

Liberal Democratic Party Declares War on Ponomaryov

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Liberal Democratic Party on Wednesday said it would pursue A Just Russia Deputy Ilya Ponomaryov across the country for his accusations that Vladimir Zhirinovskiy plagiarized his Ph.D. dissertation, a news report said.

In February, Ponomaryov appealed to the Prosecutor General to strip Zhirinovskiy of his Duma seat, accusing him of plagiarizing and falsifying his Ph.D. dissertation. In turn, Zhirinovskiy asked to file libel charges against Ponomaryov.

During a plenary session of the State Duma on Wednesday, Vladimir Ovsyannikov, a Liberal Democratic Party deputy, openly warned that his party would make a point to disturb Ponomaryov's peaceful existence, RIA-Novosti reported Wednesday.

"We declare Mr. Ponomaryov a persona non grata in all corners of our country. Our political offices and our party's organizations will greet him with warm embraces," he said. "So, I

don't know where he will be comfortable within the Russian Federation, since he so often travels around and incites people to take to the streets."

Ponomaryov responded by asking the Duma speaker to condemn such attacks and to deprive the Liberal Democratic Party of the right to speak, saying he considers the statements a physical threat.

"We see a very disturbing trend: From one meeting to the next, insults are constantly directed from this party at our party, and nobody is stopping these statements," Ponomaryov told Naryshkin.

In response, Naryshkin said he did not see Ovsyannikov's statement as a physical threat but simply as "political criticism," adding that Ponomaryov himself "always supported political criticism. Right? Thanks."

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