



Federal Contractors Accused of \$6.5M Fraud

McNabb Associates, P.C. (Federal Criminal Defense Lawyers)

Submitted at 8:37 AM November 7, 2011

Courthouse News Service on November 7, 2011 released the following:

“By DAVID LEE

(CN) – A federal grand jury in San Antonio accused three government contractors of conspiring to defraud the Air Force of \$6.5 million through false invoices. Donald Dean Brewer, 62, of Clovis, N.M., his wife, Sherri Lynn Brewer, 62, and James McKinney, 60, of San Antonio, were named in a 17-count indictment.

They are charged with one count of conspiracy to defraud the United States, 12 counts of wire fraud and four counts of major fraud against the United States, the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Texas said.

The Brewers and McKinney are accused of creating a sham subcontracting business, Enterprise and Deployment LLC, to insert it as an extra subcontractor between prime contractors and Ark Systems, a company for which McKinney worked for as vice president of government systems.

By submitting false invoices, the

defendants allegedly caused prime contractors to overcharge the Air Force by including Enterprise and Deployment’s fraudulent charges in the prime contractor invoices.

The indictment claims that from July 2002 through 2008, the obtained about \$33.5 million in subcontracts for Enterprise and Deployment, enriching themselves by almost \$6.5 million.

Donald Brewer worked for KARTA Technologies, as medical systems infrastructure modernization program manager at Brooks City Base in San Antonio. Both KARTA and Ark contracted with the Air Force. KARTA provided engineers and analysts to evaluate projects and proposals and Ark installed electronics at government medical facilities.

“Allegedly, the taxpayers were overcharged \$6 million by a company created by the defendants,” General Services Administration Inspector General Brian D. Miller said in a statement. “This is why we need ethics laws for federal contractors who can in effect steer taxpayer dollars to their own pockets.”

The conspiracy charge carries a statutory maximum penalty of 5 years in federal

prison. Each wire fraud charge is punishable by up to 20 years in federal prison and each major fraud charge by up to 10 years.”

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Guilty Plea in Missouri Terrorism Case

McNabb Associates, P.C. (Federal Criminal Defense Lawyers)

Submitted at 8:49 AM November 7, 2011

Courthouse News Service on November 7, 2011 released the following:

“By JOE HARRIS

ST. LOUIS (CN) – A St. Louis man pleaded guilty to federal charges of providing material support to a foreign terrorist organization. Mohamud Abdi Yusuf, 31, admitted he conspired to provide money to al-Shabaab from February 2008 through at July 2009.

Prosecutors accused Yusuf of sending money to al-Shabaab, a Somali militia, using fake names and telephone numbers, through money-remitting businesses in the United States.

Al-Shabaab is trying to overthrow Somalia’s government and impose Shari’a

law. It controls large parts of southern Somalia, where it has imposed Shari’a. It uses violence, intimidation and terrorism and has been credibly accused of having links to al Qaeda.

Duane Mohamed Diriye, of Kenya, and Abdi Mahdi Hussein, of Minneapolis, were indicted along with Yusuf on Oct. 21, 2010. Diriye remains at large. Hussein has appeared in court; his case is pending.

Yusuf pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to provide material support to a designated terrorist organization and three counts of providing material support to a designated terrorist organization. Each count is punishable by up to 15 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.”

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D.E.A. Squads Extend Reach of Drug War

McNabb Associates, P.C. (Federal Criminal Defense Lawyers)

Submitted at 8:19 AM November 7, 2011

The New York Times on November 6, 2011 released the following:

“By CHARLIE SAVAGE

WASHINGTON — Late on a moonless night last March, a plane smuggling nearly half a ton of cocaine touched down at a remote airstrip in Honduras. A heavily armed ground crew was waiting for it — as were Honduran security forces. After a 20-minute firefight, a Honduran officer was wounded and two drug traffickers lay dead.

Several news outlets briefly reported the episode, mentioning that a Honduran official said the United States Drug Enforcement Administration had provided support. But none of the reports included a striking detail: that support consisted of an elite detachment of military-trained D.E.A. special agents who joined in the shootout, according to a person familiar with the episode.

The D.E.A. now has five commando-style squads it has been quietly deploying for the past several years to Western Hemisphere nations — including Haiti, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Belize — that are battling drug cartels, according to documents and interviews with law enforcement officials.

The program — called FAST, for Foreign-deployed Advisory Support Team — was created during the George W. Bush administration to investigate Taliban-linked drug traffickers in Afghanistan. Beginning in 2008 and continuing under President Obama, it has expanded far beyond the war zone.

“You have got to have special skills and equipment to be able to operate effectively and safely in environments like this,” said Michael A. Braun, a former head of operations for the drug agency who helped design the program. “The D.E.A. is working shoulder-to-shoulder in harm’s way with host-nation counterparts.”

The evolution of the program into a global enforcement arm reflects the United States’ growing reach in combating drug cartels and how policy makers increasingly are blurring the line between law enforcement and military activities, fusing elements of the “war on drugs” with the “war on terrorism.”

Bruce Bagley, a University of Miami professor who specializes in Latin America and counternarcotics, said the commando program carries potential benefits: the American teams could help arrest kingpins, seize stockpiles, disrupt smuggling routes and professionalize security forces in small countries through which traffickers pass drugs headed to the

United States.

But there are also potential dangers. “It could lead to a nationalist backlash in the countries involved,” he said. “If an American is killed, the administration and the D.E.A. could get mired in Congressional oversight hearings. Taking out kingpins could fragment the organization and lead to more violence. And it won’t permanently stop trafficking unless a country also has capable institutions, which often don’t exist in Central America.”

Because the presence of armed Americans on their soil raises sensitivities about sovereignty, some countries that have sought the assistance of the United States will not acknowledge it, and the D.E.A. is reluctant to disclose the details of the commando teams’ deployments. Others — like Mexico, which has accepted American help, including surveillance drones — have not wanted the commando squads.

Federal law prohibits the drug agency from directly carrying out arrests overseas, but agents are permitted to accompany their foreign counterparts on operations. The Americans work with specially vetted units of local security forces that they train and mentor. In “exigent circumstances,” they may open fire to protect themselves or partners.

The firefight in Honduras last March, described by officials of both countries, illustrates the flexibility of such rules. The Honduran minister of public security at the time, Oscar Álvarez, said that under the agreement with the D.E.A., the Americans normally did not go on missions.

But in that case, he said, a training exercise went live: an American squad was working with a Honduran police unit in La Mosquitia rainforest when they received word that a suspicious plane from Venezuela was being tracked to a clandestine landing strip nearby.

After the plane landed, the Honduran police identified themselves and the traffickers opened fire, officials of both countries said. After a 20-minute gunfight, the Hondurans and Americans seized the cocaine and withdrew to evacuate the wounded officer.

“I don’t want to say it was Vietnam-style, but it was typical of war action,” said Mr. Álvarez; he declined to say whether the Americans took part in the shooting, but another person familiar with the episode said they did.

The FAST program is similar to a D.E.A. operation in the late 1980s and early 1990s in which drug enforcement agents received military training and entered into partnerships with local forces in places

like Peru and Bolivia, targeting smuggling airstrips and jungle labs.

The Reagan-era initiative, though, drew criticism from agency supervisors who disliked the disruption of supplying agents for temporary rotations, and questioned whether its benefits outweighed the risks and cost. The Clinton administration was moving to shut down the operation when five agents died in a plane crash in Peru in 1994, sealing its fate.

In 2000, when the United States expanded assistance to Colombia in its battle against the narcotics-financed insurgent group called FARC, the trainers were military, not D.E.A. But after the invasion of Afghanistan, the Bush administration assigned Mr. Braun, a veteran of the earlier effort, to design a new program.

Begun in 2005, the program has five squads, each with 10 agents. Many are military veterans, and the section is overseen by a former member of the Navy Seals, Richard Dobrich. The Pentagon has provided most of their training and equipment, and they routinely fly on military aircraft.

The deployments to Afghanistan have resulted in large seizures of drugs, and some tragedy: two of the three D.E.A. agents who died in a helicopter crash in October 2009 were with FAST. Last week, an agent was shot in the head when his squad came under fire while leaving a bazaar where they had just seized 3,000 kilograms, about 6,600 pounds, of poppy seeds and 50 kilograms, about 110 pounds, of opium. Airlifted to Germany in critical condition, he is expected to survive, an official said.

The commandos have also been deployed at least 15 times to Latin America. The D.E.A. said some of those missions involved only training, but officials declined to provide details. Still, glimpses of the program emerged in interviews with current and former American and foreign officials, briefing files, budget documents and several State Department cables released by WikiLeaks.

For example, an American team assisted Guatemalan forces in the March 2011 arrest of Juan Alberto Ortiz-López, whom the D.E.A. considered a top cocaine smuggler for the Sinaloa cartel, an official said. Videos of the raid show masked men in black tactical garb; it is unclear if any are Americans.

A diplomatic cable describes another mission in Guatemala. On July 21, 2009, seven American military helicopters carrying D.E.A. and Guatemalan security forces flew to the compound of a wealthy



Texas man accused of trying to help al-Qaida with money, GPS, military documents goes on trial

McNabb Associates, P.C. (Federal Criminal Defense Lawyers)

Submitted at 9:13 AM November 7, 2011

The Washington Post on November 7, 2011 released the following:

“By Associated Press

HOUSTON — A Texas man accused of trying to sneak out of the U.S. to join al-Qaida fighters in the Middle East and provide the group with money, equipment and U.S. military documents will be tried Monday on terrorism charges.

Prosecutors allege that Barry Walter Bujol Jr., 30, said he wanted to “die with the brothers for the cause of Allah, and to be in Heaven.” A U.S. citizen, he was arrested in May 2010 after using fake identification to sneak into a Houston port and board a ship bound for the Middle East, authorities said.

An FBI informant had given Bujol a bag filled with GPS receivers, two nonpublic restricted-access Army manuals and other items he had allegedly agreed to courier to al-Qaida operatives in the Middle East.

D.E.A.

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family, the Lorenzanas — four of whom were wanted in the United States on drug trafficking charges.

After a “small firefight” in which a bullet grazed a Lorenzana family member, agents found “large numbers of weapons and amounts of cash” but not the targets, who may have been tipped off, according to the cable. The Guatemalan news media documented the failure, portraying the joint operation as a “D.E.A. raid.”

A former head of Guatemala’s national security council, Francisco Jiménez, said in an interview that American participation in such operations was an “open secret” but rarely acknowledged.

In October 2009, another official said, the agency deployed a squad aboard a Navy amphibious assault ship, the Wasp, off the coast of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, where it focused on planes used for smuggling.

Cables also show the agency has twice

Assistant Attorney General Thomas E. Perez Speaks at the 15th Annual Community Reinvestment Act and Fair Lending Colloquium

(USDOJ: Justice News)

Submitted at 10:47 AM November 7, 2011

“It is critical to continue our dialogue about how we can ensure a level playing

field for all who are seeking economic opportunity and a fair chance at the American Dream,” said Assistant Attorney General Perez.

Authorities say Bujol believed the informant was a recruiter for al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. An FBI task force claims that Bujol had been emailing Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S.-born cleric with ties to al-Qaida, and is believed to have exchanged emails with Nidal Malik Hasan, the Army psychiatrist accused of killing 13 people in the November 2009 Fort Hood shootings.

Al-Awlaki was killed in a U.S. drone strike in late September in Yemen.

Authorities say Bujol made three unsuccessful attempts during February and March 2009 to travel overseas to Yemen or the Middle East.

He was arrested after a two-year investigation by the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force. He faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted on charges of attempting to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization and aggravated identity theft.

Bujol, from Hempstead, northwest of Houston, had been set to plead guilty in

the case in October 2010, but he changed his mind. He fired two attorneys, decided to represent himself and has elected to have a judge, not a jury, decide his case.

According to court documents, Bujol used at least 14 email addresses to hide his activities from authorities and advocated attacking U.S. facilities where military weapons were manufactured.”

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come close to deploying one of its units to the Darién region of Panama, where FARC incursions have established cocaine smuggling routes. But both missions were aborted, for fears that it was too unsafe for the Americans or that their involvement could escalate the conflict.

FAST has repeatedly deployed squads to Haiti, helping to arrest three fugitives this year and train 100 Haitian counternarcotics officers this fall. Mario Andresol, the Haitian police chief, says he needs such help. “We know the smuggling routes,” he said, “but the problem is we don’t have enough people to go after them.””

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Convicted Embezzler Sue Sachdeva's Designer Shoes, Purses, Clothing Being Auctioned

(U.S. Marshals Service News)

Submitted at 12:26 AM November 7, 2011

November 04, 2011 - Hundreds of items, including designer shoes, purses, and clothing, formerly belonging to convicted embezzler Sujata "Sue" Sachdeva are being sold via an online auction by the U.S. Marshals Service through November. The property, which includes brands such

as Armani, Manolo Blahnik, Brooks Brothers, Chanel, Fendi, Gucci, Donna Karan, LAM and Louis Vuitton, was seized and forfeited in connection with the criminal prosecution of Sachdeva, who was convicted of embezzling \$34 million from the Milwaukee-based company, Koss Corp.

U.S. Marshals Arrest Jewelry Store Heist Suspect in Houston

(U.S. Marshals Service News)

Submitted at 12:24 AM November 7, 2011

November 04, 2011 - U.S. Marshal Martin J. Pane announced today that the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) arrested Dontae Eugene Robinson in Houston, TX. Robinson was being sought by the Lower Paxton Township Police Department for his role in a brazen, daytime armed robbery of GEM Jewelry on October 7, 2011. When police arrived, it was determined the store had been the victim of a take-over style robbery.

Operation LASSO: Targeting Child Sex Offenders and Those who Harm the Community

(U.S. Marshals Service News)

Submitted at 12:28 AM November 7, 2011

November 04, 2011 - The Lone Star Fugitive Task Force is announcing the completion of Operation LASSO (Lock Up And Secure Sex Offenders). The operation began on August 29, 2011 and ended November 4, 2011 with huge success. The result was the arrest of 193 Sex Offenders throughout West Texas for crimes involving everything from Sexual Assault of a Child to Failure to comply with rules of Supervision.