



U. S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Washington

PRESS RELEASE

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Wednesday, December 14, 2011	Thomas Rice, First Assistant U.S. Attorney (509) 353-2767

Illegal Immigrant Sentenced for Benefits Fraud

Yakima – Michael C. Ormsby, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington, announced that on December 12, 2011, Roman Ceniceros Mora, also known as Joseph Anderson Evans Shippentower, age 61, of Yakima, Washington, was sentenced to 96 months imprisonment for federal fraud and immigration charges. A jury in Yakima, Washington, previously found Ceniceros Mora guilty of 42 counts of fraud related to the unlawful acquisition of supplemental security income (SSI) and food stamps, a false claim of United States citizenship, and making a false statement in application for a United States passport. A separate jury convicted Ceniceros Mora of being an alien in the United States after deportation.

Roman Ceniceros Mora, a citizen of Mexico, had been living in the United States for decades following prior deportations. During that time, he repeatedly claimed citizenship in the United States by birth to American Indians in the Pacific Northwest. He also claimed to have served in the United States Marine Corps and claimed to have suffered combat related injuries during the Vietnam Era. He never served in the United States Marine Corps nor did he serve in Vietnam.

On May 25, 2010, Roman Ceniceros Mora submitted an application for a United States passport at a Post Office in Yakima, Washington. The application falsely claimed the name of Joseph Anderson Evans Shippentower, a real person. The Department of State Seattle Passport Agency subsequently detected inconsistencies in the information disclosed on the application. Further investigation by the department's Diplomatic Security Service revealed the true nationality of Roman Ceniceros Mora, in addition to evidence indicating he was receiving SSI from the Social Security Administration and food stamps from the Washington Department of Social and Health Services. His applications for public assistance were based on his alleged injuries and claim of United States citizenship.

The Court also ordered Ceniceros Mora to serve three years of supervised release following his release from prison, but is then also subject to deportation to Mexico. Ceniceros Mora must also pay \$155,431.18 in restitution to the United States and the State of Washington.

The investigation was conducted by the Department of State Diplomatic Security Service, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General, Veterans Administration Office of Inspector General, Washington Department of Social and Health Services, and the United States Border Patrol. Additional assistance was provided by the Yakima County Sheriff's Office and the Marine Corps University History Division. This case was prosecuted by Shawn Anderson, Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington.

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