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Attack on Mufti Was No Commercial Dispute

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Tatarstan's chief mufti, Ildus Faizov, was the victim of a murder attempt last week when his car was blown up in the middle of the day. Minutes earlier, his former deputy, Valiulla Yakupov, was shot at point-blank range.

Meanwhile, the Investigative Committee's spokesman, Vladimir Markin, said the attacks resulted from a business dispute. Faizov and Rustyom Gataullin, a man who'd been fired from the Idel-Hajj company, had argued over a "cash flow" problem, Markin said.

Markin should be ashamed about making such a statement.

At Yakupov's funeral, people were searched with metal detectors because rumors had run rampant in Kazan that bombs had been planted there.

The person who shot Yakupov was a Wahhabi. Yakupov had no relation to finances whatsoever, and although Faizov had fired the supposed attacker from Idel-Hajj, he did so for the same reason when he tried to send the imam of the largest mosque in Kazan

into retirement.

In that case, 100 bearded men swarmed Kazan in a show of support for Yunusov, and the administration gave in. Incidentally, as far as I understand, it was one of Faizov's suspected attackers — Airat Shakirov, also known as Sheik Omar — who organized that show of support by the bearded men.

Mr. Markin, aren't you ashamed?

In September 2009, in Karachayevo-Cherkessia, Bostanov Ismail, the deputy head of the local spiritual administration board, was shot with a machine gun. In December 2010, Mufti Kabardy Pshikhachev was shot at point-blank range outside his home. In October, Sheik Sirazhutdin Khurigsky was shot dead in his courtyard in the village of Hurik, and in February the deputy mufti of the Stavropol region, Kurman Ismailov, was blown up in his car

In Ingushetia, in June 2009, 85-year-old Abdurakhman Kartoyev, an ardent opponent of the Wahhabis, was kidnapped and killed. A month before that, Said-Ibrahim Kalimatov was killed, and a month before that, so was Musa Esmurziyev, an alim and healer.

Imam Basir Salakhgereyev and Imam Mohammed Saypulayev were both killed in Dagestan in 2010 and 2011, respectively. In June 2011, the dean of the Institute of Theology and International Relations and an uncompromising opponent of Wahhabism, Maksud Sadikov, was shot at point-blank range, along with his nephew, Musayev.

In 2006, after the murder of Abubakir Kurbizhev, the deputy chairman of the spiritual administration board of the Stavropol region and Karachayevo-Cherkessia, police found a hit list of Muslim clerics and Wahhabism opponents in the killers' car, which they deliberately left behind. Kurbizhev and other victims were already crossed off the list.

Mr. Markin, is that a financial squabble too?

A systematic campaign of terror against representatives of the traditional Islamic clergy gets almost no media coverage, but this campaign provides a clear illustration of just who the aggressors and victims are in this war between traditional and "pure" Islam. Whatever the case, I haven't heard of a single instance in which a traditional imam picked up an automatic weapon and killed a Wahhabi.

In the end, the Russian state and the traditional Islamic clergy have become allies in a war declared by Wahhabis. They blow up innocent people in subways for being "kafirs," or infidels, and they kill traditional imams for being "monafiques," or hypocrites.

So doesn't it seem to you, Mr. Markin, that by citing "commercial disputes" in these killings, you are spitting in the face of our dead allies?

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