The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

St. Petersburg Bookstore Manager Fined Over Sale of Anarchist Memoir

June 16, 2025



t.me/izdaniya

A St. Petersburg court on Monday fined the manager of the century-old bookstore Podpisniye Izdaniya 20,000 rubles ($254) for selling a copy of a jailed Belarusian anarchist's memoir.

The Kuibyshevsky District Court found Yelena Orlova guilty of participating in the activities of an "undesirable" organization, the court's press service said.

Podpisniye Izdaniya was said to have sold Belarusian anarchist Ihar Alinevich's 2013 memoir "I'm Off to Magadan," which Russian authorities claim was published with support from the U.S.-based Anarchist Black Cross Federation.

Russia's Justice Ministry designated the Anarchist Black Cross Federation as an "undesirable" organization in February 2024. The designation effectively bans the organization from operating inside Russia and exposes its members and affiliates to potential criminal prosecution.

Orlova told a St. Petersburg judge that Podpisniye Izdaniya had received "I'm Off to Magadan" before the Anarchist Black Cross Federation was blacklisted in Russia, local media reported. Her lawyer claimed the book was removed from store shelves soon after the February 2024 ban.

A court spokesperson disputed the claim, saying a copy of the book was purchased from the store as recently as December 2024.

Podpisniye Izdaniya was fined earlier this year for selling books said to violate Russia's "LGBT propaganda" laws. Those books included works by authors such as Susan Sontag and Olivia Laing.

In April, Podpisniye Izdaniya was ordered to remove 48 books from its catalogue following the accusations.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/06/16/st-petersburg-bookstore-manager-fined-over-sale-of-anarchist-memoir-a89458