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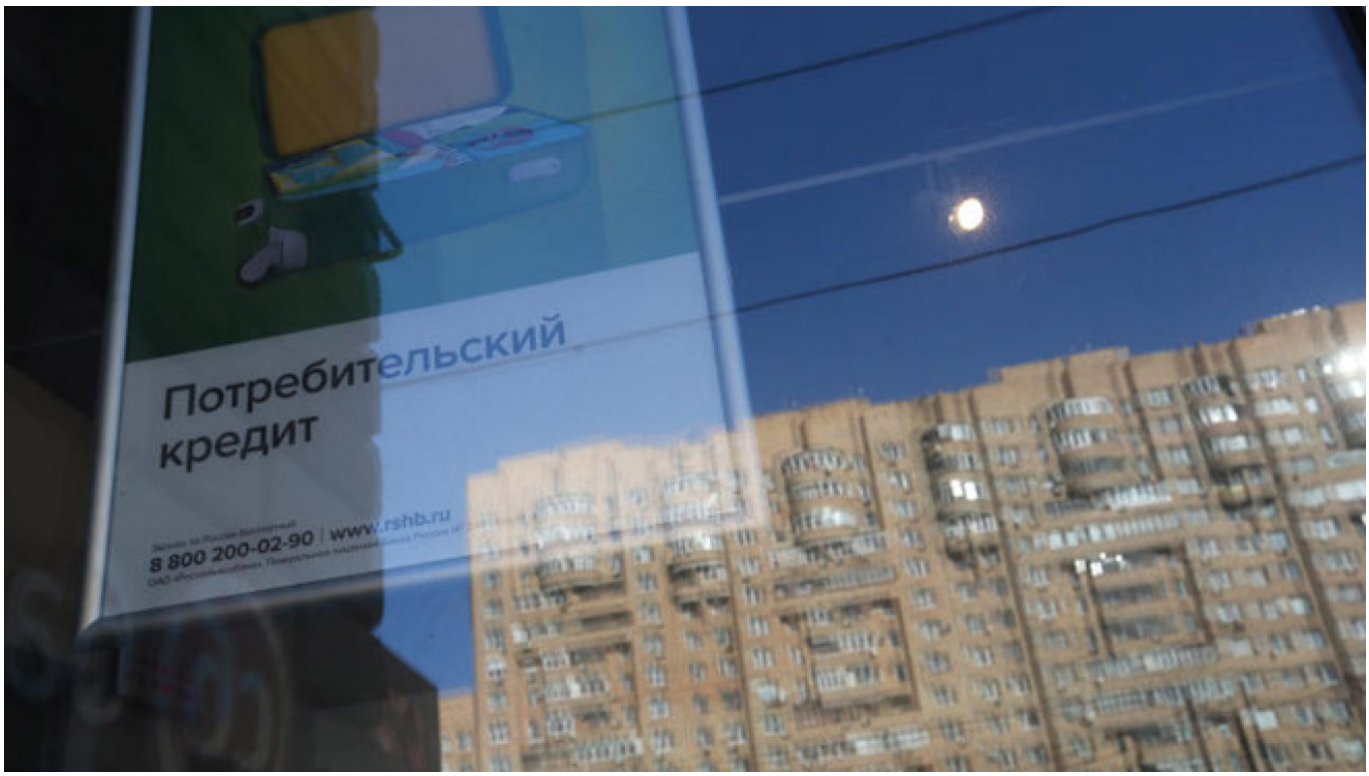
'Mortgage Slave' Flash Mob Detained on Red Square

March 22, 2015



More than a dozen people were detained on Red Square on Sunday during a flash mob aimed at addressing the plight of Russians who have mortgages denominated in a hard currency, local media reported.

Many of the demonstrators were wearing T-shirts that said "Slave to a Hard Currency Mortgage." Russia is struggling with a severe economic downturn that has seen its national currency lose about 40 percent of its value versus the U.S. dollar in the past year.

Reports about the rally varied on the number of people detained. OVD-Info, which specifically monitors detentions at protests, said 19 people were detained. But a rally participant named Irina Safyanova told the Banki.ru news site that 40 to 50 people were detained.

It is illegal to hold a rally in Moscow without the prior approval of the authorities, despite the Russian Constitution's Article 31 explicitly ensuring the right to peaceful assembly.

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