

# Happy birthday, Kirill Butylin

Saturday 18 March 2023, by [PIRANI Simon](#) (Date first published: 27 February 2023).

**Kirill Butylin, one of the first Russians to protest against the war on Ukraine by firebombing a military recruitment centre, today marks his [22<sup>nd</sup> birthday](#) in pre-trial detention.**

Butylin made the protest at the centre in Lukhovitsy, near Moscow, on 28 February last year – three days after the all-out invasion, and one day after he turned 21. The building was empty and there were no casualties.

On 8 March last year, a short film of the blaze was [posted anonymously on telegram](#), with this message:

A couple of days ago, I set fire to the military recruitment centre at Lukhovitsy, Moscow region, and recorded it on GoPro. I painted the entrance with the colours of the Ukrainian flag, and wrote, “I will not go to kill my brothers!” After that I crawled under the fence, poured petrol on the front of the building, broke some windows, and threw Molotov cocktails through them. The aim was to destroy the archive containing details of those eligible for conscription that is held there. This will obstruct mobilisation in the area. I hope that I will not see my old classmates taken prisoner, or in the lists of those killed at the front.

I believe that we should do this everywhere. Ukrainians will know, that people in Russia are fighting for them – that not everyone is scared and not everyone is indifferent. Those who are protesting here need to take courage and act more decisively. And this will surely help to break the spirit of the Russian army and the government. Let those fuckers know that their own people hate them and will snuff them out. The land will soon be burning under their feet, and hell awaits them at home, too.

Butylin was detained on the day the manifesto was published. After the arson attack, he had got rid of his phone and travelled to the Lithuanian-Belarusian border, according to press reports. But he was detained there and extradited to Russia.

On 13 March, Butylin managed to escape by jumping out of a window, but was soon re-arrested.

In November last year, Solidarity Zone, the network set up to support anti-war direct action protesters, said [in a facebook post \(translated by the Russian Reader\)](#):

The criminal charges against Butylin have morphed, during the course of this case, from “vandalism” to “terrorist attack.” And if initially he was threatened with no more than three years of community service, he now faces from ten to fifteen years in prison.

In October, Solidarity Zone tracked down Butylin in the Matrosskaya Tishina pre-trial detention center in Moscow and established a connection with him. He accepted our offer of support and said that he would be glad to receive publicity, letters and books. According to him, all his other needs are being taken care of. Butylin's lawyer is paid for by his relatives.

Solidarity Zone supports Kirill Butylin and will continue to cover his case, as well as provide him with all necessary assistance.

On Friday, the first anniversary of Russia's all-out invasion of Ukraine, Solidarity Zone [reported](#) that it knows of 112 Russians being prosecuted for direct action protests against the war.

Fifty-one of the cases involve arson attacks on military recruitment centres; 36 arise from sabotage of the railways and 17 for the preparation of attacks. Charges under terrorist legislation have been brought in 36 of the cases.

Nineteen-year-old Valeria Zotova is one of those arrested most recently – on the night of 16 February. She is accused of preparing to set fire to a warehouse in Yaroslavl, from which cargoes to supply Russian army units in Ukraine set out.

Valeria has been charged under terrorism legislation (part 205 of the Russian criminal code), the authorities have stated.

☐ You can learn how to support these and other prisoners on the [Solidarity Zone facebook page](#), and by following the links below. 27 February 2023.

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**Simon Pirani**

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