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Bosch's profits may encourage new industry

Whenever the war news starts to get you down, check out what's happening on the local front. It will definitely take your mind off the Persian Gulf.

Last week, for instance, it was announced that all roadkills on Monroe County highways will henceforth be shipped to Dade County for disposal (retaliation, no doubt, for all the jerk drivers we send down to the Keys on weekends). We also learned that the Miami City Commission didn't want local Haitians to use a city park for a democracy celebration if Fidel Castro was invited to attend the presidential inauguration in Port-au-Prince (there was no mention of what to do if Saddam Hussein turned up on the guest list).

And finally this news item: The undeportable Orlando Bosch would be selling limes on the corner of LeJeune Road and West Flagler Street.

Perfect! What better place for Miami's most famous retired terrorist! Imagine tourists from Muleville, Kan., weaving down 42nd Avenue in search of the Biltmore or God knows what, when. . . .

"Bob, slow down. Look at that nice old gentleman selling limes!"

"Mmmmm, honey, I'm in the mood for a bagful. How about you?"

"Wait a second, Bob, that fellow looks familiar."

"Why, you're right. It looks like Dr. Orlando Bosch!"

"The famous ex-fugitive? The one who zapped the freighter with a bazooka? The guy the U.S. government calls a hardened and unrepentant terrorist? What's he doing out on the street?"

"A darn good business, it appears."

Sweet success

Actually, there are worse enterprises than fruit peddling for a man of Bosch's violent history. I think it's a good plan to let him work on a busy corner; that way, his fans and supporters can greet him personally, while everyone else can keep a watchful eye on him. So far, his limes have shown no evidence of ballistic content.

Bosch was placed under house arrest months ago, after the U.S. government declared it could find no other country to take him. Since then, the anti-Castro crusader has kept a low profile, and apparently conducted himself lawfully during his three hours of daily freedom.

The lime-selling appearance was meant to dramatize Bosch's financial hardships, and help persuade the immigration service to let him take a regular 40-hour-a-week job at a medical company. However, after his first boffo day in retail produce (raking in \$717 in less than two hours), the doctor might want to make it a full-time gig.

With profits so lucrative, expect other internationally famous prisoners, fugitives and parole jumpers to start angling for prime vending locations at South Florida's busiest intersections.

More freshly squeezed

If I were Manuel Noriega's defense lawyer, for example, I'd be cooking up a sweet deal to offer prosecutors: The general pleads guilty in exchange for the exclusive curbside guava concession at the corner of Coral Way and Eighth Street.

Or say you're lonesome Bob Vesco, on the lam for 17 years now, bored to tears at your hideout in a suburb of Havana. Sirloin is being rationed, you ran out of Coppertone during Reagan's first term, and you can't even swipe Cinemax off those cheap Soviet satellites.

You're ready to come back to Miami and give yourself up, except

... You definitely don't want to go to jail. So you ask for an arrangement like Dr. Bosch's. Except if you're Vesco, fruit isn't what you want to sell. Make it no-load mutual funds. And make it a corner downtown in the banking district — Brickell and Southeast Seventh would be ideal.

If Miami gets enough of these characters on the streets, the Chamber of Commerce could promote it as a new tourist attraction — "Roadside Reprobates," or something equally snappy.

Yes, Bosch is on to something with this citrus business. What harm can he possibly do? Nothing that a few bomb-sniffing medflies couldn't prevent.