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LAFAYETTE PARISH DRUG DEALERS PLEAD GUILTY IN FEDERAL COURT

Celestine and the Galliens Were Major Cocaine and Crack Traffickers

Lafayette, Louisiana . . . United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced that **GEORGE CELESTINE**, age 40, of Lafayette, Louisiana entered a guilty plea to one felony count of conspiracy to distribute cocaine and cocaine base (crack), and his nephews, **SIDNEY GALLIEN**, age 33, **TELLY GALLIEN**, age 31, and **TRAVIS GALLIEN**, age 28, all of Lafayette, Louisiana, each pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute cocaine base (crack). The guilty pleas were entered in United States District Court in Lafayette before United States District Judge Rebecca F. Doherty.

GEORGE CELESTINE, SIDNEY GALLIEN, TELLY GALLIEN and TRAVIS GALLIEN were indicted in September 2006 on a conspiracy count along with multiple drug trafficking counts spanning ten years. Trial was scheduled to begin earlier this week.

CELESTINE was the leader of a large cocaine and crack distribution group. After a lengthy investigation into CELESTINE and his co-conspirators' drug trafficking activities, federal, state and

local agents worked together to arrest CELESTINE and the Galliens, along with other co-conspirators. These four defendants were the last to plead guilty. Overall, the investigation led to the conviction of 19 defendants.

This case was the result of an investigation code named “Tank Top” and conducted by the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) into the major drug trafficking and distribution operations in Lafayette Parish. OCDETF, consisting of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, is the nation’s primary tool for disrupting and dismantling major drug trafficking organizations, targeting national and regional level drug trafficking organizations, and coordinating the necessary law enforcement entities and resources to disrupt or dismantle the targeted criminal organization and seize their assets.

At sentencing, the defendants face the following penalties:

GEORGE CELESTINE faces an imprisonment term of not less than ten years nor more than life, a fine of up to \$4 million, and a term of supervised release of not less than five years after confinement;

SIDNEY GALLIEN faces an imprisonment term of not less than five years nor more than 40 years, a fine of up to \$2 million, and a term of supervised release of not less than four years and not more than five years after confinement;

TELLY GALLIEN faces an imprisonment term of not less than five years nor more than 40 years, a fine of up to \$2 million, and a term of supervised release of not less than four years and not more than five years after confinement;

TRAVIS GALLIEN faces an imprisonment term of not less than five years nor more than 40 years, a fine of up to \$2 million, and a term of supervised release of not less than four years and not more than five years after confinement;

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

Operation "Tank Top" was conducted by OCDETF with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Lafayette Metro Narcotics acting as the lead agencies. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley with the assistance of FBI Special Agent Joseph Pisano and Officer Richard Perez, former Metro Narcotics officer, now with the Plano, Texas Police Department.

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