



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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**FEDERAL MAGISTRATE JUDGE IN EL PASO ORDERS
BRITISH BUSINESSMAN DETAINED PENDING TRIAL**

United States Attorney Robert Pitman announced that British businessman Christopher Tappin, age 65, of Orpington, Kent, will remain in federal custody pending trial. Jury selection and trial, before United States District Judge David Briones in El Paso, has yet to be scheduled.

This afternoon, United States Magistrate Judge Robert Castaneda ruled that Tappin posed a flight risk. Tappin, the subject of a formal U.S. extradition request filed with the United Kingdom, arrived in El Paso 11 days ago while in the custody of Deputy U.S. Marshals to face federal charges in connection with a scheme to illegally export parts used in Hawk surface-to-air missile systems to Iran.

Tappin is charged by a federal grand jury indictment with one count each of conspiracy to illegally export defense articles, aiding and abetting the illegal export of defense articles and conspiracy to conduct illegal financial transactions. Upon conviction, Tappin faces up to five years in federal prison on the charge of conspiracy to illegally export defense articles; up to ten years in federal prison on the charge of aiding and abetting the illegal export of defense articles; and up to 20 year in federal prison on the charge of conspiracy to conduct illegal financial transactions.

It is important to note that an indictment is merely a charge and should not be considered as evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

This case is being investigated by agents from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations. Assistant United States Attorney Greg McDonald is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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