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Russian Police Charge Activist With Extremism for Parodying a Pro-Kremlin Figure

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Danil Alferev **YouTube**

Russian federal agents have launched a criminal investigation against Danil Alferev, a 23-year-old leftist activist, for parodying a speech by a prominent pro-Kremlin political figure, according to the Novaya Gazeta newspaper.

The Ulyanovsk branch of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) is responding to a speech Alferev made in November 2014 at a Communist demonstration, where he repeated verbatim remarks by Andrei Kovalenko, a representative of the "Eurasian Youth Union," changing only the words "mass media" to "State Duma" and addressing the speech to Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov, instead of President Vladimir Putin.

"Today in this country, I see nothing but cowardice, deceit, and betrayal! Our representatives have been in the State Duma, they've been on the city council, and everywhere we've seen

these people, we've seen the faces of traitors! This is where the fifth column hides. These are the people responsible for the Maidan Revolution in Ukraine!" Alferev yelled into a microphone at the rally in 2014.

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The FSB's charges are already the second against Alferev. For the same speech, Russia's Federal Investigative Committee has charged Alferev with a separate crime: promoting hatred against "serving representatives of the government" — an offense that could also send him to prison for several years, if convicted.

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