of the attack by Alexey Byk, a militant from the Right Sector “death squad”, on the opposition journalist Ruslan Kotsaba.

On 12 January 2019 there was another attack on a journalist while he was performing his professional duties, by Alexey Byk, a militant from the Right Sector “death squad”. It is interesting to note that the video recording of the attack was published by the perpetrator himself, and he accompanied it with the comment: “I met the pro-Kremlin journalist Kotsaba by Khreshchatyk metro station. I was not on my own so I just punched him once.

Need it be added that the attacker was not punished? This is an eloquent illustration of the level of impunity which the “death squads” enjoy in today’s Ukraine.

Ruslan Petrovich Kotsaba, opposition journalist

I work as a blogger for the News One television channel, and that channel had to pay very heavy contributions, that is fines, on two occasions because of comments I made on air, when I talked about a coup and a civil war. I was a military correspondent. I was the first person to visit both sides of the front in Donbass, and filmed reports in the LRP and DPR. I am no coward, but I am against resolving the issue of Donbass by force. At the age of 50 I found myself in prison, and the persecutions are still continuing. The nationalists jumped on me, beat me.

In today's Ukraine it has become completely normal for the Ukrainian "death squads" to openly put pressure on the courts and intimidate and beat witnesses and lawyers without incurring any sanctions. For example, on September 28 2018, militants from the S14 "death squad" broke into the court room in Zhytomyr and attacked and beat lawyers during a hearing in the case of the journalist Vasily Muravitsky, accused of treason. The militants were headed by Yevhen Karas, the leader of S14. The media reported what had happened, based on information supplied by the victims¹.

"When the prosecutor came out they attacked", Muravitsky said. According to those present in the court room, the members of S14 were armed with bladed weapons.

"S14 came into the room, armed with knives. The judges did not react to this provocation. When the security guards were asked why they let them come into the court room with knives, they answered "the walk-through metal detector isn't working", reported Alina Koryagina. We should add that after the incident in the Zhytomyr court, Muravitsky, his advocate, A Gozhiy and the journalist Andrey Laktionov were all admitted to hospital.

In an earlier interview with *Ukraina.ru*, A. Gozhiy commented that attacks on lawyers and journalists had become common practice under Petro Poroshenko's administration. "It's terrible, but now it doesn't shock anyone any more, it is just seen as normal, as part of our everyday life", said Gozhiy. Commenting on the seizure by radicals of the National Association of Ukrainian Advocates at the beginning of August, he said that "those currently in power in Kyiv have practically destroyed the independent legal system and have demoralized the courts".

A similar situation took place on December 24 2018, when Dmitry Kucher, a journalist from the site *shariy.net*, was beaten right in the courtroom of the Court of Appeal, by a group led by Sergey Stepenko, the former head of the Right Sector "death squad" in Odessa, which had been involved in the burning of opposition demonstrators. This group supported Yuliya Kuzmenko, identified by Ukrainian investigators as the killer of the journalist Pavel Sheremet — it was she who placed an explosive device under his car and then set off the bomb. Yulia Korzun,

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/news/20180928/1021274085.html>

a journalist from strana. ua, was also subjected to threats. “I warn you that you will not leave the court room. One of Shariy’s journalists has already been beaten up there. They are waiting for you” a female activist present in the court room told Ms. Korzun. “She said that, after Kucher, I will be next. They also passed on ‘greetings’ to me from the radicals Sternenکو and Tsimbalyuk”, the journalist said.

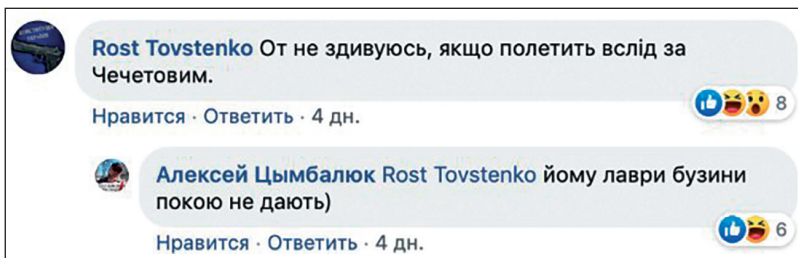
Journalists are also attacked while they are carrying out their professional duties, openly and with no likelihood of the perpetrators being punished. In May 2020 the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine published its list, Enemies of the Press. This document states, among other things, that “the unacceptably high level of physical aggression in Ukraine is possible because there are no precedents of severe penalties being imposed for crimes against journalists”. The cases never reach court and are dragged out for years, or the criminals are just given symbolic fines of a few euros or are found guilty and immediately released because the limitation period has expired.

On July 2 2019, Vladislav Bovtruk, a correspondent from the independent media outlet strana. ua, prepared a report on a demonstration against the registration of Anatoly Shariy and Andriy Klyuyev as candidates, organized on Kyiv’s Maidan Square by nationalists and supporters of Petro Poroshenko. Strana.ru¹ reports that he went to the demonstration to report on it for the editor. At a certain point he noticed there was some fighting. “I went closer to film the incident, and was immediately hit in the face by one of the participants in the meeting — a man about 50 years old. The blow was so hard that I was knocked down. After that, while I was still lying down, they carried on kicking me. I got up and stated clearly that I was a journalist, and then they poured water over me and started shouting, “Is that not enough for you?” Do you want more?”, he said. In a video of the incident that appeared on the Internet, after he was beaten Vladislav can be seen telling the activists and police standing around him that he represents the “Country”. After that he is attacked again and they try to beat him. The next day the person who had beaten the journalist was identified. It turned out that he was Alexey Tsimbalyuk, the so-called

¹ <https://strana.ua/news/210288-kto-i-pochemu-napal-na-zhurnalista-strany-vse-podrobnosti.html>



Alexey Tsimbalyuk, agent of the Ukrainian Security Service, and a member of the Right Sector “death squad”, who beat the journalist



Threats issued by Alexey Tsimbalyuk, agent of the Ukrainian Security Service, and a member of the Right Sector “death squad” to a journalist from the media outlet strana.ua. Tsimbalyuk cites the killing of the journalist Oles Buzina as an example.

“killer of Arkady Babchenko” and a member of the Right Sector “death squad” who is known for his neo-Nazi views.

Threats issued by Alexey Tsimbalyuk, agent of the Ukrainian Security Service, and a member of the Right Sector “death squad” to a journalist from the media outlet strana. ua. Tsimbalyuk cites the killing of the journalist Oles Buzina as an example.

Strana. ua presents comments by Olesya Medvedeva, a special correspondent from Strana¹. “In our days there is no freedom of speech in Ukraine” Poroshenko’s regime, when the media and specific journalists were put under intense pressure, is supposed to be finished. But we see that nothing has really changed, either out on the streets, or in the law”, she said in a live report on the News One channel. “This is Alexey Tsimbalyuk, so-called “killer of Arkady Babchenko” who the SBU got to act the role of a hired killer so that Comrade Herman, who was later charged with ordering Babchenko’s murder, would believe that he was dead. It turns out that this SBU agent is the person who beats a Ukrainian journalist and then boasts about it on social networks and threatens him with the same fate as Buzina. What does all this tell us? That these people, funded by Poroshenko, are still running amok in the streets Karas and the SBU agent Tsimbalyuk still feel free to do what they want in public. I would not be surprised if the prosecutors bury this case like they have done up to now, because their bosses are the same people as before”, said Olesya Medvedeva.

On 8 July 2019 during a protest outside the office of the News One television channel, members of the “death squads” attacked the journalist Kirill Malyshev, who was in the building working on a program². “Several minutes after the beginning of the demonstration, right by the entrance to the business center where the News One television channel has its office, the demonstrators moved on to a perpendicular street onto which, as they assumed, the windows of the television channel look out. I followed. Around us Sternenko wrote on the pavement “[Expletive] Russians”. At that moment I saw, about 10 meters from, me, Yevhen Karas, leader of the far-right organization S14, with a photographer from a Kyiv media outlet. The photographer pointed me out”, said Kirill Malyshev. Then, according to Malyshev, Karas shouted to the crowd: “There is a separatist. He is a journalist from Strana. Straight after that the participants in the demonstration tried to attack me.

¹ <https://strana.ua/news/210288-kto-i-pochemu-napal-na-zhurnalista-strany-vse-podrobnosti.html>

² <https://strana.ua/news/210487-vo-vremja-aktsii-u-telekanala-NewsOne-natsionalisty-davili-na-zhurnalista-strany.html>

In the absolute majority of cases the perpetrators of attacks on journalists are never brought to justice. In some cases they are given minor punishments. For example, on July 24 2018 the Zhytomyr court of Appeal, reconsidering the case of the attack and savage beating of Ruslan Moroz (Kuvanin), a journalist for the newspaper Zhytomyr 20 Minutes, who is in favor of good relations with Russia, sentenced two criminals to 5 years in prison, deferred for three years. The defendants were, it turns out, members of radical and nationalist football clubs. The journalist was also attacked on later occasions, was dismissed from his job in Zhytomyr's theatre because he supported Vasily Muravitsky, who has been recognized by Amnesty International as a prisoner of conscience¹. Ruslan Moroz describes what happened:

“We were working together in television. I know him and he is a reasonable person And the things he writes are quite reasonable. The things they are accusing us are basically the kind of ridiculous charges that were normal in 1937, when people were accused of, say, building a tunnel from Moscow to London. And the prosecutor has nothing to say in the courtroom — there is no evidence. The judges sit and look at each other and they realize that they are going to have to listen to this rubbish to the end. But members of the S14 group turn up and organize a provocation. A moment before it started the prosecutor left the room and the members of S14 took off their jackets and started to assault my advocate, Andrey Gozhiy, who was also acting as Muravitsky's and beat the journalist Andrey Laktionov²”.

The National Union of Journalists and Media Professionals of Ukraine has drawn up a long list of attacks on journalists in 2020, all connected with their reporting on corruption or on violations of law by the Ukrainian authorities.

For example, in January 2020 a car belonging to a correspondent of Radio Liberty was set fire to in Lviv. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Désir declared that he considers this arson attack on the car of Halyna Tereshchuk as another case of intimidating journalists. One theory is that it was related to articles published by Ms. Tereshchuk on relations between Ukraine and Poland. She had recently been in Poland,

¹ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur50/7633/2017/en/>

² <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20181225/1022205514.html>

where she participated in an event commemorating victims of the Nazis in the Auschwitz concentration camp.

On 27 January 2020 a film crew for the STV television channel, consisting of the correspondent Maria Malevskaya and the cameraman Alexander Brynza, was attacked in Kharkiv. According to the correspondent, they were attacked with tear gas. As a result both of them suffered burns to their eyes and the cameraman was rushed to hospital by ambulance.

On March 30 2020 unidentified persons tried to smash the video camera being used by a journalist from the Chernivtsi Online news site, Galina Eremita, who was reporting live from the village of Snyachov, in Chernivtsi region.

On April 4 2020 the journalist Victor Volynets suffered serious burns to his face and eyes as a result of an attack by two unidentified persons by a large shopping center in Cherkasy, where he was filming a story about violations of the road traffic rules.

On April 11 2020, while he was livestreaming a report from the site of a fire in Brovary, in Kyiv region, Dmitry Klyuchko, a member of the Union of Journalists of Ukraine was prevented from filming and had his telephone taken from him.

On April 22 2020, persons dressed in the uniform of the Municipal Guard attacked a film crew from the Perviy Krivorozhskiy web site outside the town hall in Kryvyi Rih.

On April 25 2020 unidentified persons broke a window in the home of the journalist Igor Svalki and threw in a bottle filled with petrol. He believes that the incident was connected with a long-term dispute between himself and the Mayor of Tetiiv. “This is the second time someone has broken my window. The first time was back in 2015. The Mayor had issued a booklet containing his “report” printed at public expense, and it contained false information. For example, it claimed that a certain street had been repaired. And I went there with a camera and asked passers-by if they could see any signs of the repair. I filmed a report in which people complained that there had been no repair. That evening a stone was thrown through my window”, said Igor Svalka¹.

¹ <http://safety.nsju.org/novyny/plyashka-z-benzynom-u-vikno-na-kyviv-shhyni-zhurnalistovi-zrobyly-poperedzhennya/>

After that he received a call from an unidentified number, and a voice told him to “stop doing what you are doing”.

On May 2 2020 the journalist Nikita Knysha was beaten in Kharkiv after calling the police to an event attended by a large number of persons in breach of quarantine rules. In his video report he introduces himself as a journalist and asks the young people present questions about their violations of the quarantine. After filming his report the journalist called the police so that they could take action in relation to the violations. But the police officers did nothing and left the site. “According to the journalist, just a few seconds after the police had left he was assaulted and savagely beaten. The criminals took his telephone and his rucksack, which contained his laptop and other personal effects”, said the chairman of the National of Journalists of Ukraine.

On June 5 2020, in Kyiv, the homes of the General Director of Russian Radio-Ukraine and of Sergey Kuzin, a presenter from Radio ROKS were attacked.

On June 6 2020 journalists from the Inter television channel were attacked in the middle of filming an interview for the socially-oriented talk show It’s Everyone’s Business.

On June 10 2020 the home of Roman Lyubitsky, General Director of the Vslyukh media holding, in the village of Solonka, in the Pustomytovsk district of Lviv region, was attacked.

On June 24 2020 a car belonging to the local journalist Pavlo Gunzhel was set on fire. The journalist believes that this arson attack was related to his professional activities.

On August 29 2020 the journalist Igor Stakh was attacked in Chernihiv, not far from his home¹. Two unidentified persons beat him savagely, and he was diagnosed with a closed head injury and concussion. The journalist believes the attack is entirely due to his professional activities — over the last three months he had been reporting on one of the local deputies — at that time still a candidate.

“When the police came I explained everything and said I knew the registration number of the car used by my attackers. I was surprised by the investigator’s answer — he said he number isn’t important at this

¹ <http://safety.nsj.u.org/novyny/u-chernigovi-do-strusu-mozku-pobyly-igora-staha-blogera-ta-zhurnalista/>

stage, first they need to check the exact location of the attack”, said Igor Stakh. “That kind of approach is really strange”.

On September 5 2020, in Dnipro, Alexander Snisar, a community leader and the head of the media organization Anticorruption and Rights Protection Council, was the victim of a savage attack. He was seriously injured and placed in intensive care. His colleagues are in no doubt that the attack was directly connected to Alexander Snisar’s work as a journalist and community leader.

On September 10 2020 a group of unidentified persons broke into the office of the Priluki television channel, in Chernihiv.

On October 30 2020, Vladimir Grabovenko, the senior editor of the newspaper “Popular Sovereignty Over All and Everything” was the victim of a savage attack¹. The incident took place at his home, in Volnovakha, in Donetsk region. As Vladimir Grabovenko himself said, he is a former deputy of the Volnovakha regional council and the senior editor of the newspaper “Popular Sovereignty Over All and Everything” He founded the newspaper about a year ago. As he says, he was working on anti-corruption activities. “I heard something hit the car and I ran outside and saw half a brick lying there by the yard, and I ran into the lane. I saw a car standing there, and someone walking. I was hit with a club. I got up, shielded myself, and I was hit on the arm, then on the leg, then they got into their car and drove away”, said Vladimir Grabovenko.

On October 9 2020 Alexander Kudinov, the victim’s lawyer was informed about the journalist’s condition: “On Thursday (November 5) Vladimir Grabovenko was operated on. He had a broken leg, and so the surgeons fitted a metal brace. His arm was also broken, and it was put in plaster. According to the doctors it will take him at least 6 months to recover from his injuries. Mr. Grabovenko is now in hospital and cannot move around without help”.

Alexander Kudinov and his the victim’s colleagues are in no doubt that the attack was connected to Vladimir Grabovenko’s professional activities. For a number of years he had been actively involved in researching into cases of corruption in the Volnovakha district of

¹ <http://nsju.org/novini/projshlo-10-dniv-a-dosi-ne-pryznacheno-navit-sudovo-medychnoyi-ekspertyzy-pro-hid-rozsliduvannya-pobyttya-zhurnalista/>

Donetsk region. He had brought to light some 55 incidents of corruption involving local civil servants.

We will review some of the most notorious examples of hired killings of journalists in Ukraine over the last few years. One incident that attracted a great deal of attention was the detonation of an explosive device under the car of Pavel Sheremet, acting director of the news web site Ukrainskaya Pravda, on June 20 2016. In March 2015 Olga Moroz, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper Neteshinsky Vestnik was killed in her flat in Netishyn, in Khmelnytsky region.

Anzhela Ivanovna Polovneva, political refugee

The media – that’s a different matter. What they show on television is the absolute opposite of the way things are, there so much censorship. Whatever the subject is. We had 20,000 people in a meeting, and they say there were 200. We protected someone, and they say that we were the attackers. Everything is twisted so that if you do good they say that you have done evil. It was like that with the churches. The nationalists came, organized a provocation and straightaway started filming everything. Buzina was quite simply shot. They identified the person who killed him, and immediately released him. That is, if you kill someone who has incorrect, unpatriotic views, then everything is okay.

It often happens that journalists are attacked by members of the Ukrainian police or other law enforcement bodies. For example, in 2017 there was an incident that got a lot of attention — security officers arrested and beat three journalists in the Svyatoshynsky courtroom, Dmitry Replyanchuk (Public TV) Sergey Lefter (Ukrainian Independent Information Agency) and Kirill Malyshev (strana. ua). “They hit my camera, knocked me down and hit me. They tried to beat me on the head. I shouted out that I was a journalist, and they said: “Damn media!”, said Dmitry Replyanchuk, describing the incident¹.

On two occasions in August 2020 journalists from the television program “Schemes: corruption in detail”, which specializes in

¹ <https://ukranews.com/news/701389-glava-nszhu-tomilenko-soobshhil-chto-izbienie-zhurnalistov-pravoohranitelyami-eshhe-na-stadii>

investigations into corruption involving senior civil servants, were victimized and intimidated because of their work. On August 8 Mikhail Tkach, a journalist on the program, announced that he had found a listening device installed in his home. And at about 00.30 a. m. on August 17, outside the home of the program's driver in Brovary, his car, which was had been used by the journalists in a number of investigations, was set alight.

Mikhail Tkach is one of the journalists on the program "Schemes"¹. His most recent projects include investigations into President Zelensky's journey to Oman, the "trade post" held by brother of the head of the presidential administration, speed violations by President Zelensky's cortege and the use of so called dummy license plates by his staff even though there is no legal basis for this practice.

Earlier, in October 2015, the journalist had been attacked by members of the SBU while he was filming as part of an investigation into the discrepancy between the salaries of SBU officers and their lavish lifestyle. While he was detained the SBU used force against the program's camera team and seized their equipment. On September 15 2017, staff of the State Security Administration attacked Mikhail Tkach in the grounds of a restaurant complex near Kyiv, where a private party was celebrating the wedding of the son of Yuriy Lutsenko, at that time Ukraine's Prosecutor General. On October 7, 2019, Tkach said that the court had dismissed the assault case against them in May 2019, when Lutsenko was still prosecutor general.

Tkach noted that the last material, which was filmed on the burnt car called "Kings of the Road", depicted how the transport of the first persons of the state violates the rules of the road. "During the filming and in the material itself, I repeatedly stressed that our car and we were being watched by the presidential security guards. The car spent the night near the house where the driver lives", Tkach wrote.

On August 18, 2020, the International and European Federations of Journalists called for an investigation into the arson of the Schem car and possible surveillance of journalist Tkach. "It is very important that investigative journalists be able to report freely and critically on the

¹ <https://nv.ua/ukraine/events/napadenie-na-zhurnalistov-shem-cto-izvestno-o-podzhoge-mnenie-vlastey-novosti-ukrainy-50106887.html>

corruption and wrongdoing of government officials. The surveillance and attack on this team are disturbing blows to freedom of the press that cannot go unpunished. We express our solidarity with the journalists affected by these attacks and call on the authorities to protect them from being targeted again”, said Anthony Bellanger, General Secretary of the International Federation of Journalists. In his turn, the head of the Ukrainian branch of the IFJ, the National Union of Journalists Sergey Tomilenko stressed that pressure on a group of journalists investigating corruption at the highest level is an emergency situation in the field of media freedom and an alarming signal for every investigative journalist in the capital and throughout Ukraine.

On April 29, 2020, there was an incident in Kyiv where the police interfered with the work of journalists. The police used force against Bohdan Kutepov, a correspondent of hromadske. ua, and broke his equipment under the pretext that he was filming from a prohibited area. The hromadske. ua film crew worked on the coverage of the protests for the Cabinet of Ministers building.

On November 11, 2019, Alla Zhiznevskaya, a journalist of the ZIK TV channel, was attacked by the National Guard outside the Sixth Administrative Court of Appeal in Kyiv:

“The National Guard used gas canisters on all of us. I got a burn on my hand and a burn on my right eye. I can tell you it was tough. One of the church ministers was badly hurt. He has terrible burns in both eyes”¹. An unknown group also attacked the journalist on April 2, 2020, when a film crew was inspecting Kyiv’s parks.

In April 2020, police seized a video camera from a crew from the “Stop Corruption” portal in Vinnitsa and drove it around the precincts all day². According to journalists, this is how the law enforcement reacted to the arrival of journalists from Kyiv, who were working on an article about the possible undeclared income of Yuriy Pedos, the head of the Main Department of the National Police in the Vinnytsia

¹ <http://safety.nsju.org/novyny/korespondentka-ziku-alla-zhyznevskya-otrymala-opiky-oblychchya-ta-ruky-pid-chas-vysvitlennya-mityngu-pid-sudom-v-kyievi/>

² <http://nsju.org/novini/u-vinnyczi-policzejski-czilyj-den-dopytuvaly-zhurnalistiv-rozsliduvachiv/>

region. The incident was reported to the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine by journalist Artem Polikovskyy. In addition, as reported by correspondents, the head of the Vinnytsia police threatened them in a conversation. In particular, a well-known journalist, coordinator of the project “Stop Corruption” Roman Bochkala wrote on his Facebook page: Pedos threatened journalists with criminal charges, called 102 and reported: “My house was attacked, my family was attacked, and they are keeping me from leaving”.

Attacks on editorial offices and media outlets

In addition to attacks and harassment of specific journalists, there are also open attacks on the offices of television channels, media outlets, and news agencies in today’s Ukraine. According to the journalists themselves, these attacks are also directly related to the fact that the Ukrainian authorities are not satisfied with the independent position of the media in covering politics in modern Ukraine. Here are just a few examples from recent years.

On August 24, 2020, during a live broadcast on the ZIK TV channel in Odessa, representatives of the National Corps attacked the camera crew. Here is a description of this situation given by the television channel itself:

“...A group of radicals from the National Corps burst into the frame and started shoving journalists, as well as the invited guests — Tatiana Plachkova and Bohdan Giganov. During the fight, the attackers also damaged the props.

What happened just now was completely orchestrated by the Odessa authorities, with their tacit consent. This is done on purpose in order to destabilize the situation in the city. Such lawlessness and rampant nationalism are only possible with full cooperation of the Odessa authorities. The attack on us on such a prominent day for the country is a serious provocation”, emphasized Bohdan Giganov, a member of the Odessa City Council of the Opposition Platform “For Life”.

“On the air of the TV channel ZIK, during an online marathon for Independence Day, I and a member of the Odessa City Council Bohdan Giganov were attacked by radicals of the National Corps. Particular

attention should be paid to the actions of the municipal guards, who for whatever reason stood up for the radicals! Neither we nor Odessa itself will allow Mayor Trukhanov to undermine order in the city through such actions”, said Tatiana Plachkova, a member of the Opposition Platform “For Life”¹.



The photo shows the 112 Ukraine TV channel building damaged by a grenade launcher attack on July 13, 2019

On July 13, 2019, the building of the TV channel 112 Ukraine was shelled with a grenade launcher. Here is a description of what happened:

“On the night of July 13, in Kyiv, on Degtyaryovskaya Street, 21G, the building of 112 Ukraine was shelled from a grenade launcher. The police classify the incident as an act of terrorism, reports the press service of the National Police. At 03:40 the police received a report that local residents heard a sound similar to an explosion on Degtyaryovskaya Street in the Shevchenkovsky district of the city. Investigative teams of the territorial and main police departments, explosive technicians, dog handlers and patrol crews rushed to the address.

¹ https://zik.ua/news/ludyna/v_odesi_natsionalisty_napaly_na_zhurnalistiv_telekanalu_zik_978596

Upon arrival, the police found the damaged facade of the building and cordoned off the area adjacent to the crime scene. During the area search we found a discharged grenade launcher tube¹”.

In 2016, 15 armed men broke into the office of National Information Systems, where the programs News, Podrobnosti (“Details” — *Tr. note*), and Podrobnosti Nedeli (“Details of the Week” — *Tr. note*) for the TV channel Inter are filmed, and set fire to the editorial office. As a result, the international studio of the program “Podrobnosti” completely burned down. Several employees of the company were poisoned by carbon monoxide, one employee broke her leg.

In 2017, Dmitry Korchinsky’s organization blocked the television channel News One. Verkhovna Rada member and owner of the channel Yevhen Muraev said that the action to block the Ukrainian news TV channel News One, which he owns, is taking place on the instructions of the authorities². As a reminder, Korchinsky was one of the founders and ideologists of the Ukrainian National Assembly, which later became a social structure with a “death squad” of the same name called the Right Sector. He was also a member of the later disbanded “Shakhtyorsk” death squad, on the basis of which the “Tornado” unit was created, then also disbanded for mass rape (including of children), torture, kidnapping and murder of civilians. “They are blockading 200 people without food and medicine, keeping them under siege. A huge number of people in camouflage and masks, the law enforcement agencies do nothing”, Muraev added.

“I have information that Korchinsky was given money from the Presidential Administration to block the only channel that puts the maximum democratic effort into the president’s resignation and really shows the situation in the country”, News One quoted the Verkhovna Rada member.

In 2018, the situation reoccurred — there was a blocking of the TV channel ZIK by the death squad of the extremist political party

¹ <https://112.ua/glavnye-novosti/v-noch-na-13-myulya-dvoe-neizvestnyh-iz-granatometa-obstreljali-zdanie-112-kanala-499728.html>

² <https://rian.com.ua/politics/20171203/1030033410/NewsOne-blokada-Muraev-AP.html>

“Bratstvo” of Dmitry Korchinsky. In 2018, the blocking of the television channel lasted almost a week, with tires and barbed wire brought to the building. All this time the police showed no response to these actions of obstruction of journalistic activities.

On May 9, 2018, the Inter television channel was attacked by the all-Ukrainian socio-political organization “Free People”. They threw a Molotov cocktail and spray-painted the front of the building. It should be noted that this is not the first time radicals have attacked the TV channel.

On August 3, 2018, about 20 young men wearing masks and carrying banners stormed the press center of Ukrainian News. During the fight, the speaker was pushed to the floor, injuring her arm. The attackers were also throwing chicken eggs at the speakers and the press center administrator along with them. A similar incident happened on April 30, 2020, when guys in T-shirts of the pro-fascist organization Tradition and Order disrupted a press conference at the news agency Ukrinform, beat up agency employees, and broke down the doors to the press center¹. The disrupted press conference was supposed to be about election fraud in the 50th electoral district.

The Ukrainian media quoted the testimony of the victims: “Everything happened very suddenly, I didn’t even realize right away what was happening: I was attacked from the back and grappled strongly by my shoulder, where my collarbone used to be broken and now has a metal plate in it. The pain was insane. Three guys all at once attacked my colleague Pavel Negrei and started beating him”.

The head of the press center confirms that after the attack on Ukrinform five employees sought medical help.

It should be noted that this organization was founded in 2016 by former activists of the “Revanche” group, who openly called themselves followers of Italian fascism and became known for their attacks on the Embassy of the Russian Federation and the “Russian Center of Science and Culture” in Ukraine. In 2018, this organization, together with the death squad S14, organized an attack on the offices of Ukrainian Choice and the “For Life” party. In 2019 in Lviv, they tried to disrupt a

¹ <http://safety.nsju.org/novyny/rozpovidaye-postrazhdalyj-praczivnyk-ukrinformu/>

feminist march opposing violence against women. On January 4, 2020, in front of the Iranian Embassy in Kyiv, they held an event dedicated to the “memory” of General Qassem Suleimani.

Censorship and restrictions on the media

In addition to being attacked by militants of the state and state-affiliated death squads, the opposition media in Ukraine suffer from de facto censorship imposed by state authorities.

On February 2, 2021, Ukrainian President Zelensky completely banned the broadcasting of the three main opposition TV channels 112 Ukraine, News One, and ZIK. Interestingly enough, in 2019 he also stated: “I will never shut down any channels”. From a formal point of view, this was done by an absurd announcement of “sanctions” against a Ukrainian citizen — co-owner of channels and deputy from the Opposition Platform “For Life” of Taras Kozak.

Prior to that, these channels were also subjected to constant pressure, the pretext for which was the opinionated statements of the participants of the programs that were undesirable to the authorities. For example, on August 20, 2020, an unscheduled inspection of the television channel 112 Ukraine was conducted simply because one of its participants used the phrase “civil war” in the country.

Here is the official statement of the Ukrainian authorities on this matter: “The National Council appointed an unscheduled inspection of TV and Radio Company ‘112 TV’ LLC...”

The program was hosted by E. Skorina and P. Kuzheyev, and was attended by Petro Symonenko, People’s Deputy of Ukraine of the II–VII convocations. The program was broadcast on June 28 from 03:16 to 03:57. Among the sentiments uttered by Pyotr Symonenko were that there is a “civil war” in Ukraine, that “we must return everyone to the barracks where the main units are stationed”, and then the war will end, that “no one from the Donetsk side will show aggression, they are defending today”, and so on. The National Council, having considered the results of the monitoring of the company’s broadcasting these days, unanimously voted for the appointment of an unscheduled inspection, which should establish whether the TV

channel 112 Ukraine has violated the current norms of Ukrainian legislation¹”.

In some cases, militants and state authorities operate together, with Ukrainian authorities closing down and shutting down media outlets and death squad fighters suppressing protests by journalists. For example, on July 30, 2020, the popular television channel KRT was stripped of its broadcasting license. On the same day, members of the National Corps and S14 attacked the channel’s journalists, who had gone to a rally against the channel’s closure²:

“Journalists from the TV channel ‘Kyivska Rus. KRT’ held a protest against censorship and the attack on freedom of speech in front of the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council in Kyiv on Thursday, July 30, as right-wing radicals tried to disrupt the rally.

As a representative of KRT told journalists, the channel learned from the message on the website of the National Council that today the issue of extending the KRT broadcasting license will be considered. According to him, “according to the law on the National Council, a constitutional body, they are required to give three days’ notice in writing before the day of consideration...” He added that the National Council should also have invited KRT representatives to the meeting if they wanted to consider the issue of any sanctions, but this was never done. Therefore, journalists decided to come to the building of the National Council and express their opinions.

As if to confirm their thesis that the country has grave problems with freedom of speech, radicals from the nationalist organizations National Corps and S14 came to the National Council and tried to disrupt the journalists’ rally.

“We came out to show that the National Council violates the law and deprives the KRT TV channel of its license. And we see that the National Corps and S14 have come to support the National Council. They do what they do. In essence, answering to the orders of the

¹ <https://www.nrada.gov.ua/v-efiri-112-ukrayina-zvuchaly-tverdzhennya-pro-gromadyansku-vijnu-v-ukrayim-tomu-regulyator-provede-shhe-odnu-pozaplanovu-perevirku-kompaniyi/>

² <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200730/1028399173.html>

authorities. We see how the National Corps supported the National Council. What can I say? You draw your own conclusions”, journalist Dmitry Vasilets, one of the organizers of the rally, told the Strana newspaper

“In front of the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council, which was created as a discriminatory structure to censor the opposition media, rallied employees of the KRT TV channel, who are being pressured for speaking favorably of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War and against Holy Maidan”, said journalist Pavel Volkov on his social network page. According to him, of course, nationalists “in state custody” also came there — “pushing, insulting, and even gas-spraying Ukrainian journalists”.

“No one has been arrested. That’s all you need to know about how the state uses Nazi assault troops to harass any alternative views”, Volkov stated.

He noted that “well-known journalists — Ruslan Kotsaba, Dmitry Vasilets, Vasily Muravitsky, Nadezhda Savchenko, Vladimir Ruban, Maksim Goldarb, Artur Zhurbenko, Andrei Gozhiy, Dmitry Dzhangiroy and others — work on the KRT TV channel, being harassed for broadcasting the truth”.



Journalists of the KRT TV channel protest against the shutdown of their channel under the walls of the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine

Earlier representatives of the TV channel said that the National Council is trying to terminate their activities, violating the terms of the law to grant a license. Thus, in May the National Council was to consider renewing the license of the KRT TV channel. Such an extension is provided for by a procedure that is periodically conducted for any television media outlet. Instead of holding a standard meeting on the renewal of the license and making a decision on further broadcasting, the Ukrainian authority decided to appoint five unscheduled inspections for the channel.

The channel's journalists explicitly say that the reason for the channel's closure was their professional activities that did not appeal to the Ukrainian authorities — their coverage of the Victory Parade in Minsk, reporting on the demonstration of banners of the four Ukrainian fronts at the parade on Red Square, and the opinions of the channel's guests on events related to Maidan, the war in Donbass, and the burning of people in Odessa on May 2, 2014. After the actions of the authorities, the channel called for protection of the right to freedom of speech:

“We declare that the actions of the National Council are a form of censorship and an attack on freedom of speech. In fact, the National Council has long ago become a repressive punitive body. Not only has the censorship and pressure on journalists by the previous government not been stopped, but it is being reborn with renewed vigor. In our opinion, the president (Vladimir Zelensky. — *Ed. note*) is either misinformed by his inner circle or is consciously continuing the policy of his predecessors to destroy the independent media”.

Few Ukrainian lawyers and journalists who are not afraid of repression gave an unambiguous assessment of what is happening. Lawyer Andrei Portnov spoke directly about repression in his Telegram channel: “Today's repression of the KRT channel is a continuation of the Poroshenko-Parubiy policy and the full responsibility of the ruling government, which has allowed this criminal gang within the TV regulator to exist for a whole year”.

Prominent Ukrainian human rights activist Andrei Gozhiy also gave his assessment of the situation: “Today, the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council is such a repressive body, exercising the functions of surveillance and censorship. A punitive body of the ruling

regime, whose task is to monitor whether events are reported correctly, whether language quotas are respected, etc.

Today the National Council considered the issue of extending the license of KRT TV channel, as well as the appointment of the fifth unscheduled inspection of the channel. Previously, four inspections have already been scheduled in connection with the fact that the channel showed the Victory Parade in Minsk, there was a report about the Victory Parade in Moscow. That is why the inspections are appointed. In addition, for about half a year the National Council has evaded issuing a license to the TV channel and today has decided to consider the issue. The National Council refused to extend the KRT license without giving any reasons for its decision. They just felt like saying no¹”.

According to Gozhiy, this was decided at the meeting, which was held online, and it is not quite clear how such a mode corresponds to the regulations, how the minutes are kept, etc.

“Employees of KRT TV channel together with trade unions went to the building of the National Council for a peaceful action, which they warned about in advance”, told Gozhiy. “But the regime, using its favorite method, sent nationalists from the National Corps and S14 there and used them to harass women and journalists. The nationalists worked in unison, started a fight, sprayed the protesters with pepper spray, and forcibly drove people out of the picket. The police did nothing. We see that when the regime has no arguments left, it resorts to summoning its assault troops instead. With this, the Zelensky regime really showed how willing it is to stand for the truth and what kind of sentence it really is. Zelensky is a death sentence to freedom of speech in this country. And KRT journalists, he said, have two ways to resist. The first is acts of direct democracy, which are becoming, as we see it, dangerous for the people as they are attacked by the Nazis. And the second is the lawsuits in our courts. We’ll see how effective it is, but there are also European courts²”, said the human rights activist.

As mentioned earlier, in today’s Ukraine, any statements made by program participants that are inconsistent with the current course of

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200730/1028399173.html>

² <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200730/1028399173.html>

the Ukrainian official authorities can become grounds for inspections and closure of channels. Any kind of freedom of speech is out of the question. For example, the Ukrainian state considers any statement that contains a positive assessment of Russia or the Russian authorities as grounds for inspecting the channel.

Such a situation occurred in relation to the channel 112 Ukraine, when it was assigned an unscheduled inspection. On July 2, 2020, the TV channel 112 Ukraine made a statement about this, saying that it considers the appointment of an unscheduled inspection by the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council to be another act of censorship: “On July 2, the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council appointed an unscheduled inspection of the TV channel 112 Ukraine. This is another act of censorship against the broadcaster”.

The statement also noted that the formal reason was the quotation of an article by the head of the political council of the Opposition Platform “For Life”, member of the Verkhovna Rada Viktor Medvedchuk, who, according to the website of the National Council, “in his commentary positively evaluates the initiatives of the Russian president in international politics and expresses optimism about their implementation”¹.

In a piece on a TV channel, Medvedchuk commented on an article by Russian President Vladimir Putin published in the American magazine *The National Interest*. “TV channel 112 Ukraine” considers its mission to bring to viewers the current news agenda with the comments of people’s deputies, scientists and experts. This case is no exception. The emergence of high-profile information requires a reaction from our TV channel. And quoting Viktor Medvedchuk as the only Ukrainian politician who gave a detailed and detailed analysis of this article, is part of our job — to inform our viewers”, the statement stresses.

In this situation, the broadcaster evaluates the actions of the National Council “as an act of censorship by a punitive government body, which has once again demonstrated its biased attitude towards the 112 Ukraine TV channel”.

¹ <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/8882125>

It is interesting to note that in this case the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council explicitly stated that the opinions voiced on the channel were “favorable to the Russian government”:

“Medvedchuk’s demonstrated on-air position regarding Putin’s article in the context of events in Ukraine is supportive of the Russian government; such statements provide informational support for the actions of the Russian leadership in the context of armed aggression against Ukraine and threaten to create serious international tension, which poses a threat to Ukraine’s national security”.

It should be noted that earlier, on September 26, 2019, the TV channel 112 Ukraine was already stripped of their license for digital broadcasting, which journalists directly connect to the fact that it belongs to a people’s deputy who belongs to the Opposition platform “For Life”. About this reports “Ukraine Online”:

“The National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council deprived 112 Ukraine, the largest news TV channel of the country, of its digital license. Moreover, this is not the first attack by the authorities on channels associated with the Opposition Platform. Earlier, the National Council applied to the court to close the channel News One, which, like 112 Ukraine, belongs to MP Taras Kozak, an associate of Viktor Medvedchuk. The regulator refused to renew the digital licenses of the channel. This means that tomorrow it will not be possible to watch it for those who have switched to digital terrestrial T2 signal and purchased a special TV box.

The channel will remain in cable networks — the satellite license of 112 Ukraine has not been revoked. In other words, residents of large cities, which are mainly serviced by cable operators, will continue to be able to watch this channel. So do satellite dish owners. But even after the broadcasting was shut down, the checks and warnings to the channel continued¹”.

Speaking out against the war in Donbass and criticizing the Ukrainian government on this issue also leads to reprisals against the media. For example, the reason for the crackdown on the News One channel was a statement by journalist Ruslan Kotsaba,

¹ <https://strana.ua/news/224394-112-kanal-ostavili-bez-litsenzij-cho-budet-dalshe-s-112-ukraina-onlajn.html>

in which he called for the abandonment of division in Ukraine and criticized the actions of the president of Ukraine: “It’s enough, you know, of the division: ours-yours, vatniks-vishevatniks, Stalinists-Leninists-Banderites. It’s time to finally get back to the legal field. Mr. Zelensky, just like P.A. Poroshenko in his time, repeats like a mantra: “Peace, peace in Donbass”, yet the war continues. For the sixth year, can you believe it, for the sixth year, nothing has changed”.

It is interesting to note that the Ukrainian state paradoxically treats criticism of the war in Donbass and the absence of accusations against Russia as “hate speech”.

Valentin Vladimirovich Rybin, lawyer

A lot of mass media pursue a policy of inciting ethnic hatred. Both public and private. Those channels still have licenses. And the channels that do not support this policy are harassed. You can say whatever you want, but if you don't completely agree with the state policy of Ukraine, then you are a Kremlin agent. The thing is that all nationalist slogans are superimposed on the absolute ignorance and uneducation of those who shout these slogans.

Here is the official statement of the Ukrainian authorities on this matter: “On February 27, 2020, the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine fined the television channel News One over one hundred thousand hryvnias for spreading hate speech”. The Council’s website states¹:

“The results of an unscheduled inspection, which confirmed violations by News 24 Hours LLC (the satellite TV channel News One) of the norms of current legislation. At the meeting, the regulator found calls for waging or propagandizing aggressive war and/or inciting national, racial or religious hatred and enmity. Therefore, the National Council applied two sanctions to the broadcaster — “declaring a warning” and “imposing a fine”.

¹ <https://www.nrada.gov.ua/za-poshyrennya-movy-vorozhnechi-telekanal-NewsOne-otrymav-poperedzhennya-vid-regulyatora-maye-splatyty-ponad-sto-tysyach-gryven-shtrafu/>

Numerous statements made by the program host Ruslan Kotsaba in the program “The way I Think” (beginning at 23:25, “live broadcast”) show a disregard for the norms of international law and Ukrainian laws, which prohibit the spread of hate speech and hatred. The host repeatedly resorted to manipulating facts and spreading propaganda narratives similar to the official political and propaganda position of the Russian Federation.

“And none of these formats — Geneva, Normandy, Minsk, the various Steinmeier formulas and the like — will eliminate the consequences of the conflict of that time. Only by identifying the true causes of the conflict will we get the right formula for eliminating this civil conflict.

It is time for Mr. Zelensky to make up his mind, he continues the bloody carnage of the previous gang”, this is just one of many quotes that clearly confirms the host’s thesis and threads through the entire program, stating that Ukraine itself unleashed the war in Donbass and it is up to Ukraine when this war will end.

The broadcaster violated viewers’ rights to objective information and abused the channel’s right to freedom of expression, which contradicts international and Ukrainian legal acts regarding aggression against Ukraine.

Ukraine’s government agencies closely cooperate with special services in their censorship policy. For example, on May 22, 2020, the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine announced that it was going to apply to the Security Service of Ukraine to identify the authorship of the May 9 concert, which was aired on ZIK TV channel on May 9: “At a meeting on May 21, the regulator considered the signs of violations of the requirements of the Law of Ukraine On Television and Radio Broadcasting — the fifth paragraph of Article 6 and paragraph (a) of the first paragraph of Article 59, recorded by monitoring in the air of the TV channel ZIK. On that day, between 20:59 and 21:58, the broadcaster aired the concert “White Cranes” on the Day of Victory over Nazism in World War II, but did not provide the names of the author or authors, the names and addresses of the program’s producers. This is an indication of a violation, which will be investigated by an unscheduled inspection. However, the regulator also recorded that a full version of the concert was posted on the official

website of the Russian TV channel NTV on the Internet, labeled as ‘produced by OOO Freedom NTV audiovisual company.’

According to the Decree of the President of Ukraine of May 2, 2018 “On the application and cancellation of personal special economic and other restrictive measures (sanctions)”, the NTV TV news channel, which is part of a federal state enterprise, and the All-Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company are included in the sanctions list of legal entities to which these sanctions apply. Thus, there are indications that the television company “New Communications” may have deliberately concealed the copyright and signs of identification of the said television product.

The clarification of this issue is within the competence of law enforcement agencies. The National Council will apply to the Security Service of Ukraine with a letter regarding the identification of this program and the technical possibility for the Russian company NTV to distribute its programs in Ukraine using Ukrainian telecommunications broadcasting means¹”.

Another reason for the attack on freedom of speech is the repressive Ukrainian legislation, which prescribes that the overwhelming majority of broadcasting must be done exclusively in Ukrainian. Almost always repression is applied only against the Russian language, that is, when part of the broadcast is in Russian. For example, on July 2, 2020, the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine announced an unscheduled inspection of 1+1 TV channels because of the Russian-language TV show “The Kitchen”. The TV channel aired the TV show “The Kitchen” in Russian with Ukrainian subtitles. Needless to say, there is absolutely no political component to this show?

Despite the fact that most Ukrainians prefer to listen to programs in Russian, the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine has a violent policy of imposing the Ukrainian language. Here is a description of this policy²:

¹ <https://www.nrada.gov.ua/v-efiri-telekanalu-z-zik-9-travnya-translyuvaly-kontsert-z-oznakamy-porushen/>

² <https://www.nrada.gov.ua/natsionalna-rada-regulyarno-provodyt-monito-ryngy-teleradioorganizatsij-shhodo-vykonannya-nymy-movnyh-kvot-bude-pro-tse-publichno-zvituvat/>

“The National Council, as in previous years, closely monitors the compliance of television and radio organizations with legal requirements regarding the share of the Ukrainian language on the air.

This issue is under constant control of the regulatory body. At the same time, certain trends have been observed during the monitoring, which raise concerns about the risks of non-compliance with the language legislation by television and radio organizations.

This was announced today before a regular meeting of the regulatory body chairman of the National Council Olga Gerasimyuk. “This is a very important and sensitive issue, and we don’t stop this work for a minute. Our monitoring takes place clearly in accordance with the methodology that has been adopted”, she said.

Maksim Onoprienko, a member of the National Council, said that regular monitoring of television and radio organizations also takes place at the regional level. Full reporting information is prepared every six months, but periodic monitoring is done and current information is also provided. Representatives of the National Council in the regions report that recent monitoring of local broadcasters mostly shows that the companies strictly comply with the provisions of the law. Ukrainian language and song scores at the local and regional levels are very high, often approaching 100%. Only isolated violations were recorded, so the National Council has already appointed unscheduled inspections to two broadcasters — Radio Slobozhanshchina from Kharkiv region for the language of programs, and Blesk FM from Chernivtsi region for insufficient amount of songs.

According to the results of the first half of this year, the National Council will certainly publish the data about how much Ukrainian language and songs are heard on the air of both national and local radio and TV channels, said Maksim Onoprienko. The regulator will publicly present these generalizations to society and the media”.

These cases are systemic in nature. For example, on February 27, 2020, the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine announced that it was going to check the Komri television and radio broadcasting company to see if the proportion of songs in the Ukrainian language complied with Ukrainian law.

Here is a part of the official Ukrainian statement¹:

“By the decision of the National Council on February 27, the licensee LLC “Television and Radio Publishing Company ‘Comrie’”, Kyiv, appointed an unscheduled on-site inspection. In the activity of the broadcaster to check compliance with legal norms in terms of distribution of a certain proportion of songs in the Ukrainian language.

Monitoring of daily radio broadcasting till February 2, 2020 recorded that in the period between 07:00 and 14:00 the share of songs in Ukrainian language on the air of Best FM was 29.91 %. This volume of songs contradicts the legal norm and the terms of the license, which stipulate that the proportion of songs in the state language, broadcast in each 24-hour period, must be at least 35 % in the broadcast of the broadcaster.

Presence of violations by the radio station Best FM of Part 2 of Article 9, Part 7 of Article 27, Part 8 of Article 28 and Paragraph a) of Article 59 of the Law of Ukraine “On Television and Radio Broadcasting” will be clarified in the course of the unscheduled on-site inspection. If they are confirmed, the regulator will apply to the broadcaster the sanction provided by the current legislation”.

Another mechanism for censorship of the media, already mentioned above, is the inclusion of the actors involved in them on Ukrainian “sanctions lists”, tracking the appearance of works with them on Ukrainian airwaves, and, if they appear, closing or threatening to close television channels or radio stations. The most egregious case was the inspection of the channel 112 Ukraine on April 24, 2020, for showing a children’s cartoon, which was voiced by an actor who the state had previously included in its “sanctions lists”. Is it necessary to mention that the cartoon did not include any political content?

Here is a description of this situation based on official statements of the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine²:

“Based on the results of the monitoring of broadcasting, which recorded in the air of the TV channel 112 Ukraine (TRK 112 TV LLC,

¹ <https://www.nrada.gov.ua/regulyator-pereviryt-radiostantsiyu-best-fm-shhodo-vykonannya-chastky-pisen-ukrayinskoyu-movoyu/>

² <https://www.nrada.gov.ua/regulyator-pereviryt-telekanal-112-ukrayina-cherез-pokaz-animatsijnogo-filmu-neobyknovennoe-puteshestvye-serafymy/>

Kyiv) signs of violations of the norms of the Law of Ukraine “On Television and Radio Broadcasting”, the National Council at the meeting of April 23 decided to appoint an unscheduled inspection to the customer.

During the monitoring the National Council discovered that on April 19, 2020 at 13:05 the TV channel “112 Ukraine” showed the animated film “Serafima’s Unusual Journey” (producer — Russian Federation, 2015, “KinoAtis”, Foundation of St. Seraphim of Sarov, directed by Sergey Antonov) with the participation of Russian actor Mikhailov Aleksandr Yakovlevich, whose name is included in the List of persons who endanger national security.

Distribution of the respective content on the air is a sign of violation of Paragraph 10 of Part 2 of Article 6 of the Law of Ukraine “On Television and Radio Broadcasting”, because the current legislation does not allow broadcasting audiovisual works (films, television programs, except news and current affairs television programs), where one of the participants is a person included in the list of persons who endanger national security, compiled by the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine based on requests from the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the National Council of Ukraine for Television and Radio Broadcasting.

In addition, the results of the monitoring of 112 Ukraine also contained signs of non-compliance with Paragraph a) of Part 1 of Article 59 of this Law, which stipulates that television and radio organizations must comply with Ukrainian legislation and license requirements.

The National Council will check the activities of the 112 Ukraine TV channel for relevant violations after the end of the quarantine and, if confirmed, will make a decision as provided for in the current legislation”.

On March 6, 2020, the RTVI channel was shut down¹. A similar technique was used as the excuse — the inclusion of actors on Ukrainian “sanctions lists” in programs or films, with subsequent monitoring of their appearance on Ukrainian broadcasts, and, in case of their appearance, closing them down. It is interesting to note that

¹ <https://www.nrada.gov.ua/rtvi-vylucheno-iz-pereliku-dozvolenyh-dlya-pokazu-v-ukrayini-telekanaliv/>

in this example, the channel was blamed for broadcasting a program featuring Russian ballet dancer Nikolai Tsiskaridze and the historical films “Kuprin” and “The Shot”.

Here is an official Ukrainian report: “...the Ukrainian media regulator recognized that the content of the foreign program RTVI (UK jurisdiction) does not meet the requirements of the European Convention on Transfrontier Television and Ukrainian legislation, because the TV channel repeatedly aired audiovisual works with the participation of persons who pose a threat to national security.

In order to find out how this TV channel complies with the requirements of the European Convention on Transfrontier Television and Ukrainian legislation, the regulator monitored its program content in the period from February 24 to March 1, 2020. At this time, the presence of a violation of Part 2 of Article 6 of the Law of Ukraine “On Television and Radio Broadcasting”, according to which “the use by television and radio organizations for broadcasting of audiovisual works (films, television programs, except news and current affairs television programs), where one of the participants is a person included in the list of persons who pose a threat to national security, is not allowed” was repeatedly recorded.

Thus, from 24.02.2020 to 28.02.2020 (at 17:00, with a repeat on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday at 05:00) there was recorded a broadcast of the film “The Shot” (studio “Russian Project”, Russia, 2015), with 10 episodes featuring Vladimir Menshov;

27.02.2020 (19:00–20:00) and 28.02.2020 (07:00–08:00) broadcast of the program “For Three” with Nikolai Tsiskaridze was recorded;

On 01.03.2020 (at 17:00) the broadcast of the film “Kuprin. Film 3. The Duel” (Studio “Russian Project”, Russia, 2013), 4 episodes, featuring Mikhail Porechenkov”.

A similar mechanism of repression against the media in Ukraine is quite regular and systematic and is applied not only to television but also to radio channels. At the same time, the grounds for the repressions are absolutely insignificant, such as the performance of a song by the famous singer Larisa Dolina, with lyrics that contain the following words: “When the skies are fading in the night and it’s so easy to look into your eyes / My heart wants so badly to tell what no one should know, / But barely I touch your hand, words are so eager to fall from

my lips / Of what I keep in my heart, of my love, a flower in the snow, I can tell”.

To quote the official Ukrainian report on this matter:

“The monitoring of Radio Slobozhanshchina LLC (call sign Radio Slobozhanshchina), Kharkiv, of 24.03.2020 in the air of the radio station recorded signs of violations of the requirements of the Law of Ukraine “On Television and Radio Broadcasting” regarding broadcasting works with the participation of artists included in the List of persons threatening national security; obligatory share of hosts and announcers of radio programs in the state language and compliance with rules of advertising activities and sponsorship.

On the day of the monitoring, the radio station broadcast an audio-visual work “Flowers under the snow” performed by Aleksandr Panayotov and Larisa Dolina. This singer is on the List of Persons who pose a threat to national security. The share of announcers and presenters of radio programs in the state language was 40.5 %, which is less than the 60 % of the daily volume of programs prescribed by law. In addition, the advertisement of the medical laboratory “Virola” was not in the state (Ukrainian) language.

The National Council will verify the compliance of LLC “Radio Slobozhanshchina” with Paragraph 10 of Part 2 of Article 6; Part 5 of Article 9 and Paragraphs a), f) of Part 1 of Article 59 of the Law of Ukraine “On Television and Radio Broadcasting”.

Other illegal mechanisms are also used as an excuse to censor and repress opposition media in Ukraine, such as declaring the existence of a “non-transparent ownership structure”, which was done in relation to Radio Vesti in 2017. Neither did the existence of a court decision prohibiting such machinations prevent the closure of the channel. Interestingly enough, the officials explained their refusal to comply with the court order by the fact that they “do not know the judge”.

Here is a description of this typical example from the media¹: “The National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council, at a meeting held on Friday, March 3, considering the decision on the issue of extending the license of Radio Vesti, voted unanimously in favor of not extending the license of the broadcaster on the 104.6 frequency in Kyiv”.

¹ <https://vesti.ua/strana/228105-natssovet-zakryl-radio-vesti>

“Having heard the public and spoken to my conscience, I take back everything I said, I propose to move all our disputes to the judicial plane and proceed to the consideration of the continuation of the license today”, said one of the members of the National Council, Ulyana Feshchuk. The proposal was approved by Olga Gerasimyuk, who chaired in place of the absent head Yuriy Artemenko. “I support the decision of Mrs. Uliana, it is time to stop playing games. Today we must approve the decision, express our position, and then, as it was duly noted, we will move to the plane of judicial proceedings and see who is who, so to speak. But I think society will approve of our decision, which we’ve already decided on”, Gerasimyuk said.

Having read out the decision of the National Council, she put to vote the question “to refuse to extend the license for broadcasting in Kyiv”. All six members of the regulator voted for the decision not to extend. Immediately thereafter, they unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting. The decision was taken despite the fact that about 2 thousand people under the walls of the National Council demanded an extension of the radio license. Recall that on February 23, the National Council revoked the license of Radio Vesti in Kharkiv. The decision was supported by all members of the Council. In doing so, the National Council violated the law by ignoring the injunction.

On February 16, 2017, the decision to close the radio station was prevented by the court: “On Thursday, February 16, the National Broadcasting Council met to decide whether to renew the license of Radio Vesti. But no decision was made, because the court forbade it”.

At that time there was a meeting in the building of the National Council. As a reminder, the main claim of the National Council is that Radio Vesti allegedly has a non-transparent ownership structure, although Media Holding Vesti Ukraine has provided all the documents in time.

Curiously enough, the National Council is not very sure of its position either. During the meeting the deputy head of the National Council Ulyana Feshchuk admitted that there are no legal grounds for depriving Radio Vesti of its license: “There is little legal basis for this, there are doubts”.

“They have no legal grounds to refuse to extend services. There are technological developments: first, the radio station was accused

of “non-transparent ownership structure”, then they started pressing warnings.

At the moment, Vesti Radio has already collected five such sanctions — most of them are politically motivated criticisms of newsroom guests or ridiculous technical remarks”, says Olga Semchenko, chairman of the board of directors of Vesti Ukraine Media Holding.

The radio was shut down despite the fact that international organizations declared official support for Radio Vesti¹: “The International and European Federations of Journalists officially announced their support for Radio Vesti. The International Federation of Journalists as well as the European Federation of Journalists believe that “alleged uncertainties” regarding the beneficiaries of the company are not grounds for the National Council to refuse to renew the license of Radio Vesti.

The announcement was published on the official website of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ). A joint statement by the EFJ and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) reveals the unfounded nature of the claims made by the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council against Radio Vesti.

“This is not the first incident between Radio Vesti and the National Council. Earlier, the regulator refused to renew the license for Stylish Radio, owned by the company. She was also twice denied a request to expand the coverage of Radio Vesti”, the EFJ states.

“The International and European Federations of Journalists remind the Ukrainian authorities that the right to freedom of expression is a fundamental human right. State intervention in this right is permitted only if it is prescribed by law, pursues a legitimate aim, is necessary in a democratic society and is proportionate to the aims pursued by law”, the official message says. Both organizations expressed confidence that “alleged uncertainties” regarding the company’s beneficiaries were not grounds for denying Radio Vesti’s license renewal. They also reminded the Ukrainian authorities that media pluralism and diversity of media content are critical to a functioning democratic society.

¹ <https://vesti.ua/mir/223022-mezhdunarodnye-orhanizatsii-zajavili-ob-ofitsialnoj-podderzhke-radio-vesti>

The communication also cites the position of the European Court of Human Rights, according to which “the licensing criteria applied in the licensing process must provide sufficient guarantees against arbitrariness”.

The reason for inspections of the media in Ukraine with the prospect of being deprived of the right to broadcast is actually the appearance of any positive assessments of Russia and its policies. For example, the channel Nash 365 was subjected to such scrutiny because it broadcast a press conference of Russian President Vladimir Putin, in which they discussed “scientific, technological and economic achievements of Russia, achievements of Russian social policy, increasing the standard of living of the Russian population, information about Russia’s fight against global terrorism”.

Here is the text of the official Ukrainian message¹: “On December 23, the regulator considered the results of an unscheduled on-site inspection of Nash 365 LLC (satellite broadcasting, Nash logo), Kyiv, and issued a warning to the company for noncompliance with Paragraphs a), c) of Part 1 of Article 59 of the Law of Ukraine “On Television and Radio Broadcasting”.

The licensee was inspected on the basis of monitoring on 19.12.2019. On that day, from 13:08 to 13:59, the channel recorded a live broadcast of part of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s annual press conference.

During the press conference, which was broadcast live by “Nash 365” TV channel, information was given about Russia’s fight against global terrorism, the futility and inexpediency of the world community sanctions against Russia, achievements of the military-industrial complex of Russia, the creation of the latest weapons systems, scientific, technological and economic achievements of Russia, the position of the Russian government in the conflicts in Syria, Libya, achievements of Russian social policy, Russian policy towards the Russian-speaking population, in particular, the part of the Russian people. All topics were covered from the perspective of the President and the Government of the Russian Federation.

According to the licensee’s statement, the basis for the live broadcast of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s press conference was

¹ <https://www.nrada.gov.ua/telekanalu-nash-ogolosheno-poperedzhennya-za-propagandystsku-translyatsiyu/>

an agreement between Nash 365 LLC and Reuters News & Media Ltd. According to this agreement, Reuters is not responsible for the use of licensed content that is “intended for editorial use only”, and the client (Nash 365 LLC) is required to independently determine “whether a particular use is an editorial implementation”. So, the licensee must provide the broadcast with its own editorial commentary and/or provide balanced pluralistic commentary on the expression of different opinions and positions on important issues of the socio-economic and political situation in Ukraine in the context of the information disseminated by Vladimir Putin.

...The National Council decided to apply the sanction of announcing a warning to Nash 365 LLC. companies are obliged to bring their activities into conformity with the requirements of current legislation within a month from the date of this decision”.

Is it necessary to mention the fact that Ukraine has de facto introduced censorship of all Russian channels? Such cases are monitored by the Security Service of Ukraine. For example, on April 5, 2020, a resident of Sumy region was sentenced to two years in prison. The official reason for this was his “unlicensed activity”, but the mention in the official report of his broadcasting Russian channels and the involvement of the SSU in the case leaves no doubt as to the true background of the events. Here is the official report of the National Television and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine¹:

“Yampol district court of Sumy region found a resident of the village of Seredina-Budy guilty of committing a crime under Paragraph 2 of Article 176 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (violation of copyright and related rights) and sentenced him to two years imprisonment.

The fact of production of unlicensed activities in the border area of Sumy region was discovered by employees of the Security Service of Ukraine together with the representative of the National Council of Ukraine on Television and Radio Broadcasting in Sumy region Larisa Yakubenko.

A resident of the border village of Seredina-Budy created a cable network and provided cable television services to residents of the village

¹ <https://www.nrada.gov.ua/dva-roky-pozbavleniya-voli-meshkantsyu-sumshhyny-za-bezlitsenzijnu-diyalnist-porushennya-avtorskyh-prav-retranslyatsiyu-rosijskyh-kanaliv/>

without a license from the National Council. The man also re-broadcast Ukrainian TV channels without appropriate agreements with the right holders and distributed Russian programs Russia 1, ORT, TNT, and NTV, which are restricted to re-broadcast in Ukraine.

Promptly, it was found that the so-called studio was set up in a specially rented office. He rebroadcast Ukrainian content and Russian TV channels received via satellite dishes, which are not included in the list of foreign programs whose content meets the requirements of the European Convention on Transfrontier Television and Ukrainian legislation, to end users and made a profit for it. During searches at his place of work and residence, law enforcement officers seized equipment and documents.

Illegal activities of a resident of Seredina Buda were blocked by officers of the SSU Main Directorate in Sumy region together with a representative of the National Council of Ukraine in Sumy region and employees of the National Police under the procedural guidance of the prosecutor's office.

According to the verdict of the Yampol District Court of Sumy region, the perpetrator was found guilty and sentenced to two years imprisonment with probation for one year. The verdict is now in legal power”.

Aleksei Samoilov, lecturer, PhD, former Ukrainian political prisoner

A barbaric self-censorship is embedded in Ukrainian society, at the expense of what? Colossal psychological and physical pressure with violence against opponents of political power.

Arrests and imprisonment of journalists

Since the victory of Euromaidan, opposition media have been censored and illegally restricted, and their journalists have been systematically arrested and imprisoned for their professional activities. Back in 2017, the international non-governmental organization Committee to Protect Journalists put Ukraine on the list of countries where members of the media are regularly imprisoned for their professional activities. Ukraine was included in this anti-rating along

with such states as Somalia, Algeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Guinea, and Iraq.

Pavel Volkov, Ukrainian journalist, former political prisoner

The pro-government media directly incites ethnic hatred. There is plenty of evidence for this. Even in my field. An overwhelming number of large media outlets, as well as local Zaporizhzhya media, simply allowed themselves not only during the trials, but even after acquittal, to openly call me a terrorist, separatist, state traitor, an accomplice of the occupant, write that I took a bribe from Putin to organize a referendum in Zaporizhzhya. They made up a lot of nonsense. And it's like that everywhere, and people reading it don't know if it's true or not. And if a dozen or more media made publications, respectively, there forms an atmosphere of hatred towards each other in society. People think there really are saboteurs here, terrorists trying to make their lives worse. That's how our media works.

The media only hire journalists with certain views, and leave out the others. There are a few opposition media outlets in our country, and they are all being repressed on all sides. Recently, for example, the television channel Kyivska Rus was stripped of its license because they showed the Victory Parade in Minsk and the guests in their studio – as journalists they are called experts from all sides – spoke unflatteringly about the Maidan. They had their licenses revoked soon after”. Journalists of the opposition newspaper strana. ua were repeatedly attacked. Now the SSU is trying to shut down Channel 112 again, which is part of Viktor Medvedchuk's media pool, so there is a fierce struggle going on. “The pro-government media can do whatever they want – incite hatred, call opponents ‘vatniks’ or ‘separatists,’ and do so freely and without any fear. They call people terrorists with absolute impunity, despite the presumption of innocence. There's nothing stopping them. As for the opposition media, God forbid they should allow themselves to be complimentary about the Victory Parade.

Arrest and Imprisonment of Kirill Vyshinsky

The head of the portal RIA Novosti Ukraine Kirill Vyshinsky, a citizen of Russia and Ukraine, was detained by Ukrainian Security

Service (SSU) officers on May 15, 2018 near his home in Kyiv. At night he was transported to Kherson. In addition, searches were conducted for hours at the office of RIA Novosti Ukraine in Kyiv and at the homes of some of its employees.

Kirill Vyshinsky was charged with high treason, seizure of state power by prior conspiracy by a group of persons, etc. The maximum penalty under these articles is up to 15 years in prison.

The journalist called the SSU accusations against him a lie and manipulation. He noted that the main charges brought against him by the SSU are that as editor-in-chief of the RIA Novosti Ukraine website, he was not engaged in journalism, but conducted “information special operations in the interests of the Russian Federation”. Moreover, the journalist stated that since 2014, when he became editor-in-chief of RIA Novosti Ukraine, he has never had any complaints about the inaccuracy of publications.

K. Vyshinsky wrote a letter in which he explains that his detention was illegal because it was “based on absurd and false accusations” made by SSU officers. He recalled the arguments of the SSU: the agency said that on May 15, 2018, the day of his arrest, the head of the portal posted the article “Attack on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Who is to blame for the denial of autocephaly”, and it was done “in the interests of Russia” — “in order to provide them with assistance in...The Ukrainian local church’s opposition to receiving autocephaly”. As the journalist explained, the material was a news report and was prepared by the editors from open sources. The text, he said, presented two points of view. In his letter, Vyshinsky cited data from the examination of the publication “Attack on the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Who is to blame for the rejection of autocephaly”, conducted by the Ukrainian Research Institute of Special Techniques and Forensic Examinations of the SSU. According to the conclusions of the expert, there is nothing unlawful in the article. It also, according to the conclusion of experts, does not contain statements “which, by their meaning, constitute public justification of extremist, separatist or terrorist actions”. In addition, “signs of anti-Ukrainian propaganda” were not found in the publication.

During one of the hearings of the Kherson court, where the question of the extension of the preventive measure was considered, Vyshinsky said that he would renounce his Ukrainian citizenship. One of the

sessions of the Kherson City Court was interrupted due to the ill-health of the journalist, who was sent to a prison hospital, but then, after a brief medical check-up, was returned. The court obliged the investigation to conduct a full examination of Vyshinsky, satisfying the petition filed by the defense in connection with the sharp deterioration of his health, who had earlier suffered a heart attack, and the incomprehensible “treatment” in the pre-trial detention center. Its results were presented, but the defense insisted that the examination was of poor quality.

A criminal case was also initiated against lawyer Andrei Domansky, who defends Kirill Vyshinsky. The lawyer suggested that this was connected with his participation in the Vyshinsky case. The International Commission of Jurists in Brussels found the case against him to be political persecution¹.

The incident was condemned by Anthony Bellanger, Secretary General of the International Federation of Journalists. Johann Beer, head of Central Asia and Eastern Europe for Reporters Without Borders, demanded “a clear explanation of the treason involved, or the immediate release of Kirill Vyshinsky”.

Council of Europe Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland expressed his concern about “the effects of the repeated detentions of journalists on the situation of media freedom in Ukraine, while the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Dunja Mijatovic noted that “any interference with the activities of journalists and the media must comply with European standards on human rights, including the principle of legality, legality, proportionality of such interference, as well as its necessity in a democratic society”.

OSCE Secretary General Thomas Greminger also expressed concern about the situation, reminding that all member countries of the organization must comply with international standards and not interfere in the work of the media. In April 2019, more than 250 journalists signed an appeal to Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky calling for the release of Vyshinsky.

Russian President Vladimir Putin called the situation with the arrest of Kirill Vyshinsky unprecedented. He stressed that the journalist was arrested for his direct professional activities.

¹ <https://ria.ru/20190828/1557987985.html>

On August 28, 2019, the Kyiv Court of Appeal changed his measure of restraint from detention to a personal obligation to appear in court on demand, before which Ukrainian courts had decided eight times to extend his detention.

On September 7, 2019, Vyshinsky arrived in Russia as part of agreements between Russia and Ukraine. During his professional career, journalist Kirill Vyshinsky spent 1 year and 3 months, or about 400 days in detention.

In September, Kirill Vyshinsky gave members of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation a list of 12 journalists who, among many others, are persecuted in Ukraine. Among the persecuted are: Oleg Sagan, Vasily Muravitsky, Elena Boyko, Miroslava Berdnik, Dmitry Vasilets, Yevgeny Timonin, Ruslan Kotsaba, Aleksandr Bondarchuk, Anatoly Maevsky, Vladimir Skachko, Dmitry Gubin, Pavel Volkov. Our interviews with some of them are featured in this book.

The media wrote that the main fault of these people was that they disagreed with the Ukrainian authorities¹: “Although they were accused of ‘separatism,’ treason, and financing terrorist organizations, in fact their guilt was only in criticizing the regime. In all cases, their guilt was not proven by the court; some of the journalists, after spending a year or more in prison, were even acquitted. In most cases, even after acquittal by the court, the Ukrainian law enforcement system again initiated criminal proceedings against them.

All of these journalists in one way or another expressed their disagreement with the Ukrainian government and its president, Petro Poroshenko, and were persecuted for it.

The Arrest and Detention of Vasily Muravitsky

On November 26, 2020, another trial over Zhytomyr journalist Vasily Muravitsky took place. His lawyer Andrei Gozhiy stated the following²: “The defense raised objections and uncovered a number of manipulations by the prosecutor’s office and the investigation, which called into question the main principle of adversarial proceedings — the equality of the parties, and justified the access to attorney-client privilege. The court

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20190927/1025136445.html>

² <https://ukraina.ru/news/20201201/1029816999.html>

found it impossible to consider the issue of the selection (extension) of a preventive measure for Vasily Muravitsky under such conditions.

Vasily Muravitsky was born on August 29, 1984 in the village of Novoguyvinskoye, Zhytomyr region. Since 2000, he began to publish in the press of Zhytomyr region. In 2007, he joined the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine. In 2011, he won first place in the contest “Journalist of the Year” in Zhitomir in the category “The best journalist of print and electronic media”. From 2011 to 2013, he was editor-in-chief of the all-Ukrainian youth weekly newspaper Novaya Volna Plus. Since 2014, he has been a popular opposition journalist.

Arrested on August 1, 2017 by SSU officers of Zhytomyr region on charges of high treason. The press writes that, as in other cases involving journalists, the court hearings were attended by members of Ukrainian death squads, who are called “activists” and representatives of “patriotic organizations” in today’s Ukraine¹:

“Activists from “patriotic” organizations, primarily the National Corps, came to every court session demanding to punish the journalist “for treason” and chanting insulting slogans in his address and that of his lawyers. It was obvious that the judicial panel was on their side, albeit unofficially. After all, no one stopped the radicals and Nazis from speaking and insulting the suspect — neither the police who were guarding the defendant, nor the court”.

To quote the words of the editor-in-chief of LIVA.com.ua Andriy Manchuk from an interview he gave in mid-2020²:

“The Muravitsky case is a landmark for modern Ukraine. A perfectly innocent journalist, blamed for his professional activities, innocuous comments and articles, has been under arrest for four years, despite the support of Amnesty International, which recognized him as a prisoner of conscience, and statements by other influential international human rights organizations”.

Andrey Aleksandrovich Gozhiy, attorney.

Muravitsky is accused of undermining Ukraine’s information security in his journalistic articles by criticizing the current authorities,

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20180628/1020538568.html>

² <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200520/1027742254.html>

represented by Petro Poroshenko and Yuriy Lutsenko. The accusation documents state this unambiguously: “Criticized the authorities in favor of a foreign state”. Meaning Russia, of course.

Muravitsky, like a true saboteur, a spy, worked officially as a journalist, concluded a contract with the then unbanned agency Russia Today to provide correspondent services? Opened an official bank account, paid taxes, like a real spy? He published articles saying that Ukraine was facing inevitable inflation, that Russia would build a Crimean bridge, and so on. He even wrote about rumors that Poroshenko is an alcoholic and so is Lutsenko. The SSU and the prosecutor’s office regarded all this as a call for a coup d’état. They called it “undermining the country’s information security”.

Muravitsky spent 10–11 months in pretrial detention, then a year and a half of house arrest, followed by six months of overnight detention, and just recently, at the last hearing, he was placed under the lightest preventive measure possible: a personal obligation to appear in court. And the court trials continue. Roughly speaking, he was in pre-trial detention for 11 months, and then about two years at home, unable to ever leave it.

Muravitsky spent 330 days (11 months) in prison. He was subsequently under house arrest until November 30, 2020.

Once again, to quote his lawyer Andrei Gozhiy, who assessed the case¹, and subsequently suffered personally for his professional activities as a victim of the attack²:

“Very interesting points came out at the trial. It was a court session, where the expertise on which everything was based was examined. When Vasily Muravitsky was still being detained and arrested, the press center of the Security Service of Ukraine (SSU) said that there were many examinations that confirmed the journalist’s hostile, separatist and traitorous statements. And so yesterday this was investigated, these so-called psychological examinations.

¹ http://trusty.com.ua/2020/08/22/nonsens-pri-zelenskom-zhurnalista-sudyat-za-kritiku-poroshenko/?fbclid=IwAR1vCnje_GcSgs6hfqxR66U7ty5yndFRws-n2hVk9Vy1ZcibrjvX5UQnupk

² <https://ukraina.ru/interview/20201202/1029827766.html>

We were simply amazed that now, in 2020, Muravitsky is on trial for criticizing (former president of Ukraine. — *Ed. note*) Poroshenko! Experts say that Muravitsky, showing two points of view, referring to official sources, criticized and humiliated the Ukrainian government represented by Poroshenko, Yatsenyuk, Lyashko and others.

Can you imagine: in the 21st century, the 20th year, a man is on trial for criticizing Poroshenko, and the prosecutor is not ashamed to read it! My question to the prosecutor: Listen, isn't it your Prosecutor General's Office, that presented Poroshenko with a suspicion? Didn't you bring suspicions to Pashinsky and Rosenblat? And they are judging a journalist for their criticism... Now they are putting Muravitsky on trial, and regional prosecutor Levchenko is supporting the prosecution — for criticizing Poroshenko! While Prosecutor General Venediktova hands Poroshenko a suspicion. For the first time in those three years, Vasily Muravitsky, an internationally recognized prisoner of conscience, is no longer under any kind of sanction or measure of restraint. This has come a long way, including our sincere gratitude to your publication, which was one of the few that immediately joined the cause, supporting Vasily Muravitsky, and has stayed with us all these years, and hopefully still does.

Vasily Muravitsky was detained by the Security Service of Ukraine right in the maternity hospital, after his wife gave birth, on August 1, 2017. Within three days, the Korolyov court in Zhitomir selected a preventive measure in the form of detention for him. He spent about a year in a detention center. Then his detention was changed at the request of his lawyers to a measure of restraint in the form of round-the-clock house arrest with an electronic means of control — simply put, with a so-called bracelet.

Then after about two years, 24-hour house arrest was replaced by overnight house arrest...

We have the accuser prosecutor in the case who is at the same time the procedural supervisor for the assault on me. As a lawyer. And it turns out to be a paradoxical situation: it turns out that I am defending Muravitsky against the accusations of the prosecutor, who is as if defending me in the case of the attack on me during the Muravitsky trial. During one of the sessions on Muravitsky's case, during a break, I was attacked by the neo-Nazi organization S14, which repeatedly

declared its cooperation with the SSU. In addition to the statements about the cooperation of S14 with the SSU, there were statements from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and directly from Minister Avakov...

The isolated cases of positive outcomes, although they are not completely closed, as far as both Muravitsky and letter carrier Oksana Kuramshina are concerned, are not yet evidence of any serious changes in the political and public atmosphere.

This would be evidenced by the legal and political will of the Office of the President and the review of all criminal cases under political articles, their closure and, of course, the disbanding of all units that were involved in political repression”.

Speaking about the prospects of the case of the attack on him by members of the death squad S14 associated with the Security Service of Ukraine, he noted:

“The case is ongoing, but it probably doesn’t have any prospects. And I have no illusions here. When earlier Karas (one of the leaders of S14. — *Ed. note*) rallied that he was being prepared for suspicion, I told your publication that we shouldn’t expect triumphalist statements, nothing will happen. And just like that, nothing did happen. A good old-fashioned method was used — obfuscation of the process, crushing it, red tape. They just handed it all over to the SSU to investigate. Can you imagine how will the SSU investigate S14?”

As in other cases, this case was directly inspired by the Ukrainian authorities, whose representatives directly threatened him. Here is a quote from journalist Andrei Lubensky’s article about the case¹:

“Arrest, charges of treason, months in a detention center, where the journalist was reminded: Your grandfather (later fully rehabilitated — *Ed. note*) also spent time in this cell during Stalin’s times. The tenseness of the situation is illustrated by the fact that the motion to postpone the hearing included, among other grounds, death threats to all of the journalist’s defenders. As Muravitsky himself said, these threats were made at a session of the Zhytomyr Regional Council, with the direct participation of the governor of the region, the head of the regional council, and representatives of law enforcement agencies of the region. Naturally, the threat case was not allowed to proceed, and the petition

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20200520/1027742254.html>

was dismissed. The “seriousness” of the evidence base is evidenced by the countrywide celebrity cat of Muravitsky’s relatives, who was considered to be a DPR agent”.

Ruslan Kotsaba’s Arrest and Detention

In May 2017, the Prosecutor General’s Office of Ukraine again tried to convict opposition journalist Ruslan Kotsaba in a case in which he had already been acquitted.

The pretext for the initiation of criminal proceedings, his subsequent arrest and detention was his message on YouTube. In it he declared his unwillingness to join the army (by this time he had already suffered a stroke and suffered from hypertrophy of the heart muscle) and urged all “adequate people” to do the same, since martial law was not declared in the country. He also stated that “I’d rather serve two to five years in prison than go on a deliberate murder of my compatriots who live in the East, Refuse this mobilization, because it’s hell, it’s horror! It is inconceivable that in the 21st century people would kill others just because they want to live separately”. The armed conflict in Donbass itself he called a civil war. For this appeal he spent 524 days in prison.

In July 2016, Kotsaba was fully acquitted in Court of Appeal, but continued to be attacked by members of Ukrainian death squads and a campaign of harassment.

In his interview, Ruslan Kotsaba talks about how the Ukrainian authorities are once again trying to convict him on a fabricated case, says that there is a real threat to his life and talks about his harassment campaign¹:

“If the judge decides to refer the case to the trial court, they are obliged to take me into custody, because my article is considered a particularly serious crime (Article 111, Part 1 of the Criminal Code “Treason”), and she does not foresee any other preventive measure. The prosecutor’s office asked the first and second instance for a term of 13 years for me, they won’t agree to anything less. The same charge that was in the first and second instance. The prosecutor’s office added to the appeal only that I had violated information security with my video message, but the lawyers are sure that this is nonsense.

¹ <https://vesti.ua/strana/240724-intervju-s-kotsaboj>

...Although my defense and myself understand that there is a real threat to my life. The SSU, who control right-wing radicals, can do to me what they did to Buzina. Behind the bars I could no longer speak the truth. That's where I realized that you don't appreciate the opportunity when you're free.

— You say there is a real threat to your life. Do you receive anonymous threats?

— No, they say that straight to my face. The first one who came up to me was Tyler (party activist Dmitry Reznichenko's pseudonym. — *Author's note*) on Institut'skaya Street — he came up behind me, grabbed my neck and told me straight into my ear that he would slaughter my entire family. He wanted to hit me with a taser, but I got away. Then Aleksandr Vakhniy (a well-known nationalist who trashed the Vesti editorial office and threatened to beat up the newspaper's journalists. — *Author's note*) said on Clean Thursday near Lavra that he would destroy me and my family. And they say the same on the Internet every day. I wouldn't pay attention, but I understand who is behind them and that they are uncontrollable; I'm afraid of becoming a sacred victim. I am a traitor to them, and traitors must be eliminated so that others will be afraid. I'm afraid to sleep at home, my wife is always crying, it's hell. I dare not wish the same upon anyone.

The worst thing would be if an order came from above to destroy me physically. And I know that you need to be at least a general to give this order. And I know that such a command can be given by a man of no lesser rank than a general.

...Not one channel will hire me. They refuse and say that with all due respect they don't want to lose their license; I'm blacklisted. That is, I was effectively deprived of the opportunity to make a living from my profession. And, for example, I can't even afford to rent an apartment right now — I can only rent a room. It was also the first time in Ukraine's history that deputies collected signatures to deprive me of my accreditation at the Rada, which is nonsense. All because I asked politically incorrect questions. What is this, 1937, what is this Stalinism?"

Kotsaba Ruslan Petrovich, opposition journalist

I am Ruslan Kotsaba, a journalist for the Orthodox TV channel "Kyiv'ska Rus"; a former prisoner of conscience, who is still being

prosecuted since 2015 for allegedly being a traitor to the motherland, a state traitor, an enemy of the people.

“I was against the war. I made a video appeal to Poroshenko, where I called what was happening in Donbass a civil war. And I said that I refuse to mobilize, and I urge everyone to do the same. I was informed that my video message disrupted the fourth or fifth wave of mobilization. Even though mobilization without a declaration of martial law is illegal.

I have no access to state secrets or even official secrets. We are not officials, yet we are being charged with high treason. I spent 524 days in solitary confinement in the Ivano-Frankovsk pre-trial detention center, until I was acquitted by the Court of Appeal, but the prosecution demanded 13 years of imprisonment and confiscation of all my property. I was still acquitted, but then, 11 months later, at the request of Prosecutor General Lutsenko, [and] Poroshenko’s female relative, they annulled the acquittal, and I am a defendant again. It’s still ongoing to this day.

I didn’t have a standard regimen, nor did I have an intensive one, I was under a strict regimen. For the uninformed, ordinary person there is accompanied by a convoy both in front and behind, always with a dog and hands cuffed at the back. They wouldn’t let me see my family. They resumed criminal prosecution so that I could not file a lawsuit in the ECHR, in Strasbourg. Until there is a decision that has legal force, either acquittal or conviction, I have no right to file an application, a complaint to the ECHR, so first I have to go through all the Ukrainian courts. On February 8, 2015, the beginning of the year, they put me away. I spent 524 days in jail, and then I was acquitted. It was July 16, 2016. Then a year later, on June 1, 2017, the Ukrainian Supreme Court again resumed criminal prosecution, and I went from being a suspect to being accused of treason again.

Arrest and imprisonment of Aleksandr Bondarchuk

One of the first Ukrainian political prisoners¹ after the illegal coup was Aleksandr Bondarchuk, a member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20190927/1025136445.html>

of the 4th convocation (from the Communist Party of Ukraine), former engineer-constructor of the Antonov Aviation Scientific and Technical Complex, leader of the Working Party of Ukraine and editor in chief of the leftist newspaper “The Working Class”. He was detained on charges of infringement on Ukraine’s territorial integrity in March 2015 for publishing an interview with Pavel Gubarev, the “people’s governor” of Donetsk, in the summer of 2014. In the summer of 2015, the entire circulation of The Working Class newspaper in Kyiv was confiscated and a new case was opened for calling for the overthrow of the constitutional order. After nine months in the pre-trial detention center, the court cancelled the preventive measure in the form of detention, but the case was not closed. For almost four years, sessions have been postponed either because the prosecutor failed to appear or because the judges themselves decided not to. “Transfer private enterprises of the oligarchs into state ownership, ban the sale of land, eradicate corruption, stop ignoring the social and economic interests of the workers”, these are Bondarchuk’s “calls” for the overthrow of the constitutional order.

Natalia Vitrenko, politician and leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, spoke about the circumstances of the arrest: “The form of the arrest and trial is also evidence of political reprisal. In the morning of March 17, 2014, Bondarchuk was summoned to the SSU, allegedly for an investigative experiment. Then they filed criminal charges and held him in solitary confinement for a whole day (without the right to call or warn his family). On March 18, 2015, he himself appeared in court to familiarize himself with the verdict. Then, right in the courtroom, he was arrested and thrown into a detention center”¹.

Arrest and Imprisonment of Anatoly Mayevsky

On November 26, 2014, Anatoly Mayevsky, a 64-year-old military pensioner and editor-in-chief of the leftist newspaper “Raboche-Krestyanskaya Pravda” (RKP, “Workers and Peasants’ Truth” — *Tr. note*), was detained in the Uzhgorod detention center on charges of encroachment on the territorial integrity of Ukraine and incitement of ethnic hatred for journalistic publications about “Banderite fascism”.

¹ <https://riafan.ru/501960-bondarchuk-aleksandr-vasilevich>

On January 5, 2016, after 1 year and 2 months in custody, Mayevsky received a sentence of 5 years in prison with probation for 3 years.

On December 3, 2015, in the courtroom, Anatoly Mayevsky stated: “The RKP newspaper published my article in which I criticize and accuse the current government. Yes, this government is Bandera, fascist. Exactly the same. Under Hitler, Communists were imprisoned in prisons and camps, and their leaders were exterminated. And what do we have under the new authorities who came to power last February? Journalists are being destroyed, communists are being jailed. More than 300 people were burned alive or killed in Odessa last year”.

Arrest and imprisonment of Pavel Volkov

On October 25, 2018, Pavel Volkov, a journalist from Zaporizhzhya, who had been behind bars for 13 months, was released.

To quote his own eloquent interview in which he shares the circumstances of his case and his assessment of the situation in contemporary Ukraine¹: “The office known to everyone (SSU — *Ed. note*) operated, to put it mildly, despicably. The case, as I found out later, had been open since February 2017, but they waited until the moment when my family was stricken with grief — my wife had to leave for her native grandmother’s funeral in Siberia — only then they came for me. Imagine how she felt when she heard the news thousands of miles away. Besides, if she were at home, it would be a little more difficult to search the apartment, because she has a registration there, but not me, and they would not be able to go through several rooms at the same time unattended.

So, the SSU officers threw me onto the floor and then presented me with a search warrant, of which of course I couldn’t comprehend a word — I couldn’t understand anything at that moment. It was only later my lawyer realized that under the articles I was charged with during the investigation there was no authorization to search me, nor was there any permission to seize the computer equipment from me.

In the end I was accused of conspiring with an unidentified group of people in an unidentified place to call for changing the borders of Ukraine. They referred to an article of the Constitution that speaks

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20181102/1021646189.html>

of the administrative boundaries of regions, but not at all of the state border. Well, in order to increase the “weight” of the charge, they added an article on aiding a terrorist organization, although according to the law aiding means exactly three things: recruiting, arming, and financing. Of course, there’s nothing like that in the indictment, but there is an article. It turns out that I am “to blame for the fact that they just want to eat”.

...The SSU officers really trashed the whole apartment, broke a lot of things, and the very fact that I was illegally detained in a detention center was a psychological impact. In addition, for the first few months I was in an overcrowded cell, where we had to take turns sleeping, and the window had no glass and had to be covered with a blanket when it was cold. Towards the end of the investigation I was offered a plea of guilty in exchange for a suspended sentence, and after the case began to fall apart in court, the prosecutor started talking about an exchange, which also involves a plea of guilty.

...My whole family had a year of life stolen from them. I had been waiting for my release since the first day of my arrest, because the charges and the whole situation were so absurd. However, the measure of restraint was still being extended. So even if we all understood logically that this time, after my lawyer Svetlana Novitskaya had the court declare 80 % of the evidence inadmissible, the chances of changing the measure of restraint to house arrest were very high, we were afraid to believe in it. We did believe, of course, but... In short, the stars were aligned for our enemy to betray us. The prosecutor simply abused his rights and the patience of the court, and the lawyer’s application was so competent and convincing that the court, using the norms of European and international law, left me without a preventive measure at all. As far as I know, this hasn’t happened yet in recent years in political cases.

...Most of the Ukrainian media, and especially the local Zaporizhzhya media, are senseless and ruthless, and worked to create the necessary picture to justify my arrest. What the Zaporizhzhya Internet sites have been copying since the first day of my arrest is not even in the indictment.

What freedom of speech can there be in a country where denunciations on neighbors in order to deprive them of utility subsidies are welcome? What freedom of speech can there be in a country where

real prison sentences are given for posts on social networks? Of course, I am familiar with the cases of Muravitsky, Vasilets and Timonin. My lawyer Svetlana Novitskaya defended the interests of Timonin and Vasilets in the court of first instance and appealed on their behalf, and her complaint about illegal detention on behalf of Vasilets was accepted for consideration at the ECHR; she communicates with Muravitsky's lawyer Andrei Gozhiy and with Vasily himself. In addition, I personally know some political prisoners about whom the public knows little or nothing at all. And that's a huge problem. After all, they write about those who have the opportunity to reach the media and human rights activists. Hundreds of people under similar articles sit for years in obscurity and with dubious prospects simply because they are not talked about. This must be changed. For example, for two years now, drivers who drove pensioners from the DPR across the "line of demarcation" to receive pensions have been sitting in the Zaporizhzhya detention center for assisting a terrorist organization under Article 258–3 of the Criminal Code. No one knows or writes anything about them at all".

**Pavel Vadimovich Volkov, Ukrainian opposition journalist,
former political prisoner**

Ukraine is now a police state. From 2017 to 2018, I spent 13 months in a detention center for my journalism. My wife and I are now studying and helping political prisoners in Ukraine, of whom, unfortunately, there are many. Of the people detained, I think 70% of them definitely incriminated themselves. If relatives or attorneys don't go to the public, don't tell them who was detained, it's almost impossible to find out.

Before the trial, during the investigation, the person is either in pre-trial detention or under house arrest. Our courts take a really long time. Once a month or two we have a case reviewed, so it could be two years until the evidence is actually reviewed. The person will be in custody during that time. And during this time, when a person is in custody, the SSU, the prosecutor's office can put pressure on him to plead guilty, so he can get a suspended sentence. Because the case can take a very long time to be considered, and a person can spend several years in a detention center while the case is being considered. To avoid all this, a lot of people make a deal with the investigation

and incriminate themselves. Because of this we have practically no acquittals, among other things. Children's writer Oleg Slepynin from Cherkassy was detained and placed under house arrest because he criticized the church schism in Ukraine in his articles.

It was an egregious case in Zaporizhzhya. The SSU came with search warrants to three guys, one of whom I know personally. The SSU press service wrote that they confiscated the insignia of the DPR, LPR, and Russia. After we got a lawyer involved, found out what was going on there, they weren't even charged. They were just kidnapped. There was no notice, nothing. They were simply brought to the SSU and threatened that if they don't speak up, the Right Sector will be brought to them.

In fact, it turned out they had a collection of badges. Just badges they bought at a Ukrainian auction. And the ammunition was a Soviet helmet for the reconstruction of historical battles. After that, the media wrote that they had detained a sleeper cell of terrorists, which had been under preparation for six years. The media spread it all around, and now people think that these people were saboteurs, that they were rightfully caught and condemned. And the guys were not charged with anything, because there was nothing against them. That's how they work here.

I was constantly being threatened then and still am. We even filed a report about one of these threats where it was not an anonymous person, but a specific known person. There was no reaction to it. I used to get letters to my mailbox with a picture of an armed man with a machine gun and a mask with the words "Wait for me" and "I'll come for you". Again, I took all this to the police, and then they cryptically wrote to us that they had studied the materials and realized that it was impossible to locate this person and that they could not identify him. This is ridiculous.

We have such a political prisoner, Andrei Tatarintsev, who is held in the Berdyansk detention center in the Zaporizhzhya region. He has been in custody for three years now; the man has type 2 diabetes. They don't treat him in the detention center. The lawyer took him out for several examinations. His sugar level is already very bad, around 15–17 rises at every meeting, and the ambulance records this. There is no medication, but they keep writing letters to the court that he

is being treated, he is fine, and they can support him. And the court extends his custody on this basis, among others. It is only now, almost three years after his arrest, that they have begun to consider the merits of the case. Before that, it was just not considered at all, postponed all the time.

The point is that he is an entrepreneur from Krasnodon, Luhansk region, now Sorokino, in the territory of LPR. He is accused of aiding and abetting terrorism for transferring fuel from his gas station to a children's hospital for a blood transfusion station. On the territory of Donbass. This makes for up to 15 years in jail. He has a small child and a wife. They had been living in Kyiv since 2015, and in 2017 the SSU came to them, and the entire accusation of this fuel transfer is based only on the words of Tatarintsev, who told it to the SSU provocateur as part of the unspoken investigative actions, talked to him and recorded his words. That's how it is.

We've involved human rights defenders wherever possible, and lawyers are fighting, and there are medical reports on this, but judges are just acting weird. They say that there are risks involved – apparently he will flee to Russia and negotiate something with terrorists if they let him go, and they refer to the indictment to prove these risks.

This is absolutely illegitimate, and you can't do that, because an indictment is inconclusive facts, something that has to be proven. They have already complained about them to the Supreme Council of Justice; the lawyer wrote a letter of complaint against them. The Supreme Council of Justice said that if they were to consider it now, it would put pressure on the judicial process, that they wouldn't consider it until after the trial itself was over. And this process could go on for many more years, because we have this interesting Supreme Court decision.

The DPR and LPR are not recognized as terrorist organizations. This is a very important point. Negotiations are being held with them and the Minsk agreements are being signed. They are not recognized as such. So, according to the law, they cannot be called terrorist organizations, yet they are. But that doesn't matter. So, there is a decision of the Supreme Court that allows each court in a separate trial to separately prove that the DPR and LPR belong to terrorist organizations in order to convict people for aiding and abetting these

organizations accordingly. See how wonderful everything is! In other words, in each individual court one must first prove that the DPR and LPR are terrorists, and then prove that the person engaged in any activities with them. Accordingly, a very sick person will spend so much more time behind bars in order to get a chance to justify himself under the law in a session. There are terrible law violations in Ukraine right now.

Arrest and Imprisonment of Dmitry Vasilets

On September 17, 2020, the house of the parents of a prominent opposition journalist Dmitry Vasilets was burned down. On this occasion, on Facebook and in his interview, he clarified:

“Some neighbors claim that around the time of the fire they saw a car with European license plates quickly leaving the village (there are not many cars in the village). There is no response from the Office of the President or the U. S. Embassy. I even wondered if there would be a reaction. I remember a similar story with the house of activist Vitaly Shabunin. There was no response from the police. They said there was a paper from the fire department and that would be enough for them. It’s difficult in that regard. Moreover, the parents are in a state of shock. We will make a decision with a lawyer about the fact that the police did not open a criminal case. We will demand that the case be opened.

There are inconsistencies. The light was on without any fluctuations. When half the house was flooded with water, only then the lights were turned off by the fire department. No expertise was conducted. While the house was being extinguished, they already wrote that it was a short circuit. That’s also one of the reasons why I don’t really believe the official story.

In this case, the journalist notes that earlier the President of Ukraine Vladimir Zelensky reacted to the arson of the house of the head of the Anti-Corruption Center Vitaly Shabunin, and states that in his case there was no reaction.

Dmitry Vasilets is widely known as a TV journalist, author and host of TV programs at Channel 17 on YouTube. He was the speaker of the public movement “Medialustration” and the first deputy head of the public council under the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine. On November 24, 2015, he and his colleague Yevgeny Timonin were

arrested in Kyiv by the Zhytomyr Region Security Service of Ukraine. The reason for the arrest was a business trip to Donetsk in July 2014. The charge involved assisting in the technical setup of Novorossiia TV on YouTube. Pre-trial investigation was conducted by the investigation department of the SSU of Zhytomyr region under paragraph 1 of Article 258–3 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine “organizational or other assistance in the creation or activities of a terrorist group or organization”. The journalist did not plead guilty. Novorossiia TV appeared two months after the aforementioned visit to Donetsk.

The unlawful arrest of the journalists drew the attention of UN Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights Šimonović, who took it under his personal supervision. The media wrote the following¹:

“Ukrainian human rights activist and director of the Institute for Legal Policy and Social Protection Elena Berezhnaya reports that the head of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine Fiona Fraser recently presented the 15th report of the Mission on human rights violations in Ukraine. Elena Berezhnaya assured that the case of journalists of Ukrainian Channel 17 Dmitry Vasilets and Yevgeny Timonin, who are currently on trial in the Berdychiv court, has finally moved forward: “Fiona Fraser informed me that the 14th Mission Report indicated the illegal arrest of journalist Vasilets, which demonstrates the deterioration of human rights and freedom of speech and the right to one’s opinion in Ukraine. She also told me that the UN Assistant Secretary General for Human Rights Šimonović took the case of Vasilets and Timonin under his personal control.”

Correspondents from Golos Pravdy (“Voice of Truth” — *Tr. note*)² wrote about this case in detail, and quoted a journalist as saying in court that “every day the repressive apparatus arrests someone; there are so many people who disagree with the authorities now. Thousands of people languish in pre-trial detention”:

“To prevent the oppositional Channel 17 from broadcasting live coverage of the trials it was trashed by “activists” under the supervision

¹ <https://jppgazeta.ru/politzaklyuchennyie-zhurnalistyi-na-ukraine-nadeyutsya-na-missiyu-oon-po-pravam-cheloveka/>

² <https://golospravdy.eu/zhumalist-evgenij-timonin-v-sizo-dovedyon-doplachevnogo-psixologicheskogo-sostoyaniya/>

of the SSU, and the equipment and studio were destroyed. In addition, the journalists of Channel 17 were constantly summoned for interrogations by the SSU. This led to the fact that most employees, including management, under pressure were forced to write statements of resignation. Even the Supreme Court decided to prosecute political prisoners journalists far away from Kyiv!

There is no journalistic solidarity in the country — the report to the SSU on Dmitry Vasilets and Yevgeny Timonin was written by employees of 1+1, because in one of the last (before the arrest) investigations Vasilets showed a list of false stories on this TV channel. He posted them on the Medialustration website, and presented the 1+1 employees with the Goebbels Prize. The authors of the TSN-Tizhden program were behind the arrest of the journalists Alla Mazur, Sergey Galchenko, Valentina Mudryk, Lyudmila Badalyan, Elena Kuznetsova and Maryana Bukhan”.

According to Timonin’s acquaintances, all court hearings are now closed. Political prisoners “are simply transported from cell to cell and back again”: “They can’t see their relatives or those who came to support them at the trial, or the video cameras that will transmit a reminder of their existence to those on the outside”.

According to them, Yevgeny “is brought to a deplorable psychological state” and refuses to accept any transfers from strangers in the detention center:

“A parcel could have been sent by anyone — a Maidan, a Nazi, or the SSU themselves. He only trusts his cellmates. This is how our people are mocked in Ukrainian prisons! I should note that pre-trial detention facility is a place where anyone can end up, even those who have not yet been sentenced guilty by the court. Thousands of political prisoners are being held in Ukrainian prisons. May God help them to stand strong, to endure and not to break”.

Earlier, Dmitry Vasilets said that the passports of his parents-pensioners were taken away by SSU officers, and he was threatened that they would never let him out of the detention center. And there is only one condition for release: you have to give false testimony against your colleagues — other independent investigative journalists.

Judges evade the case on the understanding that there is no constituent part of the crime. Meanwhile, the SSU officers attend

sessions every two months to “help” judges extend the unreasonable preventive measure — detention, citing only the “formidability of the accusatory article”.

At one of the last court hearings Dmitry Vasilets addressed the public:

“Petro Poroshenko said that for him freedom of speech is when everyone can express their point of view, even if that point of view does not coincide with his. And, supposedly, he’s even willing to die for it. And here I am, a year and a half in jail for not having the same opinion as the president. It seems to me that for Petro Alekseevich freedom of speech means that one can speak freely with his cellmates, with the escorting officers who takes him to court, and to speak at the courts”.

Vasilets recalled that there are many political prisoners in Ukraine today (according to the Freedom of Speech Center, more than 4,000): “And that’s really scary. Because every day the repressive system arrests someone. Such news is commonplace in the media. Their names are not mentioned, it is impossible to go to them, to visit them in court”. We can only state statistics — there are many people who disagree with the authorities now. Thousands of people who are languishing in pre-trial detention — the OSCE does not come for them”.

The media analyzed in detail the falsified case of the journalist¹ by the Security Service of Ukraine and gave his own opinion about the reason for his arrest: “We held a rally on Khreshchatyk and showed Anatoliy Shariy on a big screen using a projector. Just in a few days, there followed such a mask show at my house. I would like to stress that I have nothing to do with Novorossiya TV”:

“The case of journalists of Channel 17 Dmitry Vasilets and his colleague Yevgeny Timonin was a cause of bewilderment not only among ordinary people, but also among well-known lawyers and human rights activists, who do not understand why Ukrainians have been kept in prison for a trip to Donbass in 2014 for about 2 years now. Moreover, the meetings and hearings of this process for some reason in most cases take place behind closed doors, in other words, they are classified. What have the journalists done so wrong if they are being prosecuted as far

¹ <http://antifashist.com/item/delo-vasilca-timonina-bred-sbu-s-realnyi-srokami.html>

away as possible from public eyes? What are the charges against Vasilets and Timonin?

The essence of the accusations that are brought against the journalists is quite simple and common for the current Ukrainian authorities: Article 258 Part 3 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine — “Organizational or other assistance to the creation or activity of a terrorist group or terrorist organization” and Article 258 Part 1 — “Assistance to a terrorist organization”.

Such suspicions were raised against Vasilets and Timonin after they visited Donetsk in July 2014, where they allegedly participated in the creation of a channel called Novorossiya TV, which was then technically supported from Kyiv. In fact, the Channel 17 journalist and IT specialist suffered for not being able to come to terms with Ukrainian reality and attempting to rebuke the overzealous officials and media workers in public. For example, they arranged a broadcast of one of the programs of the popular blogger Anatoliy Shariy on Khreshchatyk”.

Vasilets noted that he covered Shariy’s blog as part of the Medialustration movement, which was created to show that there is a civil war going on in Ukraine, the last blame for the unleashing of which was played by journalists “showing the due diligence of those in power, both our country and our foreign companions”. It is a fairly adequate movement, perhaps the last bastion of those who do not yet write blatant biased verbiage and do not take shadow orders. It was they who gave the Goebbels Prize to the host of TSN, the news program that most vividly reveals today’s Ukrainian reality and the lies that accompany it.

Let’s start with the fact that when presenting journalists with a suspicion under Article 258 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (“Terrorist Act”), the prosecutor’s office, the SSU and other representatives of the prosecution did not bother to look into this article for some reason. Although they certainly ought to, since this Article addresses what an act of terrorism is and what actions characterize it.

“Actually, they have no right to be prosecuted under this article. They have a kind of responsibility for informational assistance to a terrorist organization. But if you look at Article 258 Note 3, there is no such concept there at all. The Anti-Terrorism Act, the term itself, what “terrorism” is — exclusively violent acts, arson, kidnapping, murder. In

other words, they cannot be prosecuted under this article altogether”, said Svetlana Novitskaya, lawyer of Dmitry Vasilets.

Why then do we need this particular article, why not accuse them of ordinary separatism under Article 110 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine? It is simple: if there is suspicion of involvement in an act of terrorism, there can be literally only one preventive measure: detention. Which, in fact, was taken by the prosecutors. At the same time, according to the lawyer, previously the prosecution at least put forward some evidence when extending the preventive measure, but recently they stopped bothering whatsoever and just announce the extension without any claims.

The second point is the evidence of the involvement of Vasilets and Timonin in the activities of Novorossiya TV, or rather the lack thereof. Factual absence, to emphasize. The only argument of the prosecutor’s office is the alleged wiretapping of the phones of political prisoners. However, there is a very important nuance here: the tapping of the phones was carried out before the decision to initiate criminal proceedings without any grounds and determinations from the investigating judge. So first they decided to wiretap the phones of them and their relatives (!), then they opened a criminal case, conducted a search, and put the suspects behind bars.

“Criminal proceedings were opened (combined on both defendants. — *Ed. note*) on April 6, 2015. This is where this wiretap then came up. I made three applications to explain, on what grounds were their phones tapped before the registration of the criminal proceeding? There’s no court decision at all, nothing, they just listened to the line and that’s it. On no legal grounds. And they don’t shy away from using it as evidence of sorts. Moreover, both Timonin’s parents and Vasilets’ family were wiretapped. And then they failed to provide any ruling by the investigating judge, on the basis of which the wiretapping was conducted before the initiation of criminal proceedings”, told Novitskaya.

Another point is the notorious closed hearings. Again, it is absolutely unclear why they are trying to keep this case under wraps. For comparison, the trial of Kharkiv residents, who are accused of organizing a terrorist attack on February 22, 2014 for far-fetched reasons, is open: journalists and “activists” are allowed, and photography and videotaping are allowed. The case of “May 2” in Odessa is also unclassified; everyone

starting with the Right Sector and ending with the relatives of the victims of that terrible day attended the trials. In both cases, there are victims. But in the case of Vasilets and Timonin there is not only no victims, but also no “terrorist act” itself, and yet the trial is half-closed. What does half-closed mean? This means that sometimes, despite the efforts of law enforcement and the demands of prosecutors, journalists break into sessions and then post shocking material on the subject: “I was judged without me”.

In addition, it is also necessary to note such significant points as the non-appearance of witnesses, the constant postponement of meetings for spurious reasons, the denial of defense motions, and so on and so forth.

Although a few words should be said separately about witnesses. To begin with, there are more than a dozen witnesses in the case, most of whom know neither Vasilets nor Timonin. For example, one of the witnesses are two members of the Svoboda Party, who simply did not like their statements on social networks.

In addition, witnesses often do not attend meetings for unknown reasons, although, according to the lawyer, after several petitions and the threat to prosecute witnesses for failure to appear (quite a large fine), the court suddenly said that they had not even sent summonses, because “they did not have stamps at that time”.

“One witness came, who was brought in by the SSU as a specialist during the search. The prosecutor’s office cannot ensure the appearance of the other two witnesses. This is the sixth time the witnesses have failed to appear. And there is nothing the court can do. Because of the lack of witnesses who do not know the defendants, but only read Timonin’s page on social networks, we will have to idle and wait further”, commented Vasilets’ lawyer on the last hearing, which was supposed to be held on September 4, but was postponed.

Trials such as the case of Vasilets and Timonin are quite revealing: they determine the future of Ukraine. European vector of development, so widely discussed by politicians and their minions, or a dictatorship, a model imposed on Ukrainians by their “friends” and “comrades-in-arms”?

“Vasilets and Timonin will definitely be acquitted. It’s just a matter of time. But who can give them back the years of freedom that the

regime stole from them? The case is bogus. There's no evidence, no witnesses. And then there's the violation of every conceivable rule during arrest, detention, and trial itself. I will not be surprised to see the names of judges, prosecutors and those who ordered these political cases on sanctions lists and in detention. The falsifiers must answer for everything", commented Elena Bondarenko, head of the Freedom of Speech Center, on the case of political prisoners.

It should be noted, as mentioned above, that the TSN¹ TV channel was directly involved in the harassment and defamation campaign against the journalists, and the court proceedings were characterized by numerous irregularities. The case materials showed that the Security Service of Ukraine had been illegally wiretapping journalists since 2014, and members of Ukrainian death squads were present at the sessions, putting pressure on witnesses and the court:

"Vasilets and Timonin were arrested in November. On November 24, the Ukrainian TV channel TSN immediately broadcast a TV piece titled "The SSU found the tech support office of Novorossiia TV in Kyiv. In this story, the essence of the case was presented in flagrant violation of Ukrainian criminal procedural law, as if the guilt of the detainees "for separatism" had already been 100 % proven. In fact, during the detention and search of the "terrorists", the SSU had only one proof of "guilt": Vasilets and Timonin allowed themselves to express views opposing the regime of the revolution of dignity in social networks".

Vasilets and Timonin were accused of traveling to Donetsk in the summer of 2014. The materials of the case say that the journalists communicated with "separatists from the DPR" while they were in Donetsk. The structure of the prosecution and the verdict is built around this episode. But the Ukrainian justice system did not bother to support its procedural calculations with facts. In the materials of the "Donetsk episode", there is not a single transcript of telephone conversations, screenshots of correspondence on the Internet, not to mention photo or video footage, where the accused are depicted during negotiations with the "terrorists" from the DPR. In 2014, SSU investigators conducted

¹ <https://eadaaily.com/ru/news/2017/10/17/delo-vasilca-timonina-ukrainskoe-pravosudie-po-zakonu-dzhungley>

wiretaps of telephone conversations of Kyiv’s “separatist terrorists”. But there are major problems regarding it.

As it has already been revealed, the wiretaps did not reveal any facts of contact between Vasilets and Timonin and representatives of the DPR. And the judicial permission prescribed by the laws of Ukraine for the direction-finding of telephones was obtained by the SSU... before the arrest of the “separatists”. Three important procedural conclusions follow from this fact. First: for almost a year, Vasily Gritsak’s office has been illegally spying on Ukrainian citizens. Second: Ukrainian law interprets the information obtained in this way by the SSU as illegally obtained evidence. The third conclusion related both to the integrity of the SSU and to the court that heard the Vasilets-Timonin case. The court, having studied the materials of the case, should have legally wrapped up the entire case file as illegally collected and decided to release Vasilets and Timonin from custody. But judicial realities have shown that there is a thousand times less legality in Ukraine after the victory of the “revolution of dignity” than there was even in the cursed days of Yanukovich on the Maidan.

...Since the lawyer was unable to attend the session, it should have been legally rescheduled for another date. “But the prosecutor together with the judges decided not to waste time”, said the defense of the journalists. “Violating all procedures, without the presence of a lawyer and without even letting anyone see the documents, they prolonged the detention of Vasilets and Timonin for two months without the possibility of appeal”.

In June, the case, bypassing the existing procedural rules, was transferred to a court of another district jurisdiction. Up until last August the judges at the hearings “for the sake of formality” flipped through the materials and made a semblance of questioning the prosecution witnesses who came from nowhere. In most cases they were radical Ukrainian nationalists, who testified in court that they had seen how Vasilets and Timonin “wrote bad things about Ukraine” on social networks. The hearings ended with the same verdicts — to keep them in custody until sentencing.

During this time, the prison regime was not slow to take its toll on the health of the arrested journalists. But it was not allowed to let a private doctor into their cells, or to use any other preventive measure,

such as bail. According to lawyers, judges denied the rights guaranteed to defendants under Ukrainian law on the grounds that defendants under the Criminal Code of Ukraine “Assisting terrorism” are not entitled to such rights. It goes without saying that the court lied to the lawyers and the public to their faces because it didn’t know what to answer. At the beginning of October of last year, when another term of detention for Vasilets and Timonin was nearing its end, both defendants were in the prison hospital. But the state prosecutor Lina Romanenko, head of the department of the Prosecutor’s Office of SSU for compliance with the law of Ukraine, ensured that the seriously ill were escorted to court.

On October 6 last year, the court ruled: to extend the period of detention in custody. The session lasted from 11 AM to 2 AM (!). During this time, the defendants who were barely alive in the courtroom were not given a word, and not only were not fed, but were refused food and drink from sympathizers. The defense (if it can be called “defense”) was allowed only to a court-appointed public attorney with the approval of the SSU and the prosecutor’s office. In the deliberation room of the court, where the decision on the extension of detention in the pre-trial detention center was pronounced, there were employees of the prosecutor’s office and the SSU, which under the laws of Ukraine is strictly forbidden.

Observers, including former Verkhovna Rada member Irina Berezhnaya, an honored lawyer of Ukraine who died under unclear circumstances in August of this year, recorded that the court was directly controlled by the SSU. The case was delivered to the Andrushovsky Court of Zhytomyr region in March 2017 after Judge Dubov, who had previously handled the case, suddenly resigned because he had been caught taking bribes, and Dubov’s former colleagues said they could not assemble a full panel. Since the end of April, the case has been in court. In June, the detention period was extended “in passing”. A prosecution witness by the last name of Yasinsky at length explained to the court how to use YouTube and testified against the defendants with a sense of apparent fear of ending up in the defendant’s dock himself. Two other witnesses, members of the Svoboda party (banned in Russia), told the court why they consider Vasilets and Timonin to be pro-Russian terrorists. As the defense attorneys say, it was hard

to understand whether the witnesses were speaking for themselves or reciting the text given to them by the court the day before.

Accusatory testimony is the subject of a separate proceeding. The authors of the testimonies blamed the defendants for their use of the word “Maidowns” in their personal correspondence and pictures in social networks with “unpatriotic” depictions of Ukrainian symbols. Soon after, a trump card was used — the post made by people’s deputy Mustafa Nayem in which the former journalist accused Channel 17 of anti-state activities for its coverage of last winter’s rallies against the increase in housing and utilities tariffs. In short, anything but the real facts of the defendants’ terrorist activities. After almost two years of court adversity that almost cost Vasilets and Timonin their lives (in the pretrial detention center they went not only to the hospital, but also to punishment cells), the court sentenced the journalists... to 9 years in prison, on the “proved” guilt of “informational assistance to terrorism”, a definition that does not exist in any article of the Criminal Code of Ukraine.

Such a harsh sentence for a non-existent crime was handed down not only under the influence of the SSU and the prosecutor’s office, but also because of the judges’ obvious fear of the Nazi thugs rampaging through the courts. The fear of a rabid mob in camouflage and balaclavas has been lodged deep within the Ukrainian judiciary since the fall of 2014. Now the Ukrainian political trials are repeating what happened in the courts of Nazi-occupied Poland. As soon as the judge acquits a “political” defendant, the neo-Nazis, led by the prosecution, as if on cue, stage a foreplay of mayhem in the courtroom, and the judge runs away into the deliberation room in terror. The “traitor to Ukraine”, acquitted moments ago, is sent to prison in handcuffs, according to the sentence the prosecution originally demanded. Vasilets and Timonin are yet another victims of this unrelenting “conveyor belt” of a system.

Vasilets and Timonin are being tortured in prison “for a reason”. In particular, for the virtual Goebbels Anti-Prize, which they set up to honor the most distinguished violators of the right to freedom of speech in the country. The honorary recipient of this anti-award is Yuriy Stets, the former head of the scandalous Ukrainian Ministry of Information Policy (otherwise known as the “Ministry of Propaganda”, or MinStetz) and, incidentally, Petro Poroshenko’s cousin.

As already mentioned, on September 28, 2017, the Andrushovsky District Court of Zhytomyr region sentenced journalists Dmitry Vasilets and Yevgeny Timonin to 9 years in prison.

It wasn't until February 21, 2018, that Vasilets was transferred to house arrest. He spent two years and three months in prison.

On September 11, 2018, in Warsaw at the 2018 OSCE Human Rights Implementation Meeting, Dmitry Vasilets said that SSU officers “repeatedly tried to induce me to exchange prisoners — to thus get rid of my case, which has gained public resonance”.

Criminal case and prosecution of Vladimir Skachko

Vladimir Skachko started working as a journalist in 1991¹. For a long time he was a journalist for the Kyiv Telegraph newspaper, then became its editor-in-chief and remained one until 2014. From then on, he began writing articles for Antifascist and was considered an opposition journalist. At the end of 2018, Skachko was listed on the website Mirotvorets (“Peacekeeper” — *Tr. note*). Those listed there were recommended for extermination and arrest, and some of them were killed by members of the Ukrainian death squads. On March 5, 2019, the Security Service of Ukraine conducted searches in the apartment of the journalist. On April 10, 2019, the SSU put Vladimir Skachko on the wanted list.

In his interview, Skachko said² that he was suspected of committing a criminal offense under Article 110 of the Criminal Code — “Calling for violation of territorial integrity and forcible change of borders”:

“They came to this conclusion based on articles I printed in RIA News back in 2014. Naturally, I did nothing of the sort. The point of this action is to exclude me from the pre-election political struggle by silencing me”, said Skachko”.

Also before he lost the election, Poroshenko said that the reason for his escape from Ukraine was that the Security Service of Ukraine had “ordered” him to death squads³:

¹ <https://ua-rating.com/skachko-vladimir/>

² <https://ukraina.ru/news/20190306/1022904278.html>

³ <https://radiosputnik.ria.ru/20190411/1552607015.html>

“If a person is facing a threat of death, they may act in an emergency to save their life, even if they violate some rules of law and procedure. And this is not considered another crime. It’s not me who says that, but the Criminal Code, which the SSU could have skimmed through when putting me on the wanted list, and before that — “ordering” me to representatives of neo-Nazi punitive battalions”, said the journalist.

Skachko said that when he was in the hospital, the neo-Nazis were already “circling in the corridor, waiting for the moment” when the nurses and friends would leave the room.

“But I managed to get away. Because some Nazis refused to carry out the order and warned that the SSU officers went to others, who did not refuse. And during that moment of discord I slipped away. And I don’t regret it. But if Poroshenko wins, I will either be killed or have to emigrate”, the journalist said.

Pursuit of Miroslava Berdnik

Journalist Miroslava Berdnik actively publishes on the opposition website “Golos Pravdy”. Like many opposition journalists, Miroslava Berdnik is included in the “enemies” database on the website Mirotvorets, where her home address is also listed. She was born into the family of Oles Berdnik, a famous Ukrainian writer and Soviet dissident, one of the founders of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group. He is the author of 20 books, in 1949–1955 he served time in the Pechora, Vorkuta and Karaganda camps, and then, in 1979–1984 he was arrested again and served time as a human rights activist. Just like her father, she was subjected to pressure from the authorities, and in 2016 the Security Service of Ukraine conducted a search at her place.

On this occasion, Miroslava Berdnik herself gave an interview in which she describes how the search, organized by the SSU, took place and says that her fault was that she, like her Soviet-era dissident father, holds pacifist views and advocates stopping the war in Donbass¹:

“I have serious health issues. Several years ago I was diagnosed with a terrible condition and underwent surgery to deal with it. At first I was given disabled status, but then the doctor in Kyiv, who had flags of the social-nationalist Svoboda Party on his desk in the waiting room, did

¹ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20160817/1017279852.html>

his best to take it away from me, calling me an enemy of the Ukrainian people. So, due to the fact that I was not feeling very well in those days, in the morning, while my daughter was sleeping, I went to the doctor to adjust my treatment. When I was about two hundred meters away from the house, I was caught up by two men who introduced themselves as employees of the Security Service of Ukraine and showed their IDs. Together with them I had to return to the apartment. I was read the court order for the search in connection with the initiation of criminal proceedings on the basis of publications in my blog in LiveJournal. I'm still a witness in the case, so I was later interrogated by the SSU as one.

Article 258, Part 3. Creation of a terrorist organization and its financing. As stated in the court decision, the Kyiv National Linguistic University conducted an examination of the materials in my LiveJournal and there experts found direct and indirect calls for actions against the territorial integrity of Ukraine, and calls to disobey the Kyiv authorities and so on.

I'm just a pacifist, like my father, the writer Oles Berdnik. I was simply writing about my dream — that the war in Donbass would stop — as well as publishing materials that are in turn lawfully published in licensed, not forbidden by law, media outlets. Can't we do that in Ukraine? Don't we have freedom of speech and belief?

The search lasted from eight in the morning until half past two. The witnesses and other employees of the SSU were there too. They seized my computer, flash drives, phones, and a "Polite People" chevron that my acquaintances had brought me from Crimea quite legally, along with the program of an international forum devoted to the heroes of the Great Patriotic War, which was held from May 13 to 15 in Crimea and was attended by people from a half dozen countries. I participated in it as well.

By the way, the SSU changed all my passwords on social networks and email. I no longer have access to any of them. They took me and my daughter to the SSU. She waited on a bench in front of the SSU while I was interrogated. It is interesting that before the interrogation (we were waiting for the investigator) three police officers were having a "friendly conversation" with me for an hour and a half in their office, without recording the written statement of my testimony, trying to figure out who had leaked the information about the search on my property.

My answer to them was this: As a child I witnessed how the KGB searched my father's house. He was then left with a copy of the search report. Some time later the protocol was published in the West. They made the connection and summoned him, and asked him if he had released the document. The father replied that there were two copies: one in their possession and one in his. He had his copy with him still. That means they were the ones who sent the copy to the West. In other words, the SSU themselves leaked the information about the search in my apartment.

They also threatened me that if I didn't admit guilt I'd get up to 15 years under Article 258, and if I did, they'd turn the case over to the prosecutor and I'd get a year and a half suspended sentence.

Kyiv journalist Galina Plachinda had an interesting comment. She used to be, by the way, Lyashko's press secretary (the journalist's father, the writer Sergey Plachinda, organized the persecution of Oles Buzina in 2000 and the trial in court over the latter's book *Taras Shevchenko*; after one of the sessions, Buzina was beaten by Ukrainian nationalists who were picketing outside the court (and ended up in the hospital — *Author's note*)). So, on social media, she wrote something like this: Berdnik is a laureate of the Yaroslav Galan Award, who was deservedly killed as an enemy of the Ukrainian people (the writer was axed to death by the Banderites in his Lviv apartment in the late 1940s. — *Author's note*). Plachinda writes that Berdnik deserves the same death”.

Criminal case and prosecution of Igor Guzhva

The materials of the articles and interviews of the Ukrainian opposition online edition *strana.ua* were repeatedly quoted above. Many of them cited specific facts of crimes and human rights violations by the Ukrainian government over various years. Not surprisingly, the website that publishes opposition materials and its journalists have found themselves in the crosshairs of the Ukrainian government. The criminal case and prosecution of Igor Guzhva, editor-in-chief of the website, is directly related to his professional activities.

Igor Guzhva was born on May 23, 1974 in Slavyansk, Donetsk region. In 2004, the newspaper *Segodnya* (“Today” — *Tr. note*) was relaunched under the leadership of Igor Guzhva. On April 10, 2007, an

internet team led by Igor Guzhva launched the Segodnya. ia website, which soon became a full-fledged online newspaper. On February 16, 2016, he launched the opposition online publication strana. ua. In January 2017, the website accused the Ukrainian authorities of planning to organize a provocation against the publication with the help of law enforcement agencies.

On June 22, 2017, Igor Guzhva together with his assistant Anton Filipkovsky was detained at the editorial office of strana. ua by police officers and prosecutors under Part 3 of Article 189 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (“Extortion”). According to Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, Guzhva received \$10,000 for not posting on his website dirt on Radical Party deputy Dmitry Linko, who reported blackmail to the police on March 31. The journalist himself stated that he was unsuccessfully offered money for taking down materials, while Svetlana Kryukova, deputy head of Guzhva’s website, stated that the charges were fabricated because of the authorities’ dissatisfaction with the editorial policy of the website.

Igor Guzhva and the newspaper’s editorial board named the reason for the fabrication of the criminal case as the publication of resonant critical materials against Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko. In particular, the revelations of people’s deputy Oleksandr Onishchenko, who accused Poroshenko of total corruption. Former Minister of Justice and aide to Viktor Yanukovych Elena Lukash, Andrey Smirnov (previously defended Elena Lukash and Party of Regions member Aleksandr Yefremov) and Yuriy Ivashchenko (former Deputy Minister of Justice) became the journalist’s lawyers.

On February 1, 2018, the editors of strana. ua published an appeal to President Petro Poroshenko, according to which Igor Guzhva left Ukraine and applied to the Austrian authorities for political refuge. According to the journalist, the request for political refuge was due to “unprecedented pressure from the authorities” and persecution by Poroshenko. Here is the full request.

“Petro Alekseyevich!

In just two weeks it will be two years since Strana, the online newspaper, began its work. It probably won’t surprise you if we tell you that all this

time we felt increased attention from Your side. As well as on the part of the officials and law enforcement agencies under your control.

We would certainly like to see this attention expressed in a civilized response to our publications, in the opening of criminal proceedings following our investigations into corruption, and in dialogue to find solutions to the problems in the life of the country that our site has raised.

But You have chosen a different approach. An approach of unprecedented pressure on our online newspaper, which has never been seen before in the history of Ukraine.

On your order, five criminal cases have already been fabricated against the editor-in-chief of Strana, and he himself was thrown in jail for several days. Illegal searches are taking place in our editorial office and in the apartments of our journalists. We constantly receive threats of physical violence from groups and individuals under Your control, and our appeals to law enforcement agencies for protection go unanswered.

Your goal is to intimidate us, to make us change our editorial policy. And if that fails, to destroy us, to hunt us down, and to imprison the heads of the newspaper.

But we want to tell You that You will not succeed.

You can bring dozens more criminal cases against us. You can put pressure on various publications, on their journalists and owners, You can block TV broadcasts, but You must understand that there will always remain a percentage of “other” media who are not afraid of You or Your methods of fighting with journalists.

In two and a half years we have learned to live and work under constant pressure from You. Moreover, thanks to the attacks organized by the law enforcement agencies under Your control, the whole country is well aware of us, and we have become a leader among online media outlets.

You spied on us, You wiretapped us, with the hands of political satellites like Lyashko You fabricated cases against us, You tried to discredit us, but we survived and became strong.

We understand that the election is just over a year away and You will stop at nothing to shut up journalists who have the courage to criticize You.

It is very important for you to win that election. You’re getting ready. So are we. We are getting ready to continue our work in the midst of the challenging pre-election time. So we took some actions. We have protected our site from possible shutdown. We have worked out a scheme

for journalists to work outside the office, in case of new attacks and searches.

And most importantly, Igor Guzhva, the editor-in-chief of our newspaper, whom You've been burdening with criminal cases like You've been burdening yourself with offshore companies, has been taken out of the picture. We would like to inform you that Igor Guzhva went to Vienna and asked for political refuge from the authorities of the Republic of Austria in accordance with the accepted procedure. Let us emphasize that Igor Guzhva left for Austria after his court-ordered restraint expired and he was legally entitled to leave Ukraine.

Igor Guzhva remains the editor-in-chief of the publication and continues to manage Strana from abroad. Our site will operate in the same format, steadily growing and actively developing. We are ready for any scenario. Nothing and no one will stop us, just as before, from working honestly for our readers, telling the truth about the situation in the country.

Editorial Board of the Strana online newspaper”.

Here is a detailed interview with Igor Guzhva about the provocation and the criminal case¹.

“Back in the middle of April I was told that a case was opened against me for extortion from some people’s deputy. I was surprised by this information at the time, because there was nothing like that even close. But at the end of April, I received offers to remove several materials about Lyashko from the site for large sums of money. But I refused”, Guzhva told strana. ua.

He also said that in mid-May he was approached again with a similar proposal, but they wanted Guzhva to remove one particular material — about the conflict between Ilya Kiva and a people’s deputy from Lyashko’s radical party by the name of Linko. Guzhva was offered \$20,000, to which the head of strana. ua said no.

“Besides, having put two and two together, I knew by then that it was definitely a set-up. Since then, neither Linko nor Lyashko have come to me with any more offers. Right up until June 22, when some

¹ <https://vesti.ua/strana/244238-obyski-v-redaktsii-internet-hazety-strana-huzhva-vyshel-na-svjaz->

people, posing as police, burst into our editorial office. They read out a certain document, which they called “the court’s bailer”, and later admitted worthless (that’s why it was not used for a search). In this “document” both Linko and \$20,000 were mentioned. Why did they come? Apparently, they got tired of waiting for me to start ‘extorting’ something from Linko, and decided to take action (the case was conducted since April — it’s a pity to give it up)”, explained Guzhva.

Guzhva noted that the whole story with the attack on the editorial office and his detention is a pre-planned provocation.

Persecution of Dmitry Gubin

July 2, 2019 in the Frunzensky district court of Kharkiv held a preparatory hearing of the court on charges against the opposition Kharkiv journalist Dmitry Gubin for the illegal acquisition and storage of explosives in the form of 700g of plastic and five fuses. Explosives and fuses were planted on him during the search, which was conducted by the Security Service of Ukraine.



Opposition Kharkiv journalist Dmitry Gubin, who has been repeatedly threatened for his criticism of the course of the Ukrainian authorities



The door of Kharkiv opposition journalist Dmitry Gubin that had threats written on it

On June 25, 2019, the apartment of the opposition Kharkiv journalist Dmitry Gubin was attacked by unknown persons who left a threatening inscription on the door: “Death to the Separatists. Burn in hell!”. In an interview with *Ukraina.ru* he said²: “There were all kinds of papers with threats, but no such death threats yet. I’m sure it has to do with my journalistic work, including on our website”. Dmitry Gubin also told the Kharkiv news agency³ that in the past he received threats via e-mail, and once a sticker from Azova was attached to his mailbox.

The search resulting in the “discovery” of explosives took place in March 2019. The journalist told about it in detail in *Ukraina.ru*⁴:

“They came into my Kharkiv apartment at 06:40 in the morning, threw me on my stomach, handcuffed me, but then they took it off. Then started searching the apartment. The search lasted about four hours. From the laundry room they took out... Two bags that didn’t belong to me.

It was all planted on me. The bag contained two topographic maps, a textbook on military topography, and five cylinders with strings. In the bag was something that looked like a dirty piece of plasticine. Also there was an officer’s ruler in the bag. I never had any of that, and I don’t even know how to use it. Not only that, I never served in the army at all. They confiscated all the office equipment: computer, laptop and phones.

Then I was taken to the regional department of the SSU, where I was waiting for an interrogation, which never took place. I only left around midnight”. What the journalist describes as “dirty plasticine” planted by the SSU actually turned out to be explosives, and the prospect of his imprisonment seems entirely real.

In July 2019, previously harassed opposition journalists Pavel Volkov and Ruslan Kotsaba sent an open letter to Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky, asking for the release of political

¹ <https://www.politnavigator.net/neizvestnye-ostavili-na-dveri-kvartiry-kharkovskogo-zhurnalista-nadpis-s-ugrozami.html>

² <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20190625/1024028018.html>

³ <https://nahnews.org/1011677-kharkovskomu-zhurnalistu-dmitriyu-gubinu-snova-ugrozhayut>

⁴ <https://ukraina.ru/exclusive/20180315/1020061987.html>

prisoners, including journalists in Ukraine. Here is the full text of this appeal¹:

*“To Vladimir Zelensky.
The President of Ukraine.*

Dear Vladimir Aleksandrovich!

Petro Poroshenko said in one of his election speeches that during the 5 years of his presidency there was no political repression in Ukraine, but the facts speak to the contrary. Ukrainian and foreign human rights activists, lawyers, as well as international organizations (ICRC, OSCE, UN, IACHR, Amnesty International, Solidarity Network, Peace Committee, etc.) note the existence of mass politically motivated criminal cases, some of whom are recognized as prisoners of conscience and persecuted for political reasons.

It has been five years since Ukraine has practiced mass repression and political persecution against dissidents and undesirables. The articles of the Criminal Code, designed to protect the foundations of Ukraine’s national security, are used by the SSU and the Prosecutor’s Office not to ensure the security of the state, and therefore its citizens, but to deal with those citizens who found the courage to publicly express disagreement with the destructive actions of the previous government. And this despite the rights to freedom of speech and freedom of conscience guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine and all international agreements signed by Ukraine.

Hundreds of people are absurdly and illegally accused of attempts on the territorial integrity of Ukraine, treason, terrorism, etc. on trumped-up cases, for articles on the Internet, reposts on social networks, public anti-war positions, humanitarian aid to residents of non-controlled territories, and more. Without proof, the accused are terrorized, their relatives are pressured, tortured in prisons, and kept in pre-trial detention centers for years without a conviction. At the same time, the repressive-controlled media publish with impunity unreliable and defamatory information about these people, creating a climate of hatred in a certain segment of society and thereby justifying in public opinion the illegal arrests of innocent people.

¹ <https://sbu.ua/glavnye-novosti/zhurnalisty-prosyat-zelenskogo-osvobodit-politicheskikh-zaklyuchennyh-9955.html>

The charges under the articles implying 10–15 years in prison and even life imprisonment are based on episodes unthinkable for a democratic country: laying flowers at the monument as an act aimed at the violent overthrow of the government, transferring diesel fuel for a children’s hospital in the non-controlled part of the Luhansk region and transporting Donetsk pensioners across the contact line to receive their pensions as financing terrorism, journalistic articles about the events on the Maidan and in Crimea as high treason.

People who have nothing to do with the criminal world are intimidated by long prison sentences or are broken in prison, forced to plead guilty and sign an agreement with the prosecutor, just to avoid enduring years of torture in a detention center. Thus, some innocent people are free, but with a criminal record, which prevents them from living and working normally, while employees of the SSU and the Prosecutor’s Office report on the identification of “separatists” and “terrorists”. Others spend long years in prisons without a single proof of guilt, losing their health and sometimes their lives.

The SSU and the Prosecutor’s Office persecute journalists, politicians and activists, entrepreneurs, scientists, doctors, and law enforcement officers for their professional activities, accusing them of treason, separatism, and terrorism. There is unprecedented pressure on UOC priests; with complicity of law enforcement agencies there are rampant raids on churches, beatings of believers, and many priests are forced to leave their native country because of threats to their lives and health.

Vladimir Aleksandrovich, this situation is unacceptable in a democratic state governed by the rule of law, which has signed the European Convention on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and other international agreements.

We urge You as the President of Ukraine and the guarantor of the Constitution to release all political prisoners and stop politically motivated persecution in Ukraine.

Is it even necessary to mention that there was no response to this appeal from the President of Ukraine Vladimir Zelensky?

WAR CRIMES IN UKRAINE: SHELLING OF CIVILIAN OBJECTS AND CITIZENS IN DONBASS

In the Act of the Leningrad City Commission on the deliberate extermination by the Nazi barbarians of the peaceful inhabitants of Leningrad and the damage caused to the economy and cultural and historical monuments of the city during the war and siege¹, it is stated:

“When the plans of the Nazi imperialists to seize Leningrad failed completely, their army turned to a prolonged siege and blockade of the city. This siege was systematically and deliberately used by the Nazis to destroy the city and wipe out its population through methodical aerial bombardment and systematic artillery fire.

The deliberate destruction of the city, its buildings, enterprises, architectural and cultural-historical values, the killing of civilians was carried out by the Nazi troops, blockading Leningrad, in accordance with the directives of the German Supreme Command, which is confirmed by the captured orders and other documents, as well as testimony of Nazi prisoners of war and numerous facts, some of which have already been cited in the Soviet press.

...Among the seized documents were city maps of Leningrad, on which such “military” objects as museums, palaces, institutes, etc. were indicated. For example, the Palace of Pioneers — facility

¹ Act of the Leningrad City Commission on the deliberate extermination by the Nazi barbarians of the peaceful inhabitants of Leningrad and the damage caused to the economy and cultural and historical monuments of the city during the war and siege. OGIZ, Gospolitizdat, 1945.

number 192, the Institute for Maternal and Child Health — facility number 708, the hospital named after Erisman — facility number 89, a residential area on Bolshaya Zelenina Street — facility number 757. Each object number corresponds to its own artillery data: sights, calibers, and types of shells”.

In exactly the same way, having failed in their attempt to suppress the movement of Donbass residents who opposed the illegal coup, Ukrainian politicians who seized power in 2014 and then President Poroshenko began subjecting peaceful objects in Donbass — schools, hospitals, clinics, and residential neighborhoods — to systematic shelling with numerous victims, including women and children.

The systematic shelling by the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) of civilian targets is beyond doubt and has been recorded both by local residents and journalists and by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM).

Here is an example of one of the many reports of the OSCE Mission, which describes the results of Ukrainian shelling of peaceful objects, killed and wounded residents of Donbass in 2019¹:

“On July 21, 2019, observers were clarifying reports of several civilians injured or killed on July 20 in the township of Kadiyivka (formerly Stakhanov; non-government-controlled, 50 km west of Luhansk) in Pervomaysk (non-government-controlled, 58 km west of Luhansk). Staff at the morgue in Kadiyivka told the SMM team that the body of a woman (50–59 years old) with shrapnel wounds was brought to them on the evening of July 20. A man (40–49 years old) told observers in front of a nine-story apartment building on Victory 40th Anniversary Street, 11 in Pervomaysk that he saw a woman who was his neighbor die from shrapnel wounds received during shelling in the evening of July 20. Observers noticed small cuts on the man’s right arm, which, according to him, he received during the aforementioned gunfire. At the same address, a woman (age 60–69) told the SMM patrol that she had just returned from the hospital in Kadiyivka, where she had been

¹ The latest news from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine based on information as of July 21, 2019, 19:30 | OSCE. <https://www.osce.org/ru/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/426293>

treated for injuries sustained on the evening of July 20 when she was near her home.

At the hospital in Kadiyivka, members of the Mission patrol saw a man (40–49 years old) with a wide bandage around his torso and a smaller bandage on his left arm. He said that in the evening of July 20 he was walking along Timoshenko Street in Pervomaysk when he was hit by shrapnel. At the hospital, the SMM team also saw a woman (40–49 years old) with bandages and cuts on her right thigh, arm, neck and cheek. According to her, in the evening of July 20, she and six other people were in Pervomaysk near a house on 40th anniversary of Victory Street, 11, when she heard a powerful explosion and felt sudden sharp pain in her right leg, neck and cheek. At the hospital, observers saw a man (30–39 years old) with bandages on his left thigh, abdomen, and forearm. He said that he was near the above-mentioned house on July 20 when he heard an explosion.

Observers saw a woman (30–39 years old) and her 3-year-old daughter at the children’s hospital in Lugansk; the woman’s left arm was bandaged. The woman reported that she still had shrapnel in her arm, including in the bone, and that her daughter suffered shrapnel wounds to her head and right eye. According to her, on the evening of July 20, she and her daughter were in front of her apartment building at the previously mentioned address when she heard a shell hit a nearby building.

In addition, on July 21, in the northeastern part of Pervomaysk, observers saw more than 70 holes up to 10 cm in diameter, 14 broken windows and broken glass on the ground (according to observers, the damage was recent and formed by flying shrapnel) as well as a pool of blood on the north-north-eastern wall of a nine-story apartment building at 11 40-letiya Pobedy St. The observers also spotted more than 30 spots of gunfire in the yard within 10–25m north of the house. According to the SMM’s assessment, all of the damage was recent and was caused by an airborne projectile fired from an unspecified type of weapon.

About 1 km to the southeast of this house, on the garden plot of a one-story residential building at 14/1 Timoshenko Street, observers saw two craters: one about 10 m to the east of the house, the other about 20 m to the southwest of the house. According to their assessment, the

craters were fresh and formed as a result of bursting shells from weapons of an unknown type. The SMM team also sighted five broken windows on the east-southeast wall of the house, two destroyed sections of a wooden fence about 5 meters east of the house, and at least 50 holes in the fence (the SMM estimates that all the damage was fresh and caused by flying debris)”.

Here is just the first of many hundreds of Donbass residents killed and wounded by the Ukrainian Armed Forces (according to the title, this book only cites data from 2017, while the total number of civilians killed in the Donbas since the start of the civil war in 2014, even according to UN underestimates, exceeds 3,000): Kirill Korobov (grade 7 student), Vitaly Berbinov (grade 8 student), Andrey Maksimenko (age 13), Olga Andreyevna D. (age 5), D. V. Tulup (age 12), K. R. Svetlichnaya (age 15), L. V. Artemieva (age 83), E. G. Litvinenko (age 84), G. S. Sereda (age 83), N. A. Kalimullina (age 81), V. A. Dygay (age 51), S. I. Vasilet (age 62), E. N. Antonova (age 57), I. V. Shakilov (age 60), E. S. Pokushalova (age 22), V. V. Artemyev (age 57), R. N. Burova (age 65), V. G. Ryschenko (age 56), I. I. Tebenko (age 49), N. M. Kotov (age 28), A. P. Plokhikh (age 49), N. D. Dymchenko (age 36), E. V. Isaeva (age 54), V. T. Bolotov (age 73), A. V. Zayats (age 68), V. R. Romanov (79 years old), A. O. Shaparov (25 years old), V. E. Pisotsky (48), A. V. Gudilin (64), V. I. Reze (age 76), V. G. Voronezhskaya (age 72), A. V. Krasnik (age 63), E. A. Batueva (age 81), S. V. Romanchuk (age 20), A. M. Milanov (age 43), T. F. Tolmacheva (age 66), N. A. Zalada (age 82), A. A. Pervushkin (age 56), N. I. Marutchenko (age 73), E. E. Pavlichenko (age 53), V. A. Smakovsky (age 57), I. M. Zabrodina (age 57), V. I. Pyshkov (age 53), V. F. Gubashov (age 59), T. Zaychenko (age 40), G. I. Glinskaya (age 75), O. A. Kushchenko (age 51), T. M. Anischenko (age 79), G. V. Zaytsev (age 77), V. I. Soldatov (age 67), L. V. Zhilina (age 67), T. N. Kot (age 78), V. N. Pleshkova, V. B. Bayraka (age 57), N. A. Usovich (age 64), V. Y. Nakrapas (age 37), P. N. Slobadenyuk (age 78), N. D. Volkov (age 29), N. V. Medvedeva (age 60), I. V. Prokopenko (age 36), R. N. Moshkin (age 46), A. N. Derkach (age 55), S. S. Lopatyuk (age 40), A. N. Butenko (age 65), S. V. Butenko (age 63), E. I. Niftenko (age 27), V. N. Shevchenko (age 48), V. A. Drach (age 22), L. P. Rodoshkevich (age 68), E. V. Sidorova (age 60), V. S. Yurchenko (age 24), I. G. Lyapko (age 34), T. V. Goncharenko

(age 55), L. Y. Svinorenko (age 65), O. T. Kobzar (age 65), E. F. Gutyrva (age 33), V. I. Vershov (age 64), S. N. Litovchenko (age 45), G. Z. Kulyuk (age 63), Y. A. Seliverstova (age 24), A. M. Tishchenko (age 52), V. Y. Gerasimov (age 34), E. V. Martyshchenskaya (age 40), A. V. Senchenko (age 46), V. G. Prokopenko, L. Y. Likhomed (age 65), V. P. Zhukov (age 62), D. S. Gila (age 35), K. B. Krasnobrizh (age 83), A. N. Vasilega (age 38), N. E. Britikova (age 33), A. A. Zhilets (age 45), V. P. Nepluyuy (age 62), V. P. Nepluyuy (age 61), Svetlana Ivanovna K. (age 44), Milana Olegovna K. (age 15), Alexei Leonidovich L. (age 44), Alexei Grigorievich K. (age 31), Lyubov Grigoryevna D. (age 64), Tatiana Vasilyevna D. (age 31), Miroslava Vorontsova (age 26).

International humanitarian law¹ establishes legal norms that all sides in a war or armed conflict must comply with. These rules guarantee the protection of civilians who do not directly participate in hostilities. The United States is a party to the four 1949 Geneva Conventions. The United Kingdom and France are also parties to these conventions, as well as their three additional protocols.

One of the basic principles of international humanitarian law is the “principle of distinction”. It demands that the parties to the conflict “distinguish between civilians and combatants”. Implementation of this principle ensures that “attacks may be directed only against combatants” and ensures that attacks “are not directed against civilians”². Under international humanitarian law, if civilians do not take part in hostilities, it is a war crime to target them for attack.

Another critical principle of international humanitarian law is the prohibition of indiscriminate attacks. The execution of an indiscriminate attack resulting in the death or injury of civilians constitutes a war crime³.

Another principle of international humanitarian law is the principle of proportionality. It prohibits disproportionate attacks that “may result in incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to

¹ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/8367/2018/en/>

² International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Customary IHL Study, Rule 1. The Principle of Distinction between Civilians and Combatants.

³ Article 20(b)(ii) of the 1996 ILC Draft Code of Crimes against the Peace and Security of Mankind.

civilian objects, or a combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to the expected definite and direct military advantage”¹. The commission of a deliberate disproportionate attack that results in excessive accidental death or injury to civilians constitutes a war crime.

In a resolution adopted in 1970 by the UN General Assembly (UN General Assembly, Res. 2675 (XXV)) on Basic Principles for the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict establishes that “places or areas intended exclusively for the protection of civilians, such as hospital areas or similar shelters, shall not be the object of military operations”.

International humanitarian law² also contains a separate section entitled “Rule 35. Hospitals, safe and neutral zones”. According to this rule, “attacking an area established to protect the wounded, sick and civilians from the effects of hostilities is prohibited”.

In spite of the fact that these actions are war crimes, the Ukrainian authorities regularly and systematically shell hospitals, clinics, schools, and kindergartens. For example, on April 6, 2019, Donetsk city hospital No. 21 at 12a Kremlevsky Ave. was shelled; on August 15, 2018, school No. 10 in Gorlovka locality was shelled; on December 21, 2017, general education school No. 6 in Yasinovataya locality was shelled; on December 19, 2017, the building of polyclinic No. 6 on Hospital Street in Golmovsky locality was shelled, and so were many other schools and hospitals.

This kind of action is not spontaneous — similar to shelling by Nazi troops during World War II, plans of Donbass settlements and instructions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces to shell schools and hospitals have become publicly available documents. The author’s book “Ordinary Fascism: Crimes of Ukrainian Security Forces (2014–2016)”³ discusses in detail such a case — a cipher telegram No. 2/382

¹ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Customary IHL Study, Practice Relating to Rule 14. Proportionality in Attack, Section A. General, I. Treaties Additional Protocol I, Article 51(5)(b) of the 1977 Additional Protocol I. https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v2_cha_chapter4_rule14

² International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Customary IHL Study, Rule 35.

³ Ordinary Fascism: Crimes of Ukrainian Armed Forces (2014–2016) M.: Kuchkovo Pole, 2016.

of Lieutenant General S. B. Bessarab, addressed to the commander of the 17th Separate Tank Brigade about the opening of fire: “Expense of shells per target — 20 pcs. To perform the task involve two cannons per target”. The targets of the shelling were Donetsk schools No. 117 (3 Blagoveshchenskaya Street), school-gymnasium No. 58 (68a Partizansky Avenue), school No. 74 (34 Bogatyrskaya Street) and kindergarten No. 191 “Dandelion” (19 Zoologicheskaya Street).

The Ukrainian Armed Forces also systematically shelled infrastructure in Donbass. For example, the Donetsk and Verkhnekalmiusskaya filtration stations, which were deliberately shelled 11 times during this period, exposing civilians to the danger of chlorine poisoning. On February 1, 2017, at 9:47 a. m., Ukrainian shelling caused a blackout of the Verkhnekalmiusskaya filtration plant. According to reports from plant workers, there was an odor of chlorine in the air. The consequences of this fire attack caused a drop in the pressure of water supply to Donetsk and other areas. A gas pipeline was damaged by shelling in the village of Kominternovo, and on April 17, 2018, at 15:40, the Ukrainian military purposefully shot a bus with the workers of the duty shift at the Donetsk filtration plant.

A resident of the Kuibyshev district of Donetsk, the head of shop No. 22, which built this district back in Soviet times, talks about Ukrainian shelling. According to him, by April 2015 about 60 people had already been killed in the area as a result of shelling by the Armed Forces of Ukraine, a factory, several substations and boiler houses had been completely destroyed¹.

Here is the emotional interview in its entirety:

“I’m the supervisor of Workshop 22, which serviced this whole site. We are a kind of housing and utilities service. We supply gas and water here. Electricity, everything. And we look after all these systems. We have a factory water supply, but now it’s completely broken.

...They fired all kinds of shells. Starting with Grad. Mostly Peski, the village of Tonenkiy and Avdeevka were shelled. We have the village of Avdeevka, and that’s where the shells, Grads, heavy shells, medium and small shells were coming from. The Armed Forces of Ukraine were

¹ April 23, 2015, DPR. Devastation in Donetsk, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iEwOoQX7X0>

there. The Armed Forces of Ukraine and several different battalions were shooting. It's not like we were given the names. This is where the shells exploded.



The photo shows a resident of the Kuibyshev district of Donetsk, Chief of Shop No. 22 against the background of civilian houses that were shelled by the Armed Forces of Ukraine

A great many civilians died. Right now we are standing in front of the 16th house. A woman died on the first floor, at once. A mortar shell fell, killed her, wounded her daughter. Then this house got hit in the roof. It's good that the roof is double, but it was still broken through by the shells. Now we're trying to make repairs.

I built this factory fifteen years ago. Built all these workshops. When I walked into the factory, I saw such destruction. There's the MRS. The Mechanical Repairs Shop. Three flights fell down. It's now no more. Then the workshop that made all the joinery burned down. It was completely burnt down. Other shops were also damaged. And in this area, the factory management was damaged, part of it was burned down to the ground. It was shelled with incendiary rounds, that's why it caught fire. The roof was made of wood, that's why everything went up in flames. The garage was destroyed beyond any repair.

They destroyed the military unit they left with at the time. They left the unit, the commander, by the way, disbanded them, and now he's on

trial. I just saw it on TV the other day. That this commander is on trial in Kyiv. For handing the children over to their mothers so they wouldn't all get killed here. Then the fire station was destroyed, the whole plant administration was destroyed. In general, here on the site turned out not a housing unit, but just mayhem.

There were absolutely no military installations here. There were just ordinary people here, with 600 people living in each dormitory. We also had family dormitories. With students. That entire row was occupied by students. But now the institute is completely trashed. The students, as you can see, are all gone. So in other words, the labor life of the village is completely destroyed.

It wasn't just the infrastructure they were destroying. They tried to destroy all the substations. We had a boiler room here. It was hit three times. It's so that it couldn't produce heat for us. It all started with the boiler room being destroyed. They destroyed our substation. Substation Five. Four. If they had made it to the seventh substation, then that would be gone too.

...The factory is destroyed, completely ruined. You see, because there was a lot of wood, and once the shells hit, the incendiary shells, it all burned up. Near the plant, where there is now a bomb shelter that I built in 1972, that bomb shelter is designed to withstand a nuclear shock wave. So it was reliable enough. Initially people went there, to these bomb shelters. They were hiding, but where else could they go? That shelter holds 600 people. And then people started to leave, because it was impossible to stay.

Direct hits to the roofs. Direct hits to rooms. Most of the shelling came from the airport, from Avdeevka. They are still there now at the coke plant. They have a base with their weapons there. That's the Armed Forces of Ukraine. From the village of Tonenkiy, from Vodnoye and from Peski. This is where there was constant shelling.

On that site, it was like a cemetery, I'll tell you that. I counted more than 60 civilians killed on these two sites. On these two sites only. There's a whole cemetery out there.

It's just unfathomable. Everyone is there: children, middle age, the elderly. There used to be about 15–20 thousand people, but because of what's going on here now, people either left for the city or scattered. Because it's just impossible to stay here, there are explosions every day.

Now we'll go and see. There's not a place where a shell didn't hit. Not a single place. Can you imagine, shelling and shelling every day.

They don't just attack here. They hit that site too, the hospital there, the substations, the boiler room. They were aiming to destroy the power supply. We have our own pumping node here that used to supply all these areas, now it's all broken down. It was terrifying. The shells hit here. They came here to be the destroyers.

They didn't want to leave anything alive. They don't need anything. They just want to kill as many as they can and destroy the infrastructure. The factory was destroyed, and with it the industry. The miners will have to stand down. This factory used to produce toys and buckets. It produced all sorts of things. The rubber went to the miners. To all the hydrocomplexes, and now there's none of that. Everything is destroyed. They think we are all separatists. I don't even know what that word means. I know what the Banderas are. Because I was born back in 1937. And got into the occupation by accident. Because my father was blowing up a metallurgical plant. He fell into a ditch and blew out nine ribs, so we stayed there. And we were occupied, but the Germans did not do such destruction. That is, they are worse than the Germans, worse than the Nazis.

They came, as I call them, the destroyers of all things living and dead. Here's a copy of what Hitler (President Poroshenko. — *Ed. note*) said. Destroy it all. So that people would sit in their basements. It is, as Poroshenko says, for their children to study and our children to sit in basements. This is what he did, now all we do is just sit in our basements.

This was truce just now. They made so many violations on their part. Shells were flying, killing people. Blowing up buses. It's happening. They just don't show it. It surprises me why the rest of the world's public turned a blind eye. Why they don't see anything. I don't understand that.

If it were possible for anyone here to go out there and tell them, I would. This is a cry from the heart. Because I'm a construction worker myself. And everything I've built was broken down. Memorials were destroyed. Look how much has been destroyed, how many historical monuments have been ruined. Sculptures.

A friend of mine is a sculptor. He now lives in St. Petersburg, he made a sculpture in Leninsky Komsomol Park. The Liberator Soldier

stands, thanks to my friend. He made a lot of Lenin sculptures. And can you imagine, you put your soul into your work, only for someone to come and ruin it. Simply because they practice fascism.

Do you realize that Nazis and thieves have come to power? They go around asking for money. For what? For war, of course. To eliminate people who just wanted to live freely. After all, we had a referendum here, everyone was in favor of our regions having...

...We wanted to remove it and all the people of Donetsk and Luhansk regions quietly, calmly decided on it through a referendum. We didn't think this would happen, the war came out of thin air. It's because of Turchynov. That priest, excuse me for saying that. Look at him. Our priests preach peace. But this one, I don't even know. He only preaches war. War within our own people.

The Russians, as they call them. More than half of us are Ukrainians. And we worked together. Because we had to work with someone. Russian or Ukrainian, Kazakh or Georgian. I worked in the mine for fifteen years. Most of the brigades there have people from many different nations. No one ever insulted each other.

This all came with this new power. The whole point is for the West of Ukraine to understand this. Even though they already tried to. They understood after the first coffins that came from here. That's when western Ukraine realized where they had sent their sons. They sent them to kill people here, even though these people grew up here, were born here, and you know what it's like when you establish yourself in a place. We'll bite down with our teeth to keep this land. All the more so for the miners. Miners are honest souls, they welcome everyone who comes to them. As Alexander Nevsky said: "He who comes to us with the sword will perish by the sword". He who comes with roses and flowers, will be welcomed though.

Look at this. Turn the camera this way. See, that's where the mortar shell fell, at the entrance to the room. A woman was killed here. In broad daylight. No one was expecting it, the whistling, the explosion. Her daughter was wounded and she was killed. No one, not a single military man. There was no one here. In broad daylight. It was about three months ago. Sometime in December, I think. She's been targeted three times. Blew up everything around her, but only hit her once. Then we have Sofiyskaya, 13. Three shells hit here. At different times. First

they hit from that side, they must have been shelling from the airport side. And then from the side of Pesky, right into the roof. Look at the destruction around us.

People left their homes, but they still come to their native places. On Saturdays and Sundays, to see what these Bander-logs have done. That's what we call them. Look, everything is ruined. Everything.

This is what fascists do. Fascists who came to destroy the people. The people who lived here. Every nation lived here. Kazakhs, and whoever else was here. Everyone lived together. Worked together; and now you see what came of it. Next is the 14th dormitory, same thing. I say, the AFU shot at these houses on purpose to terrorize the population.

To destroy everything, to get everyone out of here. Their tactic was to request a truce. Pull up their heavy weapons. And hit the houses with direct fire. To destroy them, to wipe them off the face of the earth”.

Ruslan Anatolievich Panchuk, former political prisoner

The Ukrainian Armed Forces are shelling settlements in Donbass. The thing is, it's hard to get to the militia, because they're sheltered in trenches. And it is the settlements that the AFU is shooting at. I call my guys, someone got hurt, someone killed. We worked with brigades who came from Donbass to earn money, and they would always call people. "A shell flew into the garden, or into the house, broke through the roof, into the barn, killed your dog there", they report. People are already used to living with it. Many children who have already grown up now haven't seen a single day of peace. We don't even have any tears left. When you find out there is yet another child killed. In 2014, I would still be crying, getting mad, wondering how to stop it all. In 2014, we tried to stop it all, we blocked the military units, but it's just impossible. We just have to deal with it now. I understand that the world doesn't care. Europe, the European Union, and America, among others, are the main organizers.

At the Nuremberg Tribunal on February 4, 1946, the testimony of Mr. van der Essen, a member of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry into War Crimes, was cited. He recounts: “The library of the University of Louvain was destroyed by the systematic shelling of it by German artillery. Two batteries, one located in the village of Korbek and the other

in the village of Lovenzhul, each from their own side, systematically shelled the library. The best proof of this is that all the bombs only fell onto the library. Before the battery at Lovenzhul opened fire, the officer who commanded it demanded that Vinyeron, a villager, accompany him into the field. When they came to a place where they could see the library tower, the officer asked: “Are you sure this is the tower of the university library?” The answer was affirmative. The officer once more insistently asked the villager if he was sure. “Of course”, replied the villager, “I see it every day just the way you see it now”. Five minutes after that, artillery fire began, and immediately a column of smoke rose very close to the tower. Thus, there can be no doubt that this attack was systematic and the library was explicitly targeted”¹.

The Armed Forces of Ukraine acted in a similar manner during the Ukrainian civil war, beginning in 2014. For example, the Donetsk Museum of Local History was shelled three times: August 14, 20, and 23. As a result, the left wing of the museum building was partially destroyed, the natural history exhibition, the diorama “Liman forest” were destroyed, the archeological collection, the collection of porcelain, faience, etc. were damaged. The total damage amounted to approximately 95 million hryvnias². Museum director D. Kuznetsov describes:

“The accuracy of firing can be judged at least by the fact that 15 to 17 shells of the D-30 howitzer hit the northwest wing of the museum. We were also hit with mortars”.

Donetsk Regional Museum of Local History was founded on September 17, 1924, the museum annually held about 40 exhibitions, visited each year by more than 200,000 people. Among the funds of the Donetsk Regional Museum are paleontological, archeological, numismatic and ethnographic collections, as well as a collection of old printed books, a collection of religious objects XVIII–XIX centuries, a collection of photographs, samples of production companies, personal belongings of famous people of Donbass, etc. Just as in the case of the

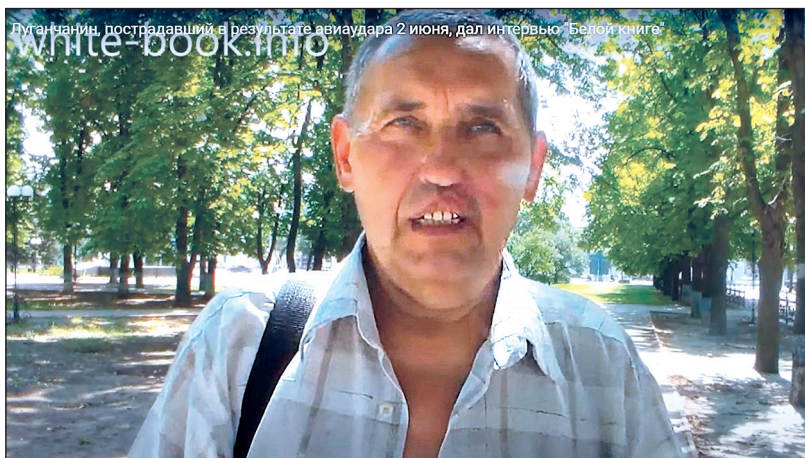
¹ The Nuremberg Trials: Proceedings: in 8 vols. T. 5. M.: Juridical Literature, 1991. page 489.

² <http://newsrbk.ru/news/2487497-kraevedcheskiy-muzey-donecka-otkryil-vyistavku-ekspozitov-postradavshih-pod-obstrelami-vsu-foto.html>

Hermitage, there were no military enterprises or units in the vicinity of the Donetsk Museum of Local History, the consistent shelling of the museum rules out its random nature.

Here is the full story of a victim of shrapnel wounds sustained in an air strike by the Armed Forces of Ukraine on Luhansk (eight civilians, including five women, were also killed in the strike):

“I was talking on the phone. At this time there was an SU-25 rocket salvo. I was immediately blown away. I lifted my head and saw blood. My face was covered in blood and my nose was broken. Along with everything else. In addition, I was wounded in the shoulder and took two pieces of shrapnel in the neck. Good thing it wasn’t in the carotid artery. I was really lucky to survive that, to say the least.



*A resident of Luhansk wounded by an airstrike by the Armed Forces of Ukraine.
Eight civilians were also killed as a result of the airstrike*

A resident of Luhansk wounded by an airstrike by the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Eight civilians were also killed as a result of the airstrike

...Is in intensive care, but he survived. There were no belongings left, because there were many small wounds, both on my legs and everywhere else. They were of that nature, numerous, but petty. They killed their own citizens. Their own Constitution. The thing they’re supposedly fighting for. Everyone knows that according to the Constitution, our

army has no right to use weapons against civilians. But you can see how that turns out.

I would also like to draw attention to those who died. Eight people died at once. Five of them were women who didn't even have a slingshot behind their backs. To call them fascists would be praise, because fascists did not shoot civilians. The people of their state. But what we have is a peaceful playground, innocent civilians, two o'clock in the afternoon, and a bombing raid. Twenty missiles in a salvo. I have come to this deep conviction, though, that we are one and the same state, unfortunately. I have always been proud of Ukraine, but today we cannot live as one state"¹.

The systematic and prolonged shelling of civilian objects and citizens by the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which began in 2014 and continues to this day, is not only a war crime under international humanitarian law, but also a violation of the Ukrainian constitution and legislation. Here is a legal analysis of this issue made by Honored Lawyer of Ukraine, People's Deputy of Ukraine V. Nymchenko, who proves that from the very beginning the decision to use the armed forces in the civil war was illegal²:

"The law "On the Armed Forces of Ukraine" does not allow the use of the Armed Forces to restrict the rights and freedoms of citizens. It is assumed that no extraordinary circumstances, orders or instructions from commanders and superiors can provide a basis for any unlawful action against civilians and their property. These laws define the list of circumstances and places for the use of armed forces in anti-terrorist operations. They are limited to military or strategic defense installations. At the same time, it is inadmissible to involve the Armed Forces in populated areas, at the place where citizens stay, work or study. None of the legislative acts of Ukraine provides for the use of the Armed Forces of the country, as well as military equipment in peacetime, especially if it involves restrictions on the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens.

¹ Luhansk resident injured in an air strike on June 2, 2014, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pk9YNwCJsoQ>

² http://vybor.ua/article/Silovye_strukturny/k-voprosu-ispolzovaniya-vooru-jennyh-sil.html

It should be noted that, according to the Constitution, the decision on the use of the armed forces is vested in Parliament, which determines their functions. The Verkhovna Rada also considers an appeal by the President of Ukraine on the introduction of martial law or state of emergency in the country or in its individual regions, on general or partial mobilization.

Under the Law of Ukraine “On the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine”, the NSDC, as a coordinating and auxiliary body under the President, is not authorized, as is the President, to decide on the involvement of the armed forces for large-scale anti-terrorist operations inside the country. All issues concerning the use of the Armed Forces are resolved only with the approval of the Ukrainian Parliament.

Thus, the decision of the NSDC to conduct a large-scale anti-terrorist operation involving the Armed Forces of Ukraine contradicts the provisions of the Constitution on the procedure and admissibility of their use.

Moreover, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, by its Resolution No. 740-VII of February 20, 2014 “On condemning the use of violence that led to the deaths of people”, recognized it unacceptable for the Security Service of Ukraine, using the armed forces, to conduct anti-terrorist operations involving the restriction of the rights and freedoms of citizens.

The legal framework for the use of the Armed Forces of Ukraine does not allow for dual subordination and legality.

The appeal of the acting President of Ukraine, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada A. Turchynov to the people can be regarded not as an appeal, but as a message to the people. But according to Article 102 and paragraph 2 of Article 106 of the Constitution of Ukraine, only the President elected by popular vote has such a right as the guarantor of the state sovereignty, territorial integrity, observance of the Constitution, human and civil rights and freedoms.

At the same time, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada, the acting President of Ukraine (in accordance with Article 112 of the Constitution), is not authorized to send messages of this kind. This raises the question of the legitimacy of such an act and its legal consequences.

...The Verkhovna Rada is empowered, according to Article 85 of the Constitution, to declare war or to approve the President's decision to use the Armed Forces to stop armed aggression against Ukraine, based on the results of consideration of issues initiated by the President. Other grounds and procedures for the use of the Armed Forces are not prescribed in the Basic Law of our state...

In his address, President Turchynov, in fact, legalized as a "legal fact" the adoption of a secret decision of the National Security and Defense Council on the beginning of a "large-scale terrorist operation involving the Armed Forces of Ukraine". However, based on the functions of the NSDC, this body is a coordinating body, and its decisions have the nature of proposals to the President and cannot serve as a basis for involving the armed forces in anti-terrorist operations.

...The decision of the NSDC of 13 April 2014 on the use of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in a large-scale anti-terrorist operation is unconstitutional and illegal.

Anton Borisovich Guryanov, human rights campaigner

The shelling of Donbass by Ukrainians happens all the time. Regularly. It happens three or four times a week. Sometimes less often, sometimes more often. There are civilian casualties, children were wounded and a woman was killed. The fact is that it is mostly the civilian population that suffers. The village of Zaytsevo is a terrible place. People there continue to live in basements simply because there is no other way. All settlements that are close to the line of demarcation continue to be in a semi-military state. At any moment people are ready to run for cover, and in this sense little has changed. It's mostly mortar fire. But from time to time they use larger calibers. Some of them are 80mm, some are larger. 80mm is a mortar. But mortar shelling occurs regularly. 100mm shells are fired less frequently, but they still are. So, in a sense, several agreements were broken, and this was the case under Zelensky. Nothing in this sense has changed fundamentally; if a truce can be sustained, it will be a step forward. But to be honest, I don't really believe it'll happen. We have an organization, called JCCC. It has a telegram channel, where everything is documented quite clearly by days. They do this work regularly and meticulously. You

can visit their website. All data on the shellings is well documented and maintained. More recently, there was shelling that damaged a water pumping station in Horlivka, just in July. Most of the DPR was left without a water supply in the summer, in the heat itself. And for several days repair crews were not allowed to go there. They were shelling the accident scene. Tons of water were lost in this terrorist attack... They deliberately create such a man-made communal catastrophe and thus terrorize the population. This has the opposite effect. People are becoming even more united, ready to endure hardships and deprivations, but to have their identity, their language, Russian, and their history.

Below are just some examples of the shelling of peaceful objects on the territory of Donbas by the Armed Forces of Ukraine from 2017 to 2020 alone.

2020

29.02.2020

As a result of shelling by the Ukrainian armed forces in the village of Elenovka, a 50-year-old civilian, who was returning from the territory of Ukraine through the checkpoint Novotroitskoye-Elenovka, was wounded, and the roof of a house at 114 Pereezhnaya Street was damaged.

04.03.2020

At 12:25 p. m., a 52-year-old civilian and a 58-year-old civilian who were on the street were injured by shrapnel wounds from an ATGM fired by servicemen of the 128th AFU brigade at a civilian bus moving on the outskirts of the village of Dokuchayevsk. Thanks to the actions of the driver, it was possible to avoid the hit to the bus.

05.03.2020

Two civilians were wounded as a result of shelling from large-caliber machine guns, small arms and ATGMs by the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the settlement of Dokuchayevsk.

10.03.2020



DPR civilian wounded as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian army

A 56-year-old civilian was seriously wounded as a result of sniper fire from the Ukrainian Armed Forces in Zaytsevo, 141 Poletayeva Street.

15.03.2020

As a result of mortar (82mm) and artillery (122mm) shelling by servicemen of the 58th AFU brigade in the Gagarin mine settlement, three civilians were wounded: A 68-year-old man, a 61-year-old woman and a 14-year-old child.

As a result of mortar shelling by servicemen of the 28th Brigade, an 85-year-old man was killed in the village of Signalnoye, five residential buildings on Gagarina Street, 12 and 16, Pushkina Street 12, 16 and 15 were damaged, and a power line was also damaged.

A high-voltage power line in the village of Kurganka was damaged. More than 1,000 residents were left without electricity; boilers 13, 14 and 15 were de-energized.

In Gorlovka, eight houses on Generala Batiuka Street, 32, 34, 36, 38, 41, 42, 43 and Artemovskoye Shosse Street, 28 were damaged.

At 1:00 a.m., a power line was damaged as a result of mortar (120mm) shelling by the AFU in the village of Zhabichevo. More than 310 residents of the village on Stepnaya Street and Sofiyaskaya Street were left without electricity.

17.03.2020

As a result of the shelling by soldiers of the 10th AFU brigade of a vehicle providing planned assistance in providing water to civilians in the village of Sakhanka, a civilian was wounded by shelling from a Stugna thermal missile launcher. The shelling took place while civilians were collecting water.

20.03.2020

At 06:40, as a result of SPG shelling by soldiers of the 28th Brigade in the village of Aleksandrovka, a 71-year-old civilian living at 131 Shestakova Street, Petrovsky district, Donetsk, Trudovskaya mine village, was wounded. The facade and windows of the house were damaged.



A 71-year-old civilian from the DPR, wounded as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian army

29.03.2020

As a result of artillery and mortar shelling by servicemen of the 28th AFU brigade in Staromikhaylovka, an 89-year-old civilian was killed and five houses were damaged at 17 Zhukovskogo Street, 3 Kotsyubinskogo Street and 86 and 88 Kosareva Street, 5 Pionerskaya Street.

09.04.2020

As a result of the use of a UAV by servicemen of the 58th AFU Brigade in the village of Shirokaya Balka, 166 Plotinnaya Street, a civilian Miroslava Vorontsova (age 26) was killed, a man (age 60) received a penetrating lung wound and multiple shrapnel wounds to the chest.



The place of death of an 89-year-old civilian resident of the DPR, who was killed as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian army

11.04.2020

As a result of shelling from a BMP by servicemen of the 28th AFU brigade in the village of Signalnoye, a 50-year-old civilian received shrapnel wounds in the yard of his house at 50 Victory Street, and two residential buildings at 13 and 15 Gagarin Street were damaged.



Myroslava Vorontsova (age 26), a civilian resident of the DPR, killed as a result of a UAV attack by Ukrainian army personnel

02.05.2020

As a result of shelling by the AFU of the village of Spartak, a 67-year-old civilian was killed.

In the village of Golmovsky, six houses on 21, 24, 27 and 29 Arenskogo St., 19, 21 Fotieva St. and 28 Generala Antonova St. were damaged; a civilian car was also damaged. In addition, the power line was damaged, and more than a hundred residents were left without power supply.

In Yasnoye, a residential house at 21 Valova St. was damaged.

In the village of Signalnoye, the power line on Mira Street was damaged, leaving more than seven hundred civilians without electricity supply.

In the village of Trudovskaya mine two residential buildings on 32 Safonova St. and 31 Gastello St. were damaged.

07.05.2020

Around 11:00 a.m., five civilians, including two children, were wounded as a result of shelling by the Armed Forces in the village of Sakhanka.

In the village of Trudovskaya Mine a residential house at 77 Karnavalnaya Street was damaged.

21.06.2020

Injuries to civilians are also noted in the report of the OSCE SMM¹:



Sakhanka children wounded as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian army

¹ 2020-07-24 Daily Report_RUS.pdf. https://www.osce.org/files/2020-07-24%20Daily%20Report_RUS.pdf

“According to the OSCE SMM, in Ukraine on July 20, during a telephone conversation, a woman said that early in the morning of June 21, while in a structure in the yard of her house on 44 Lukyanenko Street in the Trudovskiye neighborhood of the Petrovsky district, she heard explosions nearby. According to her, on her way back to the house, she heard another explosion and was wounded on the left side of her abdomen. She then added that her son brought her to Hospital No. 14 in Donetsk. On July 21, a relative of the woman showed the observers a medical certificate, which stated that on June 21 the woman (age 60–69) received shrapnel wounds on the left side of her abdomen.

23.06.2020

A 45-year-old civilian was killed as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the village of Aleksandrovka.

04.07.2020

As a result of mortar shelling by servicemen of the 35th AFU brigade in the village of Zaytsevo, a 60-year-old civilian was killed.

15.07.2020

As a result of the shelling of the village Aleksandrovka by soldiers of the 79th Brigade, a 41-year-old and a 19-year-old civilian were wounded, three houses at 251, 249 and 255 Lenina Street were damaged.

The fact that civilians were wounded and many buildings were destroyed, was recorded and mentioned in the OSCE SMM’s report¹:

“The SMM clarified reports that on July 15, a mother (age 41) and her son (age 19) were injured as a result of shelling in Aleksandrovka (non-government-controlled area, 20 km south-west of Donetsk). On July 18, a woman told observers by telephone that she and her two sons (ages 12 and 19) were at home at 255 Lenina Street on the evening of July 14 when they heard a blow. She said she went outside to corral her goats into a nearby barn, and as she entered the house, she saw a flash of light and heard an explosion nearby, and then saw blood on her leg and on her son’s chest. She said that her neighbors called an ambulance and

¹ 2020-07-26-27 Daily Report_RUS.pdf. [https://www.osce.org/files/2020-07-26-27 %20Daily%20Report_RUS.pdf](https://www.osce.org/files/2020-07-26-27%20Daily%20Report_RUS.pdf)

she and her older son were taken to Hospital 14 in non-government-controlled Donetsk. On July 25, witnesses spoke by telephone with her 19-year-old son, who said that on the evening of July 14 he was home with his mother and brother when he heard two blows; after the second blow he saw the room filled with smoke and became disoriented. On July 25, the woman and her son showed the observers medical certificates, which indicated that on July 14 they were taken to Hospital No. 14 in Donetsk, the woman was diagnosed with shrapnel wounds to the left leg, and her son with shrapnel wounds to the chest.

On 18 July, on the north-eastern outskirts of Aleksandrovka, approximately 10 m south of the one-storey house at 255 Lenina Street (where the aforementioned mother and sons live), located within 1 km of the armed formations' positions, the Mission team saw a crater, splinter marks on the metal gate approximately 5m south-west of the house and three broken windows on the southern side that were covered with wooden boards. According to the SMM's assessment, all the damage was recent, but it was not possible to determine the type of weaponry used or the direction of fire. According to three residents (men of different ages) of the area, the shelling took place in the evening of July 14".

17.07.2020

As a result of the shelling by the Ukrainian Armed Forces, two civilians, a 59-year-old woman and a 33-year-old man, were wounded, and two buildings at 13a Bokiya Street and 3 Bezlesnaya Street were damaged. In addition, the school on 1 Samarskaya Street was damaged.

The fact that civilians were wounded and many buildings were destroyed, was recorded and mentioned in the OSCE SMM's report¹:

"The observers clarified reports of civilian injuries as a result of shelling that occurred on July 16 in the Trudovskiye neighborhood of the Petrovsky district of Donetsk (non-government-controlled, 15 km southwest of the city center).

On July 18, on the first floor of a two-story apartment building on 13a Bokiya Street, the SMM team found a hole (20 cm wide) in the

¹ 2020-07-19-20 Daily Report_RUS_0.pdf; [https://www.osce.org/files/2020-07-19-20 %20Daily%20Report_RUS_0.pdf](https://www.osce.org/files/2020-07-19-20%20Daily%20Report_RUS_0.pdf)

ceiling at the entrance facing southeast. On the second floor, observers recorded a broken window facing southeast and a gunshot hole in the frame of an adjacent window, which also faces southeast. According to their assessment, the damage was caused by the recent explosion of an unspecified shell fired from the southern direction and by fragments of this shell. In the house, the SMM team spoke with a woman and a man (both aged 60–69) and saw that the woman had her right foot bandaged. They both stated that they heard shelling on July 16 at about 4:10 p. m. According to the woman, she heard a whistling sound while standing in the entryway of the house facing southeast, and saw and smelled smoke. Then she briefly lost her hearing, felt a burning sensation in her right thigh, and saw blood on her right foot. According to the man and the woman, their neighbor called an ambulance, which took the woman to Hospital No. 14, located in the Petrovsky district. The woman showed the observers a medical report, which stated that she had received shrapnel wounds to her right foot and bruises to other parts of her body.

On the same day at school No. 116 on Samarskaya Street, members of the Mission patrol found three holes from gunfire (about 1–1.5cm in diameter) on the southwest facade of the functioning school building and two more holes (about 1–1.5cm in diameter) from gunfire in the frames of two windows facing southwest. They determined that the damage was recent, but could not determine the type of weapon used or the direction of fire. The 60-year-old teacher reported that he was in the schoolyard when the shelling began around 4:15 p. m. on July 16, and had to take shelter in the school building”.

Lyubov Fedorovna Eremenko, physician at Luhansk City Hospital No. 4.

There are frequent shellings of the Luhansk People’s Republic. We have some employees who come to work from these neighborhoods. And they all know it. For example, Veselaya Gora is a suburb of Lugansk. We have a nurse who drives from there, she talks about it all the time. Mostly as soon as it gets dark, and here comes the shelling, and it goes on until 4–5 in the morning. The devastation is terrible.“ There are very few residents in these neighborhoods. They all left. Housing destruction. They walk strictly along some paths, she says, afraid to go out lest they bump into something out there.

I remember more than 100 people wounded in the last year. Civilians. About 60–70 people died. This is fascism, lawlessness, it's inhumane to fire on civilians, it's ungodly. Of course, it's only civilians, there are no military points anywhere. Settlements where there are no military bases and no military points are shelled.

They are destroying local infrastructure. In summer, stations, power substations, water towers. It happens all the time, it happens regularly. Then it takes a long period of time until they come to an agreement, because the repairmen come and bombard their crew, not allowing them to restore it all. People suffer without electricity, without water. They get water delivered to them, but the conditions are terrible.

2019



*Service vehicle of Voda Donbassa utility company after shelling
by Ukrainian servicemen*

10.01.2019

Around 1 p. m., employees of the “Voda Donbassa” utility company in the area of Vasilievskaya pumping station of the first lift of the

Southern Donbass water pipeline came under target fire from SPG and BMP-1 weaponry by soldiers of the 93rd AFU brigade. As a result of the shelling, three employees of the company were wounded and the company car caught fire.

11.01.2019



Queues of civilians at the «Mayorsk» entry-exit checkpoint, where Ukrainian border guards and SSU officers are delaying the passage of civilians

At the entry-exit checkpoints, Ukrainian border guards and SSU officers create obstacles and delay the process of allowing vehicles and civilians to enter the checkpoints in every possible way. Given the difficult weather conditions, it is the elderly people who suffer the most from these actions. Thus, yesterday during the first half of the day at the checkpoint “Mayorsk” three men, born in 1959, 1939 and 1949, died of a heart attack one by one while waiting in line.

17.02.2019

As a result of the shelling by the 128th AFU brigade in the settlement of Dokuchayevsk, a 60-year-old civilian resident of Dokuchayevsk was wounded.

23.02.2019

Around 14:00 near the checkpoint “Elenovka” there was an explosion of a civilian car, which killed a civilian and injured two women.

The car bombing was also noted in the report of the OSCE SMM¹:

“On February 23, around 12:40 p. m., driving south on the N-20 road near Olenivka (non-government-controlled, 23 km southwest of Donetsk), past the armed formations’ forward position along the line of contact, about 200 m south of the said armed formations’ position, observers saw smoldering debris of a bus that was lying upside down on the soft ground in the middle of the dividing line. Mission patrol members saw scattered debris from the destroyed vehicle, including three tires and two doors (all burned), within a 15-meter radius of it. On the dividing line, the SMM team saw a fresh crater approximately 3 meters away from the bus and three mine warning signs: one was on the ground less than 10 meters from the crater, and the other two were attached to a nearby post and a berm. The Mission estimates that the bus was blown up by an explosive device (probably an anti-tank mine) placed on the dividing line.

On February 24, the SMM clarified reports of three civilian casualties from the explosion. In Dokuchayevsk (not controlled by the government, 30 km southwest of Donetsk), the director of the morgue informed the observers that the bodies of a man (age 24) and a woman (age 85) had been delivered to the morgue on February 23. According to him, they both died from serious wounds caused by a mine explosion.

In Shakhtyorsk (non-government-controlled, 50 km east of Donetsk), a man (59 years old) told the SMM team that he was in

¹ OSCE SMM operational report: two civilians were killed and another man was wounded as a result of a mine explosion near a checkpoint near the line of contact. | OSCE <https://www.osce.org/ru/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/412394>

the said bus along with two other people. He said that on February 23, he was returning to non-government-controlled areas together with his mother and driver after they received pensions in government-controlled areas. He added that the explosion occurred when the bus entered the dividing line of the N-20 highway, south of the armed formations' forward position. The man had abrasions and bruises on his cheeks and a bandage around his head.

The incident occurred in the area between the forward positions of armed formations and the forward positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (approximately 4 km southwest of the tragedy site) near Berezovoye (government-controlled, 31 km southwest of Donetsk). Earlier on the same dividing line the SMM team saw at least 10 rounded fresh embankments with a diameter of approximately 30–40 cm and warning signs about the danger of mines along this line.

04.03.2019

As a result of the shelling of Sakhanka village by the Ukrainian Armed Forces, a civilian V.P. Neplyuy (59 years old), who lives at 18 Constitution Street in Sakhanka, had died, and the gas pipeline and residential buildings in Sakhanka on Konstitutsii Street and Tsentralnaya Street were damaged.

In Zaytsevo, civilian houses on 14 and 15 Brusilova Street and 10 Baksheyeva Street were damaged.

The death of a civilian is also noted in the report of the OSCE SMM in Ukraine¹.

“In Sakhanka and Pikuzy, the Mission clarified the circumstances of the incidents that occurred in March. The observers clarified reports about a man who died from shrapnel wounds in Sakhanka (not controlled by the government, 24 km northeast of Mariupol). On March 12, employees of the morgue in Starobeshevo (not controlled by the government, 32 km southeast of Donetsk) reported to the SMM team that on March 5, the body of a 59-year-old man

¹ The latest news from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine based on information as of July 1, 2019, 19:30 | OSCE. <https://www.osce.org/ru/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/415943>



The place of death of V. P. Neplyuy (59 years old) as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian army

died of shrapnel wounds to his head. On March 6, a 50-year-old resident of Sakhanka, who claimed to be a neighbor of the deceased, said that on the morning of March 4, after the shelling, he found this man with wounds to his head lying in the summer kitchen of his house”.

22.03.2020

The fact that civilians were wounded and many buildings were destroyed, was recorded and mentioned in the OSCE SMM's report¹:

“The Mission clarified reports of a man and a woman injured by shelling in Pikuzy (formerly Kominternovo; non-government-controlled, 23 km northeast of Mariupol) in two locations where observers had previously seen fresh craters and damage to residences (see Daily Report of March 25, 2019). At 112 Akhmatovoy Street, observers saw a resident (75 years old) with a bloody bandage on the right side of her chest, where she also had bruises; she said that she was wounded during shelling in the early morning of March 22 when she was in her home. About 300 meters further east-southeast, at 92 Akhmatovoy Street, the SMM team saw a resident (79 years old) with a scratch on the right side of his head, who said that he had been injured during shelling in the early hours of March 22 when he was in his home.

The SMM clarified media reports about the shelling of Pikuzy (formerly Kominternovo; non-government-controlled, 23 km northeast of Mariupol). On March 23, the Mission team saw fresh damage to two west-facing single-story windows at 112 Akhmatovoy Street: one was broken and the other was cracked. About 50 meters south-southeast of the house, members of the SMM patrol recorded two fresh craters. According to their assessment, the damage was caused by shells of an unknown type fired from the north-northwest direction.

Approximately 300 m further east-southeast at 92 Akhmatovoy Street, the Mission team saw two recently broken windows on the west side of a one-story house and fresh gaps in the metal door of a barn (facing north) located 4 m north-northwest of the house. Observers recorded a fresh crater in the yard of the house, about 10 meters to the west of the house. According to their assessment, the damage was caused by shells of an unknown type fired from the north. The resident of the house said that the shooting happened on the morning of March 22, when he and his wife were inside the house”.

¹ The latest news from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine based on information as of May 24, 2019, 19:30 | OSCE. <https://www.osce.org/ru/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/415187>

31.03.2019

As a result of shelling by soldiers of the 30th Brigade in Zaytsevo, two civilians living on Karbysheva Street received shrapnel wounds.

06.04.2019

As a result of the shelling by the AFU of the Trudovskaya settlement, a 46-year-old civilian residing at 30 Maksimelyanovskaya Street was wounded, and the city hospital No. 21 in Donetsk at Prospekt Maksimelyanovskaya Street was damaged. 12a Kremlevsky.

As a result of the shelling of Kominternovo by the AFU, two residential buildings on Akhmatovoy Street and Victory Street were damaged.

08.04.2019

As a result of mortar shelling by the AFU in Staromikhaylovka and Zaytsevo, a 79-year-old and a 21-year-old civilian were wounded.

12.04.2019

As a result of targeted sniper fire by servicemen of the 24th AFU brigade in the village of Aleksandrovka, a 53-year-old civilian was wounded by bullets.

05.05.2019

At 3:30 p. m., soldiers of the 24th AFU brigade opened fire from AGLS and small arms fire near the village of Elenovka, which resulted in a gunshot wound to a 34-year-old civilian who was driving his own car in the direction of the Novotroitskoye checkpoint.

08.05.2019

As a result of shelling by servicemen of the 24th Brigade in the Trudovskiye Microdistrict, Petrovsky District of Donetsk, a 56-year-old civilian was wounded while in the yard of a house.

27.05.2019

As a result of an explosive device dropped from a UAV of the AFU in the village of Gorlovka, a 70-year-old woman received a moderate shrapnel wound, an 11-year-old child was lightly wounded, and a residential building at 13 Pokydko St. was damaged.

30.05.2019

At 8:00 p. m., a 63-year-old civilian on Volny Lane 49 and an 8-year-old girl on Volny Lane 47 received shrapnel wounds as a result of a targeted shot from an ATGM fired by the Ukrainian Armed Forces in Veseloye village.

01.06.2019

At 7:10 p. m., a 54-year-old civilian was wounded and a 63-year-old civilian was concussed by mortar (82mm) fire from the 79th Brigade in the village of Leninskoye.

As a result of shelling by the AFU of Kominternovo, a 63-year-old civilian received multiple shrapnel wounds in the back.

02.06.2019

Over the past week, as a result of shelling by the AFU, twenty-nine households in Dokuchayevsk, Yasinovataya, Gorlovka, Aleksandrovka, and the Kievsky and Petrovsky districts of Donetsk were damaged.

Over the past five days, seven civilians, two of them young children, have been killed as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

06.06.2019

As a result of shelling by the AFU of Yasinovataya, a 33-year-old civilian living in the village of Shakhty im Gagarin was wounded and six houses on 8, 10, 12, 14, 19 Mayakovskogo Street and 32 Kashtanova Street were damaged.

09.06.2019

As a result of artillery (122mm) shelling by the Ukrainian armed forces in the village of Golmovsky, a 51-year-old civilian was wounded by shrapnel. As a result of a 152mm artillery shell hitting a private house in the village of Novaya Mariyivka, a 60-year-old civilian was wounded.

As a result of massive artillery shelling by the AFU, two residential buildings in Novaya Mariyivka on 20 Tsentralnaya Street and 22 Tsentralnaya Street were completely destroyed. In Mikhailovka, residential buildings at 3 and 5 Mayskaya St. were damaged. Because of the damaged power line, the village of Mikhailovka was deprived of electricity. In Zaytsevo, houses on 17, 19, 21, and 23 Brusilova Street

were damaged. In the village of Gagarina mine seven residential buildings on 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 13 Pereyaslavskaya Street, as well as an apartment on 6 Stozhka Street were damaged.

21.06.2019

As a result of grenade launcher and mortar (82mm) shelling by soldiers of the 57th AFU brigade in the settlement of Veseloye, a 63-year-old civilian was wounded by shrapnel.

22.06.2019



K.R. Svetlichnaya (14 years old), who was wounded as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian Armed Forces

K. R. Svetlichnaya (14 years old), who was wounded as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian Armed Forces

As a result of shelling by the AFU of the Gorlovka settlement on Botkina Street, K. R. was wounded. Svetlichnaya (14 years old). Mine blast trauma, shrapnel wound to the anterior surface of the right tibia. There is a 4×5 cm splinter in the leg.

26.06.2019

As a result of mortar shelling by the AFU in Trudovskaya, a 58-year-old civilian was wounded by shrapnel.

In the settlement of Dokuchayevsk, two residential buildings on 44 Mira Street and 11 Vatutina Street were damaged.

In Kominternovo, three houses on 82 Kirov Street, 27 and 37 Akhmatovoy Street and two houses in 18 and 27 Brusilova Street in Zaytsevo settlement were damaged.

28.06.2019

As a result of mortar shelling by servicemen of the 24th AFU Brigade in the Trudovskaya settlement, civilians on 84 Kosareva Street received shrapnel wounds. The woman was assisted on the spot. A 39-year-old man was taken to City Hospital #14 in Donetsk with a wound to the left shoulder and frontal area.

28.06.2019

Over the past week, as a result of shelling by the AFU, six civilians received wounds of varying degrees of severity, and fifty-two homes and buildings were destroyed and damaged in ten populated areas, including school No. 103 in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk.

02.07.2019

As a result of mortar (120mm) shelling by servicemen of the 24th Brigade in Trudovskaya village, a 37-year-old civilian living on Roborovskogo Street was wounded by shrapnel, houses on 10 Roborovskogo Street and 20 Krasnaya Street were damaged, in Kominternovo village on Chernyakhovskogo Street, 18, 19 and 27 Akhmatovoy Street, in Dzerzhinskoye village on Vartazarova Street, 12.

ammunition left after shelling by the Ukrainian Armed Forces. One woman (58 years old) died on the spot from multiple shrapnel wounds, a second woman (57 years old) was taken to hospital with injuries to her lower extremities.

11.09.2019

As a result of the shelling of Staromikhaylovka, two civilians were wounded — a 30-year-old man and a 55-year-old woman, and three private houses on 1a Chkalova Street and 4 and 16 Komarova Street were damaged.

11.09.2019

As a result of the shelling by the AFU of Trudovskaya settlement, a house at 67 Mamina-Sibiryaka Street caught fire.

At 15:10, soldiers of the 28th AFU brigade purposefully fired grenade launchers and small arms at the Emergencies Ministry's fire brigade, which arrived to eliminate the fire.

As a result of the shelling, three officers of the Ministry of Emergency Situations were wounded to various degrees of severity while extinguishing the fire in a private house.

17.09.2019

As a result of the shelling by the AFU, two civilians were wounded, and the village of Rozy was almost completely destroyed — residential buildings on Tsentralnaya Street, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were destroyed, and a school and kindergarten in Kachkarskoye were damaged. A gas pipe was damaged in the Trudovskaya mine village at 41 Krasnaya Zvezda Street.

19.09.2019

As a result of large-caliber machine gun fire by servicemen of the 28th AFU brigade in the village of Trudovskaya mine, a 45-year-old civilian suffered a bullet wound to his right shin.

22.09.2019

In the evening, soldiers of the Aidar battalion detained a 68-year-old civilian near the checkpoint in Mayorsk. At gunpoint, they took money

and valuables from the man. Afraid for his life, the man attempted to flee, but was wounded in the process of escape.

30.09.2019

As a result of shelling by the AFU of the village of Zaytsevo, a 54-year-old civilian was wounded at 10 Krasnykh Partizan Street.

A 59-year-old civilian was injured by gunfire from large-caliber machine guns and small arms fired by the AFU in the direction of the Gagarin Mine near the checkpoint in Mayorskoye.

01.10.2019

As a result of mortar (82mm) shelling by servicemen of the 53rd and 59th AFU Brigades in the settlement of Zaytsevo and Shakhty 6/7 in the settlement of Gorlovka, a 59-year-old civilian was wounded.

03.10.2019

At 5:50 p. m., as a result of shelling by soldiers of the 28th AFU brigade, a 37-year-old civilian was wounded in Staromikhaylovka and two buildings at 9 Gagarina Street and 11 Dnepropetrovskaya Street were damaged.

10.10.2019

At 5:00 pm, a 64-year-old civilian was wounded, and a residential house was damaged (address: 8, Krasnykh Partizan street) as a result of mortar fire (82 mm) targeted at Zaytsevo-Yuzhnoe, by the 59th military subdivision.

12.10.2019

Three civilians were injured by shrapnel, as a result of the detonation of an unknown explosive device, when they had been doing some cleaning works at the cemetery, the accident happened in Donetsk: 2 women (51 year old) and a 38-year-old man.

In the settlement of Starobeshevo, a 9-year-old child found and arms cache in the wood line, at the outskirts of the settlement. As he did not understand the hazard, the child detonated one of the fuses to a hand grenade, causing explosion resulted in the injury to his hand. According to the experts, the ammunition found by the child was left

by the Ukrainian soldiers who were occupying the positions in this area during the military operation, back in summer 2014.

20.10.2019

at 3:50 pm, a 61-year-old civilian woman was wounded, and a residential house was damaged (address: 55, Pustelnikova street) as a result of mortar fire (82 mm) by the 59th subdivision of Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF), the accident took place at the settlement of Gorlovka, Nikitovsky district.

25.10.2019

At 9:15 pm, a 50-year-old civilian was wounded, and a residential house was damaged (address: 39, Komsomolskaya street) as a result of mortar fire (82 mm), by the 92nd military subdivision of Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF), the accident took place at the settlement of Mineralnoye.

12.11.2019

In the village of Yasnoye, while preparing on-the-spot report from the damaged localities which had been discovered on 10.11.2019, a film production team from VGTRK Russia 24 came under fire from UAF.

29.11.2019

A 23-year-old civilian received shrapnel wounds to the head and upper limbs as a result of the attack from the UAF's infantry fighting vehicles, targeted to the settlement of Staromikhaylovka, some residential houses were damaged at the following addresses: 17, 37 and 38 Zhukovskogo Street.

26.12.2019

A 49-year-old civilian received shrapnel wounds to his head and the shoulder as a result of the UAF's 82-mm mortar fire.

In the settlement of Staromikhaylovka, five civilian residential houses (address: 40, 44, 46, 51 Shevchenko street and 10 Sovetskaya street) were damaged as a result of the attack from the UAF's infantry fighting vehicles.

2018

11.01.2018

In the settlement of Spartak, two civilians aged 33 and 31 were wounded as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack. In the settlement of Dolomitnoye, an elderly woman was wounded as a result of this attack.

An electric transmission line in a residential settlement was damaged as a result of UAF's mortar fire, which caused failure of power supply to the boiler stations. In the settlement of Dolomitnoye, two residential houses in Zheleznodorozhnaya street were destroyed.

22.01.2018

A regular bus came under the UAF's fire attack targeting the settlement of Elenovka. As a result of this fire attack one civilian was killed, and another one got wounded.

22.01.2018

At 5:30 pm Ukrainian Armed Forces carried out a mortar fire attack (120 mm) and IFV attack against the city of Dokuchayevsk. Five civilians were injured and got wounds of various degrees of severity, and a high-rise apartment building located at 83 Tsentralnaya Street was damaged.

12.02.2018

At 10:00 am, in the settlement of Spartak, in Sovetskaya street a civilian was wounded to his leg, as a result of UAF's small arms fire. The name of the injured civilian: A. M. Tishchenko (40 years old).

14.02.2018

At 12:00–12:30 (Kyiv time) the Ukrainian militaries carried out a fire attack to the city of Dokuchayevsk. This attack included 40 IFV-2 shots, 29 AGS-fired grenades, and fire by small arms.

As a result of the fire attack, the following buildings and facilities were damaged: school No. 3 (65, Lenina Street) — explosion in the corridor and in the teacher's room, window glazing was damaged; Dokuchayevskaya Boarding School (40, Lenina Street) — the dormitory building, the school wall and four windows were damaged;

barber shop “Summer”: damaged plastic window (1a, Melnikov street); a residential apartment: the fire caused by the shell hit (No 3, 22, Melnikova street).

26.02.2018

Ukrainian militaries fired on a civil vehicle — a Gazelle van owned by Dokuchayevsky bakery factory. The driver who was delivering bread to civilians, wasn't injured only because at the moment of the fire attack he wasn't inside the van. Ukrainian militaries hit the van twice.

02.03.2018

Twenty five settlements and adjacent areas were fired by the UAF during the last week. A civilian woman got wounded.

In the settlements of Gorlovka, Zaytsevo, Dokuchayevsk and in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, 24 residential buildings and houses were destroyed and damaged as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

30.03.2018

A civilian woman (aged 66) was killed, and 7 residential buildings and houses were destroyed and damaged as a result of the UAF's fire attacks to the settlements of Sakhanka, Zaytsevo, Gorlovka, Kominternovo, Shirokaya Balka and Dokuchayevsk.

07.04.2018

A 55-year-old civilian woman walking from the side of Ukraine to the direction of DPR through the Elenovka gateway checkpoint, was wounded in the back by a sniper shot made by a Ukrainian military man.

11.04.2018

Three civilians in Donetsk were wounded as a result of the UAF's artillery attack: V. Yu. Gerasimov (32 years old), mine-blast injury, multiple shrapnel wounds to the face, neck, chest; E. V. Martyshevskaya (40 years old), mine-blast injury, shrapnel wounds to the right upper and lower limbs, abdominal wound on the right; A. V. Senchenko (44 years old). Shrapnel wound of the upper part of neck.

The following buildings were damaged in Donetsk as a result of the UAF's fire attack:

Kuibyshevsky district: Nos 11, 13 (flat 2), 13(a), 14, 17 Lenkoranskaya street; 6, Luzina street; 10, Stepanenko lane; the building behind School No 63 — shell hit;

Kirovsky district, Abakumov's Shakhty settlement: 26, 27 Leontovicha street.

Staromikhaylovka settlement: 46, 48, 50 Lenina street;

11.04.2018

Four civilians were wounded in the Kuibyshevsky district, Donetsk, as a result of artillery and mortar fire, in the settlement of Staromikhaylovka 3 civilians were wounded.

15.04.2018

Near the settlement of Spartak the Ukrainian military forces started firing the agricultural machinery, as a target they selected a tractor plowing the land, they were shooting not to hit the target, but forcing the tractor driver to escape, continuing the attack on the opposite side. The tractor driver was not injured, but the tractor was seriously damaged and was out of operation.

17.04.2018

At 3:40 pm, the UAF deliberately shot the bus delivering the employees from the Donetsk Filtration Station. The bus with the station workers was going from the side of DFR near the settlement of Yasinovataya, as a result of this attack 5 workers were wounded.

19.04.2018

About at 11:30 am, when crossing the boundary between the Ukraine and DPR at Maryinka gateway checkpoint, a group of civilians came under the UAF's fire. As a result of this fire attack several residents of Gorlovka, Makeevka and Starobeshevo were wounded.

20.04.2018

During this week, 8 civilians were wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

22.04.2018

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks to the city of Dokuchayevsk, one civilian (V. G. Prokopenko) had numerous shrapnel wounds, and one civilian was killed after the fire attack to the settlement of Zaytsevo (A. N. Maskalets). In total, 9 civilians were wounded and 1 was killed during this week.

The UAF's fire attacks caused damages to 2 residential houses and an electric sub-station in Dokuchayevsk, in Donetsk and Kominternovo 3 residential houses were destroyed.

At the Donetsk Filtration Station, during the recovery works supervised by OSCE's representatives, the Ukrainian Armed Forces started a fire attack, in spite of the earlier guarantees provided.

26.04.2018

Beginning from 3:00 pm, UAF used large-caliber artillery and mortars to carry out the fire attack to Dokuchayevsk. Six artillery shells (152 mm), twenty mines (120 mm) and five mines (82 mm) were fired to the residential area of the city. Two civilians were killed as a result of the fire attack — a 78-year-old man and a 77-year-old woman.

27.04.2018

Two civilians were killed as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

On the same morning, the Ukrainian militaries interrupted the operational shift at the Donetsk Filtration Station with a mortar fire attack.

During this week, 3 civilians were killed and 9 civilians were wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

About 20 residential houses were damaged, with varying severity of damages — up to complete destruction.

28.04.2018

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks on 28.04.2018, some civilians from Dokuchayevsk were killed: A. P. Plokhikh (67 year old) and G. P. Basov

At 09:35 am, two civilians were killed as a result of the UAF's tank and 120-mm mortar fire attack to Dokuchayevsk (Bazarnaya and Polzunova streets). The names of the killed civilians: A. P. Plokhikh



As a result of the UAF's fire attacks on 28.04.2018, some civilians from Dokuchayevsk were killed: A.P.Plokhikh (67 year old) and G.P. Basov

(67 year old) and G. P. Basov, one woman wounded (L. Ya. Likhomed, 63 years old, shrapnel wound to the right shoulder) One of the bombs hit the public utilities van, the rest hit the residential houses causing damages.

30.04.2018

A civilian man was (42 years old) was wounded as a result of the UAF's gun fire attack from the side of Elenovka.

01.05.2018

At 01: 50 pm, as a result of the UAF's fire attack to residential buildings with the use of large-caliber small arms and automatic grenade launchers in the village of Verkhnetoretskoye, a 58-and 54-year-old spouses who were in the courtyard of their house on Krasnaya Street received shrapnel wounds.

04.05.2018

Fourteen settlements and adjacent areas were fired by the UAF during the last week. Two civilians were killed and six were wounded as a result of those attacks.

Twelve residential buildings and nine pieces of machinery were damaged.

06.05.2018

A civilian man (born in 1938) got a mine-blast injury and a residential house was damaged (in Bolnichnaya and Zagorodnaya streets) as a result of the UAF's fire attack from the side of the settlement of Golmovsky.

10.05.2018

A civilian woman (aged 65) got a concussion as a result of the UAF's fire attack from the side of Dokuchayevsk.

11.05.2018

Twenty one settlements and adjacent areas were fired by the UAF during the last week. Three civilians got injuries with varying severity, over 40 residential houses were damaged.

12.05.2018

In the settlement of Zaytsevo, one civilian was wounded and two buildings were damaged as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 24th subdivision.

In Dokuchayevsk, one civilian was wounded and a public school building was damaged as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 93rd subdivision.

14.05.2018

In the settlement of Shirokaya Balka, one civilian was wounded and three residential houses were destroyed (138a, 140, 144 Plotinnaya street) as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

17.05.2018

In the settlement of Zaytsevo, one civilian (61 years old) was wounded, 3 buildings and a gas pipeline were damaged as a result of the UAF's mortar fire (120 mm)

40 missiles were fired by UAF in the area adjacent to the Donetsk filtration station with the use of Grad MLRS, as a result of this fire attack the rotation of shifts was disrupted.

18.05.2018

In Gorlovka, in the Nikitovsky district of the city, two civilians were wounded (V. P. Zhukov, aged 60, and D. S. Zhyla, aged 33) as a result of the UAF's fire attack. In the settlements of Gorlovka, Zaytsevo, Golmovsky and Shakhty Gagarina, 7 residential buildings and a part of the gas pipeline were destroyed as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

19.05.2018

In Gorlovka, in the Komsomolsky district, a civilian woman (86 years old) and a civilian woman N. D. Dymchenko (34 years old) were killed as a result of the UAF's artillery fire attack. N. D. Dymchenko (34 years old) was killed as a result of the UAF's use of ammunition with shrapnel, which is prohibited by international conventions.

Death of civilians was included in the OSCE SMM's report¹:

After the UAF's artillery fire attack, on May 20, the OSCE SMM's team saw the body of a woman (43 years old) with an extensive wound in the upper right leg, and the body of a man (46 years old) with an extensive open wound and fracture of the lower right leg in the city mortuary in Gorlovka. On May 21, the medical staff members in Hospital No 2, in Gorlovka, said to the OSCE SMM's representatives, that both of these people died of shrapnel wounds on May 19. On May 23, a man who introduced himself as a son of the killed woman, said that on May 19 the man and the woman were in their garden at the address: 127, Poletayeva street, in the non-controlled by the government part of the settlement of Zaytsevo (50 km to the north-east from Donetsk), when the UAF started their fire attack. According to him, the man died on the spot, and his mother died later, in the hospital in Gorlovka.

20.05.2018

In the settlement of Zaytsevo, two civilians, a man and a woman (residing at 127, Poletayeva street, Gorlovka) were killed as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack.

At 6:30 am, in the settlement of Zaytsevo (98, Karbysheva street) a 76-year-old civilian got shrapnel wounds to his lower limbs and the right hand.

22.05.2018

Four civilians were injured in the settlement of Shakhty Gagarina as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

23.05.2018

In the settlements of Yakovlevka and Vasilievka, a civilian woman (72 years old, residing at 6, Vostochnaya street, Yakovlevka) got wounded as a result of the UAF's 120-mm mortar fire attack.

¹ The latest news from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine based on information as of May 23, 2018, 19:30 | OSCE. <https://www.osce.org/ru/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/382435>

25.05.2018

During the last week, two civilians were killed and six were wounded, over 30 residential houses were damaged as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

07.06.2018

In the settlement of Sakhanka, two civilians were injured as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 36th subdivision.

In the settlement of Zaytsevo, one civilian was injured as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 24th subdivision.

09.06.2018

As a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack (120 mm) to the settlements of Sakhanka and Leninskoye, two civilians were injured in Sakhanka, four residential houses, a gas pipeline and an electrical transmission line were damaged.

In the settlement of Zaytsevo, one civilian was injured as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

In the settlement of Vasilievka, one civilian woman was injured as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 92nd subdivision.

10.06.2018

In the settlement of Vasilievka, a 26-year-old woman who was staying in the courtyard of her house got an abdominal shrapnel wound as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack.

During the last 2 days, four civilians got wounds with varying degree of severity as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

11.06.2018

In Donetsk, in the Kuibyshevsky district, four civilians were injured as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 56th subdivision.

12.06.2018

At 12:00 am, a civilian woman (44 years old) got shrapnel wounds to the neck, left shoulder, forearm and shin as a result of the fire attack to Dokuchayevsk, by UAF's 93rd subdivision. The wounded civilian

was in an office room at the following address: 61a, Lenina street, Gorvodokanal building, 2nd floor.

In the settlement of Yasinovataya, one civilian woman was injured as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 56th subdivision.

14.06.2018

In the settlement of Aleksandrovka, a 26-year-old civilian was injured as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 30th subdivision.

In the settlement of Kominternovo, one civilian was injured as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 36th subdivision.

15.06.2018

In the settlement of Kominternovo, one civilian was injured, a residential house, an outbuilding and an electrical transmission line were damaged as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 36th subdivision.

In Dokuchayevsk, two apartments in a high-rise residential building in Lenin street were damaged as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 93rd subdivision.

At 06:30 pm, as a result of the UAF's 24th subdivision fire attack to the settlement of Zaytsevo, with the use of grenade launchers type SPG-9 and AGS-17, a 81-year-old civilian woman was wounded. The woman's name is K. B. Krasnobrizh, she was in her garden near the house, located at: 24, Brusilova street, Zaytsevo Diagnosis: multiple shrapnel wound to the head, upper and lower limbs.

During the last week, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, twelve civilians got wound of varying severity, 40 buildings were damaged, several electric transmission lines and the offices of Water of Donbass in Dokuchayevsk.

21.06.2018

A civilian (A. N. Vasilega, aged 36) was wounded as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 24th subdivision.

24.06.2018

In Dokuchayevsk, a civilian woman (76 years old) was injured, and a residential house (84, Lenina street) was damaged, as a result of the fire attack by UAF's 93rd subdivision.

25.06.2018

In the settlement of Sakhanka, a 50-year-old civilian got multiple shrapnel wounds to the face and upper limbs, as a result of a fire attack by the UAF's 36th subdivision.

24.07.2018

In Dokuchayevsk (4, Kommunalny lane), a civilian woman, Natalya Evgenyevna Britikova (born in 1987) got a shrapnel wound in her own yard, as a result of the IFV fire attack by the UAF's 93rd subdivision.

In the settlement of Kominternovo, five residential houses (15, 21, 23 Akhmatovoy street; 35, 37, 39 Pobedy street) were damaged as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

07.08.2018

In the settlement of Naberezhnoye, one civilian was injured as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 93rd subdivision. The name of the injured person was A. A. Zhilets (43 years).

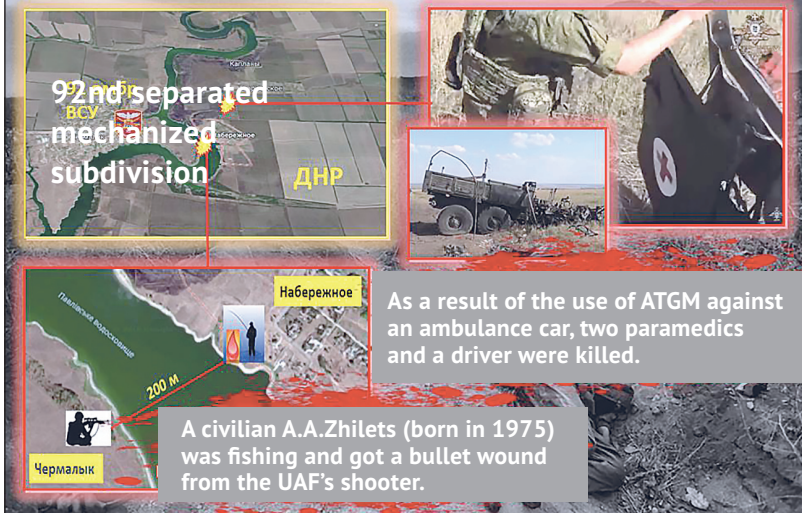
In the settlement of Staromikhaylovka, four residential buildings (54, 48 Dnepropetrovskaya street and 12, 16 Shevchenko street) were damaged as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 28th subdivision.

In the settlement of Gorlovka, 7 civil infrastructure facilities were damaged (4, Voroshilovgradskaya street; 15/49 Arkhipovka street; 5/7 Soviet Army street; 13/4 Mushketovskaya street; 1, 5 Golovanova street; 2 Shkolny lane; 25/4 Yasnaya street) as a result of shelling by soldiers of the 72nd subdivision.

An ambulance car heading to a destination to provide urgent medical care to a civilian, was subject to a fire attack by the UAF's 93rd subdivision who fired an anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) at the ambulance car. The missile hit the ambulance car which caused death to the driver and the medical staff.

On August 7, 2018, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, the ambulance car came under fire, as a result of this attack two paramedics and a driver were killed.

Жервы украински каратели



On August 7, 2018, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, the ambulance car came under fire, as a result of this attack two paramedics and a driver were killed

10.08.2018

In the settlement of Naberezhnoye, one civilian was injured as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

In the settlement of Kominternovo, two residential buildings (43, 50 Kirova street) were damaged as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 36th subdivision.

During the last week, in the settlements of Kominternovo, Gorlovka and Staromikhaylovka, 18 residential buildings were damaged as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

15.08.2018

In the settlement of Kominternovo, two civilian women (aged 76 and 79) were wounded and 7 residential buildings (located in Vatutina street, Pobedy street and Akhmatovoy street) were damaged as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 36th subdivision.

In the settlement of Gorlovka, the militaries from the UAF's 24th subdivision deliberately fired shells to School No 10.

17.08.2018

During the last week, three civilians were wounded, and in the settlements of Gorlovka, Staromikhaylovka, Dokuchayevsk, Kominternovo, Sakhanka and Sergeevka, 29 residential buildings were damaged, including a public school in Gorlovka.

29.08.2018

As a result of the UAF's fire attack to Dokuchayevsk, the civilian driver (born in 1961) was killed as a result of a direct hit of an ATGM into the cab of his truck.

In the settlement of Golmovsky, a residential house in Barabinskaya street was damaged as a result of the UAF's 72nd subdivision mortar (120 mm) and artillery (1520 mm) fire attack. In the settlement of Golmovsky, three residential houses (Komsomolskaya street and Nikitovskoe shosse) were damaged.

30.08.2018





31.08.2018, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, a 92-year-old civilian woman residing in the DPR was wounded and her house was damaged

As a result of the UAF's fire attack to the settlement of Kominternovo, a 92-year-old civilian got shrapnel wounds to her face, the left shoulder and the left hip, and in the settlement of Nikolaevka, the roof of a house in Shkolnaya street completely burnt down.

13.09.2018

In the settlement of Sakhanka, a civilian, V. P. Neplyuy (60 years) was wounded as a result of the fire attack to Kominternovo, Sakhanka, Leninskoye, Bezymennoe, Zaychenki, Novolaspa and Novaya Tavriya by the UAF's 36th subdivision, and a residential house in Gavrilenko street was damaged.

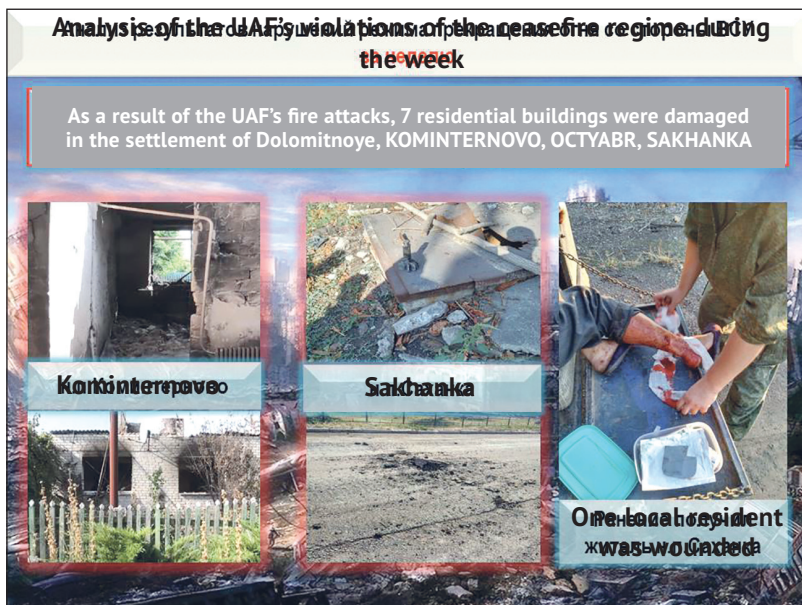
16.09.2018

Near the village of Styla, a 59-year-old man was killed as a result of an explosion on unexploded bomb.

19.09.2018

In the settlement of Yasinovataya, one civilian was wounded, a gas pipeline (Franko street) and one residential house (Vorovskogo street)

was damaged, as a result of the fire attacks with the use of IFV weapons, grenade launchers, heavy machine guns and small arms by the UAF's 56th, 28th and 92nd subdivisions, to the settlement of Yasinovataya, Zhabichevo, Spartak, Lozovoye, Krutaya Balka, Trudovskaya.



A resident of Sakhanka, V.P.Neplyuy (60 years) was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks and residential buildings were damaged in Kominternovo and Sakhanka

23.09.2018

At 10:50 am, as a result of the IFV fire attack to the residential sector of Sakhanka, by the UAF's 36th subdivision, two civilians (a 56-year-old man and 46-year-old woman) were wounded, a transformer substation was damaged which caused the interruption of power supply to six settlements: Sakhanka, Sergeevka, Dzerzhinskoye, Leninskoye, Zaychenko and Kominternovo/

Twelve residential buildings (Nansen street and Artilleristov street) were damaged as a result of the UAF's mortar (120 mm) fire attack to the settlement of Shakhty Gagarina.

27.09.2018

At 01:25 pm, in the settlement of Kominternovo, two civilians were wounded in the courtyard of their house (a 61-year-old man and a 60-year-old woman), as a result of the fire attack by the UAF's 36th subdivision.

30.09.2018

Three children were killed, and one was seriously injured, at the gateway checkpoint near a Ukraine-controlled settlement of Mayorsk, this accident happened in a wood line, as a result of tripping an explosive device.

The below data is presented according to the wounded boy: Kirill Korobov (7th grade pupil), Andrey Maksimenko (13 years old), Vitaly Berbinov (8th grade pupil) All boys were pupils at School No 30.

According to EMERCOM's report, approximately at 11: 40, four teenagers were walking across the territory of the military operating site, from Bessarabka to Mayorsk, and tripped a mine. Three of them were killed by the blast. One of the boys — D.V. Tulup (10 years old) — was wounded. Diagnosis: shrapnel wounds of the soft tissues of the entire body.



Kirill Korobov (7th grade pupil), Andrey Maksimenko (13 years old), Vitaly Berbinov (8th grade pupil) Three children were killed on September 30, 2018 as a result of explosion of an explosive device, near the gateway checkpoint in the area of Ukraine-controlled settlement of Mayorsk.

01.10.2018

In the settlement of Staromikhaylovka, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, a 16-year-old teenager got multiple shrapnel wounds.

07.10.2018

A 55-year-old civilian was injured as a result of the targeted sniper fire by the militaries of the UAF's 28th subdivision, in the settlement of Trudovskaya. During the last 24 hours, 6 civilians complained about the sniper shooting their houses. Bullet marks on cars and farm buildings indicate that the Ukrainian militaries conducted targeted fire to the civilians.

14.10.2018

In the settlement of Maryevka, two civilian women (47 years and 17 years old, a mother and a daughter) were injured as a result of the UAF's mortar (120 mm) fire.

23.10.2018

In the area of Dzerzhinsk, an emergency repair brigade of "Water of Donbass" company was going on their KrAZ vehicle to the place of repair works, their truck exploded when crossing the UAF's mine barrier. Two repair men got multiple shrapnel wounds and a shell-shock.

2017

31.01.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attack to the civilian infrastructure and residential buildings the following damages were recorded: in Donetsk (169 a/b/c/d/e Artyoma street), in the settlement Krupskoy (14 Avrory street, 234 Avdeeva street) A scientific and research institution (91 Tchelyuskintsev street) was also a subject of the UAF's fire attack, near the Mayak market, a high-explosive shell hit was recorded. In the settlement of Makeevka, in Tchervonogvardeysky district (17 Togliatti street) a shell hit the gas pipeline with further gas inflammation.

One civilian woman was killed, another civilian was injured as a result of the UAF's fire attack to the civilian localities.

01.02.2017

During the last 24 hours, two civilians (L.V. Tretyakova and V.I. Serkova) were killed, 5 civilians were injured with varying degree of severity, as a result of the UAF's artillery fire attacks. In Donetsk, an ambulance car came the UAF's fire attack, as a result of this attack, a driver and two civilians were injured.

In the settlement of Makeevka, in the Kirovsky district a kindergarten No. 29, an outpatient hospital (Popanina street) and two residential buildings were damaged, as a result of the UAF's fire attack. In the Tchervonogvardeysky district of Makeyevka, three buildings were completely destroyed, in the Kievsky district of Donetsk, 15 buildings were damaged, in the Kuibyshev district of Donetsk, 5 houses were damaged, in the village of Leninskoye two houses (43, 45 Gagarin street) were damaged.

At 9:47 a. m., as the UAF's fire attack caused a blackout of the Verkhnekalmiusskaya filtration plant. According to reports from plant workers, there was an odor of chlorine in the air. The consequences of this fire attack caused a drop in the pressure of water supply to Donetsk and other areas. In the settlement of Kominternovo the fire attack caused damages to the gas pipeline.

02.02.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attack, seven civilians got shrapnel wounds: three of them in Donetsk, 1 civilian in Makeevka and 2 civilians in Kominternovo. In the village of Novodzerzhinskoye (Novoazovsky district) a residential house was completely destroyed, in Makeevka 17 buildings and houses were damaged, in Donetsk, in the Kievsky district, three houses were damaged. Uragan MLRS were used for the fire attacks to Donetsk.

The fact that civilians were wounded and many buildings were destroyed, was recorded and mentioned in the OSCE SMM's report¹:

“According to the OSCE SMM in Ukraine, near the roundabout intersection in the Kalininsky district of Donetsk, the observers noticed

¹ Operational report prepared by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine: Victims and damages to civilian infrastructure recorded in the Donetsk region after the UAF's military operations| OSCE <https://www.osce.org/ru/ukraine-smm/297621>

a fresh crater which had formed as a result of the explosion of a rocket from MLRS (presumably “Smerch” or “Uragan”) from a destination located in the range between west and north. The shock wave caused the windows to shatter and caused damages to the doors and gates of the houses located within a radius of 170 m. A shop located at a distance of about 10 m to the south-east from the roundabout, and very close to the explosion site, was also destroyed. Moreover, about 70 m away from the explosion site, a car was destroyed, and the metal gates of the house were torn off as a result of excessive pressure which proves the fact that there had been an explosion.

About 30 m to the south from the explosion site, the SMM’s unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) recorded a five-floor hostel building, where the roof was torn off, and all the windows were shattered. At a car wash located about 170 m away, to the north-west of the explosion site, the gates were dented in, and minor damages were recorded at a petrol station located behind the car wash. About 260 m away, to the south-east of the explosion site, the SMM’s UAV recorded the DPR’s facility with two multi-purpose light armored tractors (MT-LB) inside the territory. The hostel supervisor where internally displaced persons lived, said that two of them were injured. The observers visited the mortuary, where they were informed by the staff that the body of a man was brought to them along with the partial remains of another victim.

In Artyoma street, in Donetsk, the SMM team saw two fresh explosion craters: one was on the steps at the entrance to a residential apartment building, the second was on the road, at a distance of 15–20 m to the north of the house. According to observers, the craters appeared as a result of the hit of MLRS missiles (BM-21 “Grad”, 122 mm) launched from some destination in the west. Half of all the windows on the south-west side of the house were shattered. In Sobinov street, the observers recorded a fresh crater in the courtyard of the house and determined that it had formed as a result of MLRS missile (BM-21) hit. In the neighboring house two windows on the eastern side were shattered. In the territory of a school located in the same street, the SMM team saw one fresh crater at a distance of 10 m from the school building. According to observers, the crater was a result of the MLRS missile (BM-21) hit. The building’s facade

was damaged and windows in the northern side of the building were shattered. It turned out impossible to determine the direction of the fire attack.

In Kievsky Avenue, the observers recorded two explosion sites (one was in the first and the second was in the fourth floor of two residential buildings), as well as they noticed some shrapnel damages on the neighboring houses. There were holes in the exterior walls of several apartments in the western side, as well as shattered windows. The SMM team concluded that one attack was with the use of MLRS (BM-21), and the other one was an artillery attack (with the caliber of at least 122 mm). In both cases, the shells were launched from the destination in the north-western direction. According to local residents, the above-mentioned explosions in Donetsk took place on February 2 in the period between 10:20 pm to 11: 30 pm”.

25.02.2017

In the settlement of Krasny Partyzan, in Yasinovatovsky district, a civilian woman (residing at 1, 70-th Anniversary of October Revolution street) got a mine-blast injury and shrapnel wounds to her head as a result of the UAF’s mortar fire attack (120 mm).

07.03.2017

Two civilians were wounded as a result of the UAF’s mortar fire attack: E. V. Sidorova (57 years old, in Krutaya Balka), the fire attack was from the side of Kamenka, and V. S. Yurchenko (21 years old, in Kominternovo), the fire attack was from the side of Vodyanoye.

10.03.2017

As a result of the UAF’s fire attack, 50 residential houses were damaged in the following settlements: Aleksandrovka, Trudovskaya, Donetsk, Zaytsevo, Gorlovka, Yasinovataya, Dokuchayevsk, Sakhanka, Elenovka and Luganskoye. The UAF militaries conducted targeted fire attacks to vital infrastructure facilities — after the mortar and artillery fire attacks the electric transmission lines were damaged which caused interruptions in the electricity supply for the settlements of Kominternovo, Zaychenko, Leninskoye and Sakhanka. Drones are used for adjusting the UAF’s fire to the vital infrastructure facilities.

The situation around the Donetsk filtration station is especially serious. For a few days repair teams were not able to proceed with the maintenance and repair because of the continued UAF's fire attacks.

11.03.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks to the settlement of Yasinovataya, two civilians were wounded by shrapnel: V. A. Drach (19 years old) and L. P. Rodoshkevich (65 years old).

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks with the use of "Grad" MLRS the following damages were recorded: residential houses in the settlement of Luganskoye (26 Klubnaya street, 7 Sadovaya street, 43 Ushakova street), residential houses in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk (83 Mark Ozerny street, 73 Zeleny Gai street, 106 Shestakova street), and one residential house in the Kievsky district (10 Akhromeeva street).

14.03.2017

As a result of the UAF's artillery fire attacks, 5 civilians got wounds of varying severity. Thirteen houses were damaged, six of them are located in the Kuibyshevsky district of Donetsk: 1a Kolkhoznaya street, 32 Abrosimova street; 74, 103, 105 Krasnoznamennaya street; 210 Artyomovoskaya street; one residential house in Yasnoye (13 Valova street) and six houses in the settlement of Spartak (Tsentralnaya street).

15.03.2017

In the settlement of Zaytsevo, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, a civilian I. I. Tebenko (46 years old) was killed, and one civilian was injured (V. N. Shevchenko, aged 39).

As a result of the UAF's fire attack, two residential houses were damaged in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk (29, 33 Roborovskogo street) and one residential house in the settlement of Yasinovataya (15 Tretiy Kvartal).

22.03.2017

A 59-year-old civilian got shrapnel wounds as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

In Kommunarovka, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks a school and a kindergarten (2b, 4 Tsentralnaya street), 2 houses in Ochyabrskaya

street (67 and 68), a private residential house in Zaytsevo (8 Esenina street). In Aleksandrovka, one house was damaged (29 Ordzhonikidze street), in Dokuchayevsk two apartments were damaged (5-floor house, 100 Lenina street) and a residential house (8 Bazarnaya street).

23.03.2017

Near the settlement of Krutaya Balka, a 57-year-old civilian woman was wounded to her foot, as a result of sniper fire by the UAF's militaries.

In the Kievsky district of Donetsk, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, a 23-year-old civilian woman got multiple shrapnel wounds, she was out in the street with her three-month-old baby during the attack and covered the baby with her body to protect him from the mine shrapnel.

As a result of the UAF's fire attack, 8 residential houses in Donetsk were damaged: five houses in the Petrovsky district (7, 8, 12 Andrusova street, 8 Serafimovicha street, 1 Ananchenko street (Medical and sanitary support center), and 3 houses in the Kievsky district (15, 16, 17 Zhelyabova street).

29.03.2017

A 75-year-old civilian woman was killed in the Kievsky district of Donetsk, as a result of the UAF's artillery fire attack (56 Sacco and Vanzetti street).

As a result of the UAF's artillery fire attack, the following damages occurred: in the Kuibyshevsky district of Donetsk (36 Gradostroitel'naya street), in the Kievsky district (4 (flat 44) Chapaeva street, 56 Sacco and Vanzetti street), in Mineralnoye 4 residential houses were damaged (24, 26, 33, 35 Lenina street), the electricity supply to the half of the settlement was interrupted.

During the UAF's mortar fire attack, the electric sub-station was damaged, this sub-station supplied electricity to the Donetsk filtration station, as a result of this attack the station was de-energized.

30.03.2017

A civilian woman (aged 89) got a shrapnel wound, as a result of the UAF's fire attack to Donetsk (Petrovsky district, 4 Polyarnaya street).

As a result of the UAF's fire attack, 18 residential houses were damaged: 3 houses in Mineralnoye (7, 9, 11 Komsomolskaya street), 2 houses in Sakhanka (Sergeevka street), one house in Dokuchayevsk (82 Lenina street) and 12 houses in Donetsk, in the Petrovsky district (2, 3 Sokolovskogo street; 10, 17 Revyakina street; 35, 59 Marka Ozernogo street; 13 Karbysheva street; 14 Zeleny Gai street; 77 Karnavalnaya street; 167 Petrovskogo street; 2 Revyakina street (School No 87), 4 Populyarnaya street where an aged woman born in 1928 was injured by shrapnel)

07.04.2017

As a result of the UAF's artillery fire attack to the settlement of Shevchenkovo, a civilian woman, E. I. Niftenkova (23-year old) was severely wounded by shrapnel when the shell hit the house directly, the school building in the settlement was also damaged. Totally 8 houses (Mira street) were damaged in this settlement.

09.04.2017

The electricity supply to the settlements of Elenovka, Signalnoye and Luganskoye was interrupted as a result of the UAF's fire attack causing damages to the electricity transmission lines.

25.04.2017

Two civilians were wounded as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack of the Petrovsky district of Donetsk: A. N. Butenko (62 years old) and S. V. Butenko (60 years old).

In the settlement of Zaytsevo, one residential house was damaged (36 Latzisa street) as a result of the UAF's fire attack to the settlement.

26.04.2017

Four civilians were injured as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack. As a result of the UAF's artillery attack to Dokuchayevsk, a residential house was damaged (98 Lenina street).

27.04.2017

Near the settlement of Krutaya Balka, a vehicle delivering the service personnel from Vasilievka pumping station was fired by the

UAF militaries. The station service crew was forced to abandon the vehicle and escape to the safer place under continuing UAF's fire attack.

28.04.2017

As a result of a random tank attack to Makeyevka and Yasinovataya, at 06:00 am, a two-floor residential building in Makeyevka was damaged, at the moment of the fire attack, inside the building there were 26 persons, 4 of them were children.

02.05.2017

Two civilians were injured in the settlement of Yakovlevka and in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, as a result of the mortar fire attack: A. N. Derkach (52 years old) and S. S. Lopatyuk (37 years old). Also, when extinguishing a fire in the residential building in the settlement of Yakovlevka which was caused by the UAF's fire attack, a civilian, I. A. Sukhov (46 years old) received burns.

As a result of the UAF's fire attack to civilian facilities, 12 buildings were damaged, including: 5 residential houses in the settlement of Zaytsevo, one house in Yakovlevka, and in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk 5 houses and School No 103 were damaged.

As a result of the UAF's tank and mortar fire attack to Avdeevskaya Industrial Zone, the Donetsk filtration station was again experienced power supply interruption.

03.05.2017

A civilian woman (V.G. Ryschenko, 53 years old) was killed, 3 residential houses in the settlement of Mineralnoye were damaged, as a result of the UAF's fire attack to civilian localities.

08.05.2017

A civilian, R.N. Moshkin (43 years old) was injured, and 4 residential houses were damaged, as a result of the UAF's fire attack to the Kirovsky district of Donetsk.

Two residential houses were damaged in the settlement of Mineralnoye, as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

12.05.2017

Two civilians were wounded in the Kuibyshevsky district of Donetsk (Spartak street) as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

13.05.2017

In the period between 03.00 am and 05.00 am, two civilians were wounded as a result of the UAF's mortar and artillery fire attack to Dokuchayevsk. Their names are: N. I. Medvedeva (aged 57) and I. V. Prokopenko (aged 23), 22 residential houses were damaged.

Six residential houses were damaged in Donetsk (Gorky street and Mamina-Sibiriyaka street) as a result of the UAF's artillery attack. Two residential houses were damaged as a result of a direct mine hit.

14.05.2017

As a result of the UAF's small arms fire attack, in Kominternovo, a civilian, N. I. Volkov (born in 1991) was killed, and near the settlement of Yasinovataya, a civilian woman, N. A. Kalimullina (88 years old) was wounded.

In the settlement of Zaytsevo (Rybalko street), two residential houses were damaged as a result of the UAF's fire attack with the use of a grenade launching machine.

16.05.2017

In the settlement of Yakovlevka, a civilian P. N. Slobadenyuk (aged 75) was wounded as a result of the UAF's artillery attack.

In the Kirovsky district of Donetsk, a residential house was damaged, and in the settlement of Spartak, a residential house was destroyed as a result of a direct artillery hit by the UAF's militaries.

18.05.2017

A civilian woman R. N. Burova (aged 62) was killed and a civilian man V. Yu. Nakrapas (aged 34) was wounded, as a result of the UAF's fire attack to the settlement of Krutaya Balka. Besides that, four residential houses were damaged in this settlement. In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, two residential houses were damaged.

In the settlement of Golmovsky, 8 residential houses and 2 schools were damaged as a result of the UAF's artillery and mortar fire attacks.

21.05.2017

In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, two civilians were wounded at the bus stop "Trudovskaya" as a result of the UAF's fire attacks: V. B. Bairaka (54 years old) and N. A. Usovich (51 years old), 4 residential houses in Makeevka were damaged.

22.05.2017

A civilian woman V. N. Pleshkova got shrapnel wounds as a result of the UAF's artillery attack to the settlement of Spartak.

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks, nine residential and administrative buildings were damaged, among them are: one residential house in Yasinovataya, one residential house and food store in Spartak, one residential house in each of the localities — Yasinovataya, Kuibyshevsky and Petrovsky districts of Donetsk, and 4 residential houses in Dokuchayevsk.

25.05.2017

As a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack to the bus station "Trudovskaya" in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, three civilians were wounded: V. I. Soldatov (aged 64), L. V. Zhilina (aged 54) and T. N. Kot (aged 75) During this fire attack two children were also among other people at that bus stop, they weren't injured as the civilians around them helped the children to come to the shelter.

In the settlement of Golmovsky, a civilian woman G. V. Zaytseva (aged 74) was wounded and a residential house was damaged, as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

Three residential houses were damaged in the Kirovsky and Petrovsky districts of Donetsk, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

27.05.2017

In the settlement of Staromikhaylovka, a civilian woman T. M. Anischenko (aged 76) was wounded, and two residential houses

were damaged as a result of the UAF's fire attacks. Moreover, the fire attacks caused interruptions in the electricity supply in the settlement of Lozovoye.

01.06.2017

In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, a civilian O.A. Kushchenko (aged 48) was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attack:

06.06.2017

In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, at 09:00 pm, in the eyes of her little son, a civilian woman T. Zaychenko (aged 37) was killed, as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack. The child was taken to the hospital with abdominal injuries and is in a serious condition. The child has orphaned after his mother's death, as his father had died before.

A civilian woman G. I. Glinskaya (aged 72) was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attack from the side of Yasinovataya.

As a result of the UAF's tank, mortar (120 mm and 82 mm) and AGL fire attack to the settlement of Krutaya Balka, the electricity transmission lines were damaged which caused the interruption in the power supply of the Donetsk filtration station.

As a result of the UAF's massive mortar attack to the settlement of Lukovo, three residential buildings, buildings of the tractor brigade and nine units of agricultural equipment were damaged by the shell hit. In Dokuchayevsk a residential house was damaged.

06.06.2017

As a result of the UAF's massive mortar and artillery attack to the settlements of Krutaya Balka, Staromikhaylovka and Trudovskiy, 11 residential buildings were damaged and 8 civilians were wounded.

09.06.2017

In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, 7 residential houses and a gas supply line in Lugovskogo street were damaged as a result of the UAF's fire attacks. The electricity supply to the settlement of Sakhanka was interrupted.

10.06.2017

A civilian V. F. Gubashov (aged 56) was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

In the settlements of Aleksandrovka and Trudovskaya, 6 residential houses were damaged. In Trudovskaya, 27 transformer sub-stations were de-energized.

11.06.2017

A civilian was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks. In the settlements of Vasilievka, Sakhanka and Trudovskaya, 6 residential houses were damaged. The electricity supply to the settlement of Krasny Partizan was interrupted.

13.06.2017

Two civilians were killed as a result of the UAF's fire attack to Donetsk: L. V. Artemyeva (aged 80) and V. V. Soloviev (aged 54).

The mine explosion in the Gorlovsky district caused injuries to two civilians.

In Dokuchayevsk, in the Petrovsky, Kuibyshevsky and Kievsky districts of Donetsk, 5 residential houses were damaged as a result of the UAF's fire attacks. In Dokuchayevsk, electricity and gas supply was interrupted.

15.06.2017

In the Kievsky district of Donetsk, a civilian V. I. Pyskov (aged 60) was wounded, as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

In the settlements of Golmovsky, Krutaya Balka, in the Petrovsky and Kuibyshevsky districts of Donetsk, 9 residential houses were damaged, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

16.06.2017

During the last week, in the settlement of Trudovskaya two civilians were killed and two were wounded, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

In the settlement of Sakhanka, a civilian woman was killed by the UAF's sniper fire.

In the north-eastern part of Gorlovka, two civilians were injured as a result of a car explosion on a mine, and one civilian was also injured in the Kievsky district of Donetsk.



*DPR civilians killed and wounded during the week of June 9-15, 2017
as a result of the UAF's fire attacks*

19.06.2017

In Kominternovo, a civilian woman E. S. Pokushalova (aged 29) was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attack

20.06.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attack to the settlement of Yasinovataya, a civilian woman E. G. Litvinenko (81 years old) was injured, later these injuries caused her death.

23.06.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attack two civilians were killed.

As a result of the UAF's fire attack to 34 settlements, in 12 of them 46 residential houses were destroyed or damaged.

In the settlements of Donetsk Severny, Kashtanovoje, Krasny Partizan, Kominternovo, Zaychenko, Novotavriya, Dzerzhinsk the electric power supply was interrupted.

24.06.2017

A civilian woman I. M. Zabrodina (aged 54) was injured as a result of the UAF's fire attack to Dokuchayevsk.

30.06.2017

During the last week, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, a civilian man (I. V. Shakilov, aged 57) was wounded in the settlement of Staromikhaylovka, and a civilian woman (I. M. Zabrodina, aged 54) was wounded in Dokuchayevsk.

10.07.2017

Between 09:00 pm and 10:00 pm, as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack (82 mm and 120 mm) to the settlement of Trudovskoy, one of the shells directly hit a private house (11 Galicheskaya street). Two civilians: E. E. Pavlichenko (aged 50) and V. A. Smakovsky (aged 50) got multiple shrapnel wounds.

A residential house (92 Zelenay Gai street) got burnt and was completely destroyed. The fire brigade which was sent to this address became a target of the UAF's deliberate mortar fire attack. The crew members were lucky enough and nobody was injured or killed as a result of this attack, the fire vehicle was partially damaged.

In the course of this attack, 4 transformer sub-stations were damaged, which caused interruptions in electricity supply to 10 streets.

The UAF also had an artillery attack (122 mm) and mortar attack (120 mm) to Dokuchayevsk. As a result of these attacks, four residential houses were damaged.

14.07.2017

A civilian woman residing in DPR was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, which also caused damages to residential houses during the week from July 7–14, 2017

Two civilians were wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

Thirty-three settlements were shelled by the UAF, in two of those settlements there were 12 residential buildings — damaged or destroyed by the fire attacks. In the settlement of Trudovskaya, the electricity transmission lines were damaged which caused interruption in the electricity supply to 10 streets.



Two civilians and one service man from DPR Armed Forces were wounded.

A civilian woman residing in DPR was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, which also caused damages to residential houses during the week from July 7 - 14, 2017

18.07.2017

A civilian woman, E. N. Antonova (aged 54, residing at 15 Komsomolskaya street) was killed as a result of the UAF's fire attacks to the settlement Staromikhaylovka in the Kirovsky district of Donetsk. The following civilians were injured: A. A. Pervushkin (aged 53, residing at 16 Dnepropetrovskaya), N. I. Marutchenko (aged 70, residing at 7 Dalnevostochnaya street), some residential houses were destroyed.

In the Kuibyshevsky district of Donetsk, a civilian woman N. F. Chichuy (aged 68) was injured at 32 Rustaveli street as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

In Rybalko street (No 30b), the roof coating got burnt as a result of a direct hit to the roof of a private, 2-floor building.

In the settlement of Yasinovataya (14, 17 Gogolya street), private residential houses were partially damaged.

20.07.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attack to the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, the following civilians were wounded: A. M. Milanov (aged 40), T. F. Tolmacheva (aged 63), N. A. Zalada (aged 79).

Some residential houses in Zeleny Gai street (No 57, 95 and 97) were damaged — fire outbreak at the private abandoned houses, 27 Marka Ozernogo street — damaged gas supply line, direct hit by the shell. Bakinskikh Komissarov (No 30A) — direct hit, the house is destroyed, there was an unexploded mine in the courtyard; 12 Dnepropetrovskaya street — damaged walls of the building, roof and windows, 97 Partizanskaya street — direct hit by the shell fired by the UAF.

Dokuchayevsk, Vladimira Krepkogo street — a store building was destroyed.

21.07.2017

During the last week, one civilian woman died and six civilians were injured as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

During the last week the UAF's fire attacks to 34 settlements and adjacent areas caused the following damages: in 9 of the settlements there were 21 residential buildings — destroyed or damaged by the fire attacks.

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks, local transformer sub-stations were damaged which caused electricity supply interruption in the settlements of Leninskoye, Dzerzhinskoye, Kominternovo, Novaya Tavriya and Zaychenko.

22.07.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks, in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk the following damages occurred: a gas supply line was damaged (18 Lukyanenko street), a fire outbreak at a private residential house (56 Mamina-Sibiriyaka street).

As a result of the UAF's fire attack, in the settlement of Staromikhaylovka a private residential house got burnt and was completely destroyed (50 Chernogorskaya street).

26.07.2017

As a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack to the settlement of Trudovskaya, a civilian A. N. Tipko got multiple shrapnel

wounds. In Aleksandrovka a 17-year-old civilian was injured (S. B. Romanchuk).

As a result of a direct shell hit to a residential house (47 Chernogorskaya street), the house got burnt and was completely destroyed. When a fire brigade arrived to extinguish the occurred fire outbreak, the UAF militaries continued shelling this area.

During this attack a residential house (84 Kosareva street) was damaged.

29.07.2017

In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, as a result of the UAF's fire attack two residential houses were damaged, this attack also caused electricity supply interruption in the settlements of Trudovskaya and Zhilploschadka.

As a result of the UAF's targeted fire attack to the gas supply line (Petrovsky district, Lugovskogo street) with the use of IFV, the gas supply to the residential houses was interrupted.

During the last week the UAF militaries shelled 30 settlements and adjacent areas, in 5 of the settlements there were 13 residential houses destroyed or damaged.

Ukrainian mortar crews use 120-mm lighting mines which serve as incendiary ammunition. In Kominternovo and in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, the use of lighting mines caused complete destruction of 2 residential houses.

After the fire caused by the mine hit started, the UAF militaries wait for the fire brigade and members of the local community to gather for extinguishing the fire, and start mortar shelling again, but at this point they use regular mines (120 mm).

29.07.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attack to Staromikhaylovka (Kirovsky district of Donetsk), two civilians were wounded: A. V. Krasnik (aged 60) and E. A. Batueva (aged 78).

03.08.2017

At around 7:00 pm, the Ukrainian militaries fired a mine (82 mm) to the Donetsk filter station and the adjacent territory, as a result of the mine blast the windows were shattered in one of the buildings.

04.08.2017

Two civilians were wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

During the week, 30 settlements and adjacent areas were shelled by the UAF, 6 residential houses were destroyed in 4 of those settlements.

10.08.2017

At around 6:00 pm, in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, after the fire started in the residential sector and the fire brigade arrived at the destination, the UAF militaries started shelling the fire vehicle using the large-caliber machine guns.

Around 4:30 pm, in Dokuchayevsk, a local resident A. A. Yankovsky (aged 66) was cutting grass in the territory of Tchudnovsky garden community and was blown by a trip wire mine, which had been installed by UAF. The man died in the hospital because of the wounds he had.

11.08.2017

During the last week, 33 settlements and adjacent areas were shelled by the UAF, 21 residential houses were destroyed in 7 of those settlements.

One civilian was killed and one was injured as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

14.08.2017

A drunk Ukrainian serviceman stopped a bus delivering the employees of the municipal enterprise "Water of Donbass", most of them were women, who were going back home after completing their work shift at the enterprise.

15.08.2017

In Sakhanka, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, a civilian woman (aged 71) got a shrapnel wound at 20 Konstitutsii street and a gas supply line was damaged (24 Konstitutsii street). Also an electricity transmission line was damaged, and the power supply to the following settlements was interrupted: Sakhanka, Kominternovo, Zaychenko, Novaya Tavriya, Leninskoye and Dzerzhinskoye.

As a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack (82 mm) to the settlement of Krutaya Balka, one of the mines hit a house (18 Shirokaya street)

where there was a civilian inside the house, who received a severe psychological trauma.

In the settlement of Yasinovataya, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks 2 residential houses were damaged (74 Kommunalnaya street and 22 Poltavskaya street).

In the settlement of Spartak, as a result of the fire attack 4 houses in Chapaeva street were burnt (53, 55, 56, 57) and in the Kievsky district of Donetsk a part of a residential house was burnt (4 Deputatskaya street). Two residential houses (52 Letchikov street and 37 Karnavalnaya street) were damaged in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk.

18.08.2017

In the settlement of Zaytsevo (14 Brusilova street), a civilian S. I. Vasilet (aged 59) got a shrapnel wound as a result of the UAF's artillery fire attack.

During the last week 4 civilians were injured as a result of the UAF's fire attacks. Totally 32 settlements and adjacent areas were shelled by the UAF militaries, 24 houses were damaged in 7 of those settlements.

19.08.2017

In the outskirts of Gorlovka, as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack, a civilian woman E. S. Vilenskaya (2 Revolyutsionnaya street) was wounded.

21.08.2017

In the settlement of Yasinovataya, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, a civilian woman V. G. Voronezhskaya, aged 69 (2 Revolyutsionnaya street) was wounded. Another target during the fire attack was a repair and maintenance shop, where the facade and the glazing were damaged.

In the Kuibyshevsky, Kievsky and Petrovsky districts of Donetsk, 7 residential houses were damaged.

The fact that civilians were wounded and many buildings were destroyed, was recorded and mentioned in the OSCE SMM's report¹:

¹ The latest news from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine based on information as of August 20, 2017, 19:30 | OSCE. <https://www.osce.org/ru/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/336136>

“According to OSCE SMM in Ukraine, on August 20, the observers checked the message received from a DPR member about the victims among civilian population that had been recorded a day before in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk (at a distance of 15 km to the south-west from the city center, 115 Zeleny Gai street). In front of the building of the city hospital No. 14, members of the Mission patrol saw a covered body being placed in a vehicle intended for transporting the bodies to the mortuary. At the hospital, the observers saw a 46-year-old man with a bandage on his right elbow, who reported that he had been injured by shrapnel as a result of the explosion that occurred in the courtyard of a house where he and other members of the fire brigade had been trying to extinguish the fire. He said that one of his colleagues had been killed by that explosion, and another one had been wounded. The medical staff reported that around 4:00 pm three fire fighters were delivered to the hospital, one of them, a man aged 48 had died even before arriving at the hospital, and two others (the one mentioned above and another 30-year-old man) were injured.

The medical staff also noted that the second victim had only minor injuries to his right knee, had already been discharged from the hospital”.

24.08.2017

At 8:30 am the settlement of Lukovo (Telmanovsky district) was shelled by the UAF with the use of 122-mm artillery weapons. Totally 8 shells were launched. As a result of the direct hit of those artillery shells, a residential house was completely damaged (59 Pervomayskaya street), a civilian woman V. I. Reze (aged 73) was wounded, and six more houses were damaged (52, 53, 57, 60, 61, 63 Pervomayskaya street).

25.08.2017

A civilian A. V. Gudilin (aged 61) was wounded as a result of the UAF’s fire attack to the Petrovsky district of Donetsk (29 Lugovskogo street).

During the last week the UAF’s fire attacks to 27 settlements and adjacent areas caused the following damages: in 8 of the settlements there were 32 residential buildings — destroyed or damaged by the fire attacks.

09.09.2017

As a result of the shooting of a Ukrainian sniper in the settlement of Krutaya Balka, a civilian V. E. Pisotsky (aged 45) was wounded.

Two residential houses were damaged (16 Zeleny Gai and 41 Lugovskogo street) as a result of the UAF's fire attack to the Petrovsky district of Donetsk. One of the houses was burnt.

17.09.2017

In the Kirovsky district of Donetsk, as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack (120 mm) a civilian A. O. Shaparov (aged 22) got a shrapnel wound.

In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, a civilian V. R. Romanov (aged 76) got a mine blast wound.

19.09.2017

In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, a civilian A. V. Zayats (aged 65) was wounded, a residential house was damaged (15 Lugovskogo street).

27.09.2017

In the settlement of Vasilievka, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, a civilian G. S. Sereda (aged 80) was wounded, and in Dokuchayevsk a residential house (38/4 Tsentralnaya street) was damaged.

29.09.2017

During the last 24 hours, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, 17 residential houses were damaged: in the Petrovsky district of Donetsk (93, 97 Shestakova street; 37 Shevchenko street;), in Dokuchayevsk (3 Gaydara street; 6 Stasyuka street; 100, 104, 106, 112 Lenina street;), in Kominternovo (1a and 1b Akhmatovoy street), in Yasinovataya (17 Engelsa street), Donetsk Severny rail station (railway terminal building), supports of electricity transmission lines were damaged in Podlesnaya and Pobedy streets.

During the last week, 21 settlements and adjacent areas were targets for the UAF's fire attacks, as a result of those attacks 25 houses were damaged and one civilian was wounded.

01.10.2017

In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, a civilian V.A. Besfamilny was wounded, 3 residential houses were damaged (36, 38, 42 Marka Ozernogo street).

06.10.2017

During the last week, as a result of the UAF's artillery and mortar fire attacks, 25 settlements and adjacent areas were shelled, one civilian was killed and one was wounded, 20 residential houses were damaged.

In Gorlovka, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, a residential house was damaged (26 Krasnykh Partyzan street).

08.10.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attack to the settlement of Zaytsevo, with the use of IFV, grenade launchers and various types of small arms, a civilian V.A. Dygay (aged 48) was killed (residing at 53 Karbysheva street).

17.10.2017

In the settlement of Trudovskaya (Petrovsky district of Donetsk), at 5:30 pm, a civilian V. T. Bolotov (aged 70) got a severe shrapnel wound. At 8:30 pm, as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack to the settlement of Trudovskaya, a civilian E. V. Isaeva (aged 41) got shrapnel wounds.

22.10.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks, a civilian was wounded.

25.10.2017

In Aleksandrovka, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, a civilian (aged 63) was wounded, and 2 residential houses were damaged (2 Kirova street and 19 Lenina street).

27.10.2017

At 3:20 pm, a group of staff members from Donetsk filtration station, came under the UAF's fire attack.

28.10.2017

In the settlement of Trudovskaya, as a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack, a civilian E. M. Kotov (aged 25) was killed.

03.11.2017

Twenty-two settlements and adjacent areas were shelled by the UAF militaries with the use of mortars and artillery weapons.

A civilian was killed as a result of the UAF's fire attacks. Two residential houses in Sakhanka and Trudovskaya were destroyed, and in Aleksandrovka the glazing in the school building was damaged.

03.11.2017

At 12:50 pm, as a result of the UAF's fire attack with the use of AGS-17 automatic grenade launcher, a residential house (69 Shirokaya street, Krutaya Balka) got some damages (roof and shattered windows). The UAF militaries shelled the Donetsk filtration station with the use of grenade launchers, the filtration shop building was damaged.

At 11:20, in Trudovskaya, a civilian woman I. G. Lyapko (aged 31) got a bullet wound to her left leg. A residential house was damaged (14 Andrusova street). In the settlement of Zaytsevo, the ceiling slab between the floors was damaged in a 2-floor building (3 Torgovy lane)

06.11.2017

As a result of the detonation of an unexploded munition left after the UAF's fire attack, a 10-year-old child was killed, and two children of the same age were injured, the incident happened in the school territory in the village of Staromikhaylovka.

A 122-mm artillery shell hit the building of a technical college (7 Aristova street). Two civilians (born in 1952 and 1982) were injured.

Thirteen residential houses were damaged in the Kievsky district of Donetsk, one house was burnt in the settlement of Yakovlevka, a stand-by pipe for chlorine supply was damaged at the Donetsk filtration station.

10.11.2017

During the last week, 1 civilian was killed and 5 were wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks. Thirteen residential houses were

destroyed in the Kievsky district of Donetsk, one house was damaged in Trudovskaya, one in Zaytsevo and one in Krutaya Balka.

During the last week, 24 settlements and adjacent areas became targets for the UAF's fire attacks.

22.11.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks to Dokuchayevsk, one civilian woman T.V. Goncharenko (aged 52) got a shrapnel wound to the chest, 17 residential houses in Lenina street were damaged.

24.11.2017

During the last week, one civilian was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attacks.

Eighteen residential houses in Dokuchayevsk, Leninskoye and Zaytsevo were destroyed.

05.12.2017

As a result of the UAF's targeted fire attack with the use of 120-mm mortars and heavy machine guns to the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, a 31-year-old civilian driving a utility truck was injured. The shell hit caused the vehicle to burn. At this point the Ukrainian militaries made it impossible to approach the vehicle, as anyone who attempted to come closer to extinguish the fire, became the target of the shelling.

In Zaytsevo, 4 residential houses were damaged as a result of the UAF's artillery fire attack.

13.12.2017

In Dokuchayevsk, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, a civilian L. Ya. Svinorenko (aged 62) was wounded.

Four 122-mm artillery shells fired by the UAF's militaries at about 2:00 am to the settlement of Gorlovka hit a gas pipeline, an apartment on the 6th floor of a nine-floor building (60-th Anniversary of USSR) and a private house in Stakhanova Street, as well as a kindergarten No. 134.

14.12.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks to Dokuchayevsk, a civilian woman T. Kobzar (aged 62) was wounded (110 Komsomolskaya street), a residential house (51 Komsomolskaya street) was damaged.

15.12.2017

As a result of the UAF's fire attacks to Dokuchayevsk, a civilian E. F. Gutryra (aged 30) and V.I. Vershov (aged 61) were wounded, 5 residential houses were damaged. In the Petrovsky district of Donetsk, 5 residential houses were damaged.

17.12.2017

As a result of the UAF's mortar fire attack (120 mm), in the settlement of Golmovsky (17 Bolnichnaya street), a civilian S. N. Litovchenko was wounded (aged 42) The UAF's militaries conducted a targeted fire attack to the residential houses and a kindergarten No 125 "Beryozka" which was functioning at the moment of the attack.

Today in the morning, the UAF's militaries conducted a targeted fire attack from small arms to the electric sub-station in the settlement of Verkhnetoretskoye, which is located in the 'grey zone'. Electricity supply to the settlement of Krasny Partizan was completely interrupted because of vital infrastructure damages.

18.12.2017

In Gorlovka, a civilian woman G. Z. Kulyuk (aged 60) was wounded as a result of the UAF's fire attack.

19.12.2017

In the settlement of Golmovsky, as a result of the UAF's fire attack, a civilian woman Yu.A. Seliverstova born in 1996 (2/2 Zagorodnaya street) was wounded.

As a result of the UAF's fire attack, which occurred at night between 18 and 19 December, the following residential houses were damaged: 19, 21 Zagorodnaya street; Bolnichnaya street — 1st floor of the outpatient hospital No was damaged; 15, 17 Golovanova street; 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 Generala Antonova street; 2 Arenskogo street.

In Gorlovka the following residential houses were damaged: 9 Molodezhnaya street (hostel), 9 Bairakskaya street; 109 Moskovskaya street.

21.12.2017

In the settlement of Yasinovataya, as a result of the UAF's fire attacks, one civilian was killed and three were wounded, 14 houses, including a public school No 6, and 8 cars were damaged by shrapnel.

It will be recalled that according to international humanitarian laws, the above described systematic attacks to civilian localities, infrastructure and civilians, as well as indiscriminate and blank fire attacks, are war crimes for which not only the direct perpetrators are responsible, but also the Ukrainian leadership, including the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the President of Ukraine.



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Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya