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7 Haitians jailed for phoney papers

BRAMPTON, Ont. (CP) – Seven Haitians, who apparently fled to Canada with the help of a shadowy Montreal-based organization, were jailed yesterday for six months by a provincial court judge.

The four women and three men, who pleaded guilty to uttering false documents, were arrested Oct. 9 when immigration officials spotted the phoney papers after they arrived at Toronto's Pearson International Airport from Jamaica.

RCMP Const. Stefan Tremblay testified the seven arrived together and all carried travel documents that had been reported either lost or stolen from Montreal and were doctored with false names and pictures.

Police, he said, are investigating a Montreal organization believed to have ties to illegal immigrants who have tried to enter Canada from Jamaica.

"According to (the Haitians') statements, they paid from \$2,000 to \$2,500 U.S. for these documents," Tremblay said.

Jean Dury, a Montreal lawyer who assisted on the case but had no status to address the court, said in an interview afterward that the seven will apply for refugee status.

He said he was shocked by the jail term, adding: "Usually people get a suspended sentence for a first offence of uttering."