

## OUR UNPAID DEBTS...

In the beginning of the nineties of the last century, the Orthodox Church of Russia recognized activities of searching groups, such as “Cleansing of Russia’s conscience”. It is high evaluation of our searching group “Memorial zone” of the Eurasian National University (ENU) named after L. Gumilev as well; it has been conducting field search for more than 25 years. Professional search activity, combining archival and field search, was aimed at clarification of fates of those reported missing and fallen, among whom there were 2607 soldiers and commanders of the Great Patriotic war. The first in Europe memorial zone “Nadezhda” with overall area of more than 120 km<sup>2</sup> was founded to the east of Saint Petersburg; its guide-book was published. Lost common graves, regiments and divisions’ cemetery were found in its territory; lists of buried there were made. In the near future obelisks with names of buried soldiers will be erected. Nevertheless we are still eternally indebted to those who died or went missing. Making decision for the sake of Memory First of all, it is necessary to make a decision about posthumously decorating warriors reported missing and soldiers fallen in the battlefields with an order, which is being developed. The point is that annually the country honors front-line soldiers who returned from the war. Naturally they deserve it, but we should remember that in order for them to reach Berlin, dozens or hundreds of their brother-soldiers died and went missing. We should design a special order, and adopt governmental resolution on order’s statute and decoration procedure. How can there be any doubt, while every second Kazakhstani has father, grandfather or great-grandfather, who has been reported missing up to this date. We, searchers, find them in old battlefields with weapons in their hands; they were not properly buried but completely fulfilled their duty. In September 2011 for the first time in CIS the staff of the searching group “Memorial zone” in hall of the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev posthumously presented awards for service in battle to soldiers and officers of the 310th, 387th infantry divisions, and the 106th national cavalry division, who had been reported missing. Badge of honor of the searching group, designed on the basis of the order “Great Patriotic war”, was handed to children and grandchildren of soldiers and commanders. A precedent for the Book of memory has been set only by Tatarstan Books of memory should be digitized, because in such format it will be easier to supplement them and to make corrections. Such precedent has already been set by Tatarstan (Russia), this idea was implemented by my regimental comrade, the searcher Mikhail Cherepanov; he is ready to render methodical assistance.

### **Do not obliterate the memory!**

It is necessary to bring to a stop the process of common graves, regiments and divisions’ cemeteries ravaging in old battlefields in Russia. The public and war veterans of Saint Petersburg addressed me information that in memorial zone “Nadezhda” the 90th searching battalion of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation ravaged cemetery of the 996th infantry regiment of the 286th infantry

division, exhumation works have already been started in the cemetery of the 1078<sup>th</sup> infantry regiment of the 314<sup>th</sup> infantry division, which was formed in Petropavlovsk. The problem of common graves and regiments and divisions' cemeteries ravaging has been most prevalent for the last fifty years, today situation is worse than ever before. In the fifties of the last century a regulation on relocation of common and single graves from forests and fields to big localities, for the purpose of burials' consolidation and elimination of war traces, was adopted. Incredible as it may seem, but elimination of war traces consisted in cutting mounds and modest wooden obelisks off by bulldozers, while a great number of bomb and shellholes, and deep ditches like scars of the Earth have remained intact until our days. Young people, seeing terrible traces of the war in old battlefields, ask veterans, where graves of these sacred lands' defenders are. What should we tell them? More than fifty years ago from common graves, regiments and divisions' cemeteries only several remains out of hundreds would be symbolically relocated, while currently local authorities in big villages follow that maleficent regulation adopted in the fifties, and keep on ruining common graves and cemeteries, which have been preserved in forests and fields' they invite separate searching groups for total relocation of all remains, which are estimated at hundreds; it contradicts venerable canons both of the Orthodoxy and Islam, and Federal act of the Russian Federation "The law on perpetuating memory of those who perished defending their Motherland" (22.08.2004 "№ 122-FL", 03.11.2006 "179-FL", 23.07.2008 "160- FL", 18.07.2011 "№213-FL"), where the sixth clause stipulates that, "...For the purpose of ensuring preservation of soldiers' burials, local authorities should establish conservation zones and protected natural landscape zones in their initial locations, in accordance with the established procedure prescribed by legislation of the Russian Federation. Until determining an issue of their state registration, discovered soldiers' burials are liable to protection in accordance with requirements of the given Law. Housing projects and land use plans, as well as projects of cities and other inhabited localities' reconstruction, and construction projects are to be developed with due account of requirement on ensuring preservation of soldiers' burials..." On the basis of the aforementioned law, Sergey Ivanov advised searchers to make maps of discovered burials in order to prevent conduction of construction works in those places. "There should not be building "on the bones" in Russian Federation", said chief of the presidential administration of Russia. Veterans of the 2nd Shock Army pay attention to preservation of common graves in the area of breach of Leningrad's blockage, but the problem of common graves, regiment and divisions' cemeteries' preservation is acute all over the territory of Russia. Large-scale exhumation works at common graves of medical and sanitary battalions, mobile hospitals, and sanitary landfills at the frontline are being conducted in Pskov, Tver, Voronezh regions; sometimes they are even aired on Russian TV channels. This spring administration of Novosokolnichy district of the Pskov region plans to reinter remains of soldiers of the 8<sup>th</sup> Guards Panfilov Division located in village Nasva and relocate them to Manakovo, which is absolutely inadmissible. We should remember that in ravaged common graves and cemeteries not only Russians, but also soldiers and

commanders from Belorussia, Ukraine, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan are lying. Sacred graves are located in Russia, but they belong to all nations of former Soviet Union. That is why we prepared an appeal to the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, asking him to take common graves, regiments and divisions' cemeteries under his protection. In the meantime Astana cannot find a site for construction of Park of 4 divisions. For the last ten years Department of internal policy of the akimat of Astana has been looking for a site where the Park of 4 divisions could be constructed. In the end of August we addressed an appeal, signed by children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of soldiers to our President Nursultan Nazarbayev, about protracted search of a location suitable for the Park of 4 divisions; the appeal was approved and sent to akimat of the capital in the end of August 2014. We have been waiting for response for five month.

### **Peculiarities of the idea**

Trees in the park are to be personalized. They should be planted only by relatives and close friends of soldiers and officers from Akmolinsk region, who perished or went missing at the fronts of the Great Patriotic war. Either all or the majority of saplings intended for planting are to be brought from sites of battles of the Great Patriotic war both by soldiers and commanders of the searching group "Memorial zone", and relatives of soldiers and officers. Saplings will be planted under supervision of specialists of the urban forestry department of Astana. Relatives of soldiers will be able to check quality of after care of trees, everybody disregarding age will take part in the process, Structure of landscape architecture of the Park dedicated to four Akmolinsk divisions. In total there will be 6 lanes in the park. Four of them will be dedicated to following divisions: the 310<sup>th</sup> infantry division, the 387<sup>th</sup> infantry division, the 106th national cavalry division, and the 72nd Guards infantry division. The fifth lane will be dedicated to Heroes of the Soviet Union and Full Cavaliers of the Order of Glory; the sixth lane will be dedicated to soldiers and commanders who were not members of four aforementioned divisions. Granite slabs with names of the fallen and missing soldiers will be erected along both sides of six lanes. On the Eve of the Great Victory akimat of Astana has to determine location of the site of the Park of 4 divisions and approve a project of its three-year construction.

### **Maidan KUSAINOV**

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