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**3 of 4 plead guilty in cocaine cartel trial**By Bob Robinson  
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MIAMI — The trial of three of four men, accused of participating in what prosecutors called one of the world's biggest cocaine cartels, ended abruptly yesterday when they pleaded guilty.

The three, Carlos Bustamante, 33, Lizardo Marquez-Perez, 50, and Felix Dixon Bates, in his 30s, pleaded guilty to conspiring to import and distribute cocaine.

A fourth defendant, Paul Etzel, 37, continued to maintain his innocence.

Bustamante, who federal officials said supervised the cocaine distribution network in the United States for the Ochoa cartel, said little

except to answer "yes" when U.S. District Judge James L. King questioned him to determine whether he understood what he was doing.

In addition to the conspiracy count, he pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute and two travel violation counts. In all, he faces 40 years in jail and \$70,000 in fines.

Marquez-Perez, a graduate of the Venezuelan navy academy who was described by prosecutors as the man put in charge of increasing security for the cartel, said in broken English that he understood the charges and his plea.

When asked whether anyone had promised him anything in return for his plea, he said, "only conscience—

only for myself." He faces 15 years in jail and a \$25,000 fine.

The third defendant, Bates, also pleaded guilty to a count involving possession with intent to distribute. He faces a total of 30 years in jail and a \$50,000 fine.

The pleas came on the third day of testimony in the trial. Prosecutors contend the four were members of the cartel, a Colombian-based organization that imported narcotics into the United States.

The only witness to testify so far has been Barry Seal, a former TWA pilot who said the cartel had set up laboratories in Nicaragua after Colombian authorities began clamping down on drug activities.

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