

TV Host Apologizes for Joking About Ukrainian Killings (Video)

By [The Moscow Times](#)

April 18, 2013

The  **Moscow Times**

TV host Ivan Urgant telling guest Alexander Adabashyan, "I chopped these greens like a red commissar did the residents of a Ukrainian village." (Russian only)

A popular television personality has apologized to the Ukrainian people after he likened the way he chopped fresh herbs on a cooking show to the slaughter of Ukrainian villagers by Bolshevik forces.

The comments by Ivan Urgant on the "Smak" show sparked an angry protest from the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry and a rally of a couple dozen tomato-hurling Ukrainian nationalists outside the Russian Embassy in Kiev.

"I just said a stupid thing without thinking," Urgant said on Channel One on Wednesday

evening. "Believe me, I don't embrace the monstrous and chauvinistic notions that some people have seen in this stupid phrase. Indeed, I never imagined that this would cause an international scandal."

During the cooking show that aired Saturday, Urgant spoke in apparent jest as he helped prominent screenwriter Alexander Adabashyan prepare a soup.

"I chopped these greens like a red commissar did the residents of a Ukrainian village," Urgant said.

"You have cleaned my blade," he then told Adabashyan, who replied: "I am just shaking off the villagers' remains."

The audience is heard laughing in the background.

It was unclear if Urgant was referring to a specific event in the early 20th century, a time when many Ukrainians died at the hands of Soviet authorities.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry immediately demanded that Channel One investigate the incident. "In the modern, civilized world, such jokes are considered bad taste and disrespectful toward the millions of victims of a totalitarian regime," it said in a statement.

Urgant initially offered an apology for his "inappropriate comment" via his Twitter account. But he jokingly added that he would limit his recipes to Ukrainian national dishes on "Smak" in the future and call his children Bogdan, a Ukrainian name.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry responded by criticizing the apology as half-hearted.

Urgant then apologized on air Wednesday.

Channel One has edited Urgant's remarks from the cooking show on its website, but a 30-second clip of that portion of the show has gone viral on YouTube, drawing more than 110,000 views as of Thursday.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/04/18/tv-host-apologizes-for-joking-about-ukrainian-killings-video-a23371>