



Department of Investigation

Press Release

Release # 065-2000

DOI Arrests Jail Door-Repairman For Drug Smuggling

-Tried To Sneak Coke Into Rikers Island-

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2000

EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the felony arrest of JOSE BAEZ, a repairman employed by a Department of Correction (DOC) contractor -- Forward Door & Detention, a security door and gate repair firm of Inwood, New York -- for attempting to smuggle a half-ounce of cocaine into a Rikers Island jail.

The arrest of BAEZ is part of a continuing drug and contraband smuggling crackdown at City jails, which resulted 10 days ago in the arrest of 4 Correction Officers, a DOC cook, and a Rikers inmate for attempting to smuggle heroin, cocaine, and marihuana into 5 different detention facilities in Manhattan, Queens, and Rikers Island.

According to Commissioner Kuriansky, BAEZ was arrested Friday at the George Motchan Detention Center on Rikers Island, after DOI investigators searched him and recovered a half-ounce of cocaine. BAEZ had been sent to the facility by his employer in response to a request by jail officials for cell-door repairs.

Commissioner Kuriansky said, "Corrupt workers can endanger the safety and security of corrections personnel and inmates alike. The smuggling of contraband into City jail facilities is an extremely serious crime and a top priority for DOI."

Acting Correction Commissioner Gary M. Lanigan said, "The introduction of narcotics into a facility is one of the gravest threats to the safety and security for both staff and inmates. We will continue to work closely with the DOI Inspector General's Office to uncover and vigorously prosecute any such incidents."

BAEZ, 26, of 433 Beach 40th Street, Far Rockaway, Queens, has been charged with Attempted Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree, a Class C felony, and Promoting Prison Contraband in the First Degree, a Class D felony. If convicted, he faces up to 15 years in prison.

The investigation was conducted by Michael Caruso, DOI's Inspector General for the Department of Correction, and members of his staff, including Chief Investigator Valerie Brown, Supervising Investigator George Santiago, Correction Officer Investigator Timothy Brymn, and Special Investigator William Injeian.

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his sincere appreciation to DOC Acting Commissioner Lanigan, DOC Chief of Security Robert Davoren and his security staff, and the George Motchan Detention Center security staff, for their assistance and cooperation in the investigation.

The Office of Bronx District Attorney Robert T. Johnson is prosecuting the case.