

Black PR, Raiding and Guilt by Association

By [The Moscow Times](#)

March 22, 2011

The  Moscow Times

In response to “No Safe U.S. Haven for Hatemongers,” a comment by Leonid Komarovsky on March 14.

Editor,

Leonid Komarovsky refers to my “well-established record of anti-Semitism and hate speech” and goes on to describe me as an “anti-Semitic bigot.”

But the author does not present a shred of evidence to support his inflammatory rhetoric for the simple reason that there is none.

Instead, he resorts to the suggestion of guilt through my association with the Liberal Democratic Party. I am neither bound to its party program nor the decisions of its leadership, much less the personal views of its members.

As a journalist, Komarovsky should know the difference between fair comment and falsehood.

For the record, I condemn anti-Semitism and other forms of racism. As an ethnic Armenian, I am all too familiar with the problem of racially motivated attacks in Russia. As Komarovsky should well know, Armenians and other ethnic groups from the Caucasus region are among their primary targets.

It is distressing to see Komarovsky alongside some respected individuals in Russia being manipulated by people who are determined to have me judged in the court of public opinion both in Russia and abroad in an effort to undermine my legal rights.

Tellingly, Komarovsky did not mention the circumstances preventing my return to Russia.

After I filed claims against Federation Council Senator Suleiman Kerimov and businessman Arkady Rotenberg, who is an ally of Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, for their roles in the expropriation of the Moskva Hotel, I have been subjected to a whole series of attacks, including defamation, spurious criminal prosecution and even death threats against me and my family.

On Dec. 7, one of my few remaining relatives in Russia, Aslan Aslanbekov, was murdered. Aslanbekov, who was my cousin's husband and a top manager of Gazprom, was killed a little over a week after he informed my cousin that he had refused an overture from Kerimov to assist in efforts to blacken my reputation.

"Black PR" campaigns are standard tactics employed by Russian authorities to attack their real and perceived enemies, support corporate raids and fight resistance from their victims.

It is important that Moscow Times readers are informed about the blatant abuses of power and criminal activity committed by Russian authorities.

Ashot Yegiazaryan
State Duma deputy
Los Angeles

The views expressed in opinion pieces do not necessarily reflect the position of The Moscow Times.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/03/22/black-pr-raiding-and-guilt-by-association-a5803>