

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
WESTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.) No. 07-00200-06-CR-W-FJG
)
MICHAEL FITZWATER,)
)
)
 Defendant.)

PLEA AGREEMENT

Pursuant to Rule 11(c)(1)(B) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, the parties described below have entered into the following plea agreement:

1. The Parties. The parties to this agreement are the United States Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Missouri (otherwise referred to as “the Government” or “the United States”), represented by Matt J. Whitworth, Acting United States Attorney, and Jeffrey Valenti, Assistant United States Attorney, and the defendant, Michael Fitzwater (“the defendant”), represented by Patrick Peters.

The defendant understands and agrees that this plea agreement is only between him and the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, and that it does not bind any other federal, state, or local prosecution authority or any other government agency, unless otherwise specified in this agreement.

2. Defendant's Guilty Plea. The defendant agrees and hereby does plead guilty to an Information charging him with a violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1), (b)(1)©, and 846, that is, conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine.

By entering into this plea agreement, the defendant admits that he knowingly committed this offense, and is in fact guilty of this offense.

3. Factual Basis for Guilty Plea. The parties agree that the facts constituting the offenses to which he is pleading guilty are as follows:

That between on or about January 1, 2002, and May 31, 2007, in the Western District of Missouri and elsewhere, MICHAEL FITZWATER, defendant herein, did knowingly and intentionally combine, conspire, confederate, and agree with others, both known and unknown, to distribute a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, a Schedule II controlled substance, contrary to the provisions of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)©; all in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846.

Defendant was a member of the Galloping Goose Motorcycle Club chartered in Kansas City, Missouri. The Galloping Goose have an affiliate organization known as the El Forastero Motorcycle Club and in fact, the clubs share a common clubhouse in Kansas City, Missouri. As a member of the Galloping Goose, he was required to annually pay dues to the Galloping Goose Motorcycle Club. The Clubs would have parties, hosted by a local club, and these parties are called "runs." Members of the Galloping Goose

Motorcycle Club were required to go on the July 4th Galloping Goose run, and could go on other runs. On each run, the members were required to pay run money that was pooled, or collected, by each club charter, and then forwarded to the specific Galloping Goose or El Forastero charter that hosted the particular motorcycle run. The pooled money was used to pay for hall rental, food, drink and other entertainment expenses. At some of the runs, the local charter also used a portion of the money to purchase methamphetamine and marijuana. Those drugs were maintained in “run bags” and were available to any of the club members that wanted them. On some runs, there were no “run bags” with drugs. At others, the “run bag” drugs were donated. On some of the runs, a portion of the run money collected by the Kansas City, Missouri charter of Galloping Goose, was used to purchase methamphetamine and marijuana. The defendant knew that a portion of the run money could be used to purchase methamphetamine and marijuana, and then be distributed to those club members who wanted them. By these actions, the defendant admits that he assisted others in the distribution of those drugs to club members who wanted them.

4. Use of Factual Admissions. The defendant acknowledges, understands, and agrees that the admissions contained in Paragraph 3 and other portions of this plea agreement will be used for the purpose of determining his guilt and advisory sentencing range under the United States Sentencing Guidelines (“U.S.S.G.”), including the calculation of the defendant’s offense level in accordance with U.S.S.G. § 1B1.3(a)(2).

The defendant acknowledges, understands, and agrees that the conduct charged in any dismissed counts of the indictment as well as all other uncharged related criminal activity may be considered as “relevant conduct” pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 1B1.3(a)(2) in calculating the offense level for the charges to which he is pleading guilty.

5. Statutory Penalties. The defendant understands that were he convicted of the indicted offense after a jury trial, the maximum penalty the Court could have imposed would have been not less than 10 years of imprisonment, not more than life imprisonment, not more than a \$4,000,000 fine, not less than 5 years of supervised release, and a \$100 mandatory special assessment which must be paid in full at the time of sentencing. However, as the defendant will be allowed to plead guilty to a lesser included offense, that being, conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine, pursuant to Title 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)© and 846, the penalty the Court may impose is not more than 20 years of imprisonment, not more than a \$1,000,000 fine, at least 3 years of supervised release, and a \$100 mandatory special assessment which must be paid in full at the time of sentencing.

6. Sentencing Procedures. The defendant acknowledges, understands, and agrees to the following:

a. in determining the appropriate sentence, the Court will consult and consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines promulgated by the United States Sentencing Commission; these Guidelines, however, are advisory in nature, and the Court may impose a sentence either less than or greater than the defendant’s applicable Guidelines range, unless the sentence imposed is “unreasonable”;

b. the Court will determine the defendant's applicable Sentencing Guidelines range at the time of sentencing;

c. in addition to a sentence of imprisonment, the Court shall impose a term of supervised release of not less than three years pursuant to 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1);

d. if the defendant violates a condition of his supervised release, the Court may revoke his supervised release and impose an additional period of imprisonment of up to three years without credit for time previously spent on supervised release. In addition to a new term of imprisonment, the Court also may impose a new period of supervised release, the length of which cannot exceed three years, less the term of imprisonment imposed upon revocation of the defendant's first supervised release;

e. the Court may impose any sentence authorized by law, including a sentence that is outside of, or departs from, the applicable Sentencing Guidelines range;

f. any sentence of imprisonment imposed by the Court will not allow for parole;

g. the Court may order restitution to be paid to victims of the offense to which he is pleading guilty, the conduct charged in any dismissed counts of the indictment, and all other uncharged related criminal activity;

h. the defendant may not withdraw his guilty plea solely because of the nature or length of the sentence imposed by the Court;

i. The defendant agrees to forfeit all interests he owns or over which he exercises control, directly or indirectly, in any asset that is subject to forfeiture to the United States either directly or as a substitute for property that was subject to forfeiture but is no longer available for the reasons set forth in 21 U.S.C. § 853(p). With respect to any asset which the defendant has agreed to forfeit, the defendant waives any constitutional and statutory challenges in any manner (including direct appeal, habeas corpus, or any other means) to any forfeiture carried out in accordance with this plea agreement on any grounds, including that the forfeiture constitutes an excessive fine or punishment under the Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution;

j. The defendant agrees that the United States may institute civil judicial or administrative forfeiture proceedings against all forfeitable assets in which the defendant has an interest, and that he will not contest any such forfeiture proceedings;

7. Government's Agreements. Based upon evidence in its possession at this time, the United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of Missouri, as part of this plea agreement, agrees not to bring any additional charges against defendant for any federal criminal offenses related to the violations as described in the information, for which it has venue and which arose out of the defendant's conduct described therein.

The defendant understands that this plea agreement does not foreclose any prosecution for an act of murder or attempted murder, an act or attempted act of physical or sexual violence against the person of another, or a conspiracy to commit any such acts of violence or any criminal activity of which the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri has no knowledge.

The defendant recognizes that the United States' agreement to forego prosecution of all of the criminal offenses with which the defendant might be charged is based solely on the promises made by the defendant in this agreement. If the defendant breaches this plea agreement, the United States retains the right to proceed with the original charges and any other criminal violations established by the evidence. The defendant expressly waives his right to challenge the initiation of the dismissed or additional charges against him if he breaches this agreement. The defendant expressly waives his right to assert a

statute of limitations defense if the dismissed or additional charges are initiated against him following a breach of this agreement. The defendant further understands and agrees that if the Government elects to file additional charges against him following his breach of this plea agreement, he will not be allowed to withdraw his guilty plea.

8. Preparation of Presentence Report. The defendant understands the United States will provide to the Court and the United States Probation Office a government version of the offense conduct. This may include information concerning the background, character, and conduct of the defendant, including the entirety of his criminal activities. The defendant understands these disclosures are not limited to the count to which he has pleaded guilty. The United States may respond to comments made or positions taken by the defendant or the defendant's counsel and to correct any misstatements or inaccuracies. The United States further reserves its right to make any recommendations it deems appropriate regarding the disposition of this case, subject only to any limitations set forth in this plea agreement. The United States and the defendant expressly reserve the right to speak to the Court at the time of sentencing pursuant to Rule 32(i)(4) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

9. Withdrawal of Plea. Either party reserves the right to withdraw from this plea agreement for any or no reason at any time prior to the entry of the defendant's plea of guilty and its formal acceptance by the Court. In the event of such withdrawal, the parties will be restored to their pre-plea agreement positions to the fullest extent possible.

However, after the plea has been formally accepted by the Court, the defendant may withdraw his plea of guilty only if the Court rejects the plea agreement or if the defendant can show a fair and just reason for requesting the withdrawal. The defendant understands that if the Court accepts his plea of guilty and this plea agreement but subsequently imposes a sentence that is outside the defendant's applicable Sentencing Guidelines range, or imposes a sentence that the defendant does not expect, like or agree with, he will not be permitted to withdraw his plea of guilty.

If the defendant is ever allowed to withdraw his plea of guilty, the case will go forward under the original indictment, previously returned on June 19, 2007.

10. Agreed Guidelines Applications. With respect to the application of the Sentencing Guidelines to this case, the parties stipulate and agree as follows:

a. The Sentencing Guidelines do not bind the Court and are advisory in nature. The Court may impose a sentence that is either above or below the defendant's applicable Guidelines range, provided the sentence imposed is not "unreasonable";

b. The applicable Guidelines section for the offense of conviction is U.S.S.G. § 2D1.1. The parties agree that the drug quantity to be used to calculate the Guidelines will be determined at a sentencing hearing and found by the Court. The Government will argue for an amount of drugs not to exceed a level 32, while the defendant is free to argue for any lesser amount that he believes is supported by the evidence;

c. The defendant has admitted his guilt and clearly accepted responsibility for his actions, and has assisted authorities in the investigation or prosecution of his own misconduct by timely notifying authorities of his intention to enter a plea of guilty, thereby permitting the Government to avoid preparing for trial and permitting the Government and the Court to allocate their resources efficiently. Therefore, he is entitled to a three-level reduction pursuant to § 3E1.1(b) of the

Sentencing Guidelines. The Government, at the time of sentencing, will file a written motion with the Court to that effect, unless the defendant (1) fails to abide by all of the terms and conditions of this plea agreement and his pretrial release; or (2) attempts to withdraw his guilty plea, violates the law, or otherwise engages in conduct inconsistent with his acceptance of responsibility;

d. The Government agrees not to seek an enhancement for role in the offense under the Guidelines, but may use this information to argue for the sentence it believes appropriate. While the parties will not be seeking a leadership enhancement, the parties also understand that this agreement does not bind the Court;

e. The parties are free to advocate for any sentence they deem appropriate and “reasonable.” By way of explanation, the government will advocate for a within Guidelines custodial sentence not to exceed five years (60 months) imprisonment, while the defendant will no doubt argue for some lesser sentence. This plea agreement is written with the intention that each party have the opportunity to argue for a sentence that varies from the otherwise properly determined Guidelines Sentencing Range;

f. There is no agreement between the parties regarding the defendant’s criminal history category. The parties agree that the Court will determine his applicable criminal history category after receipt of the presentence investigation report prepared by the United States Probation Office;

g. The defendant consents to judicial fact-finding by a preponderance of the evidence for all issues pertaining to the determination of the defendant’s sentence, including the determination of any mandatory minimum sentence (including the facts that support any specific offense characteristic or other enhancement or adjustment), and any legally authorized increase above the normal statutory maximum. The defendant waives any right to a jury determination beyond a reasonable doubt of all facts used to determine and enhance the sentence imposed, and waives any right to have those facts alleged in the indictment. The defendant also agrees that the Court, in finding the facts relevant to the imposition of sentence, may consider any reliable information, including hearsay; and

g. The defendant understands and agrees that the factual admissions contained in paragraphs 3 and 4 of this plea agreement, and any admissions

that he will make during his plea colloquy, support the imposition of the agreed Guidelines calculations contained in this agreement.

11. Effect of Non-Agreement on Guidelines Applications. The parties understand, acknowledge, and agree that there are no agreements between the parties with respect to any Sentencing Guidelines issues other than those specifically listed in Paragraph 10, and its subsections. As to any other Guidelines issues, the parties are free to advocate their respective positions at the sentencing hearing.

12. Change in Guidelines Prior to Sentencing. The defendant agrees that if any applicable provision of the Guidelines changes after the execution of this plea agreement, then any request by defendant to be sentenced pursuant to the new Guidelines will make this plea agreement voidable by the United States at its option. If the Government exercises its option to void the plea agreement, the United States may charge, reinstate, or otherwise pursue any and all criminal charges that could have been brought but for this plea agreement.

13. Government's Reservation of Rights. The defendant understands that the United States expressly reserves the right in this case to:

- a. oppose or take issue with any position advanced by defendant at the sentencing hearing which might be inconsistent with the provisions of this plea agreement;
- b. comment on the evidence supporting the charges in the indictment;
- c. oppose any arguments and requests for relief the defendant might advance on an appeal from the sentences imposed; and

d. oppose any post-conviction motions for reduction of sentence, or other relief.

14. Waiver of Constitutional Rights. The defendant, by pleading guilty, acknowledges that he has been advised of, understands, and knowingly and voluntarily waives the following rights:

- a. the right to plead not guilty and to persist in a plea of not guilty;
- b. the right to be presumed innocent until his guilt has been established beyond a reasonable doubt at trial;
- c. the right to a jury trial, and at that trial, the right to the effective assistance of counsel;
- d. the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses who testify against him;
- e. the right to compel or subpoena witnesses to appear on his behalf; and
- f. the right to remain silent at trial, in which case his silence may not be used against him.

The defendant understands that by pleading guilty, he waives or gives up those rights and that there will be no trial. The defendant further understands that if he pleads guilty, the Court may ask him questions about the offense or offenses to which he pleaded guilty, and if the defendant answers those questions under oath and in the presence of counsel, his answers may later be used against him in a prosecution for perjury or making a false statement. The defendant also understands he has pleaded guilty to a felony offense and, as a result, will lose his right to possess a firearm or ammunition and might

be deprived of other rights, such as the right to vote or register to vote, hold public office, or serve on a jury.

15. Waiver of Appellate and Post-Conviction Rights.

a. The defendant acknowledges, understands, and agrees that by pleading guilty pursuant to this plea agreement he waives his right to appeal or collaterally attack a finding of guilt following the acceptance of this plea agreement.

b. The defendant expressly waives his right to appeal his sentence, directly or collaterally, on any ground except a sentence imposed in excess of the statutory maximum or an illegal sentence, that is, sentencing error more serious than a misapplication of the Sentencing Guidelines, an abuse of discretion, or the imposition of an unreasonable sentence. However, if the United States exercises its right to appeal the sentence imposed as authorized by 18 U.S.C. § 3742(b), the defendant is released from this waiver and may, as part of the Government's appeal, cross-appeal his sentence as authorized by 18 U.S.C. § 3742(a) with respect to any issues that have not been stipulated to or agreed upon in this agreement.

16. Waiver of FOIA Request. The defendant waives all of his rights, whether asserted directly or by a representative, to request or receive from any department or agency of the United States any records pertaining to the investigation or prosecution of this case including, without limitation, any records that may be sought under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, or the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. § 552a.

17. Waiver of Claim for Attorney's Fees. The defendant waives all of his claims under the Hyde Amendment, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, for attorney's fees and other litigation expenses arising out of the investigation or prosecution of this matter.

18. Defendant's Agreement to Destruction of Biological Evidence. In

accordance with 18 U.S.C. § 3600A(c)(2), the defendant knowingly and voluntarily waives his right to request DNA testing of any biological evidence which may have been obtained or seized by law enforcement in his case. Defendant agrees that all biological evidence which may have been obtained or seized may be destroyed by law enforcement authorities.

19. Defendant's Breach of Plea Agreement. If the defendant commits any crimes, violates any conditions of release, or violates any term of this plea agreement between the signing of this plea agreement and the date of sentencing, or fails to appear for sentencing, or if the defendant provides information to the Probation Office or the Court that is intentionally misleading, incomplete, or untruthful, or otherwise breaches this plea agreement, the United States will be released from its obligations under this agreement. The defendant, however, will remain bound by the terms of the agreement, and will not be allowed to withdraw his plea of guilty.

The defendant also understands and agrees that in the event he violates this plea agreement, all statements made by him to law enforcement agents subsequent to the execution of this plea agreement, any testimony given by him before a grand jury or any tribunal or any leads from such statements or testimony shall be admissible against him in any and all criminal proceedings. The defendant waives any rights that he might assert under the United States Constitution, any statute, Rule 11(f) of the Federal Rules of

Criminal Procedure, Rule 410 of the Federal Rules of Evidence, or any other federal rule that pertains to the admissibility of any statements made by him subsequent to this plea agreement.

20. Defendant's Representations. The defendant acknowledges that he has entered into this plea agreement freely and voluntarily after receiving the effective assistance, advice and approval of counsel. The defendant acknowledges that he is satisfied with the assistance of counsel, Patrick Peters, and that counsel has fully advised him of his rights and obligations in connection with this plea agreement. The defendant further acknowledges that no threats or promises, other than the promises contained in this plea agreement, have been made by the United States, the Court, his attorneys or any other party to induce him to enter his plea of guilty.

21. No Undisclosed Terms. The United States and defendant acknowledge and agree that the above-stated terms and conditions constitute the entire plea agreement between the parties, and that any other terms and conditions not expressly set forth in this agreement do not constitute any part of the parties' agreement and will not be enforceable against either party.

22. Standard of Interpretation. The parties agree that, unless the constitutional implications inherent in plea agreements require otherwise, this plea agreement should be interpreted according to general contract principles and the words employed are to be

given their normal and ordinary meanings. The parties further agree that, in interpreting this agreement, any drafting errors or ambiguities are not to be automatically construed

against either party, whether or not that party was involved in drafting or modifying this agreement.

Matt J. Whitworth
Acting United States Attorney

Dated 6/2/2009

By /s/Jeffrey Valenti
Jeffrey Valenti
Assistant United States Attorney

I have consulted with my attorney and fully understand all of my rights with respect to the offenses charged in the indictment. Further, I have consulted with my attorney and fully understand my rights with respect to the provisions of the Sentencing Guidelines. I have read this plea agreement and carefully reviewed every part of it with my attorney. I understand this plea agreement and I voluntarily agree to it.

Dated 6/2/09

/s/Michael Fitzwater
Michael Fitzwater
Defendant

I am defendant Michael Fitzwater's attorney. I have fully explained to him his rights with respect to the offenses charged in the indictment. Further, I have reviewed with him the provisions of the Sentencing Guidelines which might apply in this case. I have carefully reviewed every part of this plea agreement with him. To my knowledge, Michael Fitzwater's decision to enter into this plea agreement is an informed and voluntary one.

Dated 6/2/09

/s/Patrick Peters
Patrick Peters
Attorney for Defendant