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OCTOBER MARTINIQUE LEWIS PLEADS GUILTY TO MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES IN 'PORTLAND CELL' CASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Attorney General John Ashcroft, Assistant Attorney General Christopher Wray of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Michael W. Mosman of the District of Oregon announced today that October Martinique Lewis, a defendant in the so-called Portland cell case, has pleaded guilty to federal money laundering charges and has agreed to cooperate in the government's ongoing investigations.

Lewis, the ex-wife of co-defendant Jeffrey Leon Battle, pleaded guilty to six counts of money laundering. The defendant, who was indicted in May 2003, admits that she transferred or transmitted money or funds from the United States to a place outside the country, for the purpose of assisting Battle in willfully supplying services to the Taliban. As part of a plea agreement, Lewis accepts responsibility for her criminal conduct and agrees to cooperate completely and truthfully with the government in the investigation and prosecution of other individuals involved in criminal and terrorist activity.

Lewis entered the guilty plea this morning before Judge Robert E. Jones at the U.S. District Court in Portland, Oregon.

In her plea agreement, Lewis admits that on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, defendant Jeffrey Battle picked her up from work and told her about the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Battle then drove them to a park where defendants Battle, Patrice Lumumba Ford, Ahmed Bilal and others were practicing martial arts in order to prepare for jihad.

Lewis admits that in October 2001, Battle decided to leave the United States and travel overseas to fight jihad in Afghanistan against the armed forces of the United States, as U.S. and other allied forces began combat operations in Afghanistan against the Taliban. Lewis states that Battle told her she could work while he was gone. After he left, he told her to send him money overseas, which she agreed to do. She admits taking Battle to the airport in Portland on Oct. 17, 2001. Lewis also states that in one communication with Battle after he left, he asked her to talk to "the brothers" and ask for money for him. She admits to receiving a "stack of money" from another person's wife that was intended for Battle.

Lewis states that on a number of occasions, she wired money to Battle via Western Union to various locations in Hong Kong, China and Bangladesh, in amounts ranging from \$100 to \$400 dollars. Lewis admits that on each occasion, she knew the money she wired was going to be used to support Battle's continuing attempts to enter Afghanistan to fight in jihad for the Taliban against the United States and its allies.

Lewis faces a sentencing range of 33 to 41 months in prison. The agreement states that the government will recommend a sentence of not less than 36 months nor more than 41 months in prison, if Lewis continues to comply with the terms of the agreement.

Lewis is the fourth defendant to plead guilty to charges stemming from the Portland cell case. Last week, co-defendants Ahmed and Muhammad Bilal pleaded guilty to conspiracy to contribute services to the Taliban, as well as federal weapons charges. In August, defendant Maher "Mike" Hawash pleaded guilty to conspiracy to supply services to the Taliban. Hawash and the Bilals have agreed to cooperate with government investigations. Lewis, Ahmed Bilal, Muhammad Bilal, Hawash, Battle, Ford and Habis Abdulla al Saoub were all named in the 15-count superseding indictment that included charges of conspiracy to levy war against the United States, conspiracy to

provide material support and resources to al Qaeda, conspiracy to contribute services to al Qaeda and the Taliban, conspiracy to possess and discharge firearms in furtherance of crimes of violence, possessing firearms in furtherance of crimes of violence and money laundering. The trial of the remaining defendants before the court - Battle and Ford - is scheduled for January 2004. Defendant Al Saoub remains a fugitive.

The investigation of this matter was conducted by the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force in Portland, Oregon.

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