

Interview with Stephan Khmara (SK). Interviewer: Iryna Miniailo (IM). Place of record: Kyiv.

IM: So, thank you for agreeing to the interview. In the first part I would like to hear about you as a personality, as a public figure. Tell me about yourself, how did you become a publically active person?

SK: This was my choice from early childhood. It was influenced by two main factors: it was the education in the family, the influence of parents, and the events in which I was growing up: it's the end of World War II and the postwar period, when I with the child's eyes saw the insurgency, I saw the alive partisans of UPA, I have many times heard their conversations, because they were often in our house... I was always interested in these talks, and it was often so that I was put to sleep, but I wasn't sleeping, I was listening. That is, I saw those living participants, and even some separate phrases I memorized for a lifetime... I remember such an episode: we lived nearby the border (the so-called Curzon Line), and somewhere at the beginning of 1944 UPA was throwing the best insurgent parts outside the Curzon Line, to Chelm region, because there was such a huge slaughter between Ukrainians and Polish. And they were going in an organized manner; I remember how they were housed in our village, and particularly in our home two soldiers stayed overnight. My mother milked a cow and brought the milk to treat them. And one of them points at me and my brother and says, "You firstly treat them, and only then is our turn". And the main thing is not even this... Although it's like Antonenko-Davydovych used to say "a weighty detail". Later on I was already evaluating everything through the prism of their mentality, of their ethics and morality... Also, they were talking to my parents. I do not know who they are, but apparently they were educated guys, intelligent. And one of them says: "You know, we will not win in this war yet, and it's even possible that all of us will die, but we must do this, and the next generations will be brought up with our example". And it fixed in me for all my life. What kind of depth of understanding those insurgents had about what they do, and to what extent it's necessary, and for what this sacrifice of them was needy! And here in this lies the key: they were flesh and blood of Ukrainian people and they were sacrificing themselves for the sake of this nation. And they understood that they must carry this idea, and this is the idea of fighting for a place under the sun,

for the Ukrainian state, without which the Ukrainian people, the Ukrainian nation cannot develop. And even without the state, the threat of total extinction of Ukrainian nation will never disappear... Well, of course we didn't accept the Soviet authorities after coming back of the (1939-1941 - it was a short period, but during this time everyone saw what the communist regime was). Of course, different people had different illusions. In our family, my parents didn't have it: although they were simple farmers, but they were pretty conscious and they had a good understanding of what was happening. So that's why for all my life I had such "immunity" to the perception of this Soviet destructive propaganda. My family, my relatives were definitely anti-imperial, anti-Moscow, and anti-occupant. Perhaps, children's memory itself is able to capture something, even unconsciously, which later determines the world view of a person. I think so. Besides, I was already analyzing by myself: what kind of atmosphere we had, how the occupying authorities were behaving, and what it was like... "Inhuman" - if to say very delicately, it was some kind of wild, bestial.

IM: These your assessments about savagery and bestiality - which age are they from?

SK: From early school age. I'll tell you another episode. I studied somewhere in the third grade by then, even in the second. We had a two-storied school with large windows, built already at the time of the Austrian Empire. I was on the ground floor, opposite the windows was an ancillary building, where the wood was kept, there was a cellar... It was December, the ground got frozen, and it was powdered a little with snow. And we saw such a picture through window: tree men lied next to the shed with firewood (of course, they were in civilian clothes), they didn't move. And the soldiers (there were the internal troops or NKVD) take the bricks that lay there near the shed, ran and in turn throw it, trying to get to these people's heads, to finish them. Although those were already without consciousness, but the soldiers were not shooting them even, but just finishing them with the bricks. And why did we pay attention to this? Because the teacher who was conducting the lesson looked out the window and suddenly seemed to be petrified with horror. I still remember her face. And then we all rushed to the window and this was what we saw. And then it turned out that one of those three was my near neighbor, a young boy, Ivan Bulbak, whom I knew well. The second one was the father of my classmate, the secretary of the village council,

who was associated with the underground, and the third one was from a nearby village. And it happened so that the partisans were in the apartment of secretary of the village council, and suddenly these attacked... Maybe someone told, or maybe by accident - it is unknown how it happened. But the shootout had started, they injured them, and already heavily injured they brought them there to school... And then everything was taking place before my eyes: both eviction, and how then in 1945 they have arrived... And I must say that in 1944 and somewhere up to the middle of 1945 in almost every village there was an outpost of those internal troops of NKVD. And suddenly during the day several cars arrived, and they selected several houses where, according to their information, were the partisans in the family. They kicked out those who were there, poured with petrol and set on fire. And the village was tight, the houses were built close to each other, but they didn't allow the neighbors to extinguish those fired houses. And we didn't burn because the set on fire house was four yards from us. Although it was coming a lot and we covered the barn with clothes and poured with water, because in hot weather the entire pieces of the roof were taken by wind and carried far away. Somewhere around 25 percent of the houses were burned down in different parts of the village, although they didn't set on fire many, just several houses. During the passage of the front from west to east and from east to west no house in our village was burned, and here almost one third of the village burned out. Then there was the deportation to Siberia... Well, and further I was not interested in politics anymore, especially in higher grades. I remember already in 1950s this story with Beria... It is described interestingly in historical literature, and I know exactly that suddenly in 1953, in the beginning of summer, the order came to change all the district stuff. And the stuff was changed not just to Ukrainian, but it obligatory had to be people from the locals. And it happened so that in my Sokal district (well, there were little of literate communists back then) there was no appropriate candidature for the first secretary of the district committee of the party, and they have found a native from our village: he worked as a teacher of physical education. And at once - they put him as a secretary of the district committee! It was such an alarm cleansing of stuff. But it lasted only for a month...

IM: So you were 16 years old at the time. How did you observe that?

SK: Well, I was already a conscious person, I was curious...

IM: Were you still studying at school?

SK: Yes, yes. I finished the school in 1955

IM: Did parents discuss such things at home?

SK: They weren't able not to discuss. Moreover, my own father was killed: he was a district leader of UPA Security Service, and a cousin of mine from my mother's side was killed as well: he was a medical nurse of UPA. Therefore, our childhood was such a very adult, you know...

IM: Did the parents teach you something because of this? Or they were just allowing you to observe? How do you remember?

SK: You know, there was just one warning: not to talk too much elsewhere. If someone unknown asks something... Because there was such a case, that my elder brother was coming back home and some such kind of a worried people in civilian clothes met him and say: "Listen boy, do you know, where the partisans are? We are running away, they can catch us, we need to hide somewhere". And he says: "I don't know! But I will ask at home, maybe my parents know". He came running and told this, but parents perfectly realized who that was. Those actually were the representatives of those particular pseudo UPA fighters who were dressing into the partisans, masking as them...

IM: And what can you tell about the circle of your parents' contacts? As you say, there was little of intelligentsia in the village. Maybe the priests?

SK: Definitely, definitely. As in every social cell, there are more and less developed people in a rural community. But, above all, the good owners were sharing their impressions, since they worked day and night by the sweat of brow, although the parents didn't have much of lands... And, of course, there were conversations on various subjects. I remember how one Jew was coming to

us to get warm, to bathe, to eat, when he was forced to remain hidden. And I don't know what his fate was afterwards. I didn't hear that he was caught. Evidently he passed somewhere the border with Hungary where there were no repressions against the Jews. Because we had a few Jewish families, and they were taken to the ghetto.

IM: I would like to clarify what was the role of priests in your rural community? What was their attitude? What was the state of their consciousness?

SK: Well, first of all, they were engaged into educational work... Several priest has changed in my memory, including one young which totally didn't accept the shift from the Greek Catholics into Russian Orthodoxy, he was even detained, tortured, and after some time they let him go. Perhaps because of those tortures, as a result he died in still relatively young age. I would also like to say that, despite the fact that it was a very hard work, a circle of amateur art activities was working actively. I remember that my father played in plays of famous Ukrainian classics that were set on the village scene. He sang in the church choir up to the elderly, he had a beautiful voice. It is a pity that there was no such a technique yet, and no records are left. The choir was led by our fellow countryman who graduated a musical school, so the choir was on a professional level. And we have a very large, beautiful church, it is built in the same style as in the district center - Sokal, and my grandfather Klym who was the village elder played a big role in its construction. He was reelected for 22 consecutive years during the Austrian rule, and later on the community didn't want to let him go. But after the occupation of Galicia by Poland grandfather said that he cannot cooperate with such authorities: compared to Austria, the Poles behaved disgracefully. And the age was already no longer the same... But an interesting story came out with the church, because in a small village such a big church was built. And we had many land-hungry people: we were considered as rich because we had 4 hectares, but it is very little. Although, if to work skillfully, you can allow yourself the necessary needs. I remember however that the parents worked and were buying by small pieces more fields. And my father was always saying that we will sell it later on because it is necessary for children to obtain the higher education. And for the conscious Ukrainians this meant that it's needy to go abroad because in order to enter the Lviv University it was necessary to write in the questionnaire that you are of Roman Catholic religion, because if

you write "Greek Catholic" it means that you are Ukrainian and it will be very difficult for you to get there because there was discrimination of Ukrainians.

IM: Which period was that?

SK: It was still during the Polish occupation. That's why parents were stick to this idea of going abroad. There were such people in our village who graduated from university in Prague for example. And later on, when I was studying at the university, then half of the teachers we had graduated from European universities and half from Russian or Soviet ones. But the main thing was that there was the orientation of children towards the education. And the second is that we had a library at home: Ukrainian classics... When I was in third grade I have quietly read a shortened version of the "History of Ukraine-Rus" of Hrushevsky (I saw where my brother hides it)

IM: But why does he hide?

SK: Well, because it's not allowed! If it would be found, you could get for this a ticket to Siberia or to prison because it was considered as a terrible Anti-Soviet crime.

IM: But did the parents know that you and your brother were reading it?

SK: Well, I don't know if they knew that my elder brother was reading, but about me that I was reading they didn't know. Of course, I would not be allowed, because I was still too small for such things. But all this was influencing. Later I have seen how many of our relatives die. I have already said about the brother of my father... There was such a story with him: they injured him and he fled. And a year after the NKVD people came upon him again, he was escaping, he got wounded again, he couldn't escape and then he already shot himself... That is, my child's head was full of adult thoughts, you know... It is clear that the forces are not comparable, that they are many - a great state was fighting. How could we defeat this Moscow infection? This is how we called it - "infection". It's impossible when the forces are completely incomparable. But I understood that

we should look for some ways, we have to study well, to have a lot of knowledge to think how to continue the fight. Because the idea that this fight is necessary was already deep in the genes, in the child's mind. Because without this somebody will always reproach us: if not Poles than Russians, etc. And I believe that it was a defining moment so that to study successfully. Fortunately, both in high school and at the university I studied well, but it was still necessary to constantly work on myself. I have medical education but it turns out that during that time I managed to study history pretty well, and I even persuaded later that I learned it even better than some graduates of the historical faculty. But it's needy to work all the time, and now it's necessary to work in order to not be left behind those processes that occur in our complex globalized world. We live in a time of extraordinary changes, and we don't still know what the result of all this fermentation will be. Because there are many problems, and we can see that for example Europe is such an infantile, spoiled by its prosperity, well-fed and quiet life – it is now in a prostration. But here I already jump to another topic... To finish about the choice of profession... When I was in school, what was a choice back then? I wanted to become either a historian or a lawyer. But already in the 10th grade I realized that it's unrealistic because the history which I was taught in school and the history which I already knew at that time (and I was looking for old books, journals) - that they are two different histories. We were taught the anti-history, and the true history was forbidden. So that's why it wasn't suitable, because what I will do afterwards? To "maim" the children in the same manner as those unfortunate teachers who understand everything but cannot break away from the official line, and who instead of history of Ukraine have to stuff us with the so-called history of the USSR? So that's why in search of choice I ended up in medicine as a pretty humane and the least ideologized profession. By the way, in the 10th grade, before the exams, I had to join the Komsomol, because they didn't accept the documents without a characteristic from Komsomol, and the way to higher education was closed otherwise. And I had a goal to get higher education under any circumstances.

IM: OK. Still, our topic is revolutions, so we will have to leave a great period of your life behind the scenes, right?

SK: But I answered to your provocative question enough, right?

IM: In my view, there was a lot of interesting information, which I have never seen in your interviews.

SK:I will tell you more: in a short period of Beria (nobody knows about that but I know in practice) the cadres where changed so much quickly, and it is unknown what would be the end of all this. Many question marks.

IM: Further I know that you had a difficult life path: the arrests, the dissident activity, the nationalistic platform... But I would like to come closer actually to the Revolution on the Granite... What is your personal background of participation in this event? Could you start somewhere like a couple of years before that and bring us somehow to your participation in this event and then describe how all this was for you?

SK: Let's start with the topic why I did not only directly participate in the process of hunger strike itself but I was familiar with those who was preparing it. By the way, the Parliament of the first convocation elected in 1990 worked from the 15th of May to the 3rd of September without interruption. The second session had to begin on October 2. And we were working indeed: we worked in commissions of the Parliament (there were not committees but commissions back then), and at the plenary in parallel regime. We knew what we wanted, we had an enormous load, and this topic can be developed to several volumes. And how we were preparing the Declaration of State Sovereignty, and we have prepared a wonderful document, a foundation for the revival of the independent Ukrainian State. And after the elections to the Parliament of Ukrainian SSR of 1990, to the group for the preparation of the work of new Parliament from every region two MPs were gathered in approximately one week. I got there from Lviv region, and at the first meeting a package of documents was given to us, which included the project of the new Union Treaty, an Appeal from Ukrainian SSR to the republics of the Soviet Union to get involved in to sign a new treaty, and some more... And it was planned to finish the first session after three weeks. And at the first meeting of this preparatory group I asked for speech and I said: "Dear all, we were given these documents, but our tasks are quite different. The task of the newly-elected Parliament is to

carry out the restoration of an independent Ukrainian State". Of course, this was a provocative statement for the representatives of the majority of areas from where the party nomenclature was chosen, but it was impossible not to say this. We had to choose our line immediately and we had to hammer it. I thought back then that my words would be met with whistling or with something similar, but when I said the words "our goal is the restoration of an independent Ukrainian State", just dead silence was there, like in the final scene of "The Government Inspector". And then the crazy job started, I worked in a Commission on the issues of sovereignty, inter-republican and international relations. We were working the whole day and night really with a short break for sleep. It was incredibly difficult. First, it was a completely new job, and secondly, we had to break the resistance of the communists. And only convincing arguments and a strong will enabled to prepare a very good project. Naturally, I had my own project, in which I wrote about the restoration of independence, showing the continuity of the state already since the time of Kievan Rus, but of course this project was not supported. But it's not so bad because I really showed there the foundation for the restoration of the state.

IM: But when you say "We knew what we wanted", then who is "we"?

SK: We are the MPs who considered themselves statesmen, patriots. Moreover, there were 6 or 8 of former political prisoners - it's also serious. And I can tell you that we were such a motor, an engine, which was starting everything. I want to say that it's been relatively democratic elections, the elections of 1990. From all the regions, even from the most Russified and the most influenced by the Communist ideology ones, there still were at least several MPs who were Ukrainian patriots, statesmen. The Luhansk, Donetsk, Dnepropetrovsk regions were not excluded among them.

IM: And what about Crimea?

SK: Well, there were some loyal ones. They were not infected by the Ukrainian idea but we were not enemies. But some people, of course, were our enemies. For example, Tsekov, if anyone still remembers him. He is a fierce Ukrainophobe, chauvinist and so forth.

IM: OK. I asked you about the revolution.

SK: Revolutions do not arise from nowhere. They arise when there is a public demand for this. If there is a demand for changes in the society, if those changes are matured, and the existing system doesn't imply them - either it is not able or it doesn't want, or it resists, and then the contradictions are getting mature, the tension increases.

IM: So you saw that the tension is increasing back then, isn't it?

SK: Well, it was needed to look at the street, to listen what the people want. For example, in 1989, in 1990 (and especially in 1990) there were rallies. And when the Parliament began to work, all the time up to several thousands of people were gathering under the Parliament as well. Because people were captured by the idea of being a host on their own land (this is a banal phrase but it may be embodied only through their own state).

IM: That is, there was a public demand for ensuring the rights?

SK: Yes, yes.

IM: And how did you feel it as an active politician, as an MP back then?

SK: I felt it as one of those engines, from this "dynamite". We have to return a little bit back... You know the political prisoners who were returning from soviet concentration camps, they were the detonator of the acceleration of social processes. Look: on 7th of July 1988 we conducted a constituent conference to create the Ukrainian Helsinki Union, where in the program it was clearly indicated that this is a prototype of a new Ukrainian political party, even though it was registered as a public organization. And already a year and a half later the Ukrainian Republican Party was created, and this was a transformation of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union. By the way, I have several times been subjected to administrative arrests because of the fact that I was one of

the founders of the Union. The Soviet Union was still there: it was somewhat weakened, but there still had been political taboos - to not encroach on the power of the current party. They even gave me a fine of 1000 rubles - it was a fantastic sum at that time. I immediately said in the court that I was not going to pay it. And apart from that, in spring of 1989 they declared the home regime for me which meant that I didn't have right to appear in public places, to take part in public events etc. I was arrested by KGB men in Chernivtsi where I was conducting the constituent conference, and they brought me to the surroundings of Ternopil and thrown away there at midnight. It was night of the 1st of March. But why did they do so? Because on the 1st of March a huge council was supposed to take place in Lviv, and they didn't want me to get there. But I anyways got there. That is, we were such a public detonator which was pushing. And then the fact that I said about the Declaration raised a question: how to implement it? Because later on the dynamics of development will emerge. How to create the institutions of an independent state? That is, there is a plan, and we have even begun to implement it. For example, in July 1990 a very important strategically Act of economic independence of Ukrainian SSR was adopted, on 30th of July the Parliament took the resolution about the military service of the citizens of Ukraine on the territory of Ukraine. This was my project which passed by some miracle. It was an individual work: for example, I was approaching the communists and I was speaking with them. And they were different: there were both outright enemies among them (however these were the minority), and the neutral ones, for whom the idea of statehood meant nothing, and there were the third ones in which something Ukrainian was beginning to wake up, and they started to work. That is, the nomenclature was not the same, and I had the understanding of this, and I can name the examples of how from such nomenclature came out great patriots. Anatoli Kasianenko - the 2nd secretary of the Kherson Regional party committee back then, he is a great Ukrainian patriot. I and he, without advertising this, found a common language. And if I would say, it has not been accepted because "it's the nationalistic Khmara", but when he would say then it was already another thing because he was working among the communists. And so this is how I and he worked with different means, trying to convince. And then I was just approaching them and saying: "Do you want your son or your grandson to get into some kind of a "hot point" during their army service?" And so they voted for that Resolution. They wanted to introduce there some changes in the fall, but I have threatened some of the communists that I will tear his head. And this was a severe blow to the

strength of the Soviet Union, and it was the prototype of the formation of the Ukrainian armed forces.

IM: Are you talking this about the steps taken to implement the Declaration?

SK: And further it was necessary to think how to develop the state institutions. Such a situation couldn't exist long, there was no way to independence with such a composition of the Parliament which was forming the other governmental institutions. When there were the constitutional majority of communists in the Parliament - more than 300 MPs. They could do whatever they wanted. Moreover, the things in which we succeeded were largely possible thanks to the support of the people on the street near the Parliament.

IM: And how was organized this support?

SK: People wanted changes, I told you already.

IM: But was it spontaneous or it was organized by someone?

SK: Well of course, after all we were conducting the ongoing propaganda, agitations, meetings, rallies, conversations etc. There was already an organization: the Ukrainian Helsinki Union was the first political organization. Then, there was a huge National Movement; there was the Society of Ukrainian youth. That is, the society had already made a step towards the structuration, towards the creation of public organizations. Therefore, the conscious people were coming out for support under the building of Parliament. And then it was easier for us to break through the decision. Plus, our hard work, our persistence, and plus there were educated people among the party nomenclature. Take the example of Ivashko... Kravchuk cannot be even compared to him. He was a very enlightened business executive. I had a few conversations with him, because he was a smoker, and we talked in the smoking room. He knew who I was and where I was from, that I was a fierce nationalist, a political prisoner, but he was curious: "But you, how do you look at the following issue?" In general, he was a Ukrainian patriot, but the bad thing was that he still went

to Moscow - here he didn't have enough will to disobey the party discipline. Had he remained the Chairman of the Parliament, it would have been incomparably better than Kravchuk. This was a person who knew how the economy develops, and in which direction it is necessary to go. He was of social-democratic views, an intelligent person. And Kravchuk is just a windbag. I am not going to touch it any longer but there are a lot of sins on his conscience... Yeah. Therefore, it was necessary to obligatorily and immediately change the situation. And I said to my colleagues MPs: "Dear all, the winter will come. People will not stay all the time under the Parliament anymore. If there is no serious progress after the upturn, then the decline and demoralization comes". That's why, after the approval of the Declaration of State sovereignty I published an article about the fact that after the approval of the Declaration this convocation of the Parliament has fulfilled its historic mission and we must propose to the society early elections in order to have a democratic majority in the Parliament, to form a new Government and to carry out new politics. The People's Council consisted of 124 members back then, and there were 13 such a radically-minded among us, and we were trying to convince the rest that there is a need for new parliamentary elections. The mood in the society was to such extent anti-communist, anti-imperialistic at that point that of course there would not be any communists in the Parliament. So there was a possibility to begin the reforms in Ukraine, including the decommunization, without which it would not be possible to carry out political and humanitarian reforms. And without political and humanitarian reforms, it would not be possible to conduct the economic reform. Reforms can be conducted by committed, ideological people, by the statesmen. And so, in search for solution, since it was impossible to convince the majority inside of the Parliament, we started to look for a solution beyond it. And then I reached the group of a Student fraternity in Lviv, I met Markiyan Ivashchynshyn who was a known activist back then. And already at that time we were thinking what to do. And the student activists have decided (and I absolutely supported this idea) that during the opening of the 2nd session of the Parliament the students will go out for a protest, for a hunger strike.

IM: Was it their initiative which you have supported or was it you who inspired them?

SK: You know, there were regular meetings, constant searches, everyone was thinking what to do. To call the strikes? But it was very difficult to do, and what to do afterwards? And the students

were starting the new school year, they were easier to organize: they are young, energetic people. And then the development was planned... Well, this I will tell you later.

IM: I am curious how the idea of hunger as a form of protest arose?

SK: It was not only the idea of hunger strike. It was the idea of the youth protest with such a form as a hunger strike among the others. It was just one of the elements of the students protest.

IM: But was this idea already in the student environment or was it somehow brought there?

SK: Well, we found a common language with them, that it is impossible to do so that this party nomenclature would leave the power with its own will. That's why it is necessary to make pressure from outside so that we would be able to conduct the changes.

IM: But if to recall, how often did you communicate with the students?

SK: These are the details, I cannot say right now how often. But all the time I was saying that the core idea must be the new elections to the Parliament. Why? Because as a politician I was interested in construction of Ukrainian power institutions, and all the rest was derivative. The students had supported this, and they went out exactly with this idea. And you know that on the 2nd of October the session of the Parliament was supposed to begin, but the plenary session was disrupted, and the People's Council all the day had the meetings on the third floor of the Parliament's building. I had several speeches there and I was arguing that we must immediately put the ultimatum to Kravchuk as the Chairman of the Parliament to resign and to announce the call for early parliamentary elections. Kravchuk definitely had to be removed because he was a protégé of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, he was their puppet, and it was necessary to minimize the influence of communists in the organizational work for the preparation of the elections. Then the students lay down on the granite, and there was a tremendous manifestation before that, and I proposed to invite Kravchuk to the meeting of the People's Council on the third floor and to dictate the ultimatum to him. And Kravchuk would be

forced to go for it, especially because the students are on Maidan, and the society is perturbed. Kravchuk would surrender, but unfortunately apart from our group of "13 Apostles", the majority of the People's Council didn't support it. And above all, it's the Rukh's team. The "Rukh" did a lot for public events but it did a lot of damage in the main issue: the mechanism of change of power. The new elections to the Parliament were desperately needed, and it was just a great moment for this back then!

IM: But why they didn't support?

SK: Oh... Let's not talk and go into individual names. But there were many people who had been previously recruited by the KGB, and many of them I know by name. These people are already to some extent bonded psychologically. This stone of negativity is hanged over them, and they are afraid, because the special services have compromising material about them. This is one reason. And the second reason was that some of them were afraid to lose their MP's mandate. They were even saying this to me: "But what if we will not be reelected?" I say: "And so what? First of all, we will always find a social work for ourselves. And secondly, there is no reason not to reelect us. People saw how we work and they have supported us". And so, I was interested in the main issue: the reelection of the Parliament, but unfortunately... I will tell you, how the events unfolded... I was associated with this action of the students even before the beginning, and then we were trying in the Parliament but we didn't succeed to break the majority. And the People's Council made a statement that they support the students' action. But it is so, you know, as the Europe is now sympathizing and feeling concerned... And I said that an ultimatum and specific steps are necessary in order to change the system. And why later on, in the evening of 7th, I have directly joined the hunger strike? Before that, for example, I flew to Donetsk, I spoke there at the meetings, in enterprises, mines, and I was encouraging to support the students' action. And in case if the authorities will resist the demands of the students, to support them with the general strike. The miners were the vanguard among the working class at the time, and they were very active, powerful in Donetsk. There was no need to go, for example, to Lviv: they would support anyways. And already during the first session I went to the Donbas, to Odessa, to Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Zaporizhia: the regions that need to be pulled. Unfortunately, most of my colleagues

from Rukh insufficiently supported this idea. And when I came back from Donetsk, I decided to directly support the students' action, because, firstly, it would morally raise the spirit of youth, and secondly, I perfectly saw that there was more romanticism than the awareness of the idea for what the students came out. And I was very much concerned because a variety of provocateurs were approaching there, trying to bring vodka, to seduce someone to secretly take some sandwich in order to speculate on this afterwards, to compromise. So that's why I went there to directly monitor these processes and to support those people. And another very important function was there, about which they write little now, even the leaders of the students' movement... Well, I must say that only Oles Doniy remained and grew up as a worthy Ukrainian politician among the decent ones. And back then he was just a young student. I'm very glad that I also had some influence on him, that our views with him match today as well and that he doesn't entwine some specific problems with laces of words and statements. So, I want to say that every evening an assembly on the Maidan was held, and the microphone was working constantly: the students were speaking, and all who wished to come and to speak out from the publicity. Another reason: it was necessary to protect this action in order not to be undermined from the inside. Once I had to behave very sharply... You know, they wanted to "lower the spirit" of the action. For example, once during his speech Yavorivsky (and by then about a week of the hunger strike went already) says: "Well, all of you hungered here, you demonstrated your protest, everything is clear. And now you shall go into the lecture halls and learn". I approached him and said: "Your feet should not be here anymore if you do not want to be whacked in face". So, this was the conversation, and indeed, he never showed up again, because he knew that the conversation with me will have the consequences. I say to him: "Did you come to demoralize? So, go back to Leyb Makarovich Kravchuk!" So, there were such moments... Then, the task was not to simply lie on the granite, to set your requirements - and that's it. Actively, there were everyday trips to different districts of Kyiv, to the largest enterprises.

IM: Are you talking here about the form of protest? About what those people who were starving were occupied with?

SK: Yes! Because it was necessary to powerfully, increasingly put pressure on the authorities in order to achieve the result, since the reelections were a very difficult issue for them. They perfectly understood that they will lose the majority in the Parliament. There would be no communists there at all. That's why, for example, visits to large enterprises, such as "Bilshovyk" for instance - a closed enterprise, but we learned that Kravchuk had a meeting there. And we organized a march from Khreshchatyk to the "Bilshovyk" factory, we wanted the representatives of the student action to be allowed to the meeting, and they didn't want to allow... Well, and we wanted to catch Kravchuk there, to neutralize his party lies. They didn't want to let us in. And I was going in front of the column at the moment, and I said: "Let's sit down to the asphalt!" And we blocked the road. In a few minutes the Brest-Litovsk highway... Do you understand what is it? The paralysis! And very quickly they have allowed us, they said, choose the representatives, come here, let's meet.

IM: I would like to understand the internal dynamics of this protest. Your personal reason to join is clear for me. But what was the attitude of the students' environment to these forms? You say that there was a lot of romanticism... Does it mean that this circle didn't really understand that it was necessary?

SK: Well, many students, you know, have supported it just out of solidarity. The leaders, the organizers were understanding everything, although still not to the depth, because we had to stand there and not to give up when finally a conciliation commission was established which included the representatives of the Parliament, and what is more both from the People's Council and from the Communist majority, and from the students action. You know, this already has alerted me. Because, despite the fact that the communists have the majority in the Parliament, they don't have the majority in the society, so it was not necessary to include them to that conciliation commission. But do you understand, how much important were these actions of shaking the society?

IM: I understand.

SK: The students had to perform the role of detonator of public pressure to the existing authorities to change it to such a power which I am speaking about. And what did Ukrainian government begin with back then? With the highest representative body. That is, it was necessary at any price to achieve the reelections to the Parliament! To not waste the time! The time which is not used in the right moment, can cost much! 13 persons were MPs!

IM: And that's it.

SK: Well, if there were more, the People's Council would achieve the victory. Here, Iryna Kalynets... In one of the evenings she managed to arrange a meeting at the "Arsenal" factory. For four hours we worked with the people. In the morning thousands of people from "Arsenal" came to the Parliament with anti-communist slogans, you know? We had all the social preconditions for success, but these, excuse me, "impotents" from the People's Council, from Rukh, or these hand shakers...

IM: The communists?

SK: No! I don't speak about the communists at all! They had to be thrown away - and that's it. And in general, this conciliation commission had to be without the communists because to take the communists - it already means to take into consideration their position. And it was not allowed to consider their position. They had to be told: "Guys, you need to go away. And if you want, then go to the people and agitate during the elections". But I don't know they would be thrown away from everywhere... But only do not define in the Parliament which requirements of the students to satisfy and which to not satisfy. It was a huge mistake! But when I wanted to enter this group, Dmytro Pavlychko (whom I respect as a poet but as a politician I believe that he did a lot of evil) had just hysteria when they proposed me to enter that conciliation commission. And they didn't include me there. Well, they knew indeed how I can make pressure... Therefore it ended up with the release of the steam, and there was a decline after the students' hunger strike. Because they didn't achieve the main goal. You know, well, Masol was resigned from the position of Prime-Minister, although I was against it. But I couldn't speak out against it, because the students, the

young people, would not understand this. But at the time Masol was actually very much at the suitable place, for the transitional period. And especially when there is no other Parliament which could form a government. If to fire him and the majority of the Parliament is not ours, they will form the government according to themselves again! And where is the guarantee that they will not replace him for the worse? And so this is exactly what happened!

IM: But do you remember the discussion on this topic with the students? Did it have place or not?

SK: With the students everything was in order. As well as with those students who were in the conciliation group... But unfortunately they had no experience and they cheated over them: they wrote that they will conduct the preparation for determination of the elections, something like this... And this meant to have some talks about reelections, so to postpone. And so they postponed... But why do I dwell on this point? Because it is a strategic point on which the fate of the further quarter of a century for Ukraine depends. So here the strategic mistake was made! And with all due respect for the First convocation, it was the grossest error. If there would be such a composition according to the moral-political and educational knowledge as it is today, then Ukraine would have been one of the Federal districts of the Russian Federation. And they say: "But it just fell "from the sky", just so easily". It's not so! It's not true! And where is the guarantee that if there was a different composition and the majority of the communists would have said that we will be one of the subjects of the Russian Federation?

IM: I see. Can I put such a question: you said that you had the People's Council of 124 people among which there were 13 radicals and even this configuration allowed to adopt the Declaration. But if you look back at the 20th-century history, which events led to the fact that those particular people appeared to be there?

SK: Well, you shall touch on global processes, global politics here. First of all, the idea of statehood, of independence had the opportunity to work within the society. It was an opportunity for the political prisoners to return to the public work. Although we were not many, just single units, but even one by one we played a large role for the revitalization of social processes.

IM: But if to speak of their key role, what was the first thing which they brought into the process?

SK: The social and public activity.

IM: Which ideas did they give to the society?

SK: Building of the Ukrainian State. The restoration of the Ukrainian State. As a politician, I understand, that all starts from this, that without this we will be nobody, we will be rags in someone's interests, as the current government is trying to carry Ukraine through...

IM: What else did the political prisoners introduce?

SK: This is the main thing! These very ideas of activation of the society: that it is necessary to act, that we must fight. And every personal example was very important: when I was arrested for the second time (and I lived in Chervonohrad back then), for my fellow countrymen it was so much insulting then that they got angry, they gathered and went, they wanted to destroy this prison, this bullpen.

IM: OK. What other factors influenced this?

SK: The international situation itself: the weakening of the Soviet Union above all. Why such changes occurred? Here they say: the great Gorbachev appeared and so further... Gorbachev himself is a mediocre person, and he didn't play any special role, and it's even difficult to estimate how much was of positive and how much was of negative. Those processes were driven with other factors: first of all is the fact that at the head of the most powerful state the God sent such a personality as Ronald Reagan who perfectly understood that to those bandits you can only speak from the position of strength. You can force them to retreat and you can defeat them. Only current Obama, Merkel and so on are doing that through the persuasion. And with the persuasion the appetite of a predator is only raising, he wants to eat even more, and the more they persuade him,

the more his saliva flows. And I would not speak with you today: this is the merit of this great man. During the negotiations in Reykjavik in 1986 concerning the reduction of offensive strategic nuclear weapons, the first question of Reagan to Gorbachev was: "Mr. Gorbachev so what do you think to do with your political prisoners?" And Gorbachev came to talk about the missiles, about the nuclear warheads... And he says: "But we don't have any political prisoners". And Reagan: "Well, if you don't have any political prisoners, what are we going to talk about then?" And Reagan gets up - a great personality, a great politician, and also a great actor in addition - he stands up and goes into the corridor! The journalists are in panic, but he calms down everyone: don't worry, we will force the Russians to sit down at the negotiation table and to talk seriously. It was the year 1986. The regime has applied the last convulsions against us at the time. Well, those who were in political zones in that year, they remember: the regime has become unbearable. Even those bobtailed formal rights that we had in those zones, they were not respected: they were simply mocking as much as they wanted. And exactly in 1986 we had to go to the most extreme means of the protest: the strike. And a strike in the zone is the guaranteed doubling of the criminal period. But we had to go for it, because the conditions were horrible, it was already a struggle for survival. And they were trying to isolate us: for half a year they put a ban for any kind of meetings, to all, because they weren't able to block the channels of information. Because it was irregular but from time to time it was coming out, and the KGB was going mad: "how so? We do everything, and the information is still coming out of the camps". So that's why they decided to completely cut the meetings for everyone. But the Soviet Union which didn't withstand this strategy which Gorbachev had applied: no concessions of political or moral character, plus offensive in the arms race in space, in which the Soviet Union's "pants were taken off", it wasn't able to neither financially nor technologically sustain it. And Gorbachev got "diarrhea", and he was forced to release the political prisoners. And this was the moral and political defeat of the regime, it was their demoralization which contributed to the process of degradation within the mechanisms of the existing power. And this psychological defeat, this contributed the decay in the repressive system. KGB apparatchiks were one of the engines of the deployment of massive corruption back then. And the corruption is like rust, it is corroding the system. And KGB itself which was the most informed. They started to engage in various financial machinations, and this

is how the current bright representative of KGB - Putin - grew up. Take a look: the connection to the criminal, and money, money, money.

IM: Do you want to say that the KGB was the source of corruption in the state system?

SK: It was the most limiting factor and punitive element in the Soviet Union. And when the processes of demoralization had begun, even KGB itself started to corrupt the most and stopped to perform the functions which were keeping the system.

IM: Do you think that the start of this process was the year 1985?

SK: Not only 1985. In 1985 there was already the intensification, that's why I'm saying again: the release of political prisoners from the camps (even though we were not many) was a great moral and political defeat of the communist regime and of Gorbachev himself. Gorbachev is not a humanist, he wanted to strangle us, but with such a pressure which Reagan made over him, he had to obey the requirements of the United States.

IM: And the events related to the Chernobyl disaster, did they affect the situation, the state of the society?

SK: Undoubtedly, Chernobyl had an impact. It was also one of the factors because people already saw the threat to life and they saw the meanness of the system itself, it kind of exploded to the surface: how they were hiding it, how they were lying, how they were destroying the people, sending them there to the zone. And this made people angry, it was one of the factors of activation: something has to be done, we have to move, because otherwise all of us will be dying here, you know?

IM: Which else circumstances were shaping the public attitudes?

SK: Well, here are three factors: economical, political... The political first of all in national republics which were interested - some in a lesser, some to a greater extent. The Baltic republics were more ready for the independence due to historical and other reasons. Ukraine, I would like to say, played a very powerful role here, because there were very powerful campaigns of pressure on the regime, and we made a good Declaration, and almost immediately we started the process of reconstruction the statehood, when we factually cut our force from the Soviet armed forces - this factor was fatal for the Soviet army. These processes accelerated, at last, the final design of the collapse of the USSR.

IM: And if you can tell very briefly your opinion about Ukrainian soldier in the Soviet army? What is his role?

SK: Well, the Ukrainian soldier determined the strength of the Soviet army.

IM: In general?

SK: In general. He, and not the Russian soldier, was the determining factor.

IM: Due to what?

SK: Ukrainians are more disciplined, perhaps. They have military spirit which sleeps somewhere in genes and comes from the Cossack times, so that's why to perform the military functions matches the character of the Ukrainian. The Russians were saying: "The sergeant in the Soviet army is Ukrainian". And this is the basic link - without a sergeant the army cannot be efficient, because it reaches downwards and that's it... So, undoubtedly this had a great importance. And the interplay between these factors has given this collapse. But what I was saying that there wasn't done what should have been done in 1991, this was a strategic mistake, and the degradation had started.

IM: The degradation of what?

SK: Non-building of healthy system of public administration with the basis of P, P and H: Patriotism, Professionalism and Honesty. Everywhere. The personnel policy both in state building and in the public sphere should be guided by this principle. So, you know, if not to comply this now, then we will see...

IM: So, we talked about the degradation. Can you explain the degradation of what took place?

SK: In fact, instead of the reforms, of transformation the Soviet system into Ukrainian state to be hold, the transformation processes were slowed down, because after the composition of the Parliament remained unchanged, and the majority in the Parliament was not democratic, this majority, which was composed of party nomenclature, wasn't able to fulfill the mission of the state elite which could lead the building of the independent state. And you know the party nomenclature was still infected with inferiority complex. These people in the vast majority were not caring of the idea of statehood, they neither morally nor politically were ready for this. They didn't believe in the possibility of the existence of an independent state, they were accustomed to a certain social status, to a priority social position in the society, and when there became more freedom and the system ceased to be totalitarian, then such their internal desires and true values revealed, which for the vast majority was the material interest, the financial enrichment. Without this the soviet safety lock which used to restrain them they like the predators came out at freedom, and then this corruption manifested itself which was originating from the Soviet Union, with its fragmented society, where the nomenclature had priority social position and the other people - slavish subordination. This negative manifested itself, and they rushed into the processes of enrichment. All sorts of criminal elements joined the nomenclature, and gradually such a system was created here which I call "mafia-oligarchic". And unfortunately it is so that the greatest capital in Ukraine has a very dangerous feature: it is anti-Ukrainian, anti-popular. And the carriers of large capital which was acquired not by the means of work but by the means of robbery. They say here that it's the "primary accumulation of capital", but I say that it is the robbing of the existing capital by a small group, and as a rule, the members of this group are not integrated to the

Ukrainian environment. Take any of our billionaires and you will see that they have no connection to Ukrainian culture, to Ukrainian psychology

IM: But if they were connected, what would be the consequences, the results?

SK: The elements of patriotism would still force them to think that even for their evil intentions it's necessary to have our own strong state. But this is when they are rooted in Ukrainian cultural environment in the broadest sense of the word. And they are detached.

IM: OK. You talk about the mafia-oligarchic structure, and I would like to refer to the moment when the actions "Ukraine without Kuchma" took place in 2001.

SK: It's also one of the elements of Ukrainian revolution. It has four stages: 1990, then 2001, 2004 and 2013-2014.

IM: If you have a more comprehensive view, then please explain why do you highlight these particular steps?

SK: First, why there are 4 stages, and not just one? Because of the fact that none of the periods of Ukrainian revolution finished with the victory. What is the victory? It is the change of the system of governance, a fundamental qualitative change.

IM: The change of the system of or of the people?

SK: The system of governance itself depends on quality of the people, on their culture, on their morality, their patriotism, and it is indisputable. So, therefore incompleteness continues to accumulate the protest force in the society which feels the necessity to change with all its conditions of existence, and it requires these changes, and the regime doesn't implement them.

IM: What was the state of the mafia-oligarchic system at the beginning of the action "Ukraine without Kuchma"?

SK: If at the first stage of the revolution in 1990 the most important was obtaining the legal status of an independent state, at the second phase there already emerged the need for changes of the quality of institutions of power, because the regime of Kuchma had already all the features of mafia.

IM: What are these features?

SK: It's the lack of law and order system in the state. And if the law doesn't work in the system, it means that mafia rules work there: nepotism, bribery and everything else on the type of mafia. And the one who is at the top is serving as a Godfather of mafia.

IM: What do you think, why this action took place at that particular moment?

SK: Because the regime, apart from the fact that it was slowing down the reforms in the socio-economic system (and this is the immediate quality of life), had also started the offensive against already existing civil rights. This is the pressure on the media, the monopolization of the media and setting them at the service, to serve exactly this small group of the leaders of that mafia-oligarchic clan. This is the most important. Well, and the law enforcement system which was created under Kuchma (and which is still the same) doesn't perform its functions of meeting the needs of the society, that is the protection of people's security, ensuring of their rights, the ability to resolve the conflicts through the system of justice, as a social arbiter. All this doesn't work, because they have the task to be a servant of mafia-oligarchic group which usurped the power. And now this very brightly emerged, all these issues after so called Revolution of Dignity became even sharper. Because the demonstrative disregard of the Constitution is taking place, and, paradoxically, it goes from the highest official who has to be the guarantor of the Constitution and of its legal lawfulness in the country. And this problem brings us to the conclusion that the reasons for the next revolutionary phase exist and that they are growing. And they increase even

more because the aggravation of the conflict between the authorities and the society is going on, the state of the society is worsening both in social and in legal terms.

IM: But you are talking here about the current state, and I would like to go back to the past events..

SK: But these issues have been raised already in the protest actions against the regime of Kuchma. It was already a prototype of the revolutionary upsurge of 2004. These actions were the detonator, and the revolutionary stage of 2004 was the continuation.

IM: What was not reached by the action "Ukraine without Kuchma" and what were the goals of the revolution of 2004, and what it didn't reach?

SK: The action "Ukraine without Kuchma" wasn't able to remove the Kuchma's regime, that is the system of his governance. And since at the next stage in 2004 the presidential elections also reached a deadlock, and the society saw that the change through elections is impossible, and then there was an explosion, and the society forced the Kuchma's regime to go, and the top of the government has changed. But the revolution didn't write any clear project of specific mechanisms of change, and this led to the restoration of the regime, because the liberal regime which existed during Yushchenko's presidency, where there was no pressure on the media from the side of the President, but there were no changes which would become the protector of irreversibility. The reform of the law enforcement system was not undertaken, neither the reform of the system of justice. And the economic transformations were going on but insufficiently, because all of them are connected in this triangle: it's impossible to conduct effective changes in the economy without the reform of the system of justice and the law enforcement system.

IM: I got it. It was a general answer. And now if to expand it: your participation in the revolution of 2004, how it was applied to you, how did you see the processes and the mechanisms of attracting people, the moods, the self-organization?

SK: Well, firstly, I took an active part in the public actions of protest in 2001, it is clear. And the same way in 2004.

IM: When did you realize in 2004 that this was already a revolution?

SK: This was when the massive public actions had started. If the society has already absolutely no trust in the government and says: that's it, you have to go. This was when people didn't agree with the results of the elections of 2004. When people saw that this was false, that this was lie...

IM: But do you remember that particular moment? For you personally?

SK: Well, I cannot tell you the exact date, but let's just say the following: after the announcement of the results I realized that people will not accept it. I understood that. And I perceive it in the same way. And people are coming out, they speak, they agitate, they are getting involved to this somehow: through the trips, through the speeches in front of the public.

IM: Have you been an MP at that moment?

SK: Yes, I was still an MP back then.

IM: What kind of feelings did you have on the eve? What were the current tasks before you at that moment?

SK: During the election campaign I of course was advocating and agitating against the candidature of Yanukovich and I was supporting an alternative candidate. This is understandable. During the election process there was a trip to different regions, including directly during the elections I was in Zakarpattia region together with the deceased Yuriy Horobets. At one of the polling stations they beat us: I was beaten less, he was beaten more, and pretty seriously. Probably, he was affected more because he was with a camera, he was filming. You know, there have been made such bandit groups that were attacking the stations. We were trying our best to

prevent the brutal falsifications, to record them. And before that there also was such a "dress rehearsal" before the presidential elections: the mayoral elections in the city of Mukacheve. It has a nationwide importance despite the fact that there were just the elections in the average city. But exactly there this regime was faced with the alternative, and there was the focus of attention of not only our public, inside of Ukraine, but also abroad. Because there was a difficult election campaign and there was a brutal falsification of the results. Particularly, I saw at my station how it was done but, fortunately, we didn't allow this: at midnight the bandits were trying to break into the station, they already had the information at which stations the pro-governmental candidate is suffering a defeat, and they wanted to destroy the ballots. And I forced the policemen (there were several there) to make a desperate resistance. There was just a physical fight, several policemen were injured, but still we all together didn't allow those bandits, and then we forced the pro-governmental head of the election commission to sign the act of the election results. When he saw the results (and he was a school principal, a member of Medvedchuk's party SDPU (u)), he didn't want to sign. But we told him: "It will not save you anyways. If you do one way, they can dismiss you from job, but if another way, you will just go to prison. We have recorded everything, we have the results, we have the documents, and we have the certified protocols. So, make a choice!" It was such a long discussion, in the presence of the observers and of members of the commission. And I warned him that he will remember who Khmara is. And with the patchy trembling hand he signed this act. And then in the district commission they turned everything opposite: they have recorded to the winner the results of the opponent which was defeated. So this is how was there. You know, the previous announcement who won, and then suddenly the district commission announce that some "rubbish" won. Well, this is such concreteness. And, you know, this already "cranked" the society, a commission at the Parliament was created which has investigated and which has documented the abuses and the falsification of the elections. Since it was in the spring, it was not so far remained until autumn, and the same thing repeated again already at the presidential election. And I also took an active part as an MP.

IM: If to talk about the period where the results were already announced, and Maidan had already started, where have you been at that time, and what was your role in the interaction between the leaders and the protestors?

SK: I wasn't with those leaders who all the time posed at the stage, I was in front of the stage and among the people. And, by the way... It is no longer secret, and the Security Service already wanted to interrogate me because of this case, we had once such a conversation: an officer from the Security Service called me and said that we would like to talk because we have information that you are preparing a group of armed militants.

IM: Was it then, in 2004?

SK: Yes. I replied him on phone back then that I will teach him how to work for the protection of interests of Ukraine, if he doesn't know how to do that. Such a sharp conversation we had. They were afraid of me, they already had a certain image because I could come to the General Prosecutor and punch the fist on the table for some problems which people have. Therefore the image they had. But, indeed, they had the information, I really was doing that, I was looking for volunteers among the force structures, and there were several police officers who agreed to be in Kyiv with arms and to subordinate just to me and to nobody else. Because if he will go to those "great" figures that are on the stage, so you can consider that everything is lost. I didn't need the ambitions, I needed a certain safeguard, and I'll tell you why. And a few more guys agreed from the officers of the border troops, the special forces. And we went for reconnaissance in Koncha-Zaspa, and the goal was the following: if Kuchma would dare to use the force and to shoot the demonstrators, to break then into his "nest" (and all the time he was in Koncha-Zaspa, he didn't go to Kyiv even once during all these revolutionary events) and to shoot him on the spot. If only he would give the order to shoot, then to shoot him just like Ceausescu, on the spot. This was the task. It was not for broad conversations, it was necessary for the case, because I believed that I have to perform this task. Moreover, taking the advantage of the fact that the force structures knew me very well, they knew my biography and the purity of all what I say, they trusted me. It was only on a voluntary basis. I remember that from one district several officers came and then their commander tells me that he let them go without arms. And I say to him: "Why the hell did you send them to me without weapons?" And he says: "OK, there will be weapons by the evening". They had, of course, only small arms.

IM: Was it your personal initiative and you didn't share this activity with anyone?

SK: Only personal! I couldn't share with anyone because I know the characters of people: someone will get afraid, someone will "sell" you, all was possible. It was hanging by a thread, you know... But everything depended on the order. Could Kuchma give it? He could. But thanks God that he got afraid and he didn't give such an order.

IM: You said you weren't with these leaders on the stage. But why? How do you see them in the course of the protests, what was their role?

SK: You know, first of all, on the stage "hanged out" those who saw themselves as somebody in power, at any position. And I don't need it, it's not mine. But in struggle against the system I will try to play my role. As at the time I had the fortune after the mass arrests of 1971 - 1972 among the Ukrainian intelligentsia, including the redactor of the newspaper "Ukrains'kyi visnyk" - the newspaper stopped to be published as a result, and everyone was so much terrified and disorganized, nobody wanted to undertake the restoring of publication of "Ukrains'kyi visnyk". And it was essentially important to show to KGB people their powerlessness in the fight, to show that they cannot win. They can always strike but they cannot defeat the very idea. And I thought: "Well, if nobody does it, then I will try, maybe I will succeed". It's interesting that I'm coming back to that fact... There is something above which pushes and directs. I told you my biography that I was a successfully arranged doctor, but there was a first step: I engaged into the distribution of samizdat, I was first who translated the Sakharov's work into Ukrainian language and so on. And then comes the moment when already your knowledge, both life and political, is pushing you and you already have to synthesize something. And since among our resistance movement, or so-called dissident movement, the smallest component was the political one, it was mainly a fight in the cultural environment, the protection of Ukrainian language, culture, the protection of human rights and so on. But the big issue of the statehood was not put, this component was absent. And I thought that it cannot be like this, and that this component necessarily has to be. And not just to speak publicly but to expand the very idea itself and to bring it to the society, outside the territory

of Ukraine as well. That's why my "Ukrains'kyi visnyk" was qualitatively different from the previous one, because 6 issues which were published by Viacheslav Chornovil, there was such a statement: "outside-censorship legal publishing". Well, it is craftiness. It was not legal, because in a single day it would be arrested by KGB people. It's the same as to get out with a banner, it's just a momentary act. That's why, in spite of KGB people and the predecessors, and by the way, in the opening remarks of the first issue was written the following: "published illegally in the occupied territory of Ukraine". And this was the main political idea: "occupation", which means abnormal condition of a country, the condition against which we must fight. That is, the statehood idea was already in this slogan. In the opening remarks was noted that repressions, regardless how much they would harm and how many strikes they would apply to the carriers of Ukrainian idea, they cannot reach their goal, they will only contribute to the radicalization of the liberation movement. And indeed it was so.

IM: OK. Coming back to the year of 2004 and your role. You said you weren't with those who were on the stage. But have you been with the people?

SK: Thanks God, it was not necessary and there were no bloodshed.

IM: You said that you were observing the protesting people. What kind of people were they? What motivated them?

SK: Well, the people were quite different. For the vast majority it was the disagreement with the brutal injustice which manifested itself in the falsification of the elections. After all, people saw it, and this made them angry, it humiliated their dignity, not only the rights. This behavior of the Central Electoral Commission Chairman: you might remember, he got the nickname "Calculate it" at that time and so on. And the people were from different social environments. I remember myself commuting from the Maidan to my left bank, and one guy is driving me there. It turned out that this was a person from Dnipropetrovsk (the current Dnipro), a businessman, Russian-speaker. And he said back then: "Yes, I will fight and I will donate for this fight against this outrage. It touches me, and in such a country it is abnormality". So, this is the middle class, and in general

the middle class was financing this and was the motor. I know a lot of people, and my friends among them, who were contributing, bringing stuff, and so on. And an acquaintance of my acquaintance businessmen from Kyiv region brought a whole car of meat to feed people at Maidan. The grannies were bringing hot tea and dumplings and so on, and a businessman brought a car of meat, and this is how this revolution was financed. Therefore, these tales about pinned oranges caused only an ironic laughter, as a joke.

IM: You said about the middle class. What was motivating it apart from the outrage with the falsifications?

SK: You know, the middle class is not only businessmen. It is also the intellectual elite, which is the driving force of the development of the society and the stabilizer of the society. It is an active force, a creative power, because they are creating - some with a pen, some at the enterprise. There is no action without them.

IM: Did this force have some sort of a goal in this revolution?

SK: Definitely. This force is always interested in normal, fair conditions of life, where the rules work. Here is the word "democratic": what is a democratic system? It is when there is the dictatorship of democratic laws, of righteous laws. These are those legal rules which protect the interests of the largest number of members of the society. Everyone cannot be taken into account. Some people who are disposed to banditry, to theft we, of course, will not take into consideration. These particular rules are just and embodied in legal norms, in laws. They are interested to work under exactly such conditions.

IM: OK. There was also the Anti-Maidan. What kind of people were they?

SK: Do you mean the last revolution?

IM: No, I mean the year 2004, when the white-and-blue were gathered?

SK: Well, it's been artificially. It was organized by those who wanted to keep the system: the peak of power and its, so to speak, henchmen who were nourished through the incorrect behavior.

IM: But if to speak about the average people?

SK: But they were financing those poor ones because they couldn't gain the mass character.

IM: Is it possible to say that this side also had their own certain goals? If you not to talk about the elite, which wants to keep the power, but of those who actually were there.

SK: Those were there for their own narrow interests: someone was paid the money, someone... Well, those who were at the financial flows, they didn't walk with the slogans by themselves, they were not waving those rugs, but they were just funding.

IM: And if to speak about the interaction between the leaders of the Orange Maidan and the protesters themselves, how would you describe it? Who were these leaders?

SK: There already were certain contradictions between the top leaders, and these contradictions gave rise to the future struggle for power. Those two people: Yushchenko and Tymoshenko. Well, Yulia Volodymyrivna is a very energetic person, very hardworking, and such that seeks for the maximum power. It manifested itself already back then, and I remember how she used the methods of blackmailing with the demands to be appointed as a Prime Minister. I'm not saying if this was bad or good, this is not the point, the point is the desire of this power. And then, when the revolution was finished, and the Cabinet of Ministers was formed, together with the Presidential Administration... Yushchenko - he is an interesting person. He was not interested in the usurpation of power, he is not one of those people. This was evident by how a year later his powers were greatly limited, you know about it. And he didn't insist to remain with those credentials with which he entered the Presidency. This is his positive. The negative is that he wasn't able to create a team within the "principle of P, P and H". If he would have created such a team, he would be a

good President. Although I believe that this is the first Ukrainian president who did not engage enough into his functions as a state manager. He correctly determined the strategic issues that need to be developed. The issue of Holodomor is the global matter for the nation, and without Yushchenko no one would have raised this issue, and he nevertheless raised it on the international, geopolitical level. And unfortunately, the process of international recognition of the genocide had stopped after the end of his term. And the current power doesn't move a finger to work further on this issue, so that the genocide would be recognized by more states. It is necessary to be done, this will determine our place in world, and how others will perceive us, and how we will fight for our fair place in the Sun as a subject of international politics. Then, he still had the courage and he rightly pointed out at the official state level and secured it legally, he paid the tribute to the fighters for Ukrainian independence, starting with the beginning of the twentieth century, and ending with the most recent periods of this century.

IM: OK. You are talking now about the strengths and weaknesses of the leaders, but I would like to talk about their interaction with the protesters. What was it like? Who influenced whom? Was the position of the leaders dependent on the position of the protesters? Did the leaders listen?

SK: No, no. You know, you cannot eat an artificial, plastic product, it doesn't carry the payload. And just the same here: in fact, there was no any protesting Maidan, there were the organizers who were organizing this Maidan, and it didn't carry any ideas. They just manipulatively said to go out and to draw the posters of the ruling elite which were at that time in power. Therefore the mistake was the appointment of Yanukovych to the post of the Prime Minister later and the indulgence from the fair legal persecution of the active participants of the Kuchma's regime. Of those who falsified the elections, who was engaged in repressions, who was involved into the criminal activity in the field of economics. The most famous figures had to endure severe punishment. Instead of going into the governmental offices they had to sit in jail, and then we wouldn't have had the necessity of the fourth stage of the revolution. And they had to punish very severely their own fellows from the ruling team. I remember how Poroshenko was starting as a head of National Security of Ukraine. How he was trying to drag to himself absolutely inappropriate powers. If he would be severely punished back then, it would remove many

questions. And the only thing which was done is that Yulia Volodymyrivna was sent into retirement - she acted absolutely unacceptable as well when they undertook a coup there in September of 2005. But Poroshenko had to be punished exactly the same: there were both corruption schemes and appropriation of inadequate powers to himself, and so on.

IM: I see. Still, I would like to come back to the issue of manipulations. Here you said that they ordered to draw the posters and to protest. Who did this and why did the people follow it?

SK: Well, there were some approximates in Kuchma's regime, there were oligarchs.

IM: The question is a bit about different. I'm speaking already about the "orange" protesters who protested the falsifications and went out to Maidan. What was their interaction with the leaders? You said that the Maidan didn't have any ideas. Are you talking here about the Orange Maidan?

SK: No, I'm talking about the white-and-blue one. The orange one had the ideas but there was no any specifically written so to speak "charter" or "declaration" of system change. And the society got satisfied with the fact that it supposedly had changed the Kuchma's regime, even though it wasn't actually changed: just the tip was excluded from the power, and the regime was just a slightly weakened.

IM: But is it possible to say that the protesters had some goals? Here you said that the middle class would like the regulations...

SK: Yes. A consolidated demand should have been presented there: either from NGOs or by the establishment of an appropriate party structure which would prove itself at the following elections, in order to continue this fight and to fix the demands. But this happened neither in 2004 nor in 2014.

IM: OK. But can we say that something has been done at that Maidan?

SK: Well, the main thing was done: those who stood on the stage of Maidan, they received the mandate. Maidan placed them in chairs, gave them the powers. And further the Maidan didn't fulfill its function - the control: looking after the behavior of its elected representatives.

IM: OK. If to speak about other influences to Maidan, then what do you think, in which way did the foreign politicians affect the situation?

SK: They affected, they did. You know, during the Maidan the negotiations took place, there were meetings in Mariinsky Palace, a very active role in which the Polish President Kwasniewski played, and he played a very negative role. He tried his best and he received the assurances from Yushchenko regarding non-prosecuting of Kuchma. And I will tell you that Mr. Kwasniewski is still supported by Kuchma's family, and specifically by Pinchuk. He was financing him, he is financing him, he organized all these Yalta meetings, and in Switzerland, and so on. And Pinchuk - he is kind of an oligarch in the background, but he played a highly ominous role. And I don't know what role he will still play. We don't know what will be the result of the presidential elections in the USA. But the campaign there is unfolding in a very unfavorable for us direction. We cannot predict how Trump will behave if he will be elected. But I predict how Madame Clinton will behave, if she will be elected. There will be nothing good for Ukraine.

IM: But what is the role of Pinchuk in this situation?

SK: Well, Pinchuk has long been financing the Clinton family, they have very close ties. And if Clinton will be elected, of course, there will be the influence of Pinchuk, and it will be only a negative impact. This person is anti-Ukrainian in his spirit. Look at his cultural initiatives and so on: it doesn't have even smell of anything Ukrainian.

IM: That is?

SK: That is, he is a stranger for Ukraine. What I say is that the oligarchs are not integrated into Ukrainian environment.

IM: But are there any integrated ones?

SK: There are no such billionaires in Ukraine, no. I'm saying this about billionaires, the highest top which is included into the ruling mafia-oligarchic group. There are several oligarchs, and all of them are anti-Ukrainian. After all, they understand perfectly that to withdraw the money from Ukraine is to destroy the country. If something would tie them to this country, at least something, they would have used their fortunes for the strengthening of this state. Not for you and me. But, let's say, to invest their profits in the development of technological, industrial character. I'm not even talking about the social needs and so on. Why do they withdraw? They are the enemies, it is necessary to severely punish for this. And Poroshenko belongs to this category as well, unfortunately. In the first place. Well, today he is the godfather of the mafia.

IM: I see. If you're talking about the ominous role of Pinchuk in 2004, then how do you explain that?

SK: This was the influence through Kwasniewski who was twisting the arms of Yushchenko so that he gave his word not to prosecute Kuchma.

IM: And what if Kuchma would be persecuted?

SK: If the case of Gongadze would be open and recorded legally to an end, that is, the people who ordered would be identified... People know about them in the society but the government rests with "horns and hooves" not to record it legally. And legally, the ends undoubtedly lead to the first person of the state, then-President Kuchma. He was the one who ordered it. What was his fault that Gongadze got exactly a death sentence - this is already another question, then you can speak only about the degree of punishment. But you do remember the Melnychenko recordings: "Remove, neutralize this villain- Georgian! Give him to the Chechens, to hell!" And this is already an indicator of the order. And then, further, it is unknown how the executors transformed this, into what kind of guidance.

IM: I got it. What the investigation of this case would give to the society?

SK: You know, there are things which cannot be explained rationally. This is the moral responsibility, the sin of the Ukrainian society that it still didn't achieve the punishment for this crime. This is not the case of some banal fact of the crime. Imagine it goes from the first person of the state! And this person is not punished. And if this person is not punished, we didn't eliminate the style of behavior of the relevant state structures for the future, and we feel it today.

IM: Was it only the political will of Yushchenko which became an obstacle to the investigation?

SK: Not only. Yushchenko of course fulfilled his promises and gave this indulgence to Kuchma. But there is also the fault of the society that the society didn't demand properly to open this case. Kuchma had to be punished.

IM: But apart from this aspect of Kwasniewski's role, are there any other aspects in which the participation of Kwasniewski influenced the course of the events?

SK: We don't know all the elements and details, but I believe this is the most important, because it still accordingly influenced the style of behavior of the newly elected President Yushchenko. And he kept the word, and in such cases it is necessary to stick to the truth and justice, and break the word which you he gave to protect a villain. And now this villain was appointed by Putin as a negotiator and he sits in Minsk together with Medvedchuk, his henchman. You see, what is unpunished evil? And until figuratively speaking will not be "spilled the purifying blood" in Ukraine... Read Shevchenko carefully, everything is written there. Shevchenko should be read in every situation. On my own example I can say that in different periods of life you read and you discover something new. It is like the Holy Scripture, not fully decoded. And Shevchenko is our Prophet, he explained us everything with accessible language through "Kobzar". There lay codes of solving all the problems and these ciphers need to be decrypted and to be executed in practice. I told to the MPs of the first convocation: "Guys, the Bible and the "Kobzar" must be on the table.

And before going to sleep open and read the "Message to both dead and alive", it is same relevant forever and ever". Here, you see, the monuments are opened, and this is good, this is the external signs of respect and love. But the other thing is lacking - the core. I would say that everyone should issue "Kobzar" with millions of copies. Every year a million!

IM: OK. Any other foreign politicians on the Maidan of 2004? Adamkus, Solana?

SK: Well, there were different. Some were supporting formally, some... Well, Solana was, as I remember, the Secretary General of NATO back then, but to do something there...

IM: And Adamkus?

SK: Well, these are the true friends of ours, they wished us good. The support is such - it supports the spirit. Look: now the current President of Lithuania, she needs already the state award of Ukraine, but unfortunately not our president should reward, not these hands.

IM: OK. You talked about Pinchuk's role in this revolution. But in general what role the oligarchs played in the events of 2004?

SK: And in general the oligarchs, they would have to atone for their predatory actions.

IM: I see. Is it possible to say that they had some kind of an objective in this revolution?

SK: Of course: to retain the existing regime.

IM: Did they manage it?

SK: Unfortunately, yes.

IM: Did they manage to keep it in the same form, or with some modifications? Was their role reduced?

SK: I do not think that it was reduced. Maybe it was less publicly advertised. As they were masters of life, they still remained the same. And profits of Akhmetov who always had an anti-Ukrainian position... Well, his story is special, and to the power in Donbas he came not without the help of the Russian FSB, in a struggle between criminal clans. And he is faithful to them. Do you remember how in spring of 2014 he was shouting hysterically: "It's not allowed to bomb the Donbas!", and then he got scared a little bit and he quieted down. He is an enemy. And Firtash is the enemy. All these are the enemies of Ukraine. Not just the competitors but the conscious enemies of Ukraine.

IM: But what is their ideal Ukraine? What do they want here?

SK: The Ukrainian resources. To unpunished rip off the skin from Ukraine and Ukrainians.

IM: So, what kind of Ukraine they need for this?

SK: Deprived of civil rights, slavish, where they would be able to do whatever they wish.

IM: Ukraine as Ukraine or Ukraine as a Federal District?

SK: Well, you know, if it is deprived of civil rights in their hands, then it will certainly be Ukraine by name, but without the Ukrainian essence. Because they understand that this is their enemy – the Ukrainian essence.

IM: And what is the "Ukrainian essence"?

SK: The carriers of the Ukrainian idea. Why the current regime persecutes the voluntary movement? Because it is afraid. Because they are the brightest carriers of the Ukrainian idea, and

they are the people who are ready to sacrifice the most important, everything they have. So that's why the regime... Analyze how many of volunteers are illegal, and so on...

IM: OK. The events of 2013... A few words about the background of your life situation, of your socio-political work at the time. How do you see this revolution, and if the previous ones didn't reach their goals, then how the tasks were transformed already at this stage?

SK: In this revolution I was already as an ordinary participant which almost all the time was at Maidan. Perhaps on your fingers you can count the days when I wasn't there. And what kind of work? It's the work with people, the own conversations, among others with those who were staying at opposite side: with the same Berkut people, with the officers of internal troops who were there at the time. Unfortunately, it did not give the results.

IM: But what kind of the results were you hoping for?

SK: But even in the Constitution it is stated that you can refuse to implement a criminal order. You know, on 18th of February before the noon (and I was there all the day) next to the Mariinsky Park where "Berkut" was standing at the fence, blocking the Hrushevsky street, I spoke to Berkut people, I tried to convince them, to explain what's going on, that you cannot beat people and you can refuse to carry out this criminal order... And guess what? Somewhere around the noon when a part of column went through Instytutska street and through the Kriposnyi lane to the Mariinsky Park, the command was given and it had started: back from "Berkut" these bandits stood, and they threw grenades at the protesters, they shot... There were many wounded and three dead bodies which I saw. That is, you know, it's an open crime. And they at the state service were helping to bandits. Because these did not shoot and didn't throw the grenades, they were just covering the bandits organized by that regime: were they the disguised people from force structures or the real bandits, the core is not in this. But that's the way they behaved... Similarly, the internal troops, when they were carrying the injured later... And it turned out afterwards that the Minister of Health gave the command not to hospitalize the wounded ones. The ambulances were anyways coming (both private and public ones)... And they brought a militia wagon and have tried to push

there a lying wounded! I started to shout there and one of the officers of the internal troops, I guess the captain, said: "In any other time I would shoot you!" And these scams, they stayed there, the cleansing failed. They now serve in the so-called National Guard, he is perhaps already a major, if he didn't die yet... And there were a lot of such. I am not saying that all were such, but many.

IM: OK. And if to speak about the state of the society before these events, how would you describe it?

SK: Well, it's been brewing! Analyze what people were saying when they were gathering at maidans, in the kitchens, and so on...

IM: What was the reason for the protests?

SK: Well, the reason was the enormous injustice: tightening of the screws, the social oppression... As this corruption was on the surface: what the regime was doing, with what kind of raider means the business was taken, how the "obligation" was superimposed - it's a well-known fact. That is, the situation was maturing. And if there is no situation, then no reason will be able to "lead the engine". That is, there was a revolutionary situation, and it was growing, and the detonator was that little picket on the Maidan with the requirement to sign the Association Agreement with the European Union. And you know what happened: Yanukovich in the last day just didn't sign it. And also that impulse when in the night from 29th to 30th of November they beat the students. I was at the St. Sofia Square on the 30th of November and there was a serious council that you cannot miss it and it is necessary to come tomorrow for the protest at the city center. And it started: it sounded everywhere that we should go out tomorrow. Both on the stages and in groups of people, and in social networks... The only thing: I didn't expect that such a mass of people will gather so quickly. This shows how much in the society this was overdue! And it is estimated that around a million of people came on the 1st of December. Further, all those events are known.

IM: And can we say that some goals of the protest movement were formed? Was there any kind of purpose?

SK: I would say the following: there were different groups among different environments, some propositions, reforms, projects were drawn. There were many useful ideas, and even developments, bills. It is already kind of a step forward. But it was not designed into a consolidated, ultimate demand to those who is put at power. And there was not created any new powerful political force under that consolidated position. Maidan had to give birth to a political structure, a party. Of course, it's difficult. But a consolidated requirement...

IM: But why it had to? What was the precondition so that it had to do that? What are the key positions that would be able to unite this consolidated power?

SK: A consolidated power - it is when the groups which exist... Here, for example, you were developing a package of reforms, and others were engaged in the package of the reforms of law enforcement agencies, the thirds in something else, and so on... All this had to be brought together into a consolidated requirement, supported among others by the public authorities: to follow persistently the requirement and to follow the way of this and that...

IM: What do you think, should it have happened during the Maidan?

SK: It should have happened immediately as soon as Yanukovych fled and when the government in the Parliament was formed. Here at that moment the consolidated requirements had to be presented.

IM: But why it didn't happen?

SK: Since the association of well-structured, healthy civil society organizations... Since we have a large number of organizations which simply live on foreign grants. I do not know what is their relationship but, without offense, most of them just work in such a manner that to work in order to

live. I'm not that much naive to think that these people will defend national interests. I know a lot of such figures, the co-called "grant-eaters", and they are many. So that's why I say: since the requirement wasn't set, then at least these MPs from the opposition... You know, there are certain rules in a mature society. In the East, the society listens to the elders, to the authorities. And us - and this is our big problem and the reason of our defeat... Well, I better know this young generation that is pocking at the power and around the power, that's why I cannot grasp the characteristic of the whole young generation, but those who I see have a lack of responsibility, patriotism, honesty and professionalism. And the desire to learn! But there are exceptions, and in the Parliament there are a couple of dozens of exceptions, but the majority (I mean the one from the patriotic part) is such. And I learned this with my own experience. I think my biography is such that there are no precautions against me in the anti-Ukrainian actions or corruption schemes, or in use of the authority for my own purpose... And that's why I live, I go by trams and by metro, people say hello to me, come for advices and so on. That's why immediately as the Cabinet of Ministers was formed I wanted to give the advices and I said that I'm ready. For example, when the question of the appointment of the Minister of Defense was raised, and they divided the quotas between the groups, between the fractions - the quota principle. And so, the quota for the Minister of Defense, for the Prosecutor General, for the Minister of MIC, and someone else - it was a quota of the fraction of "Svoboda" and the fraction has nominated the candidature of admiral Tenyukh. And I personally approached Tyahnybok and said: "Oleg, I beg you, you cannot put this person! I was dragging him, I did pretty much for his carrier, and he turned out to be a villain. He is a bastard, he is scum, and you cannot appoint him! And to the other guys MPs I said. They didn't listen. I think I don't need to tell about the consequences... Because today both at the networks and everywhere they say that there were no order and so forth. Well, I understand the Acting Commander-in-chief, who is also the head of the National Security and Defense Council, - he has to issue orders. Well, he did not issue. But the Minister of Defense did nothing. If the Commander-in-chief didn't issue such an order - to resist in Crimea, then the Minister of Defense had to perform his holy duty - the Charter of a soldier. And the Charter of a soldier is to shoot to defeat in case of an attempt to penetrate the territory of a military unit, everything is written there. Only this, and here he would not go beyond his legal obligations. Although, he had to convince the Commander-in-chief. And also the fact that he didn't order to withdraw our military ships

from the bay - this is a crime. And the fact that he had appointed as a commander of naval forces Admiral Berezovsky who on the same day in the evening betrayed and switched to the Russian side, for this he would have to stand in front of a military tribunal under the rules of wartime. Do you see what does it mean not to listen to elders? People like Khmara are not many, and they can never be many in the society. I have an extensive experience of work with the armed forces, with the forces of special purpose. I am the one who has saved from the destruction our landing troops, starting with the Khyriv airborne forces brigade, which was located in Khyriv, and ending with the Zhytomyr training base of these troops. This is another story. All the officers of these subdivisions know me. And I will tell you even more: on the 20th we went to Zhytomyr to bury our sworn brother, the hero of the Heavenly Hundred Yakiv Zaiko. Well, during the events I was at Kriposnyi Lane, and he was at Instytutaska, and when he died tragically: well, you know that they were pursued, he fled, and so on... And three of us - the MPs of the first convocation, - went to Zhytomyr for the funeral, and we decided to also call the headquarters of the 95th airborne brigade that is stationed there on the outskirts. And there was a conversation with the brigade commander and with his deputy: very pleasant guys, officers. It was on the 20th of February and I must have been looking in a crystal ball, I said: "Guys, we are now as at a gunpowder keg. You need to be everyday ready to the "H-hour". Are you ready? Because it is clear that you will have to protect the country from the Russians". I analyzed the political situation and I understood that Russia will for sure "play some trick". Well, the guys said: "Yes, we are ready". And I told them to have it in mind and to conduct educational work, and to be alert. And what do you think? I have learned later, that when the events in Crimea had already unfolded, the decision was made (apparently, by the Ministry of Defense or by the General Staff) to throw the 95-th airborne brigade to Crimea with two planes. And they were already in the air when Muzhenko gave the order to return to the base. So, this is how it was. And Muzhenko is still not punished neither for Ilovaisk, not for Debaltseve, nor for the airport, nor for all those victims. And the Chief of the General Staff performs the functions of the commander of the armed forces of Ukraine. The Supreme is the President, and he is the Commander-in-chief. So, such stories. And it was felt! When those half-grown up, half-educated, half-brought up, half-patriots shout here that they are patriots... There is no need to yell that you are a patriot, you must prove it with your own actions. If they would have listened to Khmara back then, then the events would develop somehow

differently. I never speak about this elsewhere, I don't want to undermine the authority of the "Svoboda" party because it's not the worst (although there are some questions), let them fight and learn from their own mistakes. But I'm talking also about the examples with the other MPs, and there are very many such examples. I'm already not speaking of the fact that there was a conversation with Turchynov (he was resisting though) to assign a different commander of the National Guard. Still he delayed it for a month and then appointed Poltorak.

IM: Is this the one you recommended?

SK: No, no, this is exactly the point that no! There were alternative proposals, but we speak about different topic today.

IM: But why he did so?

SK: This already is not a question to me, I don't know.

IM: Well, you know the people, you know their motivations...

SK: Well, wait, how I can say why Tyahnybok didn't listen to me? He knows me perfectly and for a long time, and he knows how I rescued their guys in 1993, when the police took them here at Maidan.

IM: And you don't know why he didn't listen to you?

SK: I don't know.

IM: But could you express any assumptions?

SK: I cannot imagine. You know, if a person is able to evaluate an appropriate person, such as Khmara, then this person either has no experience or has an evil intention. I would not like to

think of an evil intention, I believe it is just an underestimating, an inability to use that experience which your predecessors already have. And they are not so many, and their experience is precious. Until they still walk upon this earth, until we are chatting with you, it is necessary to absorb this experience like a sponge and to use it. I'm not saying that everything should be taken, I don't go where I don't know. If it would concern the Ministry of the economy where I don't know, but this one I know, and I know categorically, that this person cannot be allowed even at the threshold! You have to listen, but they don't listen.

IM: They talk a lot about the fact that the Maidan was very well self-organized. How would you evaluate it?

SK: Definitely!

IM: How it emerged, in your opinion?

SK: It emerged from those fragments of the society, and this is the great achievement of the revolution of 2014 that the society has already made considerable development of self-organization. And it gave rise to the volunteer movement. This, contrary to the government, has protected Ukraine from the foreign occupation. This is a big advantage of the society. This is the achievement! The disadvantage is the failure to qualitatively change the government. The failure is the fact that now the society is passively waiting looking at what the gang of Poroshenko does today. This is a terrible danger for Ukraine!

IM: How would you articulate, what is the meaning of the danger?

SK: I mean by the danger first of all the fact that this person is solely guided by his mercenary interests. And as a result of these mercenary interests he sacrifices the national interests of Ukraine and doesn't fulfill his direct constitutional duties for the organization, first of all, of the defense against external aggression. He currently is the main obstacle in recognition of Russia as the aggressor and the occupied territories as the occupied ones. And this is necessary for us, for all

those millions who were forced to leave their homes, and in order these people to have the legal right to seek for compensation for the damages by the aggressor, Russia must be legally recognized as the aggressor. And here he meanly manipulates the society: publicly he calls Russia the aggressor and so on, and legally he acts according to Putin's rules, calling the conflict an "anti-terrorist operation", that is an internal conflict. This is his huge crime. The fact that he didn't introduce the martial law in the border areas and in the areas where the military operations are taking place. Our military are not protected, our terminology is just awful. The "demarcation line" instead of "front line", the "occupied territories" they call the "territories beyond the control". What are they? Beyond the control. But no! They are under control, but not of Ukraine, but they are controlled by Russia through the collaborators who formed the DPR and the LPR. That is, this is lie, but it's written so everywhere. And in the West they say so. And since it is the internal conflict... And Poroshenko repeated one million times that there is no alternative to the Minsk agreements. And if to fulfill the Minsk agreements, this means the elimination of the Ukrainian State. Read it carefully, I am not going to decode it now because there is no time. This is the essence of Poroshenko's crime. And if the Ukrainian society, God forbid, will not understand that the fact that Poroshenko is in power and the politics which he conducts are incompatible with the existence of the Ukrainian State, if the society will fail to promptly put him in his place, then we can lose the state. There is a great danger of losing the state.

IM: What do you think, how the society can "put him in his place"?

SK: Well, as I said when they were coming, there were pickets under the Presidential Administration: 30 - 40 people. And I say, people of Kyiv, he's a bastard! If one hundred thousand would have come, then he, excuse me, would be "fucked up". And to place the ultimatum to him: do this and that.

IM: OK. But with which demand to go to the Administration? To call the war by "the war" and to the aggressor by "the aggressor"?

SK: To fulfill his constitutional duties of ensuring the security of the state, to organize proper resistance in the complex: legal, diplomatic, political and military. There cannot be only such a one-sided solution for this conflict, only through negotiations, through diplomacy with Russia. This is not possible, it has to be in the complex. Power measures, such as special operations behind enemy lines, capture of their headquarters and so on. Here I will ask you a question: during so-called truce, or as they artificially call it "silence", when they shoot everyday to our military, which were put in the entrenchments and told: "You have no right to respond. And when they already go to your entrenchments you can shoot back with light small arms". You see? And they come to the territory... Here recently: the train to Debaltseve brings an echelon, I guess of 16 tanks. Several wagons of ammunition, several wagons of fuel. Plus they are bringing it with highways as well. So, I'm sorry? What are the armed forces of Ukraine for? When the enemy comes to our territory, and even more - if the echelon have already arrived in Debaltseve, it must be "met" by a volley of artillery fire, by the long-range missiles. To level it to the ground. And I give you the guarantee that then Putin would think long to send it here again or not. When they say: "Oh, you cannot do that because Putin would unleash the war". But Putin all the time conducts the war, and not only Putin. The Russian society, the Russians hate the Ukrainian state, we are incompatible. Either they or us! There is no place for both of us under the sun. The war will be continued between us until someone wins. And we have every reason to win, because we are defending the justice, we are protecting our territory, and we don't come to their territory. This is one! And the second: with a wide-ranging war to show the World that the Russia is the aggressor.

IM: OK. Let's finish with the following question: we have four stages of the revolution. And also you said an interesting idea that the society has matured to something between 2004 and 2014. That is, there is a certain process of structuring the society...

SK: Of activation of the revolutionary process!

IM: Do you see that this tendency continues? Can this be called an achievement of the revolution?

SK: This process continues. What is important now? Important is this process not to be delayed, and I'm afraid that in the fall the explosions of public protests, of uncontrolled riots may be estimated, taking into consideration the social situation of the majority of people. And in such cases there are always forces that wish to control and to use it. And first of all, our eternal enemy Russia. That's why we have already to prepare very seriously, so that in the event of such a revolt everything would be under control. Not to allow to conduct it randomly, to guide this public discontent into productive direction, in order to have productive consequences.

IM: What could be the reason and the cause?

SK: The cause is on the surface. The cause: to take a person's apartment for nonpayment of utility services. Because it's impossible, it's simply impossible for most people! It's difficult for me, although I'm not the last person, I have an MP's pension, and it's really difficult even for me. And people simply will not withstand. But I say again: a riot, chaos for sure will be directed by someone, and it is necessary to be taken under control by some healthy forces in Ukraine, and we must already get ready. My article will appear tomorrow where I am teaching with a program, what to put into ultimatum to Poroshenko and the authorities. And it would be advantageous for us if he would fulfill it, because we cannot afford now the luxury of elections. But I will not talk about it now.

IM: The elections now will not give the result?

SK: Forget about elections when Poroshenko is in power. While he sits with the powers which he has appropriated himself, which do not belong to his competence, which are beyond the Constitution... That's why it is necessary to put him in frame, to put an ultimatum. There is no other choice. Another way is the end of the state, and we cannot allow this. I for example do not wish to be a witness of the liquidation of the Ukrainian State, even of such a curtailed one, which has lost a lot of its subjectivity, and at the moment our subjectivity is hanging by a thread. Therefore, the measures have to be radical, including the breaking of diplomatic relations with

Russia. Our diplomats, our ambassadors have to be everyday on the threshold of the leaders of other countries: European, American. And the demands: "Dear all, we are protecting the European values. We are at the front! We are protecting Europe, and not just Europe - the security in the world - from the bandit Russia which has violated all international rules, including the Helsinki Final Act on security and cooperation in Europe of 1975. Call for a security conference "Helsinki-2". The borders are violated!" Next: United Kingdom, France, USA, China. Why not to talk to China? China joined the Budapest Memorandum when we handed over weapons, and we were promised. So, fulfill it, dear! We completely fulfilled it, we handed over the weapons, and you have accomplished nothing. You say: "Implement the Minsk agreements"? That is, follow Putin's plan and liquidate the Ukrainian State gradually. Poroshenko is a bastard, he is a last scumbag! He is worse than Yanukovich because Yanukovich was known, he didn't pretend to be a patriot. Everyone knew who he was, both in Ukraine and in the world. And this bastard comes and says that he is a patriot, and says, that there is a war with Russia, and then he gives an instruction to courts (I've been to these courts) to not recognize Russia as the aggressor. There is such a Stanislav Batryn, a famous lawyer... And a representative of the President speaks and asks to not address this petition because "it is already known". What do you mean as known? It's known that there is ATO zone! I say to journalists: "Don't call this ATO zone! Call it "zone of military operations", "front" and so on. And in such a manner the society can force this bastard. The society stopped the front with Russia. Now the task is to save the state, to prevent its liquidation. That's it.

IM: Thank you very much.