

Psychedelics and Russian Newspapers:

Our Russian Odyssey.

Stanislav Grof, M.D.

We are back from a visit to Russia, where both Christina and I presented at the Xth European conference on Psychotherapy. I celebrated my 70th birthday by giving a keynote on Psychology of the Future, the topic of my last book. I was deeply impressed by the extraordinary interest my lecture evoked, by the loving response of the audience, and the honors I received. I was awarded the title of Academician by the Russian-based International Academy of Psychological Sciences that they told me had been given before to only four people. On the evening of my birthday, there was a banquet in my honor for conference participants and on the following night a lovely dinner, which was an amazing reunion of the holotropic breathwork family.

Everything seemed to be going exceptionally well, until we found out that (the political department of) a major Russian newspaper, Kommersant, responded to my visit and appearance at the conference by a scandalous, vicious, and severely scathing article entitled "LSD Propagandist visits Russia," inviting explicitly the attention of the secret police to my visit.

The article was full of incorrect information and distorted facts in all the personal offenses and false accusations of criminal activity. They had me conduct my research in Switzerland, which I never did, referred to my research with cancer patients, addicts, and alcoholics (official US research conducted at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center under the auspices of NIMH) as "underground work with illegal substances ignoring prohibition," and calling me, among others, "father of the psychedelic revolution" (sic!), "infamous researcher," and a few others. In the USA, similar personal slanders appearing in tabloid journals, let alone in official newspapers that aspire to be taken seriously as sources of trustworthy information, would justify suing for millions of dollars.

Dr. Vladimir Maykov and his friend professor Kozlov responded to the article by an open letter to the editor that they also published on the Internet. They referred to damage of my reputation as an internationally known researcher and author published in sixteen languages and

asked for apology. I am myself looking into the possibility of suing the chief editor of Kommersant, if something like that is feasible in Russia, unless he publishes a rebuttal with correct facts. I will translate the Kommersant article and the response by Maykov/Kozlov and put it, together with my own letter, on the Internet. The Maykov/Kozlov letter is already there, but in Russian.

At the time of my arrival in Moscow, a major publisher released the Russian translation of *Psychology of the Future* and also of my science fiction novel *Call of the Jaguar*. Vladimir Maykov, the editor who published both books, believes, that even in its present extended version my science fiction might be interesting to transpersonal circles. A version meeting more traditional criteria can be published later. I have been reading the book in Russian and it is very well translated. I find this to be a very interesting opportunity to test on a fairly large scale (8,000 copies) the market for this book about which I am still trying to get some clarity.

The article in the Kommersant, July 2, 2001:

LSD Propagandist Arrived in Russia He Appeared in the Academy of Government Service

Stanislav Grof, “father of the psychedelic revolution” and underground experimenter with the psychedelic drug LSD forbidden in the entire world, who is coming to Russia for the first time on an official visit, arrived at the Tenth European Congress “Psychotherapy West-Psychotherapy East.” This congress is held in the Academy of Government Service of the RF President and those, who are familiar with the activity of Mr. Grof, were very surprised by his appearance in such a place.

Chief psychotherapist of the RF Ministry of Health, Boris Karvasarskiy presented at the congress a lecture on the successes of Russian psychotherapy. But the main event of the congress was the lecture of Stanislav Grof “Psychology of the Future: Lessons from Modern Consciousness Research.” And although the international psychotherapeutic community expressed concern about the “dark spiritual crisis into which human society is sinking” and even tried to assess what measures can be undertaken “to prevent humanity from disappearing in a spiritual abyss,” all participants were interested only in doctor Grof, scandalously infamous in the

entire world, founder of the International Transpersonal Association and Professor of the Faculty of the California Institute of Integral Studies.

More than forty years ago, this Czech psychiatrist began in Switzerland his experiments with the psychedelic substance LSD that at that time was not yet forbidden. Toward the end of the 1960s, having personally tried tens of psychedelic preparations, among them amphetamines and LSD, Stanislav Grof moved to America, where he began to treat narcotic drug addicts and alcoholics by these already forbidden preparations. The world press became strongly interested and engaged, because at this time the young generation was drawn to psychedelics and many of them embarked on a journey without return.

Tens of psychedelics began to be seen as strong narcotic means and were forbidden by law, which included medical practice. Dr. Grof received the name one of the “fathers of psychedelic revolution.” Ignoring prohibitions, he continued experiments with psychedelic preparations in cancer patients and narcotic drug addicts, but this time as an underground activity. Part of his psychotherapeutic practice that was legal was his work with altered states of consciousness. Having published more than fifteen books translated into twelve languages, professor Grof now appears all over the world, causing laments of the followers of classical psychotherapy. He has been in Russia several times, but these were private visits, because many of Grof’s treatment methods are in our country illegal and they attract interest of special services.

Nevertheless, several of Grof’s students work anonymously in our country. The professor’s visit at the congress held at the Academy of Government Service was initiated by the Russian Institute of transpersonal psychology. At the time of the congress, professor Grof, who came with his wife and colleague Christina, is celebrating his seventieth birthday and conducts in St. Petersburg a practical seminar (without the use of psychedelic preparations). The reaction of special services to this event is at this point unknown.

Alena Antonova

Response:

Dear Andrey Vasilyev,

As per our telephone conversation, I have written a response to the article describing my visit to Russia that appeared in the Kommersant on July 2, 2001 and sent it to you by e-mail. I am

now sending you a hard copy of my letter with all the material mentioned in it - my curriculum vitae and the description of the conferences of the International Transpersonal Association (ITA) with the names of the scientists, spiritual figures, and political leaders who have participated in them, many of whom are my personal friends.

I would like to add something that will help you in assessing the quality of Alena Antonovna as a reporter and her integrity, or better lack thereof. Since I sent you the e-mail version of my letter, Alena Antonova published another vitriolic article about me in the periodical Vlast. I hope that after seeing this material, you will agree that if anything deserves the term “propagandist,” it is the highly unprofessional, hateful, and libelous writing of Alena Antonova.

What Alena Antonova presents in the Vlasta periodical as an interview with me is a complete fraud and is entirely fabricated from the beginning to the end, questions as well as answers. I have not had an interview with her and never said the words that she put into my mouth. This included, among others, hostile statements about other physicians, Russian narcologists, and government officials, clearly designed to antagonize these people and turn them against me.

All you have to do to see the extent and degree of distortions is to compare her “interview” with what I have said in my lectures and written in my books and professional articles. The only time in my life when I encountered this kind of journalist strategy were the years when my country was occupied by the Nazis and those when we were controlled by the Soviet Union and had a Stalinist regime. It would be very sad to see that this kind of journalism is tolerated and goes unpunished in democratic Russia.

Sincerely,

Stanislav Grof, M.D.

**Stanislav Grof, M.D.
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Andrey Vasilyev
Chief Editor
Kommersant

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Mill Valley, California, July 12, 2001.

Dear Andrey Vasilyev:

I am writing to you because of a serious incident that occurred during my recent visit to Moscow, where I was officially invited to present a keynote lecture at the Tenth European Conference of Psychotherapy. On the occasion of my presentation, which was also my seventieth birthday, I was awarded the title Academician by the International Academy of Psychological Sciences for my life's work in the area of non-ordinary states of consciousness.

On July 2, your newspaper Kommersant published a highly unprofessional article written by Alena Antonova, describing the events at the conference. It carried the sensational title "LSD Propagandist arrived in Russia," and contained a large number of incorrect statements that ranged from simple sloppy disregard for facts to outrageous lies and false accusations that are seriously damaging to my reputation.

I have no doubts that when I describe to you the nature and scope of this misinformation, you will agree that articles of this kind should not appear in a journal that aspires to be taken seriously by its readers. You might also consider if you want to employ reporters who produce articles of this quality. In my experience, the worst of American tabloids specializing in gossip pay more attention to facts than Alena Antonova did in the article she wrote for your journal. Here are some of the erroneous facts and false accusations:

1. I am not and have never been an "underground experimentator with LSD." The research with psychedelics that I conducted between 1956 and 1973 involved official projects conducted first at the Psychiatric Research Institute in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and later at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center in Baltimore, Maryland. The results of this research have been published in professional journals and scientific books translated into 16 languages. I also received for my research the national Kuffner Award, given in Czechoslovakia for the most important psychiatric discovery of the year, and the prestigious Czechoslovakian Purkynje Award.

2. Although I consider psychedelics to be very valuable tools in the hands of professionals, as I have shown in my books, I have never advocated unsupervised use of these substances. I have never to my knowledge been called “father of the psychedelic revolution.” When I was conducting my research in Czechoslovakia, LSD was listed in the official pharmacopeia with indications and contraindications, together with penicillin, insulin, and tetracycline antibiotics. When I arrived in the USA, the psychedelic revolution (unsupervised use of psychedelics by the young generation) was already well underway. The title “father of psychedelic revolution” has always been linked with the name of Timothy Leary.

3. My appearance at the conference was not a “surprise,” as depicted by your article. As I mentioned before, I was officially invited by professor Victor Makarov and Dr. Vladimir Maykov to deliver a keynote lecture. This was announced in the conference program and fully expected by the participants from throughout Russia and abroad. As you will see from my curriculum vitae that I enclose, my reputation is backed by academic credentials. The term “infamous” (the best translation I can find for the Russian “scandalously known” or “known for scandals” used in your article) has never been used in connection with my name in the past. It is incorrect, offensive, and represents serious libel.

4. The term infamous is used in the article in close connection with the International Transpersonal Association (ITA), an organization that I founded. As you will see from the enclosed material, this association and its European branch have held conferences in many countries of the world and featured as speakers prominent scientists and other public figures, including Nobel Prize winners, such as Mother Teresa, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and Ilya Prigogine. The Prague ITA conference was held under the auspices of the Czech President Vaclav Havel. The ITA meetings also included US presidential candidate Jerry Brown and former maharaja of Kashmir and Jammu and independent Indian politician Karan Singh.

5. The fact that I have never conducted my research in Switzerland, as incorrectly stated in your article, is such a petty detail in the sea of lies which it contains, that it is hardly worth mentioning.

6. As I have already mentioned, the psychedelic research with terminal cancer patients, alcoholics, and narcotic drug addicts was an official US project conducted at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center in Baltimore with the permission of the US government and under

the auspices of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in Bethesda, MD. To describe it as illegal and as an underground criminal activity is not only grossly incorrect, but represents serious libel deserving legal action, unless satisfactorily corrected. Under similar circumstances, victims of such damaging publicity have successfully sued the irresponsible journals involved for millions of dollars.

7. Another serious error in your article concerns my previous visits to Russia and the status of my work there. I quote from your article: “He has been in Russia several times before, but these were private visits, because many of Grof’s treatment methods are in our country illegal and attract interest of special services. Nevertheless, several of Stanislav Grof’s students anonymously work in our country.” Contrary to this statement, two of my three previous visits in Russia were the result of official invitation by the Soviet Ministry of Health. I presume that you are familiar with the strict professional criteria applied by this institution. I hope you agree that it is highly implausible that the ministry would have extended its invitation to the “infamous father of the psychedelic revolution.” It is also relevant to mention in this context that the first official editions of my books *Realms of Human Unconsciousness* (1991) and *The Human Encounter with Death* (1995) were published by the Soviet and Russian Academy of Sciences respectively by circulation of 1000 copies for scientific purposes. The second book describes my work with cancer patients that Alena Antonova explicitly calls underground and illegal. Do you really believe that the Russian Academy of Sciences would publish the work if it were true?

The research with psychedelics has been just a small part of my professional activity. My keynote lecture at the conference, entitled *Psychology of the Future: Lessons from Modern Consciousness Research* and based on my recent book with the same name, explored a large spectrum of non-ordinary states and their revolutionary implications for the theory and practice of psychiatry. Since 1975, my wife and I have been working with holotropic breathwork, a non-drug method that we have developed. This is also a method that we taught our Russian students in well-established international training programs. It is not only legal in Russia and other countries, but its therapeutic effects have been explored and confirmed in many research projects and doctoral dissertations. The results of some of these studies were presented at a special symposium of the Moscow conference dedicated to holotropic breathwork, which was attended by more than hundred professionals. Our Russian students (and, for that matter, students in other countries) therefore do not have the need to work anonymously.

8. Just a small comment to put the more general facts straight. Psychedelic substances are not “forbidden in the entire world,” as incorrectly stated in the Kommersant article. They are among strictly controlled compounds and their use for research requires special permission; this is why we were able to conduct our large scale research at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center. Receiving this permission became difficult, partially due to mass unsupervised use of psychedelics by the young generation, partially as a result of sensationalist reporting by irresponsible journalists, of which the article by Alena Antonova in the Kommersant is a salient example. In the last fifteen years, a large group of Swiss psychiatrists and psychologists conducted official research of psychedelic therapy and currently another research project is beginning in the famous Burghoelzli University Clinic in Zurich. Several research projects have recently been conducted in the United States. In Brazil, the psychedelic potion ayahuasca is being used with the government’s permission by millions of people in the ceremonies of the Santo Daime Church, Union de Vegetal, and native ayahuasqueros.

These are the most serious errors in your article – quite an impressive collection considering its size. A little additional detail; Alena Antonova claims that her papers are based on an interview she did with me; this is an outright lie. She did not have an interview with me and drew only on my lecture and possibly books. So much for honest reporting! I hope that realizing what a sloppy, amateur, and scandalous job Alena Antonova has presented for publication in your journal you will feel at least as outraged as I did reading it. Do you really want this kind of person and this kind of reporting to represent your journal? After all, appearance of such an article in your journal raises the question of the quality of reporting in the rest of your paper– something that should be of concern to any responsible chief editor. I ask you for correction of the misinformation in a prominent place in your journal, followed by an apology would give me full satisfaction and settle the matter. Otherwise, I would have to seek legal action and, if suing for libel is not a common practice in Russia, I would use the Internet, other journals, and my friends in Russia and abroad to make this situation publicly known. I hope we can find an amiable solution for this unfortunate matter.

Sincerely,

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Stanislav Grof, M.D.

cc.: Jack Silver, Attorney-at-Law, Santa Rosa, CA.

Dr.Marc Ronca, Zuerich

Alla Jivina, Vice President of the Bar of the City of Moscow

The article in Kommersant Vlast:

Stanislav Grof: Prohibition of Psychedelics – a Crime.

Alena Antonova

Last week arrived in Moscow the infamous (literally “scandalously famous”) doctor Stanislav Grof. A legendary personality. In many countries, including Russia, the methods of doctor Grof, who is trying to treat narcotic drug addicts with LSD, amphetamines, and other psychedelics, are forbidden by law. Alena Antonovna, correspondent of Vlast, met Stanislav Grof.

LSD, amphetamines, and other preparations are in the entire world considered to be strong narcotics. You have been working with them for more than 40 years. You don’t consider their effect to be deleterious for health, even if it is in relation to alleviation of the suffering of cancer patients?

In medical and psychotherapeutic practice – not at all. More than that, I consider the prohibition of the use of psychedelics in the work with narcotic drug addicts and alcoholics, as well as cancer patients, to be a great crime against humanity. What we see in our practice are striking successes. Many of our patients-drug addicts have become fully functioning people. Statistically speaking, the number of our patients who are not using narcotics, is considerably higher than those of other specialists. In many respects, the prohibition of psychedelics and their inclusion in schedule I (narcotics with strong effects) was the result of dilettante publications in the press and unhealthy sensation-hunting journalism. For a long time, I have been proposing legalization of psychedelics and the methods of psychedelic therapy, so that hundreds of sick people are not deprived of its effects.

But a gigantic (sic!) number of suicides among LSD users is a fact. And many of those who survived the use of psychedelics are until this day patients of psychiatric clinics. Indeed, was it not reasonable to prohibit these preparations?

Please, do not confuse use of LSD in medicine and unsanctioned use of various preparations for the achievement of a high. LSD, like morphine and many other preparations, are medical instruments that are similar to the knife of the surgeon. And working with them requires a specialist. I will not now discuss in detail what kind of mechanisms in the psyche and the brain are involved in the action of LSD and how we worked with our patients – this has been described in my books. I am very sorry that world psychotherapy has not noticed the real practical results that we have achieved in the course of our experiments. Crack, heroin, and other substances unquestionably belong to Schedule I and be prohibited by law. But do not forget that LSD psychotherapy is only a part of the methods we work with. What we do in our work with different addictions – alcoholic, narcotic, psychoses, paranoias, depressions, and other mental disorders – is an entire complex of methods. And psychedelics form only a small part of them

You are using other and, according to the opinion of specialists, very hard methods of psychotherapy.

Above all – this is work with altered states of consciousness and these can be achieved also without the use of psychedelics. I am now speaking about the holotropic breathwork and other non-pharmacological practices, which we are using in the treatment of addictions. But removal of withdrawal symptoms is only one tenth of the work of a medical doctor; that can be handled by any narcologist. The most important thing is the removal of the psychological dependency on the narcotic substance.

In the sessions of holotropic breathwork, when the individual enters in altered states of consciousness (practically the same is achieved by the use of LSD, only the effect is much deeper), he has powerful spiritual experiences associated with birth and the prenatal period of development, the time of conception, and even experiences past lives. Patient - heroin addict connects with the source of his narcotic addiction, the moment when pathology began to form. He feels cosmic bliss. “This is what I have been seeking my entire life!” – these are exactly the states that all narcotic drug addicts are unconsciously seeking. But experience this moment is not enough. Because in this way can actually develop addiction to LSD. The task of the psychotherapist is to involve powerful mechanisms of psychological work, transform this feeling.

So that one begins to receive enormous satisfaction in life, to see oneself in it – that is to reorient the psyche to other, positive interests, where heroin loses its inevitability. This is a very

primitive explanation, but understandable to everybody. It is naturally a very hard method. But it is much more humane than to fill the patients with neuroleptics and other preparations that turns them into “vegetables.” And this is what specialists are doing under government supervision – almost all contemporary medicine.

You are continuing the work with cancer patients?

Absolutely. Unfortunately, political and administrative difficulties due to unsupervised use of psychedelics made impossible the use of this extraordinarily effective method on a large scale. The analgesic effect of LSD is superior to the effect of opiates. In many patients suffering from cancer and other incurable diseases even the clinical condition improved (this is confirmed by attending physicians who observe these patients).

As a rule, we worked with patients in whom continuation of medical treatment did not offer any help and who suffered from strong pain, depression, and fear of death. Thirty percent of the patients showed dramatic improvement, forty percent moderate improvement, and the condition of the remaining thirty percent of the patients were essentially unchanged (but even in this category we observed positive influence on such symptoms as inhibition, suicidal tendencies, tension, anxiety, and insomnia).

But the most important and striking effect of LSD on cancer patients was a deep change in ideas about death and distinct alleviation of the fear of death. The patients show increased interest in life, a tendency to enjoy each moment, derive satisfaction from such simple things as nature, meals, sexual relations, music, and interpersonal relations. And our new method - holotropic breathwork – is an important alternative to the use of psychedelics.

That means psychedelic therapy is a panacea, in spite of all prohibitions?

I would not formulate the question this way. There are no panaceas. The most important thing is that the power of transformation is within us. It is important to involve these mechanisms; then the life of any healthy individual will become hundred times more effective. That what I see today in human society is an uninterrupted pathology and addictions that are in no way less serious than narcotic addiction: addiction to power, dogma, war, weapons, money, and others.

In the last decades, humanity is moving to a low point and is experiencing a serious spiritual crisis. And, as a medical doctor, I am saying: this is a serious diagnosis. I see around me paranoia, schizophrenia, and also tens of serious mental disorders, from which suffer “healthy” people, often those in power and responsible for solutions on governmental level. For example, many of our patients encounter in their sessions experiences of death, because they attain a new feeling of a full and free life, without addiction. They do not know what to do with it. And our task is to teach the patient how to live this new life. And humanity is now heading toward death, people are engaged in real suicide, and the task of psychotherapists is to unite and to help people to get out of the spiritual abyss, on the threshold of which we are now standing. This is one of the themes of the congress.

You will insist on continuation in Russia of psychedelic, or – as you are calling it - transpersonal psychotherapy?

Of course. And I am glad that I have followers in Russia who are using breathwork techniques. Rather effective results. It is a different thing when tens of thousands practicing physicians – narcologists, psychotherapists, psychiatrists – will be without work. And this is not in the interest of the government. Besides that, the money earned by specialists who make patients dependent on them – these are huge sums. Plus an enormous market of pharmacology with very strong-acting preparations, which are used by specialists. And nobody can lose something like that.

Response:

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Maksim Kovalsky
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Mill Valley, California, July 28, 2001.

Dear Maksim Kovalsky,

on July 10 of this year, Kommersant Vlast published an article by Alena Antonova about my recent visit in Moscow by Alena Antonova, a sequel to the striking example of mendacious and deceitful journalism by the same author that appeared in Kommersant on July 2. I have sent earlier my response to this article to Andrey Vasilyev . The article in Vlast tops the first one in that it represents an outright journalistic fraud.

What Alena Antonova presents as an interview with me is her creation from the beginning to the end. She has never interviewed me and fabricated all the answers to her questions herself. More than that, much of what she puts into my mouth I have never said in my lectures and seminars or written in my articles and books. Nor would I ever say or write these things. The lies she fabricated and attributed to me range from grandiose statements about my therapeutic results to vulgar attacks on my colleagues, pharmacological companies, and government officials.

I have never encountered anything as fraudulent, vile, and outrageous in my experience with hundreds of journalists all over the world whom I have met in my entire life. Those people who are familiar with my writings and/or with me personally (and there are many of them in Russia, since I have given a number of lectures and seminars in your country and most of my books have appeared in Russian translation) know that the content of this “interview” is not only full of misinformation and outright lies, but that it is alien to my very nature.

It would seem that showing that Alena Antonova’s “interview” is a fabrication and that it has never happened would be a sufficient answer. However, that would not necessarily mean that her facts are incorrect and as fraudulent as the format of the article itself. I would, therefore, like to point out to you some of the most salient lies. To start with the title of the article, I have never said that the prohibition of LSD is a crime against humanity. I have also never advocated across the board legalization of psychedelics. I believe on the basis of my clinical experience that psychedelics, used properly and responsibly, are useful therapeutic tools and would like to see them returned into the hands of qualified professionals. As far as I know, the terms “father of the psychedelic revolution” and “scandalous Dr. Grof” have not been used in connection with my person before and have been invented by Alena Antonova (the former name has always been associated with Dr. Timothy Leary).

I am not and have never been an “underground experimenter with LSD.” The research with psychedelics that I conducted between 1956 and 1973 involved official projects conducted first at the Psychiatric Research Institute in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and later at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center in Baltimore, Maryland. The results of this research have been published in professional journals and scientific books translated into 16 languages. I also received for my research the national Kuffner Award, given in Czechoslovakia for the most important psychiatric discovery of the year, and the prestigious Czechoslovakian Purkynje Award. I am enclosing my curriculum vitae for your information.

Contrary to Alena Antonova’s allegations, I am not currently working with cancer patients, alcoholics, heroin addicts, psychoses, paranoias, depressions, or any other category of psychiatric patients, let alone doing psychedelic therapy. That period of my life ended in 1973. Since that time, I have been using exclusively holotropic breathwork, a non-drug method of self-exploration, in the context of seminars and training programs for professionals.

This would have become immediately clear, had Alena Antonova actually had a chance to interview me and ask me the questions she used in the article (such as: “LSD, amphetamines, and other preparations are in the entire world considered to be strong narcotics. You have been working with them for more than 40 years, or “Do you continue working with cancer patients?”). Having to construct the “interview” without the benefit of actually talking to me, what she puts into my mouth are her own fantasies and distorted information from my books and lectures.

I will mention only the most salient and serious of the many distortions and lies in which the “interview” abounds. The positive changes seen in our cancer patients after LSD psychotherapy were related to their emotional condition, not to their basic clinical condition, as suggested by my “answer” in the “interview.” This was very clearly stated in my books and professional articles. To put into my mouth such a grandiose statement as: “The task of psychotherapists is to unite and to help people to get out of the spiritual abyss, on the threshold of which we are now standing” is simply absurd. It seems to have come somewhere from Alena Antonova’s memory banks; it strangely resembles the popular slogan of the Communist era: “Proletarians of the whole world, unite!” I do not think and talk this way.

The most disturbing part of the article involves various condescending and deprecating statements Alena Antonova has me say about my colleagues – psychiatrists, psychologists,

psychotherapists, and narcologists, as well as pharmacological companies and government officials. These are clearly designed to antagonize the professional community against me. She has me bragging about our superior results, compare them with those of others, and claim that tens of thousands of professionals would be out of work if my methods were accepted. I have never made these statements and never would make them. My relationships with the academic community have always been very friendly and polite; the exchanges have taken the form of scientific discussions, not nasty competitive altercations and arguments.

Attributing to me statements like: “I observe around me complicated paranoid schizophrenia and tens of other serious psychic disorders from which suffer healthy people, often those who have power and make responsible decisions on the government level,” or “And I can say as a medical doctor: This is a serious diagnosis,” is not just a fabrication; it is ridiculous that I would ever say something like this. Or it would be laughable, if it were not for the fact that it is incendiary and has the potential to antagonize the target persons and institutions and generate negative feelings toward me. And this is serious slander and defamation deserving a legal action.

I hope that, upon getting acquainted with the facts in the above material, you will realize that the kind of fraudulent journalism practiced by Alena Antonovna is unacceptable in a democratic society. Publishing her articles certainly seriously damages the reputation of your journal and raises serious question about the integrity of the people running it, as well as the quality of the rest of the articles appearing in it. I request hereby that you publish in a prominent place in your journal an article distancing yourself from the libelous and fraudulent reporting of Alena Antonovna, apologizing for publishing it, and correcting the distorted facts. I hope that after getting acquainted with the above material you will see this as the only honorable solution to this unfortunate incident. Any editor can be deceived by an irresponsible reporter, but silence on your part would mean endorsement and indicate that you consider this kind of reporting to be an acceptable practice for your journal. And that would be a different matter, something that your readers should be aware of.

Sincerely yours,

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Stanislav Grof, M.D.

cc.: Jack Silver, Attorney-at-Law, Sebastopol, CA

Marc Ronca, International Lawyer, Zurich, Switzerland

Alla Jivina, Vice President of the Bar of the City of Moscow