

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 5/5/92

JACINTO JOSE TORRES (protect identity) was interviewed March 19, 1992 at the United States Attorney's Office, 312 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, California. Present during the interview was EDGAR TORRES, brother of JACINTO TORRES. Also present during the interview was Special Agent (SA) CHARLES JONES of the Drug Enforcement Administration, ANNE T. LUNA, Internal Revenue Service, and Detective RONALD E. HODGES of the Los Angeles Police Department. TORRES voluntarily provided the following information:

TORRES advised that he knew DANILO BLANDON, a Nicaraguan male, residing in the San Diego, California area, to be heavily involved in cocaine trafficking activities. TORRES advised that in approximately 1980, he and his brother EDGAR, doing business as Torres Used Cars, 444 South Atlantic Boulevard, East Los Angeles, California, hired BLANDON to work at their car lot. BLANDON left Nicaragua shortly after the 1979 fall of the Somoza regime. BLANDON and his wife, Ci-LAPITA (phonetic), had moved to Los Angeles from Miami, Florida, in early 1980. TORRES stated that BLANDON only worked at Torres Used Cars for about a two week period. TORRES stated that shortly after BLANDON moved to the Los Angeles area BLANDON was introduced to NORWIN MENESIS in the San Francisco, California area, by DONALD BARRIOS. In approximately 1980 DANILO BLANDON, FRANK VIGAL, and DOUGLAS DIAZ travelled to the San Francisco area

where they obtained two kilograms of cocaine from MENESIS.

BLANDON, VIGAL, and DIAZ returned to the Los Angeles area where they had thirty days to sell the cocaine. TORRES stated that BLANDON and the others only sold a few ounces of the two kilograms to someone in the San Diego area. They gave the rest of the unsold cocaine to RAUL VEGA.

TORRES advised that BLANDON continued to work with VEGA, VIGAL and DIAZ through 1983, however, their cocaine dealings were small due to the fact that they did not have many customers.

As of approximately 1984 BLANDON was involved in cocaine sales in the Glendale, California area. BLANDON'S supplier as of 1984 continued to be NORWIN MENESIS. One of BLANDON's "runners", who used to deliver the cocaine from San Francisco was RAFAEL ESPINAL. As of 1984, BLANDON'S cocaine business dramatically increased. NORWIN MENESIS, BLANDON'S supplier, as of 1983 and 1984 routinely flew quantities of 300 to 400 kilograms from Miami to the west coast. BLANDON eventually "separated" from MENESIS and obtained other sources of supply.

TORRES estimated that between 1980 and 1991 BLANDON moved over 5,000 kilograms of cocaine.

TORRES advised that in approximately October of 1991, he flew from the Los Angeles area to the San Francisco Airport. He was picked up at the San Francisco Airport by DANILO BLANDON who drove a small white Ford Tempo. After leaving the airport BLANDON drove him to a storage house which was located approximately fifteen minutes south of the San Francisco Airport. On arrival at the house TORRES met DON SANTIAGO. TORRES stayed at the house for approximately three days with BLANDON, DON

SANTIAGO, and MAURICIO GONZALEZ-LANZAS. On the second day of his stay, TORRES, BLANDON and SANTIAGO went to a bar owned by JOSE TORRES on El Camino Real. While at the bar BLANDON met a Mexican male by the name of JOSE MARIA, also known as DON CHEMA. DON CHEMA was accompanied by three other Mexican males. During the meeting BLANDON and CHEMA talked about a cocaine deal. The discussion pertained to money owed by CHEMA who had previously been provided with 86 kilograms. TORRES stated that as a "pretext" he was introduced as the owner of the cocaine.

TORRES further advised that he knew DON CHEMA to be the head of a Mexican group in the San Jose area that regularly obtained cocaine from DANILO BLANDON.

TORRES recalled that at the meeting DON CHEMA indicated to BLANDON that he would be getting a loan on a house to pay the balance owed on the 86 kilogram deal.

TORRES stated that he knew RAFAEL CORNEJO to have been in the business (cocaine) with DANILO BLANDON for a long time.

TORRES advised that based on conversations that he has had with BLANDON he believed that over the past year CORNEJO obtained at least 100 kilograms of cocaine per month from BLANDON.

TORRES stated that as of the end of 1991 he resided at 7806 Teesdale Avenue, in North Hollywood, California. He stated that in approximately September or October of 1991, CORNEJO and his half brother, SALVADOR AVILES, drove from the San Francisco area to his North Hollywood residence, 7806 Teesdale Avenue. He recalled that CORNEJO and AVILES stayed at his residence for a two day period during which time CORNEJO negotiated with BLANDON regarding the purchase of a multi-kilogram quantity of cocaine.

As of September and October, 1991, BLANDON resided with TORRES at

7806 Teesdale, telephone number (818) 765-5200. TORRES recalled that CORNEJO and AVILES drove to the Hollywood area in an older model vehicle (make and year unknown to TORRES). During the stay AVILES frequently "snorted" cocaine. CORNEJO mentioned to TORRES that he lived in a "beautiful" home which was about a forty-five minute drive from the storage house south of the San Francisco Airport. TORRES also stated that CORNEJO told him that he once had a problem with the "IRS" and had done time.

TORRES further stated that CORNEJO and AVILES came to the North Hollywood area with \$300,000. After waiting for two days, CORNEJO and AVILES departed North Hollywood and drove back to the San Francisco area without having obtained the cocaine from BLANDON. TORRES advised that CORNEJO left the \$300,000 at 7806 Teesdale, for BLANDON.

TORRES advised that approximately one day after CORNEJO and AVILES departed North Hollywood, California, BLANDON sent twenty-seven (27) kilograms of cocaine to CORNEJO in the San Francisco area. The 27 kilogram shipment was followed within about two weeks by two additional and separate 27 kilogram shipments.

Each of the three separate shipments of 27 kilograms were transported from North Hollywood, California, to the San Francisco area in a blue Nissan station wagon which has a hidden compartment large enough to hold 27 kilograms built into the driver's side rear wheel well area.

One of the 27 kilogram shipments was driven to the San Francisco area by MAURICIO GONZALEZ, a "runner" for BLANDON. The other two 27 kilogram shipments were delivered to the San Francisco area by "runner" ARMANDO REYES.

TORRES recalled that on REYES' first delivery REYES called him at about 6:00 in the morning, at which time REYES indicated that he was in the Burlingame area and advised that he was having trouble getting a hold of MAURICIO and/or anybody in the San Francisco area. TORRES advised that REYES eventually hooked up with MAURICIO who gave the 27 kilograms to CORNEJO.

TORRES stated that he believed that the three 27 kilogram shipments sent to CORNEJO were in fact sent to the storage house that he (TORRES) had previously visited south of the San Francisco Airport. TORRES further advised that when DANILO BLANDON stayed at his house during the latter part of 1991, BLANDON received telephone calls from Colombia. BLANDON also used TORRES' cellular telephone to call Colombia as well as to call numbers in the San Francisco area. DANILO BLANDON frequently called MAURICIO GONZALEZ' pager number and would instruct MAURICIO to get a hold of CORNEJO.

TORRES stated that during the late summer of 1991, DANILO BLANDON sent a 200 kilogram shipment of cocaine to the storage house south of San Francisco. The 200 kilogram shipment was split between DON CHEMA, CORNEJO, and a third individual (identity unknown to TORRES).

BLANDON's buyers have remote controlled garage door openers for the storage house.

TORRES further advised that he witnessed the loading of the three 27 kilogram shipments into the blue Nissan station wagon which was parked in his driveway. On each of the three occasions MAURICIO GONZALEZ and ARMANDO REYES unloaded cocaine from a gold/brown Jeep Cherokee and placed the cocaine into the hidden compartment of the Nissan.

A photograph of MAURICIO ANTONIO GONZALEZ, also known as Mauricio Gonzalez-Lanzas, was displayed to TORRES. After viewing the photograph, TORRES positively identified GONZALEZ as the runner who drove the 27 kilogram shipment of cocaine to the San Francisco area.