

**The Specialized Prosecutor's Office and the Specialized Criminal Court - Bodies for Harassment of the Government's Inconvenient Opponents**

**January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

The establishment of the specialized prosecution and the specialized criminal court was celebrated with fanfares as a new stage in the fight against organized crime. However, these institutions quickly disappointed society because, in essence, these are bodies for the harassment of inconvenient opponents in Bulgaria, the land without rule of law.

The show arrests of the mayors of Mladost and famous business families had to convince the European Commission that Bulgaria had waged a war against corruption. Judging from the sugar-coated conclusions of the latest report under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism, maybe Bulgaria's government has succeeded to mislead Brussels. By contrast, the specialized prosecution and the specialized criminal court failed to persuade Bulgaria's society that the government was combatting corruption. The average Bulgarian may be traditionally patient and refrains from solidarity, but he/she only gives 9% confidence to General Prosecutor Sotir Tsatsarov. I am sure that even fewer people trust his protégé – Deputy General Prosecutor Ivan Geshev.

Regardless of the multi-million contracts with expensive law firms and lobbyists as well as the government's tireless diplomatic negotiations, General Prosecutor Sotir Tsatsarov and the symbol of corruption and behind-the-curtain dealings Delyan Peevski could not sabotage my application under the US Global Magnitsky Act. Disappointed by their failure, they activated their "punishment squad" in a decisive attack against me as well as the people fighting for the truth in the Corpbank case.

Firstly, the merciless squad started harassing my defense attorney Lazar Karadaliev. Pressing two absurd charges against him as well as imposing him a ban to leave Bulgaria's territory, so that he could not meet with me, were not enough for their ambitions. With perverse disrespect for Bulgarian law and the European Convention on Human Rights, the Bulgarian Prosecutor's Office raided attorney Karadaliev's office as well as the apartments of his colleagues. Tsatsarov's marauders obviously do not realize their actions turn attorney Karadaliev into Bulgaria's Magnitsky.

The prosecution's rock bottom surely is the arrests and ridiculous accusations against five innocent people. How did they annoy Bulgaria's mafia? By telling the truth during the interrogations in the "investigation" into Corpbank's case. The specialized prosecution did not shy away from arresting these people in the small hours of the night with the clear aim of humiliating them and stressing out their relatives.

The culmination of arrogance is the accusations themselves, which are based on the false testimony of the main witness against me, Biser Lazov, and visibly falsified documents. A graphological examination by one of the best graphologists in Bulgaria has proven that the people's signatures have been forged. On the basis of these "documents", however, the specialized criminal court left the witnesses in custody. The goal is clear and sinister – abuses and harassment, in an attempt to influence their testimonies. Why? Because the prosecution's math is wrong and the “proceedings of the century” against Corpbank are about to fail. What a shame for Georgi Ushev's and Galia Georgieva's puppet Plamen Panayotov!

Shame also on all media which did not report these abuses as well as those who merely copied the prosecution's press kit, without even thinking what indeed was going on. It is striking that nobody even considered why bTV had acquired the text of Plamen Panayotov's ruling before the ruling was read in the courtroom? This would have been a scandal in a country governed by the rule of law! Needless to say, people who were present in the courtroom argue Panayotov had difficulties reading his own ruling, which raises the question whether he wrote the ruling himself.

I believe that society wants to know the truth about Corporate Commercial Bank. This cannot happen in an extraordinary tribunal where the judges do not even read their cases and are proud of this, where the judges give a break every 15 minutes to receive instructions by phone, where the judges coordinate their every move with the prosecutor's office. This has nothing to do with justice!

Ladies and gentlemen, it is time realize that we live in an ugly dictatorship. With silence, you become accomplices of the regime. At the same time, they will not like you more for your carelessness – they will attack you at the first convenient moment, too!

Despite everything, I am convinced that Judgment Day for the Peevski-Tsatsarov-Geshev-Lazov organized criminal group is coming. They should not be comforted that we have not heard the outcome of my application under the US Global Magnitsky Act yet. Nor should they be reassured by the European Commission's tap on the shoulder of Bulgaria's government. A series of bad news is coming their way! One of them is that their crimes are currently being investigated – neither lobbyists nor the Angelkova-Zaharieva-Tsacheva trio can interrupt these proceedings.