

**Radical nationalism and efforts to oppose it in Russia in 2005**  
by Galina Kozhevnikova

SOVA Center Russia

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Introduction

**Manifestations of radical nationalism :**

Violence :

Key areas of activity of organized right-wing radical groups :

Anti-Roma attacks :

Anti-Semitism :

Islamophobia : Other religious xenophobia :

Xenophobia as electoral resource :

Radical nationalism on behalf of the state

**Opposition to radical nationalism :**

NGO activities and spontaneous opposition :

Criminal prosecution of right-wing radicals :

Administrative liability and preventive actions :

The fight against xenophobia as a political resource

Conclusion

## Introduction

This review covers key manifestations of radical ethno-nationalism in Russia, and opposition to it by society and the state in 2005. As before, it is based on the daily monitoring by SOVA Center [1]; all materials used in this review, except when indicated otherwise, can be found on the Center's Nationalism and Xenophobia website <http://xeno.sova-center.ru>.

The past year was marked by more than just further development of earlier (alarming, but not unusual) right-wing radical trends - such as growth of racist and other hate-motivated violence, increasingly aggressive day-to-day xenophobia, exploitation of ethno-nationalist sentiments in elections, etc. The year 2005 also demonstrated some new tendencies in right-wing radicalism underestimated by the state and potentially leading to serious consequences.

## Manifestations of radical nationalism

### Violence

Similarly to previous years, hate-motivated violence in Russia is mainly associated with skinheads. Their attacks, while slightly less cruel (in 2005, the number of persons killed in such attacks was 18 less than in 2004), became more frequent. Moreover, while in previous years we could identify more or less clear-cut "risk groups" targeted by skinheads - such as people with dark skin or people from Central Asia - now it is increasingly difficult to tell which groups skinheads are likely to attack. Today victims do not need to be Azeri or Chinese - having slightly darker skin or hair, or just "turning up at the wrong moment" makes one vulnerable. Skinheads are increasingly likely to attack members of youth subcultures believed by skinheads to be "traitors of the white race" - rappers, punks, skaters, Goths, and others, as well as ideological opponents of the skinhead movement, leftist anti-fascist youth [2]. In addition, we should note that while in 2004 skinhead groups claimed responsibility for racist attacks only in a few cases, in 2005 they did so consistently.

The table below shows comparative statistics of victims of racist and neo-Nazi attacks in 2004 - 2005.

Year	2004		2005	
	Killed	Beaten, injured	Killed	Beaten, injured
Total	46	208	28	375
Including				

Dark-skinned people	1	33	2	37
People from Central Asia	7	20	8	27
People from the Caucasus	14	37	8	43
People from the Middle East and North Africa	4	12	0	6
People from Asia-Pacific Region (China, Viet-Nam, Mongolia, etc.)	8	26	2	42
Other people of "non-Slav appearance"	2	20	0	23
Members of youth subcultures and leftist youth	0	4	3	87
Others, or not known	10	56	5	110

As before, these statistics do not include homeless people and victims of robbery and other property offences (such as the attack against a Rwandan in Voronezh or the killing of an Azeri man in Nizhny Novgorod in a fight provoked by offensive nationalist behavior, where the perpetrators stole the victim's car), unless the hate motive in such crimes is recognized by the law enforcement agents. We did not include victims of skinheads' "revenge" attacks against their former members, and victims of massive fights, where the number of people affected is difficult to assess. So our statistics are, by design, underestimated, but reliable to the maximum extent possible without a detailed study of each specific case.

We should note that between 2004 and 2005, mass media policies with regard to covering this type of offences changed. In an increasing number of cases, racist attacks are covered many months after the incident, when the crime has been investigated, and the perpetrator convicted. It creates a false impression of high detection rates of such offences, and an illusion that most skinheads involved in violent racist offences are eventually punished. But this is not true.

Still, even though the media coverage of such attacks is far from complete, and given the restrictive standards we use to determine racist motives, it is obvious that the number of victims rapidly grows: the recent statistics exceed those of the previous year by more than 1.5 times, by very conservative estimates.

Skinhead attacks have become so common that they are no longer perceived as "news," but as part of everyday life. For this type of crime to be noticed it must be either designed to elicit public response, as the killing of anti-fascist musician Timur Kacharava in St. Petersburg on 13 October 2005, or result in spontaneous protests, which cannot be ignored, as in October 2005 in Voronezh, following the killing of a student from Peru, or in St. Petersburg after the killings of African students.

While Moscow (8 people killed, 161 injured) and St. Petersburg (3 killed, 42 injured) remain the epicenters of racist violence, its geography is consistently growing. While in 2004 we documented attacks in 26 regions, in 2005 they were reported in 36 regions. In addition to Russian and NIS nationals, in 2005

people from at least 25 countries were victimized.

Good news: fewer killings. The difference in numbers is so significant that it cannot be explained only by different policies of media coverage. We can assume that it may have been caused by increased sentencing for killings since 2004 (see below).

While skinheads are the perpetrators of racist attacks in most Russian regions, in South Russia [3] racist violence is primarily associated with Cossacks. However, in 2005 Cossacks began to see skinheads as “comrades-in-arms.” It is obvious since the Movement against Illegal Immigration became active in southern regions of Russia; the movement openly recruits skinheads to its ranks. We can refer to an incident in Novorossiysk, where during a trial of a skinhead who attacked a Roma man, leaflets were distributed with appeals “not to let them convict a young Cossack.” Moreover, representatives of right-wing radical organizations closely linked to skinheads - Dmitry Dyomushkin of the Slav Union and Alexander Ivanov (Sukharevsky) of the Popular National Party - openly and formally attended the All-Russian Cossack Circle, a congress held on 10 July outside Kursk [4].

Cossacks were involved in the three biggest ethnic clashes reported in Russia in 2005. In March in Novorossiysk, a street fight between Cossacks and young Armenians and Greeks resulted in an anti-Armenian pogrom. On the day following the street fight, on 22 March, Cossacks raided and destroyed a cafe owned by an ethnic Armenian, and demolished a few cars. The city authorities had to mobilize all law enforcement units to stop Cossacks coming from outside of the city and from neighboring settlements and prevent even more violence. The atmosphere in the city was tense for weeks afterwards, with Cossacks disseminating leaflets calling to pogroms and threatened to block the federal highway.

Russian media widely covered the anti-Chechen riots in the village of Yandyki outside Astrakhan in August. The violence was provoked by a fairly mild sentence given to three ethnic Chechens convicted for hate-motivated vandalism in a rural cemetery and a street fight killing a local villager - ethnic Kalmyk. His funeral resulted in attacks against Chechens and arson attacks against their homes; the attackers included, in addition to local residents, Kalmyks and Cossacks who came from neighboring districts and from Kalmykia.

As a result of the clashes, at least five people were hospitalized (by unofficial data, at least 30 were hospitalized, and the overall number of victims is unknown); and at least five houses of the Chechen families were burnt to ashes. To stop the riots, a village of about three thousand inhabitants had to be sealed off by more than a thousand police and interior forces brought from neighboring regions; the administrative border with Kalmykia had to be closed.

Also in August, a situation on the verge of another riot against ethnic Chechens occurred in Rostov Oblast, where an ethnic Chechen was accused of raping the daughter of a Cossack leader. The local Cossacks announced “mobilization” and brought more than four hundred men to the village. Police succeeded in curbing the riots, but the Cossack camps surrounded the village for several more days.

The three conflicts described above demonstrated the rapid deployment ability of Cossack units and their high readiness for violent action. Moreover, Cossacks have openly made it clear that they were prepared to assume law enforcement functions - in accordance with their own understanding of the law.

The right-wing radicals have been increasingly explicit in their demonstrations of readiness for political terrorism. They go beyond threats against top-ranking officials [5] and openly engage in violence. In 2005 two high-profile incidents were suspected to be orchestrated by radical nationalists.

On 17 March, 2005, in an attempted assassination of Anatoly Chubais, his motorcade was raked with automatic weapons fire. On suspicion of organizing and committing the assault, Colonel Vladimir Kvachkov, member of the Military Imperial Union, was arrested, and Ivan Mironov, the son of ex-cochairman of the National Imperial Party Boris Mironov was declared wanted (the son, like the father, is a right-wing radical activist).

On 12 June, an attempted blast attack on a passenger train heading from Grozny to Moscow, fortunately, did not cause deaths or serious injuries. Two activists of ethno-nationalist groups were charged with organization of the attack.

There are serious reasons to suspect right-wing radicals to have been involved in pressure against participants of the so-called Blokhin-Konovalenko trial. Back in 2003, these two policemen from the city of Dolgoprudny outside Moscow were charged with abuse of power in detaining a local criminal leader who was ethnically from the Caucasus. The criminal leader was released on recognizance, disappeared and currently on the federal list of wanted suspects. It would have remained just another case of proceedings into police abuse, if the local right-wing radicals had not interfered. In 2004, two judges and a prosecutor involved in the proceedings were attacked, and one judge was killed in the attack. The local chapter of the Russian National Unity (RNE) claimed responsibility for the three incidents, and proclaimed itself to be a "support group for Russian police." Then the proceedings were transferred to Moscow, but the threats continued, targeting virtually all participants of the trial. In summer 2005, a jury court acquitted the defendants, but in September, the Russian Supreme Court overruled the judgment by formally recognizing that members of the jury had been pressured into passing a non-guilty verdict (the fact that RNE was behind the pressure was informally admitted even by the defendants' supporters). Whatever the real motives of RNE (known for its close links with the criminal world), these actions were presented as protection of "Russian policemen" against "Caucasus mafia." The case was sent back to reconsideration, and a new criminal investigation launched into the threats. Around the 20th of December, the wife of a trial participant was attacked.

As another sign of increasing readiness for terrorist acts, a number of ethno-nationalist organizations call to legal (or illegal [6]) acquisition of weapons and to creating mobile armed units. In 2005, such initiatives were voiced by organizers of the All-Russian Officers' Assembly, the Slav Union, and RNE, but the greatest response was provoked by the Movement against Illegal Immigration launching its call on Hitler's anniversary on April 20, and supported by MP Nikolai Kuryanovich of the Liberal-Democratic Party.

Growing xenophobia in the Russian society (a survey by the Levada Center in summer found unprecedented rates of xenophobia in Russia) increasingly provokes racist violence by persons having nothing to do with right-wing radical groups. The most outrageous of reported incidents happened in Irkutsk Oblast, where on 10 June local villagers in Moskovschina lynched Uzbek migrant workers for "being ethnically non-Russian" and looking similar to the previous team of workers suspected by locals

of being involved in the deaths of several villagers. Two people were killed in the attack, and four more hospitalized with serious injuries. The head of local administration, Sergey Zubarev, virtually justified the lynching by saying that the conflict had been provoked by the local businessman who should have stopped "bringing foreign workers to Moskovschina" and adding that "we, [ethnic] Russian people, are tolerant, but you should not test our tolerance for too long [7]." Sadly, even this outrageous incident was not totally new: a similar one happened in 2004 in Novosibirsk Oblast, where about a dozen migrant workers from Azerbaijan were cruelly beaten for no reason, and about a hundred (!) local residents came to watch the beating.

The incident in Moskovschina in 2005, being the cruelest, was just one of many similar incidents. Xenophobic violence by non-affiliated Russians was reported in Samara, Pskov, and Sverdlovsk Oblasts.

Notably, in 2005, for the first time law enforcement authorities recognized the ethnic hatred motive in an incident involving the use of firearms against a man from the Caucasus in Nizhny Tagil; the attackers, apparently, were not affiliated with any right-wing radical groups.

A new phenomenon emerged in 2005. Skinhead violence and racist attacks are so common and potential victims are so intimidated that ordinary criminals increasingly take advantage of their fear by pretending to be neo-Nazi. Thus in 2005, street robbers "looking like skinheads" were arrested in Moscow and in Yekaterinburg. The offender detained in Moscow later explained to the police that the mimicry discouraged his victims from any resistance should he threaten that "the other guys" were coming to his help. In October in Irkutsk, killers attempted to mislead the investigation by painting a swastika on the wall next to the corpse.

### **Key areas of activity of organized right-wing radical groups**

While early in the decade skinhead gang violence was the most obvious indicator of right-wing radical trends in Russia, in 2005 the focus on ideology became more prominent in right-wing radical groups. Alongside their old communication channels - such as rallies, newspapers, magazines, and websites - they increasingly use new, sometimes fairly unusual promotion tactics. We can even assume that they use strategic planning approaches to organize their promotion.

RNE may be the only group still keeping within the limits of "traditional" methods. It became notably active back in 2004 and maintained virtually the same pace in 2005. As before, RNE activists held a few pickets and disseminated leaflets calling to political terrorism. In early 2005, the part of RNE headed by Alexander Barkashov launched a new project under a trendy (then) title "Pora!" [It's time!], but it never achieved popularity. In general RNE remains in a crisis, its split parts continue fighting and accusing each other of collaboration with security services, etc. The impression of increased RNE activity is due, partially, to the overall activation of right-wing radicals and partially to scandals involving members of the group, such as a massive fight with police on 9 May, provoked, apparently, by RNE members themselves; Barkashov and others' attack against a policeman; and conviction of a local RNE leader in Karelia for murder in June 2005.

Right-wing radicals have long been concerned over low relevance of anti-Semitic propaganda - the public is more responsive to other ethnic phobias - while anti-Semitism has been traditionally the most

prominent part of Russian nationalist propaganda [8]. Growing social discontent and fear of immigrants in Russia force nationalists to rethink their rhetoric. Most have not been successful so far; for example, a meeting in Moscow adopted a resolution where alongside demands to raise salaries of health care workers and teachers, a call was made to investigate a ritual killing of five children by Hassids in Krasnoyarsk [9].

The use of “social justice” slogans (notably, not just in January and February - at the time of massive protests against the “monetization of benefits” law - but throughout the year), even coupled with traditional anti-Semitist propaganda, substantially expanded the audience reached by radical nationalists. The Movement against Illegal Immigration (DPNI) ended up more successful than others not only by abandoning anti-Semitism in their propaganda, but also by translating ethnic xenophobia into more socially acceptable rejection of “immigrants” commonly understood as “ethnic aliens” from the South and the East in “traditionally ethnic Russian” areas.

Appeals to strong anti-immigrant sentiments in society, coupled with active and radical propaganda helped DPNI to become a leader - if not the leader - among right-wing radicals; its power is not in the relatively small core of active members, but in the masses of supporters, including respectable politicians and journalists. The leader of the movement, Alexander Potkin, who assumed the pseudonym Belov [10], by the end of the year became the most wanted spokesman for Russian ethno-nationalists, beating the less charismatic Alexander Sevastyanov. Being a pro in PR - Alexander Potkin used to work as press-secretary for the leader of Pamyat National Patriotic Front - and certainly, a talented demagogue, he is almost always very careful with his rhetoric, making it difficult to challenge his statements or to sue him for incitation of ethnic hatred.

Another strategic area of activity for right-wing radicals is integration of their ranks. There have been a few attempts to do so at events in Altai [11], Penza, Bryanks, Vladimir, and in the Far East. Notably, the establishment of the Russian Club in Vladivostok was not only an attempt at integration, but possibly, helped the Vladivostok neo-Nazi through a crisis caused by the local “skinhead case” [12]. It was followed by a number of national-scale integration events.

In October, the Moscow chapter of the interregional non-governmental movement “Russia’s National Imperial Path” was registered; in fact, it was a reincarnation of the National Imperial Party (NDPR) denied registration in 2003 in an atmosphere of a public scandal, but nevertheless active. Back in 2002, NDPR was registered as a party and became a center of integration bringing together a multitude of dwarfish or split right-wing radical groups. On 3 December 2005, in Moscow, the National Imperial Path - the reincarnated NDPR - held its periodic party convention and publicly stated that by the spring of 2006 they were planning to register the required number of regional chapters to transform into a political party (so that they can stand for the 2007 elections). This goal, however, seems a bit too distant at the moment.

On 21 November, in Moscow, a “rehabilitation” congress of the Union of Russian People was held, to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the organization by the same name, but better known as The Black Hundred. The congress was attended by about 70 organizations of Orthodox Christian and monarchist orientation. It was the first in a few years attempt to build a broad coalition of ethno-nationalist monarchist organizations. The congress did not end up as just another marginal event; on the contrary, guest speakers included MP Sergey Glazyev, leader of (Rogozin’s) Rodina parliamentary party, MP

Sergey Baburin, Vice Speaker of the State Duma (of the other Rodina Party), and MP Nikolai Kuryanovich of LDPR. Baburin officially joined the organization, headed by sculptor Vyacheslav Klykov.

The third strategic area of activity for right-wing radicals - traditional, rather than new, but increasing in intensity in 2005 - was "fighting for young people," in particular for skinheads. In fact, following the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, "fighting for young people" became a priority for virtually all stakeholders, ranging from the President's Administration that established the Nashi youth movement, to liberal political parties. Right-wing radicals follow along with the trend.

An entirely new project - the Eurasia Youth Union (ESM) - was launched in the spring of 2005 in the form of "fighting units" of the Eurasia Movement headed by Alexander Dugin who successfully combines his status of semi-official political advisor and the reputation of the "Russian fascism" leading ideologist [13]. ESM positions itself as an alternative to the commercialized and ideologically amorphous Nashi, emphasizes loyalty to the current government, and plays up the slogans of "opposing the Orange threat." ESM has already attracted public attention by a number of provocative acts, such as an attack against Pentecostals' picket in Moscow [14], attempts to disrupt oppositional events in the regions (Moscow, Bashkortostan, Krasnodar Krai), and their formal leading role in the November 2005 "Right-wing March" in Moscow.

They continue their efforts to win the support of young people. Thus in Vladimir Oblast, a bootcamp organized by the Russian All-Nation Union operated throughout the summer of 2005. NDPR places a special emphasis on young people as its key target group in all program documents. In fact, NDPR has been more active than all others in recruiting young people. One of NDPR leaders, Alexander Sevastyanov, spoke many times throughout the year to young audiences in undergraduate schools, including respectable state-controlled universities as well as private "commercial" ones.

Besides, NDPR made another attempt to get inside general schools. Building on its 2004 experience [15], NDPR chapter in Tomsk organized a contest of essays for school students; the suggested theme was "What does being [ethnic] Russian mean in Russia?" Why they succeeded in involving schools in a contest held under a logo closely resembling a Nazi swastika is a mystery.

Some details of the "government-sponsored" efforts to "involve" skinheads will follow below [16]; as to right-wing radicals acting publicly, before 2005, with rare exceptions [17], they were cautious about collaborating with neo-Nazi skinhead groups. Apparently, they perceived skinheads as an unmanageable, undisciplined mob. However, 2005 was a turning point in this respect as well. Even though we can dismiss as mere self-promotion the statements made in spring by the right-wing radicals Yuri Belov and Yuri Riverov about involving skinheads in the White Patrol group [18], there is no way we can dismiss the involvement of skinheads in the "Right-wing March" organized in Moscow on 4 November 2005 by a coalition of right-wing radical organizations [19].

The "Right-wing March" came as a logical consequence of the new official holiday established in 2005 - the Day of National Unity on 4 November; everyone with some knowledge of the Russian history found the idea of the new holiday questionable to say the least. The Right-wing March apparently had been planned as an event of the national scale, or at least involving more than one region, but in St. Petersburg



the number of participants was traditionally low, no more than 150, while in Syktyvkar the local authorities banned the march. But even the march held in Moscow produced enough impact, when about 3,000 people (mostly skinheads) walked the streets of the Russian capital carrying xenophobic, racist and explicitly neo-Nazi slogans. They completed the show by raising their arms in the Nazi greeting.

The number of skinheads and the degree of discipline that they showed during the march [20], suggested that legally operating organizations have broad and close links with neo-Nazi skinhead groups, and that the skinhead mob can be manageable - at least for a short while - something that had been doubted both by experts and by the initiators of the march. There is no doubt now that all active right-wing radicals will increase their efforts to involve skinheads.

In addition to exploiting social cause rallies to promote their ideology, picketing court buildings during trials was found to be a new and effective promotional strategy. Rather than campaign for those whom nationalist "patriots" consider their allies (such as members of Schults-88 group in St. Petersburg or RNE in Oryol), right-wing radicals prefer to focus on defendants, victims and trials having nothing to do with nationalist ideology, but involving "[ethnic] Russians" vs. "members of other ethnicities/immigrants". Right-wing radicals appeal to the general public by interpreting such trials in terms of interethnic confrontation. High-profile cases of this type include the trial involving two policemen from Dolgoprudny (see above) and the Alexandra Ivannikova case (the woman, a Moscow resident, was charged with killing a man who attempted to rape her; the man was an ethnic Armenian).

Another effective form of self-promotion practiced in particular by the Slav Union was website hacking. While before there had been only a few isolated cases of website hacking, in 2005 this activity became targeted and consistent, especially after the hacker attacks against the websites of the Moscow Helsinki Group and the Federation of Jewish Communities in Russia (Jewish.ru), widely covered by mass media. For some reason, law enforcement authorities have been unable to suppress such offences, while the Slav Union openly invites more hacker attacks as a *"good result (apparently, meaning "method" - Author) for breaking the information blockade"*.

In 2005, another alarming trend emerged. Increasingly, we hear about joint events held by right-wing and left-wing radicals, and even liberally-oriented organizations. There is some evidence of collaboration between the Vanguard of Red Youth (AKM) and RNE in the city of Ramenskoye outside Moscow, and in Rostov-on-the-Don, while a joint picket in defense of RNE activists in Novgorod involved members of regional chapters of the National Bolshevik Party (NBP), Freedom Party, and, surprisingly, Yabloko Party; a rally in Moscow carrying ethno-nationalist slogans involved, alongside DPNI and NNP, activists of the Union of Communist Youth (SKM), Yabloko youth branch, etc. There have been even more examples of collaboration between democratic organizations and Rodina Party.

### **Anti-Roma attacks**

Anti-Roma attacks were prominent in 2005. These were caused both by common (sometimes extremely absurd) xenophobic attitudes, and by targeted anti-Roma propaganda.

Thus in the spring of 2005, city authorities in Krasnoyarsk were forced to deport all Roma rapidly from the city to prevent massive pogroms against them - the threat of riots was very real due to rumors that

Roma were responsible for disappearances of five school students [21]. Such actions by authorities were not the best (and, apparently, illegal) solution, but it looked like the city could not protect Roma in any other way.

Attacks against Roma were reported in Leningrad, Pskov, Moscow [22] and Belgorod Oblasts. In Belgorod, the attack was professionally planned and organized: the road leading to the house was blocked - ostensibly, for repairs, the attackers wore masks; first they threw a bottle filled with flammable liquid at the house, and then started beating the people running out of the burning building, and shouted "Beat the Gypsies!" The woman who owned the house and her son had to be hospitalized, and it was mere luck that greater damage was avoided: the residents had visitors on that day who did not only drive the attackers away, but even held one of them.

The biggest conflicts, however, started back in 2004, while in 2005 they just continued.

Mass media have covered on many occasions the events in the Roma settlement in Iskitim, Novosibirsk Oblast. They started in December 2004, when several houses of the Roma residents were burned under the pretext of fighting drug crimes. The arsons apparently committed by local bandits were supported by other (non-Roma) residents and virtually encouraged by the police (by some reports, police would not allow either the fire brigades or ambulances to the site). Two more waves of arsons came in April and November, accompanied by intense anti-Roma campaigns in the local media (some local papers even suggested that Roma themselves burned their houses, and that they were linked with the Chechen terrorists). Police for a long while refused to respond to the events in any way - an investigation into the arson attacks was launched only after a parliamentary enquiry by the deputy head of the State Duma Committee on Civil, Criminal, Commercial and Procedural Legislation, Pyotr Shelisch from United Russia. He sent his enquiry to the Department of Interior of Novosibirsk in March 2005, and was immediately accused of corruption by the Novosibirsk press, while human rights groups that tried to help the victims were accused of helping the drug dealers.

After a third wave of arson attacks in November 2005, when an eight-year-old girl was killed by a bottle with inflammable liquid hitting her bed, and her mother was seriously injured, a representative of the local prosecutor's office publicly stated that those responsible for the arson had been identified, but they did not face punishment, because the local public in Iskitim was worried about the spread of drugs in the region and wanted all Roma to go away. This statement suggests that the conflict in Iskitim is far from finished and will continue, encouraged by the local law enforcement authorities.

A similar scenario nearly took place in Yaroslavl Oblast starting in November 2004, when Sergey Krivnyuk, deputy of the local municipality, said that he was prepared personally to lead riots against Roma to fight drug crime. The anti-Roma sentiments and the threat of riots were discouraged by public statements of local drug police officials denying that Roma were responsible for drug offenses, and public statements by the city prosecutor of potential criminal charged against the deputy [23]. Following the Iskitim events in the spring of 2005, S. Krivnyuk set up what he called "a community squad named after Che Gevarra" that demolished a few cars owned by Roma (there were no reports of victims). But as soon as Krivnyuk declared his involvement in organizing the "Che Gevarra squad," the local police department started an inquiry into his conduct with a very real prospect of criminal prosecution. Notably, the mass media in Yaroslavl supported the law enforcement authorities by explaining to the local public why

Krivnuyk's statements were dangerous [24].

Yaroslavl Oblast was one of the rare examples of immediate and publicized response of the law enforcement to such statements and actions. In contrast, in Irkutsk Oblast, calls to anti-Roma riots voiced by Yevgeny Roisman [25], MP of the State Duma and informal leader of the City without Drugs Fund in Yekaterinburg, were not opposed by the local media, but widely promoted.

In the atmosphere described above, the long-term conflict between a Roma community and the Mayor of Archangelsk over land plots allocated for construction of Roma houses looks fairly "civilized." The litigation lasted for more than 18 months and was finally won by the Mayor's office [26]. In the spring of 2006, all Roma houses must be pulled down. Besides, the Archangelsk Mayor Alexander Donskoy made numerous anti-Roma statements and promises to "solve the problem" regardless of the court ruling.

### **Anti-Semitism**

While right-wing radicals may debate the relevance of anti-Semitist campaigning, they did not abandon it, but escalated anti-Semitism to a country-wide, high-profile right-wing radical trend. Starting in early 2005, scandalous anti-Semitist incidents followed one another restoring the nearly forgotten issue to the public discourse.

The start-off event was the 13 January appeal signed by 19 State Duma MPs of Rodina and Communist parties asking to close all Jewish organizations in Russia, because, allegedly, they all followed the teachings of Kitsur Shulkhan Arukh where the authors of the appeal found hate messages against non-Jews. The appeal was based on an article published by Mikhail Nazarov back in 2002. On the next day, the text of the appeal was published on Konstantin Dushenov's Orthodox Russia newspaper website as a document open for signature. By the time the appeal was published on the website, it had 500 signatures.

The media scandal followed a week after the publication - on 22-23 January, just before the Russian President's visit to Poland for ceremonies marking the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Notably, President Putin took some time to respond - his statement condemning the anti-Semitist letter by the 19 MPs was made on 27 January in Poland and targeted international, rather than Russian public.

The 2004-2005 winter was marked by an outburst of anti-Semitist violence in Moscow. Hate-motivated violence against Jews had been rare before December 2004: only two incidents were reported over the 11 months of 2004. In contrast, five attacks with an explicit anti-Semitist motive took place during 2004 - 2005 winter, injuring at least seven, including six in Moscow. The greatest public resonance was caused by the attack against two rabbis - Alexander Lakshin and Ruven Kuravsky - on 14 January. Almost all such incidents in Moscow took place around the Synagogue owned by the Federation of Jewish Communities in Maryina Roscha. While these incidents were apparently the initiative of a local skinhead gang that chose to target Jews as opposed to Caucasus or Asian ethnicities (consequently, attacks against Jews in the neighborhood stopped immediately following the arrests of suspected attackers of rabbi Lakshin), subsequent incidents, such as attack against a student from Israel and anti-Semitist arson attack of a flat in St. Petersburg, and harassment of Miss World 1998, an Israeli citizen, in the Moscow Metro - could have been provoked by the anti-Semitist letter and, most importantly, the subsequent lifting of taboo against public manifestations of anti-Semitism.

Other contributing factors included the Russian journalists' unpreparedness to an educated discussion of relevant issues, and their lack of understanding of the real purpose of nationalist "patriots" who use mass media as an instrument of their propaganda, rather than a forum for debates. A striking example of a journalist's professional failure in this respect was the 14 February 2005 TV talk show K Baryeru [A Challenge to Duel] hosted by Vladimir Soloviev and involving Albert Makashov known for his outrageous anti-Semitist pronouncements.

Subsequently, the anti-Semitist propaganda continued at a growing pace and assumed increasingly uncivilized forms, largely due to inaction of the law enforcement authorities who refused to investigate the "Letter of Five Hundred" (later reviewed and resent to the prosecutor's office as the "Letter of Five Thousand") as a potential offence of inciting ethnic hatred.

As their next step, anti-Semitists attempted to rehabilitate the Blood Libel myth of ritual killings by Jews. The campaign was started, again, by Mikhail Nazarov, and linked to the disappearance and death of five school-age children in Krasnoyarsk. Nazarov publicly accused the Hassid community in Krasnoyarsk of ritual killings, and Governor Khloponin of covering up the crime. Soon this pronouncement was repeated - with the same impunity - at one of ethno-nationalist rallies held in Pushkin Square in Moscow.

A perfectly logical next step was the dissemination, since the autumn of 2005, of a documentary produced by Konstantin Dushenov and entitled "Russia with a Knife in Its Back. The Jewish Fascism and the Genocide of Russian People" (recently Dushenov has published more films with similar content on his website.).

The year ended in a "monumental" scandal - an attempt to install a monument to Prince Svyatoslav in Belgorod Oblast. A model of the would-be monument shows the Prince's horse stomping on a fallen Khazar warrior with the Star of David on his shield (which was obviously never used in the Khazar Kaganate; incidentally, few people noticed a type of swastika on the Prince's shield). Ironically, the monument rejected in 2005 by two Oblasts, was to be erected in an Orthodox Christian monastery, although Prince Svyatoslav was a heathen. The assembly of the statue was stopped following protests by Jewish organizations across Russia. The author of the monument and the newly elected leader of the Union of Russian People Vyacheslav Klykov used the scandal to make another public statement to the effect that Jews are "enemies of Russia and Orthodoxy" and that he refused to change the design of the monument, because *"we should understand the essence of Prince Svyatoslav's victory."* [27]

This series of events appears to be more than consistent escalation of anti-Semitist activity. It creates an impression that anti-Semitists are pushing certain informal boundaries of what is publicly acceptable, in order to check whether any reaction will follow. Failure of the prosecutorial office to find incitation in hatred encourages anti-Semitists to become more active as their perception of boundaries gradually fades. Incidentally, the behavior of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, is a good indicator of this loss of boundaries: his explicitly anti-Semitist pronouncements are increasingly heard at official events in Moscow [28], whereas before they used to be more limited to his regional appearances.

Against this background, no one should be surprised by the scandal with anti-Semitist literature being distributed at the Moscow Book Fair in autumn, or by the fact that Valery Ganichev known for his anti-

Semitist views since Soviet times was invited to sit in the Public Chamber, or by the anti-Semitist TV show *Our Strategy* being regularly broadcast on TV-3, or by other similar developments. These include open manifestations of aggression towards Jews - as, for example, in Tambov, where on the eve of Pesah, a group of teenagers with cropped hair yelled at a group of religious Jews, "*Yids!*" and "*Jude Schwein!*" or in Kursk, where a terrorist threat disrupted the performance of Mikhail Turetsky Jewish Choir. These also include increasingly targeted and emphatic vandalism. Thus in Moscow, a kosher store was rioted, while the Jewish cemetery in St. Petersburg has been systematically subjected to abuse by vandals. In total, in 2005, at least 27 acts of vandalism with regard to Jewish cultural and religious establishments were reported in 17 Russian regions.

Rather, we should be surprised that there have been relatively few incidents, and the attack against believers in a Moscow synagogue, injuring 8, happened on 11 January 2006 and not before, given the increasingly intense and cruel campaign against Jews over the last year.

## **Islamophobia**

A wave of anti-Islamic acts continued throughout 2005, mainly in the form of vandalism against religious buildings and cemeteries. Thus mosques in Nizhny Novgorod and in Penza were vandalized, and in Syktyvkar, on 1 December 2005, the building of the Komi Republic Moslem Religious Board was set on fire. However, we must admit that acts of vandalism against Moslem establishments in 2005 were less frequent than in 2004.

In 2005, attacks against individual Moslems [29], apparently, were less frequent than in 2004, when an outburst of Islamophobia was provoked by the Beslan tragedy. It is important to mention, however, the attack against a prayer house in Sergiyev Posad: on 14 October, 2005, about a dozen skinheads armed with steel wire broke into a Moslem prayer house and yelling the slogans of "Russia for Russians!" and "Moslems have no place in Russia!" attacked to believers. The head of the Moslem community was hospitalized following the attack.

Incidents of offensive public behavior against Moslems have been reported. Thus on 3 September 2005 in Nizhny Novgorod, Moslem organizers of a meeting of silence to commemorate the Beslan tragedy were hissed by skinheads yelling anti-Moslem slogans.

Aside from that, anti-Islamic sentiments were mostly manifested in public debates, becoming stronger in the second half of 2005. It was started with a discussion of an openly anti-Moslem novel by Yelena Chudinova, "*The Mosque of Notre Dame*." Later the debates became more intense following the November riots in Paris suburbs. The Russian media presented these events almost exclusively in terms of racial ("black immigrants and/or Arabs vs. white Europeans") and religious (specifically, religion/civilization) conflict. In addition, statements by Moslem radicals saying that Russia must remove the cross from its coat of arms provoked even more aggressive anti-Moslem rhetoric.

Notably, as opposed to anti-Semitist, anti-Islamic publications appear in respectable print media with high circulation, rather than in marginal press. Chudinova's book presentation was attended by Mikhail

Leontyev, a well-known TV host, rather than marginal nationalist “patriots.” Moreover, following the Paris riots reference to “The Mosque of Notre Dame” was made by commentators of the anti-liberal kind, while Chudinova was for some time considered an established “expert on France.”

While the Russian society continues to find open support of anti-Semitism unacceptable, anti-Moslem pronouncements are increasingly well tolerated.

### **Other religious xenophobia**

In addition to anti-Semitic and anti-Islamic incidents, religious xenophobia [30] was expressed mostly in numerous acts of vandalism with regard to cemeteries and religious buildings. Virtually all believers were affected, from small and new faiths to the dominant Russian Orthodox Church. Notably, attackers of the latter (we documented about 30 anti-Orthodox acts of vandalism in 18 Russian regions), where vandalism is motivated by religious intolerance, rather than mere “hooliganism,” are mostly teenagers calling themselves “Satanists.” In one case, in Vologda Oblast, graffiti slogans “Russian gods for Russia!” were written over a burnt chapel, suggesting that left-wing radical neo-Pagans who favor this slogan were responsible for the arson.

The most serious incident took place in a small community near Vyazma (Smolensk Oblast), where on 14 November an Orthodox chapel built next to a memorial to Soviet soldiers killed in WW2 was blown up.

While the Russian Orthodox Church suffers from vandalism, members of other religious denominations are increasingly victimized by violence, often at the hands of persons emphasizing their “Orthodoxy” or justifying violence by the need to protect “tradition” the way they understand it.

For example, increased activity of a few radical Orthodox groups seeking to terminate the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church in Suzdal (Vladimir Oblast) is considered to be the cause of attack against the elderly leader of the Autonomous Church, Metropolitan Valentin (Rusantsov) and systematic verbal offenses against the nuns of Rizopolozhensky Monastery of the Autonomous Church.

On 9 April, 2005, outside a Moscow club, a group armed with steel wire, chains and knives attacked black metal musicians and their fans; several people had to be hospitalized. The right-wing radical websites described the attackers as “Orthodox youth opposing the Satanists.” On 10 August, in Pushkin Square in Moscow, a picket of Pentecostals was attacked by youths dressed in black shirts (according to some reports, members of the Eurasia Youth Union) shouting “Burn the heretics!” and “Orthodoxy is our faith!” These attacks by essentially non-religious groups ostensibly guided by religious motives are an alarming trend especially noticeable last year.

### **Xenophobia as electoral resource**

As before, many politicians continue to regard xenophobic sentiments shared by many Russians as a substantial electoral resource. Virtually all election campaigns in 2005 featured candidates who exploited ethno-nationalist slogans in some way. One can distinguish a few main types of xenophobia-based campaigning.

An old and well-known type of negative PR is based on the use of xenophobic slogans and materials to discredit the opponent. Such negative PR can be anonymous, as, for example, in Buryatia, where campaign posters of a candidate standing for the Mayor's office in the city of Gusinoozersk were covered with stickers saying "Down with the Buryat!" [31]. Or it can be more sophisticated, when xenophobic materials are disseminated on behalf of the opponent - during municipal elections in Tula, for example, xenophobic leaflets were disseminated on behalf of the local Armenian National-cultural autonomy [32].

Participation in elections is a legal opportunity for small and little-known right-wing radical groups to expand their audience, even if they do not expect to win the elections anyway. The election campaign gives them the means and the method of promoting their ideas on a large scale - including free air time on television. This was the reason behind the election campaigns of the Leningrad Oblast NDPR activists and the openly neo-Nazi National Socialist Society and the Freedom Party.

Sometimes more than one right-wing radical candidate stand for elections in the same district and some would withdraw in favor of the strongest. This happened, for example, during the additional elections to the State Duma from Preobrazhensky Electoral District No 199 in Moscow, where the candidates included Colonel Kvachkov accused of attempted assassination of Chubais, and Alexey Nazarov, a neo-Nazi politician supported by the National Socialist Society whose campaigning in the form of at least two meetings left no doubts as to their neo-Nazi orientation. Just two days before the vote, A. Nazarov withdrew from the elections in favor of Kvachkov. In this particular case, we are not interested in the reasons for his withdrawal [33], but the demonstration of an efficient method of expanding the scope of xenophobia-based campaigning; the campaign was double in volume, while only one candidate remained on the voting day, avoiding even minimal scattering of the votes.

More respectable candidates with good chances of success also resort to explicitly xenophobic rhetoric. As a rule, they regard xenophobic messages as a campaigning advantage, rather than the basis of their campaigning. The scandal that xenophobic campaigning will inevitably cause is an effective promotional strategy, helping to break through the powerful information blockade faced by all movements and candidates other than United Russia.

Rodina Party used this strategy to the greatest effect during the Moscow City Duma election campaign. The scandal exceeded the wildest expectations of political advisors who had chosen this strategy for Rodina. The slogans "Moscow for Moscovites!" and "Let us clean the city of garbage!" immediately attracted media attention. A picket held by Rodina Party in October in Mayakovsky Square in Moscow featured young people "sweeping out" immigrant workers from Moscow streets. The youth chapter of the party adopted a new name - "Patriotic Greenpeace" - seeking to "clean" open-air markets in Moscow of dishonest immigrant traders. The scandal peaked when the party televised its campaign video titled "Let us clean the city of garbage" - where "garbage" was understood as migrants of non-Russian ethnicity.

Rodina's campaigning strategy offended many people exposed to it, not to mention that it almost provoked a diplomatic scandal (embassies of Azerbaijan and France expressed their indignation) [34]. So D. Rogozin reached his goal - the information blockade was broken, the scandal was the most noticeable part of the Moscow Duma election campaign, while Rodina is now seen - whether rightly so or not - as a powerful competitor of the United Russia.

The rulings of the Moscow City Court and then of the Russian Supreme Court to ban Rodina Party from elections for “incitation of ethnic hatred” were apparently totally unexpected. This is the first known case in Russia of banning a party from elections for this reason. Before, parties had been sometimes banned on formal grounds (as for example, the Spas Bloc in the 1999 parliamentary elections).

Nevertheless, Rodina was not the only party that used xenophobic slogans in this campaign; moreover, it actually borrowed the idea from LDPR that had, on many occasions, camouflaged ethnic xenophobia by using geographic and social terminology in its slogans like "Criminal Southerners - get out of Russia!", "It is not Caucasus here", and others [35]. The recent election campaign was not exception - the best-known piece of promotion was a leaflet published by the Liberal Democratic Party and saying "Shut off Moscow from Southerners! We are [standing up] for a city with Russian faces. Illegal [immigrants] have no place in the capital".

As a result, in November 2005, Rodina and LDPR sued each other for their virtually identical type of campaigning, demanding that the opponent be banned from the elections. The Liberal Democrats won, and Rodina lost. Unfortunately, this outcome supports the widespread opinion that the real reason for banning Rodina from the Moscow elections was not its nationalism, but its popularity in the city and, consequently, its potentially successful competition with United Russia.

Another example was the campaign for the head of administration office in Megion - a city in Khanty-Mansiysky Autonomous District. Alexander Kuzmin, a strong candidate for the office, who left the current Mayor, Alexander Chepaikin of United Russia, far behind after the first round (49.53% vs. 27.33%, respectively). A. Kuzmin relied heavily on xenophobic sentiments in his campaign, so on 8 April 2005, literally on the eve of the second round of voting, the District Court ruled, following long and confusing proceedings, that A. Kuzmin must be banned from elections for "*bribery, incitation of ethnic hatred and racial discrimination*". The elections were cancelled, the city does not have a Mayor since, and Kuzmin took his case to the Supreme Court that overruled the previous decision to ban the candidate, finding procedural irregularities. However, the Supreme Court refused to clear the candidate of ethnic hatred charges.

To emphasize, the Rodina Party and A. Kuzmin cases are unique for Russia's electoral practices. To place them into perspective, we should remember that in 2003, candidate German Sterligov openly called to shoot Roma and Azeri in Moscow streets, but the court failed to find "incitation of ethnic hatred." The political motives underlying both judgments virtually set off their anti-xenophobic component and demonstrate that the law is applied selectively to suppress rivals of "the ruling political party."

In all other cases, electoral xenophobia remains unpunished, even if physical fighting is involved, as was the case in Vladimir Oblast. During the Communist Party leader Zyuganov's meeting with voters, Igor Artyomov from the Russian All-Nation Union launched a verbal attack against Magomed Akhmadov, leader of local Young Communists; he targeted Akhmadov's Chechen ethnicity. Magomed Akhmadov, in turn, called Artyomov "fascist" and the latter hit him in the face. Currently, a criminal investigation against Artyomov is ongoing, but it is highly unlikely that a popular nationalist politician will be punished.

Notably, electoral outcomes for right-wing radicals are usually negligible, except rare cases where other,



mostly subjective factors come into play [36]. However, by end-2005 this situation started to change in an alarming way. One example is the aforementioned additional elections in District 199 in Moscow, where Colonel Kvachkov's campaign was based on the slogans of "national liberation war" against "foreign occupant government" of present-day Russia. Specifically, he said: *"Destroying the occupants and their collaborators is not a crime, but the duty and responsibility of every defender of our Fatherland loyal to his military oath"*. Certainly, all voters in the district knew that the Colonel faced political terrorism charges for assassination attempt against Chubais - so at least 44,167 who voted for Kvachkov approved of his terrorist act. A major part of "Kvachkov's constituency" also knew his political views, because Kvachkov's "manifesto of national-patriotic rebellion" was widely covered in the press. Consequently, some members of the constituency voted for Kvachkov as a right-wing radical. So, V. Kvachkov with 28.9% vote was a national-patriotic candidate successfully competing with the "ruling party candidate." The former "Spetsnaz" [Special Purpose Forces] serviceman Kvachkov lost a mere 7% to Sergey Shavrin, also a former "Spetsnaz" man. Coupled with the striking success of Vladimir Popov, formerly little-known neo-Nazi candidate - 4.18% vote - in the Moscow City Duma elections, we can see that the December 2005 elections in Moscow demonstrated an unprecedented sharp growth of radical xenophobia in the Russian capital - and possibly, in the entire country.

### **Radical nationalism on behalf of the state**

As before, in 2005, rather radical manifestations of ethno-nationalism by agents of the state were reported.

In most cases, those responsible were the legislators who are more diverse in their background and behavior than bureaucrats. Members of the Liberal Democratic Party retain their image of nationalists. One illustrative example was the draft law proposed by Nikolai Kuryanovich of LDPR to deprive Russian women who marry foreigners from Russian citizenship. The racist nature of the draft - enthusiastically supported by the party leader Zhirinovskiy - leaves no doubts: the underlying concern is for "protecting the gene pool" from being "corrupted" - even if the woman later decides to get a divorce and come back to Russia.

MPs do not stop short of contacts with neo-Nazi. For example, the Slav Union leader Dmitry Demushkin regularly meets with MPs who willingly keep photos with a neo-Nazi handshake (S. Baburin) or even state openly that skinheads are "useful," and raise their arms in the Nazi greeting (the said Kuryanovich).

The tough control of United Russia over the entire parliament does not prevent the communist MP and ex-governor of Krasnodar Nikolai Kondratenko from systematic verbal attacks against "Zionists" at every plenary [37], whereas the mentioned congress of the Union of Russian People in November, alongside the expected N. Kuryanovich and S. Baburin, also featured speakers like Sergey Glazyev who used to distance himself from even a moderate version of nationalism displayed by his colleague Dmitry Rogozin.

However, this phenomenon is not limited to parties such as Rodina, LDPR or CPRF (with its spin-off, Gennady Semigin's Patriots of Russia) known for their members' xenophobic attitudes, or to participation of right-wing radicals in formal events organized by government - for example, in Archangelsk, Leningrad and Pskov Oblasts.

A new and alarming trend in 2005 was the consistent effort of the state to “domesticate” skinheads through various pro-presidential youth groups, primarily through the Nashi movement. A few years ago, the press reported close links between Nashi’s predecessors Iduschie Vmeste (“Those who march together”) and skinheads; we have no reasons to assume that they had lost contact. Their leader, Vassily Yakemenko, said on many occasions that Nashi were prepared to “work” with skinheads for their “reformation.” How are the “nashists” - whose congress at the Lake Seliger featured talks by the former leader of the extreme-left Ukrainian group UNA-UNSO Dmitro Korchinsky - are going to “reform” skinheads is anyone’s guess. Moreover, the movement has close links with Gladiator security agency which in turn is connected with Spartak soccer fans known for their extreme aggressiveness and right-wing attitudes. As a result of this collaboration at least one person was beaten - Ilya Yashin, activist of the liberal Oborona group who secretly attended the founding congress of Nashi. “Nashists” and “gladiators” are the suspected attackers of leftist youth (mainly National Bolsheviks, NBP) outside Avtozavodskaya Metro Station in Moscow in August 2005.

The Moscow City Government launched a strange, to say the least, initiative in August 2005, when the City Department of Justice registered a new NGO, the Moscow Association of Sports Fans. The objectives of the new organization include, among others *“combating terrorism, extremism and chauvinism”*. It was expected that the new organization would bring together fans of seven soccer clubs - CSCA, Spartak, Dynamo, Torpedo, Locomotive, FC Moscow, and Saturn of Moscow Oblast. Most active fans of these clubs, especially Spartak and CSCA fans, are not only extremely aggressive, but maintain close links with a number of skinhead groups, so that the law enforcement agencies hardly see any difference between soccer fans and skinheads. It is unlikely that soccer fans involved by bureaucrats in an association will suddenly become less aggressive to anyone they perceive as alien.

The examples above show clearly that the government’s “fight for youth” is characterized either by lack of education about youth subcultures, or by extreme unscrupulousness. Ultimately, both will lead to the same outcome, i.e. a demonstration of impunity of anyone who is “patriotic” and loyal to the current regime. There are more facts, besides the stories of nashists and soccer fans, to prove it. Thus in Voronezh, law enforcement authorities were surprised that a youth gang with a name suggestive of neo-Nazi - the White Patrol - which *“supported the system”* was, in fact, involved in the killing of a student from Peru. The law enforcement said, *“... we did not expect it from Vityaz and the White Patrol; the youngsters have come together for a good cause - they practice sports and fight drugs.”* At the end of summer in Moscow a hard rock music festival was held under the auspices of the United Russia Party. Originally, its slogan was “Long Live Russia!” - but then the organizers, apparently, realized that it was a traditional slogan of radical nationalists and replaced it with a more neutral “Long live Russia, Long live Moscow!” The concert program featured Sergey “Spider” Troitsky, an icon of Russian skinheads. The slogan of the festival combined with the performance of Troitsky’s group Corrosion of Metal appears to be intended to please skinheads.

Some prominent politicians in Russia allowed using their names in right-wing radical promotion. For example, Konstantin Dushenov advertised his anti-Semitist film using a collection of quotations from various political, civil and religious leaders, mostly known for their anti-Semitism, but others as well - for example, he quoted from speeches made by Lyubov Sliska, Vice Speaker of the State Duma (United Russia). It was easy for the Vice Speaker to find it out and respond, but there was no public response on

her part.

Another example of “silent endorsement” was the talk of the Federation Council Speaker Sergey Mironov in the “Two to One” TV show, where the show hosts were pushing the politician to discuss what they termed an anti-Russian “*conspiracy of Jewish oligarchs*” (a quote from their conversation). While Mironov only said a few words about Boris Berezovsky’s political role, he failed to make any comments or challenge the TV hosts about the nationalist context that they imposed on the discussion. Sergey Mironov, technically the third most important political figure in the country virtually legitimized anti-Semitic pronouncements by taking part in the talk show.

## **Opposition to radical nationalism**

### **NGO activities and spontaneous opposition**

Opposition to the increasingly prominent radical nationalism in the country has always been an important part of NGO activism, but their capacity is limited. Most NGOs operate within traditional spheres of research, awareness-raising, education, and expert services targeted at diverse audiences, including graduate students, journalists, school students, police, teachers and officials.

In 2005, however, NGOs focused increasingly on “street actions” to raise public awareness. Actions that featured young people painting over xenophobic graffiti in Russian cities were especially popular and widespread. Other actions included anti-fascist pickets and rallies, the largest of them being the “Anti-fascist March” on 18 December 2005 attended by about 1500 people, including, in addition to members of human rights groups and other NGOs, representatives of various political parties and movements, mostly of the liberal orientation.

Spontaneous opposition to radical nationalists is increasingly common - in particular, a number of cases were reported throughout the year of nationalist campaigners being ousted from social protest rallies (i.e. in Noginsk outside Moscow, and in Pskov), and of unorganized people spontaneously destroying nationalist leaflets and graffiti. A number of times, those whom skinheads attempted to involve responded by fighting back. For example, in Kursk, on the first day of 2005, local residents taking a stroll downtown were offended by the neo-Nazi slogans, attacked and beat the skinheads shouting them. In May, a few skinheads were beaten by passengers of a Moscow suburban train whom the youngsters tried to involve in some “action” (apparently, in a violent racist attack). In contrast, in Kaluga Oblast, passengers in a suburban train did not beat the skinheads, but escorted them to a police station; by doing so, the citizens prevented a riot that the skinheads had planned on that day.

Opposition between skinheads and leftist youth has been growing in scale and intensity, involving mutual violence, which has been frequently provoked by the young left-wing anti-fascists. Their attacks, while motivated by a sincere desire to fight neo-Nazi, are as illegal as the violence of their opponents, and lead to nowhere except even more violence and more victims. Thus, for example, on 16 December, a group of leftist youth attacked a club where a music festival featuring Corrosion of Metal was taking place. Massive fighting followed, leaving many victims, mostly the anti-fascists themselves (one of them

subsequently died from the injuries) and members of the audience who had nothing to do with the skinheads.

### **Criminal prosecution of right-wing radicals**

Undoubtedly, law enforcement authorities must play the central role in combating illegal manifestations of the right-wing radicalism, and notably, they were much more active in 2005 than before, at least in criminal prosecution of offenders, in particular for violent crimes. While in 2003 only four convictions took account of the hate motive, in 2004 there were eight such convictions, and in 2005 their number reached 16 [38] (in Moscow, Moscow Oblast, and St. Petersburg - two convictions in each city - Blagoveschensk, Vladivostok, Volgograd, Yekaterinburg, Lipetsk, Murmansk, Perm, Saratov, Surgut and Tambov). A total of 60 persons were found guilty in the above trials, but only 50 convictions addressed the hate motive.

Most offenders were sentenced to actual, rather than probational, prison terms - only four defendants of the Schultz-88 and Mad Crowd trials in St. Petersburg and one defendant each in Lipetsk and Murmansk got probational sentences. It is important, because, as we know from experience, probational sentences do not discourage skinheads from subsequent offences, but give offenders a sense of impunity; many of those convicted in 2005 had already received probational sentences for violent attacks and vandalism. An example is the story of Yuri Zavershinsky, a skinhead from Lipetsk. In August 2004, he was sentenced to two years of probation under art. 213 (misdemeanor, or “hooliganism”) for an armed attack against a Mozambican. Then, although investigators found Nazi literature in his home, they did not find the attack against the African to be racist, and the criminal investigator told the local press that he was not going to bring charges under art. 282, it would be “political.” However, seven months after the sentence, on 14 March 2005, Yuri Zavershinsky together with three companions - one of them previously convicted for banditry - beat a man from Mali. This time, the attackers were sentenced under art. 282 part 2 para “a” of the Criminal code to 2 and 4.5 years of prison.

Another sign of progress in prosecution of violent racist crimes was the fact that courts actively applied not only this paragraph of art. 282 of the Criminal Code, but other Criminal Code articles punishing for violent crimes and containing the motive of racial hatred among aggravating circumstances. At least eight [39] out of 16 sentences in cases heard by jury courts under part. 2, art.105 (murder) and 111 (inflicting serious injuries) took into account this aggravating circumstance [40]. We can note in particular the sentencing of a skinhead group in Saratov. In February 2005, a jury court in Saratov found three local skinheads guilty of a murder motivated by ethnic hatred (the cases of two more persons involved in the killing were investigated separately under different proceedings). However, a few months later the Russian Supreme Court overruled the sentence due to procedural violations, and sent it back to be reconsidered by other judges. By that time, the other investigation had been completed, the cases were combined, and in September 2005 a new panel of judges sentenced all the five defendants to prison terms ranging between 5 and 13 years.

The motive of racial hatred was also involved in a number of criminal prosecutions opened in 2005 into vandalism in cemeteries. Two of the trials have by now resulted in convictions. In December, two “Satanists” from Naberezhnye Chelny were found guilty of vandalism, and in Astrakhan Oblast in May three ethnic Chechens were found guilty of vandalizing a rural cemetery in Yandyki. The latter were

sentenced to 18 months of correctional colony, but the sentence was then replaced by a probational term, and this ruling provoked the anti-Chechen riot in August 2005 described above.

Notably, about a half of sentences in 2005 were for offences committed in 2002 and 2003. Long proceedings into serious crimes are common for Russian courts, but a court in Volgograd staged a record of slowness: a group of 13 skinheads were on trial for murders and beatings of persons from Central Asia - the offences were committed back in 2002 [41]. The case file was sent to court on 30 May 2003, the trial started in January 2004, and the sentences were passed in April 2005. During the time elapsed since the investigation was opened, the Criminal Code was amended, and three of the defendants were released without trial. Nevertheless, eight of the nine remaining defendants were sentenced to prison terms ranging between 4 and 10 years [42]. Notably, this high profile trial and the strict sentences taking into account the racist motives served as a deterrent for skinheads in Volgograd, who refrained from "actions" for a number of months, because punishment was now a real, rather than an abstract prospect.

The trial of Schultz-88 group in St. Petersburg was also very long, taking a few years. Schultz-88 activists were detained back in 2003 and charges were brought against them promptly, including, for the first time in Russia, charges under the new art. 282-1 (organization of, or involvement in, an extremist community, added in 2002). This highly publicized trial, apparently, was designed to demonstrate how strict law enforcement authorities are with regard to racists. However, it ended in surprisingly soft sentences - one of the defendants was acquitted, and three others received probational terms. In additions, the proceedings took so long that charges of involvement in an extremist community had to be lifted, because the statutory period of limitation had expired by the time of trial. Only the group leader, Dmitry Bobrov, was sentenced to an actual prison term for a number of charges, including the organization of an extremist community.

In some cases, sentencing for racist attacks still fails to take the hate motive into account. We know of at least six such sentences (in Moscow, Krasnodar [43], Togliatti, Novosibirsk, Sverdlovsk and Voronezh). The trial in Sverdlovsk Oblast presented a particularly strange example.

In December 2005, a local court convicted a group of teenagers who killed three Armenian migrant workers in May 2005. After the killings, the youngsters came back to a local cafe and publicly declared that they had just performed a "cleansing operation" in the city. [44] Regardless of this fact, the court did not even consider the ethnic hatred as a motive of the crime. In this case, mentioning the qualifying circumstance of ethnic hatred in the indictment would not mean harsher punishment (the sentence was the harshest possible anyway - between 10 years to a life term), but would be appropriate from the legal perspective and likely to produce an educational and awareness-raising effect. The punishment, in this case, would be administered to racist killers, rather than "delinquent youth."

Of course, many racist offences are never detected.

While the law enforcement authorities increasingly prosecute violent racist crimes, things are not as straightforward with regard to ethno-nationalist "propaganda."

Certainly, prosecution of those responsible for such propaganda increased in 2005; with 11 trials [45] against 13 defendants [46] ending in convictions (as opposed to just three in 2004). In 2005, Kemerovo

Oblast was the absolute leader in terms of such convictions, with four sentences, only one of them probational. Promoters of racial hatred were also convicted in Kirov, Moscow, Novgorod, Oryol, Syktyvkar, Sverdlovsk and Khabarovsk.

As a form of punishment, courts also started to ban the type of activity defendants are charged for. In 2005, two such sentences were passed; the first, involving the National Bolshevik Alexander Nikolayenko [47], was passed on 26 April 2005 in Kemerovo Oblast. The second, passed on 31 May 2005 in Novgorod deserves a special mention, being the first conviction under art. 282-1 (organization of an extremist community) in Russian jurisprudence, and we consider the sentence passed by the Novgorod court to be the best ruling in a racial hatred case over the recent years.

Back in 2004, three RNE activists were charged with composing and disseminating a newsletter entitled Novgorodets containing hate texts. The investigators, and subsequently the judges found the defendants to constitute an extremist community, and their actions were qualified under art. 2, art. 282 and art. 282-1: their leader, Mikhail Pekin, was convicted under part 1 (as the main organizers), and the other two under part 2 (as participants). The sentence (four, three and two years of prison, respectively) was probational, but all the three were banned by the court from distributing any mass media materials for three years, and Pekin was banned from working as a journalist for the same period.

Three more people, in addition to these four, were substantially punished, and we regard it as tangible progress, because none of the three persons convicted in 2004 was ultimately punished.

Of the six “real” sentences (three in Kemerovo Oblast, one each in Novgorod, Sverdlovsk Oblast and Kirov) only two involved prison terms: the first was passed in October in Sverdlovsk Oblast - although the defendant sentenced to six month of colony was arrested at the time anyway facing even more serious charges of hate-motivated violence [48]. The other conviction was the second over the three-month period sentence to the National Bolshevik A. Nikolaenko - again, six months of settlement colony.

The remaining four sentences did not involve incarceration - in addition to being banned from certain occupations, the defendants were sentenced either to correctional labor (for someone already employed it means that part of their salary is withheld) or to fines. We believe that courts were right in their sentencing.

Six more persons were found guilty, but either their sentences were probational, or the statutory limitation period had expired (we should note that delays were not the responsibility of defendants, who were certainly interested in exhausting the period of limitation, but the prosecutors and judges who did not know how to deal with it [49]). The lack of real, rather than virtual, punishments encouraged new waves of xenophobic statements. Thus in 2005, Pavel Ivanov from Novgorod and Igor Kolodezenko from Novosibirsk resumed the activity they had received probational sentences for (the latter - even two sentences over the recent years) under art. 282 of the Criminal Code. Vladimir Popov from Vologda continued publishing his anti-Semitist paper "Slavyansky Nabat," and prosecution against him was apparently dropped. Victor Korchagin [50] who on several occasions was found guilty under the “incitation of ethnic hatred” provision, but never actually punished, continued speaking at rallies and accusing Jews of ritual killings even though his trial was ongoing. Sergey Lukyanenko, an anti-Semitist publisher in Khabarovsk, continues his activity in spite of being currently under a probational sentence

and being accused for a third consecutive time under art. 282.

No doubt, prosecutions under art. 282 can be challenging, given that the investigators usually lack special training or experience with regard to this rather specific type of offences. They often request expert opinions from the wrong experts, who, in turn, make mistakes in their assessments [51]. Therefore, the prosecutor's case in court is usually weak in this type of trials. A solution may involve re-organizing the way prosecutors operate.

At times, it is nearly impossible to get authorities to prosecute, not to speak of conviction and sentencing. The following requests for prosecution were denied:

- against the author and promoters of the anti-Semitist "Letter of 500" (by now reaching "15,000") containing an explicitly discriminatory demand that all Jewish organizations must be closed in Russia; the demand was based on a series of old anti-Semitist myths (request to prosecute denied twice);
- against organizers and speakers of the anti-Semitist meeting in Pushkin Square in Moscow, where Hassids were accused of ritual killings of children;
- against Mikhail Nazarov for an anti-Semitist book and a series of publications (one of the reasons given for the refusal to prosecute was that the book *"was not only officially allowed by the [Russian Orthodox] Church to be sold in its bookstores, but was recognized as a 1999 bestseller. Books which incite hatred are not blessed for publication by the highest Orthodox hierarchy".*)

None of these publications was found by prosecutors to provoke ethnic hatred.

Another less known, but illustrative case was the refusal to open a criminal investigation into the publication, in a Pskov Oblast newspaper, of "The Catechism of a Jew in the USSR" - an anti-Semitist fabrication known since Soviet times; back in 1995 the aforementioned Victor Korchagin was convicted for its publication.

The Catechism example demonstrates that the same texts are assessed differently depending on the moment of time and on the specific prosecutor; however, in 2005 there was an example of the same text being assessed differently by the same prosecutorial office within the same month. On 4 March 2005, the City Prosecutor's Office in St. Petersburg warned the newspapers "Orthodox Russia" and "For the Russian Cause" for publication of "The letter of 500" finding incitation of ethnic hatred, but in April the same prosecutors refused to open a criminal investigation under art. 282 of the Criminal Code into the same incident. The reason given for their refusal to prosecute was not that a warning had been issued or that the offence was not dangerous enough for criminal prosecution [52], but inter alia, that as long as there were no "calls to commit illegal acts against members of a certain ethnicity, race or religion," there was no crime under art. 282 - an interpretation unfounded in the Criminal Code.

### **Administrative liability and preventive actions**

Administrative sanctions are increasingly used against right-wing radicals - in addition to law enforcement authorities, other authorized government bodies can impose administrative liability.

Increasingly, we hear about administrative punishment for the display of Nazi or similar symbols and paraphernalia (art. 20.3 of the Russian Code of Administrative Offences). Such cases were reported in Oryol, Murmansk, Moscow (a participant of the Right March was sentenced to five days of administrative arrest), Ryazan Oblast and Krasnodar Krai.

After a long interval caused by the ongoing administrative reform, prosecutors and Roskhrancultura resumed their warnings to mass media for ethno-religious xenophobia. We know of at least 11 such warnings issued in 2005 (six by Roskhrancultura and five by prosecutors) [53], while in 2004 there were only four warnings [54]. As a rule, editorial offices do not stop their ethno-nationalist publications after such warnings, but at least they become nervous. As of this writing (January 2006), at least five warnings issued in 2005 are being challenged in courts.

Roskhrancultura		Prosecutors	
Warned media	Note	Warned media	Note
“Zakubanye” (Adygeya)		“Moscovskye Vorota” (Kaluga Oblast)	Challenged in court
“Volzhskaya Zarya” (Samara Oblast)	Successfully challenged in court in January 2006	“I am [ethnic] Russian in Samara” (Samara Oblast)	Challenged in court
“I am [ethnic] Russian in Samara” (Samara Oblast)	Challenged in court	“Orthodox Russia” (St. Petersburg)	
“Russkaya Pravda” (Moscow)		“For the Russian Cause” (St. Petersburg)	Challenged in court
“The Course” (Kemerovo Oblast)	Warned for incitation of social strife	“Era Rossii” (Moscow)	
Nevsky TV Channel (St. Petersburg)			

Notably, such warnings had been rarely challenged in courts before; only well-respected mainstream media did so, rather than marginal nationalist publications; now all of them seem to realize that an unchallenged warning may lead to the media company being closed. Indeed, on 4 July 2005, Khamovnichesky Court in Moscow closed NBP's "General'naya Liniya" paper following three warnings in 2004 [55]. However, a list of media warned in 2005 shows that xenophobic statements in respectable mainstream publications were not noticed by prosecutors and Roskhrancultura. It seems strange, because Komsomolskaya Pravda and Moskovsky Komsomolets, not to mention a number of regional periodicals, published numerous offensive articles ranging from xenophobic to explicitly racist in 2005 [56].

Right-wing radical organizations did not feel much pressure either - we do not know of a single liquidation of such organizations through judicial proceedings in 2005 - or in 2004, for that matter. In



contrast to previous years, we have not heard of any right-wing radical groups having been liquidated on formal grounds (such as failure to submit requested reports to the registering authority, etc.).

There was one example of an organization being officially warned by the prosecutor for extremist activity [57] in April 2005 - the Krasnodar chapter of the neo-Heathen organization "Spiritual Ancestral Russian Empire". The group has declared itself sovereign and separate from the Russian Federation, randomly "grants" lands and property to its members and encourages them to defend their property using weapons. While the group's rhetoric and activities are rather weird and raise doubts about mental sanity of its members, it is not as harmless as may appear. It is responsible for at least one riot in September 2004 in Krasnodar Krai. In April 2005, the same organization condemned to death the Russian Vice Premier Alexander Zhukov (for facilitating a "*Judo-Nazi occupation*") and called upon its members to execute the sentence "*using all available means, in any form, and at any convenient time.* [58]"

We know of one denial of registration to a non-governmental association: on 15 September 2005, the Federal Registration Service in St. Petersburg and Leningrad Oblast refused to register NDPR's new organization, the National Imperial Path of Russia because its charter contained hate-provoking statements. This decision of the registering authority in St. Petersburg is notable, particularly considering that a month later another branch of the same organization using the same charter was registered in Moscow without problems (see above).

Legal remedies continue to be rarely used against right-wing radical organizations and publications. For the last couple of years, no NGOs have been liquidated specifically for nationalist activities, and very few media outlets were closed for the same reason [59]. The case of General'naya Liniya having been closed for nationalism is questionable: firstly, the court of second instance has not yet confirmed the ruling, so it is not yet effective; and secondly, nationalism was not the first on the list of charges against NBP's paper - the main legal and political reason for suppressing NBP is its extreme opposition to the current government.

In addition to criminal and administrative sanctions against right-wing radicals, increased focus was placed on preventing manifestations of right-wing radicalism. In July, a local court in charge of Yu. Zavershinsky's case (see above) issued a special order to the city administration of Lipetsk prescribing increased control over Vityaz Sports Club as a potential meeting place of local neo-Nazi. An example of preventive policing was a police operation on 26 April 2005, which effectively curbed a riot at a punk concert in Kirov. Apparently, the police acted on the basis of good intelligence, because a fight involving at least 68 skinheads armed with chains, baseball bats, metal knuckles and metal rods was stopped within minutes.

Unfortunately, effective policing of this sort is the exception, rather than the rule. Incompetent and often illegal law enforcement practices lead to counterproductive outcomes. For example, in St. Petersburg, skinheads caught red-handed and arrested for beating an ethnic Armenian in 2002 avoided punishment due to expired period of statutory limitations. However, the police who arrested them were found guilty (and rightly so) of beating one detainee and sentenced to prison terms.

In an effort to prevent ethnic violence, police and prosecutors in some regions - including Kursk, Ivanovo, and Yekaterinburg - meet with foreign students and advise them on how to keep safe in the streets of

Russian cities. However, very often this form of prevention is merely a bureaucratic formality. Thus for example, in Voronezh, the local police jointly with the department of education produced Safety Guidelines for foreign students focusing mostly on advice to foreign students not to go to certain places at a certain time. Sometimes this type of bureaucratic exercise is openly cynical. Also in Voronezh in November 2005, soon after the killing of a Peruvian student, a new position was created in the city administration: the Mayor's advisor on interactions with foreigners. At the same time, the city's graduate schools - where the foreigners study - hosted lectures by the NDPR leader Alexander Sevastyanov.

In St. Petersburg - a city that pioneered the publication of Safety Guidelines for foreign students in 2004 - police blamed foreigners for putting themselves at risk by following the guidelines. For example, the guidelines said, *"if you choose to run, run as fast as you can,"* while in January 2005 a high-ranking police officer in St. Petersburg was quoted as saying that *"By their behavior, foreigners often provoke groups of youngsters to violent offences. Seeing a group of youngsters, foreigners - usually from Asian and African countries - often start to run; by doing so they attract attention and are pursued."*

Equally cynical was a statement published by a number of political leaders during the Moscow City Duma elections, denouncing the Right March. The authors of the statement, including Yuri Luzhkov, Gennady Zyuganov, Sergey Baburin and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, voiced a demand *"to nip in the bud any attempts to put up against each other people of different ethnicity and faith."* Shortly before the statement, Zhirinovskiy and Zyuganov refused to denounce members of their parties who had participated in the march. The Moscow City Government headed by Luzhkov failed to impose any administrative sanctions to suppress and punish nationalist pronouncements during the Right March (except removing a few random marchers who carried a swastika) and then banned an anti-fascist march. Baburin by that time had already made his speech to the Union of Russian People congress.

Besides, many officials continue to deny the existence of radical nationalism in Russia, making only general political concerning the need to overcome xenophobia. Regional "tolerance-promoting programs" are little known at best - many of them were adopted without any consultations with civil society. At worst - as the Krasnodar Krai program - they do nothing to promote tolerance, but make ethnic problems even worse.

### **The fight against xenophobia as a political resource**

We should also describe a new extremely disturbing and notably increasing trend that first appeared in 2005: the use of anti-Nazi and anti-xenophobia slogans as an instrument of suppressing political opposition and independent organizations.

The first part of the trend is not new; anti-xenophobia slogans have long been used to discredit political opponents outside the country; for example, Latvia and Estonia have been targeted for their rehabilitation of former Waffen SS members. In 2005, the most visible episode of this type was the beating of Russian diplomats' children in Poland and a subsequent beating of Polish nationals in Moscow.

Racist and ethnically-motivated attacks are equally disgusting wherever they happen. However, while many attacks against foreigners in Russia may be equally and even more cruel than the beating of Russians in Poland, the latter elicited an immediate and highly emotional response by Russia's top

political leaders, causing tensions in Russian-Polish relations. On the other hand, subsequent attacks against Poles in Russia did not only fail to provoke any political response, but have not been (and probably will never be) investigated - in contrast, in Poland the attackers were promptly arrested. Moreover, a number of Russian media interpreted the beatings of Poles in Moscow almost as “fair revenge” for the attack of Polish skinheads, and openly demanded that “a draw be declared” of the beatings.

Another part of the same trend is excessively tough persecution of fairly harmless leftist youth organizations for the only reason of their opposition to the current political regime. Not limited to excessively severe punishment of NBP members’ non-violent protests and to accusing NBP of fascism [60], persecutions also affect members of AKM, SKM and other leftist groups. An obvious example of them being targeted was the preventive arrest of leftist youths on the eve of the Victory Day, when they were planning a peaceful manifestation.

And finally, the third and most important part of the trend is the use of anti-Nazi rhetoric for discreditation of political opponents.

The pro-Kremlin Nashi group was the first to proceed from the abstract statements about “conspiracy against Russia” to concrete political accusations targeting, alongside skinheads and NBP, also Yabloko Party, Committee 2008, Garry Kasparov and Irina Khakamada - i.e. politicians and groups oppositional to President Putin, but never known for anything like xenophobia. We have reasons to believe that Nashi are behind increasingly common, even systematic street attacks against NBP members and other lefties.

Simultaneously with Nashi, the Federation Council Speaker Sergey Mironov once again voiced his long-cherished idea of amending the Russian Constitution to allow Vladimir Putin to retain his presidency after 2008. Now Mironov argues his case by references to the growing fascist threat in the country.

A ban of the anti-fascist march to be held in Moscow on 27 November in response to the Right March caused a high-profile scandal. The ban was motivated by “inconveniences [likely to be caused] to Moscovites” (the argument could have been valid given that the march was planned on a weekday in Tverskaya street, but we should remember that a march by Nashi in Leninsky Prospect in May was not regarded by authorities as an inconvenience). The Moscow City Government permitted a rally in Belorussky Railway Station Square instead of a march, but the organizers declined saying that “it takes a march to oppose another march.” Instead, they held an anti-fascist picket in front of the Moscow Mayor’s Office on 27 November. The picket was unsanctioned, so the city authorities were legally allowed to break it up; however, the excessive violence of riot police in breaking up a peaceful picket (one participant had to be hospitalized) and the fact that a neo-Nazi rally held by NSO at the same time in Preobrazhenskaya Square in Moscow was not noticed by the city authorities or the police, suggest that the Moscow Government encourages nationalists - whatever the real motives may be.

Another outrageous attack by government against civil society activists was reported in Nizhny Novgorod. In 2005, authorities initiated a trial of Stanislav Dmintievsky, director of the Russian-Chechen Friendship Society. He was charged under part 2, art. 282 of the Criminal Code for incitation of ethnic hatred - namely, for a publication of statements by Aslan Maskhadov and Akhmed Zakayev. Both statements are, of course, biased and strongly critical of those who hold political power in Russia, but do

not contain any sign of ethnic hatred, so there is no reason whatsoever for this kind of charges against the publisher [61]. On 3 February 2006 Dmitrievsky was sentenced to two years of imprisonment but put on probation.

## **Conclusion**

The conclusions that we can make looking back at the year 2005 are less than optimistic.

On a positive side, the Russian authorities increasingly prosecute illegal conduct by right-wing radicals. Apparently, improved sentencing, both in number and in quality, for racist attacks in 2004 - 2005 caused a decrease of hate killings. Possibly, the fact that serious criminal prosecution of racist propaganda started in 2005 will cause a decrease of such offences in the future. However, the government's efforts to combat these offences continue to lag behind the activity of neo-Nazi and other radical ethno-nationalists, especially their promotional and organizing activity. The state is not sufficiently systematic and consistent in opposing them, raising doubts about its commitment to eliminating hate crime.

Racist and other neo-Nazi violence is expanding; it becomes increasingly emphatic and affects new ethnic, religious and social groups.

In an attempt to mainstream their ideas, right-wing radicals use all promotional methods available to them. Unfortunately, mass media often present right-wing radicals as independent media personalities and by doing so partially legitimize them before the audience.

Apparently, the government still fails to recognize the right-wing radical threat as a top priority, although the electoral successes of Rodina and DPNI with their nationalist rhetoric during the Moscow Duma campaign clearly demonstrate that these are not marginal groups anymore, which you can ignore or easily control through administrative intrigues. Moreover, the clearly political context of pressure against Rodina (as opposed to LDPR, for example) devalues the state's declarations about fighting xenophobic sentiments; it undermines public confidence in the law and creates a strong belief that political opposition to the regime, rather than right-wing radicalism, is punished.

In fact, in 2005 the problem of xenophobia became a handy instrument of political manipulation used to intimidate democratically-oriented electorates, to discredit liberal opposition, to achieve desired electoral outcomes locally and ultimately to perpetuate authoritarian methods of government. Dead set on opposing the mythical "orange threat," motivated by their own xenophobic attitudes and personal interests, members of political elites prefer to remain passive at best, and collaborate with leaders and ideologists of Russia's right-wing radicalism at worst.

Apparently, ruling elites in Russia continue to believe that extreme nationalism is not a real political threat; moreover, they seem to believe that "soft" nationalism can be safely and successfully incorporated in the official ideology. Their mistake lies not only in the underestimation of threats other than political - even now, right-wing radicals kill dozens, injure hundreds and poison the minds of many more people with their propaganda; they also underestimate the political threat: extreme nationalism continues to

grow, and we have no reasons to believe that the ineffective Russian government can successfully control right-wing radicals should the latter mobilize in the face of a crisis.

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[1] See the last year's report: G. Kozhevnikova. Radical nationalism in Russia: Manifestations and Responses. A review of 2004 events. // SOVA Center. Nationalism and Xenophobia. 2005. 24 January ([xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/4DCF65B](http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/4DCF65B)). SOVA Center's activities are presented at [sova-center.ru](http://sova-center.ru).

[2] Strictly speaking, we should differentiate between "red skinheads" that include some of young anti-fascists, and Nazi skinheads - their opponents. But we will follow the tradition and use the term 'skinhead' to describe Nazi skinheads and "bonheads" and will not use the term with regard to their opponents.

[3] In this paper, we cannot cover the situation in the North Caucasus republics. The events there should be the subject of a different type of research. The data available for Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria and especially Chechnya cannot be treated in the same way as the data for Stavropol and Krasnodar. Therefore our statistics do not include these republics, and we use the term "the Russian South" to include regions which are part of the Southern Federal District, minus the said republics.

[4] At the congress, Demushkin and Ivanov (Sukharevsky) - long-term competitors accusing each other of collaboration with Russian security agencies - even had a physical fight "for leadership."

[5] For example, the governor of St. Petersburg Valentina Matviyenko.

[6] RNE advocates for illegal possession of weapons.

[7] Migrant construction workers lynched in Moscovschina // Baikal Info. 2005. 16 June.

[8] See the section on anti-Semitism. Radical Russian nationalists attempted to avoid anti-Semitism before. Such attempts were described in 2002 by A. Verkhovsky in his report "Russian nationalists are evading anti-Semitism." The report in Russian is available from SOVA Center website: [xeno.sova-center.ru/1ED6E3B/1ED7483/215FBBA](http://xeno.sova-center.ru/1ED6E3B/1ED7483/215FBBA).

[9] To remind: in April 2005, in Krasnoyarsk, five boys aged 10 - 11 disappeared. After a long time, their bodies were found in an underground sewage reservoir in the city.

[10] Alexander Sevastyanov made the following statement about it: *"Out of tactical considerations, DNPI leadership gave him a party pseudonym: Belov, consistent with the country's revolutionary tradition (Stalin, Molotov, and many others)".* However, rather than revolutionary, we see a racist tradition here ("Belov" comes from "bely" - "white" in Russian).

[11] In end-2004.

[12] In 2004 in Vladivostok, a group of skinheads were detained on charges of several racist attacks.

Ultimately, only one of them was convicted, but the others willingly testified against him. This incident strongly affected the morale of Vladivostok neo-Nazi.

[13] See details, for example, in Marlene Laruelle, Alexander Dugin - an ideological intermediary // The Price of Hatred. Nationalism in Russia and Opposition to Racist Crimes. M.: SOVA Center, 2005, at 226-253.

[14] See below.

[15] In 2003-2004, NDPR organized a similar competition on a national scale. See details in G. Kozhevnikova. Radical Nationalism in Russia: Manifestations and Responses. 2004 Review.

[16] See section Radical nationalism on behalf of the state.

[17] Yu. Belyaev's Freedom Party, both People's National Parties - Tokmakov's and Ivanov's (Sukharevsky), and Dmitry Dyomushkin's Slavic Union.

[18] Soon they were confused and could not make sense of their own information.

[19] The actual organizers of the march included ESM, DPNI, and NDPR. Formally, ESM applied for permission to hold the march.

[20] Enough to say that they refrained from fighting when a small group of anti-fascists started throwing water-filled condoms at them. There was not enough police around to stop a fight, should it have started.

[21] It was not known at the time that the children had died.

[22] A group of local skinheads claimed responsibility for a riot of a Roma camp outside Moscow, injuring at least four.

[23] Later, unconfirmed reports appeared that a criminal investigation was opened into Krivnyk's statement under art. 282 of the Criminal Code.

[24] See, e.g. Oleg Kozlovsky. Before you burn houses and evict Gypsies. // Golden Ring (Yaroslavl). 2005, 22 January ([http://www.goldring.ru/podrobno.php?id\\_rub=15798&day=22&month=1&year=2005](http://www.goldring.ru/podrobno.php?id_rub=15798&day=22&month=1&year=2005))

[25] The Fund is known for its anti-Roma and anti-Tajik statements, kidnapping drug addicts for the purpose of their treatment without medications (!), and Roisman is known to have been a close friend of the local criminal leader Alexander Khabarov who died in prison in 2005.

[26] Provided that the judgment is not challenged again.

[27] However, commercial interests, apparently, prevailed: by unofficial reports, the six-rayed star was replaced by a twelve-rayed one, and in January 2006 the monument was opened in a low-profile ceremony.

[28] For example, at the round table “Ethnic issues in the structure of social interaction” held in the State Duma on 16 May 2005.

[29] In this report, we do not consider persecutions against Moslems in the North Caucasus, e.g. in Kabardino-Balkaria. It would take a separate research project to study this subject.

[30] In this review, we do not cover discrimination of believers belonging to certain religious denominations.

[31] The elections were held on 18 October 2005.

[32] Armenians in Tula demand that provocateurs should be punished // Agency of National News. 2005. 25 in October (<http://www.annews.ru/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=19554>). The elections were held on 30 October 2005.

[33] However, if the suspicion is true that the decision had been made under pressure from Kvachkov’s HQ (i.e. DPNI and NDPR), we can assume that skinheads (the National Socialist Society is closer to skinhead groups than to parties) are bound by some sort of “party discipline.”

[34] The French ambassador was indignant that Rodina modified its video following the ban by translating the content into French and thus alluding to the riots in France. Rogozin responded to Azeri ambassador’s note by rather rude polemics, but stopped short of further offending the French ambassador.

[35] To remind, this strategy was used by LDPR at least three times in 2004. It was challenged in court twice, but both times the party’s campaigning was found acceptable by court.

[36] A detailed analysis of reasons for electoral success of right-wing candidates is given by V. Pribylovsky in his report “National Patriots in regional elections (governors and legislative assemblies), 2000-2004” at the conference “Russian nationalism and elections. Election campaigns and voting outcomes, 1993-2004” (Moscow, 17-18 February, 2005).

[37] The United Russia’s specific methods of leading the Duma plenary sessions, and MPs xenophobic rhetoric were discussed on 25 October 2005 at a conference of the French-Russian Center for Social and Humanitarian Studies “Russian nationalism in official structures of the Russian government,” in particular in Yekaterina Mikhailovskaya’s presentation entitled “Nationalist discourse in the Duma: the Rodina Party example.”

[38] In the summer of 2005 Moskovsky Komsomolets newspaper published a report about one more sentence being passed by the Moscow Oblast Court. However, the Moscow Oblast Prosecutor’s Office did not confirm this report.

[39] We do not know the exact wording of charges and sentences in some cases.

[40] In another trial involving cruel murders of Uzbek migrant workers in the summer of 2004, the

Moscow Oblast Prosecutor's Office was not able to prove the hate motive. It is important, however, that they were prepared to bring these charges.

[41] However, the record is likely to be beaten by the Rodoshkevich group trial in Novosibirsk. The group was charged with a series of attacks against migrants from Central Asia back in 2002. Members of the group were arrested in November 2002. The proceedings started in October 2003 and are still ongoing.

[42] One was found not guilty.

[43] However, given the specific context in Krasnodar Krai, the mere fact that prosecutions into the killings of Meskhetians reached the court and ended in convictions is a positive thing in and of itself.

[44] Notably, they were detained only after the incident caused international scandal: the Armenian ambassador was in Sverdlovsk Oblast with an official visit at the time of the killings.

[45] These statistics include sentences where the defendants were found guilty, but were not punished under art. 282 due to expiry of the statute of limitations. There were three such cases in 2005: Victor Korchagin in Moscow, Ram Latypov in Khabarovsk and Alexander Nikolaenko (his first case) in Kemerovo.

[46] One man out of the 13 - A.Nikolaenko - was convicted twice.

[47] There were two trials involving Nikolaenko and running simultaneously; in both cases, he was charged under art.280 and 282 of the Criminal Code, but for different publications. The first sentence was passed in April 2005 - then Nikolaev was found guilty under art. 282, but the statute of limitations had expired, so he was sentenced only under art. 280 to a probational term combined with a ban on engaging in journalism. The second sentence - six months of prison - was under both articles of the Criminal Code.

[48] It follows from media reports that the incident in question involved a series of arson attacks against cafes owned by "people from the Caucasus" in the autumn of 2004 in Yekaterinburg and Verkhnyaya Pyshma, killing one and seriously injuring at least one person who required hospitalization. We do not know, however, which of the arsons the defendant was involved in.

[49] See a detailed analysis of reasons why such cases are difficult in: Ratinov A., Kroz A., Ratinova N. Liability for Incitation of Animosity and Hatred. Psychological and Legal Characteristics. M.: Yurlitinform, 2005. p. 12-16.

[50] In early 2005, a cassation court confirmed his release from punishment due to expiry of the statute of limitations. However, the expiry can be contested, because all the time Korchagin continued distributing the materials like the ones he was prosecuted for.

[51] See Ratinov A., Kroz A., Ratinova N. Op. cit. p. 187-236.

[52] In principle, it is possible that an offensive publication may cause the media company to be closed,



without criminal prosecution against the author or the publisher.

[53] It remains unclear whether Orthodox Russia and For the Russian Cause were warned by Roskhrancultura. If both publications received two warnings each (from Roskhrancultura and prosecutors), then a total of 13 warnings were issued in 2005.

[54] Only warnings concerning incitation of ethnic and religious hatred are meant here.

[55] Two of them were for “extremism” and one for incitation of ethnic hatred (and perfectly justified).

[56] See, the Hate Speech in Russian Media section of the SOVA Center website at [xeno.sova-center.ru/213716E](http://xeno.sova-center.ru/213716E).

[57] It is also known that a few warnings were issued in Tatarstan, but no information as to whom and when they were issued.

[58] It has been reported that other top officials in Russia, including President Putin, received similar “death sentences.”

[59] For more information on the application of the Law on Combating Extremist Activity see: Verkhovsky A., Kozhevnikova G. Three years of opposition // The Price of Hatred. Nationalism in Russia and Opposition to Racist Crimes. M.: SOVA Center. 2005. p. 111-129.

[60] The NBP ideology formed in the 90-ies closely resembled fascism, according to many experts. Changes in the party’s policies over the recent years are not totally convincing, because NBP has not denounced its former statements in any way. Therefore, describing it as part of the democratic opposition - as some observers increasingly do - is premature, in our opinion.

However, while some central core and regional activists subscribe to right-wing radical views, they are ultimately forced to leave the party. NBP has never organized violent racist or ethnically-motivated attacks; regardless of its aggressive rhetoric, the party is not inclined to violence. Therefore it is wrong to mention National Bolsheviks next to Nazi skinheads.

[61] The statements and the case file materials can be accessed from the website of the [Russian-Chechen Information Agency](http://Russian-Chechen-Information-Agency).