

PLEKHANOV RUSSIAN UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS (MOSCOW)
Croup essay contest

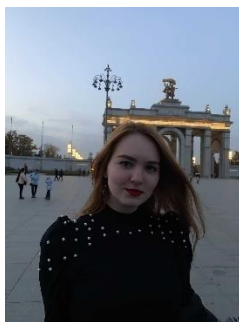
“Unity in Diversity: Russia and the English-Speaking World Time for Equal Opportunities”

“IF YOU WERE A MEMBER OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE AWARD COMMITTEE, WHICH HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER WOULD YOU NOMINATE FOR THIS AWARD, AND WHY?”

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Theses:

“If you were a member of the Nobel peace prize award committee, which human rights defender would you nominate for this award, and why?”

Borisova V., Volkova M., Mamulyan H., Firsova O., Tulyusina K.

1. The future of the world depends on the choice of a worthy candidate: whose work was more effective?
2. The best of the best defenders of the future of planet Earth.
3. "Fate is not the result of random circumstances, but the result of choice; it should not be expected but created".
4. Violence poisons both the life and the soul of a person. It destroys his picture of the world, forcing him to believe that everything is all right when it is not at all.
5. Ignorance is bliss: inaction is the encouragement of new crimes. Rapists go unpunished; they feel power and permissiveness.
6. Domestic violence is not a fairy tale fiction; the salvation of the whole society begins with the salvation of its components, each person.
7. "Our actions become causes and come back to us as effects".
8. One decision can change everything: our opinion on the problem of domestic violence.

“If you were a member of the Nobel peace prize award committee, which human rights defender would you nominate for this award, and why?”

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Today is a big day. Every year for many years, the members of the committee met to select the best among the best. And today is the day of their next meeting. But before making a fateful decision, they once again weigh all the pros and cons and just talk heart to heart. Most ordinary people see them as serious and cold people who listen only to the voice of reason, but in fact, they are just like all of us - people with their own experience and concern.

Finally, all the members of the Nobel Peace Prize Committee are assembled (Pic.1). There are five of them: two women and three men. All of them are people of different professions; each of them has his own view of the world, but today they face a single task: to determine who is worthy of such a high award, to decide who will be recognized as the best of the best.

When the colleagues talked about the news of the past days, it came main time: discussion of candidates. First on the list is Sheila Watt-Cloutier (Pic.2). She is a public figure, politician, writer, activist and advocate for human rights and respect for the rights of Inuit and other indigenous people. Awarded the Order of Canada in 2006, in 2005 she was awarded the Sophie Prize, and in 2015-the award "Right Livelihood Awards" [1]. The next candidate is Anastasia Lin (Pic.3), a Falun Gong practitioner. Anastasia has actively opposed human rights violations in the People's Republic of China, especially regarding the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners. Canadian television reporters attributed her victory at the Miss World 2015 pageant to her active stance on human rights [2]. A woman with an interesting history, the title of Miss World, and even an outstanding human rights activist, besides struggling with such an important problem as persecution and violation of rights in the PRC. All the members of the committee were particularly impressed by the biography of Anastasia Lin.

And the last two candidates are Fatma Benli (Pic.4) and Anna Rivina. Fatma Benli is an outstanding lawyer, lawyer, and jurist, member of the Administrative Council of the International Jurists Union Vice-President of the Association against Discrimination of Women's Rights AKDER [3]. Anna Rivina (Pic.5) is a lawyer, political scientist, candidate of legal Sciences, an expert on the topic of domestic violence and gender discrimination. In 2015, she founded and headed the Center for Working with the problem of Violence "Насилию.нет". In December 2018, Anna Rivina was included in the list of 100 outstanding people of 2018 by the magazine "Expert". In June 2019, RBC magazine included Anna Rivina in the list of 20 young and promising Russians moving the country forward. In May 2020, Anna entered the Forbes ranking of the most successful young people [4].

Colleagues began to discuss who is really worthy of the award. The fate of several people was in their hands, and it was their decision that would determine who would be awarded the highest award. "Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for; it is a thing to be achieved" [5].

De jure, the decision was made a long time ago, but at each meeting, opposing points of view were repeatedly expressed. So it was at this meeting: each of those present repeatedly explained why they wanted to see a particular candidate in the role of the winner of such a revered award. However, this time the verdict was supposed to be final, and the choice fell on the candidacy of Anastasia Lin: the committee was touched by her persistent struggle for human rights in China, and the interesting biography of the woman only assured the judges of the correctness of the decision. Other candidates did not suit the judges for various reasons. The actions of Sheila Watt-Cloutier seemed to the audience insufficiently active and decisive. The two remaining candidates were distinguished by the unusual nature of their chosen projects. It was impossible not to mention the merits of Anna Rivina, who fought so hard against domestic

violence. Although, this problem still seemed not so important and significant to the judges. In their point of view, domestic violence did not reach the world level, which means that there were problems that deserved more attention.

That is why the committee chose someone who fought against such problems as human rights violations and discrimination. Against their background, the problem of domestic violence seemed insignificant to the committee members. But why? It happens because this problem, in their opinion, is not so obvious and widespread? Unfortunately, not everyone can really appreciate the scale of this problem.

Violence is happening all around us; it has a monstrous scope; it is just that people either do not notice it or consciously do not want to notice it. But is it worth ignoring this problem? If you ask this question to people who have suffered violence, you can see fear and denial in their eyes. Thinking about it, we realized that it is fear that binds people who have suffered from violence and cruelty [6]. It does not allow them to admit that they have been a victim or, in certain cases, a witness to violence, that the pain they have experienced has torn at their heart. Another reason that this problem is considered insignificant is that people do not always realize that they are being abused. People are not always aware of even the most obvious kind of abuse, physical violence. What can we say about those manifestations of cruelty that are even less noticeable? "All violence is poison to the soul" [7]. Indeed, living next to a rapist is disastrous for a person: every act of violence committed, like a deadly poison, sends the victim and gradually kills him. This applies to both psychological and physical violence because the meaning of such harsh behavior is the same – manipulation of another person. Why do people become victims of violence? As noted earlier, this is because the victims themselves do not understand that they are being abused. They are told that they are doing well: "Everyone lives like this; what is your problem?" People simply distort the perception of the world. Such actions are called gaslighting: "What you see is not there" [8]. It also happens that a

person consciously denies that violence is being committed against him. To open your eyes and see that your loved ones are using you is painful, and the victim, trying to protect himself from the heartache, simply ignores the problem. No matter how painful and scary it is to accept the harsh reality, you will still have to open your eyes.

The worst thing is that you can never be sure that you will not encounter it specifically [9]. All the victims are people just like you: children, women, men, elderly people. They greet you on the street and, covering their blue shoulders from being beaten; pull a smile when asked about what is happening at home. They justify their tormentors, find reasons to avoid the realization that they were victims of violence.

They themselves reject help, avoiding the harsh truth. The four members of the committee, when discussing the candidacy of Anna Rivina, did not think about her achievements, but reflected on their own lives. Some of them remembered their husband, who from time to time, after getting drunk, liked to lay hands to the unfortunate wife, who did not have time to prepare dinner in time. Someone remembered the unexpected outbursts of jealousy of the spouse, his blows for a "way too short skirt", for "communicating with others". Someone immediately came up with the image of his beloved, who was not afraid to swing the kitchen pan if he was late at work. And someone remembered the ex-wife who threatened to take the beloved child far away and deprive the father of the opportunity to see the child. They thought about it and then dismissed the nagging memories. "I'm fine," everyone said firmly to themselves.

In no way do we want to downplay global problems, such as human rights violations, discrimination, and high levels of poverty. We want to show that domestic violence is not a fairy tale fiction, but a real nightmare happening in reality, happening here and now, with our friends, acquaintances, neighbors, and maybe with you. It can be psychological, physical, in relation to men and women, children and parents. Violence has no gender, no age; it can make lives

miserable, not sparing anyone. This is a global problem, which is not given due attention, considering it as a trifle. However, are the health of a person, his happiness, well-being, and his quiet life – little things? We are ruining ourselves by turning a blind eye to this problem. "We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men; and among those fibers, as sympathetic threads, our actions run as causes, and they come back to us as effects" [10]. By their inaction and indifference, people encourage the most real criminals. Rapists go unpunished; they feel power and permissiveness.

We are still young and do not have much experience under our belt, but we are the future of the world. And we definitely would not want to drown the world in lawlessness, fear, violence, and indifference. One decision can change everything: history, the future, the world, only those who are ready to make this decision is needed. "Be decisive. A wrong decision is generally less disastrous than indecision" [11]. That is why, if we were the same members of the committee, we would open the eyes of the whole world, we would loudly announce to everyone that Anna Rivina, a fighter against domestic violence, deserves the highest award, the Nobel Peace Prize. She is the one who is fighting for peace that she is the one who can make sure that our future is safe.

APPENDIXES



pic.№1. The Nobel Prize ceremony in the Blue Hall of Stockholm City Hall



pic. №2. Sheila Watt-Cloutier



pic. №3. Anastasia Lin



pic. №4. Fatma Benli



pic. №5. Anna Rivina

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