



Department of Justice

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OWNERS OF EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES AND RESTAURANTS INDICTED

Defendants Provided Jobs and Transportation for Illegal Aliens Across the Eastern United States, Many Worked in Asian Restaurants

ATLANTA, GA - Five individuals have been indicted by a federal grand jury in three separate indictments on charges of conspiring to induce undocumented aliens to enter and remain in the United States by providing them with employment, predominantly at Chinese restaurants, all for commercial gain. In addition, three more individuals were arrested yesterday on criminal complaints and are expected to have their bond hearings and arraignments today before United States Magistrate Judge Janet F. King.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said, "These defendants allegedly provided jobs that frequently exploited the workers by subjecting them to long shifts, six days a week, often with substandard pay and living conditions. On top of that, the defendants took large deductions from the workers' pay to reimburse themselves for the costs of the employment agencies' illegal services."

"We are focused on finding and penalizing employers who believe they can unfairly get ahead by cultivating illegal workplaces and by exploiting illegal aliens," said ICE Acting Special Agent in Charge, Robert Andrews. "By joining forces with the FBI, we will continue rooting out this criminal activity. The message is clear: all employers must play by the rules."

FBI Atlanta Special Agent in Charge Brian D. Lamkin said, "Yesterday and today's joint FBI/ICE operation should serve as notice to those individuals and businesses that traffic and exploit undocumented immigrants. The FBI remains committed to working with U.S. ICE agents as we enforce federal law."

The three indictments were unsealed after ICE and FBI conducted joint field operations to arrest the defendants and execute search warrants yesterday and today. Named in the indictments as part of the criminal conspiracies are:

- PILI CHEN, 55, of Tucker, Georgia;
- AI LIN FU, 40, of Norcross, Georgia;

- CHUN YAN LIN, 44, of Chamblee, Georgia;
- XIANG MEI KE, 32, of Duluth, Georgia; and
- JING XING JIANG, 42, of Lawrenceville, Georgia;

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court: CHUN YAN LIN, AI LIN FU and PILI CHEN, owned employment agencies, named “New Fuzhou,” “Zhong Mei,” and “Lucky,” all in Chamblee, Georgia, and conspired with others to transport and provide jobs to illegal aliens. The agency owners primarily placed the illegal aliens mainly in restaurant jobs in South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Georgia. The employment agencies did not require or request any proof that the aliens had permission to be or work in the United States. The employment agencies allegedly advertised in Asian language newspapers and on the internet. They charged the undocumented aliens a commission and transportation fee to place them in a restaurant or other job site and to drive them there, or in some cases charged the restaurant owners, who deducted the fees from their illegal workers’ modest pay. Another individual arrested yesterday during the ICE/FBI joint enforcement operation, CHUNBIAO XU, 33, of Norcross, Georgia, now faces the same charges as the other employment agency defendants.

Co-conspirators XIANG MEI KE and JING XING JIANG owned and operated restaurants, named “Hong Kong Super Buffet,” in Gainesville, Georgia, and “Fuji Buffet,” in Lawrenceville, Georgia, where they used undocumented aliens brokered by the conspiring employment agencies. The restaurant owners often provided housing, sometimes in their own houses, to the workers in order to better monitor them and shield them from detection, and paid the workers in cash to avoid paying unemployment taxes. Also arrested yesterday were LIANG FENG CHEN, 32, and SAU TING CHENG, 41, both of Duluth, Georgia, who owned and operated “Grand Buffet and Grill,” a restaurant in Duluth, Georgia, and were charged in criminal complaints with conspiracy to encourage and induce aliens to reside illegally in the United States.

PILI CHEN also allegedly transported the undocumented aliens in a private vehicle from the employment agencies to the illegal job sites. The employment agencies used paid drivers to minimize contact between the undocumented aliens and the outside world, including law enforcement.

All defendants face federal charges of conspiring to induce undocumented aliens to enter and remain in the United States by providing them with employment, predominantly at Chinese restaurants, all for commercial gain. AI LIN FU faces additional charges of transporting aliens for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain, in reckless disregard of the fact that the aliens were in the United States and remained here in violation of the law. This joint ICE/FBI investigation continues.

During yesterday's joint operation, 39 individuals were arrested administratively by

ICE for being in violation of U.S. immigration law. They are currently in ICE custody pending immigration removal proceedings.

The conspiracy charge carries a maximum sentence of up to 10 years in federal prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. The transportation charge also carries a maximum sentence of up to 10 years in federal prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. 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.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys Susan Coppedge, Brian Pearce, Phyllis Clerk, Steve McClain, and Gerald Sachs are prosecuting the cases.

For further information please contact Sally Quillian Yates, United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.