

Socialite Says NTV Censored Her Show

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The  **Moscow Times**

NTV has taken off the air an episode of a talk show in which socialite Ksenia Sobchak accuses a senior government official of corruption, drawing allegations that the television channel has censored two programs critical of the authorities in less than a week.

Sobchak [said](#) on Twitter late Tuesday that a video of her confronting the government's youth policy chief in a posh restaurant was to have been featured on a segment of "NTVshniki" in which guests discussed "the hatred of the rich," but the talk show was replaced by another program Sunday.

Sobchak cited Anton Krasovsky, the show's producer, for the information. Krasovsky redirected inquiries to NTV spokeswoman Maria Bezborodova, who refused to comment late Tuesday, [Gazeta.ru said](#).

One of the show's guests, liberal Kirov Governor Nikita Belykh, confirmed participating in the filming of the "NTVshniki" episode with Sobchak but did not elaborate.

Sobchak's confrontation with Federal Agency for Youth Affairs chief Vasily Yakemenko, which she filmed on her cell phone, made ripples in the blogosphere last week.

The minute-long video, shot in the downtown restaurant Mario, where the cost of a meal for one starts at 4,000 rubles (\$130), shows Sobchak asking how Yakemenko could afford to dine in such an establishment. The official dodged the question, as well as a request for an interview.

The video ends with Sobchak recommending that he order Belon oysters (500 rubles per oyster) — advice that quickly became an Internet meme.

Yakemenko has not commented on the issue. His spokeswoman Kristina Potupchik has reacted to Sobchak's confrontation with her boss by calling the socialite "a cheap prostitute." No legal action has followed.

NTV, which tries to balance loyalty to the Kremlin with sharp coverage, canceled a report about illegal abductions by law enforcement agencies in Chechnya on Saturday, but only after it was broadcast in time zones east of the Urals. NTV representatives said later that the report needed "editing," but did not elaborate.

Alexander Cherkasov, a member of the rights group Memorial, said the show was censored on Kremlin orders because it indirectly took aim at Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, Radio Liberty [reported](#).

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