

# Why Putin Backers Love Bloodhound Gang

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During a recent concert in Ukraine, Jared Hasselhoff, the bass guitarist of the U.S rock group Bloodhound Gang, shoved a Russian flag down his pants to please the audience.

Hasselhoff, who suffers from a slight mental disorder, has shown a fondness over the years for shocking his audiences. He like to run around the stage naked and boast about his drug use, binge drinking and his participation in porn films.

With the Russian flag stunt, Hasselhoff was fully satisfied. The group was expelled in disgrace from Russia, and in the VIP hall at the airport they were attacked by Cossacks who pelted them with tomatoes and rotten eggs and tore up a U.S. flag in front of them. (I wonder how spontaneous demonstrators get into the airport's VIP hall.)

Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky announced that the U.S. group would be expelled from Russian paradise. "We should have put them behind bars," complained Alexander Tkachev, governor of the Krasnodar region. State Duma Deputy Sergei Neverov from United Russia sternly demanded that the Prosecutor General's Office find out who "instructed" the musicians to perform this act of blasphemy.

Desecration of the flag is in general a pretty serious thing. In France, you can be put behind bars not only for the public desecration of the flag but also for the dissemination of pictures about the sad event. In Germany, you can be sentenced to up to five years in prison.

In the U.S., there have been seven attempts in the last quarter century to try to adopt laws to prohibit flag burning outright. Of course, each attempt is accompanied by a whole new epidemic of flag burning. Meanwhile, the U.S. Supreme Court has regularly overruled all guilty verdicts for the desecration of the flag on the grounds that such "blasphemy" is protected by the First Amendment right to free speech.

The U.S. Congress, which regularly tries to ban flag burning, and the U.S. Supreme Court, which just has historically protected free-speech rights, are a perfect illustration of the fact that the desecration of a flag is a highly divisive issue. Freedom of speech should be protected, but at the same time, people should respect a country's national symbol.

Recently, U.S. rapper Lil Wayne trampled the U.S. flag while singing "kill 'em all and let 'em die," and very few were pleased with his actions.

But I can not imagine that a U.S. congressman would turn to the U.S. Attorney General's office to investigate who "instructed" or "paid" the musician to trample the U.S. flag.

Putin's loyal supporters for some reason love to feel offended by the U.S. They suffer from some form of political masochism who, like moths attracted to the light, lay down to be trampled on by the U.S. over and over again. Their slogan is "If they insult us, it means they have at least noticed us."

By the way, Hasselhoff lives in Germany. He left the U.S. as a protest against the policies of former U.S. President George W. Bush. Living in Germany, he once said in an interview that he dreams of seeing a porn movie with Chancellor Angela Merkel as the chief heroine. Needless to say, Merkel had no comment.

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*The views expressed in opinion pieces do not necessarily reflect the position of The Moscow Times.*

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