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Russian Soldier Charged With Recruiting Nazi Sympathizers, Media Reports

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Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency

A Russian soldier has been reportedly charged with extremism for recruiting fellow soldiers guarding Defense Ministry buildings in central Moscow into his budding Nazi party.

Before his conscription, Private Oleg Konstantinov formed the National Socialist Workers' Party of Russia on the popular Vkontakte social media platform under the online alias of Oleg Breitenberg. There, he actively pressed his 38 supporters to elect a party leader "fuhrer" before his conscription into the army in the fall of 2017, the Kommersant business daily reported Saturday.

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Investigators believe Konstantinov recruited six fellow soldiers on guard duty at the imposing Russian Defense Ministry buildings across the river from Gorky Park, Kommersant cited case

materials as saying.

"His comrades, claiming that Private Konstantinov had misled them, testified against him as an organizer of an illegal group," the publication reported.

Konstantinov pleaded guilty and has been placed in pre-trial detention with an accomplice, according to Kommersant.

He faces up to three years in prison on charges of inciting hatred and four years for creating an extremist organization.

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