



***United States Attorney
District of New Jersey***

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**FOLKES BROTHERS EXTRADITED FROM JAMAICA TO FACE CHARGES OF
CONSPIRING TO TRAFFIC COCAINE ON COMMERCIAL AIRLINES**

Cocaine Smuggled from the West Indies to England via the United States

NEWARK, N.J. – Roger and Romeo Folkes arrived in the United States last night following their extradition from Jamaica to face charges they conspired to smuggle cocaine hidden in the retractable handrails of luggage aboard commercial airlines from the West Indies to England via the United States, United States Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Roger Folkes, a/k/a “Kirk,” 39, and Romeo Folkes, a/k/a “Rocky,” 27, of Jamaica, West Indies, are expected to appear this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Mark Falk on a superseding Indictment charging each of them with conspiracy to import and to export cocaine.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

The conspiracy involved drug couriers from the United States, including Tajara Barnes and Genard Howard, who would travel to Jamaica and St. Lucia, where Roger Folkes, his brother Romeo Folkes and co-conspirator Mervin Francis would provide cocaine hidden in the handrails of the couriers’ luggage. The couriers would return to the United States carrying the cocaine-filled luggage, where co-conspirator Cortnie Spencer would at times take possession of the luggage containing the cocaine and deliver it to couriers who were scheduled to travel to Great Britain. Once in Great Britain, the couriers would deliver the cocaine to Nigel Roberts, Prine George Alfonso Jones, and others in exchange for payment.

The superseding Indictment stems from a multi-jurisdictional and international investigation into the alleged narcotics trafficking ring. The status of the other six individuals charged in the superseding Indictment is as follows:

Nigel Roberts, a/k/a “Skang,” 33, of Birmingham, England, pleaded guilty to Count One of the superseding Indictment, charging conspiracy to import and export five kilos or more of cocaine, on October 21, 2009, and was sentenced to 80 months in prison on November 15, 2010.

Cortnie Spencer, a/k/a “Skippy,” 34, of Queens, N.Y., pleaded guilty to Count One of the superseding Indictment, charging conspiracy to import and export five kilos or more of cocaine, on April 19, 2010, and awaits sentencing.

Mervin Francis, 35, of Jamaica, was extradited from Great Britain and appeared in federal court on September 21, 2009. On April 27, 2010, Francis pleaded guilty to a superseding

Information charging him with conspiracy to import and to export cocaine. Francis admitted that once the narcotics were received in Great Britain, he received Western Union transfers on behalf of the conspirators that were sent as payment for the drugs. He was sentenced to 40 months in prison on August 9, 2010.

Tajara Barnes, 35, and Genard Howard, 35, both of Brooklyn, N.Y., were first arrested in London on May 6, 2008. On April 27, 2010, Barnes and Howard both pleaded guilty to a superseding Information charging them with conspiracy to import and to export cocaine. Barnes and Howard admitted to conspiring to travel from the United States to St. Lucia on April 24, 2008, for the purpose of bringing back narcotics on May 1, 2008. While in St. Lucia, they received narcotics from individuals including Francis. They admitted to then traveling from New York to London on May 5, 2008, with narcotics hidden in their suitcases. Howard was sentenced to 60 months in prison on November 15, 2010. Barnes awaits sentencing.

Prine George Alfonso Jones, a/k/a "Prince," 44, of Birmingham, was arrested on February 3, 2009, in Great Britain, for allegedly transporting narcotics directly from St. Lucia to Great Britain, where he is currently in custody.

United States District Judge Dennis M. Cavanaugh presided over the guilty pleas and imposed sentences.

The Folkes Brothers are charged with conspiracy to import and to export five kilos or more of cocaine, which carries a statutory maximum of life in prison and fines of up to \$4 million.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents of the United States Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Peter T. Edge; and the DEA, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge John G. McCabe – in coordination with police officers with the West Midlands Police Complex Casework Unit in Birmingham; United States Department of Homeland Security, HSI Attaché, Kingston, Jamaica; and officers of the United Kingdom Border Agency and the Jamaican Fugitive Apprehension Team (JFAT), which is composed of officers of the Jamaican Police and the United States Marshals Service, in Kingston, Jamaica – for the investigation leading to the extradition. He also thanked the Department of Justice Criminal Division's Office of International Affairs for its assistance in effecting the extradition.

The government is represented by Assistant United States Attorney Eric W. Moran of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Newark.

As for the defendants with pending charges, the charges and allegations contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are considered innocent unless and until proven guilty.