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Kremlin Spokesman's Son Says Fought for Wagner in Ukraine

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Nikolay Choles, archive photo. **Nikolay Choles / Facebook**

The son of Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman has claimed that he fought with Russia's Wagner mercenaries in Ukraine in a rare example of the children of senior Russian officials serving at the front.

Nikolai Peskov, 33, who also uses the last name Choles after his British stepfather, is the son of veteran Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov.

Peskov junior credited his father for "helping" him get in touch with Wagner in an interview published by the Komsomolskaya Pravda tabloid late Saturday.

Peskov senior on Monday confirmed that his son had participated in what Moscow calls its "special military operation" in Ukraine.

"He's reached that decision, he's an adult," Dmitry Peskov told reporters, declining to elaborate further.

Wagner founder Yevgeny Prigozhin previously claimed the Kremlin spokesman had requested his son join the notorious private military company as an artilleryman.

“I considered it my duty,” Peskov’s son told Komsomolskaya Pravda. “I couldn’t sit on the side and watch how my friends leave [for Ukraine].”

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He claimed to have entered Wagner’s ranks under an assumed name to avoid being recognized.

Prigozhin said he had helped forge Peskov’s documents to allow him to join Wagner anonymously.

Peskov said he had served out a contract of “just under half a year.”

“I’m immensely proud of everyone who is there now, all the lads are doing amazing work. And I believe that all the tasks that have been set will be achieved. I’m convinced of that,” he said.

Peskov lived in Britain for a decade after his birth in the early 1990s and served in Russia’s Strategic Rocket Forces in the early 2010s, according to Reuters.

Following Peskov’s interview to Komsomolskaya Pravda, independent Russian media published reports casting doubt over his claims to have been at the front — citing Peskov family acquaintances, Wagner fighters and speeding ticket records in Moscow.

Peskov prompted widespread derision last year when, contacted by an associate jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny pretending to be a military recruitment officer, he claimed an exemption from the draft.

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