Danish court sentences ex-minister to prison for child abuse material

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A former Danish government minister was jailed for four months on Monday for possession of thousands of images of child sexual abuse.  
  
Henrik Sass Larsen, once a senior Social Democrat who served as industry minister, admitted to having more than 6,000 photographs and 2,000 videos on his computer depicting sexual abuse of children.  
  
He had denied the charges, saying he had the material because he was trying to find out who had abused him as a child.  
  
Prosecutor Maria Cingari said she was “satisfied” with the verdict but added that it was sad that someone “who managed to make the most out of their life despite a bad start finds himself in such a situation.”  
  
Sass Larsen was placed in foster care as a child before being adopted.  
  
“You should never be in possession of child pornography, no matter the reason,” Cingari added.  
  
During his trial, the 59-year-old told the court he had received a link in 2018 to a 50-year-old video showing him being sexually abused when he was three years old.  
  
He testified that he received another video clip in 2020, in which a three-year-old girl was raped in his presence when he was around the same age.  
  
The two videos disappeared after he viewed them, he said.  
  
He told the court he regretted not having contacted the police when he received the videos.  
  
Sass Larsen was also accused of being in possession of a child sex doll, but the court did not find him guilty on that charge.  
  
His lawyer, Berit Ernst, told reporters that “we’ll see if it is a definitive end or if we will appeal.”  
  
The scandal came to light last March and led to his expulsion from the Social Democratic Party.  
  
At the time, Social Democratic Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen expressed her shock over the case.  
  
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