



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TUCSON FUGITIVE FACES FEDERAL CHARGES AFTER ARREST BY LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT FOLLOWING STAND-OFF

TUCSON, Ariz. - Robert A. Ergonis, 46, of Tucson, was charged with Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute 2,427.8 pounds of Marijuana, enhanced by a prior felony drug conviction, and Possession of a Firearm by a Felon in separate cases in U.S. District Court today. Federal arrest warrants based on these charges were issued by U.S. Magistrate Judge Glenda E. Edmonds and filed with the Pima County Jail where Ergonis is being held in a Pima County case.

In case number 08-3044M, the complaint alleges that Ergonis arranged with an undercover FBI agent to obtain and transport 2,427.8 pounds of marijuana from Tucson, Ariz., to Las Vegas, Nev. for ultimate resale in Detroit, Mich. After the undercover agent transported the marijuana to Las Vegas, Ergonis paid the agent \$100,000 cash in transportation fees. The marijuana was transferred to Ergonis' driver and subsequently seized by Las Vegas authorities. An information filed in conjunction with the complaint alleges that Ergonis was previously convicted in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan of Possession with Intent to Distribute 100 kilograms or more of Marijuana in case number CR 95-80095-DT.

The complaint filed in case number 08-3043 alleges that while barricaded in a house in Tucson last night and this morning, Ergonis, a convicted felon, possessed a .45 caliber Masterpiece Arms Pistol. The Fugitive Investigative Strike Team (FIST), consisting of local, state and federal law enforcement, had arrived at the residence in the evening of February 7, 2008, to arrest Ergonis in Pima County Superior Court case number CR 07-724912A. After a female occupant of the residence closed the door on the FIST team, a gunshot was heard inside the residence. Tucson Police Department SWAT arrived on scene and by the morning of February 8, 2008, were able to enter the residence and arrest Ergonis in the bathroom. A search warrant revealed the bathroom contained at least five guns, a magazine for an assault rifle, a full-sized mattress and a television set. The selector switch on the .45 caliber pistol was in the fire mode and there were two spent .45 caliber shell casings inside the bathroom and two holes in the wall which appeared to be bullet holes.

A conviction for Conspiracy with Intent to Distribute 1,000 kilograms or more of Marijuana, enhanced by a prior felony drug conviction, carries a minimum mandatory prison sentence of 20 years, up to a maximum penalty of life in prison, a \$8,000,000 fine or both. Possession of a Firearm by a Felon carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, the U.S. District Court Judge will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

A criminal complaint is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence

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is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Inspector General, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Marshals Service, Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Drug Enforcement Administration, Tucson Police Department and the Fugitive Investigation Strike Team. The prosecution is being handled by Mary Sue Feldmeier, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: 08-4034M-GEE
08-4044M-GEE
RELEASE NUMBER: 2008-026(Ergonis)

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