

Vandals Attack Homes of Prominent Anti-War Russian Activists

The critics are taking the vandalism in stride.

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Prominent figures in Russia's opposition circles have been subject to a spate of vandalism on their homes in the last two days.

Editor-in-chief of the outlawed radio news channel Ekho Moskvyy Alexei Venediktov, St. Petersburg activist Daria Heikinen, and volunteer Kristina Vorotnikova, have all been victims to attacks against their homes.

"This morning I found a pile of manure under my door. Vandals also wrote "Traitor" on the door with red paint. They also filled the locks with an unknown substance and smeared the door handle with something," Heikinen told The Moscow Times.

Kristina Vorotnikova, who worked with former Alexei Navalny aide Irina Fatyanova, was also subject to a similar attack by vandals, suggesting it was carried out by the same perpetrators.

She found manure on her door mat with inscriptions about a “betrayal of the motherland.”

“This situation is linked to my anti-war position,” Heikinen, an activist who heads the St. Petersburg based activist group “Mayak,” said after the incident.

Since Russia invaded pro-Western Ukraine last month, the Kremlin has cracked down on opposition to the war effort, with President Putin [castigating](#) those who have spoken out against the war as “traitors” and “scum.”

Meanwhile, the head of a pig was left outside the home of Alexei Venediktov, editor of iconic liberal radio station Ekho Moskvyy. A sticker of the Ukrainian crest with the phrase “Jewish pig” was plastered to his front door.

The antisemitic attack on Venediktov, who has Jewish ancestry, comes amid a Russian invasion of Ukraine that Kremlin officials is aimed at “demilitarizing” and “denazifying” its pro-Western neighbor. On Friday President Vladimir Putin claimed that “in Russia there is no place for ethnic intolerance.”

In a bid to suppress the information about what the Kremlin has termed a “special military operation,” Russia has blocked access to the country’s independent media channels, with Venediktov’s Ekho Moskvyy being closed and the site destroyed. The station had been on the air in Russia since 1990.

The decision to smear her home with manure didn’t surprise Heikinen, who claims she, and other activists, have fallen prey to such attacks before.

“Taking into account that these “surprises” have happened to other activists – it wasn’t exactly unexpected,” Heikinen said.

“At the beginning of March, a criminal case was fabricated against me because of my anti-war position, so we were expecting attacks to continue,” she said in a phone interview with The Moscow Times.

“So I can't say that I was very surprised or scared. And in general, manure at your front door is not very scary at all.”

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