

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pleasantville Pimp Has First Appearance in Federal Court for Prostitution of Minors

(More)

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CAMDEN – A Pleasantville man made his first appearance in federal court in Camden today on a federal Criminal Complaint which charges him with transporting minor females from Allentown to Atlantic City for the purpose of having them engage in prostitution, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Kevin R. Mayfield, 27, was arrested last night by members of the FBI and the Ventnor Police Department on the Complaint and had an initial appearance today before U.S. Magistrate Ann Marie Donio. Judge Donio ordered Mayfield be detained without bail pending trial on the grounds that he presents a danger to the community.

Mayfield and Casson L. Coward, 24, of Pleasantville, who is charged in a separate complaint, are each charged with one count of conspiracy to transport minors in interstate commerce with the intent that the minors engage in prostitution. Coward is expected to have an initial appearance in federal court on Thursday, July 12. Coward was arrested on state charges on June 8, 2007, by Special Agents with the FBI and Troopers with the N.J. State Police and remains in state custody in lieu of bail. Mayfield surrendered to state authorities on June 14 and was released on bail on the state charges. Separate federal complaints were signed against the defendants on July 5, 2007.

According to the complaints, Mayfield and Coward conspired to recruit and transport minor girls and others between various cities, including Allentown, Pa., and Atlantic City to engage in prostitution. The complaints resulted from an investigation of postings on the Internet website “Craig's List” that appear to advertise prostitution.

During the investigation, a posting for a female going by the name, “Vanilla Treat” purported to be a 21-year-old woman. The posting stated that Vanilla Treat was in the Atlantic City area and included a nude photograph of a female and a contact telephone number. Additionally, another posting on the website for a female called “Lushes” purported to be an 18-year-old woman and stated that she was in the Atlantic City area as well. The posting included two nude photographs and posting stated “[I]n calls 100 ½ 150hr Out calls 200hr expepting tips.”

According to the Complaints, on June 7, an undercover officer (“UC”) called the contact number listed for Lushes on the website and arranged a meeting at a motel in Galloway Township. At the motel, the UC met a minor girl who offered to have sex with the UC in exchange for money. At that point, the female was taken into custody by N.J. State Police. The female was identified as a 14-year-old girl from Allentown, which the complaint identifies only as A.B., who was working as a prostitute in the Atlantic City area. According to the complaint, A.B. told law enforcement officials that she was working for Coward.

On June 5, 2007, Coward allegedly picked up A.B., who he had met three weeks earlier, and her 16-year-old sister, J.B., and took them to an Allentown motel. According to the complaint, Coward then introduced A.B. and J.B. to a male known as “B,” who was later identified as Mayfield. The next day, Coward drove A.B. to the vicinity of Atlantic City, where he paid for her to stay in a motel room. Allegedly, Mayfield drove J.B. to the Atlantic

City area as well. Coward gave A.B. a cellular telephone, with the phone number that was listed on the website, to use to facilitate her working as a prostitute and to communicate with Coward, according to the complaint.

According to the complaint, Coward used a digital camera to take photographs of A.B., which included nude photographs. After taking the pictures Coward loaded the images into a laptop computer and told A.B. that he had “put them up,” meaning they were uploaded on the Craig's List posting for “Lushes.”

According to the complaint, A.B. identified the girl depicted in the nude photograph on the Craig List posting of “Vanilla Treat,” as her sister, J.B., who was missing at the time A.B. was interviewed, according to the complaint. According to the complaint, after Mayfield transported J.B. from Allentown to the Atlantic City, he had J.B. stay in motel rooms in Egg Harbor Township and Absecon. After Mayfield had instructed J.B. how to work as a prostitute, she refused to do so and asked Mayfield to take her home. Mayfield drove J.B. to Philadelphia, dropped her off, and told her that she would have to earn her bus fare home, the complaint alleges.

The charge contained in the Complaint, conspiring to transport minors to engage in prostitution, carries a mandatory minimum prison term of 10 years and a statutory maximum prison term of life and a \$250,000 fine.

In determining an actual sentence, the judge to whom the case is assigned would, upon a conviction, consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of FBI's Atlantic City Resident Agency, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Pedro Ruiz, in Newark, and the Trooper with the N.J. State Police, under the direction of Colonel Joseph R. Fuentes, Superintendent, with the investigation.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Richardson of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney:
Mayfield - Troy A. Archie, Esq. Camden
Coward - Lori M. Koch, Esq. Camden