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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Femen Accuses Police of Planting Arms at Headquarters

By The Moscow Times

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Activist Anna Hutsol pointing at the place at Femen's headquarters where police said they found explosives. **Gleb Garanich**

KIEV — Ukrainian topless feminist group Femen accused the police of planting explosives and a gun during a raid on their headquarters in Kiev headquarters in a bid to close their organization.

The Femen group specializes in shock bare-breast appearances to dramatize women's rights causes, mainly in the male-dominated hierarchies of Russia and its former Soviet allies.

President Vladimir Putin has been a particular target for Femen's protests since the prosecution of female punk group Pussy Riot last year.

A police statement in Kiev said a group of explosives experts were sent to Femen's headquarters in central Kiev on Tuesday after an anonymous call. Objects resembling a World

War II pistol and grenade were found during a search, it said.

Officers at the scene said they had also found leaflets showing the profiles of Putin and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill pictured in snipers' cross-hairs.

Femen activists denounced the police finds as plants.

"They arrived on the scene and told us we had to get out of the building because there was a report of bombs. We left for two or three minutes. Then they called us back and said they had found these objects," said Anna Gutsol, one of Femen's main leaders.

"They say they found these things. But guns, narcotics and such like are not things that we have. It's absurd," she said, describing the police action as a "provocation" likely to lead to further action to curb Femen's activities.

"The mere fact that the police had a 'special group' there within seconds shows the whole thing was prepared," said Gutsol.

Femen's leaders and activists were questioned by police and the group's headquarters was sealed off. No one was immediately arrested or charged, though Gutsol said in a text message to journalists that police appeared to be preparing formally to arrest them.

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