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Gudkov Speaks From Heart About Loss of Company

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State Duma Deputy Gennady Gudkov spoke to The Moscow Times while traveling home by car late Thursday, hours after he announced that a legal assault had forced him to sell his Oskord private security holding.

Gudkov later told Izvestia that he sold his company for 350,000 rubles ($10,800), incurring a loss of $10 million. And a question lingers over the sale after the buyer identified by Gudkov, Ares, subsequently denied any deal.

Here Gudkov shares his thoughts about Oskord's work, Ares and what drove him to part with his family business.

Q: What were the sale terms?

A: I practically gave it away. I sold Oskord for hundreds of thousands of rubles. I sold it

for cheaper than a Zhiguli.

The authorities simply destroyed my business as revenge for my opposition activity. It was absolutely cynical. They acted without scruples.

Q: Will the pressure on you stop?

A: No. The pressure will continue. The only thing that will stop is people losing their jobs. They are guilty of nothing. I primarily made this decision in the interests of honest people who need their paychecks to get by and who have nothing to do with the opposition.

Q: What is most upsetting about the sale?

A: Before the raids, you could say that Oskord was the best private security structure in Russia. It was created over 20 years, had a string of great achievements and had won all sorts of awards. Oskord crowned Russia's private security market.

Q: Who is Oskord's buyer?

A: Ares is a company that we have known for more than 10 years. We know the people at the top very well and have worked together on international projects. The company today is No. 2 in Russia after Oskord in terms of turnover and the size of regional branches. I feel like I'm sending my staff to a safe pair of hands.

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