

2 Americans ^{CIA}
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To Be Freed
In Calcutta
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From News Dispatches

CALCUTTA, Sept. 10—Two Americans detained here for more than two years were sentenced to two years and four months in jail yesterday for smuggling narcotics.

But the pair, initially held under the Indian Official Secrets Act on suspicion of spying, are expected to be released shortly.

A city session court judge ruled that the sentences for Richard W. Harcos, 28, and Anthony A. Fletcher, 31, both listed as taxi drivers from San Francisco, should be set retroactively to when their detention began in April 1973.

They will be released after the necessary formalities, he said.

Harcos had been convicted on a charge of smuggling narcotics in the Calcutta port area and Fletcher for aiding and abetting.

Both were arrested after Harcos was found in scuba diving gear in the early hours of the morning at the docks.

Harcos and Fletcher were the only Americans ever held under the secrets act, and Indian and U.S. diplomats feared that the case would damage relations between the two countries.

Initially a lawyer for the accused indicated that the U.S. embassy in New Delhi was not intervening vigorously enough in their behalf. But various representations were made denying any U.S. spy role for Harcos and Fletcher. They began a hunger strike in June 1974, after waiting more than a year for the prosecutor of West Bengal state to add specifics to the spying charge.

The Americans' lawyers conceded from the outset that the pair intended to smuggle hashish out of India, apparently in plastic pods to be attached to ships. Hence the scuba-diving gear.