

The United States Attorney's Office

Southern District of Florida

Press Release

ATTORNEYS SENTENCED ON MONEY LAUNDERING CONSPIRACY AND OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE CHARGES

September 28, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

R. Alexander Acosta, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Michael E. Yasofsky, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation; Jonathan I. Solomon, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Al Lamberti, Sheriff, Broward Sheriff's Office, announced today that defendants **Marc F. Desiderio** and **Loel H. Seitel**, both attorneys, were sentenced today by U.S. District Court Judge James I. Cohn. Desiderio was sentenced to 41 months' imprisonment, to be followed by 2 years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay a fine of \$75,000. Seitel received 5 months' imprisonment and 5 months' home confinement, followed by 2 years supervised release, and was ordered to pay a fine of \$30,000.

In July 2007, Desiderio pled guilty to conspiracy to commit money laundering in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(h), count one (1) of a six (6) count superseding indictment. Seitel also pled guilty to conspiracy to obstruct justice, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371, count three (3) of the superseding indictment.

According to court documents, from about 1994 until late 2003, defendant Marc Desiderio conspired with Jeffrey Tobin and others to violate Title 18, United States Code, Section 1957. From about April 2003 until about March 2004, defendant Loel Seitel conspired with Jeffrey Tobin, Marc Desiderio and others to violate Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001.

Beginning in about 1992, Jeffrey Tobin and Joseph Russo, Jr. were operating a substantial marijuana distribution organization that involved purchasing thousands of pounds of Mexican marijuana in either California or Arizona and then transporting the drugs to the New Jersey area for distribution in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and other states.

In about 1994, Jeffrey Tobin met the defendants Desiderio and Seitel, attorneys practicing together in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, as well as in other states. Defendant Desiderio was the step-father of Peter Rossi, who was employed by Tobin's marijuana organization. At that time, Jeffrey Tobin requested that defendants Desiderio and Seitel assist Tobin by renting a residence in Englewood Cliffs on behalf of Tobin. Tobin did not inform them that he was a marijuana trafficker. Instead, he advised the defendants that he was operating a loan shark business and that he needed a stash house to store large amounts of cash needed in his business.

In all, over the course of approximately eight years, the defendants leased three stash houses for various periods of time on behalf of Tobin. The leases for the houses were in the name of defendant Seitel. They also purchased certain real estate on behalf of Tobin in the South Miami, Florida area. They were provided with cash proceeds as reimbursement for the leased residences and \$500,000 in cash proceeds as collateral for their purchase of the piece of real estate. Defendants Desiderio and Seitel were told that these cash proceeds were from Tobin's loan shark business. In reality, the cash proceeds provided were derived from Tobin's marijuana distribution business. The cash was delivered to the defendants by Jeffrey Tobin, who, along with others, has been convicted of operating a RICO enterprise engaged in, among other things, the distribution of multi-kilogram quantities of marijuana.

After learning of the investigation being conducted by the Internal Revenue Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the defendants Desiderio and Seitel, Jeffrey Tobin and others agreed to provide false and misleading information to the government concerning the nature of the relationship that the defendants had with Tobin.