



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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JUNE 3, 2003

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Note: Audio comments from United States Attorney Todd P. Graves are available online at www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow

FUGITIVE NABBED, PLEADS GUILTY AFTER NEARLY 10 YEARS ON THE RUN

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a fugitive of almost 10 years pleaded guilty in federal court today to drug-related money laundering charges originally filed in 1994.

Benjamin Boorem, 51, whose last known address was in Golden, Colo., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith this morning to a money laundering charge, which was originally filed in federal court on Aug. 4, 1994, in Kansas City.

By pleading guilty, **Boorem** admitted that between Oct. 11, 1990, and Jan. 4, 1991, he purchased a Cessna T210 aircraft knowing that the money used in the transaction was obtained through the unlawful distribution of controlled substances. **Boorem** retrofitted this particular aircraft with long-range fuel tanks and ground-avoidance radar, making it capable of smuggling illegal narcotics over continental distances. He also admitted that his plan to purchase the plane was designed to disguise the ownership of the money involved in the transaction. The monetary transactions took place in the Western District of Missouri, District of Kansas and the District of Arizona.

“During the last year, law enforcement officers have been tracking **Boorem**, who has been a fugitive since the time he was indicted in 1994,” Graves said. “During that time, **Boorem** used several aliases and probably thought that he had outrun the law, but he was mistaken. He’s been arrested, pleaded guilty and now awaits his federal sentence, which should be more time than he spent on the run.”

As a result of his guilty plea, **Boorem** may be subject to a sentence of up to 20 years in

federal prison without parole, plus a \$500,000 fine. His sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of presentence investigation by the U.S. Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael S. Oliver. It was investigated by Special Agent James Cheatham with the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Robert Hawkins with the Internal Revenue Service.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow