

Russian Government Offers Cash in Return for Patriotic Films

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A view of Sevastopol.

The Russian government renewed its efforts this week to encourage the production of patriotic and historical movies, offering a million rubles (\$16,000) to authors of Russian film scripts devoted to one of 10 patriotic themes by March 27, the state Cinema Fund announced.

The themes include "Crimea in the history of Russia," "the August 1991 coup: myths and realities," and "the Russian-Japanese War of 1905: victory that ended in defeat," the foundation said in a statement posted on its website Monday.

Last year saw 22 scripts win, seven of which are being turned into movies, state news agency TASS reported Wednesday.

One of those films, called "Goalkeeper of the Galaxy," is about the late Russian football star Lev Yashin. Another is a continuation of a film series about imperial Russian marines, and another, about the Viking ruler of the people of ancient Rus, is called "Rurik — Flight

of the Falcon."

Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky said in December that his ministry would never again provide funding for "Russia-smearing" films.

"The one thing I see as pointless is giving the Culture Ministry's money to people who ... make movies based on the 'Russia is sh-t' principle," he said at the time, Russian media reported.

The remark came after the film "Leviathan" met with wide acclaim in the West, having won a Golden Globe and been nominated for an Oscar. The film, which received funding from the Culture Ministry, has been harshly criticized by the minister and some others in Russia for its depiction of corruption, hypocrisy in the Orthodox Church and heavy drinking.

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