

'Spiritual Values' More Important than Material Wellbeing, Duma Deputy Claims

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Newly-elected State Duma Deputy Pyotr Tolstoy has declared "spiritual values" to be more important than material well-being and that the former will itself lead to Russia's economic development.

Speaking about his future work in parliament on Tuesday, Tolstoy told the Govorit Moskva radio station that spiritual values amongst the population guaranteed well-being.

"Unequivocally I would say [that there should be] spiritual values first, and then well being," he said "Without them there can be no national dignity, nor economic development and no self-respect among the population."

Tolstoy, the great great grandson of the Russian literary great , previously worked as a television presenter before running for office. He also pledged to "champion regular people, with no compromises," claiming "no one should live in poverty in a great country," Govorit Moskva reported.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has previously spoken out in support of strengthening Russian society's spiritual underpinning, claiming in 2012 that it lacked compassion and charity.

“We are witnessing a lack of those values which have always made us stronger and more resilient, which have always made us proud,” he said, whilst emphasizing the necessity of supporting institutions which upheld such "traditional values."

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