

Russian Boy Who Gave Speech in Bundestag on Nazi POW Threatened

November 23, 2017



Nikolai Desyatnichenko (r) / Achim Melde / Deutscher Bundestag

The mother of a Russian student who gave an anti-war speech in the German parliament [says](#) he has received intimidating threats, even as the Kremlin has urged for calm.

In a visit to the Bundestag, Nikolai Desyatnichenko, a teenager from the northern industrial city of Novy Urengoy, described the story of a 21-year-old German soldier taken captive after the battle of Stalingrad who died “in the severe conditions of captivity.”

Desyatnichenko said he had been moved by a visit to the grave of Wehrmacht soldiers in the Chelyabinsk region.

“Innocent people were killed there, many of whom wanted to live in peace and did not wish to fight,” he said.

Footage of the speech was [uploaded](#) to YouTube and his school’s page on social network VK. The video has since become inaccessible.

The speech triggered an uproar among conservatives in the Russian parliament and state media, which generally glorify Soviet forces in World War II.

"He's being insulted and called names, and being threatened that they're going to get him," state news agency TASS quoted Nikolai's mother as saying.

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His speech, originally seven or eight minutes, had to be cut down to two minutes, she said, and for that reason might have been misunderstood.

"The purpose of his trip was a mission of peace, not to incite conflict."

A pro-Putin blogger has [accused](#) Desyatnichenko of supporting fascism and a Russian lawmaker has publicly [mocked](#) him for not being aware of Nazi death camps. Russia's children's rights ombudswoman Anna Kuznetsova has [demanded](#) an investigation.

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Vladimir Dzhabarov, deputy head of the Committee for International Affairs in the Federation Council [called](#) the speech "impermissible" and urged the government of Yamalo-Nenets region to investigate the school in Novy Urengoy.

He blamed "not the child, of course, but the grown-ups" and said law-enforcement should be involved.

Boris Cheryshov, deputy of the State Duma's Committee on Education [said](#) the school should be investigated to see whether the teacher or parents initiated the speech.

Novy Urengoi Mayor Ivan Kostogriz has defended the trip to the Bundestag as part of a German-Russian exchange program arranged to coincide with the commemoration of the war.

"His speech, using the example of the story of this German soldier calls for peaceful existence on the whole Earth and rejection of war, bloodshed, fascism, suffering, and violence as such," Kostogriz said in a press release.

The Kremlin on Tuesday also appeared to side with that view. President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov [said](#) "it's clear the student did not mean any harm and it's clear he was just concerned."

"It's not right to accuse him of any evil intentions, or propagandizing Nazism and all other deadly sins."

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