[RU] The Court responsible for information disputes gives judgment

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In the case of the journalist E.V. Limonov (Savenko), Editor of the newspaper Limonka, the Court responsible for information disputes had to decide whether two articles ("Hand grenades at Croats" and "Black list of peoples"), published in Limonka, Nos. 13 and 16 (1995), were unconstitutional and therefore a ground for prosecution.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation guarantees freedom of thought and of the spoken and written word, but Article 29 also prohibits any propaganda or agitation which foments social, racial, nationalistic or religious hatred or enmity. Glorification of war and agitation directed at oppressed peoples are forbidden by ordinary laws.

In both of the articles concerned, the author speaks of "collective guilt of a people" and of "evil peoples", justifies the future sending of troops into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and puts forward an offensive and humanly degrading theory that certain ethnic groups have a genetic predisposition to brutality and cruelty. The Court took the view that the articles contained racist elements which insulted or threatened entire peoples or ethnic groups, fomented race hatred and glorified war.

In its Decision No. 7 (90) of 4 April 1996, the Court responsible for information disputes decided to send the files on the case to the Press Committee, recommending that the journalist be given an official warning for violating Section 4 of the Mass Media Act, and to the Public Prosecutor's Office in Moscow, with a view to the possible bringing of criminal proceedings against him.

Decision No. 7 (90) of 4 April 1996, on the articles by E.V. Limonov (Savenko), “Hand grenades at Croats” and “Black list of peoples”), published in Limonka, Nos. 13 and 16 (1995). Published in Post-Soviet Media Law and Policy Newsletter, No. 30-31 (May-June 1996). p. 7.

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