



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 28, 2008**

**CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
YUSILL SCRIBNER
REBEKAH CARMICHAEL
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600**

**DEA
ERIN McKENZIE-MULVEY
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 337-2906**

**MANHATTAN U.S. ATTORNEY ANNOUNCES ARRESTS OF SUPERVISORY
CUSTOMS OFFICER AND SIX OTHERS FOR CORRUPTION
AND DRUG IMPORTATION CONSPIRACY**

*CHARGES FOLLOW AN UNDERCOVER INVESTIGATION OF CORRUPTION
AT UNITED STATES CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION
AT JOHN F. KENNEDY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT*

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JOHN P. GILBRIDE, Special Agent in Charge of the New York Office of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), STEVEN J. MOCSARY, the Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Professional Responsibility, Investigations East ("ICE-OPR"), GREGORY K. NULL, the Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigation, Philadelphia Field Office ("DHS-OIG"), and RAYMOND W. KELLY, Police Commissioner of the City of New York ("NYPD"), announced today that Supervisory Customs and Border Protection Officer WALTER GOLEMBIOWSKI, Customs and Border Protection Officer JOHN AJELLO, and others were arrested on narcotics importation and bribery conspiracy charges. According to the criminal Complaint filed in Manhattan federal court:

The arrests were the culmination of a lengthy investigation into a network of individuals importing large quantities of hashish and other controlled substances and contraband into the United States through John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York ("JFK"). The investigation was launched by the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force ("OCDESF"), which is comprised of agents and officers of

the DEA, the NYPD, the United States Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the New York State Police, the United States Marshals Service, the United States Secret Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. It resulted in the indictment and successful prosecution of over twenty individuals -- from distributors to overseas sources of supply -- and the seizure of over 600 pounds of imported hashish and a significant quantity of narcotics proceeds in the United States and France.

Based on the information obtained through its investigation, OCDEF identified a number of individuals who assisted in clearing shipments of hashish, other controlled substances, and counterfeit goods through United States Customs at JFK, including WALTER GOLEMBIOWSKI -- a supervisor in United States Customs and Border Protection at JFK -- who regularly accepted and solicited bribes to permit shipments of contraband to pass through Customs without inspection.

Similarly, the investigation led to the identification of SHARUK SARIARI, a freight forwarder, and VICTOR JUZUMAS, a Customs broker, who used their association with GOLEMBIOWSKI to clear shipments of illicit cargo; SEAN MILLS, operations manager of a cargo cooperative, who conspired to bypass possible inspection at a container freight station by delivering a shipment of contraband directly from the plane to his co-defendants; and KAI LI and WEI LAM, two importers of counterfeit goods and controlled substances. Law enforcement also identified JOHN AJELLO, a Customs and Border Protection Inspector at JFK who worked with GOLEMBIOWSKI, and also accepted bribes as part of the conspiracy. Based in part on information provided by confidential witnesses, the Strike Force, ICE-OPR, and DHS-OIG initiated an undercover operation and recorded numerous meetings and phone calls involving GOLEMBIOWSKI, AJELLO, and the other defendants. During those meetings and calls, the defendants plotted to bring narcotics and other contraband -- including counterfeit Rolex, Cartier, and Chanel watches, and designer sunglasses -- into the United States through JFK, undetected by law enforcement. On multiple occasions, GOLEMBIOWSKI was captured on audio and video accepting bribes to help his co-conspirators bring in illegal drugs and counterfeit goods without detection.

The charges by defendant and the possible maximum sentences are as follows:

Count	Defendant	Maximum Penalty
Count One: Narcotics Importation Conspiracy (2004 - 2008)	WALTER GOLEMBIOWSKI	40 years in prison (minimum 5 years in prison), fine of the greater of \$2 million or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense, life supervised release
Count Two: Bribery Conspiracy (2004 - 2008)	WALTER GOLEMBIOWSKI	5 years in prison, fine of the greater of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense, 3 years supervised release
Count Three: Narcotics Importation Conspiracy (2008)	WALTER GOLEMBIOWSKI SHARUK SARIARI VINCENT JUZUMAS SEAN MILLS KAI LI WEI LAM	20 years in prison, fine of the greater of \$1 million or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense, life supervised release
Count Four: Bribery Conspiracy (2008)	WALTER GOLEMBIOWSKI JOHN AJELLO SHARUK SARIARI VINCENT JUZUMAS KAI LI WEI LAM	5 years in prison, fine of the greater of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense, 3 years supervised release

GOLEMBIOWSKI, 65, resides in Bethpage, New York. AJELLO, 51, resides in Hicksville, New York. SARIARI, 51, resides in Ft. Lee, New Jersey. JUZUMAS, 46, resides in Merrick, New York. MILLS, 37, resides in Woodbridge, New Jersey. LI, 28, and LAM, 37, both reside in Fort Lee, New Jersey.

"Smuggling any kind of illegal commodity raises troubling issues at a time of deep concern over national security. The threat is heightened when a government official accepts bribes to help smugglers breach our borders," said Mr. GARCIA. "Thanks to the tireless work of our law enforcement partners, including internal investigators from DHS and ICE, these defendants will no longer be able to profit from their corruption of the public trust."

"These arrests demonstrate the combined will of law

enforcement to put an end to illicit smuggling, be it illegal narcotics or intellectual property," stated DEA Special Agent-in-Charge JOHN P. GILBRIDE. "This investigation epitomizes the role of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force which combines the resources of federal, state and local agencies to identify and dismantle smuggling organizations operating across international borders."

Mr. MOCSARY stated, "Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Professional Responsibility is dedicated to aggressively pursuing all allegations of corruption involving employees and civilians within our area of responsibility, especially in a border security environment. ICE, OPR takes great pride in protecting the integrity of all ICE and Customs and Border Protection employees. Additionally, this case serves as a textbook example of the cooperation between the federal, state and local law enforcement agencies involved in the successful outcome of this investigation."

Mr. NULL stated, "Acts of corruption within the Department of Homeland Security represent a threat to our nation and undermine the honest and hardworking employees who strive to maintain the integrity of the Department. Corruption will not be tolerated and those who choose to break the law will be pursued aggressively."

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative work of the OCDESF, ICE-OPR, and DHS-OIG. Mr. GARCIA also thanked the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York for its assistance.

Assistant United States Attorneys JEFFREY A. BROWN, MARGARET GARNETT, GLEN G. MCGORTY, and AMY FINZI are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

08-126

#