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Party Says No More Press Access to Russian Athlete Turned Politician After Disastrous Interview

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Viktor Sysoyev **Viktor Sysoyev / VK**

Russia's nationalist Liberal Democrat Party (LDPR) has forbidden 21-year-old former soccer player Viktor Sysoyev from further interactions with the press, the Life tabloid news outlet reported Wednesday. Sysoyev, who was recently elected to the St. Petersburg legislative assembly on LDPR's ticket, asked a reporter to "make up" his political platform when he was unable to answer basic questions.

Oleg Kapitanov, a regional coordinator for the party, said that the athlete would not be available to talk to reporters until he was better prepared.

"Of course, the party's representatives are working with him," Kapitanov told Life. "He's a young man. If you go out and meet the press, you should be prepared," he said.

Viktor Sysoyev, who is expected to "represent the interests of fans and soccer players," and

monitor the city's playgrounds in his new role, made headlines after failing to answer basic questions in an interview with the Fontanka news agency two days after winning his seat.

Ksenia Klochkova, Fontanka.ru: How many meetings did you hold with voters during your campaign?

Viktor Sysoyev: I will not answer this question.

Not a single meeting?

I didn't say that. I'm simply refusing to answer.

Are you well informed about legislative work? About budgetary law? What do you plan to do in the legislative assembly?

Nothing. I'm not prepared to answer these questions.

But you ran for office with some kind of plan and goals?

Probably. I cannot answer. If you want, just think up something yourself.

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