



Unsealed Federal Criminal Indictment Alleges that 13 Alleged Members of the Hankton Organization Committed Violent Crimes in Aid of Racketeering and Other Serious Federal Crimes

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

Submitted at 5:09 PM October 20, 2012

The Federal Bureau of Investigation on October 19, 2012 released the following: "NEW ORLEANS, LA— Walter Porter, 37, a/k/a "Urkel" a/k/a "Moonie"; Nakia Hankton, 34; Shirley Hankton, 58, ; Telly Hankton, 36, a/k/a "Third" a/k/a "Wild"; Thomas Hankton, 36, a/k/a "Squirt"; Troy Hankton, 28; George Jackson, 38, a/k/a "Black"; Derrick Smothers, 34, a/k/a "Dump"; Andre Hankton, 35; Kevin Jackson, 39; Netthany Schexnayder, 33; Sana Johnson, 37; and Terrell Smothers, 36, all of New Orleans, Louisiana, were charged in a 22-count superseding indictment by a federal grand jury on Thursday October 18, 2012, announced Jim Letten, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana; Michael Anderson, FBI Special Agent in Charge for the New Orleans Division; and Phil Durham, ATF Special Agent in Charge; along with Jimmy Fox III, DEA Special Agent in Charge; Genny May, United States Marshal, Eastern District of Louisiana; Leon Cannizzaro, Orleans Parish District Attorney; and Ronal Serpas, NOPD Superintendent.

The superseding indictment was unsealed today as most of the defendants were taken into custody by federal agents or were already in custody on related matters. Presently there are no defendants who are considered to be fugitives.

According to the superseding indictment, members of this organization and their associates ran a violent drug ring in and around the city of New Orleans dating back to 1996. During the course of this organization's existence, its members and associates murdered rival drug dealers, intimidated witnesses, attempted to obstruct the state criminal justice system by having associates provide false alibi testimony in state court, and murdered a witness' family member in an effort to obstruct justice.

Specifically, Andre Hankton, Telly Hankton, Kevin Jackson, Walter Porter, and Thomas Hankton are all charged in specific murders and could potentially face the death penalty for the murders of

Darnell Stewart, Jesse Reed, Hasan Williams, and Curtis Matthews (counts five, six, eight, nine, 10, 11, 15, and 16). No decision concerning this issue has been made at this time. As in all possible capital cases, this case must be reviewed according to a strict protocol to determine whether the Department of Justice will seek the death penalty.

Speaking to today's unsealed indictment, U.S. Attorney Letten stated:

"Today, as the result of the outstanding work of the men and women of federal enforcement and our partners in the New Orleans Police Department and the District Attorney's Office, yet another powerful blow has been made against an organization whose members are alleged to have committed murder and violence against our community. My deepest gratitude goes to the dedicated members of our own office, together with special agents of the FBI and ATF, along with DEA and the Marshals Service."

"Our very special thanks go out to Orleans Parish District Attorney Leon Cannizzaro, NOPD Superintendent Ronal Serpas, and their tremendous team for their commitment, hardwork, professionalism, and partnership. Without NOPD's investigative work, and the District Attorney's indispensable charging groundwork, partnership, and seamless cooperation, the full extent of this indictment would not have been achieved."

Mike Anderson, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's New Orleans Field Office, added:

"This investigation is a clear reflection of the FBI's enhanced commitment to address localized violent street gangs, in partnership with our federal, state, and local law enforcement counterparts. Accordingly, such criminal activity will remain a top investigative priority."

Phil Durham, Special Agent in Charge of ATF, stated:

"ATF's primary goal is to work along side our other law enforcement partners to reduce the number of homicides and other violent crimes committed with firearms. This joint effort clearly illustrate our commitment of the federal, state, and local

law enforcement agencies to making our communities safer."

U.S. Attorney Letten reiterated that the indictment is merely a charge and that the guilt of the defendants must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

No further information is available at this time.

This indictment is the culmination of a long federal grand jury investigation that was conducted with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the United States Marshals Service; the New Orleans Police Department; the New Orleans District Attorney's Office; and the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Louisiana."

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Douglas McNabb and other members of the U.S. law firm practice and write and/or report extensively on matters involving Federal Criminal Defense, INTERPOL Red Notice Removal, International Extradition Defense, OFAC SDN Sanctions Removal, International Criminal Court Defense, and US Seizure of Non-Resident, Foreign-Owned Assets. Because we have experience dealing with INTERPOL, our firm understands the inter-relationship that INTERPOL's "Red Notice" brings to this equation.

The author of this blog is Douglas C. McNabb. Please feel free to contact him directly at mcnabb@mcnabbassociates.com or at one of the offices listed above.



Counterfeit sneaker defendant acquitted

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

Submitted at 4:48 PM October 20, 2012

The Buffalo News on October 19, 2012 released the following:

“BY: PHIL FAIRBANKS

By the time the predawn raids were over, 24 people were rounded up and charged, each one accused of taking part in a multimillion-dollar counterfeit sneaker ring stretching from China to Buffalo.

Five years later, one of the 24 rolled the dice and went to trial, well aware that each of his co-defendants had been convicted.

A federal court jury helped Greg Smiley beat the odds Thursday by finding him not guilty.

“He’s very happy and glad to be heading home to see his family,” said David R. Addelman, Smiley’s defense lawyer.

In understanding why Smiley went to trial – and ultimately got off – while 23 others did not, Addelman believes it is important to understand the defendants’ varying degrees of involvement in the counterfeit sneaker case.

He says Smiley was a relatively small player in the conspiracy, a network that started with manufacturers in China and stretched all the way to two New York City warehouses and ultimately to distribution points in Buffalo and Niagara Falls.

“I don’t think we can read too much into it,” Addelman said of his client’s acquittal. “He was way out there in

Atlanta all by himself.”

Prosecutors dismiss the notion that Smiley was anything but a major player in the conspiracy or that the case against him was weaker than against other defendants.

“We certainly felt the case was a strong one,” said U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul Jr. “We charged 24 men and women and 23 were convicted.”

As the owner of Top of the Line Fashions, a small neighborhood clothing store, Smiley stood accused of buying and selling counterfeit Nike sneakers.

From the start, he argued that, yes, he bought the sneakers but no, he had no idea they were fakes.

“The prosecution was, he must have known,” said Addelman. “And the defense was, that’s no way to convict someone.”

The jury seemed to agree even though the prosecution, eager to prove Smiley knew what he was buying, played taped recordings of his conversations with one of the alleged ring leaders, Malik Bazzi. “He’ll tell you how the whole operation ran,” Assistant U.S. Attorney John E. Rogowski said of Bazzi early on in the trial. “He’ll tell you how he found suppliers. He’ll tell you how he found customers. And most important, he’ll tell you how he knew Greg Smiley.”

Federal agents also testified against Smiley, noting the taped conversations with Bazzi and the repeated delivery of counterfeit sneakers to Smiley’s store in Georgia.

Addelman countered by suggesting the recordings proved very little and that Smiley was nothing more than another victim of the conspiracy.”

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