



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 19, 2004

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CRACK COCAINE CASE WRAPS UP TOTAL OF FIFTEEN HEAD FOR FEDERAL PRISON

(Tyler, Texas) The final defendants from a crack distribution ring in the Carthage and Henderson area, have been sentenced to prison today for various crimes related to the possession and distribution of crack cocaine. U.S. District Judge Leonard Davis sentenced **KENNON BLACKSHIRE**, 30 of Carthage to 140 months in prison, **RODNEY CATO**, 25 of Fairfield, to 92 months in prison, **QUANTARIUS INGRAM**, 23 of Carthage to 72 months in prison, **CLEVELAND SANDERS**, 30 of Henderson, to 115 months in prison, and **WILLIE WARE**, 29 of Carthage, to 151 months in prison.

According to information presented by prosecutors, the individuals were named as co-defendants along with 13 other persons in a 105 count indictment charging violations of Title 21, United States Code (USC), Section 846, conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and distribution of 50 grams or more of crack cocaine, as well as Title 21, USC, Section 841 charges for individual sales and deliveries of crack cocaine in the Carthage and Henderson, Texas area.

BLACKSHIRE pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute and distribution of crack cocaine. **CATO** pleaded guilty to possession of crack cocaine.

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INGRAM pleaded guilty to possession of crack cocaine. **SANDERS** pleaded guilty to possession of crack cocaine. **WARE** pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute and distribution of crack cocaine. This concludes the sentencing of the 18 defendants.

U.S. Attorney Matthew D. Orwig praised the work of law enforcement in bringing these defendants to justice, "The agents, investigators, officers and deputies did an outstanding job dismantling this organization and removing a sizeable amount of crack cocaine from the streets of East Texas. Crack cocaine, and those who possess it or distribute it, are not welcome in this District."

The investigation was led by the Drug Enforcement Administration, Northeast Texas Drug Task Force and Panola County Sheriff's Department. Assistant United States Attorney Jim Middleton prosecuted the case.

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