

The Telergaph. – 15.05.2015

By Roland Oliphant

I am not afraid of death, says female Ukrainian pilot held in Moscow jail
The MP who has been imprisoned for nearly 11 months says freedom is the most valuable thing a person has

Я не боюсь смерті, - говорить українська льотчиця яка перебуває в московській в'язниці.

Депутат, яку утримують у в'язниці протягом 11 місяців говорить, що свобода це найцінніше, що може бути

Українська льотчиця розповіла про своє голодування у московській в'язниці. У своєму зверненні вона розповіла, що російські в'язниці не гірші ніж «три зіркові готелі», а щоденне життя майже не відрізняється від армії. На запитання, що вона найбільше хотіла б отримати в подарунок на день народження, Надія відповіла: «Свободу, адже це найцінніше та найважливіше, що є у людини».

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11609075/I-am-not-afraid-of-death-says-female-Ukrainian-pilot-held-in-Moscow-jail.html>



A Ukrainian helicopter pilot has described how she was ready to starve herself in a Russian prison before she called off a five month hunger strike this week.

In her first description of nearly 11 months behind bars, Nadia Savchenko said Russian prisons are no worse than a "three star hotel", and day-to-day life in custody is not that different to the army, and ruminated on the nature of freedom.

Miss Savchenko, a Ukrainian army helicopter pilot who is accused by Russia of complicity in the deaths of two journalists in east Ukraine, made the comments in a four-page letter to the Daily Beast.

"FREEDOM! I want to see my sister and (to eat) cake," she said when asked what she wanted for her birthday on May 11.

"Freedom is the most valuable thing that a person has. It is given to every human being by nature and God. But in the brutal human world ... freedom is not given to you by default. You have to fight for it and fight for freeing your spot under the sun for a free life," she wrote.

Miss Savchenko, an Iraq war veteran and senior lieutenant in the Ukrainian army, was captured by pro-Russian separatists while fighting with the Aidar battalion, a pro-Ukrainian militia, near Luhansk on June 17 last year.

Three weeks later, she resurfaced in Russia when investigators announced they would charge her with abetting the murder of Igor Kornelyuk and Anton Voloshin, employees of a Russian state-owned TV channel, who died when they were hit by mortar fire on the same day Miss Savchenko was taken prisoner.

The case has made Miss Savchenko a hero in Ukraine where she has been elected to parliament and lionised by Petro Poroshenko, the president of Ukraine, and Yulia Tymoshenko, the former prime minister.

But the Kremlin has defied calls from Mr Poroshenko and other world leaders for her released, saying she was a suspected criminal – not a prisoner of war – and would only be released if acquitted.

Miss Savchenko has shot to fame in Ukraine for her defiance in custody, which has seen her wearing the Ukrainian coat of arms during court appearances and defying the advice of her lawyers to go on a lengthy hunger strike.

She said she ended her five-month hunger strike on her 34th birthday on May 11.

By that time, she said, it had become a "bargaining" tool, with prison authorities threatening to prevent her from appearing in court if she did not take food.

"The hunger strike was no longer an honest protest, but instead an object of barter," she said.

"I could have continued even until death – this was not hard, and I was not afraid," she wrote in the letter.

Mark Feygin, Miss Savchenko's Russian lawyer, believes she will finally be sent to trial for complicity in murder and illegally entering Russia in August.