



Inside ICE

ICE'S "OPERATION PALMDALE" DISRUPTS MAJOR INTERNATIONAL SMUGGLING RING

MIAMI, Fla. — Sixteen people were arrested in Miami and New York December 11-12 on alien smuggling charges following a nine-month investigation by ICE.

The arrests are the result of an investigation known as "Operation Palmdale," which was conducted in Miami, New York and Ecuador by the ICE Human Smuggling and Trafficking Unit.

Beginning in the spring of 2004, using immigration documents provided by undercover agents, the defendants smuggled Ecuadorian and Chinese nationals into the United States by commercial airline from Ecuador. During the operation, the defendants paid undercover agents posing as part of the scheme smuggling fees ranging from \$9,000 to \$20,000 per alien.

Eight defendants were arrested in Miami and eight others in New York. They are charged in various and multiple criminal indictments with a variety of charges, including conspiracy to smuggle illegal aliens into the United States for profit, alien smuggling and encouraging and inducing illegal

aliens to come to the United States. If convicted of conspiring to smuggle aliens, the defendants face a maximum statutory term of five years in prison. If convicted on substantive alien smuggling charges, the defendants face a maximum statutory term of 15 years in prison.

"Today we have dismantled a major human smuggling enterprise that funneled individuals from

China and Latin America into this country illegally," said Jesus Torres, ICE Special Agent-in-Charge in Miami. "The criminal organizations behind this scheme profited enormously at the expense of their human clients, in some cases charging as much as \$20,000 per person. Targeting the multi-billion dollar human smuggling trade is a key priority for ICE and the Department of Homeland Security."

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Some of the 16 people arrested in a major smuggling case are led by ICE agents into a detention facility in Miami following their arrest. The investigation, which stretched from Miami to New York to Ecuador, ended December 11-12 with arrests in New York and Miami.

ICE RETURNS STOLEN \$2.7 MILLION TO NICARAGUA

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — ICE Miami Special Agent-in-Charge Jesus Torres and United States Ambassador to Nicaragua, the Honorable Barbara C. Moore, on December 9 presented the Republic of Nicaragua with a \$2.7 million check to return funds that were embezzled from the treasury of Nicaragua and illegally invested in South Florida.

The repatriated funds stem from the seizure and forfeiture of eight certificates of deposit and a luxury condominium in Key Biscayne, Fla., that were purchased with funds embezzled by former Nicaraguan President Arnoldo Aleman and Byron Jerez, Nicaragua's former tax commissioner.

The ICE-led Foreign Corruption Task Force in Miami, in coordination with the ICE Asset Identification and Removal Group, conducted the two-year investigation that resulted in the seizure of U.S. assets traced to the diversion of embezzled Nicaraguan government funds.

"This case illustrates ICE's commitment to curb political corruption around the globe. It also highlights our efforts to keep the proceeds of foreign corruption from ending up in the United States. Our goal is to find these illicit funds and return them to nations whose treasuries have been looted," said Special Agent-in-Charge Torres. "With today marking the first anniversary of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, ICE is proud to play a key role in the fight against bribery, extortion and political corruption."

The \$2.7 million represents the largest forfeiture to date made by the ICE Task Force in Miami. Created in August 2003, the Foreign Corruption Task Force is comprised of agents from ICE; prosecutors from the Miami U.S. Attorney's Office; and agents from other federal agencies that participate on a part-time basis. The Foreign Corruption Task Force represents the only task force in the United States that specifically targets the proceeds of public corruption, bribery and embezzlement emanating from foreign nations.

Both Aleman and Jerez have been convicted of various charges in Nicaragua relating to these embezzled funds and are serving sentences in Nicaragua.



John Doe, left, treasurer of the Republic of Nicaragua, receives a \$2.7 million check from the Honorable Barbara C. Moore, center, U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua and ICE Miami Special Agent-in-Charge Jesus Torres. The funds were embezzled from the government of Nicaragua and illegally invested in South Florida before being recovered by ICE.

ICE WINS 80-YEAR PRISON TERM FOR CHILD PREDATOR

SIoux FALLS, S.D. — Charles Aaron Kellogg, 39, of Sioux Falls, S.D., was sentenced December 1 in a South Dakota court to 80 years in prison for raping a little girl hundreds of times over two and one-half years.

An investigation initiated by ICE determined that Kellogg first raped the child when she was four years old. Kellogg has also pleaded guilty to six counts of possession of child pornography. He will not be eligible for parole until he has served at least 40 years of the sentence.

Acting on a lead provided by ICE's CyberCrimes Center in Virginia, members of the South Dakota Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force launched an investigation into Kellogg's activities earlier this year. Investigators were led to Kellogg by credit card information found in the possession of a U.S.-based billing service that collected fees for a child pornography business located in Belarus.

Kellogg's arrest and prosecution is part of Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE initiative designed to protect children from sexual predators, including those who travel overseas for sex with minors, Internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders, and child sex traffickers.

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. Please send comments and contributions to:

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ICE WINS CARTEL CHIEF'S EXTRADITION TO U.S.

MIAMI, Fla.—Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela, one of the founders of Colombia's notorious Cali drug cartel, made his initial appearance in federal district court in Miami December 6 after being extradited from Colombia to the United States on December 3 to face charges that resulted from a 14-year investigation by ICE agents in Miami and Colombia.

Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela faces narcotics trafficking and money laundering charges in the Southern District of Florida, where a four-count superseding indictment is pending against him and 10 other named defendants, including his brother, Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela, both of whom are the alleged leaders and founders of the infamous Cali Cartel.

At one time, Rodriguez-Orejuela and his organization were believed to be responsible for roughly 80 percent of the cocaine shipped to the United States. To date, ICE agents have convicted more than 100 members of the Cali cartel, including the Rodriguez-Orejuela brothers, who pleaded guilty to Colombian charges and were jailed in Colombia, as well as many cell managers and organizational lawyers convicted during U.S. trials. In addition, more than 50 tons of cocaine and \$15 million have been seized as part of the investigation.

The ICE (then-U.S. Customs Service) investigation into the Cali drug cartel began in 1991 when a drug-sniffing dog at the Miami seaport alerted officers to a shipment of cocaine concealed in concrete posts. ICE agents seized 12,000 kilograms of cocaine and arrested several individuals. A cooperating defendant linked the shipment to Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela, Gilberto's brother. In following years ICE investigators established the Rodriguez-Orejuela brothers as the heads of the cartel.

In June 1996, a grand jury in Miami indicted a number of Cali cartel members. In late 1996, the Rodriguez-Orejuela brothers reached an agreement with the Colombian government to plead guilty to mirrored charges in Colombia, rather than face future possible extradition to the United States.

From 1999 to 2003, ICE agents investigated information that the Cali Cartel was continuing its drug and money laundering activities from within Colombian prisons. ICE agents launched a new investigation and developed additional and corroborating information linking the cartel to several seizures in Miami, Texas and California. In September 2003, a federal grand jury in Miami issued a sealed indictment against 11 Cali cartel defendants, including Cali cartel founders Gilberto and Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela, for recent drug



ICE agents take custody of Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela after his extradition from Colombia and his arrival in the United States. He faces charges of running the Cali drug cartel from his prison cell in Colombia.

and money laundering activity. In November 2004, U.S. extradition requests for Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela and one other defendant in custody were approved by Colombia. Extradition requests for Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela and two other defendants are being considered before the Colombian Supreme Court.

ICE BREAKS TRIBAL CASINO CASE

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Six people, including a Texas state representative, were indicted by a federal grand jury, following an ICE investigation into a scheme to steal more than \$900,000 from the Kickapoo Indian Tribe of Eagle Pass, Texas.

The 19-count indictment was returned December 9. It charges the indicted persons with conspiracy, embezzlement, theft, money laundering and income tax charges related to the scheme, which involved tribal casino funds.

"We followed the money trail straight to these individuals' pockets," said ICE San Antonio Special Agent-in Charge Alonzo R. Pena. "Their luck has run out and their days of exploiting the Kickapoo people, stealing and laundering money are over."

The indictment charges that the six persons involved embezzled or stole the money from the casino's proceeds for their personal use, buying cars, furniture, appliances and, in the case of the state legislator, using the money to finance a campaign.

ICE STOPS SNEAKER, CIGS SMUGGLING SCHEME

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Seven San Gabriel Valley residents face federal charges after being arrested December 10 for their role in a ring suspected of trafficking millions of dollars worth of counterfeit cigarettes and Nike shoes.



Shown above is one of the nearly 50,000 cartons of counterfeit cigarettes seized by ICE agents in Los Angeles.

The arrests stem from an investigation by ICE into a scheme involving the smuggling and distribution of counterfeit trademarked products in the Los Angeles area. The ring could have potentially cost the State of California more than \$1.6 million in lost tobacco tax revenues.

During the eight-month probe, ICE agents intercepted four shipping containers at the Port of Los Angeles loaded with illegal cigarettes. The seized cigarettes included counterfeit Marlboro brand and Chinese-made cigarettes prohibited for sale in the United States. Since a fully loaded shipping container holds nearly 50,000 cartons of cigarettes, ICE agents say the ring was poised to distribute almost two million packs of illegal cigarettes on the domestic market.

In addition to the counterfeit cigarettes, ICE agents intercepted a fifth shipping container slated for delivery to the ring's members that was packed with nearly 10,000 pairs of counterfeit Nike shoes.

Each of the seven defendants faces one count of trafficking in counterfeit goods, a charge that carries a maximum penalty of ten years in prison.

"Trafficking in counterfeit cigarettes and other trademarked goods

is a multi-billion dollar global industry that robs governments of vital revenues and undermines our economy," said Loraine Brown, special agent-in-charge of ICE investigations in Los Angeles. "Even more disturbing, the huge profits generated by this illicit industry go to fund criminal enterprise and gang activity."

In addition to the almost \$2 million dollars in tax revenues the state of California stood to lose, the counterfeit cigarettes seized during this investigation represented \$700,000 in potential tax losses for the federal government. Beyond that, the counterfeit goods represented a potential financial loss of \$4 million for Marlboro's parent company, Philip Morris, and an estimated \$700,000 in losses for Nike.

Industry groups estimate counterfeit goods cost the world economy more than \$500 billion dollars a year and the U.S. economy upwards of \$20 billion annually.

ICE ARRESTS PREDATORS, PEDOPHILES IN NEW YORK

NEW YORK, N.Y. — The arrest of 25 sexual predators and criminal alien sex offenders in Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan and the Bronx was announced December 1 by Assistant Secretary Michael J. Garcia, and Martin F. Horn, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Probation.

Among those arrested were a 38-year old Honduras man convicted of rape, sodomy and five counts of sexual abuse on a 14-year-old, and a 44-year old Guyana man convicted of sexual abuse of his daughter and another under-aged girl.

"Sexual predators, particularly those who prey on our nation's children, will continue to be a top prior-

ity in our immigration enforcement efforts," said Mr. Garcia. "We are a nation of opportunity but also of laws. These convicted criminals have forfeited their chance at opportunity by violating our laws. ICE plans to remove them from the United States as quickly as possible."

Those arrested today are foreign-born sex offenders who have been convicted of charges that include rape, sodomy, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and endangering the welfare of a child. The youngest victim was nine-years old. Based upon their prior convictions, these individuals are eligible for removal from the United States.

The targets are from seventeen different countries including: Antigua, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Liberia, Mexico, Nigeria, Panama, Russia, St. Kitts, Togo, Trinidad, and Tobago. All predators were male.

ICE's New York Office of Detention and Removal participated in the processing transfer and detention of the predators.

Since Operation Predator was launched on July 9, 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 4,500 child predators nationwide, including 275 in New York.

FPS OFFICERS MAKE IMPORTANT ARRESTS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY

ICE Federal Protective Service (FPS) officers have made several significant arrests at various locations around the country in recent weeks.

On November 27, an FPS agent arrested a male juvenile in Seattle, Wash., for possession of child pornography. The subject had entered federal property with a knife and attempted to hide it before going through security. He was arrested, and during processing, pictures of a nude female juvenile were discovered. FPS agents and King County, Wash. Deputies then executed a search warrant on the subject's residence and seized evidence relevant to the investigation, which is continuing.

In Montclair, Calif., on December 2, FPS agents interviewed a subject in connection with an ongoing investigation. An NCIC check revealed that the subject was wanted by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office for child abuse. The subject was arrested, transported to the FPS Processing Center and then turned over to Los Angeles County authorities.

Sentencing is scheduled for January 27 for Jason Waasdorp, who pleaded guilty to possession of an unregistered firearm - a sawed-off shotgun. Waasdorp was arrested by FPS agents in West Fargo, N.D., after he allegedly threatened to kill a U.S. Army lieutenant and the lieutenant's family. A search of his residence uncovered the shotgun.

In New York, N.Y., Christian Soto was convicted of assault after an FPS investigation into an incident in which Soto assaulted an employee of the Social Security Administration (SSA) with a metal chair at the SSA office in Bronx, N.Y. Soto faces up to one year in jail and is also awaiting trial in New York State court for an unrelated murder.

TEACHER WHO RAPED DISABLED GIRL TO BE DEPORTED FROM U.S.

DALLAS, Texas — A former local teacher from Russia who raped a mentally disabled girl was ordered deported by an immigration judge December 9.

Brusilov was first convicted in Colorado in 1997 for third degree assault and sentenced to two years in prison and 18 months probation. His victim was mentally disabled and when she resisted his sexual advances, Brusilov tied her up and raped her. Because the girl was incapable of testifying during Brusilov's trial, Colorado authorities plea-bargained the case to third degree assault.

During his plea bargain, he falsely claimed to be a U.S. citizen. He evaded immigration officers of the now-defunct INS by moving to Texas.

Brusilov took employment as a teacher at the University School of Las Colinas here. On his employment application, he falsely claimed to be a lawful permanent resident of the United States. He was likely able to be hired by the school because of his false claims.

According to state prosecutors, Brusilov again targeted a vulnerable girl, this time a 16-year-old student at the school. Brusilov allegedly sexually assaulted her during August and September 2001. Again, because the victim was unable to testify, the case could not be prosecuted.

However, Dallas County Assistant District Attorney Jennifer Bennett recognized that Brusilov's prior conviction might make him eligible for immediate removal from the United States as an immigration law violator, and she contacted ICE.

During ICE's investigation, it was learned that Brusilov had applied for permanent resident status through the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service. At ICE's request, the Dallas district attorney provided Brusilov's conviction information, which was forwarded to the CIS office processing his application. Brusilov's application was denied. ICE agents arrested Brusilov Nov. 12.

"We are especially appreciative of the efforts of the Dallas County assistant district attorney, who recognized that a united law enforcement team could protect the community by doing something about this predator," said ICE Dallas Detention and Removal Field Office Director Nuria Prendes.

DRO ARRESTS FUGITIVE ALIENS IN NORTH CAROLINA OPERATION

RALEIGH-DURHAM, N.C. — ICE Detention and Removal Office (DRO) officers arrested 22 fugitive aliens December 6-8 during an operation targeting fugitive illegal aliens and criminal aliens.

The operation --the first of its kind in North Carolina-- is part of a long term national strategic plan to apprehend and remove the more than 400,000 immigration fugitives and 80,000 criminal aliens who have been ordered to leave the country, but are hiding to avoid deportation.

"Most of these individuals are dangerous criminals who pose serious threats to law abiding citizens," said ICE Atlanta DRO Field Office Director John A. Mata. "We are committed to restoring integrity to the nation's immigration system."

Inside ICE

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security, responsible for the enforcement of border, immigration, customs, infrastructure and transportation security laws.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ICE



MaryAnn Granger, left, and Joy Francis of ICE's New Orleans SAC office wrap presents for the yearly toy drive for the area's battered women's shelter. ICE employees throughout the country have been reaching out during the holidays and helping those less fortunate.