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Pussy Riot Activist Handed Community Service for FSB 'Butcher' Protest

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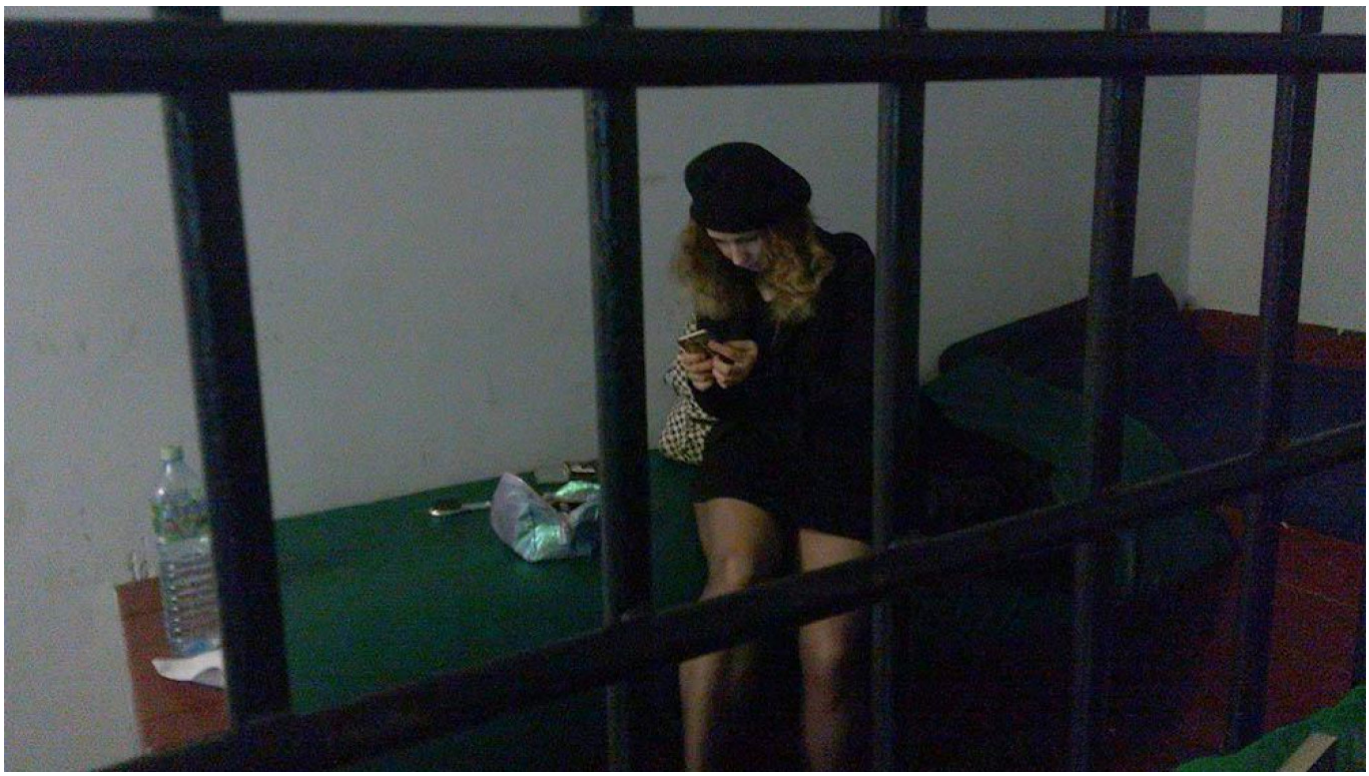

Maria Alekhina (Denis Bochkaryov / Facebook)

A member of Pussy Riot was sentenced to 40 hours of community service on Thursday for unfurling a banner that read "Happy Birthday, Butchers" in front of the FSB headquarters this week.

Wednesday marked the 100-year anniversary of the founding of the Cheka, the notorious Soviet secret police force that orchestrated mass executions during the Russian Civil War. The date is celebrated as Security Services Day in Russia.

Maria Alekhina and two photographers were detained for demonstrating out the headquarters in central Moscow on Wednesday without a permit, according to the OVD-Info police monitoring group.

Related article: Pussy Riot Activist Detained Outside FSB Building Over 'Butchers' Banner

Alekhina pleaded not guilty to the charges, citing a law that permits solo picketers, the Interfax news agency reported.

Alekhina and Pussy Riot member Nadezhda Tolokonnikov were sentenced to two years behind bars in 2013 on charges of "hooliganism" for staging a "punk prayer" in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow. They were given amnesty in 2013 after serving more than a year of their sentence.

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