

**Heydar Aliyev said: “Eldar, these chatterboxes are talking nonsense...”.
“Flattery, duplicity, slipperiness, scraping — I despise all of it”.**



For a long time, we have only been reading official information about Azerbaijan's extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador to Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eldar Hasanov, on the pages of national and foreign media. If I were to say that interviewing him is one of the opportunities that the fate of journalism has granted me, I would probably not be mistaken. This is because, as a rule, Eldar Hasanov does not like talking about himself. His argument is as follows: some people even describe the dreams they have at night, turning them into a sensation to make the headlines and thereby prove their usefulness to society. Our interlocutor, on the other hand, is a diplomat who is more focused on fulfilling his mission with dignity and speaks about it with particular modesty, very briefly. In a word, he keeps his distance from reporters.

During our working trip to Bosnia and Herzegovina, led by Milli Majlis (National Assembly of Azerbaijan) deputy Javanshir Feyziyev, I took the opportunity to have a conversation with Mr. Eldar Hasanov. Far from our homeland, the beginning and the end of our discussion revolved around the homeland, lost lands, and Karabakh. My first question to the interlocutor was related to his profession.

- You were a professional lawyer. How easy or difficult was it to start a diplomatic career at a time when most of your life, one might say, has already been lived?

- As fate would have it, after graduating from the institute I was assigned to work in a government agency. Last year I celebrated exactly 40 years of my work in public service. It is not only an honorable, but also a responsible mission. Part of my activity in the public service fell on the Soviet period, most of it fortunately coincided with the independence of our country, and I am still serving my native Azerbaijan. The chronicle of independence of our republic is replenished with new glorious pages and we are proud of this history.

- You were also among those who wrote the first pages of the history of independence, of course, as a lawyer...

As fate would have it, I have always been fortunate enough to stand at the origins, my life path inextricably linked to the beginning of momentous change. When we were studying at the institute, there was an awakening in our national consciousness, the impetus for which was Gulistan, a poem by Bakhtiyar Vagabzadeh, awakened our national consciousness. Then a period of the national awakening of our people began. We moved on to practical actions - and this happiness fell to the share of our generation.

- You worked in law enforcement agencies in 1990-1992, a period when our state faced serious trials. You were the head of the Ganja Internal Affairs Department. Then you were the first head of the National Central Bureau of Interpol in Azerbaijan. You created this structure literally from the scratch. You were the First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, then the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan. As far as I know, during one of your talks with the late Heydar Aliyev, you asked him to appoint you ambassador to some country...

- The late Heydar Aliyev's methods of management were extraordinary and unusual. When discussing any difficult issues, he created an atmosphere in which people felt at ease and had an opportunity to express their opinions openly. Once, during one of the heated sessions of the Security Council, I took the opportunity and said with a smile: "Mr. President, if the Karabakh issue is solved, I would like to go as an Ambassador to one of the European countries". The reply was "We do everything that we can for the solution of Karabakh problem and we will return Karabakh. But it's too early to send you as an ambassador. We still have a lot of things to do".

It so happened that my constitutional term of five years as Prosecutor General expired, and I surrendered my duties and continued my activities in the scientific and pedagogical field in the manner prescribed by law. I taught at the university and at the same time I defended my doctoral dissertation "The fight against drugs and crime". At the same time, I received an offer from the UN.

Having received the blessing and advice of the national leader Heydar Aliyev, I began my work in the UN office in Geneva as head of the coordination office of programs of the United Nations and the International Organization to Combat Drug and Alcohol Addiction in Turkey and CIS countries. Seven months after I began my work, I received a phone call that the President would speak to me. On the other end of the line sounded a categorical - the voice of the national leader Heydar Aliyev:

"I expect you tomorrow, at 1 o'clock".

I replied, "Can I come back in a day?".

He asked: "Why?".

I explained, "I need to get permission".

He wondered, "From whom?"

I clarified that I was supposed to get permission from the management of the organization where I was currently working. The reply immediately followed: "I am the head of the organization for which you work".

"That's right," I confirmed, adding, "I have always consulted with you about everything. I'll get formal approval and I'll come".

A day later we were already sitting and talking with Heydar Aliyev. He told me: "These chatterboxes write all kinds of nonsense about how that you allegedly took offense and left dissatisfied... In an interview with "Azadlyg" newspaper, you expressed the right position. You have taught a good lesson to those in power, and to those who have resigned or been reprimanded, that loyalty to ideas is not a commodity to be bought and sold, nor is it measured by the chair you hold".

I understood from our conversation that he had read the article with my interview to the end and said in response, "Mr. President, I always tell the truth about the real state of affairs".

He said to me: "Do you remember in 1996, on 19 June, at the meeting of the Security Council, you said that you would like to go as ambassador to some European country if the Karabakh issue is solved? Well, I want to appoint you as an ambassador".

I insistently asked to keep my previous job. But it was very difficult to change his mind, the decisions of the national leader were categorical. A very weighty and substantiated argument was necessary to influence his opinion. Naturally, it turned out the way Heydar Aliyev said. Of the several countries he offered me, I chose Romania. When he asked the reason for my choice, I replied that it was the second country, after Turkey, to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan. Heydar Aliyev ended the conversation with the phrase: "You will hear it on TV in the evening. After that, the national leader gave necessary instructions and recommendations concerning the processes after the Warsaw Pact, the events in Romania, and the political situation in that country".

-That's how the professional lawyer Eldar Hasanov moved from law enforcement to diplomacy. Has your profession helped you in this?

- Definitely. Diplomacy is inherently governed by legal instruments. It doesn't matter whether you work in a state structure or are in the diplomatic service - a person must always, first of all, serve the interests of his state. And most importantly - with all your blood, soul, with all your being, love the Motherland, be its devoted citizen. Without knowing the history of your country, its literature, culture, music, art, without knowing its traditions, customs, without understanding the fine ornaments of its unique carpets, you will not be able to build a dialogue with your interlocutor in a foreign country. It's never too late to learn.

During two months I studied Romania, taking information from books, official documents, from all sources that were at hand, held meetings with experienced diplomats of our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in the first decade of the third month I went to that country as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan. I have represented the interests of Azerbaijan in that country for many years. And since 2013, I am the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Azerbaijan to the

Republic of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina with residence in the city of Belgrade.

- Mr. Ambassador, you have had an interesting life. As a rule, you always started from zero when you started a new job. You set those zeros in motion by leaving them behind, putting numbers in front of them, and turning them into numbers, quantity, quality, and achievement. In the Republic of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina in each of these countries, which have very few similarities to find common ground with each of them, to implement thoughtful, balanced policies... We know from the news about your activities that you have contributed a lot to the success of our country.

- Our state has a clear foreign policy. By implementing it, we, together with a team of professional diplomats working with me, have achieved certain successes for our state and people. From now on, Azerbaijan independently determines its foreign policy. It is in the powers of the President of Azerbaijan to make certain adjustments, to direct it. We are just performers. Everything else is a matter of conscience. A conscientious performance of duties implies a responsible and creative approach. In this matter, it requires a special diplomatic professionalism to implement priority areas. I try to implement them, guided by the knowledge gained from the books I have read in recent years and from my diplomatic experience, as well as from the experience of other countries.

- Thanks to your activities in the Balkan countries over the past three years, everyone from young to old knows Azerbaijan. We have witnessed this during official meetings in Bosnia. Prominent public figures of the country even hold discussions on the culture of Azerbaijan and the tragic pages of its history.

- As I told you, in this important mission, I had the role of an executor and in this matter, the political decision belongs to our state. The pain and tragedy of the Bosnian people are akin to our pain. On the banks of the Danube, we erected a majestic sculptural complex in honor of the outstanding Azerbaijani composer Uzeyir Hajibeyli in order to promote our culture here - after all, we have common roots, Turkic roots. Then they established a scholarship named after Uzeyir-bek at the Musical Academy. And in the Royal Park of Montenegro, a monument was erected to the famous playwright Huseyn Javid ... In the Friendship Park, located on the banks of the Dobrynya River in Sarajevo, there is a monument to the tragic victims of our peoples - Srebrenica and Khojaly. This is a sculpture of two mothers standing side by side and tragically bowing their heads. All this makes it possible to show who we are, our history, culture, modernity, the tragedies that befell the Azerbaijani people in the recent past, to convey the historical truth to the general public. In one night, 613 people were brutally killed in Khojaly. Even the date of the adoption of the resolution in the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina coincides with the day of the tragedy in Khojaly - February 26, 1992.

- Everyone characterizes you as a true patriot, a fair and modest person, and at the same time notes the leadership traits of your character.

- The concept of leadership is widely used in modern educational institutions. I'm far from that. In fact, it would be more correct to speak of the responsible performance of one's duties. You need to approach the issue of conscientious and honest performance of the tasks assigned to you through the prism of the fact that this is your civic duty. And in the context of awareness of responsibility, the experience of working with Heydar Aliyev played a huge role. We have gone through the most difficult, dangerous periods - the tense years of work in the law enforcement system in the whirlpool of seething events when new pages were being written from scratch in the history of the restoration of our independence. I have witnessed many visible and invisible events. I learned a lot, thanks to the fact that I had access to forensic and investigative documents.

- If I had to derive a leadership formula, I would decipher its components in this way: strong-willed - character, determination, foresight. And yet - the ability to maneuver. What do you think? Have you always been able to maneuver?

- A person working in a state structure must be able to maneuver. A maneuver should be based on the essence of the problem. If a maneuver serves the interests of the state, national interests, and does not harm our common cause, then an official or diplomat who has managed to carry out this maneuver is a happy person. We must not forget that an unsuccessful maneuver can cause harm, damage to the state. After all, I have some experience in this area.

- Working in Romania, you managed to make one maneuver in Hungary. Shortly after his appointment as Ambassador Plenipotentiary to this country, on February 26, 2013, the State Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina officially recognized the Khojaly genocide. And, in my opinion, all this is the result of your diplomatic maneuvers serving the state's interests.

- Mrs. Aida, you know, the official who is entrusted with such responsibility must clearly know the policy of his state. And this policy is determined by the state and its President. And we, officials, must correctly understand the tasks assigned to us and put them into practice. Of course, the recognition of a country that survived such a tragedy as the Khojaly genocide was a serious demand placed on us. Where was the arena to bring this to the general world public? In the Balkan countries.

In Khojaly, the Armenian occupiers destroyed civilians on a national basis because they were Azerbaijanis.

The only big difference is that the UN Security Council, The Hague Court, the world community, and international structures recognized the genocide in Srebrenica. Unfortunately, the situation with the Khojaly genocide is different. For obvious reasons, we cannot convey the whole truth about this tragedy, despite the fact that the participation of Russian military formations in it at all stages from the preparation of the occupation plan to its implementation has been proven by indisputable facts, evidence, investigative materials, court decisions. You probably know very well that I have read every page of these materials in detail. Russia is our neighbor, and we must cherish and preserve the strategic partnership.

But our partner must also know that we do not forget that the preparation of the artificial problem of seizing the independence of Azerbaijan, its subsequent implementation, the occupation of our historical lands and the Khojaly genocide, the participation of the Russian armed forces in this occupation is a fact and proof. I think that Russia should draw conclusions from this, correct the mistakes of the past, which will positively affect its image as a co-chair of the Minsk Group.

Today it is no secret that Russia plays a role in separatism in Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and Karabakh. Ensuring the immediate withdrawal of the occupying forces from our territories in accordance with the well-known resolutions and decisions of the UN Security Council would also serve the image of Russia. It can also play a significant role in interstate relations, the policy of good neighborliness and mutual trust, and the strengthening of international relations.

- How do you think Russia will take this step?

- You know, hope dies last. My personal opinion is that Russia should take this step. Because international and local experts, as well as scholars involved in the study of events, confirm that in all the problems that took place in the former Soviet republics, the hand of Moscow is clearly visible. Will Russia ever have such a historic chance again? I think that based on their own interests, their own policy, she should take this step. Thus, it will create the image of a peacemaker country and be able to achieve peace in the region.

The Azerbaijani people have already drawn conclusions from the historical alterations that have fallen to their lot - Zangezur, the Gulistan Treaty, the Turkmenchay Treaty. Azerbaijan was mercilessly cut and reshaped, bringing the territory, which once covered an area of 200 thousand square km to 86 thousand... The Azerbaijani people realized that periodically our historical lands were presented as a gift to Armenia. This has been repeatedly emphasized by our President. The Azerbaijani people are no longer the same as before, public opinion is no longer what it used to be, and the economic potential is now completely different. Azerbaijan has an unshakable national spirit, a strong disciplined army, and political will. We, like all countries of the world, need equal relations built on mutual trust.

- If we are talking about our national spirit, let's remember our "April battles"...

- "April battles" is the most honorable, courageous, and historical date in the history of the statehood of our independent Azerbaijan, as well as in the history of army building. This is an event in which we demonstrate our will and our voice to the world. We have faced real threats from those who unfairly use all means and methods against us and seek to dictate to us. If we pay attention, we can see that in those days the nation passed a difficult test, marched to the graves of martyrs, went to the front from young to old, there was an awakening of the spirit of the nation. These days are the story of our pride, a page of our pride. We are Azerbaijan, we are the commander, we are the soldier, we are the state. At any moment we can show our strength and say our word again.

- There is such a well-known saying: two things can shake the state - the impunity of criminals and the punishment of the innocent. What do you think about this?

- From my first years of work in law enforcement agencies and to this day, I have been on the side of the truth, I recognize and respect fair decisions and I am always ready to defend them. These words, which the national leader Heydar Aliyev addressed to the people, should become, even today, the program and principle of activity of everyone who works in law enforcement agencies. Indeed, in both cases, the state may face great danger - both when the guilty go unpunished and when the innocent are punished. This must not be forgotten.

- Staying with all your soul attached to your homeland, did your relatives condemn you for being away from it? Because you have always been valued as a person ready to help your relatives. And now, perhaps, you don't always manage to give a helping hand to your relatives.

- Everyone who chooses the profession of a civil servant must respect every decision of the state and be able to obey it. Today, working in the Balkans in the west of Eastern Europe does not mean that I am far from Karabakh, my state and its interests, where I was born and raised. The pain of innocent people and the occupation of our lands are always in my heart. Although I am far away, I am with the victims, our state, and our statehood. It is just a matter of time and space that sometimes I cannot participate in mourning ceremonies, as was the custom of our fathers and grandfathers. Fortunately, I am grateful to our people and relatives for their understanding.

- You're away from home. Is homeland different from inside and outside?

- We must understand the truth that Azerbaijan is our motherland forever, our land, our blood, and our soul. We are all connected with these lands under the same name Azerbaijan. Of course, people are happy when they receive good news. We follow the daily press. Foreign policy is also an integral part of state policy. Look where we came from. In the early years of independence, until mid-1994, we were even afraid to send our children to school. Those who lived at that time know that there was a danger of losing independent statehood and shedding fraternal blood. What would have happened if Heydar Aliyev had not come to power then if he had not plucked up the courage to prevent all this? At this age, Heydar Aliyev could sit and live a quiet life. He was a man who had already fulfilled his duty to his people and state. However, he came under a heavy burden. We have won these days with his statehood experience and intelligent mind.

When it comes to vision, two factors cannot be overlooked. There are two realities in appearance. Azerbaijan is going through a period of development and reforms covering all areas. There are enough people who see and understand this, as well as those who do not belong to our nation or religion. Azerbaijan has already become a favorite place for non-Azerbaijanis, an island of stability. Azerbaijan is a free country where all religions exist in a tolerant environment in a multicultural environment. Many people recognize this. There

are those who do not like Azerbaijan, and here the special activity of the Armenian diaspora plays the main role.

On the other hand, our people from their own people, sometimes out of ignorance, and sometimes consciously, pour water on their mill. Of course, certain mistakes are inevitable at different levels of government. The mistakes of any official do not mean that the policy as a whole is wrong, it is unfair to take it and write on behalf of the state. Of course, the president is also patient. He warns, gives a deadline, conducts his work, a person who understands responsibility, knows, and draws conclusions. And you must conclude. It would be good to draw this conclusion on a larger scale. In this regard, I wish our national unity to be more authoritative and reliable.

Geographically, we see that all around us is the blood and flames of war. Today and tomorrow there are threats to our country. To prevent these threats, along with a very flexible policy, thoughtful actions of the President, national unity within the country is always necessary. We must put aside our grievances. If we have a problem, we should explain it to each other and help each other fix it. The position held should never play an important role in the national interest. There is a great need for our national unity in terms of the fate of Azerbaijan, in terms of strengthening state independence, in terms of deciding the fate of Karabakh, in terms of preventing fires around Azerbaijan. Undoubtedly, the President of the country, taking into account all these factors, is systematically committed to his policy. But let's acknowledge that the implementation of this policy also depends on you, us, and individuals.

If we divide ourselves into friends and foes if the opposition and the ruling party still think "it's not us, it's the enemy", there is a danger of losing national unity. Nobody should forget the troubled times of 1988-1994 and the modern history of Azerbaijan today. We must know that it is our civic duty to keep this stability and security as the apple of our eye. This is our own destiny. Our today and tomorrow. Solidarity and stability are very important.

- The role of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in the effectiveness of the Azerbaijani Embassy in the Balkans is undeniable.

- You witnessed the speech of Demir Ovchin, Director of the Center for Blind and Visually Impaired Children and Youth. In his speech, he said that today, when we say Azerbaijan, we remember this educational center, which is the only one in Eastern Europe. Everyone who studies at this center recognizes Leyla Aliyeva, vice-president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, by her voice. Because visually impaired people understand mostly by hearing. After the construction was completed, Ms. Leila met with each of the children individually to find out what kind of sweets they like. Of course, many do not understand what the official is saying about the president's daughter. But we must call everything by its proper name. This can't be hidden. Because history is formed on truths.

- Eldar, do you have many friends?

- Friendship is a responsible concept. There are a number of factors necessary for friendship, and they are very important for everyone, whether they are men or women. For

example, courage, reliability, loyalty, compromise, and so on. I would not say that I have many friends. For the reasons I mentioned, this is exactly what I said. It also comes from our past and upbringing.

- You said “my past”, I remembered your grandmother Meleyka, whose eyes were blue as the sea, and I remembered your uncle Koroglu, who was similar to you in height and features.

- We were a big family when we went on vacation, on Sundays we were always busy with work and housekeeping. We were not left alone, we were constantly involved in physical labor. Five brothers, we all took care of our house and farm in the village of Lachin. We took an ax, a belt, and a scythe and helped our parents and fellow villagers.

- In which village did you visit more, in the village of Baglypey or in the village of Lachin?

- I have been there more than we live in the village of Lachin. Uncle Koroglu was a literature teacher. He lived in Baglypey. Woe to the day when I fell into the hands of my uncle. He made me work so hard, and at the last moment, he paid only for the fare. At this age, children usually enjoy gifts from their parents. His approach was different. My uncle wanted us to get used to working. I also worked with enthusiasm. He taught me to work. Although we had different characters, he was talented and very successful in poetry.



- Do you often see Kelbadjar in your dreams?

- These are the most difficult moments for me. Recently, I first told about this to my son. Every time when I dream of Lachin, Shusha, Kelbadjar, Agdam, I die. I have a change of mood this day, I cannot come to myself. There was my childhood. I am an Aranets, a mountaineer, a Karabakh man. My mother is from Karabakh and my father is from Karabakh. My grandfather was a double refugee. Then they came to the village of Lachin in the Kelbadjarsky district of the Geichinsky district. The tragedy of this migration, which fell on the shoulders of my grandfather, later fell on the shoulders of my father Humbat.

On the one hand, I want to often see these dreams, to visit those places that I dreamed of in Kelbajar. Return to your memories of those years for a long time...

Homeland begins with a hearth that attracts people more and more as they grow older. In recent years, I have been dreaming of the destroyed Kalbajar. In our historical land, I hear sounds in a foreign language, sometimes I jump out of those dreams, I can't come to my senses. I do not hesitate to express my position on Karabakh. At my meetings, I give free lectures at universities. I also use these audiences to explain the realities of Karabakh to the younger generation. I am trying to uncover and describe the tragedies that have befallen us, their roots, today's grave consequences, and the ambivalent attitude towards us.

- As far as I know, your father was for you the last symbol of the hearth. It is very hard to be without a father. How does a man your age feel without a father?

- Regardless of the age of the person, the loss of parents was very difficult. We are indebted to our parents for life, and we must instill this in our children. My father had a lot of rights over me. There was a lot of sincerity between us. After my parents left, I feel like an orphan. After the death of my father, I feel like a lonely person. Although I am a man of iron will, very patient, it is very difficult without a father. My father and mother always blessed me when I went on a long trip. I grew up with their blessings. Now, when I do something, I look at their pictures on my phone.

- If you were to meet God, what would you ask him? Do you have a question for him? (Eldar is silent for a long time...).

- Of course, it would be a great happiness to have the opportunity to meet with the Almighty. First, I would ask him to be able to bury my father and mother in their homelands. I would kneel before him and ask God ... To get to my native lands, I would kneel and hug the burnt ashes and stones of my land and apologize that we did not know the value of our land. Having lost her, we realized that being without a Motherland is great pain.

- I see that many places in the Balkans resemble Kelbajar... Does that reassure you?

- There are many similarities. During my meetings, I told many people that they calmed me down a bit. Sometimes I go out and walk through the streets, paths, forests similar to those places. We are victims of injustice, of the Karabakh tragedy, everything that happened to us is unjust. Injustice is a very serious matter, both individually and in terms of national interests and destinies. I don't have a separate wish.

- You just said, "I am a man of iron". Where do you draw your strength from?

- Our kind are long-livers. No one is immortal, everyone has a time, an hour and a minute. My grandfather lived 119 years and my father 95 years. They grew up in the mountains with clean water and fresh air. We were taught to work with strict, iron discipline, we achieved everything by our own efforts. Life itself has thrown me into many whirlpools, and when I analyze the fate and period of my life, I too have gone through many trials in the face of fate...

- **“Everyone will throw a stone at you, and you will be stoned by those you love?”.**

- Yes. I have witnessed injustices... But in all of it, I was patient. I didn't complain. Maybe that was my happiness. In restraint, in patience... Patience and restraint are very important in human life, patience comes from God. I have lost nothing except the land of Karabakh.

- **What qualities do you dislike in people?**



- Flattery, duplicity, slipperiness, scraping — I despise all of it.

- **Is the glass half-full or half-empty for you?**

- There's a villain approach and a well-meaning approach... I tried to see things as they are. Only the intention must be pure, this vision must not be intentional. Mrs. Aida, I thank God that I have no enemies except Armenians. Nevertheless, I asked God to send me a worthy enemy. We should not fear the brave we should fear the fool.

- **Can you forgive?**

- For the first time I will have to confess at the age of 61 ... Hold a grudge against my relatives, keep this evil in my heart for years ... No! I couldn't do it! What is gone is gone. I

appreciate and remember the good moments more. I will not forget the good. I will never forget the one who supported me in my student years, the one who brought me a book, who wiped the blood from my nose with his handkerchief. But I'm not vindictive. Ironically, I was working with a family member of the person who had done me the most harm. He worked with me for 7 years. I loved him as much as my son Anar. I proved it with my words and deeds. I played a part in its development and rise. As he left, he couldn't hold back his tears. I also appreciate it.

- Forgive me for this question. Did you make a mistake?

- It is impossible to work without mistakes, such an ideal is impossible. There were mistakes, I tried to draw conclusions from my mistakes, and I was ashamed of my mistakes. Even if no one sees or feels it... these mistakes, a wrong decision, a word, maybe an action. Like all people, none of us is immune from them. The most important thing is to be able to see this error and draw the right conclusions. If we are talking about management, if we are talking about activities in strategic state bodies, then sometimes you come across a different or contradictory situation in approaches to processes taking place based on the existing realities of time, period, and history. When you voluntarily make a commitment, you are making the decision required by law. You're not going to, but the law says you must. At this point, personal thoughts--character, personal vision, approach--in the background should be beneath the law. There must be only one truth - THE LAW IS THE LAW.

- That's what your peers think; you've always been a charismatic person on the outside. How much did your most expensive suit cost?

- It's more important to be neat. From my childhood until today, I was mostly focused on cleanliness. It was enough to clean old clothes and iron them properly. Chasing expensive brands is the lot of greedy and short-sighted people. What kind of luxury am I talking about? I have no moral right to do so. My land is under occupation. I gave 11 martyrs. My bloodline was destroyed... My homeland was occupied, ask me if I have laughed heartily in recent years. I would say no. Because I don't have the right. As for me, I don't think about luxurious clothes. By the way, let me explain an interesting point. Two years ago, when the crisis in Europe was just beginning, I rented out my first apartment, rented for the embassy in Belgrade, and found a cheap house for half its price. I voluntarily moved out of the luxurious residence where I lived until yesterday and live comfortably in a simple three-bedroom house. And I am very glad that my books are with me.

- You have three children, none of them work.

- My son Anar is a doctoral student. I'm very pleased. Why does he need a position? Let him serve the Fatherland with his mind and zeal. From a young age, I worked in a leadership position, the youngest general, the youngest leader, the police chief, the prosecutor general - all this was. It does not matter. The main thing is that the Motherland is free, the state is independent, the people are happy, and the rest is trifles.

P.S. Every sentence my interlocutor uttered radiated love for his homeland, every expression of his was filled with sincerity, and every thought embodied determination. I

didn't even notice how time flew during our conversation. If Eldar had more time, our discussion would probably have lasted much longer. And I must admit that our conversation deeply moved me. Eldar's words, and perhaps even the things he chose not to say, reaffirmed for me one simple truth: love for one's homeland is a feeling that comes from the depths of the soul, the heart, and the blood. To possess such sacred feelings is a great blessing. But Eldar, whose native land remains under occupation, does not consider himself happy.



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