

Russian Orthodox Church Angry as State Destroys "Extremist" Bibles

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Spokespeople of the Russian Orthodox Church expressed concern over a court ruling in the Far Eastern city of Vladivostok that outlined destroying 40 Bibles in accordance with the notorious “Yarovaya legislation,” the Vedomosti newspaper reported Wednesday.

Earlier this week, Russian media reported a Vladivostok court handing down a 30,000-ruble (\$495) fine to the Salvation Army christian organization for incorrectly marking bibles the organization was distributing. In addition to the fine, the court ordered the books' destruction – 36 Russian-language Bibles and four English-language ones among them.

It is the first precedent of implementing the “Yarovaya legislation” and its harsher regulations for missionaries. “Essentially, the organization was punished for illegal missionary – not terrorist or extremist – activity by destruction of the Bible,” a spokeswoman for the Moscow Patriarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Xenia

Chernega told Vedomosti.

Salvation Army's lawyer Mikhail Frolov told Vedomosti that the court has overstepped its authority by demanding to destroy the Bibles – the Administrative Code outlines confiscating property, but not destroying it, he said.

The head of the organization in Russia Alexander Khorkov called the court ruling “blasphemous.” “Seizing books and destroying them – it is just nonsense,” he said.

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<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/12/28/russian-orthodox-church-concerned-by-far-eastern-court-decision-to-destroy-40-bibles-a56672>