

Yacht Broker Sentenced to 2 Months for Tax Evasion

By The Associated Press

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FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) A Florida yacht broker who admitted filing a false federal tax return and concealing millions of dollars in a secret account at the Swiss bank UBS was sentenced Friday to two months in prison.

Judge James I. Cohn of Federal District Court in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., gave the broker, Robert Moran, credit for immediately confessing his crime and for assisting a broad federal investigation of tax evasion at UBS and other offshore banks. Judge Cohn also noted that Mr. Moran, a British-born United States citizen, had paid the \$1.9 million in penalties and back taxes he owed.

But the judge said “the public is weary” of people trying to hide wealth from the Internal Revenue Service and rejected Mr. Moran’s request for a sentence of probation only.

Mr. Moran is scheduled to report to prison Jan. 4. The United States Bureau of Prisons has not yet determined where he will serve his sentence, but Judge Cohn recommended that he be held in southern Florida.

In April, Mr. Moran became the first UBS client in the United States to plead guilty after the bank gave federal prosecutors about 150 names of Americans suspected of tax evasion. The bank later reached a second agreement that calls for disclosure of 4,450 additional United States taxpayers to the I.R.S.

Mr. Moran is the third former UBS client to be sentenced in the last two weeks in South Florida for filing false tax returns. One of them got house arrest and the other a short prison term. Seven former clients have been charged in the latest crackdown, and dozens more are under investigation.

Mr. Moran, president of Moran Yacht and Ship, which has offices in Fort Lauderdale and Moscow, will lose his yacht broker's license because of the felony conviction and faces an uncertain business future, Gary M. Bagliebter, his lawyer, said.

In remarks to the judge, Mr. Moran, 58, accepted full responsibility. He had about \$3.5 million in his UBS accounts.

"I'm really sorry for opening this foreign bank account and not disclosing it," Mr. Moran said. "I realize it was a mistake."

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