

MBI

Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation

NEWS RELEASE

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Operation Revolution Press Release

The **Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI)**, the **Florida Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (ABT)**, the **Orlando Police Department (OPD)**, and the **Orange County Sheriff's Office (OCSO)** served search warrants and made arrests at a **downtown Orlando drinking establishment** and several residences on Thursday, July 7, 2005, at 10:00 p.m.

The MBI began the investigation, called *Operation Revolution*, after receiving tips about a bartender **slipping GHB** (commonly known as the date rape drug), into the **drinks of some unsuspecting female** customers. The six month investigation documented widespread illegal drug use and distribution that occurred inside the **Red Square Lounge**, a Russian themed drinking establishment, located at **118 South Orange Avenue**, Orlando, Florida. A search warrant was served at the lounge and at the offices for the *Red Square Lounge*, located next door at 116 South Orange Avenue.

The investigation has resulted in distribution of narcotics charges for three **(3) patrons** and five **(5) employees** of the *Red Square Lounge*. Search warrants were also served at the residences of two of the employees.

Undercover MBI and ABT agents witnessed the **widespread sale and use** of illegal drugs such as GHB, Cocaine, Ecstasy, and Cannabis while inside the *Red Square Lounge*. **Agents made 24 separate purchases** of drugs while undercover inside the lounge.

During the investigation, illegal drugs were observed being **stored behind the bar** and patrons were observed **paying for and receiving GHB in their drinks**, making a concoction called a "Salty Dog". Patrons and employees of the lounge were also observed snorting Cocaine and smoking Cannabis inside the lounge.

Evidence in the investigation reflects that the **following employees** were involved in the sale and distribution of illegal narcotics:

Daryl Bartsch-*Bar Manager*
Elijah Burress-*Bartender*
Alex Loudakis-*Bar Back*
Michael Diaz-*Security*
Josh (last name pending)-*Bar Back*

The **Red Square Lounge website**, www.RedSquareLounge.com, has additional details concerning the establishment and in the "Gallery" portion of the website a **video clip is available** of the bar manager/defendant Daryl Bartsch, creating a fire effect by blowing a mouthful of alcohol through a lighted paper napkin.

As a result of the pervasive sale and use of illegal drugs occurring inside the *Red Square Lounge*, the Florida Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco has determined the *Red Square Lounge* to be an **endangerment to the public health and safety** and has served the management with an **Emergency Order of Suspension of the Alcoholic Beverage License**.

The contact person for additional information is **MBI Narcotics Commander Larry Zwieg, 407-836-9724**, or for questions concerning the **alcoholic beverage license issues** contact, the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Press Information Office at **850-922-8981**.

The Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation is a multi-agency Narcotics, Vice and Organized Crime law enforcement task force assigned to Orange and Osceola Counties. The member agencies of MBI are the State Attorney of the Ninth Judicial Circuit; Sheriff of Orange County; Orlando Police Department; Winter Park Police Department; Apopka Police Department; Ocoee Police Department; Eatonville Police Department, Sheriff of Osceola County; Florida Department of Law Enforcement; Florida Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration; and the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation