



Igor Baryshnikov / Photo: OVD-Info

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ARTICLES

Baryshnikov's Last Court Address

This is the final court speech of Igor Baryshnikov. He is a 64-year-old activist from Sovetsk (in Russia's Kaliningrad region exclave, sandwiched between the Baltic Sea, Lithuania and Belarus). Because of his anti-war Facebook posts he was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison. Baryshnikov needs urgent surgery. He also has an elderly paralyzed mother and is her sole caregiver. They might both die because of the sentence.

ОБ ЭТОМ НИКТО НЕ УЗНАЕТ

Если об этом никто не напишет. Подпишитесь на регулярные пожертвования ОВД-Инфо, чтобы плохие дела не оставались в тишине.

ПОДПИСАТЬСЯ

Distinguished court, your honor. I was born in this town. I went to school here and grew up here. I left here to go study in the then Soviet city of Leningrad. And now the time has come to try me for crimes that I did not and could not commit. The case against me is politically motivated and made up by the regional FSB office. First of all, I want to say the following: Baryshnikov (*in this speech Baryshnikov often refers to himself in third person to highlight formality — OVD-Info*) is charged with committing a serious crime. However, Baryshnikov has not murdered anyone, robbed anyone, raped anyone, and neither did he steal anything from anyone. And, as the official indictment says, there are no victims of Baryshnikov's actions. Baryshnikov is charged with publishing knowingly false information, but the prosecution has not presented to the court a single piece of evidence of his wrongdoing and had to make up for him those words, those actions, and those wrongdoings that Baryshnikov did not say and did not commit. As an example, I cite a written testimony of Ada Antonovna Gribanova, born in 1937, the warden in the apartment building [where I live]. Did you see her, your honor? An elderly sick lady having trouble walking, suffering from hearing loss, and barely grasping what really goes on in the world. Still, her written testimony alleges that Baryshnikov asked her and someone else to go to some rallies. But how can one even ask someone who supports the government and has trouble walking to go to a rally? Where could she go, will I drive her to Kaliningrad or what?

— Ada Antonovna, here's your ticket, let's go to a protest together.

But I came up to her asking: Ada Antonovna, did I ask you to go to protests?

— No, she says.

But the case documents say otherwise.

<...>

Part 2(e) of Article 207.3 of the Criminal Code, under which Baryshnikov is charged, was in fact copied word-for-word from Soviet-era article 190(1) of the Criminal Code of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic on the dissemination of known falsehoods that defame the Soviet political and social system. That is, today's «lawmakers» didn't even have to come up with anything new.

<...>

False witness Nikolay Safonov claimed that he had seen Baryshnikov in Victory Square on March 9, 2022 and allegedly heard him talking to people about something related to the events in Mariupol. It turns out that in order to cobble together a serious criminal case against Baryshnikov, one can lie to the court just about anything. The court could have easily verified the fact that on March 9, 2022 Baryshnikov was neither in Victory Square nor in Kaliningrad at all.

<...>

There are people who fully support this government and the «special military operation» and at the same time support Baryshnikov, no matter how paradoxical it may sound. More than that, they pray for Baryshnikov. As you can see, your honor, life is more complex than a criminal case thought up by the FSB.

<...>

I view what is going on only as a political reprisal. The case is made up and falsified like they used to do back in 1937,

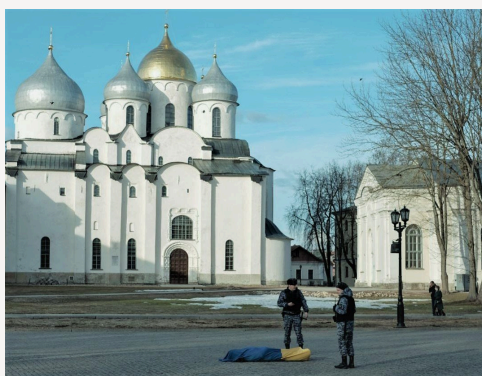
when one could be sentenced to 10 years or shot on insane charges, such as when astrophysicist Nikolay Kozyrev was charged in 1937 for plans that allegedly included diverting the Volga river to the West. Or such as in the Chelyabinsk oblast in 1937 where peasants were accused of collaborating with Japanese spies. Back then, 99 out of 100 peasants from that village were shot. Baryshnikov is in fact accused of publishing information that differs from the one spread by Konashenkov. However, as the prosecution represented by the senior lieutenant admits, he himself doesn't even know whether the information he trusts corresponds to reality. And in the indictment there is one truthful line — there are no victims of Baryshnikov's actions.

ЧТО Я МОГУ С ЭТИМ СДЕЛАТЬ?

Прочитать, рассказать, поддержать. Подпишитесь на регулярные пожертвования ОВД-Инфо, чтобы как можно больше людей узнали о политических репрессиях в России сегодня.

ПОДДЕРЖАТЬ

«Антивоенное дело»



С первого дня вторжения в Украину жители российских городов проводят антивоенные акции и высказываются о «спецоперации» в соцсетях. Эти действия становятся поводом для уголовного преследования.

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