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Critical Russian Emigres Should Have Property Seized, Lawmakers Say

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State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin. **duma.gov.ru**

Russians who criticize their country after fleeing abroad should have their remaining property confiscated, lawmakers proposed Friday in an apparent effort to increase pressure on exiled anti-war Russians.

Vyacheslav Volodin, speaker of the lower-house State Duma, said "scoundrels" who have left the country can still face criminal prosecution for "insulting Russia, its inhabitants, soldiers and officers."

"The scoundrels who left live comfortably thanks to our country. While abroad, they rent out real estate and continue to receive royalties at the expense of Russian citizens," Volodin wrote on the Telegram messaging app. Telegram.

"At the same time, they allow themselves to pour dirt on Russia in public and insult our soldiers and officers."

“According to Russian law, such statements can be viewed as calls for extremism, rehabilitation of Nazism or discrediting the Armed Forces,” he wrote.

Volodin said amending Russia’s Criminal Code with a clause on property confiscation would be the “correct” punishment for exiled anti-war Russians found guilty of these offenses.

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His idea received backing from Andrei Klishas, chairman of the upper-house Federation Council’s constitutional committee.

“This approach is possible, but there needs to be the formulation of a criminal offense [and] an amendment to the Criminal Code,” he told the state-run TASS news agency.

It was not immediately clear if or when Volodin’s proposal to confiscate emigre Russians' properties would be considered in the State Duma, which returns to work next week.

The Kremlin cautioned against “opening any Pandora's boxes” by confiscating the property of Russians who have went abroad.

“We must make sure that those who left and are not enemies of Russia want to return,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Hundreds of thousands of Russians have fled abroad since Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine last February, including those facing criminal prosecution for anti-war acts.

Earlier this week, Russian lawmaker Yevgeny Popov proposed canceling the passports of dissenting Russians who fled abroad.

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