

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA
HARRISONBURG DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	CASE NO. 5:06CR00010
)	
v.)	
)	<u>REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION</u>
MILTON JOEL VASQUEZ-)	
VELASQUEZ ¹ ,)	
)	
)	By: B. WAUGH CRIGLER
Defendant.)	U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE

In accordance with the provisions of Title 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(3) and upon the defendant's consent, this case was referred to the undersigned to conduct a plea hearing.

DEFENDANT'S RESPONSES TO RULE 11 INQUIRY

The Grand Jury has returned a single count Indictment charging defendant in Count One with being an alien and national of Honduras, was found in the United States, after first having been deported and removed on several occasions, without first having obtained the express permission of the Attorney General of the United States or the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to reapply for admission to the United States, all in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Section 1326(a) and (b)(1).

On May 4, 2006, a plea hearing was conducted before the undersigned, and the defendant entered a plea of guilty to Count One of the Indictment. At this hearing, the defendant was placed under oath and testified that his full legal name is Milton Joel Vasquez-Velasquez, that he was born in Honduras on June 23, 1979, and that he received his education in Honduras. The defendant stated

¹The style of the case in the indictment and plea agreement erroneously reflect that defendant's name is spelled *V*alaszquez rather than *V*elasquez. In open court a motion was made and granted to amend the style of the case.

that he cannot read, write, or understand the English language.² The defendant stated that he was fully aware of the nature of the charges against him and the consequence of pleading guilty to those charges. The defendant further testified that he was not under the influence of alcohol, medicine, or any drug. Defendant stated that he had no other physical or mental condition which impaired his ability to understand the nature of the proceedings being held. Defendant's counsel stated that he had no reservations as to the defendant's competency to enter a plea of guilty to the offense.

The defendant testified that he had received a copy of the Indictment pending against him and that he had fully discussed the charges therein, and his case in general, with his counsel. The defendant stated that he was pleading guilty of his own free will because he was, in fact, guilty of the offense charged. The defendant also stated that no one had made any promises, assurances or threats to him in an effort to induce his plea. The defendant testified that he understood that the offense with which he is charged in Count One is a felony, and that if his plea is accepted, he will be adjudged guilty of that offense. Moreover, the defendant testified that he understood that he will be required to pay a mandatory assessment of \$100. The defendant testified that he understood that under the terms of the agreement he was waiving any right to appeal or to collaterally attack his conviction or sentence and that he was waiving his right to have a jury determine beyond a reasonable doubt the facts alleged in Count One, including any facts related to sentencing. The defendant stated that he understood that he must submit to the government a complete and truthful financial statement revealing all his assets and liabilities on a form provided by the government within thirty days of the date of the plea agreement. The defendant stated that he was waiving his right to raise the defense of the statute of limitations if for any reason the plea agreement is

²An interpreter assisted the defendant during the hearing.

withdrawn or otherwise not consummated. The defendant also testified that he was waiving all rights under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, or the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552a, to request or receive from any department or agency of the United States any records pertaining to the investigation or prosecution of his case.

The defendant was informed that the maximum possible penalty provided by law for the offense with which he is charged in Count One, is ten years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000, together with supervised release³.

The defendant was informed that under the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984, the United States Sentencing Commission has issued guidelines for judges to follow in determining the sentence in a criminal case. The defendant was then informed that, in light of the United States Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Booker*, 125 S.Ct. 738 (2005), the sentencing guidelines are no longer mandatory but that the sentencing judge may apply them in an advisory fashion in determining a reasonable sentence. The defendant stated that he understood that, contingent upon his acceptance of responsibility and continued cooperation in the sentencing process, and fulfillment of his duties under the plea agreement, the government will recommend a two-level (2) reduction under USSG § 3E1.1(a), and because he meets the listed criteria, he should be granted an additional one-level (1) reduction under USSG 3E1.1(b) if his offense level is 16 or greater. The defendant was informed that the government will recommend that he receive a sentence of incarceration between the low end and middle of the applicable sentencing guidelines range and that the government will object to any motion for downward departure that he might make.

The defendant testified that he and his counsel had discussed how the sentencing guidelines

³Defendant's supervised release might include removal from the United States to his home country.

might apply in his case. The defendant also testified that he understood that the court would not be able to determine the applicable guideline range, for advisory purposes, until after a presentence report has been prepared and both parties have been given an opportunity to challenge the reported facts and application of the guidelines. He stated that he understood that the eventual sentence imposed may be different from any estimate his attorney had given him and that the court has the authority to impose a sentence that is either higher or lower than that called for by the guidelines, so long as the sentence is not greater than the statutory maximum for the offense to which the defendant is pleading guilty. The defendant stated that he knew that parole had been abolished and that if he is sentenced to prison he will not be released on parole but on supervised release, a violation of which could result in additional incarceration.

The defendant testified that he understood that he had the right to a trial by a jury, in addition to the following rights, which will be waived or given up if his guilty plea is accepted:

1. The right to plead not guilty to any offense charged against him;
2. The right at trial to be presumed innocent and to force the government to prove his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt;
3. The right of assistance of counsel at trial and in any subsequent appeal;
4. The right to see, hear and cross-examine witnesses;
5. The right to call witnesses to testify in his own behalf and to the issuance of subpoenas or compulsory process to compel the attendance of witnesses;
6. The right to decline to testify unless he voluntarily elects to do so in his own defense;
7. The right to a unanimous guilty verdict; and
8. The right to appeal a guilty verdict.

The defendant also testified that he understood that if he is adjudged guilty of these charges, he may be deprived of valuable civil rights, such as the right to vote, the right to hold public office, the right to serve on a jury, and the right to possess a firearm.⁴

⁴Defendant would not possess these rights which appertain only to citizens.

The defendant stated that he was fully satisfied with the advice and representation given to him in this case by his counsel. The defendant also stated that he believed his counsel's representation had been effective. The defendant testified that he understood the possible consequences of his plea.

The undersigned noted that plaintiff's signature on his plea statement and plea agreement appeared to differ. The defendant testified that both were his true and lawful signatures. The defendant asked the court to accept his plea of guilty to Count One of the Indictment.

THE GOVERNMENT'S EVIDENCE

The government filed in open court a Memorandum Of Investigation provided by Gerald White, an Immigration Enforcement Agent. Defendant did not object. The Memorandum Of Investigation dated January 30, 2006 hereby is incorporated by reference and attached as an exhibit.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Based on the evidence presented at the plea hearing, the undersigned now submits the following formal findings of fact, conclusions and recommendations:

1. The defendant is fully competent and capable of entering an informed plea;
2. The defendant is aware of the nature of the charges and the consequences of his plea;
3. The defendant knowingly and voluntarily entered a plea of guilty to Count One of the Indictment; and
4. The evidence presents an independent basis in fact containing each of the essential elements of the offense to which the defendant is pleading guilty.

RECOMMENDED DISPOSITION

Based upon the above findings of fact, the undersigned RECOMMENDS that the court accept the defendant's plea of guilty to Count One and adjudge him guilty of that offense. A sentencing hearing is scheduled for August 9, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. in Harrisonburg before the presiding District Judge.

NOTICE TO PARTIES

Notice is hereby given to the parties of the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(C): Within ten days after being served with a copy of this Report and Recommendation, any party may serve and file written objections to such proposed findings and recommendations as provided by rules of court. The presiding District Judge shall make a *de novo* determination of those portions of the report or specified proposed findings or recommendations to which objection is made. The presiding District Judge may accept, reject, or modify, in whole or in part, the findings or recommendations made by the undersigned. The judge may also receive further evidence or recommit the matter to the undersigned with instructions.

Failure to file timely written objections to these proposed findings and recommendations within 10 days could waive appellate review. At the conclusion of the 10-day period, the Clerk is directed to transmit the record in this matter to the presiding United States District Judge.

The Clerk is hereby directed to send certified copies of this Report and Recommendation to all counsel of record.

ENTERED:

United States Magistrate Judge

Date

