



Texas Syndicate Gang Members and Associates Sentenced to Prison

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

Submitted at 8:29 AM August 31, 2011

U.S. Attorneys Office Southern District of Texas on August 30, 2011 released the following:

“McALLEN, Texas – Six Texas Syndicate members and associates have been sentenced to prison for racketeering, violent crimes in aid of racketeering, kidnapping and possession with intent distribute cocaine, United States Attorney Jose Angel Moreno announced today.

At a hearing on Monday, Aug. 29, 2011, Chief U.S. District Judge Ricardo Hinojosa sentenced the chairman of the Texas Syndicate in the Rio Grande Valley, Jose Ismael Salas, 40 of Edinburg, Texas, to 20 years in federal prison without parole for drug trafficking offenses in violation of the racketeering statute. Salas pleaded guilty on April 2, 2009, admitting to committing two acts of racketeering, namely two separate acts of possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance – six kilograms of cocaine on Aug. 12, 2004, and 39 kilograms of marijuana on March 28, 2003, intending to further the goals of the gang.

Five other members or associates of the gang were also sentenced yesterday by Judge Hinojosa including Fidel Valle, 45 of Donna, Texas – the source of drug supply to the gang who employed gang members to assist in his drug distribution business. He received 126 months imprisonment for possession with intent to distribute six kilograms of cocaine. On July 28, 2009, Valle pleaded guilty to the federal felony drug charge acknowledging that on Aug. 12, 2004, upon being contacted by Salas, Valle agreed to sell approximately six kilograms (approximately 13 pounds) of cocaine to Salas's associates. That drug load was found and seized by law enforcement officers during a traffic stop of a Ford pickup seen leaving Valle's residence in Donna on Aug. 12, 2004.

Romeo Rosales, 41 of Raymondville, Texas – an admitted Texas Syndicate gang member who was convicted of kidnapping Amancio Pinales-Garcia – was sentenced to 151 months imprisonment. Reyes, son-

in-law of the kidnapping victim, sought a monetary reward to turn over Pinales-Garcia to unknown subjects in Mexico. Pinales-Garcia was shot several times in the low torso during the struggle and subsequently died in Mexico. Rosales pleaded guilty to kidnapping Pinales-Garcia on March 3, 2009.

Noel De Los Santos, 33, of Donna, Texas was sentenced to 240 months imprisonment for violent crimes in aid of racketeering, that is, for the murder of Crisantos Moran on March 20, 2003. According to trial testimony, Moran had been ordered by the Texas Syndicate to kill a rival gang member who lived near Penitas, Texas. De Los Santos and Jose Armando Garcia, both Texas Syndicate gang members, agreed to accompany Moran to commit the murder. However, Moran failed to carry out the order as given. Instead, De Los Santos and Garcia shot and killed Moran for failing to carry out the order. On Aug. 10, 2010, Garcia was convicted of racketeering and violent crimes in aid of racketeering and was sentenced to life in prison on Jan. 5, 2011.

Cristobal Hernandez, 31, and Arturo Rodriguez, 28, both of Brownsville, Texas, were sentenced to 120 and 240 months imprisonment, respectively, for violent crimes in aid of racketeering arising from the murder of Marcelino Rodriguez in June 2007. After members of the Texas Syndicate obtained a copy of a sealed court document from an employee of a McAllen area law firm which represented Marcelino Rodriguez in a federal case, the murder of Marcelino Rodriguez was approved by the leadership of the Texas Syndicate. Hernandez and Arturo Rodriguez were recruited by Raul Galindo to commit the murder. Galindo shot Marcelino Rodriguez in the back of the head while Arturo Rodriguez set the vehicle on fire with gasoline. On Aug. 10, 2010, Galindo was convicted of violent crimes in aid of racketeering and tampering with a witness, victim or an informant. On Jan. 5, 2011, Galindo was sentenced to life imprisonment.

All six of the defendants sentenced yesterday are in federal custody and will remain in custody pending transfer to Bureau of Prisons facilities to be

designated in the near future.

All 13 charged in this case have been convicted and sentenced to prison. Juan Pablo Hinojosa, who was convicted by a federal jury of racketeering and violent crimes in aid of racketeering, was sentenced to life imprisonment on Jan. 5, 2011. On Jan. 28, 2010, Benjamin Piedra pleaded guilty to violent crimes in aid of racketeering and was sentenced to 120 months confinement and three years of supervised release on Feb. 22, 2011. Adan Roberto Ruiz pleaded guilty to criminal information charging him with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute less than 50 kilograms of marijuana, while Jorge Puga pleaded to a criminal information charging him with possession with intent to distribute 39 kilograms of marijuana. Ruiz and Puga received 52 and 37 months, respectively. Joel Carcano Jr. pleaded guilty providing false statements – admitting he lied to Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) agents when he falsely stated he did not provide a copy of downward departure motion to Texas Syndicate members. This document was used as the basis to order the murder of the government's informant. On Feb. 22, 2011, Carcano was sentenced to 52 months custody and a three-year-term of supervised release.

The investigation leading to the federal charges and subsequent conviction of these admitted Texas Syndicate gang members was conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office. Assistant United States Attorney Robert Wells, Jr. prosecuted the case.”

To find additional federal criminal news, please read [Federal Crimes Watch Daily](#).

Douglas McNabb and other members of the U.S. law firm practice and write extensively on matters involving Federal Criminal Defense, INTERPOL Red Notice Removal, International Extradition and OFAC SDN Sanctions Removal.

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Inside the spy unit that NYPD says doesn't exist

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

Submitted at 9:23 AM August 31, 2011

The Associated Press (AP) on August 31, 2011 released the following:

“By MATT APUZZO and ADAM GOLDMAN

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Working with the CIA, the New York Police Department maintained a list of “ancestries of interest” and dispatched undercover officers to monitor Muslim businesses and social groups, according to new documents that offer a rare glimpse inside an intelligence program the NYPD insists doesn't exist.

The documents add new details to an Associated Press investigation that explained how undercover NYPD officers singled out Muslim communities for surveillance and infiltration.

The Demographics Unit, a squad of 16 officers fluent in a total of at least five languages, was told to map ethnic communities in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut and identify where people socialize, shop and pray.

Once that analysis was complete, according to documents obtained by the AP, the NYPD would “deploy officers in civilian clothes throughout the ethnic communities.”

The architect of this and other programs was a veteran CIA officer who oversaw the program while working with the NYPD on the CIA payroll. It was an unusual arrangement for the CIA, which is prohibited from spying inside the U.S.

After the AP report, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the NYPD has kept the city safe and does not take religion into account in its policing. The NYPD denied the Demographics Unit exists.

“There is no such unit,” police spokesman Paul Browne said before the first AP story ran. “There is nothing called the Demographics Unit.”

Internal police documents show otherwise. An NYPD presentation, delivered inside the department, described the mission and makeup of the Demographics Unit. Undercover officers were told to look not only for evidence of terrorism and crimes but also to determine the ethnicity of business owners and eavesdrop on conversations inside cafes.

A police memorandum from 2006 described an NYPD supervisor rebuking an undercover detective for not doing a good enough job reporting on community events and “rhetoric heard in cafes and hotspot locations.”

How law enforcement agencies, both local and federal, can stay ahead of Islamic terrorists without using racial

profiling techniques has been hotly debated since 9/11. Singling out minorities for extra scrutiny without evidence of wrongdoing has been criticized as discriminatory. Not focusing on Muslim neighborhoods has been equally criticized as political correctness run amok. The documents describe how the nation's largest police force has come down on that issue.

Working out of the police department's offices at the Brooklyn Army Terminal, the Demographics Unit maintained a list of 28 countries that, along with “American Black Muslim,” it considered “ancestries of interest.” Nearly all are Muslim countries.

Police used census data and government databases to map areas it considered “hot spots” as well as the ethnic neighborhoods of New York's tri-state area, the documents show.

Undercover officers known as “rakers” — a term the NYPD also denied existed — were then told to participate in social activities such as cricket matches and visit cafes and clubs, the documents show.

Police had a list of “key indicators” of problems. It included obvious signs of trouble such as criminal activity and extremist rhetoric by imams. But it also included things commonly seen in neighborhoods, such as community centers, religious schools and “community bulletin boards (located in houses of worship).”

At least one lawyer inside the police department has raised concerns about the Demographics Unit, current and former officials told the AP. Because of those concerns, the officials said, the information gathered from the unit is kept on a computer at the Brooklyn Army Terminal, not in the department's normal intelligence database. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the intelligence programs.

The AP independently authenticated the NYPD presentation through an interview with one official who saw it and by reviewing electronic data embedded in the file. A former official who had not seen the presentation said the content of the presentation was correct. For the internal memo, the AP verified the names and locations mentioned in the document, and the content is consistent with a program described by numerous current and former officials.

In an email Tuesday night, Browne disputed the AP's original story, saying the NYPD only follows leads and does not simply trawl communities.

“We do not employ undercovers or confidential informants unless there is

information indicating the possibility of unlawful activity,” Browne wrote.

That issue has legal significance. The NYPD says it follows the same guidelines as the FBI, which cannot use undercover agents to monitor communities without first receiving an allegation or indication of criminal activity.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the CIA sent a respected veteran officer, Lawrence Sanchez, to New York, where he worked closely with the NYPD. Officials said he was instrumental in creating programs such as the Demographics Unit and met regularly with unit supervisors to guide the effort. After a two-year rotation in New York, Sanchez took a leave of absence, came off the agency's payroll and became the NYPD's second-ranking intelligence official. He formally left the agency in 2007 and stayed with the NYPD until last year.

The CIA recently dispatched another officer to work in the Intelligence Division for what officials described as a management sabbatical. A U.S. official familiar with the NYPD-CIA partnership said Sanchez's time in New York was a unique assignment created in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. But the official said the current officer's job was much different and was an opportunity for him to learn from an organization outside the CIA.

Both the CIA said and the NYPD have said the agency is not involved in domestic spying and said the partnership is the kind of counterterrorism collaboration Americans expect.

The NYPD Intelligence Division has unquestionably been essential to the city's best counterterrorism successes, including the thwarted plot to bomb the subway system in 2004. Undercover officers also helped lead to the guilty plea of two men arrested on their way to receive terrorism training in Somalia.

“We throw 1,200 police officers into the fight every day to make sure the same people or similarly inspired people who killed 3,000 New Yorkers a decade ago don't come back and do it again,” Browne said earlier this month when asked about the NYPD's intelligence tactics.

The Demographics Unit had officers who spoke Arabic, Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu, according to the police presentation. The undercover officers were divided into teams based on ethnicity. Arab officers could blend into Arab neighborhoods and Southwest Asian officers, those from Pakistan and Afghanistan, could more easily blend into those neighborhoods.

Rep. Yvette Clarke, a Democrat who



Judges consider Jared Lee Loughner's medication

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

Submitted at 8:46 AM August 31, 2011

The Los Angeles Times on August 31, 2011 released the following:

"Lawyers for the Tucson shooting suspect say his involuntary treatment with anti-psychotic drugs is a violation of his rights.

By Carol J. Williams, Los Angeles Times
Prison doctors are violating the rights of Tucson shooting suspect Jared Lee Loughner by forcibly medicating him with drugs more powerful than needed to control his outbursts, defense lawyers told a federal appeals court Tuesday.

The three-judge panel weighing Loughner's plea for an end to the involuntary medication with anti-psychotic drugs appeared sensitive to the defendant's legal arguments that, as he hasn't been tried on the 49 felony counts against him, he should retain the right to decide what drugs go into his body.

At a hearing that could determine whether Loughner is ever rendered competent to stand trial in the Jan. 8 attack that killed six and injured 13, including Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.), the judges peppered the government's lawyer with questions, suggesting they look askance at the prison's practice of forcing psychotropic drugs on Loughner when mild sedatives would suffice.

At issue is whether Bureau of Prison

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represents much of Brooklyn and sits on the House Homeland Security Committee, said the NYPD can protect the city without singling out specific ethnic and religious groups. She joined Muslim organizations in calling for a Justice Department investigation into the NYPD Intelligence Division. The department said it would review the request for an investigation.

Clarke acknowledged that the 2001 terrorist attacks made Americans more willing to accept aggressive tactics, particularly involving Muslims. But she said Americans would be outraged if police infiltrated Baptist churches looking for evangelical Christian extremists.

"There were those who, during World War II, said, 'Good, I'm glad they're

policies for dealing with dangerous inmates apply to pretrial detainees, like Loughner, who was sent to a hospital in Springfield, Mo., on a federal judge's order to try to restore his mental competency so he can stand trial.

Prison medical officials have rejected the defense's calls for using tranquilizers or physical restraints, arguing that they need to treat Loughner's underlying mental illness to prevent him from being a danger to himself or others.

Loughner was diagnosed with schizophrenia during an initial confinement at the Missouri hospital and deemed incompetent to stand trial in May by U.S. District Judge Larry A. Burns.

Assistant U.S. Atty. Christina M. Cabanillas told the panel that Supreme Court case law obliged them to defer to the prison administration's judgment on what medication was necessary and appropriate to "mitigate his dangerousness." Loughner has reportedly thrown the chair in his cell against the wall, spat at one of his attorneys and shouted expletives and unintelligible rants.

In legal papers filed with the court, Loughner's attorneys argued that his behavior didn't justify treatment with powerful anti-psychotic drugs, and that the medications could have long-term negative health effects and damage his ability to assist in his own defense if he is

interning all the Japanese-Americans who are living here," Clarke said. "But we look back on that period with disdain."

To find additional federal criminal news, please read [Federal Crimes Watch Daily](#).

Douglas McNabb and other members of the U.S. law firm practice and write extensively on matters involving Federal Criminal Defense, INTERPOL Red Notice Removal, International Extradition and OFAC SDN Sanctions Removal.

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eventually put on trial.

In court, defense attorney Reuben Camper Cahn urged the judges to require prison officials to get federal court approval for their involuntary treatment plans.

One of the panelists, Judge J. Clifford Wallace, observed that Loughner might have a "liberty interest" in not being rendered competent to face charges that could lead to a death penalty.

Another U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals panel last month issued a temporary injunction against forcing the drugs on Loughner, but prison doctors resumed them on July 18, citing emergency circumstances.

Tuesday's panel, on which Wallace was joined by Judges Marsha S. Berzon and Jay S. Bybee, isn't expected to rule for several weeks."

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Timothy J. Delaney Named Special Agent in Charge of the Criminal Division at the Los Angeles Field Office

fbi (Current)

Submitted at 6:00 AM August 31, 2011

— Washington, D.C.



Jeffrey Wallace Edwards, and his Corporation, Frontier Holdings, Inc., Found Guilty by a Federal Jury in Federal District Court on Charges of Mail Fraud, Wire Fraud, and Money Laundering

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

Submitted at 9:12 AM August 31, 2011

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on August 30, 2011 released the following:

“Bremen Man Convicted of Running an Investment Scam

Edwards Netted Over \$7 Million by Promising a Special “High Yield” Return ROME, GA—A jury in federal district court late this afternoon returned a guilty verdict against JEFFREY WALLACE EDWARDS, 46, of Bremen, Georgia, and his corporation, “Frontier Holdings, Inc.,” on charges of mail and wire fraud and money laundering.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said, “Financial and investment fraud claims victims from all parts of our community. In this case, the jury found that a man from a small town in west Georgia successfully persuaded investors from around the country that with his supposed contacts with a former Vice President and a Federal Reserve Chairman, he could make their money multiply into millions. He persuaded retired teachers and dental hygienists to give them the equity in their homes and retirement plans. Then he spent the victims’ hard-earned money on lavish vacation cruises, real estate, fur coats, tiki carvings, and luxury cars. With the jury’s verdict, EDWARDS is now facing a

substantial term in federal prison.”

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and the evidence presented at trial: The jury found EDWARDS and Frontier Holdings guilty on two counts of mail fraud, 17 counts of wire fraud, and eleven counts of money laundering. EDWARDS and his corporation were originally indicted on May 6, 2009; a superseding indictment was returned on February 15, 2011. The evidence at trial showed that between February 2006 and February 2007, EDWARDS promised investors they would receive returns of between 41 and 1066 percent on the money they placed in the “high yield” investment programs that he had with the Federal Reserve Bank.

The evidence showed that EDWARDS also claimed to own a bank, to have access to lucrative but confidential investment opportunities, or to be a “special agent” of the Federal Reserve. Thirty-one victims mailed or electronically transferred over \$7 million to EDWARDS. He spent the money quickly, and when the victims started demanding payment, he blamed “the banking industry” and “the powers that be” for delaying payment from his phantom investments.

The mail and wire fraud charges each carry a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000 per count, and the money laundering charges

each carry a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 per count. Sentencing will be December 1, 2011, at 10:00 a.m. before Senior United States District Judge Robert L. Vining. In determining the actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Marshals Service, and the Carrollton Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorneys William G. Traynor, Alana R. Black, and Michael J. Brown are prosecuting the case.”

To find additional federal criminal news, please read [Federal Crimes Watch Daily](#).

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Stanley Needleman, a Baltimore Criminal Defense Attorney, Charged in Federal Court with Allegedly Committing Tax Evasion and Other Financial Crimes

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

Submitted at 8:58 AM August 31, 2011

The Baltimore Sun on August 30, 2011 released the following:

“Prosecutors allege Needleman ‘hoarded’ more than \$1 million in cash to conceal income

By Justin Fenton, The Baltimore Sun
A Baltimore criminal defense attorney has been charged in U.S. District Court with tax evasion and other financial crimes, according to records unsealed Tuesday, more than four months after his home and office were raided.

Stanley Needleman, 69, is accused of “hoarding” \$1.3 million in cash payments from criminal defense clients over a six-year period in order to conceal his income from the IRS. Needleman was charged by

criminal information on Aug. 16. It is common for prosecutors to charge a person by criminal information if they expect the defendant to plead guilty.

Needleman’s attorney, Kenneth W. Ravenell, said he has been a “great lawyer for a long time, and helped countless individuals in their own serious matters.” He said Needleman will “answer the charges on Thursday, and we expect to have more to say about the charges at that time.”

Federal agents raided Needleman’s downtown law office and Pikesville home in April, and court records show more than \$1.15 million was found inside two safes.

Authorities also accuse him of breaking down cash payments into smaller amounts to help prevent the IRS from detecting

them. The documents allege Needleman failed to pay more than \$660,000 in taxes, and the government is seeking to seize the balance of the cash found in the safes.

According to court filings, all of the judges in Baltimore District Court have recused themselves from the case and it will be heard in Greenbelt.

Separately, Needleman was charged in May in Baltimore County District Court with stealing a textbook belonging to a judge’s law clerk. The theft case is scheduled to go to trial in October.

Ravenell said the theft charge was “without merit” and he expects Needleman to be exonerated.

If convicted on the tax evasion charge, Needleman could face up to five years in



Manuel Ivan Castillo-Estrada Pled Guilty to a Criminal Information Charging Him with Knowingly Concealing and Harboring an Illegal Alien for Profit

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

Submitted at 8:16 AM August 31, 2011

U.S. Attorneys Office Southern District of Texas on August 30, 2011 released the following:

“Mexican Man Convicted of Harboring Illegal Aliens

McALLEN, Texas – Manuel Ivan Castillo-Estrada, 22, of Mexico, has pleaded guilty today to a criminal information charging him with knowingly concealing and harboring an illegal alien for profit, United States Attorney José Angel Moreno announced today.

At a hearing before U.S. District Judge Randy Crane today, Castillo-Estrada admitted he was being paid for being in charge of a stash house and taking illegal aliens there for approximately a month.

On Aug. 16, 2011, according to the criminal complaint filed in this case, Border Patrol (BP) agents were conducting surveillance

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prison and a fine up to \$100,000. The structuring payments charge could result in up to 10 years in prison and a fine up to \$500,000.”

To find additional federal criminal news, please read [Federal Crimes Watch Daily](#).

Douglas McNabb and other members of the U.S. law firm practice and write extensively on matters involving Federal Criminal Defense, INTERPOL Red

on a house in Edinburg, Texas, and saw a white Ford Expedition leave the residence. A Hidalgo County Sheriff’s deputy stopped the Expedition for a traffic violation and identified the driver as Castillo. BP agents responded and determined that Castillo was an illegal alien from Mexico. The agents then obtained consent to search the residence from an individual there and found a total of 23 undocumented aliens lying all over the floor in the residence and hidden in one of the bedrooms and the attic. The allegations in the complaint also alleged that Castillo beat several of the undocumented immigrants with a baseball bat.

At a detention hearing on Aug. 23, 2011, U.S. Magistrate Judge Dorina Ramos ordered Castillo to remain in detention without bond. He will remain in custody pending his sentencing hearing presently set for Nov. 8, 2011, at 2:00 p.m. before

Notice Removal, International Extradition and OFAC SDN Sanctions Removal.

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Judge Crane. Castillo-Estrada faces up to 10 years in federal prison without parole and a fine of up to \$250,000 for the conviction.

BP investigated the case with the assistance of the Hidalgo County Sheriff’s Office. Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher Sully is prosecuting the case.”

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