

Soviet Landmark Linked to Drug Use

By [Allison Quinn](#)

January 29, 2013



The sheaf at the center of the monument allegedly contains a hemp leaf. **Vladimir Filonov**

A resident of the southern region of Orenburg has demanded that part of a famous fountain at Moscow's All-Russia Exhibition Center be dismantled for “promoting drug use” because of what he sees as a hemp leaf in the sculpture, news reports said Tuesday.

Vladimir Savinkov filed a complaint with the Federal Anti-Monopoly Service alleging the “promotion of drugs” in the geology pavilion and the Friendship of Nations Fountain at the exhibition center, as well as in advertisements for a range of well-known brands, including Coca-Cola and Krasny Oktyabr (Red October) chocolates, Izvestia reported Tuesday, citing a copy of the complaint.

Apart from the “promotion of drugs” that Savinkov sees in the capital's architecture, he also thinks the problem stems from rampant marketing efforts by Coca-Cola, Yves Saint Laurent's Opium perfume, Rasta guitar straps, Krasny Oktyabr's Krasny Mak (Red Poppy) chocolates and several kinds of hemp-seed oil.

As the basis for his complaints, Savinkov cited violations of Statute 6.13 of the Administrative Code: “promotion of drugs” and causing “personal offense and concern for loved ones.”

Izvestia reported that a source in the Orenburg branch of the Federal Anti-Monopoly Service said the complaints are under review.

Savinkov says the very name of the brand Coca-Cola promotes the growth of the South American coca plant, which is used to produce cocaine. He also noted that coca extract was previously included in the recipe for the famous soft drink.

Yves Saint Laurent is cited in the complaint for its Opium perfume, the slogan for which Savinkov considers highly provocative: “Opium, for those addicted to Yves Saint Laurent.”

Levi Strauss also promotes the use of narcotics, Savinkov says, with the depiction of a hemp leaf on its Rasta guitar straps.

“These products are offered to musicians, both young beginners and famous musicians with thousands of fans, on whom they will have a strong psychological influence,” the complaint says.

Savinkov told Izvestia that he's already so sick and tired of complaining about the issue that his “mouth is sore, and things still haven't budged an inch.”

Sergei Vanin, executive director of a Russian perfume and cosmetics manufacturers' association, said Savinkov's fight with lawyers of such major corporations is doomed.

“This perfume [Opium] has been out in many countries since 1977, and it's never had to change its name,” he said. “The only time sales of it were banned was in Communist China, and even then it was either because of promotion of drug use and because the name reminded the Chinese of the Opium Wars, or it was because the perfume contained the ingredient musk ketone, which was considered harmful.”

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