



Inside ICE

ICE'S "OPERATION FLASH" ARRESTS 187 CRIMINALS, FUGITIVES IN NEW ENGLAND

BOSTON, Mass. – In the largest criminal alien fugitive operation ever conducted by an ICE field office, ICE officers have arrested 187 persons throughout New England, capping a weeklong operation targeting alien fugitives, most with convictions for violent crime.

Operation FLASH (Fellow Law-enforcement Agencies Securing the Homeland) is part of an ongoing effort to identify and arrest fugitive criminal aliens who failed to comply with a removal order from a federal Immigration Judge. The op-

eration was supported by ICE Fugitive Operations teams from six states.

“We initiated Operation FLASH to remove dangerous criminal aliens from our streets,” said Bruce E. Chadbourne, ICE Field Office Director for Detention and Removal Operations in New England. “Criminal aliens have a very high rate of recidivism and often re-victimize the community in which they reside. By finding and removing these fugitives, we are able to greatly enhance the public safety of New England and restore

integrity to our nation’s immigration system.”

Many of the fugitives arrested during this operation have a history of violent criminal activity that include rape of a child, rape, arson, assault and battery on a police officer, armed assault, armed robbery, intimidating witnesses and threatening murder. Some examples of those arrested in this operation are:

Carl Brown-Harton, a 42-year-old national of Costa Rica, convicted of threatening murder, as

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ICE officers apprehend a suspect near a wall marked with graffiti from the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) street gang.

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sault and battery, larceny and breaking and entering.

Antonio Jesus Fontes, a 53-year-old national of Cape Verde, convicted of assault and battery and threatening to murder.

Kimleang Ke, a 31-year-old national of Cambodia, convicted of armed assault, possession of a firearm, assault and battery and robbery.

Omar Trochez-Mejia, a 50-year-old national of Honduras, convicted of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon.

Stephen Ahlijah, a 45-year-old national of Ghana, determined to be a human rights violator.

Jose Adelino Tavares, aka **Joseph Cabral**, a 28-year-old national of Portugal, convicted of assault and battery on a police officer.

Soondar Mahadeo, a 48-year-old national of Trinidad, convicted of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, threatening and intimidation of a witness.

Operation FLASH is a combined effort between federal, state, county and local law enforcement agencies across New England and beyond coming together to locate and apprehend fugitives. Participating agencies included: ICE Fugitive Operations teams from Baltimore, Md.; Newark, N.J.; New York City,

N.Y.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Hartford, Conn.; Boston, Mass.; Manchester, N.H.; St. Albans, Vt.; Providence, R.I.; Portland, Maine; ICE's Boston Office of Investigations; ICE's New England-based Federal Protective Service; the U.S. Social Security Administration; the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles; the Massachusetts State Police Compliance Unit; the Barnstable, Bristol, Essex and Plymouth County Sheriff's Departments; the Boston Police Department; the Hartford, Conn. Police Department; the Connecticut Department of Corrections; and the U.S. Marshal's Service.

The arrests made in this operation are a result of ICE's National Fugitive Operations Program (NFOP), which is part of ICE's ongoing effort to restore integrity to the nation's immigration system. Last fiscal year, ICE removed a record 160,000 aliens from the country. So far this fiscal year, ICE has removed more than 75,500 aliens from the country, including more than 45,000 criminal aliens.

The aim of the NFOP initiative is to reduce the number of fugitive aliens in the United States. Fugitives are foreign nationals who have been ordered removed by a federal Immi-

gration Judge, but failed to comply with those orders.

Currently, ICE has 16 Fugitive Operations teams nationwide which are designed to identify, locate, and apprehend fugitive aliens for removal from the United States. The President's budget seeks \$8.8 million in enhanced funding in Fiscal Year 2006 to increase the number of Fugitive Operations teams around the country. In Fiscal Year 2004, there was a 62 percent increase in the number of fugitive aliens apprehended by ICE, compared to the previous year.

In addition to the FLASH arrests, ICE's New England Field Office has arrested 571 fugitive aliens so far this fiscal year. Of the arrests resulting from Operation FLASH, 105 were arrested in Massachusetts, 57 were arrested in Rhode Island, 14 were arrested in Connecticut, nine were arrested in New Hampshire, two were arrested in Vermont, one was arrested in Maine and one was arrested in Baltimore on a referral from Boston. Since these individuals have already been through immigration proceedings, they are subject to immediate removal from the country.



An ICE officer and a state police trooper are briefed prior to the arrest of a fugitive during Operation FLASH in New England.

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 AGENTS TARGET VIOLENT GANGS NATIONWIDE

ICE agents, in operations over the past three weeks ranging from San Diego and Florida to North Carolina and New Jersey, have arrested dozens of gang members, including several linked to Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13), one of the nation's most violent and dangerous street gangs.

In San Diego, following a two-year investigation, ICE agents, working closely with the North County Regional Gang Task Force, broke up a sophisticated international drug trafficking organization suspected of distributing methamphetamine, cocaine, and marijuana throughout the United States.



An ICE officer escorts a gang member arrested during Community Shield operations held in Florida.



As a result of the probe, 33 individuals, including several high-ranking members of a local street gang, were charged June 7 in federal court with multiple counts of drug trafficking and money laundering. On June 6, 28 of those subjects were arrested during a pre-dawn operation in northern San Diego County. The investigation began after agents learned about the drug distribution activities of Juan Rodriguez, who had a prominent role as a member of the Encinitas Home Boys Street Gang.

In a crackdown on members of the violent MS-13 street gang in New Jersey, ICE agents arrested 14 MS-13 gang members and associates, including the gang's suspected local leader, in Elizabeth and Somerset, N.J. They were arrested June 15 on criminal charges of conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, conspiracy to transfer false identification and administrative immigration violations. The arrests, which involved more than 100 federal, state, and local law enforcement officers in New Jersey, were

the culmination of an eight month investigation that made use of court-authorized wire intercepts. Among those arrested was the suspected leader of the MS-13 clique in Elizabeth.

In Florida, an ICE investigation has resulted in the arrest of three members of the MS-13 street gang in the West Palm area of Florida. All three are being held at the Krome Detention Center awaiting the outcome of their cases.

In Charlotte, N.C., ICE special agents and officers from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department arrested three members of the SUR-13 street gang on June 10. Just a day earlier, ICE, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and officers of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg, N.C. Police Department Gang Unit teamed up to arrest three other gang members.

"We have arrested six violent gang members this week alone and our message is clear: Gang members beware, we will find, arrest and deport you," said Jeff Jordan, the ICE Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge in North Carolina.

AUSTRIA ACTS ON ICE LEADS IN CHILD PORN PROBE

Acting on information provided by ICE, Austrian authorities last week executed search warrants at 120 locations associated with 96 child pornography suspects in Austria.

The Bundeskriminalamt (BKA), in conjunction with local police agencies across the country, were acting on leads provided by ICE's Attaché in Vienna, Austria, as part of a massive investigation under ICE's Operation Predator.

Operation Predator aims to safeguard children from foreign national pedophiles, human traffickers, international sex tourists, and individuals who trade in child pornography.

ICE has arrested more than 5,800 individuals since the program began on July 9, 2003. In addition, foreign law enforcement, acting on information from ICE, has arrested more than 1,000 individuals.

This action grew out of an ongoing ICE investigation of a company in Minsk, Belarus. In January 2004, the company was charged with money laundering as well as providing billing services for 50 child porn websites worldwide and operating child porn websites. Three officers of the company were arrested and extradited to the United States. Two have pleaded guilty, as have four officers of two affiliated companies.

ICE NABS OWNERS FOR PROVIDING ILLEGAL LABOR

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — A South African businessman was arrested here with his girlfriend and business partner June 2 for a scheme to fraudulently bring workers into the United States.

Petrus J. Botes, 50, was allegedly involved in a scheme to bring in workers from South Africa on temporary work visas (H-2A) to work for employers other than those designated. Arrested with Botes was Joyce Yvonne Coetzee, 39, who was indicted on three counts of encouraging an illegal alien to reside in the U.S. Botes and Coetzee, both South African nationals, were indicted by a federal grand jury.

The indictments and arrests follow an extensive investigation by ICE and the Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of the Inspector General.

Botes and Coetzee formed a Kansas company in 2001 to act as an agent to employers interested in obtaining foreign workers through the DOL Foreign Labor Certification program. The company provided workers for agricultural and trucking operations in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Texas, and North and South Dakota.

Botes and Coetzee are accused of filing foreign labor petitions for potential employers with or without their consent, and filing for more workers than employers actually needed. They're also accused of forging employers' signatures and falsifying job descriptions and the nature of the businesses.

After receiving the visa approvals, Botes and Coetzee allegedly sent workers to employers that were not designated on the visa petitions. H2A employment visas do not allow workers to change employers without authorization.

"Both Botes and Coetzee are accused of blatantly abusing immigration and labor laws with their scheme," said Elissa Brown, Special-Agent-in-Charge of the ICE Chicago office. "They allegedly operated their business with no regard for the workers, the employers, or the laws involved."

ICE and DOL agents searched Botes and Coetzee's residence in Bennington, Kan.. Both had also been convicted on visa charges in Kansas in 2002 and recently received final



Joyce Yvonne Coetzee, left, and Petrus J. Botes were indicted for a scheme to bring workers from South Africa by making bogus visa applications.

orders of deportation. Those orders will be reinstated following any trial that may take place. Should they be convicted on these charges, they would first serve the sentence and then be deported.

Pakistani Man Arrested Again On Illegal Arms Trafficking Charges

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — A Pakistani national who was convicted and served prison time for exporting HAWK missile components to Iran has been arrested again by ICE agents on new charges of arms trafficking.

ICE agents arrested Arif Durrani, 55, at the Los Angeles airport after he arrived on a flight from Mexico en route to Pakistan. He was arrested on a May 1999 indictment and arrest warrant charging him with illegally exporting components for U.S. fighter jet engines.

The new charges stem from an extensive investigation by ICE agents in Oxnard, Calif. that began in 1993.

The indictment charges Durrani with two counts of violating the Arms Export Control Act, alleging that Durrani's now defunct company, Lonestar Aerospace in Ven-

tura, Calif., illegally exported more than 100 compressor blades for the General Electric J-85 military aircraft engine to foreign customers in 1994.

The J-85 military aircraft engine is the primary power source for the F-5E "Tiger II" fighter jet and the U.S. T-38 "Talon" trainer aircraft. The compressor blades for this engine are classified as "defense articles" by the United States, making their export subject to strict controls.

"Durrani once again stands accused of illegally exporting American military components," said Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia. "By arresting illegal arms dealers, particularly those with a history of selling U.S. military hardware to state sponsors of terrorism, ICE is helping to keep sensitive U.S. weapons technology from falling into the wrong hands."

N.H. ICE AGENTS ARREST LAOTIAN MAN WHO RAPED TEENAGE GIRL

MANCHESTER, N.H. — A 44-year-old predator convicted of raping a child in Massachusetts was arrested June 7 by ICE special agents.

Inthavong Somsy, a citizen of Laos, pleaded guilty in a Middlesex superior court in Massachusetts to raping a child in February 1990. The victim was under the age of 16 at the time. Somsy received a one-year sentence and served six months.

ICE arrested Somsy after identifying him as a predator and initiated removal proceedings against him based upon his criminal conviction. He is currently in ICE custody at the Rockingham County (N.H.) Jail.

“Crimes against children are reprehensible,” said Robin M. Avers, Special Agent-in-Charge of ICE in New England. “ICE is committed to pursuing predators who are a public safety threat to our society’s most vulnerable—our children—and removing these dangerous criminals from the U.S.”

This arrest is part of a nationwide initiative known as Operation Predator. ICE encourages anyone who wants to report the activity of suspected child predators to call the toll-free ICE hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. Investigators staff this hotline around the clock.

ICE ARRESTS 22 CITIZENS, ALIENS IN IOWA MARRIAGE FRAUD SCAM

DES MOINES, Iowa — ICE special agents arrested 22 people June 1 for allegedly participating in marriage fraud schemes designed to evade U.S. immigration laws.

According to indictments filed in federal court, participants in the sham relationships married only so that the Kenyan nationals involved could obtain permanent resident status, commonly referred to as having a “green card.” In return, the U.S. citizens were paid for entering into the fraudulent marriages.

“A priority for ICE is to identify vulnerabilities in our legal immigration system and shut them down,” said Mark Cangemi, ICE Special Agent-in-Charge. “We will not allow America’s generosity to be abused by those who try to manipulate the system for criminal purposes.”

About three years ago, ICE’s Des Moines office began investigating a loosely affiliated group of persons that includes those arrested today. Allegedly, U.S. citizens who agreed to enter a sham marriage received between

\$250 and \$1,000 up front, then received monthly payments until the Kenyans’ “green cards” became permanent, a process that takes about two years.

In addition to the 22 currently in custody, 10 additional people have been indicted for conspiring to enter a marriage to evade immigration laws, marriage fraud, and making false statements, but have not yet been arrested.

The U.S. Marshals Service and the Social Security Administration’s Office of the Inspector General assisted ICE in the arrests.

Conspiracy charges carry possible prison terms of five years; charges of making false statements carry a possible term of 15 years; and marriage fraud charges carry a possible term of 10 years.

SEATTLE ICE AGENTS ARREST TWO FOR BORDER ECSTASY SMUGGLING

SEATTLE, Wash. — Two Canadian citizens from the Vancouver area appeared in federal court June 15 to face charges of smuggling ecstasy into the United States following their arrest by ICE agents.

Richard E. Godin, 29, and Ashley Sabeski, 21, were taken into custody after U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers discovered approximately 160,000 tablets of the club drug, Ecstasy, concealed under the bedliner of the pickup truck Godin was driving when he and Sabeski entered the United States at the Lynden Port-of-Entry.

“ICE is working closely with its federal and local law enforcement partners to combat the smuggling of dangerous drugs,” said Roy Hoffman, ICE Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge for Blain, Wash. “Those who are involved in this illegal enterprise put their greed ahead of the good of our communities.”

According to court documents, Godin told agents his landlord hired him to drive the truck to Florida to pick up \$500,000 in cash, and that he was aware of his landlord’s “illegal activities.” Godin said he was paid \$12,000 for the trip and was going to give Sabeski \$1,500. Godin also reportedly told agents that this was not his first time running Ecstasy loads.

ICE statistics document steady growth since 2002 in Ecstasy seizures along the Northwest border, with numbers sharply spiking this year. In 2003, 47,686 doses were seized. In 2004, the number rose to 258,026. In the first four months of this year, 465,220 doses were intercepted at the border.

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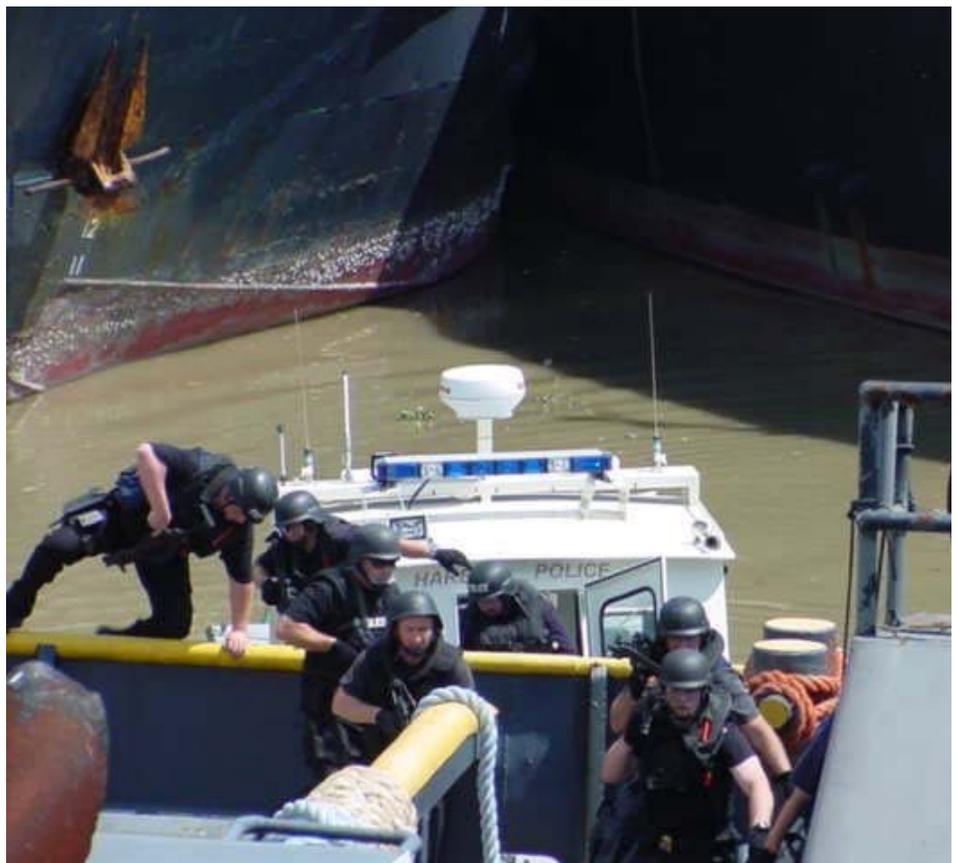
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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

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 five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.

ICE ON THE RIVER



Flanked by massive freighters docked at the Port of New Orleans, the ICE New Orleans Special Response Team, assisted by the New Orleans Harbor Police, boards a tug boat in the Mississippi River during a training exercise.