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American Who Helped Russian Forces in Ukraine Receives Russian Citizenship

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Daniel Martindale (left) shakes the hand of Denis Pushilian (right). **Video grab**

An American man who claims to have assisted Russian troops in Ukraine for two years received a Russian passport on Tuesday, state media reported.

Authorities in the Moscow-controlled Donetsk region identified the man as Daniel Richard Martindale and said he had played a "key role" in helping Russian forces seize the village of Bohoiavlenka near the occupied city of Vuhledar in October 2023.

Martindale appeared in a televised passport ceremony at the Donetsk representative office in Moscow, where he recited the oath of citizenship in Russian. The pro-Kremlin head of Donetsk, Denis Pushilin, said President Vladimir Putin had signed a decree granting him citizenship.

"I, Daniel Richard Martindale, voluntarily and consciously accepting the citizenship of the Russian Federation, swear to observe the constitution," Martindale said.

Originally from New York, Martindale told reporters last year that he had done "everything to save the lives of Russian soldiers" and requested Russian citizenship during a press conference in Moscow.

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Pushilin claimed Martindale provided intelligence that helped Russian forces capture the Ukrainian city of Kurakhove in December.

The pro-Kremlin official also said Martindale had to be rescued due to threats to his safety. "When it became clear that Daniel's continued presence in that area was life-threatening, our special services conducted a highly complex rescue," he wrote on Telegram.

Martindale said he plans to become a farmer in Russian-occupied Ukraine, where he said "people may have experienced what I have."

"They understand that the land has indeed been liberated from criminal power and we're all looking forward to a better future," he said.

Russian state media reported that Martindale's family supports his decision to remain in the region and plans to visit him.

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