

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Thomas Man Facing Five Years In Federal Prison, \$250,00 Fine For Marijuana Possession With Intent To Distribute

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ST. THOMAS -- Alva Nicholas, 57, pleaded guilty on Tuesday in District Court here to one count of possession with intent to distribute marijuana, United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe announced via press release.

According to court records, on August 21, 2015, Nicholas was arrested by agents of the Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) at the Cyril E. King Airport on St. Thomas after his arrival on an American Airlines flight. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)

inspectors screening bags arriving at the airport detected an anomaly inside a suitcase bearing Nicholas' name and flight tag. After further inspection, agents found 3.4 kilograms of marijuana wrapped in plastic inside Nicholas' suitcase. The bag was repackaged and placed on the conveyor belt. Nicholas was taken into custody after he collected the suitcase from the conveyor belt. Nicholas was previously convicted of heroin smuggling and sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Nicholas faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison and a fine of not more than \$250,000.00. His sentencing is scheduled for March 10, 2016. This case is the result of a joint investigation by HSI and CBP. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Delia L. Smith.