



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 18, 2008

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
YUSILL SCRIBNER,
REBEKAH CARMICHAEL
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600

FBI
JIM MARGOLIN
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 384-2720

NYPD
PAUL BROWNE
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(646) 610-8989

EIGHTEEN CHARGED WITH DRUG AND FIREARMS TRAFFICKING
IN AREA OF 169th STREET AND GRAND CONCOURSE

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, MARK J. MERSHON, Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and RAYMOND W. KELLY, the Police Commissioner of the City of New York, announced today the arrests yesterday of twelve individuals for drug and firearms trafficking crimes allegedly committed at a building located at 1269 Grand Concourse, between 168th and 169th Streets in the Bronx, as well as two nearby buildings. Crack cocaine distribution charges were brought against a total of sixteen defendants, six of whom were also charged with trafficking in firearms. Three of the latter group were also charged with possessing firearms after previously being convicted of a felony. Two other defendants were charged in a separate Complaint with firearms trafficking alone.

Yesterday's takedown represents the culmination of a year-long law enforcement operation led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") and the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"). The operation involved numerous purchases of crack cocaine made by confidential sources from drug and gun dealers at 1269 Grand Concourse ("the Building"), as well as numerous purchases of firearms and ammunition from individuals at both the Building and two nearby buildings. According to the Complaints filed today in Manhattan federal court:

The crack cocaine and firearms traffickers at the

Building -- described in Complaint 08 Mag. 1328 (the "1328 Complaint") as the "Grand Concourse Crew" or the "Crew" -- were led for several years by NATHANIEL L. ORTIZ, a/k/a "Nate," the defendant. The brother of NATHANIEL L. ORTIZ -- NATHANAEL R. ORTIZ, a/k/a "Bob," a/k/a "Bebe" -- is also a member of the Grand Concourse Crew and a participant in the Crew's narcotics conspiracy. According to the 1328 Complaint, LUCECITA VARELA, a/k/a "Lucy," believed to be the wife of NATHANIEL L. ORTIZ, has recently assumed a leadership role in the Crew.

The Building is designed in a way that makes it difficult for law enforcement officers to conduct surveillance of individuals within the Building without being detected. For example, no one can enter the Building without first passing through an outer iron gate, a courtyard, and a front door, which is typically locked. In addition, because of the way the windows in the stairwells are situated, a person sitting by the windows on the stairway landings can act as a "look-out" with respect to the front entrance of the Building, and can warn persons inside whenever law enforcement agents appear to approach.

Together, the 1328 Complaint and Complaint 08 May 1327 describe containing the crack distribution charges describes nearly fifty transactions in which confidential sources purchased at least 972 "dime bags" of crack cocaine (each costing \$10), and dozens of firearms. The firearms and ammunition purchased in connection with this case included the following:

Firearms/ammunition purchased
Harrington & Richardson Arms Company .38 caliber break front revolver
Jennings Arms Company .380 caliber semi-automatic pistol
Ruger .44 caliber magnum Redhawk Model 6 shot revolver
Rossi .38 caliber revolver with five rounds of ammunition
Smith & Wesson .44 caliber magnum revolver -
Plainfield machine Company Model M-1 .30 caliber assault rifle
Israeli Military Industries Uzi 9-mm semiautomatic pistol
Smith & Wesson 9-mm semiautomatic pistol with a defaced serial number, loaded with six hollow-point rounds in the magazine

semi-automatic 9-mm pistol equipped with a silencer and a magazine containing 16 live 9-mm rounds
Norenko Sportster assault rifle
Star 9-mm pistol
Rossi .38 caliber revolver
Llama Minimax .45 caliber pistol
Cobray M12
Hi-Point .380 caliber semi-automatic pistol
Harrington & Richardson .22 caliber revolver
Ruger 9-mm semi-automatic pistol
FEG Model P-63 semi-automatic pistol
VZOR Model 70 semi-automatic pistol
.22 caliber firearm
.22 caliber firearm
9-mm firearm
9-mm firearm
shotgun with 100 rounds of buckshot ammunition
111 rounds of .223 caliber ammunition
27 rounds of 9-mm ammunition
28 rounds of .38 caliber ammunition
36 rounds of .45 caliber ammunition
588 rounds of ammunition

The defendants face the following potential penalties, per count:

United States v. Nathaniel L. Ortiz, a/k/a "Nate," et al., 08
Mag. 1328

Count	Charge	Defendants	Potential Sentence
One	Conspiracy to distribute over 50 grams of crack cocaine	NATHANIEL L. ORTIZ, a/k/a "Nate," NATHANAEL R. ORTIZ, a/k/a "Bob," a/k/a "Bebe," LUCECITA VARELA, a/k/a "Lucy," ISAAC SANTIAGO, a/k/a "Ice," JORGE MARCIAL, WILLIAM VELASQUEZ, a/k/a "Ant," a/k/a "Superman," JOSE TAVARES, a/k/a "Vega," a/k/a "Jose M. Nin," JASON COLON, a/k/a "Mini Me," JOSE REYES, RICHARD DELEON, STELLA MARTINEZ, ABEL BUSTOS, DAVID ORTIZ, a/k/a "Bori," LARRY BROCKINGTON, a/k/a "Black," JOSELIN PENA, and CATHERINE FIGUEROA	Maximum: Life in prison Mandatory minimum: ten years in prison
Two	Firearms trafficking	NATHANAEL R. ORTIZ, a/k/a "Bob," a/k/a "Bebe," JORGE MARCIAL, JOSE TAVARES, a/k/a "Vega," a/k/a "Jose M. Nin," JOSE REYES, DAVID ORTIZ, a/k/a "Bori," and ISAAC SANTIAGO, a/k/a "Ice,"	Five years in prison
Three Four Five	Felon in possession of a firearm	NATHANAEL R. ORTIZ, a/k/a "Bob," a/k/a "Bebe," DAVID ORTIZ, a/k/a "Bori," ISAAC SANTIAGO, a/k/a "Ice,"	Ten years in prison

United States v. Marcus Deonarine and Albert Olivari, a/k/a
"Anthony", 80 Mag. 1327

Count	Charge	Defendants	Potential Sentence
One	Trafficking in firearms	MARCUS DEONARINE ALBERT OLIVARI, a/k/a "Anthony"	Five years in prison
Two	Traveling from one state to another to further illegal trafficking in firearms	MARCUS DEONARINE ALBERT OLIVARI, a/k/a "Anthony"	Ten years in prison

At this time, twelve defendants have been arrested, five remain at large, and one is in custody on other charges.

Mr. GARCIA praised the outstanding investigative work of the FBI and the NYPD.

Assistant United States Attorneys JESSICA ROTH, TODD BLANCHE, and MICHAEL MAIMIN are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Complaints are merely accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

08-150

###