



## **McGregor W. Scott**

United States Attorney  
Eastern District of California

*Sacramento*  
501 I. Street, Ste 10-100  
Sacramento CA 95814  
Tel (916) 554-2700  
TTY (916) 554-2855

## **NEWS RELEASE**

*Fresno*  
2500 Tulare St., Suite 4401  
Fresno, CA 93721  
Tel (559) 497-4000  
TTY (559) 497-4500

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 9, 2007

Contact:  
Fresno - AUSA Sheila K. Oberto or  
AUSA Karen A. Escobar  
559-497-4000

[www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae)

### **LASHER BROTHERS TRUCKING OWNERS CHARGED IN BRIBERY SCHEME**

FRESNO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that KULWANT LASHER, 50, TARLACHAN LASHER, 52, and JASWINDER LASHER, 47, the owners of Lasher Brothers Trucking Company, Inc., based in Los Banos, California, were arrested and charged in connection with a scheme to bribe an Internal Revenue Service revenue officer to abate a tax liability of over \$2 million, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 201(b)(1)(C). According to the United States Department of Treasury's Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA), the case is the largest in the nation involving an alleged bribery of a revenue officer.

The investigation was conducted by Special Agents of TIGTA, and the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Karen A. Escobar and Sheila K. Oberto of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Fresno.

According to a criminal complaint filed in federal court in Fresno, the LASHER brothers offered to pay a revenue officer of the Internal Revenue Service, working undercover in cooperation with TIGTA, \$600,000 in cash to eliminate approximately \$2.4 million in delinquent federal taxes and penalties. The complaint further alleges that, as part of the alleged bribery scheme, the defendants actually paid the revenue officer over \$54,000 in cash and handed over a quitclaim deed for KULWANT LASHER's residence in Los Banos, along with a 2003 BMW 745LI, during meetings with the revenue officer at a restaurant and gas station.

A conviction for bribery of a public official carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison and a fine of up to \$1.8 million.

Special Agent-in-Charge William J. Marandola of the Department of Treasury's Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) stated, "Instead of complying with federal tax laws, these individuals chose to resolve their tax issues by bribing an IRS Revenue Officer, which resulted in their arrests. TIGTA is tasked with protecting the integrity of Federal Tax Administration and will thoroughly investigate any attempts to corrupt IRS employees."

The LASHER brothers are scheduled for an initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Sandra M. Snyder in U.S. District Court in Fresno on Tuesday, October 9, 2007, at 1:30 p.m. The charge is only an allegation and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

# # #