

NEWS

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Camden Cocaine Dealer Admits Murdering His Supplier

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CAMDEN – The leader of a Camden street corner drug set pleaded guilty today to his involvement in a drug conspiracy that peddled powder and crack cocaine and to protecting his drug set operations through the use of threats and violence, including the murder of one of his suppliers during a disagreement over the quality of crack cocaine, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Moises Hernandez, 27, of Camden, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Robert B. Kugler to a two-count Superseding Information that charges him with one count of conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute a crack cocaine and one count of using and discharging a firearm in relation to a drug trafficking crime, thereby causing the death Cesar Severino, without malice, upon a sudden quarrel and heat of passion. Judge Kugler continued the defendant's detention and scheduled sentencing for Aug. 13, 2008.

At his plea hearing, Hernandez admitted that from May 2006 to July 2006 he conspired with Peralta Pimentel, 52, a.k.a. "Bolivia," of Jersey City, and Francisco Martinez, 36, a.k.a. "Frank," of Philadelphia, Severino, who was 45 and resided in Camden at the time of his death, and others, to distribute crack cocaine. Hernandez admitted that on various occasions Severino supplied him with crack cocaine to distribute through the drug set he controlled in the area of 32nd and Pierce Streets.

On June 22, 2006, Severino supplied Hernandez with approximately 28 grams of crack cocaine, some of which was sold at Hernandez's drug set. Hernandez admitted that while selling that crack cocaine he learned that the drug fronted to him by Severino was of poor quality and that the "bad" crack caused him to lose customers at his drug set. Hernandez stated that he returned the crack to Severino and on numerous occasions called him to arrange a meeting to have him replace the bad crack with good quality crack cocaine.

Hernandez admitted that on July 8, 2006, he went to Severino's residence to deal with the issue and to get better quality cocaine or crack cocaine to sell at his drug set. Hernandez stated that he met with Severino and a second male in the back yard of Severino's house and that while discussing the problem Severino got angry and told the other man to go get Severino's gun. During the argument, Severino slap Hernandez in the face, who at the time had a broken jaw, according to Hernandez. Hernandez admitted that by the time Severino's associate returned, he was upset that Severino lied to him about the drugs and money and he was also scared that Severino's associate had a gun, so he shot Severino one time in the stomach.

Hernandez was charged in a criminal Complaint on July 13, 2006, and arrested on July 14, 2006. Hernandez, Pimentel, Martinez and three others were charged in a Superseding Indictment that was returned on Oct. 25. According tot he Indictment, Pimentel and Martinez were cocaine wholesalers who were responsible for supplying multi-kilo shipments of both powder and crack cocaine to Severino for distribution to

drug set managers in Camden neighborhoods. All of Hernandez's co-defendants have pleaded guilty to charges. Pimental and Martinez are awaiting sentencing.

The arrests resulted from a long-term investigation was an effort of the DEA, ICE, N.J. State Police, Camden County Prosecutor's Office and Sheriff's Department, Camden H.I.D.T.A. Task Force, as well as the Police Departments of Camden City, Cherry Hill, Pennsauken and Maple Shade.

Christie credited Special Agents of the DEA, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Gerard P. McAleer in Newark; ICE, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Kyle Hutchins in Newark, Investigators with the Camden County Prosecutor's Office, under the direction of Acting Prosecutor Joshua Ottenberg; the New Jersey State Police, under the direction of Colonel Joseph R. Fuentes, Superintendent; the Camden Police Department, under the direction of Chief Edward Hargis; the Cherry Hill Police Department, under the direction of Chief Charlie Jones, the Pennsauken Police Department, under the direction of Chief John J. Coffey, the Maple Shade Police Department, under the direction of Chief Edmund C. Vernier, the Camden County Sheriff's Department, under the direction of Acting Sheriff Charles H. Billingham; and the member agencies of the H.I.D.T.A. task force .

The Government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Richardson of the Criminal Division in Camden and Sanda Moser of the Criminal Division in Newark.

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Defense Attorney: Thomas J. Gosse, Esq. Haddon Heights