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# Russia: Aleksandr Skobov latest Russian “defeatist” condemned for “terrorism”

Sunday 23 February 2025, by [SKOBOV Aleksandr](#) (Date first published: 17 January 2025).

***The closing statement to the Petersburg military court in Russia, made last week by the historian and political activist Aleksandr Skobov, in his trial on charges of publicly condoning terrorism and organising a “terrorist community”. The charges relate to social media posts. Republished with thanks from [the Russian Reader](#).***

I was brought up in the Soviet Union to believe that when a malicious, cruel aggressor attacks civilians, you have to take up arms and go do battle with him, and that if you cannot bear arms, you help the people who are doing battle and call on others to do the same.



Aleksandr Skobov in court. Photo by Dmitry Tsyganov

All my work as a political commentator has been about calling on people to go do battle with the aggressor which has attacked Ukraine, to assist Ukraine with weapons and ammunition.

No one had attacked or threatened Russia.

It was Putin’s Nazi regime which attacked Ukraine, only because of the megalomania of the regime’s ringleaders, because of their inhuman thirst for power over all they survey.

Murdering hundreds of thousands of people is their way of bolstering their self-esteem. They are degenerates, scum, and Nazi riffraff.

The guilt of Putin’s Nazi dictatorship in plotting, unleashing, and waging a war of aggression is obvious and does not need to be proven. We also do not need to prove our right to offer armed resistance to this aggression on the battlefield and in the aggressor’s rear.

It would be laughable to expect this right to be acknowledged by a regime which tosses people in prison for morally condemning its aggression out loud. All legal means of protesting Putinist Russia’s aggression have been eliminated.

My calls to resist the aggressor’s regime with armed force have caused me to be charged with terrorism. I won’t deign to argue with the aggressor’s officials, even if they claim my actions constitute paedophilia. Russia’s courts have long ago shown themselves to be appendages of the Nazi tyranny and seeking justice from them is pointless.

I will never stand up before these people, who are the lackeys of murderers and scoundrels.

I see no point in arguing with puppets of the dictatorship about how conscientiously they execute their own laws. In any case, these laws are the laws of a totalitarian state and their aim is to stifle dissent. I do not recognise these laws and I will not obey them.



Olga Shcheglova watches her husband's trial on a video link. Photo by SOTA vision / Grani.ru

I also have no intention of appealing any rulings made by or actions taken by representatives of the Nazi regime.

The Putinist dictatorship may murder me, but it can not force me to stop fighting against it. Wherever I find myself, I will keep calling on honest Russians to join the Ukrainian Armed Forces. I will keep calling for air strikes on military facilities deep in Russian territory. I will keep calling on the civilised world to inflict a strategic defeat on Nazi Russia. I will keep trying to prove that the new Hitler regime must be routed militarily.

Putin is the new Hitler, a vampire driven insane by impunity and drunk on blood. I shall never grow tired of saying, "Crush the viper!"

Death to the murder, tyrant and scoundrel Putin!

Death to the Russian fascist invaders!

Glory to Ukraine!

□ The Russian Reader translated Skobov's speech from [the facebook page of Grani.Ru](#), whose editors added a note: *Thanks to Alexander Valeryevich's dedicated wife Olga Shcheglova (pictured above). Thanks to SotaVision for filming at the Petersburg military court (Skobov is participating in the trial via video link from Syktyvkar). Thanks to those who didn't unsubscribe from Grani.Ru after it closed. It's as if Skobov timed his brave deed to coincide with the final moral collapse of numerous media brands. And yet he will be heard by a handful of his contemporaries. But he has already gone down in history.*

□ Aleksandr Skobov, 67, is being tried on charges, relating to social media posts, of "publicly calling for terrorism", "publicly condoning terrorism or promoting terrorism using the mass media, including the internet" and "organising a terrorist community and participating in it." He faces 10-20 years in jail if convicted.

Skobov was declared a "foreign agent" in March last year, ignored friends' pleas to leave Russia, and was detained in April. At his first court hearing, he refused to stand or answer questions, stating that he wished only to "spit in the judge's face". He is now being held in pre-trial detention in Syktyvkar in the Komi republic.

Aleksandr Skobov began his political activity in the left wing of the Soviet dissident movement in the 1970s. In 1976, together with other students in Leningrad (now St Petersburg), he formed the "left

opposition” group which called for the liquidation of the Soviet Union’s repressive state machine, for civil rights and for nuclear disarmament.

The group overlapped with Leningrad’s counter-cultural scene of communes and rock bands. Its journal, Perspectives, published texts by Lev Trotsky, the anarchist writers Mikhail Bakunin and Petr Kropotkin, and contemporary European socialists including Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Herbert Marcuse.



Aleksandr Skobov in 1977. Photo from [the Fond Iofe archive](#)

In 1978, the “left opposition” contacted groups in other cities and planned to set up a “revolutionary communist union of youth”. Skobov and another of the organisers were arrested, and Skobov detained for two years in a psychiatric hospital – a notorious means of punishing dissent in Soviet times.

After his release in 1981, Skobov joined the Free Interprofessional Labour Union, best known by its acronym SMOT, one of the first independent labour organisations in the Soviet Union. When Lev Volokhonsky, one of SMOT’s organisers, was arrested, Skobov joined with friends to paint graffiti demanding his release – and was himself detained again. He served a second sentence, of three years, in a psychiatric hospital.

In the late 1980s, when the policy of “glasnost” allowed for legal political activity, Skobov joined the Democratic Union. As a result, in 1988, he became one of the last people to be charged with “anti-Soviet agitation”, a case that was closed in 1989.

In the 1990s, in the first post-Soviet years, Skobov vehemently denounced the Russian war against Chechnya as a “war unleashed by Russian imperialism, with the aim of crushing the aspirations to independence of those peoples who were once conquered by tsarist Russia”, a war fought with the “interminably barbaric methods of colonisers of all ages and all peoples”. He joined the liberal Yabloko party and the group Solidarity, that was active in the early 2010s.

Skobov denounced the Russian intervention in Ukraine in 2014 and publicly applauded Russians who joined the Ukrainian resistance, arms in hand. *Simon Pirani*.

*In July last year – after his arrest and detention – Skobov wrote to his wife, Olga Shcheglova, a letter that he asked her to publicise. It was [published](#) by Novaya Gazeta Evropa. Here is a translation.*

### **A letter from Aleksandr Skobov to Olga Shcheglova and all Russian citizens**

Dear Olga,

I wanted to write this letter to Lena (you can easily understand why), but I do not have any of her addressed envelopes. And in any case, this is not only for her.

You and I talked about this the first time we met. I want to explain, again, why I said no to many dear, close friends, who tried to convince me to take the opportunity to leave Russia.

I belong to the generation of Soviet dissident political prisoners. Although its numbers are small, that generation became a significant historical phenomenon. It became a symbol of humanity's resistance to violence. It took its place on the international stage.

And although I was always a black sheep in that generation, because I am myself a "red", belonging to it is the most important thing in my life. It was made up of different people: some good, others not so good, some strong, some weak. It had its downsides, like any opposition milieu at any time. But it appeared to the world through its larger-than-life personalities and the moral and spiritual gold standards they set.

They have all passed away. There were never that many of us, and now only a few individuals remain. Our generation takes its place in history for entirely natural reasons. And in the new historical drama now unfolding, it can only stand on the sidelines.

They haven't laid a finger on us for a long time. The reasoning being: we'll die out on our own. Or we'll leave, and live out the rest of our lives on the political and moral capital we once acquired (quite deservedly). The blows are falling on other people, most of them much younger.

I respond sceptically to pompous declarations about the passing-on of traditions and experience. Actually, that mechanism doesn't work very well. Every new generation prefers to plough its own furrow and make its own mistakes. But I want the young people who are taking the blows now to know: the last remaining Soviet dissidents stood side-by-side with them, stayed with them, shared their journey.

I don't know what practical use this will be, in terms of the tactical and strategic tasks right now. I just hope that, for someone, the world will be kinder and warmer, as a result. I want this to be the way that my generation brings its own history to an end.

□ More about Skobov, in English, here: ["New trumped up charges against Alexander Skobov"](#) (The Russian Reader, 19 May 2024). He is also mentioned here: ["We all live in a yellow submarine"](#) (The Russian Reader, 5 August 2020)

□ About the younger generation of Russian anti-war activists that Skobov supports, People & Nature wrote e.g. [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)

□ Sources I consulted (in Russian) to write the notes above include: ["Pod teniu tiurny"](#) (Novaya Gazeta, 16 January); ["Krasivy final zhizni"](#) (BBC Russian service, 4 April 2024); [interview with Skobov](#), Kholod, 16 May 2023; the [Fond Iofe archive](#); and Ilya Budraitskis, [Dissidenty sredi dissidentov](#)

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## **P.S.**

People and Nature

<https://peopleandnature.wordpress.com/2025/01/21/aleksandr-skobov-tells-russian-court-putins-dictatorship-must-be-routed-militarily/>