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Moscow's Pioner Cinema Let Off the Hook for Showing 'Death of Stalin'

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Mikhail Tereschenko / TASS

Russia's Culture Ministry has withdrawn a request to punish a Moscow cinema for showing a satirical film about Stalin.

The ministry withdrew the license for "The Death of Stalin" two days before its premiere in January after public figures argued it insulted the country's Soviet legacy.

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Cinemas which showed the movie by British director Armando Iannucci, would be fined, the ministry warned.

Moscow's historic Pioner cinema, however, went ahead with screenings, triggering police to visit the cinema at a screening and question staff.

At a court hearing on Wednesday, the ministry retracted its request to fine Pioner, the

Vedomosti business daily reports.

Instead, Pioner on Tuesday was handed a fine of 80,000 rubles (almost $1,400) for showing the French film “Stalin’s Couch” — starring Russian citizen Gerard Depardieu — without a license.

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