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JAMAICAN DRUG TRAFFICKER FOUND GUILTY IN MANHATTAN
FEDERAL COURT OF NARCOTICS IMPORTATION
AND DISTRIBUTION CONSPIRACY

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and JAMES T. HAYES, JR., Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), announced that DAVID CHRISTIE, a/k/a "Big Man," was convicted of conspiring to import multiple kilogram-quantities of cocaine and marijuana into the United States using commercial airlines, and to distribute those drugs in major U.S. cities, including New York. A jury returned the verdict yesterday following a seven-day trial in Manhattan federal court.

According to the two-count superseding Indictment with which CHRISTIE was charged, other documents filed in this case, and the evidence at trial:

CHRISTIE supplied cocaine and marijuana for importation from Jamaica into the United States, working with co-conspirators at the Montego Bay Airport, who ensured that the drugs were hidden in commercial aircraft.

CHRISTIE and his co-conspirators used two primary methods for concealing the narcotics. In one method, co-conspirators would stash the narcotics beneath the toilet of a flight bound for the United States. After the flight landed and cleared customs, a co-conspirator would board the flight for the

next leg of the plane's trip. While on that flight, the co-conspirator would walk to the bathroom, remove the hidden narcotics, and conceal them either on his or her person or in his or her carry-on baggage. Because the plane had already cleared customs, the passenger would not be searched upon exiting the plane with the narcotics, and once in the United States, the co-conspirator would deliver the narcotics to other co-conspirators for distribution.

In the second method, the co-conspirators would secret the narcotics behind panels in the cargo section of planes departing Jamaica. Once the flights reached airports in the United States, co-conspirators employed as luggage handlers at various airlines removed those drugs and handed them off to other members of the organization, who then distributed the drugs to CHRISTIE's customers in New York. Over the course of the conspiracy, CHRISTIE imported more than 150 kilograms of cocaine and more than 100 kilograms of marijuana using this method.

Mr. BHARARA praised the outstanding investigative work of ICE in this case, and thanked the United States Drug Enforcement Administration and United States Customs and Border Protection for their assistance.

CHRISTIE, 43, of Montego Bay, Jamaica, was convicted on both counts against him: Count One charged CHRISTIE with conspiracy to distribute, and possess with the intent to distribute, 5 kilograms and more of cocaine and 100 kilograms and more of marijuana; Count Two charged CHRISTIE with conspiracy to import into the United States 5 kilograms and more of cocaine and 100 kilograms and more of marijuana. Each count carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment, a mandatory minimum term of 10 years in prison, and a maximum fine of the greatest of \$4 million, or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense.

CHRISTIAN R. EVERDELL and CHRISTOPHER D. FREY are in charge of the prosecution.

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