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Prosecutor Demands Two-Year Sentence for Russian Oppositioner in 'Microphone Case'

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The prosecutor in the so-called “microphone case” has demanded a two-year suspended sentence for opposition politician Leonid Volkov, the newsru news website reported Thursday.

Volkov was arrested on July 17, 2015 after activists from the far-right People's Liberation Front (NOD) staged an unsanctioned picket outside the Novosibirsk office of the PARNAS political party.

Some of the activists threw eggs at oppositioner Alexei Navalny and a cameraman from the Life News television channel tried to approach Navalny to film him, but Volkov stood in his way, holding the microphone of the camera. The Life News journalist is heard saying to Volkov, “Shall I break your arm?”

The journalist later claimed that Volkov had damaged the microphone. Volkov was subsequently arrested and charged with preventing journalistic work through violence — charges he denies.

Prosecutor Yelena Sergeeva requested that the testimony of witnesses who are members of the Anti-Corruption Foundation — which Volkov and Navalny also belong to — be discounted as they "share the same point of view" as Volkov.

"The evidence of the NOD thugs is, however, trustworthy" Volkov replied ironically during the hearing, which took place in a Novosibirsk court on Thursday.

"I ask that the court recognize Volkov as guilty and give him a two-year suspended sentence," Sergeeva said.

"The discussion was over and I was ready to say my final words but the judge announced a break in the trial until Aug. 22," Volkov wrote on Twitter afterwards, saying that he expected sentencing to be delayed further.

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