

Navalny, Sobyenin 'Working Together'

September 04, 2013



Two men distributing information materials about mayoral candidate Alexei Navalny on the metro on Tuesday. **Vladimir Filonov**

Just Russia mayoral candidate Nikolai Levichev suggested his competitor Alexei Navalny may be coordinating his campaign with City Hall in exchange for protection and support from acting Mayor Sergei Sobyenin's administration.

In an interview with Izvestia published Wednesday, Levichev argued that Navalny had been using illegal methods in his campaign accused him of conducting a "fixed" election campaign aimed to secure victory for Sobyenin while creating the impression of a fair election.

To support his claim Levichev referred to an incident on Aug. 14, when he helped police storm an apartment of alleged Navalny supporters who were allegedly making illegal campaign materials. He claimed that after the initial request to send police to the building on Chistoprudny Bulvar, five men in civilian clothes arrived and made sure Navalny's lawyers entered the apartment before police or a member of the Central Elections Commission.

They were later identified as police officers: Levichev filed a complaint to the Interior Ministry because the men were able to leave the scene unidentified.

"I realized that everything is much more complicated than I thought in the beginning of the election campaign," Levichev said.

Asked if he thought the election would include fraud, the candidate said that fraud is sometimes hard to qualify. He gave the example of a young woman who offered him the chance to stay home during the election and vote through a door to door service. When he refused, the woman implored him to sign up, saying that she could lose her job if he didn't.

"Is that fraud or not?" Levichev said.

Original url: <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/09/04/navalny-sobyanin-working-together-a27382>