

EAUU GMM BAS

MISCAM-DRUG TRAFFICKING

CUBANS REVEAL U.S. BASED DRUG TRAFFICKERS SENTENCED:

HAVANA, SEPTEMBER 23, REUTER -THREE RESIDENTS OF FLORIDA WERE EACH SENTENCED TO EIGHT YEARS IN PRISON BY A CUBAN COURT LAST MONTH AFTER BEING CONVICTED OF DRUG TRAFFICKING AND ILLEGAL ENTRY INTO CUBAN TERRITORY, THE MAGAZINE +BOHEMIA+ REVEALED HERE.

THE ARTICLE SAID THAT FLOYD SMELTZER, BOB MORRIS AND PEDRO HERNANDEZ (FOR SPANISH LANGUAGE: PEDRO HERNANDEZ GARCIA) WERE CAPTURED WHEN THEIR BOAT, THE +RAMONITA+ OF KEY WEST, WAS TOSSED ONTO REEFS NEAR THE CUBAN COAST DURING A STORM LAST MARCH. THE BOHEMIA ARTICLE WAS THE FIRST PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THEIR ARREST AND SENTENCING.

BOHEMIA SAID THAT THE BOAT HAD PICKED UP TWO AND A HALF TONNES OF MARIJUANA IN TWENTY-SEVEN SACKS NEAR B RIOS, JAMAICA AND WAS ON ITS WAY TO FLORIDA.

BOHEMIA SAID THAT THE MEN THREW THE SACKS OFF THE BOAT BEFORE THEY WERE RESCUED BY A CUBAN HELICOPTER BUT THAT ALL THE MARIJUANA WAS RECOVERED BY CUBAN AUTHORITIES.

A PHOTO SHOWS SMELTZER AND MORRIS, UNDER ARMED GUARD, PARTICIPATING IN THE BURNING OF THE MARIJUANA AT A HAVANA CREMATORIUM SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THEIR CAPTURE.

THE U.S. ADDRESS GIVEN IN THE ARTICLE FOR SMELTZER AND MORRIS IS PEARL TRAILER PARK, STOCK ISLAND, FLORIDA. FERNANDEZ IS DESCRIBED AS A CUBAN WHO ARRIVED IN FLORIDA IN 1980 AND LIVES IN MIAMI.

BOHEMIA SAID THAT SINCE 1970, 330 DRUG TRAFFICKERS, HALF OF THEM U.S. CITIZENS OR RESIDENTS, WERE CAPTURED AND SENTENCED TO LONG PRISON TERMS IN CUBAN WHEN THEIR BOATS OR PLANES, ON THEIR WAY TO THE UNITED STATES, STRAYED INTO CUBAN TERRITORIAL WATERS OR AIR SPACE. IT SAID THAT CUBAN AUTHORITIES HAD CONFISCATED AND DESTROYED DURING THIS PERIOD 250 TONNES OF MARIJUANA, 1 TONNE OF COCAINE AND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF NARCOTIC PILLS.

--REUTER/LEM

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