

Ukraine:  
a nuclear physicist  
hospitalized with a  
severe head injury  
after attempt to  
forcibly conscript him

Researched by Yurii Sheliashenko, PhD



# Victim: Stepan Bilchenko

- Senior Laboratory Assistant of the Nuclear Physics Training Laboratory (Department of Solid State Physics) at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv
- Author of article “Impact of Phase Transitions on Temperature Evolution of Absorption Spectra and Electron–Phonon Interactions in  $[N(C_2H_5)_4]_2CoCl_2Br_2$  Crystals”
- Attended protestant church in Lviv, declared conscientious objection and served alternative nonmilitary service



ФІЗИЧНИЙ  
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**Impact of Phase Transitions on Temperature Evolution of Absorption Spectra and Electron–Phonon Interactions in  $[N(C_2H_5)_4]_2CoCl_2Br_2$  Crystals**

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V. B. Kapustianyk, S. I. Semak, S. B. Bilchenko, Yu. I. Eliyashevskyy, Yu. V. Chorniy & P. Yu. Demchenko

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Про нас Навчання Вступнику Наука

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1. Kapustianyk V. Impact of Phase Transitions on Temperature Evolution of Absorption Spectra and Electron–Phonon Interactions in  $[N(C_2H_5)_4]_2CoCl_2Br_2$  Crystals / B. Kapustianyk, S. I. Semak, S. B. Bilchenko, Yu. I. Eliyashevskyy, Yu. V. Chorniy, P. Yu. Demchenko // *Journal of Applied Spectroscopy*. – 2019 – V. 86, No. 4 – 531 (8 p.)

# Public scandal

- Stepan Bilchenko was abducted by military recruiters and found in the vicinity of Zhytomyr with severe head injuries after an attempt to forcibly transport him to a military unit



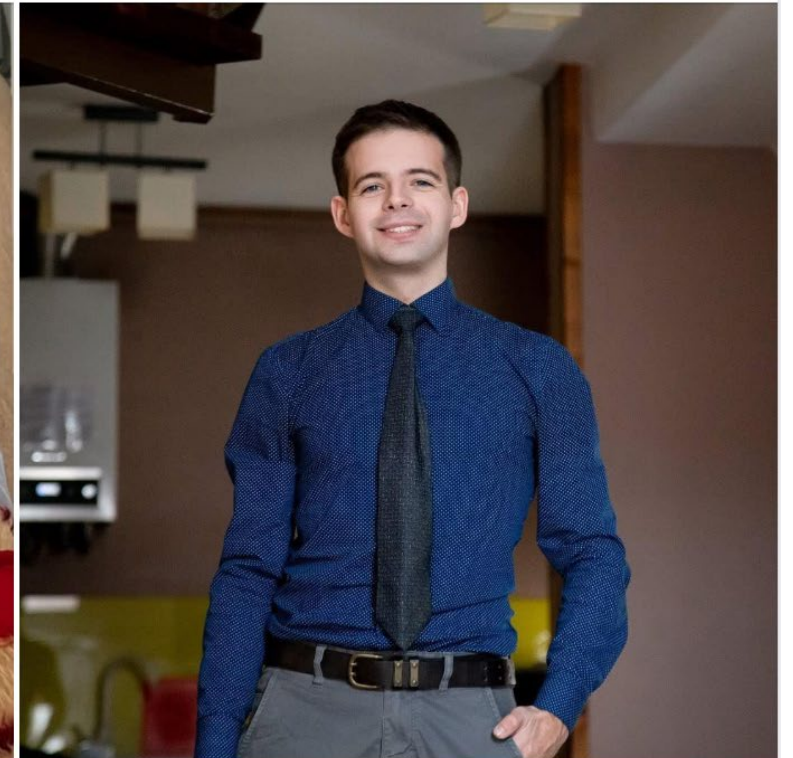
Vladyslav Kononov

February 8 at 5:27 PM · 🌐

Ситуація яка склалась потребує розголосу і підтримки громадськості.

Це мій друг Степан Більченко, ми дружимо більше 15 років. З дитинства, колись ходили в протестантську церкву у Львові.

Більченка Степана Борисовича, було в доправлено працівниками ТЦК у Львові, в районі Стрийського ринку, близько 9:00... [See more](#)



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# Questionable explanations

- Police claim that he possibly traumatized himself trying to escape during compulsory transportation to a military unit.
- Military training unit claims that he is AWOL
- Military recruiters claim that their actions were legal because he didn't renew his military registration.
- These claims are doubted by many commenters among the public and, even if the claims are correct, the horrible fact as it happened highlights cruelty and lack of human rights compliance in current procedures of military registration and conscription prescribed by the law.
- His father reportedly said that he planned to escape. Father is wondering why his son was left on the road without medical care.



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І додам, що особа також зізналась: своє сзч він планував, є підтверджуючі матеріали. Тому перед тим як поширювати зраду, необхідно вивчити факти.

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Відповісти

7



Ksenia Dronga  
Калічити здоров'я людині ніхто немає права, крапка

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50 хв Подобається Відповісти

5

# Context: systemic human rights violations related to conscription under martial law

- Article 35 of the Constitution of Ukraine requires replacement of military duty in all forms, that must cover military registration, to alternative nonmilitary duty, and therefore alternative nonmilitary registration for conscientious objectors.
- According to international standards of compliance with Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, non-derogable in time of war according to Article 4 of the said Covenant, application procedures for obtaining the status of conscientious objector to military service should be available to all persons affected by military service
- Human right to conscientious objection to military service is denied in Ukraine under martial law contrary to international human rights obligations of the country.
- Several conscientious objectors are imprisoned, more prison sentences pending appeal. Prisoner of conscience Dmytro Zelinsky filed constitutional complaint.
- Arbitrary detention and deaths in detention.
- Inhuman treatment and torture.

## Conscientious objection to military service

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“We should cut off your genitals so cowards like you can’t reproduce!”  
– A Jehovah’s Witness repeating to OHCHR what he was told by a conscription officer when he tried to conscientiously object.

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90. Under the ICCPR, the right of conscientious objection to military service allows no restrictions or derogation.<sup>62</sup> The right to conscientious objection to military service is also enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine.<sup>63</sup> However, domestic law in Ukraine unduly restricts this Constitutional right only to some forms of religion or belief, excluding others, contrary to applicable obligations of equality before the law and non-discrimination under the ICCPR.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The Government of Ukraine informed OHCHR that it plans to adopt a resolution in 2025 with an exhaustive list of criteria for defining the ideology of “Russian world”.

<sup>61</sup> ICCPR, art. 19; CCPR/C/GC/34, paras. 21 and 34.

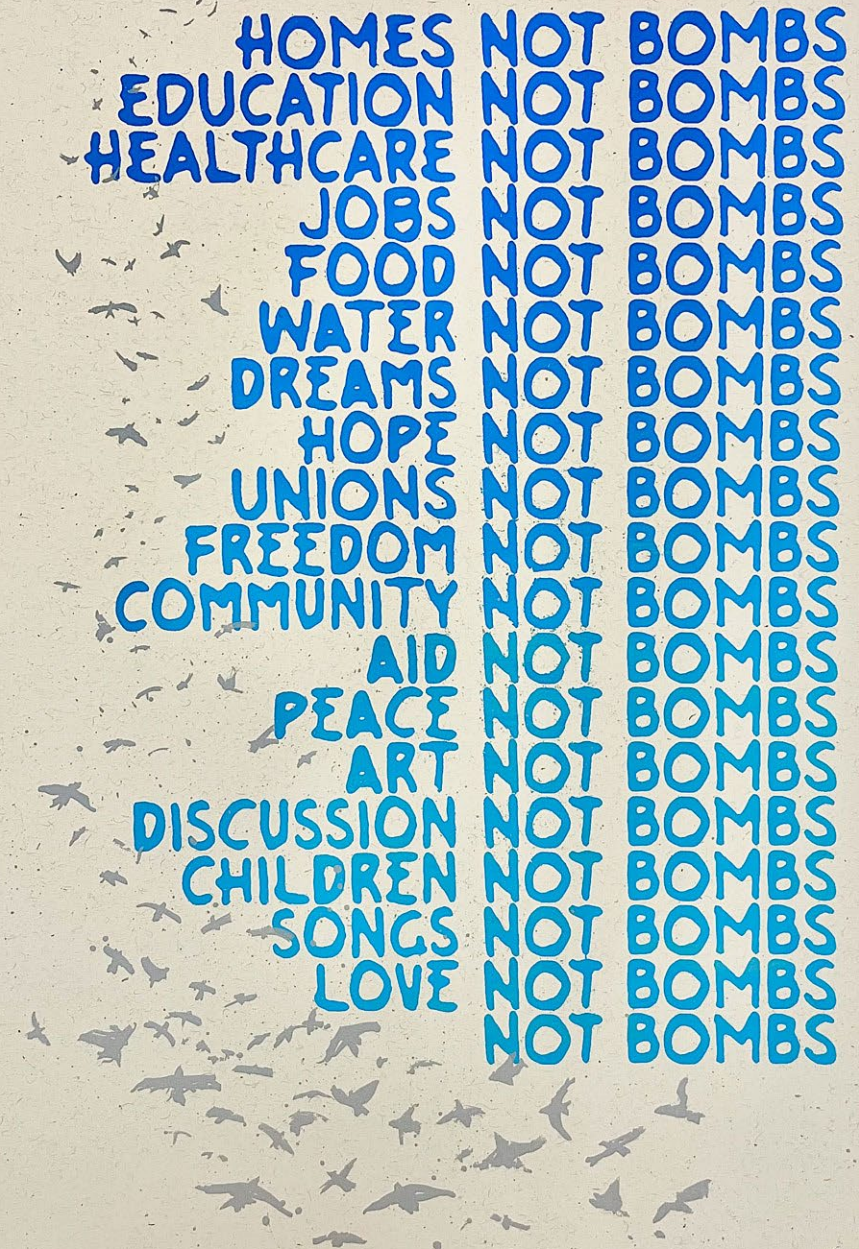
<sup>62</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, arts. 18 and 4. See also [A/HRC/56/30](#) paras. 5-6, citing relevant decisions of the Human Rights Committee.

<sup>63</sup> The right to object to military service on the basis of religious belief and to perform alternative non-military service is enshrined in article 35(4) of the Constitution of Ukraine.

<sup>64</sup> According to the Government of Ukraine, the process of bringing the Law of Ukraine “On Alternative (Non-Military) Service” in line with Article 35 of the Constitution is ongoing, and on 4 October 2024, an interdepartmental working group was created to prepare proposals for legislative amendments to allow for alternative non-military service during martial law.

# Recommendations

- Raising awareness of the case and systemic problems
- Raising concerns regarding militarist pressures on the academy
- Anti-conscription manifesto, following example of Albert Einstein
- Civil mobilization of the academy for nonviolent resistance to militarism and war
- Research and education efforts for development of peace studies, culture, economy, and politics



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