

Churchill descendant faces drug sentence

by UPI

SYDNEY -- The great-grandson of former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill pleaded guilty to a major charge of drug racketeering in Australia. Nicholas Barton, 33, entered the plea Monday in Sydney, and will be sentenced Feb. 22, a correspondent for Britain's Daily Telegraph reported. Co-defendant Reese Woodgate, 42, of New Zealand also pleaded guilty to involvement in the multimillion dollar drug racket, which could bring a 20-year jail sentence. The men were arrested in a series of raids in June 2006 in Sydney in which 250,000 ecstasy tablets with a street value of around \$10 million were seized. Barton emigrated to Australia from Britain at the age of 18 and took out Australian citizenship in the 1990s. His mother, Arabella Spencer Churchill, is the granddaughter of Winston and daughter of his son Randolph. Barton's father attended the hearing and told the newspaper his son had been planning to return to England to visit his ailing mother. "In the stress of wanting to go home he made an error of judgment which he deeply regrets," the father said.

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