



Inside ICE

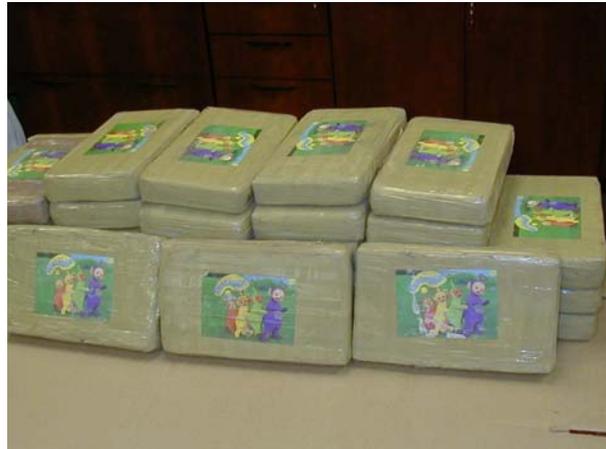
ICE ARRESTS SEAPORT SMUGGLERS

A five-year investigation by ICE has led to the indictment of 22 members of two Colombian drug organizations on charges that they conspired to smuggle large quantities of cocaine through seaports in New York, Newark, San Francisco and Oakland with the help of corrupt longshoremen.

"Operation Pier Pressure" resulted in the arrest of defendants in New York, New Jersey, Florida, California and Colombia on September 28. One of the ringleaders is accused of supervising various international cocaine smuggling operations from his federal prison cell in Pennsylvania.

The investigation was led by ICE in conjunction with the Drug Enforcement Agency and the New York Waterfront Commission, with assistance provided by U.S. Customs and Border Control, and was coordinated by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The investigation began in December 2000, when law enforcement learned that Jose Escobar Orejuela was supervising an international narcotics operation from the Federal Correctional Center in Allenwood, Pa., where he is serving a 30-year sentence for his role in the 1995



Shown above is some of hundreds of kilograms of cocaine seized by ICE agents in New York and New Jersey as a result of "Operation Pier Pressure," a five-year investigation into a major smuggling group.

importation of 180 kilograms of cocaine into Port Newark, N.J.

As a result of leads developed in the investigation, in August 2001, ICE, DEA, and the New York/New Jersey Port Authority Police arrested five individuals and seized approximately 78 kilograms of cocaine from a container at the Howland Hook Marine Terminal in New York. The five defendants were subsequently convicted of felony narcotics distribution charges.

Following additional advances in the investigation, during the next two years federal agents and inspectors seized another 270 kilograms of cocaine hidden in containerized

shipments at Howland Hook.

A major development in the investigation occurred when law enforcement learned in August 2003 that a large shipment of narcotics would be arriving at Howland Hook.

During the early morning hours of August 28, 2003, agents from ICE, DEA and the Waterfront Commission observed three suspects emerge from Howland Hook carrying large bags, which they loaded into a pickup truck. The agents arrested two suspects outside the terminal and gave chase to two others who fled in the truck.

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RINGLEADER RAN COKE RING FROM PA PRISON

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At speeds exceeding 90 miles per hour, the truck and its occupants ran through a roadblock and escaped.

Thereafter, agents obtained recordings of Escobar's telephone calls from prison, which confirmed that he had been expecting, but did not receive, a cocaine shipment at Howland Hook in late August 2003. Subsequent investigation revealed that the August 28 drug shipment was actually stolen by one of the members of Escobar's crew.

Based in large part on the information gleaned from Escobar's prison calls, in November 2003 the government obtained court authorization to intercept the telephone conversations of a trusted Escobar associate. Those intercepts, as well as other investigative techniques, revealed that the Escobar organization was expecting another cocaine shipment at Howland Hook in early December 2003.

Agents established surveillance and on December 5, 2003, seized an additional 157 kilograms of cocaine at Howland Hook, with a street value of approximately \$3,925,000. Six individuals were arrested as they loaded the cocaine into a minivan. The government's subsequent investigation revealed that the August 28 and December 5, 2003, cocaine shipments actually belonged to drug organizations led by both Escobar and Jorge Ignacio Figueroa, also an inmate at Allenwood who was serving a life sentence for his role in a 1991 importation of 244 kilograms of cocaine.

Escobar and Figueroa had joined

forces and together were supervising the importation of cocaine from Colombia into Howland Hook, with the assistance of family members and associates in Colombia and the United States.

Escobar enlisted the help of long-shoremen in Brooklyn and Staten Island to facilitate the importations by ensuring that the cocaine-laden containers were placed in easily accessible locations and by notifying the organization members if law enforcement was at the port. For each cocaine shipment, Escobar tasked a trusted associate with hiring a "break-in" crew to sneak into the terminal late at night or in the early morning hours, locate the right container, remove the cocaine, and deliver it to associates waiting in vehicles outside the terminal.

In July 2004, the government obtained court authorization to record conversations between Escobar and Figueroa and their associates during meetings in the Allenwood prison visiting room. Those conversations confirmed that as a result of law enforcement activity in New York and the costly losses of cocaine at Howland Hook, the two drug organizations were planning to import cocaine into another port, this time in the San Francisco area. During a prison meeting on August 22, 2004, Figueroa's brother, William Figueroa, relayed an associate's concern that the situation in New York "...is very shaky," and that individuals arrested at Howland Hook were talking to the government. William Figueroa concluded, "...things are rotten here."

In October 2004, Escobar's son, Jose M. Escobar, Jr., and Julio Gongora traveled to San Francisco to meet with Escobar's longtime associate Carmen Rodriguez and her contacts at the port to discuss moving the drug-smuggling opera-



Colombian Police assist one of the several persons arrested in Colombia as a result of ICE's investigation into drug smuggling from Columbia to the United States.

tion to the West Coast. Upon his return, Escobar, Jr. met with his father at Allenwood and reported that "...the game cannot be done through the piers," because the ports in San Francisco and Oakland were under such tight security that cocaine could not be successfully imported there. Escobar, Jr. told his father that based on what "the supervisor at the pier" told him "the terminal is under 24-hour surveillance by the Feds."

ICE New York Special Agent-in-Charge Ficke stated, "It is an ICE priority to identify and dismantle the vulnerabilities that can threaten the security of our country. These arrests have taken violent criminals off the street and shut down an illegal drug trafficking enterprise that threatened the welfare of our communities. I want to thank the ICE special agents, the DEA and the Waterfront Commission for their assistance and support in this investigation."

Inside ICE is an e-newsletter produced by the ICE Office of Public Affairs to inform the public about the mission, operations and activities of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

ICE DEPORTS CALIFORNIA IMAM LINKED TO AL QAEDA

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — A 38-year-old former imam of a Lodi, Calif., mosque was deported to Pakistan after ICE attorneys presented evidence tying him to the Taliban and Al Qaeda.



Shabbir Ahmed

According to ICE attorneys, Shabbir Ahmed's long-term goal was to establish a madrassah, or religious school, in Lodi (90 miles East of San Francisco) similar to one in Rawalpindi, Pakistan believed to be used to recruit individuals to engage in jihad.

Ahmed was initially picked up on immigration violations and was deported September 24 on board a commercial flight escorted by ICE officers.

“With Ahmed’s removal, ICE has once again fulfilled its mission to protect our country,” said Ronald E. Le Fevre, ICE chief counsel in San Francisco.

“His removal sends a strong message that ICE will continue to use every tool at its disposal to preserve the integrity of our immigration system and prevent foreign nationals who pose a threat to this country from conducting activities within our borders.”

During Ahmed’s immigration proceedings, ICE attorneys presented evidence tying the Lodi cleric to the Taliban and Al Qaeda. That evidence included a diagram showing the relationship between Ahmed and several other Lodi-area men who have been taken into custody by federal authorities.

One of those individuals, Imam Mohammad Adil Khan, was arrested by ICE on immigration violations and removed to Pakistan last month. Two other men, Umer Hayat, and his son, Hamid Hayat, have been indicted on criminal charges.

Ahmed’s deportation followed an immigration hearing where he accepted an order of removal to Pakistan. ICE agents took Ahmed into custody June 6 for violating the terms of his visa.

ICE ARRESTS CHILD PSYCHOLOGIST FOR CHILD PORN

LONG ISLAND, N.Y. — ICE agents and local police in New York have arrested a child psychologist who was employed at a pre-school on charges of possession of child pornography.

Assisted by detectives from the Suffolk County New York Police Department Computer Crimes Section, ICE agents on September 22 arrested Peter Mies, 57, as a result of a joint, ongoing investigation into the receipt and possession of child pornography via the Internet.

Mies is the latest individual to be arrested as part of a massive, ICE child pornography investigation targeting an Internet billing company based in Minsk, Belarus and its affiliated entities in the United States. To date, the investigation has resulted in the arrest of more than 1,200 people worldwide.

In January 2004, the firm was charged with money laundering,

providing credit card billing for 50 child pornography Web sites worldwide and operating child pornography Web sites of its own. Three company officers were arrested in Europe and extradited to the United States. All three pleaded guilty in Newark, N.J., as have four officers of two affiliated companies in Florida and California.

ICE agents in domestic ICE offices and 52 Attaché offices worldwide then turned their focus to those who purchased child porn subscriptions from these sites in the U.S. and abroad.

As a result of the operation, called Falcon, ICE has arrested more than 237 persons in the United States, and foreign law enforcement, acting on ICE leads, have arrested more than 1,000 in Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Japan, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Some of the subscribers to the child pornography sites who have been arrested to date include



an elementary teacher, priests, school principals, school coaches, school janitors, camp counselors, campus ministers, pediatricians, circus clowns, Boy Scout leaders, police officers, firefighters, and many others with direct access to children. Some of these individuals were also found to have been involved in the production and distribution of child pornography.

This investigation is believed to be the largest Internet child pornography investigation to date, and the first time the U.S. government has targeted the financial side of Internet child pornography.

ICE BREAKS NEW JERSEY FRAUD DOC RING

NEWARK, N.J. — A year-long investigation into a fraudulent document ring operating in New Jersey and Pennsylvania has resulted in the arrest of eight individuals, including the ringleader and a former policeman who is a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation official.

The investigation by ICE and law enforcement officials in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania dismantled a criminal organization that provided hundreds of Pennsylvania driver's licenses and commercial driver's licenses to illegal aliens and others who sought false identities.

The arrests began at dawn September 27 as teams of ICE agents in Pennsylvania and the Trenton, N.J. area arrested the eight suspects and conducted searches at two locations.

The ringleader, Altagracia "Grace" Rosario, 45, was arrested in Robbinsville, N.J. Rosario's organization provided fraudulent supporting documents which were then used to obtain Pennsylvania driver's licenses and commercial driver's licenses. Without the supporting documents provided by Rosario, the individuals would not have been able to obtain the licenses.

Agents also arrested 62-year-old Pennsylvania Department of Transportation official Ronald Henry at his home in Philadelphia. The criminal complaint alleges Henry was paid to falsify records indicating that the individuals had taken both a written and a road test to obtain their licenses. Henry is a former Philadelphia police officer.

Much of the evidence in the case was developed through surveillance and court authorized wiretaps. The wiretaps were placed on telephones at the Rosario and Henry residences.

ICE Newark Special Agent-in-Charge Kyle Hutchins said, "This organization was helping individuals create new identities, and in today's world, that is a serious threat to our national security." Hutchins also pointed out that the individuals who fraudulently obtained commercial driver's licenses were in most cases not properly trained and did not take the road test as required under Pennsylvania law, thereby "creating a significant public safety threat on our highways."



An ICE agent escorts Pennsylvania Department of Transportation employee Ronald Henry after his arrest on charges that he falsified records, allowing illegal aliens to obtain driver's licenses.

ICE ARRESTS EIGHT GANG MEMBERS

DETROIT, Mich. — Eight members of the Muertos-Treces street gang were arrested September 23 by ICE agents and the Detroit Police Department Gang Squad.



All eight men are illegal aliens from Mexico and are currently in ICE custody. They include: Alejandro Daniel Rios-Sainz, 18; Sergio Alejandro Campos-Villa, 21; Diego Alfonso Hernandez-Camarena, 19; Tomas Gonzalez-Angel, 21; Felipe Maclovio Flores-Sanchez, 27; Mario Alberto Hernandez-Gonzalez, 20; Miguel Saucedo-Cuevas, 22; and Guillermo Gutierrez-Pasencia, 29.

When arrested, Gutierrez-Pasencia had a .357 revolver. ICE has pre-

sented the case for criminal prosecution to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan.

"These arrests clearly demonstrate the importance and benefit of ICE and local law enforcement working together to address the nation's violent gang problem," said Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent-in-Charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Detroit. "Under the auspices of Operation Community Shield, ICE uses the full spectrum of its authorities to help local police make our cities and neighborhoods safer for everyone."

These arrests are part of Operation Community Shield, a nationwide ICE anti-gang initiative intended to disrupt, dismantle and assist in the criminal prosecution of violent gangs by employing the full authorities of ICE. To date, more than 1,300 gang members have been arrested.

ICE SEEKS VICTIMS IN SAN DIEGO IMMIGRATION FRAUD SCHEME

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — ICE and the San Diego District Attorney's office are appealing to immigrants who were bilked as part of an employment visa fraud scheme to come forward so that they can be compensated for their losses.

The two San Diego residents behind the scam pleaded guilty to felony charges September 26 and have been ordered to pay restitution to their known victims.

Bemilda Asuncion Ruiz, 37, also known as "Linda", and her business partner, Jose Rolando Cesena, 57, were arrested in March after ICE investigators uncovered a widespread fraudulent immigration consulting scheme in which they submitted bogus applications for their clients. Ruiz and Cesena pleaded guilty to multiple counts of grand theft. Prior to their sentencing, as part of a plea agreement, Ruiz Ruiz will be required to pay \$72,648 in restitution and Cesena will pay back \$26,935.

ICE is appealing to anyone who believes the two consultants have defrauded them to contact the District Attorney's consumer hotline at (619) 531-4070 or the Mexican Consulate in San Diego at (619) 231-6634.

CONVICTED PAKISTANI FACING NEW ILLEGAL EXPORT CHARGES

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — A Pakistani national convicted in 1987 of illegally exporting U.S. missile components to Iran has been charged in a new criminal complaint with conspiring to illegally export U.S. military aircraft components to the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia and Belgium in 2004 and 2005.

The complaint alleges that Arif Ali Durrani, 56, knowingly and intentionally conspired to export from the United States defense materials designated on the U.S. Munitions List without first having obtained a license or written authorization for such export from the Department of State. By law, anyone attempting to export U.S. defense articles must be registered with the State Department and must apply for and receive a license or other approval for export of the defense articles.

The complaint alleges that Durrani conspired with Richard Tobey, operator of Airpower Supply in Temecula, Calif., to illegally export a rear canopy panel for the T-38 military aircraft from the United States to the United Arab Emirates on or about July 1, 2004. According to the complaint, Tobey told ICE agents in June that Dur-

rani operated his military parts supply business from Mexico and that Tobey purchased and exported military aircraft components from the United States on behalf of Durrani. In August 2005, Tobey pleaded guilty in the Southern District of California to a felony charge of conspiracy to violate the Arms Export Control Act.

The complaint also alleges that Durrani conspired to illegally export jet engine parts from the United States to Malaysia. These parts were designed for an engine specifically used on military aircraft.

In April 1987, Durrani was convicted on three counts of illegal arms exports. He served his sentence and voluntarily left the United States in 1998 after receiving a deportation order.

ICE ARRESTS TWO CANADIANS ON MARIJUANA SMUGGLING CHARGES

SEATTLE, Wash. — Two brothers from Calgary are facing federal drug charges after they were arrested with an estimated \$3 million worth of marijuana by ICE agents earlier this week.

Braydon Miraback, 19, and Zachary Miraback, 22, are charged with possession of marijuana with intent to distribute. The two were taken into custody by ICE agents September 21 at a home in Puyallup, Wash. According to the criminal complaint, the arrests occurred after ICE agents received a tip that two cars traveling on Interstate 90 were involved in marijuana distribution.

ICE agents spotted the two vehicles, a maroon Toyota Tundra with Colorado license plates and a GMC Spartan van with Washington plates, traveling in tandem near North Bend, Wash. Agents followed the vehicles to a home in Puyallup. As the men climbed out of their vehicles, ICE agents saw large black hockey bags in the back of the van. A Washington State Patrol canine alerted to the presence of the drugs. In all, there were 23 hockey bags containing an estimated 900 to 1,000 pounds of marijuana.

"These arrests continue to highlight the extensive amount of marijuana being smuggled into the United States," said Leigh Winchell, Special Agent-in-Charge of ICE investigations in Seattle. "ICE will continue to focus our investigative efforts on this type of criminal activity and those individuals involved."

A preliminary hearing on the charges is set for October 7 before Magistrate Karen Strombom in Tacoma, Wash. If convicted of the charges, the brothers face a mandatory minimum sentence of five years and a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison.

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.

No Trespassing



An ICE officer stands guard with a shotgun at the top of a stairway leading to the Hyatt Hotel in New Orleans, its curtains hanging from windows blown out by the winds and rain of Hurricane Katrina. ICE mobilized a force of 725 law enforcement and support personnel to the hurricane ravaged Gulf Coast.