

Federal Crimes in Hawaii

Welcome back to “This Week With Hawaii’s Law Enforcement.” During this next segment of our show, we are going to update you on recently charged federal crimes in Hawaii.

[SOUND OF POLICE SIREN]

Brief Facts About the Case:

On August 28, 2006, the Defendant Mark Anthony Seina was charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

According to the Criminal Complaint filed in federal court, the Defendant was previously convicted in California for being a felon in possession of a firearm. At that time, he was sentenced to 63-months in prison.

In addition to that federal felony, the Defendant was previously convicted six times by the State of Hawaii — each conviction was for committing a felony crime.

According to this investigation, on August 28th, the Defendant was arrested by agents at the parking lot next to Leeward Bowling Alley. At the time of his arrest, he had a 9-millimeter Sigarms handgun tucked into his left front pants pocket.

Seina later admitted to obtaining the firearm from another, and he also admitted that he was still on supervised release for his California federal conviction.

On August 31st, the Defendant was indicted by a federal grand jury in this case, and on September 1st, Magistrate Judge Barry M. Kurren ordered Seina detained pending his trial in this case. The Court found that he was a danger to the community and that he posed a flight risk.

If convicted on this charge, the Defendant may be sentenced to a maximum 10-years in a federal prison. The public is reminded that the Defendant is presumed innocent of the charges, unless otherwise proven guilty in a Court of Law.

The prosecutor in this case is Assistant United States Attorney Marshall Silverberg, and the defense attorney is Assistant Federal Public Defender Donna Gray.

[SOUND OF JUDGE’S GAVEL]

Federal Court Trials:

Now, in this second case, the Defendant was convicted in federal court.

Holly Koliopoulos was convicted of conspiring with Arthur Hidano and Steve Paul Echols to manufacture 50 grams or more of methamphetamine and attempting to possess 500 grams or more of Iodine knowing or having reason to believe that it would be used to

manufacture methamphetamine.

This case arose out of a package containing approximately 500 grams of Iodine, a chemical known to be used in the manufacture of methamphetamine, that Customs and Border Protection intercepted at the Honolulu International Airport.

The Iodine had been ordered by Steven Echols, Koliopoulos' boyfriend at the time, who was using the Iodine to manufacture methamphetamine at their home in Mililani. Koliopoulos picked up the package at Echols' post office box, after law enforcement had already substituted sham Iodine in place of the real chemical.

The investigation led the agents to Echols and Koliopoulos' home in Mililani where they found an active clan lab, including small amounts of methamphetamine.

The evidence at trial revealed that Koliopoulos assisted with the manufacture of methamphetamine by picking up packages of chemicals and equipment that Echols had delivered to his post office box, purchasing cold remedies containing pseudoephedrine (which is another essential ingredient in the manufacture of methamphetamine), and that she also had other materials which had been used in the clan lab laboratory.

After the verdict, Judge Kay revoked Koliopoulos' bail, and placed her into federal custody pending her December 11, 2006 sentencing date. Koliopoulos faces a maximum of life imprisonment on the conspiracy count, along with a 10-year mandatory minimum and a potential fine of \$4,000,000.

We would like to acknowledge the excellent investigative work by Special Agents Ed Feeley and Nephi Camacho, from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency.

We would also like to thank Investigator Dana Shinozuka from the State of Hawaii Narcotics Enforcement Division, for his valuable work in this investigation.

The prosecutor in this case is Assistant U.S. Attorney Candace Kelly, and the defense attorney is Harlan Kimura.

Sentenced:

Now, let's report on recent sentences which has been handed down by our federal courts in Hawaii.

[SOUND OF SLAMMING CELL DOOR]

1. Isael Perez:

Isael Perez and about ten others were charged with conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute more than 50 grams of Crystal Meth. In the course of about 18 months, he and other co-conspirators were responsible for transporting and sending to Hawaii more than 100 pounds of Crystal Meth for distribution. During the investigation, Perez was arrested by investigators for three pounds of Crystal Methamphetamine which were recovered from his car. A search of his home also resulted in the recovery of an additional drugs.

On August 17th, Perez was sentenced to 10 years and 6 months in jail by U.S. District Judge Mike Seabright. The prosecutor in this case was Assistant U.S. Attorney Bev Sameshima.

2. Ricardo Gonzalez:

In the second case, Ricardo Gonzalez and another attempted to smuggle more than a pound of Crystal Meth into Hawaii from Los Angeles. After traveling to Hawaii, Ricardo and his co-defendant were arrested. On August 14th, Gonzalez was sentenced by District Judge Susan Mollway to 10 years in jail. The prosecutor in that case was Assistant U.S. Attorney Ken Sorenson.

3. Michael Lee Leach:

In the final case, the defendant, Michael Lee Leach, burglarized the home in Kula and stole a gun safe which contained 26 firearms. He was arrested by investigators after he exchanged some of the firearms in for drugs. Due to his violent past, and prior arrests for Possession of a Stolen Firearm and Possession of a Shortened Firearm, he was charged as an Armed Career Criminal in Possession of these Firearms. On August 21st, District Judge Mike Seabright sentenced the defendant to 102 months in jail. The prosecutor in this case was Assistant U.S. Attorney Loretta Sheehan.

Now, we'll return again after this brief Public Service Announcement about the need to teach kids that violence against women is wrong.

[PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT #2]

“As a Dad, you’ve probably spent years teaching your son how to hit a baseball; . . . how to throw a tight spiral, hit a receiver; . . . how to hit the strike zone.

The question is this: — How much time will you spend teaching him what not to hit? Teach your son early and often that all violence against women is wrong.

For tips on what to say, visit endabuse.org. Brought to you by the Family Violence Prevention Fund, the Wait Institute for Violence Prevention, the Ad Council, and this Station.”