



U.S. Department of Justice

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Dec 3, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Darren Johnson

FORMER UNION PRESIDENT PLEADS GUILTY TO THEFT

A former President of the National Treasury Employees Union, Chapter 78, Darren Johnson, pleaded guilty today to theft of union funds, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Ian Burg, District Director, Detroit District Office, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Labor-Management Standards.

The information presented to the court at the time of the plea to an Information showed that between 2002 and 2004, while Johnson was the President of Chapter 78, he embezzled over \$13,000 by making unauthorized ATM cash withdrawals from the Chapter's checking account and, additionally, by writing and cashing unauthorized union checks.

Under the terms of the plea agreement, Johnson faces up to six months

imprisonment and a fine of up to \$20,000. Johnson will also be required to make full restitution.

“The charges that led to this guilty plea underscore the seriousness with which my office and the Office of Labor-Management Standards view allegations of corruption by union officials, as well as our strong commitment to investigating and prosecuting these types of cases,” U.S. Attorney Murphy said. “The U.S. Attorney’s Office is committed to the principle that no one is above the law, and we will work aggressively to hold union officials to the high standards of the law.”

The case was investigated by Investigator Randal Cummings of the Office of Labor-Management Standards. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney James M. Wuczyna.



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Dec 7, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Samar Khalil Spinelli

**MARINE CORPS OFFICER AND TWO TIME IRAQ WAR VETERAN
PLEADS GUILTY TO CITIZENSHIP FRAUD CONSPIRACY**

Samar Khalil Spinelli, 39, currently of Okinawa, Japan, formerly of Taylor, Michigan, a Captain in the United States Marine Corps, pleaded guilty today in federal court in Detroit to conspiring with former FBI Agent and CIA employee Nada Nadim Prouty and Elfat El Aouar, the wife of fugitive restaurateur Talal Chahine, to commit citizenship fraud and passport fraud, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

At a hearing in Detroit before U.S. District Court Judge Avern Cohn, Spinelli, entered a plea of guilty to counts one and two of a fourth superseding information. Count one of the information charges conspiracy, for which the maximum penalty is five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Count two charges passport fraud, for which the maximum penalty is 10 years

imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

According to court documents, Spinelli (originally Samar Khalil Nabbouh) entered the United States from Lebanon on a student visa in 1989. She resided in Taylor, Michigan with Elfat El Aouar and Nada Nadim Prouty. On April 13, 1990, Spinelli entered into a fraudulent marriage with Jean Paul Deladurantaye in St. Clair Shores, Michigan for the purpose of evading U.S. immigration laws. Spinelli later submitted a series of false, fraudulent and forged documents and letters to federal immigration officials to verify the validity of the fraudulent marriage in order to obtain permanent residency status, and, later, U.S. citizenship, thereby committing naturalization fraud. In fact, Spinelli hired Deladurantaye to marry her, never had any relationship with Deladurantaye and never resided with him as husband and wife. On August 31, 1995, after obtaining her U.S. citizenship, Spinelli filed for divorce falsely claiming to have “lived and cohabited together as husband and wife.”

On December 19, 1997, Spinelli utilized her fraudulently obtained U.S. citizenship to obtain a commission as an officer in the United States Marine Corps. It is a prerequisite to becoming a commissioned officer, that one be a U.S. citizen. Spinelli was in the midst of her second tour of combat in Iraq, when she was extracted to answer the citizenship fraud charges.

In addition, Spinelli facilitated the fraudulent marriage of Nada Nadim Prouty (then Nada Nadim Al Aouar) to her fake brother-in-law, Chris Deladurantaye. Spinelli and Prouty were thus technically sisters-in-law through dual fraudulent marriages, while continuing to reside together in Taylor, Michigan. Spinelli later assisted Nada Prouty in defrauding the Federal Bureau of Investigation into hiring Prouty by serving as a reference for Prouty in 1998 while attending the Marine Corps Basic School in Quantico, Virginia. Notwithstanding her knowledge that Prouty had fraudulently procured U.S. citizenship and was thus completely ineligible to become an FBI agent, Spinelli told FBI investigators that she was not aware of any activity or conduct in Prouty’s background which could in any way be used to subject her to influence, pressure, coercion, or compromise, or which would negatively reflect upon Prouty’s character. Nada Prouty recently pleaded guilty to charges of fraudulently obtaining U.S. citizenship, which she later used to gain employment at the FBI and CIA, and to accessing a federal computer system to unlawfully query information about herself, Talal Chahine, Elfat El

Aouar and the terrorist organization Hizballah.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "With so many honest and hard-working immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship, with all the rights and privileges that confers, we cannot permit those who obtain this precious right by fraud to remain unchallenged. We will take action when appropriate to bring criminal charges in such situations."

Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement who stated that, "becoming an American citizen is privilege not a right." "We will not tolerate those who pledge their allegiance to this nation knowing that the oath they took was achieved through lies and fraud. ICE Special Agents will work with our partners in the U.S. Attorney's Office to ensure that those privileges are removed."

Under the terms of the plea agreement with the government, Spinelli is facing a term of imprisonment of 6 to 12 months and must separate from the U.S. Marine Corps. A sentencing date has not been set.

El Aouar's husband, Talal Chahine is currently a fugitive believed to be in Lebanon. He, was charged in 2006 in the Eastern District of Michigan with tax evasion in connection with a scheme to conceal more than \$20 million in cash received by La Shish restaurants and to route funds to persons in Lebanon. Last month, Chahine was also charged in the Eastern District of Michigan, along with a senior ICE official in Detroit and others in a bribery and extortion conspiracy in which federal immigration benefits were allegedly awarded to illegal aliens in exchange for money.

The ongoing investigation into this matter is being conducted by the FBI and ICE, with assistance from the U.S. Department of State, Diplomatic Security Service, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. Mr. Murphy also extended his appreciation to the U.S. Marine Corps for its full cooperation in the investigation.

The case is being prosecuted by Eric M. Straus, Chief of the National Security Unit, and Kenneth R. Chadwell, Assistant U.S. Attorney, from the U.S. Attorney's office for the Eastern District of Michigan, as well as Mark J. Jebson, Special Assistant U.S. Attorney and Senior

Assistant Chief Counsel for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.



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Dec 5, 2007

EVENT: Indictment

Defendant: Talal Khalil Chahine

**LASHISH OWNER INDICTED IN CITIZENSHIP FRAUD CONSPIRACY
INVOLVING FBI/CIA EMPLOYEE AND MARINE CORPS CAPTAIN**

Talal Khalil Chahine, 52, formerly of Dearborn Heights, Michigan and the owner of the La Shish chain of Middle Eastern restaurants, was indicted by a federal grand jury sitting in Detroit today on citizenship fraud conspiracy charges involving former FBI Agent and CIA employee Nada Nadim Prouty, his wife, Elfat El Aouar, and U.S. Marine Corps Captain Samar Khalil Spinelli, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Special Agent Maurice Aouate of the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division.

The Indictment charges that from April 13, 1990 to the present, Talal Chahine conspired with Nada Nadim Prouty, Elfat Nadim El Aouar and others to defraud the United States of valuable benefits of U.S. citizenship and to commit Marriage Fraud, Naturalization Fraud,

Perjury, False Statements in Naturalization Proceedings, Use of Fraudulently Procured Proof of U.S. citizenship, False Statements to Government Agents, Passport Fraud and Unauthorized Computer Access. Specifically, the Indictment charges, Talal Chahine assisted illegal alien Nada Prouty in penetrating the Federal Bureau of Investigation and, later, the Central Intelligence Agency. Prouty later made unlawful accesses into the FBI's classified computer data bases to query information about herself, Talal Chahine, Elfat El Aouar and the terrorist organization, Hizballah. Nada Prouty pleaded guilty to the conspiracy on November 13, 2007; Elfat El Aouar pleaded guilty to the conspiracy on November 28, 2007; and Samar Spinelli pleaded guilty to the conspiracy on December 4, 2007.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "With so many honest and hard-working immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship, with all the rights and privileges that confers, we cannot permit those who obtain this precious right by fraud to remain unchallenged. Many people consider marriage fraud a social issue, but since September 11th it has become a security issue. My office is committed to fighting marriage fraud and visa fraud and bring those who commit these crime to justice."

Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement who stated that, "becoming an American citizen is privilege not a right." "We will not tolerate those who pledge their allegiance to this nation knowing that the oath they took was achieved through lies and fraud. ICE Special Agents will work with our partners in the U.S. Attorney's Office to ensure that those privileges are removed."

Chahine faces a maximum penalty of 5 years' imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine on the Conspiracy charge. An Indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Chahine is currently a fugitive believed to be in Lebanon. He, along with his wife, Elfat El Aouar, were charged in 2006 in the Eastern District of Michigan with tax evasion in connection with a scheme to conceal more than \$20 million in cash received by La Shish restaurants and to route funds to persons in Lebanon. Last month, Chahine was also charged

in the Eastern District of Michigan, along with a senior ICE official in Detroit and others in a bribery and extortion conspiracy in which federal immigration benefits were allegedly awarded to illegal aliens in exchange for money.

In announcing the Indictment, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy commended the work of the Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Internal Revenue Service, the Diplomatic Security Service, U.S. Department of State, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service all of whom participated in the joint investigation. Mr. Murphy also expressed his gratitude to the United States Marine Corps for its excellent cooperation in the investigation.

The case is being prosecuted by Eric M. Straus, Chief of the National Security Unit, and Kenneth R. Chadwell, Assistant U.S. Attorney, from the U.S. Attorney's office for the Eastern District of Michigan, as well as Mark J. Jebson, Special Assistant U.S. Attorney and Senior Assistant Chief Counsel for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.



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Dec 7, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Verdict

Defendant: Brian Garrett et al

**TWO DETROIT RESIDENTS FOUND GUILTY
OF DRUG AND MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES**

The two remaining defendants of 39 charged in connection with the "Black Mafia Family" (BMF) drug trafficking organization were found guilty today on drug distribution and money laundering charges, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. The other 37 defendants previously pleaded guilty.

Brian Garrett, 39, and Benjamin Smith, 37, of Detroit, were found guilty today by a federal jury in United States District Court before Judge Avern Cohn. The jury deliberated for less than eight hours before returning the verdict, concluding a seven-day trial.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Today's convictions mark the end of the notorious 'Black Mafia Family' (BMF) drug organization, which was once a nationwide syndicate. Many neighborhoods across the country are safer now that such an extensive drug organization has been dismantled and millions of dollars of its drug proceeds taken away."

According to the charges in the indictment, Garrett and Smith were part of the "Black Mafia Family" (BMF) drug organization, which dealt in multi-kilo quantities of cocaine in the Detroit metropolitan area beginning in the early 1990's. Since 2000, law enforcement officers from across the country have seized over 476 kilograms of cocaine destined for distribution by this organization. Several million dollars in cash was seized by law enforcement officers between October, 1997 and June 2005. The members of this organization, using the illegal proceeds of their narcotic sales, purchased and leased numerous luxury vehicles, acquired and sold real property and purchased jewelry while concealing the true source and nature of the funds involved in the transaction through false names and nominee purchasers. To date, over \$18 million in assets has been seized and forfeited.

Evidence showed that Garrett transported thousands of dollars to various places including California. The evidence indicated that Garrett was arrested in Texas while transporting over \$700,000. In addition, the evidence showed that Smith transported substantial amounts of cocaine and currency to New York, St. Louis, and other locations across the country.

This case was investigated by the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF), an initiative of the Department of Justice, involving multiple federal agencies including, DEA and IRS along with numerous state and local agencies from across the country.

Garrett faces up to 20 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine and Smith faces up to 10 years in prison and \$4 million dollars. U.S. Attorney Murphy commended the excellent investigative work of the DEA and IRS, as well as the trial team of Assistant U.S. Attorneys Dawn Ison, Mike Leibson and Julie Beck.



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Dec 10, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Hasan Qasem

**FLORIDA RESIDENT PLEADS GUILTY TO FUNNELING FUNDS
THROUGH DEARBORN TRAVEL AGENCY TO YEMEN**

A resident of Tampa, Florida, Hasan Qasem, 43, pleaded guilty today before United States District Judge Marianne O. Battani to Conspiracy To Violate The Travel Act. The charge related to the transmission of money from Florida to Yemen, through a Michigan company, that had been obtained through structured financial transactions, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Mr. Murphy said: "Laws relating to the interstate transmission of proceeds of structured financial transactions are designed to thwart those who seek to move money interstate or out of the country that is derived from surreptitious and illegal transactions. My office, working with quality federal investigators and the sophisticated techniques they employ, will continue to root out and prosecute cases of illegal financial transactions to make sure that money is not being moved for illegitimate purposes."

According to the information filed in the case, from March 2004 through June 2004, the

defendant purchased numerous money orders in the Tampa area, structuring the purchase of those money orders so as to evade record-keeping requirements for money order establishments. The defendant mailed the money orders to individuals at a travel agency located in Dearborn, Michigan, to transmit the funds to Yemen. In total, the defendant provided \$53,000 to the travel agency for purposes of sending the money to Yemen.

The investigation of this case has been conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case has been prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Cathleen M. Corken.



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Stephen Moore IRS CI 313-234-2410

Dec 11, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Kenneth Felder Jr.

**DETROIT MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DEFRAUDING
THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE**

Kenneth Felder Jr., of Detroit, Michigan pleaded guilty to an information charging him with a conspiracy to defraud the Internal Revenue Service, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation Division.

According to court documents, Felder, Jr. recruited individuals to file fraudulent federal income tax returns and provided them with false Form W-2s. These false Form W-2s contained the names of employers who did not employ these individuals, along with fabricated amounts of income and tax withholdings. Felder then drove or directed these individuals, equipped with the fabricated Forms W-2, to a commercial tax return preparer, who

unknowingly prepared the false 2002 federal income tax returns on their behalf. These returns falsely claimed tax refunds from the IRS of over \$41,000.

“Our office will continue to prosecute and enforce the tax laws. We will take all appropriate action against those who prepare fraudulent tax returns, however, taxpayers are ultimately responsible for their tax returns, regardless of who prepares them. If the return is prepared fraudulently, the taxpayer is liable and can be held responsible for the resulting penalties and interests,” United States Attorney Murphy said.

“No one is entitled to an undeserved windfall and refunds should only be issued to taxpayers who are entitled to them,” said Aouate. “Willfully filing a false tax return is the same as stealing. At the IRS, protecting taxpayer money is a matter we take extremely seriously.”

Conspiracy to defraud the Internal Revenue Service carries a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

The case was investigated by special agents of the IRS Criminal Investigation Division and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Sheldon N. Light.



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Dec 11, 2007

EVENT: Sentenced

Defendant: Eric Cornell Foster

DRUG DEALER SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON

Eric Cornell Foster, a 41-year-old repeat drug dealer from Maryland, was sentenced today to life in prison as a result of his guilty plea to charges of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute cocaine, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Robert L. Corso, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Foster traveled to Detroit in March of 2007 with the intent of purchasing five kilograms of cocaine from a drug supplier, who in reality was an undercover DEA agent. Foster was arrested as he attempted to complete the transaction. Prior to this arrest, Foster had been convicted on three separate occasions of drug related felonies involving PCP, cocaine and heroin. In handing down the sentence, U.S. District Judge David M. Lawson noted that the federal drug statute required that Foster be sentenced to life imprisonment because he had two or more prior felony drug offenses.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Today's life sentence of a career drug dealer shows the high price that will be paid by those who continue to traffic in narcotics after being convicted multiple times."

This case was investigated by agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Elizabeth A. Stafford.



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Dec 11, 2007

EVENT: Sentenced

Defendant: Thomas Mercer

FORMER DEARBORN H&R BLOCK TAX PREPARER GOES TO JAIL

A tax preparer formerly employed by H&R Block, Thomas Mercer, 60, of Romulus, Michigan, was sentenced today to 86 months' imprisonment, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy. On September 13, 2007, Mercer pleaded guilty to all 30 counts of an indictment charging him with filing false federal income tax returns for a number of his clients and with obstructing the IRS's investigation.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation Division.

The sentence was imposed by U.S. District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff, who also ordered Mercer to pay restitution to the U.S. Treasury in the amount of \$331,478.00.

According to court documents, Mercer was a tax preparer at an office of H&R Block in Dearborn, Michigan. Mercer was charged with 23 counts of aiding in the preparation and filing of federal income tax returns that claimed false and fraudulent deductions for expenses and

tax credits that made it appear that the taxpayers were owed large refunds. Most of the returns indicted losses from fictitious janitorial businesses, as well as false tuition, charitable contributions, and child tax credits. He was also charged with seven counts of obstructing the due administration of the Internal Revenue laws by providing instructions to some of his clients with what to tell investigators and by providing them with documents purporting to justify some of the expense deductions.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, “A tax preparer exercises a great deal of power over his tax payer customers, because they are relying heavily on the preparer’s expertise and honesty. In this case, the tax preparer acted more like a coach on how to cheat Uncle Sam. All citizens must remember that they are ultimately responsible for their tax returns, no matter who prepares them. If their returns are false, taxpayers may be not only liable for back taxes, but also subject to fines, penalties, and like this case, serious criminal prosecution.”

Special Agent in Charge Aouate said, “At the IRS, protecting taxpayer money is a matter we take extremely serious. No one is entitled to an undeserved windfall and refunds should only be issued to taxpayers who are entitled to them. CI will continue to aggressively pursue those who file or promote the filing of false tax returns.”

Mr. Murphy noted that H&R Block fully cooperated with and provided valuable assistance to the government’s criminal investigation, which was conducted by special agents of the Criminal Investigation Division of IRS. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Stephen L. Hiyama.



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Dec 12, 2007

EVENT: Sentenced

Defendant: Clarita Hinson

Detroit Mom Goes To Jail For Helping Others To Defraud the IRS

Clarita Hinson, 25, of Detroit, was sentenced to six months imprisonment, followed by two years of supervised release, for her role in a conspiracy to defraud the Internal Revenue Service, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation Division.

According to court documents, during 2003 to 2005, Hinson manufactured and sold false and fraudulent Forms W-2. These forms contained the correct name and social security numbers of the taxpayers with fabricated employers, income, and federal withholding. Hinson instructed these taxpayers on how to obtain false income refunds and maximize their fraudulent refund claims with the IRS. She solicited a fee from these taxpayers, to be paid upon the receipt of the fraudulent refunds. Because of the quick actions of the IRS, this

scheme was identified and shut down before any loss was actually incurred. The loss to the IRS could have been as high as \$139,000.

“The prosecution of individuals who intentionally defraud the IRS is a vital element in maintaining public confidence in our tax system,” said United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy.

“At the IRS, protecting taxpayer money is a matter we take extremely serious,” said Aouate. “No one is entitled to an undeserved windfall and refunds should only be issued to taxpayers who are entitled to them.”

The case was investigated by special agents of the IRS Criminal Investigation Division and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Susan E. Gillooly.



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Dec 12, 2007

EVENT: Settlement

Defendant: Edward Rose and Sons et al

**JUSTICE DEPARTMENT OBTAINS APPROVAL SOUGHT TO DISTRIBUTE \$700,000
IN FAIR HOUSING LAWSUIT**

The Justice Department today announced that it had obtained approval from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan to distribute \$700,000 in monetary damages to 37 persons with disabilities pursuant to the consent decree entered in United States v. Edward Rose and Sons, et al., a case that was resolved by a consent decree entered in the Eastern District of Michigan in September 2005.

The consent decree resolved two lawsuits filed by the United States in 2001 and 2002 alleging that Michigan apartment owner Edward Rose and Sons, along with their architects and affiliated companies, had failed to design and construct 49 apartment complexes in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Virginia, and Nebraska in accordance with the accessibility requirements of the Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Among other things, the decree required the Rose companies to set aside \$950,000 to compensate persons who had been harmed by the lack of accessible features at the complexes and to take steps to notify tenants and other persons of their right to apply for

compensation.

The United States identified 37 persons that should be compensated and today the Court approved the distribution of \$700,000 to those persons. Under the terms of the decree, the remaining \$250,000 in the settlement fund will go toward increasing housing opportunities for disabled persons in communities where Edward Rose and Sons operates, in a manner to be determined later by the Court.

“We are pleased that persons who were wrongly denied the right to live in accessible housing will receive compensation,” said Grace Chung Becker, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division. “The Civil Rights Division is committed to ensuring that individuals are not prevented from occupying the home of their choice because of illegal accessibility barriers or other violations of federal law.”

“Despite the Fair Housing Act’s enactment by Congress so many years ago, some landlords still fail to make their properties accessible to persons with disabilities. This case demonstrates our office’s commitment to aggressively enforcing federal fair housing laws and our continuing – and successful – efforts to fight discrimination based on race, color and national origin, religion, sex, familial status and disability,” said Stephen J. Murphy, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan. “As a result of this case, more than 5,000 apartment units are being made accessible to citizens with disabilities. We are also pleased to be able to compensate those individuals who have been victims of housing discrimination in this case.”

Fighting illegal housing discrimination is a top priority of the Justice Department. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales announced Operation Home Sweet Home, a concentrated initiative to expose and eliminate housing discrimination in America. More information about Operation Home Sweet Home is available at the Justice Department Web site at <http://www.usdoj.gov/fairhousing>. The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability and familial status. Individuals who believe that they may have been victims of housing discrimination can call the Housing Discrimination Tip Line at 1-800-896-7743, email the Justice Department at fairhousing@usdoj.gov, or contact the U.S. Department of Housing and

Urban Development at 1-800-669-9777.

Since Jan. 1, 2001, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division has filed 241 cases to enforce the Fair Housing Act, 114 of which have alleged discrimination based on disability. More information about the Civil Rights Division and the laws it enforces is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt>.



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Dec 12, 2007

EVENT: Sentenced

Defendant: Turan Finley

DEFENDANT SENTENCED ON DRUG CHARGES

A Detroit resident was sentenced today to a mandatory minimum of 60 months imprisonment for charges involving possession with intent to distribute heroin and possession with intent to distribute more than five grams of cocaine base, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today. Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Acting Special Agent in Charge William Temple, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Turan Finley, 32, of Detroit, was sentenced by United States District Judge John Corbett O'Meara.

On August 7, 2007, Finley pled guilty to both counts: Possession with Intent to distribute Heroin, and Possession with Intent to Distribute more than Five Grams of Cocaine Base. The charges arose following an investigation and execution of a search warrant at a house on Martindale street in Detroit by members of the Detroit Police Narcotics Squad. During the execution of the search warrant, a Detroit Narcotics Officer located Defendant sitting at a

makeshift dining room table inside the premises. Upon seeing the officers, Defendant fled into an adjacent room leaving 74 packets of crack cocaine (total weight of approximately 9.8 grams), 38 packets of heroin (total weight of approximately 1.08 grams), and money on the makeshift dining room table. Defendant was apprehended and arrested.

Finley has a prior criminal history which includes prior felony convictions for Fleeing a Police Officer-Third Degree and Felony Firearm.

“The lengthy sentences offenders receive under Project Safe Neighborhoods is aimed at fighting violent crime in Detroit,” stated U.S. Attorney Murphy. “Project Safe Neighborhoods and Operation Tide targets offenders like Mr. Finley in an effort to make our communities safer. If you have information concerning the illegal use of guns, please contact 1-800-ATF-GUNS. All information received will be confidential”.

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Operation TIDE is the unprecedented, long-term law enforcement and community collaboration where federal, state, county and local law enforcement officials meet regularly and work in cooperation to reduce violent crimes and prevent recidivism by focusing on the “worst of the worst” in Northwest Detroit, Detroit’s largest police district.

Other PSN Operation TIDE Task Force partners include the U.S. Marshals Service, the FBI, the Wayne County Sheriff’s Department, the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office, and the Michigan Department of Corrections.

Citizens with information concerning illegal guns, gangs with guns, armed drug trafficking or the trafficking of illegal guns are encouraged to call 800-ATF-GUNS. Callers can remain anonymous. This number is managed and answered by law enforcement, ATF agents who work directly with local police departments. For information about Project Safe Neighborhoods call 1-800-891-8881 or visit www.psnworks.org.

The case was the result of multi-agency cooperation between the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Detroit Police Department Narcotics Section. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Terrence R. Haugabook.



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Dec 13, 2007

EVENT: Sentenced

Defendant: Ghazi Al-Awadi

**MAN SENTENCED FOR ACTING AS
AGENT FOR FORMER IRAQI GOVERNMENT**

A Dearborn man was sentenced today to 18 months' as a result of his pleading guilty to acting as an agent of the government of Iraq under the former regime of Saddam Hussein, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Andrew G. Arena, FBI Special Agent in Charge.

Ghazi Al-Awadi, 78, a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Iraq, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Nancy G. Edmunds.

According to documents filed in the case, between May and November 2002, Al-Awadi obtained information in the United States about individuals and groups opposed to Saddam Hussein and then provided that information to the Iraqi Intelligence Service in Iraq. Al-Awadi acted as an agent of the government of Iraq without notifying the Attorney General as required

by law.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, “We will respond aggressively to any cases involving spying by the agent of a hostile foreign government. Refugees from oppressive regimes should be able to enjoy the freedoms of the United States without being monitored or informed upon by agents of that regime on US soil. I commend the FBI for their excellent work on this case.”

Special Agent in Charge Andrew G. Arena said, “The foreign intelligence threat facing the United States is increasingly complex. Protecting the United States against foreign intelligence operations and espionage is one of the FBI’s top priorities.”



U.S. Department of Justice

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Dec 14, 2007

EVENT: Sentenced

Defendant: Robert Joshua Youngblood

MAN SENTENCED TO 36 MONTHS FOR CROSS-BURNING

DETROIT – Ronald Joshua Youngblood, 26, of Ypsilanti, Michigan, has been sentenced to 36 months after pleading guilty to violating the housing rights of an African-American family by burning a cross at the family’s home, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy and Acting Assistant Attorney General Grace Chung Becker, of the Civil Rights Division.

The sentence arises out of an incident that occurred on June 20, 2006, when Youngblood and several friends burned a five-foot-tall cross in front of the victims’ residence in an attempt to drive the victims out of their home. The defendant also set off an explosive device in order to awaken the family members so that they would run outside and see the burning cross.

United States Attorney Stephen Murphy said, “Today’s sentence gives real life and meaning to our Constitution’s promise of equal protection under the laws, and our society’s rejection of racial intimidation in any form. One would hope that federal convictions and sentences for cross burnings would be nothing more than an ugly topic for historical study, but sadly, they are not. And as long as there are those who would violate the rights and security of

their neighbors out of some kind of intolerance or discrimination, my office will be there to prosecute them and see to it that their crimes are punished.”

This case was investigated by the Sumpter Township Police Department and the Detroit Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Pamela Thompson and Trial Attorney Barbara Bosserman from the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice.



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Dec 17, 2007

EVENT: Convicted

Defendant: Lamont Sapp

**DETROIT MAN CONVICTED OF 2003 FIREARMS
THEFT FROM BROWN BEAR SPORTING GOODS**

Lamont Sapp, 42, of Detroit pled guilty in federal court today to aiding and abetting the theft of 27 firearms during a 2003 robbery, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Joining in the announcement was Acting Special Agent-In-Charge William Temple, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Sapp admitted to aiding and abetting two others during an October 16, 2003 robbery of a Brown Bear Sporting Goods store in Chesterfield Township, a licensed federal firearms dealer, before United States District Judge Patrick Duggan.

After the robbery was discovered, a Chesterfield Township Police K-9 named Chaos followed the robbers' scent to a pedestrian bridge at Nursery and 21 Mile Rd. There, police found a tied-up sweatshirt concealing 23 stolen handguns. Another four handguns were located nearby.

That night, Sapp was stopped by Chesterfield Township police officers driving a dark blue Mercury Marauder. Inside the vehicle, police found a pry bar, a twenty-four inch screwdriver, a two pound brass hammer, and a pair of brown cotton work gloves that connected Sapp to the robbery.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, “Fortunately, the 27 stolen weapons that the defendant heisted in 2003 never made it to the streets of our communities, due to the detective work of the Chesterfield Township Police Department. Now, thanks to the combined work of local law enforcement and the ATF, one of the people responsible for the theft of the guns has been brought to justice.”

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Operation TIDE is the unprecedented, long-term law enforcement and community collaboration where federal, state, county and local law enforcement officials meet regularly and work in cooperation to reduce violent crimes and prevent recidivism by focusing on the “worst of the worst” in Northwest Detroit, Detroit’s largest police district.

Other PSN Operation TIDE Task Force partners include the U.S. Marshals Service, the FBI, the Wayne County Sheriff’s Department, the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office, and the Michigan Department of Corrections.

Citizens with information concerning illegal guns, gangs with guns, armed drug trafficking or the trafficking of illegal guns are encouraged to call 800-ATF-GUNS. Callers can remain anonymous. This number is managed and answered by law enforcement, ATF agents who work directly with local police departments. For information about Project Safe Neighborhoods call 1-800-891-8881 or visit www.psnworks.org.

Stealing firearms from a gun dealer is punishable by up to five years imprisonment. No sentencing date has yet been set.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Leonid Feller.



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Dec 20, 2007

EVENT: Indictment

Defendant: William Ibianski et al

**TWO DETROIT AREA RESIDENTS INDICTED FOR
BANK FRAUD, MONEY LAUNDERING AND TAX EVASION**

A federal grand jury indictment was unsealed today charging two Detroit area residents on charges of conspiracy, bank fraud, interstate transport of securities taken by fraud, money laundering, false statements, and tax evasion, announced United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy.

U.S. Attorney Murphy was joined in the announcement by Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit, Michigan, office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Maurice M. Aouate, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation.

Charged in the indictment were William Ibianski, 47, of Warren, and Robert Kolo 60, of Orchard Lake.

The indictment charges that from 1999 through 2004, Ibianski, the Corporate Tax Director at Copper and Brass Sales, Inc. (a unit of ThyssenKrupp Materials, NA, Inc.), engaged in a conspiracy with Kolo to steal \$1,116,102.73 from Copper and Brass. Ibianski

caused Copper and Brass to issue 75 checks payable to Kolo or his company (World Class Engineered Products), when Kolo had no business relationship with Copper and Brass. The indictment alleges that the checks were a way for Ibianski to repay Kolo for loans to cover Ibianski's gambling losses.

The indictment also charges the defendants with bank fraud, interstate transport of securities taken by fraud, money laundering; Kolo is also charged with making false statements to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Ibianski is charged with tax evasion.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said "The embezzlement of over \$1 million in corporate funds by an officer is the kind of serious malfeasance that can inflict major damage on a company and its employees. Such conduct will be met with a swift investigative and prosecutorial response. I applaud the excellent teamwork of the FBI and IRS-CID that led to today's Indictment."

FBI Special Agent in Charge Arena advised, "Bank fraud and conspiracy remain a top investigation priority of the FBI and we will continue to aggressively investigate officers of corporation who personally enrich themselves at the expense of the corporation and innocent shareholders."

IRS Special Agent in Charge Aouate said, "Corporate officers and directors have a duty and responsibility to follow the laws and when they abuse this trust, IRS Criminal Investigation will be there to diligently follow the money in order to bring them to justice."

If convicted as charged, the defendants could receive a maximum sentence of 30 years imprisonment on each count of bank fraud and a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment on the money laundering, and fines.

An Indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service, with the assistance of ThyssenKrupp Materials. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Christopher L. Varner.



U.S. Department of Justice

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Dec 21, 2007

EVENT: Indictment

Defendant: Curtis M. Gottler

**Livonia Man Indicted for Federal Civil Rights Violations
For Threatening African Americans Residents**

Stephen J. Murphy, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan announced today that Curtis M. Gottler of Livonia, Michigan, was indicted by a federal grand jury for hate crimes and other charges stemming from threats he made to a local couple and their real estate agent in an attempt to keep the couple from selling their home to African Americans. The defendant was also charged with a hate crime and a threat for sending a threatening letter through the U.S. Mail to an African American resident of Livonia.

One count in the indictment charges Gottler with attempting to interfere with the right of the couple to sell their home without discrimination on the basis of race. According to the indictment, on August 24, 2007, Gottler left a handwritten note at the couple's home indicating that he would track them down and harm them if they sold their home to African-Americans.

Gottler is also charged with one count of attempting to interfere with the real estate agent's right to assist the couple in selling their home without regard to race, and one count of making a threat in interstate commerce. According to the indictment, these charges relate to a

threatening email threat Gottler sent on September 15, 2007, to the real estate agent who was representing the couple in the sale of their home.

Gottler is also charged with two counts stemming from a letter he allegedly sent on June 25, 2007, to an African American resident of Livonia, in which he threatened to harm the resident if the resident failed to leave Livonia. For this incident, the indictment charges Gottler with one hate crime and one count of sending a threat through the United States Mail.

If convicted, Gottler faces a maximum punishment of thirteen years of imprisonment and a fine of \$800,000.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "The idea that someone can try to threaten and intimidate an African American family – and their real estate agent -- not to move into a certain neighborhood is a morally and legally bankrupt notion, as today's Indictment makes vividly clear. The charges filed today should signify to all that our Office abhors such conduct, and that it will remain a top priority of mine to address it."

Federal Bureau of Investigation investigated this case. The case will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Pamela Thompson from the United States Attorney's Office, and Trial Attorney Patricia Sumner from the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice.

The charges set forth in an indictment are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.



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Dec 21, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Kenneth Stefanski

**MULTI-CONVICTED SEX OFFENDER PLEADS GUILTY TO
MANUFACTURING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

A Garden City man who was twice convicted of sex crimes with children has pleaded guilty in United States District Court to manufacturing child pornography, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Entering the guilty plea before United States District Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff was Kenneth Stefanski, 36 of Garden City, Michigan.

According to information presented to the court at the time of the plea, in June of 2007, Stefanski, entered onto the premises of a church located in Redford, Michigan while a church picnic was underway. While there, Stefanski approached two young girls, ages 7 and 8 who were playing in a driveway area separated from the adults and other kids, chasing fireflies. Stefanski removed the 7 year old's shorts and underwear and took pictures with a digital camera he had brought with him. Later investigation of Stefanski's apartment and truck during an execution of a search warrant in connection with a sexual assault on a 4 year old in

Garden City a few days earlier, revealed the digital camera containing the pictures of the child taken in Redford.

Stefanski was sentenced to 1 ½ to 15 years in 2000, for a 2nd Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct Conviction in Wayne County. He was also convicted in 2002 of Accosting a Minor for Immoral Purposes. Stefanski is also currently facing charges in Wayne County Circuit Court for 2nd Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct for the assault in Garden City. He is scheduled to appear on that case in January. Under federal law, Stefanski will be facing a mandatory minimum sentence of 35 years.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "This kind of case shows how important Project Safe Childhood is in protecting children from sexual exploitation. Thanks to the coordination with Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, we can try to ensure that the toughest federal penalties will be brought to bear against the worst kind of conduct."

Murphy praised the outstanding work of the Redford and Garden City Police Department as well as Prosecutor Kym Worthy and the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office. "Their quick response and investigation, as well as the dedication of time and skill necessary to apprehend this predator has been most admirable" Murphy said.

Assistant United States Attorney John O'Brien is prosecuting case for the United States and Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Daniel Less, for Wayne County.