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Navalny Must Pay for 'Crooks and Thieves' Comment

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A Moscow court has ordered prominent opposition activist Alexei Navalny to pay a United Russia State Duma deputy 30,000 rubles ($896) for comments he made about party members in the Russian version of Esquire magazine.

Court spokesperson Maria Balakshina said United Russia deputy Vladimir Svirid's request to force Navalny to denounce his previous statement and give monetary compensation for moral harm had been partially fulfilled with the court order Monday, Rapsi reported.

Svirid had originally sought 1 million rubles in the defamation case.

The case was filed over disparaging comments made by Navalny about members of United Russia in a December article published in Esquire magazine.

"In United Russia, there are people I come across that I generally like. But if you have joined United Russia, you are still a thief. And if you are not a thief, then you are a crook, because you

use your name to cover the rest of the thieves and crooks," Navalny wrote.

Navalny's lawyer Vadim Kobzev said Navalny would appeal the decision, arguing that if he didn't, more United Russia members could be motivated to file similar complaints.

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