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12 CHARGED HERE IN A WORLD PLOT TO IMPORT HEROIN

Linked to Distribution of
\$87-Million Worth From
France via Argentina
NY Times

By MORRIS KAPLAN

Four Frenchmen, three Argentines, two Uruguayans, a Belgian, a Chilean and an American were charged in Federal indictments unsealed here yesterday with conspiring to import and distribute 383 pounds of heroin and 25 pounds of cocaine between August, 1970, and Nov. 30, 1972.

They were accused of having funneled the narcotics from France to Argentina, where the woman owner of a wig shop allegedly transshipped them to the United States.

United States Attorney Robert A. Morse of the Eastern District estimated the narcotics' retail value at \$87-million.

The indictments followed a joint investigation by the Bureau of Customs, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs and the Brooklyn Strike Force Against Organized Crime. The Federal crackdown reportedly immobilized the ring, the third to be prosecuted since Nov. 17.

The reputed leaders of two international smuggling rings had been indicted in Brooklyn then on charges of conspiring to smuggle 1,100 pounds of heroin, valued at \$250-million, into the United States between January, 1968 and April, 1971.

Federal officials said that the breakup of the rings had helped to stem the flow of narcotics into the metropolitan area.

20-Year Jail Term

Christian David, the alleged overlord of one of the rings, pleaded guilty on Dec. 1 to a Federal narcotics charge and was sentenced to the maximum of 20 years in prison and a \$20,000 fine by Chief Judge Jacob Mishler. David, 41, thereby escaped the possibility of extradition to France, where he faced the guillotine for mur-

der.

The second alleged ringleader, arrested in Brazil, was Michel Nicole, 42, another Frenchman accused of supplying a large part of the heroin that found its way into the New York market.

Yesterday's indictment named two Frenchmen, who are fugitives and who had also been listed with David. Their operation, however, was reported to be an independent one.

One was Andreé Gaetan Condemine, a 39-year-old ringleader who was indicted Oct. 5 under the name Mario Deniz. He was said to have operated principally out of Buenos Aires and Brussels. The other principal was Joannes Munoz, 40, of Boulogne.

Federal authorities identified Mrs. Yolanda Sarmiento, a 43-year-old Chilean citizen living in Buenos Aires, as a key figure in the conspiracy. They said she was the owner of a fashionable wig shop a block from the United States Embassy there.

Following her arrest there early this month after a shooting incident, the United States requested her extradition. Mrs. Sarmiento has been sought by Federal agents since April,

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1970, when she reportedly skipped bail of \$100,000 after being arrested on narcotics charges.

A Federal agent called her a major crime figure and said she had previously eluded extradition to this country because Argentina's treaty with the United States exculpated persons accused of drug smuggling.

But a change in treaty provisions as of Sept. 15, according to authorities, made her vulnerable to extradition for such violations since that date.

The Argentine police seized Mrs. Sarmiento near her home on Dec. 2 after her husband, Emilio Diaz-Gonzalez, drew a revolver and opened fire on them. Neighbors, believing that terrorists or bandits were involved, also joined in the shooting, according to Federal sources.

The man was critically wounded by the police. Although not named in the indictment, because his alleged drug activities preceded Sept. 15, he had been a fugitive since January, 1971.

Authorities said he had es-

caped from the Federal House of Detention on West Street on Jan. 23, 1971, while awaiting trial on charges of giving false documentation in connection with a seizure of a large quantity of heroin and cocaine.

The Sarmientos had been residents in 1970 of Concord Village, a large apartment-house complex directly across Adams Street from the Federal Court-house in downtown Brooklyn. Both escaped to Argentina.

While here, the woman reportedly arranged with a self-styled Manhattan artist to design bulky hollow wooden frames in which heroin and cocaine were concealed. The artist, identified as 61-year-old Rudolpho Albert Ruiz, was arrested at his apartment at 206 East 75th Street on Oct. 8, 1971, by agents who said they had traced the delivery of a crate of paintings.

Ruiz was convicted in November, 1971, of smuggling narcotics and sentenced to eight years in prison. Federal Judge John R. Bartels reduced the sentence last spring to four years.

Condemine in Belgium directed the European branch of the smuggling organization, according to Thomas P. Puccio, an assistant United States attorney who presented the case to the grand jury. Mrs. Sarmiento reportedly headed the South American branch.

The indictment enumerates occasions when the drugs were allegedly imported and seized at Kennedy International Airport. On one occasion, in July, 1971, the conspirators were said to have arranged to bring in 158 pounds of heroin hidden in a Volvo automobile aboard the liner France.

In October, 1971, according to Mr. Morse, 132 pounds of heroin were hidden in a cargo of sheepskins sent by ship from Buenos Aires but seized by Brazilian authorities in Rio de Janeiro.

A former customs official in Buenos Aires, known as "Guigui," is listed as one of the two John Does in the indictment. He allegedly enabled carriers from abroad to enter the city and make contact with Mrs. Sarmiento.

The other defendants were identified as:

Louis Riviere, 46, a French citizen, now in custody in Italy. Extradition has been requested by the United States.

Jozef Vienne, 45, a Belgian citizen, now in custody in Belgium, formerly employed by the Ministry of the Interior.

Jorge Varela Fernandez, 40, a citizen of Uruguay, believed to be living there.

Juan Carlos Franco, 30, a citizen of Uruguay, now in custody in Paris. Extradition has been requested.

Roberto Cristobal, 43, an Argentine citizen believed to be living in Buenos Aires.

Mrs. Elsa Yasbic, 43, an Argentine living in Buenos Aires.

Alfredo Aviles, 44, a naturalized American citizen, whose last known address was in Baruch Place, Manhattan.

If convicted, on all counts, they could receive 55 years in prison and a total of \$150,000 in fines.