

Cars Torched Near Lawyer's Office Over Controversial Film 'Mathilde'

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Konstantin Dobrynin Facebook

Two cars were set on fire near the office of a lawyer working for Alexei Uchitel, the director of a controversial film on Tsar Nicholas, in an apparent act of intimidation ahead of the film's release.

Photos [published](#) on Facebook on Monday by lawyer Konstantin Dobrynin showed two burnt cars close to central Moscow's Arbat district. The incident comes after Uchitel's studio in St. Petersburg was [torched](#) with Molotov cocktails on Aug. 31.

Uchitel's biopic on Tsar Nicholas II's love affair with Polish ballerina Mathilde Kschessinska has stirred widespread controversy among Russian Orthodox activists.

Embed:

Led by State Duma Deputy Natalia Poklonskaya, they claim the film on Nicholas II, who was

canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 2000, offends religious believers.

Olga Kulikovskaya-Romanova, the 91-year-old widow of the Tsar's nephew Tikhon Kulikovsky-Romanov, has sued the director's studio "Rock" over the film.

In February, a vigilante group called "Christian State — Holy Russia" sent a letter to dozens of cinema managers, saying "cinemas would burn, maybe people will even suffer" if the film was shown.

Dobrynin, the lawyer, in his Facebook post included photos of slips of paper with text "Burn for Mathilde" found scattered at the site of the car burnings.

"While [Natalia] Poklonskaya tells everyone about some claims made by relatives of the holy Tsar and tries to ban the film, her supporters continue to throw Molotov cocktails and burn everything," he wrote.

Despite the controversy, the film is still set to premiere on the big screen on Monday at the Pacific Meridian film festival in Vladivostok.

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