The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Gulag Historian Cleared of Child Pornography Charges

April 05, 2018



Yury Dmitriev **Youtube / novayagazeta**

A court has cleared a prominent Russian historian and rights activist of child pornography charges that could have landed him in jail for 15 years.

Yury Dmitriev, 62, was arrested in December 2016 after authorities searched his home and discovered naked photos of his adopted underage daughter on his computer as well as parts of a hunting rifle. Dmitriev dismissed the child pornography accusations and said that he had taken the photos to monitor his daughter's health and physical development for child services.

Link:

The Mediazona news website reported that the crowded hallway inside the courthouse in the northwestern city of Petrozavodsk erupted in applause after the acquittal was announced.

Dmitriev was also cleared of a third count of depravity involving a minor.

He was handed 2.5 years of probation on charges of possessing a firearm, but will only have to serve three months, given the time he has already spent in prison, the 7x7 news website reported.

“I’m happy. I knew that it was all untrue, and I'm glad that it's been proven,” Dmitriev’s other daughter Yekaterina was cited as saying.

Dmitriev, a Gulag historian who heads the Karelia Memorial Society, has irked the authorities by investigating Soviet-era crimes, including uncovering a 9,000-body mass grave dating back to the Great Purge.

Memorial is an independent NGO that researches Soviet political repression and human rights.

Dmitriev was declared mentally fit in February after undergoing enforced psychiatric testing over fears that he could be falsely declared insane, the investigative Novaya Gazeta newspaper reported at the time.

“What are they congratulating me for? That I’m not a pedophile? [...] But I already knew that!” Dmitriev said after the verdict.

Update: A previous version of this article incorrectly stated that Dmitriev was put on house arrest.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/04/05/gulag-historian-cleared-child-pornography-charges-a61069