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Lawmaker Tells Colleagues to Drive Russian-Made Cars, Not Mercedes

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A leader of the ruling United Russia political party — which upholds the Kremlin's anti-Western policies — has urged his fellow lawmakers to avoid driving luxury Western cars such as Mercedes when they travel around the country, independent Ekho Moskvy radio reported Thursday.

“There are a lot of car models that are assembled in Russia,” Sergei Neverov — the secretary of the United Russia's general council, a deputy speaker of the State Duma, and a President Vladimir Putin ally sanctioned by the United States over the annexation of Crimea — was quoted as saying.

He was commenting on news reports that said State Duma deputies rode in luxury cars during trips to outlying regions, and specifically admonished lawmakers for riding in Mercedes sedans, Ekho Moskvy reported.

Neverov did not specify what kind of cars lawmakers should be riding in Moscow. Anti-corruption blogger Alexei Navalny published a photo on his LiveJournal social network page three years ago, showing Neverov disembarking from a luxury BMW sedan that carried him to

the State Duma.

In response to Western sanctions against Moscow for its meddling in Ukraine, Russia has unleashed a flurry of anti-Western rhetoric and banned food imports from the West. It did not ban imports of Western cars, which have remained the favored means of transportation among the country's top politicians.

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