

Probation for Russian Spy's Son

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PORTLAND, Oregon — A U.S. judge has sentenced the son of an imprisoned spy to five years of probation for helping his father contact his old Russian handlers in a scheme to collect money from them while behind bars.

Nathan Nicholson, son of ex-CIA agent Harold “Jim” Nicholson, had pleaded guilty to a pair of conspiracy charges and could have faced a prison term.

But U.S. prosecutors say the 26-year-old son helped them build a case against his father on charges that the older Nicholson used his son as a courier to contact Russian agents from prison so that he could try to get a “pension” from them.

In a sentencing memo, prosecutors recommended probation for the younger Nicholson because of his “extraordinary early cooperation against his father” and because he had been manipulated and groomed by his father.

Nathan Nicholson apologized to U.S. District Judge Anna Brown at his hearing this week, adding that he was “terribly embarrassed” by his actions and wanted to move forward and earn his college degree in computer science.

The son last year pleaded guilty to conspiring with his father to launder money and act as an agent of a foreign government. Prosecutors say Nathan Nicholson jetted to Mexico, Peru and Cyprus between 2006 and 2008 to meet with Russian agents and collect money from them.

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