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Russian TV Propagandist Challenged to Duel for Calling Church Protesters 'Demons'

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Vladimir Solovyov **Kremlin.ru**

A Russian state television propagandist has been challenged to a duel after calling protesters against a church's construction on park grounds "demons."

Vladimir Solovyov, a pro-Kremlin pundit who hosts one of Russia's most-watched news shows, has repeatedly referred to residents of Yekaterinburg who took to the streets to defend a riverside park as "demons." In Tuesday's broadcast, Solovyov told angry local listeners that "I'll come down to [Yekaterinburg] to chase you demons around."

Related article: Why Are Russians Clashing Over a New Cathedral in Yekaterinburg?

This week, a blogger from the southern Russian city of Krasnodar challenged Solovyov to a duel for his remarks.

“Don’t drag out the satisfaction, demon,” wrote Kirill Guryev, who referred to himself as “not an athlete or a fighter but a simple Russian journalist,” in an open letter to Solovyov.

“You allow yourself to make these statements because, as your like-minded General Zolotov said, no one has kicked your a--,” Guryev said, referring to another high-profile duel challenge issued by a senior security official.

Related article: Russian Deputy Submits Bill to Regulate Duels

Viktor Zolotov, President Vladimir Putin’s former bodyguard and current head of Russia’s National Guard, challenged an opposition leader to a duel in September over his video investigation into corruption.

Some 24 hours later, a lawmaker submitted a draft bill in the State Duma outlining dueling rules for state officials. No date has been chosen for its first hearing in the lower house of parliament.

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