



**United States Attorney
Southern District of
New York**

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**NY SNP
KATI CORNELL
(212) 815-0525**

**DOI
DIANE STRUZZI
(212) 825-5931**

**NYPD
PAUL BROWNE
(646) 610-8989**

**CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
ELLEN DAVIS,
EDELI RIVERA,
JESSIE ERWIN
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600**

**ICE HSI
KHAALID WALLS
(646) 313-2716**

**DEA
ERIN MCKENZIE-MULVEY
(212) 337- 2906**

**MANHATTAN U.S. ATTORNEY CHARGES 50 MEMBERS
OF MASSIVE MARIJUANA TRAFFICKING RING**

*ICE HSI Leads Coordinated, Multi-Agency Law Enforcement Strike
That Shuts Down Pipeline For Ton-Quantities
Of Marijuana Into New York City*

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, JAMES T. HAYES, JR., the Special Agent-in-Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office of Homeland Security Investigations in New York ("ICE HSI"), JOHN P. GILBRIDE, the Special-Agent-in-Charge of the New York Division of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), RAYMOND W. KELLY, the Police Commissioner of the City of New York ("NYPD"), BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York, and ROSE GILL HEARN, the Commissioner for the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today the unsealing of an Indictment charging ten individuals and a Complaint charging 40 individuals with participating in a massive marijuana trafficking ring that transported ton-quantities of marijuana from Florida and California for distribution in the greater New York area from the early 1990's to 2010.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA said: "With today's arrests, we have successfully shut down a major pipeline for marijuana distribution in New York City. This successful operation was the result of a dedicated and ongoing partnership

among federal, state, and local law enforcement and reaffirms our zero tolerance policy for those who flout our drug laws."

ICE HSI Special Agent-in-Charge JAMES T. HAYES, Jr., said: "These criminal organizations have allegedly dominated the illegal marijuana market in New York City for almost 20 years. The high profile stature of some of the alleged members of these organizations is especially troubling. Just as these organizations relied on each other to expand their illicit business and fuel the growth of their drug distribution network, ICE HSI will continue to partner with our federal, state and local law enforcement brethren to cripple those same networks."

DEA Special Agent-in-Charge JOHN P. GILBRIDE said: "Operation Green Venom was investigated and prosecuted as a team effort by federal, state, and local law enforcement entities. This organization fueled marijuana distribution from Florida to New York for one reason - to make a profit. Today's enforcement actions prove that as we work collectively with our law enforcement partners, drug trafficking organizations will be identified and investigated in order to bring drug traffickers to justice."

Special Narcotics Prosecutor BRIDGET G. BRENNAN said: "This case began with an investigation into the source of large amounts of laundered money and shows the extent to which trafficking in hydroponic marijuana has become the province of large organized criminal groups concerned only with profits. The interagency cooperation demonstrated in this case increasingly will be necessary to successfully prosecute organizations of this kind."

DOI Commissioner ROSE GILL HEARN said: "Individuals using New York City in drug trafficking operations will face a concerted law enforcement response resulting in arrest and prosecution. DOI was pleased to join with its law enforcement partners on this far-reaching investigation."

During a long-term investigation dubbed "Operation Green Venom," federal, state, and local law enforcement officers used over twenty wiretaps to infiltrate drug trafficking crews that controlled the importation and distribution of marijuana throughout the greater New York City area. Since July 2008, seizures totaling almost \$2 million in marijuana proceeds and over 360 pounds of marijuana have been linked to this organization.

After a coordinated takedown earlier today, including approximately 350 federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, 45 of the charged defendants are in custody. Five defendants are still at large. The defendants taken into custody today are expected to be presented in Manhattan federal court later this afternoon. During searches related to these arrests, agents and officers seized, among other evidence, over \$100,000 in cash, additional quantities of marijuana, three rifles, and a loaded handgun.

The allegations in the Indictment and the Complaint are described in greater detail below.

United States v. Manuel Geovanny Rodriguez-Perez, et al.
(10 Cr. 905)

According to the Indictment unsealed today, MANUEL GEOVANNY RODRIGUEZ-PEREZ, a/k/a "Manny," a/k/a "Shorty," is the leader of the marijuana-trafficking conspiracy. The Indictment charges nine members of a "cell" that allegedly transported marijuana and marijuana proceeds between Florida and New York. Specifically, RODRIGUEZ, the primary user of over ten telephone lines intercepted during the investigation, has imported multi-ton quantities of marijuana into the New York City area since 1992.

During the investigation, RODRIGUEZ was intercepted over the wiretaps discussing violent acts, including his threat to "hunt" a customer who was late paying for marijuana. The Indictment also charges marijuana "brokers" who assembled marijuana in Florida for transportation to New York and elsewhere, individuals who provided access to transportation for the brokers, and the drivers who transported the marijuana.

The Indictment seeks forfeiture of two tractor trailers from which marijuana and/or marijuana proceeds were seized, and at least seven separate properties owned by RODRIGUEZ in New York and in Florida.

United States v. Kareem Burke, a/k/a "Biggs," et al.
(10 Mag. XXX)

The Complaint charges 40 individuals with allegedly distributing marijuana in New York City and in New Jersey. These defendants include KAREEM BURKE, a/k/a "Biggs," one of the founders of Roc-A-Fella Records, MATTHEW WOODSTOCK STANG, a/k/a "Magazine Guy," an advertising representative for High Times magazine, and members of three separate "cells." While the three

separate cells independently controlled areas where marijuana was sold, they depended on each other, and on the same transportation network, for the distribution of the marijuana they sold to customers in New York and New Jersey.

During the course of the investigation, law enforcement agents discovered the following:

- RODRIGUEZ discussed "grow houses" located in New York City and obtained marijuana from BURKE
- RODRIGUEZ discussed with BURKE the possibility of obtaining marijuana from California
- Members of the cells smuggled narcotics proceeds on commercial flights
- Members of the cells accessed a location that was later found to contain 22 pounds of marijuana and \$77,000

* * *

In addition to the charges filed by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, four defendants are also being charged by the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York ("SNP") with violating New York State marijuana trafficking laws.

Mr. BHARARA praised the outstanding investigative work of ICE HSI, DEA, the New York City Police Department, DOI, the U.S. Marshals Service, the Maryland State Police, the Bergen County, New Jersey, Police Department, the Rocky Mount, North Carolina, Police Department, the Miami Dade Police Department, the Greenburgh, New York, Police Department, the Passaic County, New Jersey, Police Department. He also thanked the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for New York City, and added that the investigation is continuing.

The prosecution of the cases arising from "Operation Green Venom" is being overseen by the Office's Narcotics Unit, with assistance from the Violent Crimes Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys AMIE N. ELY, DANIEL P. CHUNG, and SARAH E. MCCALLUM are in charge of the prosecution. Assistant U.S. Attorney MICHAEL D. LOCKARD of the Office's Asset Forfeiture Unit is responsible for the forfeiture.

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

U.S. v. Manuel Geovanny Rodriguez-Perez, et al. (10 Cr. XXX)

Ct	Charge	Defendants	Maximum Penalties
1	Conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 1000 kilograms of marijuana and more	All defendants	Life imprisonment, mandatory minimum of 10 years in prison

Defendant	Residence
MANUEL GEOVANNY RODRIGUEZ-PEREZ	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
JOSE BETANCOURT	MIAMI, FLORIDA
MIGUEL CERDA	MIAMI, FLORIDA
JAVIER FALCON	MIAMI, FLORIDA
DANIEL FERNANDEZ	MIAMI, FLORIDA
IDAEL MENA-HERNANDEZ	MIAMI, FLORIDA
ARTURO MENA-SIFONTE	MIAMI, FLORIDA
JESUS SANCHEZ	MIAMI, FLORIDA
ADEL SANTANA-ZAMORA	MIAMI, FLORIDA
OSMEL VAZQUEZ-PEREZ	MIAMI, FLORIDA

U.S. v. Kareem Burke, a/k/a "Biggs," et al. (10 Mag. XXX)

Ct	Charge	Defendants	Maximum Penalties
1	Conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 1000 kilograms of marijuana and more	KAREEM BURKE JENNY CASTILLO, ROSEMARY DEJESUS EDGAR ENCARNACION-LAFONTAINE ALFONSO GARCIA KLEVI GUTIERREZ EDWING ALBERTO HERRERA ISIDRO ESMELIN HERRERA, RICARDO JIMENEZ-PADILLA, ANDY LOCIER JIMMY LOPEZ LUIS ANTONIO LUCIANO MICHAEL MARTINEZ ROBERT MARTINEZ, ABEL MATOS, NELSON AUGUSTO MATOS ERICK FULGENCIO NUNEZ FRANKLIN MANUEL PACHECO-VALDEZ, ARIEL PENA JOSE RAMON PEREZ, LEODIS PEREZ MIRIAM PIMENTEL, RICARDO PIMENTEL VICTOR QUEZADA EMMANUEL RAMIREZ LETICIA RAPOSO MICHAEL ANGELO REYES EDWIN RIVERA JOSE A. RODRIGUEZ OSCAR RODRIGUEZ ANDRES ROJAS MATTHEW SANTIAGO MATTHEW WOODSTOCK STANG JEROME SIMPSON DANIEL VALDEZ, CHRISTOPHER VIZCAINO	Life imprisonment, mandatory minimum of 10 years in prison

2	Conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 1000 kilograms of marijuana and more	KAREEM BURKE EDGAR ENCARNACION-LAFONTAINE EDWING ALBERTO HERRERA ISIDRO ESMELIN HERRERA RICARDO JIMENEZ-PADILLA ANDY LOCIER JIMMY LOPEZ LUIS ANTONIO LUCIANO MICHAEL MARTINEZ ROBERT MARTINEZ ABEL MATOS NELSON AUGUSTO MATOS LEODIS PEREZ MIRIAM PIMENTEL RICARDO PIMENTEL VICTOR QUEZADA MICHAEL ANGELO REYES EDWIN RIVERA JOSE A. RODRIGUEZ OSCAR RODRIGUEZ ANDRES ROJAS MATTHEW SANTIAGO MATTHEW WOODSTOCK STANG JEROME SIMPSON DANIEL VALDEZ	Life imprisonment, mandatory minimum of 10 years in prison
3	Conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 1000 kilograms of marijuana and more	JENNY CASTILLO ALFONSO GARCIA KLEVI GUTIERREZ ARIEL PENA EMMANUEL RAMIREZ CHRISTOPHER VIZCAINO,	Life imprisonment, mandatory minimum of 10 years in prison
4	Conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 1000 kilograms of marijuana and more	ROSEMARY DEJESUS ERICK FULGENCIO NUNEZ FRANKLIN MANUEL PACHECO-VALDEZ JOSE RAMON PEREZ LETICIA RAPOSO	Life imprisonment, mandatory minimum of 10 years in prison

5	Money laundering	WILLIAM ALCIBIO DELGADO RICHARD JIMENEZ-PEREZ JULIO CESAR LEONARDO RAMIREZ DEYANIRA PAULINO-GOMEZ	Twenty years in prison
6	Commission of a crime while on release on federal charges	DANIEL VALDEZ	Ten years in prison; imposed consecutive to any other sentence

Defendant	Residence
KAREEM BURKE	NORTH BERGEN, NEW JERSEY
JENNY CASTILLO	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
ROSEMARY DEJESUS	BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
WILLIAM ALCIBIO DELGADO	BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
EDGAR ENCARNACION-LAFONTAINE	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
ALFONSO GARCIA	BRONX, NEW YORK
KLEVI GUTIERREZ	BRONX, NEW YORK
EDWING ALBERTO HERRERA	DORAL, FLORIDA
ISIDRO ESMELIN HERRERA	BRONX, NEW YORK
RICARDO JIMENEZ-PADILLA	MAMORONECK, NEW YORK
RICHARD JIMENEZ-PEREZ	QUEENS, NEW YORK
JULIO CESAR LEONARDO RAMIREZ	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
ANDY LOCIER	BRONX, NEW YORK
JIMMY LOPEZ	FLUSHING, NEW YORK
LUIS ANTONIO LUCIANO	ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY
MICHAEL MARTINEZ	BRONX, NEW YORK
ROBERT MARTINEZ	BRONX, NEW YORK
ABEL MATOS	BRONX, NEW YORK
NELSON AUGUSTO MATOS	NEW YORK, NEW YORK

ERICK FULGENCIO NUNEZ	BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
FRANKLIN MANUEL PACHECO-VALDEZ	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
DEYANIRA PAULINO-GOMEZ	WHITESTONE, NEW YORK
ARIEL PENA	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
JOSE RAMON PEREZ	MIAMI, FLORIDA
LEODIS PEREZ	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
MIRIAM PIMENTEL	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
RICARDO PIMENTEL	NEWARK, NEW JERSEY
VICTOR QUEZADA	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
EMMANUEL RAMIREZ	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
LETICIA RAPOSO	MIRAMAR, FLORIDA
MICHAEL ANGELO REYES	BRONX, NEW YORK
EDWIN RIVERA	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
JOSE A. RODRIGUEZ	BRONX, NEW YORK
OSCAR RODRIGUEZ	BRONX, NEW YORK
ANDRES ROJAS	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
MATTHEW SANTIAGO	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
MATTHEW WOODSTOCK STANG	NEW YORK, NEW YORK
JEROME SIMPSON	JAMAICA, NEW YORK
DANIEL VALDEZ	BRONX, NEW YORK
CHRISTOPHER VIZCAINO	NEW YORK, NEW YORK

People v. William Delgado, et al. (Charges filed by SNP)
Indictment No. 4144/2010

Defendant	Residence
WILLIAM DELGADO	Brooklyn, NY
ALVIN GARCIA	New York, NY
RICHARD JIMENEZ PEREZ	Flushing, NY
KENNETH PENA	New York, NY

Ct	Charge	Defendants	Maximum Penalties
1	Conspiracy, 4th Degree	All	1 1/3 to 4 years; 2 to 4years for second felony offenders
2	Criminal Sale of Marijuana, 1st Degree	Delgado; Jimenez-Perez	5 1/2 yrs; 8 years for second felony offenders
3	Criminal Possession of Marijuana, 1st Degree	Pena	5 1/2 yrs; 8 years for second felony offenders
4	Attempted Criminal Possession of Marijuana, 1st Degree	Delgado; Jimenez-Perez	5 1/2 yrs; 8 years for second felony offenders
5	Ciminal Sale of Marijuana, 3rd Degree	Pena; Garcia	1 1/2 years; 2 years for second felony offenders
6	Criminal Sale of Marijuana, 3rd Degree	Pena; Garcia	1 1/2 years; 2 years for second felony offenders
7	Criminal Sale of Marijuana, 1st Degree	Delgado; Jimenez-Perez	5 1/2 yrs; 8 years for second felony offenders

8	Criminal Possession of Marijuana, 2nd Degree	Pena; Garcia	5 1/2 yrs; 8 years for second felony offenders
9	Criminal Possession of Marijuana, 1st Degree	Pena; Garcia	5 1/2 yrs; 8 years for second felony offenders