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Nicaraguan Narcotic Smugglers Charged With Possession of More Than 3500 Pounds of Marijuana on Vessel

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ST. CROIX — Jonny Cadena Osorio and Morlin Moises Jaenstchke Calero, both of Nicaragua were charged with conspiracy to possess and possession of a controlled substance with intent to distribute on board a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert announced Friday.

The court filings allege that on March 27, 2021, the defendants were on board a vessel that was intercepted by a United States Coast Guard (USCG) cutter while on routine patrol. The vessel was sighted approximately 92 nautical miles off the coast of Isla De Malpelo, Colombia. The vessel did not have any display indicating its nationality.

A USCG helicopter reported packages being jettisoned from the vessel prior to its stop. Packages recovered from the ocean yielded 35 bales of suspected marijuana, an at-sea-weight of approximately 3,500 pounds.

The defendants made their initial appearance in the Southern District of Florida on April 8, 2021. They are being held on \$250,000 bond and will later be transported to the District of the Virgin Islands for prosecution.

A criminal complaint is merely a charging document, and it is not evidence of guilt, said the U.S. Attorney's Office. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

This case is being investigated by the United States Coast Guard and the Drug Enforcement Administration.