

into prison for several months, and Algirdas Paleckis, who came to our Forum and offered a suggestion to arrange a meeting with junior teams of Lithuania. Both of them were imprisoned. Is it possible to call these regimes democratic? As for what concerns human rights activism, they set forth an idea that it is critical to intensify it. Through the agency of International Council of Russian Compatriots we expect to create an International Association of Russian-Speaking Lawyers. And this movement of lawyers is a very useful thing; they are engaged in many processes on the protection of the rights of compatriots living abroad.

CJ: Who to defend our compatriots against? Our European colleagues believe that we have problems with democracy.

— Wait. What do they imprison people for? They can't prove anything. And this happens as far as the eye can see. Only when the public rises, they begin to "hesitate", grant bail and put under house arrest. That is what our "Friends of Crimea" have gained. Only thanks to efforts of International Association coordinator, the former Prime Minister of Slovakia Yan Chernogorskiy who met with the Polish ambassador to Bratislava and went to the Poland Parliament, - only after that the amount of bail was reduced and it became possible to admit Mateusz Peskorski to bail after three years in prison!

CJ: In the Baltic states Russophobia is gaining traction, Russian language is banned in schools.

— From the very beginning, in the late 90s – early 2000s, when they just started talking about it, it

“Today these countries are hardly democratic ones. They are not even countries now, but regimes”

was necessary to give notice that there would be a stern economic response for our part and all the economic regulations would be broken off. They thought it was much to do. Why? As, they said, that the Russians would suffer as well. And now Baltics are suffering in full, and what do we get? Economic, diplomatic, and political relations are curtailed. And the Russians suffer again! That is why we get the same result! But if we had done this from the very outset, there would have been no such consequences. That is why I repeat again and again: crisis is not always bad. But it's better to set up the priorities at once, i.e. to speak the same language with a challenger.

EUROPEAN "DEMOCRACY"

LET'S THANK CRIMEA:

IT IS WAKING US UP TO THE TRUTH!



Karl Eckstein,

D.J.S., Lawyer, Honorary Consul
of the Russian Federation in
Switzerland from 2007 to 2018

“Wrong Route”

Since the Age of Enlightenment in the Western world there have been several major principles of human coexistence. One of them is that a person should have the right for self-determination. These principles are enshrined in the Constitutions of all Western countries; even transnational conventions were signed based on them, for example, the European Convention on Human Rights. Western politicians are now propagating this achievement all over the world. They urge other countries to ensure respect for human rights. Holding their pointer fingers up with a gesture of the righteous apostles, they interfere in other countries' internal affairs.

In this context the Crimean peninsula proved to be a “touchstone”. When the topic of Crimea is brought up, it seems like all Western politicians suddenly become blind and immediately run out of words even in cases of the most obvious human rights violations. When it comes to Crimea, Western states forget most fundamental principles of a rule-of-law state.

Last year I wanted to participate in the Financial Congress in Kyiv. All expenses had already been paid: air travel, hotel accommodation, and participation in the Congress. When I came to Borispol in the evening, I was denied the entry. The reason for that was my visit to Crimea via Moscow. Instead of making a tiresome journey through Kyiv, driving 900 km on dirty roads and getting through tedious customs clearance on the border with Crimea, I comfortably flew by plane from a Moscow airport to Simferopol. It turned out to be a crime; therefore I was forced to spend the whole night in the transit lounge of the airport. The next morning I was sent back by plane at my own expense. As expected, my expenditures for air travel, hotel accommodation, and participation in the Congress were not reimbursed.

Note: the legal basis for the breach of visa agreement with Switzerland was choosing the wrong route!

Unlawful Law

Almost all Western countries have a list of sanctions for Crimea. It includes persons and companies that Western counterparts are banned to transact with. The list also contains names of members of parliament who voted to re-unify with Russia in 2014.

In other words, these "apostles of rule-of-law state and human rights" not only punish their members of parliament for the wrong vote but also dare to punish parliamentarians from other countries for voting that is "improper" in their opinion. Thus, not only the principle of parliamentary immunity, but also the basic international legal principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the foreign country is grossly violated.

But Switzerland has surpassed all the other countries for the matter! Citizens of Switzerland are also not allowed to transact business with persons from the list of sanctions. In other words, this law applies to Swiss citizens.

The Crimean magazine

The following points draw particular attention:

1 Swiss authorities punish members of parliament of foreign countries for "improper" voting.

2 The effect of the law primarily extends to the Swiss who are not allowed to transact business. In Switzerland there are 4 scheduled languages: German, French, and Italian and Romanche ones. However, this law can only be found on the Internet and only in English, which is not a scheduled language!

3 Switzerland has a body of laws and regulations. They are published in the Regular Code of Federal Laws (of course, in the scheduled languages of Switzerland). However, in the Regular Code there is no instruction providing against transactions based on the list of sanctions. It can only be found on the website of the Department of Economy of Switzerland, provided you are an experienced Internet user. And one can easily imagine the "democratic" way this instruction was made.

And here is another even more interesting fact: it is clear to an English-speaking Swiss that they are not allowed to transact business with those who voted (and not just that) for the re-unification of Crimea. But it's not indicated that they are not allowed to invite them to Switzerland. In real life it means that such person will never receive a visa to Switzerland. Within Schengen there is a special police service that deals with making lists of persons who should be denied visa. But within these four walls: none of the Swiss will ever be given any legal basis – the reason why certain people will never be granted Schengen visa and why they cannot be invited to Switzerland.

So, all of this is happening in the oldest and most famous democracy in the world. Let's thank Crimea: it wakens us up to the truth!

**“IT IS TIME TO
DROP THE POLICY
OF DOUBLE STANDARDS
AND STOP THE CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT
FREE DETERMINATION OF THE CRIMEANS
IN THE COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION”**



Grigoriy Ioffe,
Chairman
of the Public Chamber
of the Republic of Crimea

The institute on public diplomacy is a primary instrument in forming the network of foreign friends of our republic and the whole country abroad. It's a well-known fact that our country, and especially Crimea, has been subjected to a flurry of economic and other sanctions from the part of the European Union countries, the USA and the West. After the events of Crimean spring in 2014 the enlargement of potential team of like-minded others has become particularly topical.

World events of recent years clearly demonstrate discrepancy and inconsistency of situation around Crimea. On the one hand, in existing relations of society most European countries realize that there is a historical "dead-lock", and further escalation of sanctions war against Russia and Crimea is a blemish policy. The effectiveness of public diplomacy is increasing riding on the wave of public sentiment. In an unofficial capacity, deputies from several European countries visit Crimea and become even more ascertain of the need to lift the anti-Russian