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United Russia Criticized for Gifting Meat Grinders to Fallen Soldiers' Mothers

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Social media

The ruling United Russia party in Russia's northern Murmansk region has sparked controversy after gifting meat grinders to the mothers of soldiers killed in Ukraine.

The kitchen appliance has become a grim symbol of the Russian military's high-casualty assaults in the Ukraine war. The Wagner mercenary group had previously awarded "Bakhmut Meat Grinder" medals to its fighters.

United Russia's local chapter in the town of Polyarnye Zori included meat grinders in gift packages to mothers whose sons died in the war, according to photos published on the party's social media account Wednesday.

The post drew scathing comments from users who criticized the gift as insensitive.

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United Russia's Murmansk chapter pushed back against the criticism on Thursday, calling the interpretations "inhumane and provocative" and claiming that the women themselves had chosen meat grinders as gifts.

"The meat grinder was not part of the standard gift set, but one woman asked for it, and of course [party members] could not refuse her," said Mayor Maxim Chengayev.

The party's social media page later published a video of one soldier's mother thanking members for what she called a "timely" gift.

"I wanted to buy [the meat grinder] for myself, but you gifted me one just in time," the woman said on camera. "I asked you for it, in principle."

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