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Nine Arrested in Plot To Ship Guns to Cuba

NEW ORLEANS (UPI)—Federal agents said Sunday they had arrested nine men and confiscated thousands of rifles and submachine guns which apparently were to have been used in an attempt to overthrow the Castro regime in Cuba.

The weapons were seized at an airport near Shreveport, La. The nine suspects were picked up in New Orleans, Shreveport, and at Eagle Pass, Texas, a town along the Texas-Mexico border.

Special agent Michael B. Pollack of the Justice Department's Brooklyn, N.Y. strike force said the munitions "were to be smuggled to Mexico for future shipment to another foreign country, presumably Cuba."

"These explosives were to be flown from Vera Cruz, Mex., for use in the overthrow of a foreign nation," he said. "The U.S. Customs Bureau received information that there were people negotiating to import a large quantity of automatic weapons into Mexico for fur-

ther shipment to areas of the Caribbean and or Europe.

"These negotiations involved were for weapons such as the M16 rifle, M1 rifle, Thompson submachine gun and a RB type of rifle. Quantities involved were in terms of 3,000 of one type of rifle, 1,000 of the Thompson submachine gun; about 5,000 weapons totally were mentioned with a retail selling price of \$1.2 million."

In addition to the guns, 13,500 pounds of plastic explosives, 7,000 feet of prima-cord, 2,000 electrical blasting caps and 25 electrical detonators were discovered and confiscated in the vicinity of Shreveport.

The nine suspects arrested were identified as Murray Kessler of Brooklyn, Adler B. Seal, James M. Miller Jr., and Joseph Mazzuka of Baton Rouge, La.; Arthur Henry Lussier of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; Marion Hagler and Richard C. Harper of Eagle Pass, and Antonio Maldonado and Juan Martinez, both of Vera Cruz, Mexico.