

Putin Caricatures Banned Over Privacy Law

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Elections authorities in Nizhny Novgorod prohibited the Communists from satirizing Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in caricatures because he did not give permission for it, Kommersant [reported](#) Wednesday.

Putin's likeness was featured in leaflets that the party distributed in the region ahead of the State Duma vote on Dec. 4, the report said.

But the region's elections committee banned the leaflets, saying images of real people can only be used in campaigning with their explicit permission, said the committee's deputy head, Alexander Ivanov.

Putin is never explicitly identified in the caricatures, but Ivanov said all committee officials and even Communist Party representatives agreed that it was "100 percent" him.

The pictures, which feature sloppy artwork, remain [available](#) on Politpros.tv.

A typical example shows a gaunt man with the same pear-shaped nose and big forehead as Putin sweating and straining as he arm-wrestles a likeness of Communist Party head Gennady Zyuganov, who sports a Civil War-era Red Army getup. Putin is aided by equally struggling representatives of the other two parliamentary parties, A Just Russia and the Liberal Democrats.

The Communist Party dismissed all accusations, saying the elections law only limits usage of photographs in campaigning. It added in a statement that the committee's ruling actually qualifies for defaming the real Putin, who was identified with a "generalized character" in the caricature.

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov and the ruling United Russia, the Communists' main rival, refused to comment.

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