

Belarus Detains 3 for Pelting Lenin With Eggs

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MINSK — Belarussian police detained three nationalist activists on Monday after they threw eggs at a statue of Communist leader Vladimir Lenin in the capital, Minsk, on the anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

✘ Three young men, members of the nationalist Young Front movement, shouted "Stop Communism" and "Put Communism on trial" as they threw eggs at the statue in the city center while Communists held a rally nearby. ✘ The men were chased and detained by plainclothes police and charged with hooliganism, the group said. ✘ Belarus is one of the few former Soviet states that still officially observe the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution as a holiday. Public protests are rare under President Alexander Lukashenko, who tolerates little dissent.

✘ Lukashenko congratulated his citizens on Monday on the anniversary of "Great October," praising the Soviet Revolution's ideals such as "freeing the working class from exploitation."

✘ European countries have long criticized Belarus for allowing little political opposition under

Lukashenko, in power since 1994.

Belarus is struggling to overcome a balance of payments crisis triggered by excessive government spending. Inflation in the country of 9.5 million is set to reach about 100 percent this year.

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