

# 22 Arrested In Chile-U.S. Cocaine Ring

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Twenty-two persons have been arrested in recent days and charged with being part of an international drug ring that allegedly smuggled \$32.7 million worth of cocaine into this country in Chilean diplomatic pouches and in Chilean military aircraft that landed at Andrews Air Force Base.

Among those arrested are a Chevy Chase couple, Mr. and Mrs. Eduardo Diaz, of 4428 Stanford St. He is a chief petty officer in the Chilean navy assigned to the Chilean embassy here.

The arrests occurred in the past week both in this country and Chile. Others arrested include Marion R. Brown, a University of Wisconsin professor of agriculture, and members of the Chilean air force and navy, who were apprehended there.

The indictments charge that between May, 1973, and this June the suspects smuggled at least 162 pounds of cocaine, a narcotic grown in the Andean highlands, from Chile to New York City via Washington.

On at least three occasions one of the suspects "stowed four kilograms of cocaine in diplomatic pouches, which were then transported to Washington D.C., and passed through U.S. Customs," the indictments allege. Diplomatic pouches routinely are used by diplomats around the nation to carry communications that are not subject to customs inspection.

The indictments further allege that another suspect "on other occasions secreted at least 50 kilograms of cocaine on Chilean military aircraft, which flew from Santiago (Chile) to Washington, D.C.," where the cocaine was temporarily hidden.

A spokesman for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration said that cocaine, which is in high demand by drug-users in this country, has a street sale value of more than \$500 a gram.

The 22 arrests—16 in Chile and six in this country—were jointly announced by U.S. Drug Enforcement Administrator John R. Bartels Jr. and Chilean Ambassador to the U.S. Walter Heitman, who stressed the cooperation that had occurred between law enforcement agencies of the two countries.

In recent months Chile has

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become much more active in investigating drug suspects. Within the past year at least 18 major narcotics suspects have been arrested in Chile and brought to this country for trial, a U.S. official said.

The indictments involving the 22 persons arrested in the past week were issued on June 5 in New York, but were sealed until arrests could be made as simultaneously as possible in both countries, a spokesman for the Drug Enforcement Administration said.

The indictments allege that those arrested include three Chileans, including one known as "One-eyed Fidel," who were suppliers of the cocaine from the vicinity of Valparaiso, a coastal city near Santiago, the nation's capital.

Jaime Leyton, a Chilean naval officer stationed in Valparaiso who had access to diplomatic pouches, was accused in the indictment of arranging the smuggling of cocaine that allegedly occurred via the pouches. Leyton was arrested over the weekend in Chile.

Another suspect is a member of the Chilean air force and still is being sought by police there. He is charged in the indictments with arranging the smuggling in Chilean military aircraft that make routine shuttle flights at least once a month between Los Cerrillos, a military air base near Santiago, and Andrews Air Force Base here.

U.S. officials declined to say just how the cocaine, a white or colorless crystalline powder, was secreted on the aircraft.

The indictments charge that Diaz, who worked in the Chilean naval attache's office here and had access to diplomatic pouches sent from Chile, received the incoming cocaine. Diaz was arrested last weekend in Chile.

Luisa Diaz, his wife and the mother of at least five children, was arrested at her Chevy Chase home on Monday and charged with one count of conspiracy to import and two counts of distribution and possession with intent to distribute narcotics.

Mrs. Diaz was arraigned in Baltimore, where her bail was set at \$100,000. She is being held in the Anne Arundel County jail pending a hearing to determine whether she should be transferred to New York for trial.

The indictments further charge that Lena Ruby Gotes-Contreras, of New York, "traveled to Washington, D.C., to receive the narcotics after they had been smuggled into the United States."

The indictments charge that another person arrested in recent days, Lionel Marques, of New York, "was a major purchaser and re-seller in New York of the cocaine smuggled from Chile to Washington D.C. and then allegedly delivered by Mrs. Gotes-Contreras.

Brown, the University of Wisconsin professor charged as being part of the smuggling ring, was arrested on Tuesday in Madison, Wis., on one count of conspiracy to import narcotics. Brown had worked last year in Chile at the University of Wisconsin's Land Tenure Center there.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration said in its announcement that Lina Gotes-Contreras allegedly was the "mastermind" of the ring. In 1968 she was arrested on cocaine smuggling charges in New York City and convicted and sentenced to five years in prison.

Others arrested in this country in the current investigation were Elva Morales and Jose Rey-Ferreiro, both of New York.

The indictments allege 22 separate criminal acts that occurred between the spring of 1973 and this spring. However U.S. investigators said they suspect that a Chile-U.S. smuggling ring has been in operation since 1970.

Cocaine comes from the coca plant that mainly grows in the Andean highlands of western South America. The leaves are treated with alkali to release the cocaine, which can induce euphoria and hallucination in a user.

Cocaine, which is sniffed, does not cause a physical dependence but often creates a strong psychological dependence by users. The drug often is sought by addicts unable to obtain heroin.