

**ХРОНІКА**

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**CHRONICLE  
OF THE WAR  
2014-2020**

**Volume 1**

**FROM MAIDAN TO ILOVAISK**

Kharkiv  
«Folio»  
2022

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### ***Information about the authors of the volume 1***

***Gennady Afanasyev***, a professional photographer and Crimean activist, took part in the movement for a united Ukraine during the annexation of the Crimean peninsula by the Russian Federation. But in 2014 he was arrested in Simferopol and he was tried in the case of so-called Crimean terrorists. He was illegally detained in Russian prisons as a political prisoner.

He now lives in Kyiv and continues to fight for the release of Ukrainian political prisoners illegally detained in Russia.

***Artem Shevchenko*** is a journalist. He has experience as a reporter in covering military conflicts in hot spots: the Balkans, the Caucasus, Israel, Iraq.

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He actively covered the events of April-June 2014 in Slovyansk.

# FEBRUARY 23, 2014

## ■ Gennadiy Afanasiev “Rise after a Fall”

### WE WERE WAITED FOR

Enraged and furious people from the whole Crimean peninsula started gathering. Twenty thousand men and women set off to protect their home, crying out jodie calls and holding posters with slogans that would then become their life credo: “Crimea is Ukraine”. But near the Verkhovna Rada of the Crimea we were already waited for byfoes. At least ten thousand Kuban Cossacks relocated from the Russian Federation as they said, as tourists. They were to provide armed support to the relocated civilians. These people were rapidly distributed in all towns and settlements, but many stayed in the capital to “conquer” it.

They were reinforced by local special police squad “Berkut”, those who rampaged, beat and killed protesters in the Kyiv Maidan.

The Crimean teams were considered the most cruel, since they had long sympathized with Moscow. The majority of separatists were paid string puppets, the so called “titushki”, who functioned as “expendables” during all the hot stages of the conflict. In total there were at least five thousand Russians around the Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of the Crimea. They did not conceal their presence and purpose, which were transparent, clear and evident — to occupy and annex the territory of the appealing peninsula.

These masses were standing in a semicircle near the entrance door to the building. Their task was to prevent the interruption of the ongoing parliament session at any cost. On the other hand, the invaders were preparing a bloody provocation, which was to justify further ground invasion of troops. The roof of the building was full of journalists, who were certainly attracted by the event. Dozens of cameras of various RF media were preparing the evening portion of propaganda for their public.

They included those who came to stand for the integrity and independence of Ukraine, mainly Crimean Tatars. There were

many ethnic Ukrainians, but still the main attacks were against the indigenous people of the Crime. The Russians insulted them and racially abused them by shouting such typical of our neighbors words as Wogs! Gooks! Skibbies! The Russians did their best to provoke Crimean Tatars to attack. All this was further heated up by increasingly numerous Russian flags.

When glass jars, bricks and sticks were thrown at us, and the opponents started using pepper spray balls and truncheons, it was impossible to keep standing any longer. The wave attacked. It caused a jam. The crowd tried its best to push away the occupants from the invaded territory. Everything happened relatively bloodlessly, the front cordon tried to prevent any possible clashes and fights, and for those who were injured a live corridor was organized to reach safety freely. These activities lasted for at least three hours, after which the Russians had to retire. We were full of euphoria. At that time it seemed we had won. The session was terminated and the local authorities were reminded that their time was limited and nearly running out. The representative body of the Crimean Tatars Mejlis ordered to stand down, and everybody rushed to their homes. Near the building there still was a group of expelled separatists; in fact, they had not gone away. It was also obvious that all of them would come back to their positions right after our departure...

On coming back home, I switched on Russian television to listen the way the events of the day would be presented. I revealed absolutely coarse, non-refined and unbelievable lies. Clear manifestation of absurdity. It was at that moment that I realized what the word propaganda meant.

Reports of all central media were identical. From all sides you could hear symmetrically the same message. The highlights from different places, different time with streets aflame, "Molotov cocktails", blood and murders. All this was accompanied with the same fraudulent wording: "Ukrainian nationalists are gathering from all Ukraine to start genocide of the Crimean people and destroy all Russian speaking population. Our brothers are under threat!" That was the introductory accord of the war.

That night special forces of the Russian Federation were relocated to the Autonomous Republic of the Crimea and seized all administrative buildings, where on roofs they hang Russian flags.

The invaders seized military bases, took over airports, banned all roads leading to the peninsula. The streets were patrolled by masked people in camouflage uniforms. Nobody was wearing any identifiers on their clothing, but each inhabitant of the Crimea understood perfectly well who they were and where they were from.

From that day on it became dangerous to be Ukrainian. We turned into enemies. Hunting for us started. Streets were full of young strong well-built men. Under the security of the masked terrorists they were deploying Russian flags in streets, removed and destroyed national symbols of Ukraine, trying to show who the master was now. Showing off their weapons, this mob did not frighten us. *Vice versa*, it united us even more, encouraging to act.

# MARCH 1, 2014

## ■ News Round-Up

Two Ukrainian fighter jets have taken off with the order to use lethal weapon. A combat team of two Sukhoi SU-27 fighter jets have received the orders to patrol the air frontiers of Ukraine. It was announced by the official sources of the *TSN news agency* in Ukraine.

- ✈ In the night several unidentified individuals would attempt to enter the territory of the Armed Forces of Ukraine bases in Crimea, according to the statement of the Ministry of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. “It was brought to the attention of the leaders of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine that in the night of February 28 and March 1, 2014 — between two and five o’clock in the morning — some radical and hostile forces were planning on committing some prohibited acts, in particular to infiltrate the territory of the Armed Forces of Ukraine positioned in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and to disarm military personnel,” according to the statement of the *Ministry of Defence of Ukraine*.
- ✈ Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Crimea has formed a special “Berkut” tactical team for the enforcement of public order acting under the authorities of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. It was reported by the *First Vice-Prime Minister of the Council of Ministers of Crimea Rustam Temirgaliev*.
- ✈ **Armed Russian soldiers have approached the Parliament of Crimea.** Machine gunners have taken up their positions. This was reported by the “*Interfax Ukraine*” journalists. Nearly ten people were located on Karl Marx and Zhukovsky Streets.
- ✈ Russia has deployed around six thousands soldiers to the Russian-Ukrainian border. It was a grave violation of the agreement, according to the statement of the *Acting Minister of Defense of Ukraine Ihor*

Tenyukh that he made during one of the emergency meetings of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

- ✎ Six Russian “Ural” vehicles have been also deployed to the Kerch raft ferry. The soldiers were armed with the AK machine guns and rifles with the telescopic sight. This was reported by the local media called *Kerch FM*.

There are a few dozens military men, fully armed, patrolling surrounding area. According to the eyewitnesses’ accounts, these military men were armed with the Kalashnikov assault rifles and fires with the telescopic sight. There was also a machine gun spotted there. Military men have arrived to that position on the evening of the previous day, from Feodosia side.

- ✎ **Military vehicles without plates and insignia were reported to be moving through the streets of the city.** The “Simferopol” airport and the “Crimean-Caucasus” raft ferry were still surrounded by the armed soldiers, according to the reports of the *National Border Service of Ukraine*.

- ✎ As of the 1st of March 2014, identified armed individuals continued surrounding “Simferopol-Avia” checkpoint, although they weren’t really disrupting work of the Ukrainian control forces. The “Crimea-Caucasus” checkpoint continued working as per normal. Eleven ferries have arrived to and departed from the raft ferry here. Allegedly a numerous group of soldiers of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation were seen within the service zone as well, although they also haven’t been interfering with the checkpoint operations.

*Ukrainian Border Service officials* declared that their offices continued working as usually, protecting the state borders of Ukraine.

- ✎ **The Parliament of Russian Federation did not rule out the possibility of deployment of the Russian Armed Forces on the territory of Ukraine.**

Russian Senators said in their statement that Russian needed to take measures to assure security and safety of Russian citizens and Russian soldiers who are located on the territory of Crimea, as their safety is threatened, according to the members of the Council of Russian Federation.

✎ In Donetsk pro-Russian protesters shouted “Well done!” And “Russia!”, and removed Ukrainian flag from the building of the Donetsk Oblast State Administration and proclaimed some Gubarev their senator. In addition to that people allegedly chanted “Donbas!”, “Referendum!”, “Bandera shall not pass!”, and “Donetsk is a Russian city!”

✎ Ukrainian Coast Guard ships have been alerted and steered out to the sea, according to the statement of the public affairs office of the *State Border Guard Service of Ukraine*.

“At around one o’clock in the afternoon, a convoy of the armed people in military uniform with the signs of the elite forces has attempted to take over a unit of the Coast Guard of Ukraine near Sevastopol. This convoy consisted of ten military vehicles and around 300 armed people,” stated Ukrainian State Border Guard public affairs office.

Local media also reported about the Russian landing craft carrier with the ground effect “Zubr” that has entered Ukrainian trade port of Feodosia. Ships of this type are usually being used for transporting of the heavy armored vehicles and paratroopers.

✎ On Friday the air space of Ukraine was violated by the eight Russian Il-16 combat aircrafts, and ten helicopters, while a massive convoy consisting of ten Russian armored vehicles arrived in the city of Simferopol in Crimea later that day.

✎ **Vladimir Putin has declared war against Ukraine: Russian Federation Council would approve deployment of troops on the territory of Ukraine.**



President of Russian Vladimir Putin has addressed the Russian Federation Council demanded to approve deployment of Russian Armed Forces on the territory of Ukraine “in order to normalize social and political situation in this country.”

- ✎ “We are committed and loyal to the oath to Ukraine. Nobody has any intention to disarm, surrender and raise the Russian flag,” said *Dmytro Delyatytsky, Commander of the 1st Battalion of the Coast Guard of the marine forces of Ukraine* in Feodosia.
- ✎ Oleksandr Turchinov, Deputy President of Ukraine in that time, has designated Denis Berezovsky for the position of the Chief of the Marine Forces of Ukraine (according to the reports of “*Ukrainian Pravda*” media).
- ✎ A Russian flag was raised on the building of Kharkiv Oblast State Administration. A few young men were spotted walking on the roof of the building and waving another Russian flag.
- ✎ Aggressive protesters supported by the Communist Party of Ukraine are protesting the mayor office in the city of Mariupol. There are reports about broken windows and a Russian flag raised on the roof of the building.
- ✎ **Donetsk City Council has pronounced itself the only legitimate political force and authority in the region.** In addition to that, “in order to protect citizens on the territory of Donetsk Oblast and to prevent the possibility of aggressive moves of the radical Ukrainian nationalist forces,” local MPs have created their own municipal police. The MPs also decided to consider Russian their official language along with Ukrainian and demanded to organize a referendum to decide the faith of Donbas.
- ✎ **Russian Federation Council has approved Vladimir Putin’s request to deploy troops on the territory of Ukraine.**

Russian Federation Council has supported Vladimir Putin and his statement about deployment of the Russian Armed Forces on the territory of Ukraine, in Crimea, allegedly “until the situation normalizes,” according to the “Russia 24” reports.

✎ The “*Right Sector*” has declared an urgent mobilization and armament of all their units.

✎ **Kyiv residents are gathering at the recruitment offices en masses.** Due to the Russian aggression residents of Kyiv arrive to the local recruitment offices to apply for the volunteer military service.

✎ **Ukrainian Marine Forces naval ships have left Sevastopol.**

“There is a corvette “Ternopil” there, and the other ships of the Naval Forces of Ukraine as well that have received the same orders, were deployed near Sevastopol but would soon leave their base,” said a high ranking official of the *General Staff of the Marine Forces of Ukraine*.

In addition to that, all the naval ships of the Coast Guard of Ukraine have also left their positions the day before. The ships possible location is the city of Odesa.

✎ **Armed militants have blocked entrance to Crimea.**

Local media “Kherson News” has reported about it, “Entrance to Crime has been blocked by the unknown civilians dressed in camouflage. They were also wearing the black and orange St. George ribbons. There were also some “Berkut” forces armed with the machine guns there. It was forbidden to take photographs there.”

✎ According to the media, pro-Russian sentiments and provocations in the cities seized by the separatists are being fuelled mostly by the Russian citizens.

In Kharkiv pro-Russian sentiments of the protesters and their demands for federalization of the region and becoming a part of Russian Federation were being expressed mostly by Russian citizens.

It became known later that Russian flag that was installed on the roof of the building of Kharkiv City State Administration during its storming by the protesters has been installed by a resident of Moscow.

- ✎ The Council of National Security and Defense of Ukraine has approved the decision to place the Armed Forces of Ukraine in operational readiness. *Deputy President of Ukraine Oleksandr Turchinov* has made a statement about it during an urgent meeting of the Council of the National Security and Defense of Ukraine.

In addition to that, the Council has also developed a “detailed plan of actions in case of the direct military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.”

- ✎ The Armed Forces of Ukraine were brought to combat readiness, according to the statement of *Ihor Tenyukh*, the *Head of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine*.

# MARCH 2, 2014

## ■ News Round-Up

### **Mass mobilization has started in Ukraine.**

- ✈ Ukrainian servicemen in Crimea are being offered to get Russian citizenship.

“There are representatives of Russian Federation all over the territory of Crimea, including positions of Ukrainian internal forces. They are actively offering to receive Russian citizenship and Russian passports almost right away. This message is directed predominantly towards the middle and higher ranks of the servicemen and officers. In all the cases of such “offers” (there were five offers in five different units) the representatives offering it were “sent from outside” for sure,” according to the *Minister of Interior of Ukraine Arsen Avakov*.

- ✈ All the units of the Ukrainian Navy on the territory of Crimea are currently being controlled by the headquarters.

According to the reports of the “*Radio Liberty*”, Ukrainian Navy ships are located at the places of their permanent deployment, except for the flagship of the Ukrainian Navy, frigate “*Hetman Sahaydachny*”. The flagship frigate was returning home after six months spent in the Gulf of Aden and is now at the NATO base “*Souda Bay*” in the Mediterranean Sea.

Press center representatives have also denied information being spread by the Russian media that allegedly Ukrainian flagship frigate has raised the St. Andrew flag and that it was on its way to Odesa.

The Navy speakers also mention that all the units of the Ukrainian Navy based in Crimea are currently under control of the Ukrainian forces.

It was also reiterated at the Navy press center that a group of the armed Russian servicemen has gained entry to the training center of

the Ukrainian Navy in the city of Sevastopol seizing and taking away near 200 units of weapons. They drew these arms on the KAMAZ truck.

✎ The National Council for Security and Defense of Ukraine has decided to not implement state of emergency due to the situation in Crimea.

✎ Armed Russian soldiers have closed in on the Ukrainian military base in Kerch.

Today unidentified people in military uniform have surrounded the territory of the military base A-0669. A “Ural” truck with Russian plates was marked right in front of the gates. Soldiers are wearing Russian military uniform and are telling they are from Russian Federation.

✎ Russian soldiers attacked a training unit of the Ukrainian Navy in the city of Sevastopol.

Russians are attacking the 39th training unit of the Naval Forces of Ukraine stationed in a permanent military camp Lazarevsky Lodgement near Sevastopol.

✎ Nearly fifteen thousand people have attended pro-Ukrainian protests in Russian-speaking Dnipropetrovsk chanting “Glory to the Nation! Death to the enemies!”

There was also a march against Vladimir Putin that has taken place in the city. The march started near the building of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast State Administration and went to the Heroes of Maidan Square. During the march protesters have been chanting, “East and West are together!”, “Putin, get out from Ukraine!”, “Putin is another Hitler!”, “Putin kaputt!”, “Ukraine is not Russia!”, while dozens of vehicles driving next to the march have been sounding their horns in support.

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