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Chelyabinsk Judge Bans Distribution of Oscar-Winning 'Mr. Nobody Against Putin' in Russia

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A still from the film "Mr. Nobody Against Putin."

A judge in the Ural Mountains city of Chelyabinsk has banned the Oscar-winning documentary film "Mr. Nobody Against Putin" from being distributed in Russia after prosecutors argued that it negatively portrays the country, the exiled news outlet Mediazona reported Thursday.

The Central District Court upheld a request from the state prosecutor's office to have the film removed from three online video platforms, including those operated by VKontakte and Yandex, "in the interests of an indefinite number of persons."

Prosecutors argued that the film gives a negative portrayal of the Russian government and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

They also argued that "Mr. Nobody Against Putin" shows extremist and terrorist

symbols, including the pro-peace white-blue-white flag that Russia's Supreme Court banned.

In addition, prosecutors said the film's co-director, Pavel Talankin, had shot footage of children without receiving the consent of their parents to allow it to be featured in the documentary.

Russia's presidential human rights council used the same argument last week when it said it had asked the Academy that awards the Oscars and the UN cultural agency UNESCO to launch an investigation into the film's production.

Related article: Pavel Talankin Was a 'Nobody Against Putin.' Now He Has an Oscar.

The Kremlin said it had not seen "Mr. Nobody Against Putin" and has not commented on its Oscar win.

The documentary, which shows Talankin witnessing the indoctrination of schoolchildren into Russia's state ideology after the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, took home best documentary feature at the 2026 Academy Awards.

Talankin secretly preserved footage he filmed while working at the school in the Chelyabinsk region town of Karabash before leaving Russia in 2024.

His co-director, American filmmaker David Borenstein, said he sought to frame the footage around broader themes of free speech and indoctrination.

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