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Russian Activist Detained For Posting 'F-- the Church' Three Years Ago

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Anton Vaganov / TASS

A teenage activist in the Siberian city of Irkutsk has been detained for "insulting the feelings of religious believers" in a social media post published more than three years ago.

Nineteen-year-old Dmitry Litvin said that police arrived at his home at 6 a.m. on Saturday morning. Officials interrogated him for nine hours before charging him in relation to a photo he had posted on Russian social network VKontakte, the Deutsche-Welle news site reported.

The post showed an image of a raised middle finger superimposed onto a photograph of a church.

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Litvin claims that the charges are being used as a pretext to hamper his work as an activist, including initiatives related the anti-corruption rallies which swept Russia on March 26.

“Offices seized items from me and my friends which couldn’t have had anything to do with insulting the feelings of believers: megaphones, anarchist literature, anti-fascist stickers," Litvin said. "Most of the questions I faced were not related to the criminal case on which I was formally detained. It was obvious [that they were] were interested in our public activities."

If found guilty, Litvin could face three years behind bars or a fine of up to 500,000 rubles (~$8,900).

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