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Pro-Putin Activist Complains of 'Prison-Like' Conditions at Russian Consulate in Australia

By AFP

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Simeon Boikov. **@AussieCossack**

An Australian pro-Putin activist who has spent nearly three years sheltering inside the Russian Consulate in Sydney to avoid prison now says he is living in "prison-like conditions" imposed by his hosts.

Simeon Boikov, who calls himself the "Aussie Cossack" on social media, moved into the consulate in December 2022 after assaulting a 76-year-old man at a protest. He was later convicted of the assault in absentia.

Boikov, known for mixing pro-Kremlin and anti-Western rhetoric with conspiracy theories, told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation that he is effectively confined to his room, cannot move around the building without an escort and is frequently denied visitors.

“I’ve never felt welcome in this building for one day,” he said in an interview published Tuesday. “It’s always been stressed. It’s always been on edge.”

He claimed that consulate staff want him removed and sent to prison.

The activist previously spent four months in jail in 2022 for breaching a court suppression order by naming a priest charged with child abuse. He rose to prominence during the Covid-19 pandemic as an organizer of anti-lockdown protests.

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Boikov has vowed not to leave the consulate if doing so would land him back in police custody.

“If I have a medical emergency and need a doctor, don’t call an ambulance because I’m not going to leave,” he told the ABC. “Call the funeral company to bring the hearse. I’m not going to leave alive.”

He also said his first child is due in the coming weeks and that consular officials refused his request to hold the christening inside the mission.

The Russian Consulate did not respond to a request for comment.

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