



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 23, 2009

CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
YUSILL SCRIBNER
REBEKAH CARMICHAEL
JANICE OH
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600

**FORMER SENIOR JFK CUSTOMS INSPECTOR SENTENCED IN
MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON
FOR BRIBERY AND NARCOTICS IMPORTATION**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that WALTER GOLEMBIOWSKI, formerly a Supervisory Customs and Border Protection Officer at JFK International Airport, was sentenced today in Manhattan federal court to 10 years in prison. GOLEMBIOWSKI pleaded guilty on March 11, 2009, to narcotics conspiracy and two counts of bribery conspiracy before United States District Judge LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN, who also imposed today's sentence.

According to the Indictment to which GOLEMBIOWSKI pleaded guilty, the previously-filed criminal Complaint, and statements made during today's sentencing proceeding:

During its investigation, which included wiretaps, video surveillance, and undercover sting operations, OCDESF officers identified a number of individuals, including GOLEMBIOWSKI, who assisted in clearing shipments of hashish, other controlled substances, and counterfeit goods through United States Customs at JFK. The defendant also regularly accepted and solicited bribes to permit shipments of contraband to pass without inspection. GOLEMBIOWSKI was captured on multiple occasions on audio and video recordings accepting bribes to help co-conspirators bring in illegal drugs and counterfeit goods without detection.

GOLEMBIOWSKI's arrest and prosecution stemmed from a long-term investigation into a network of individuals importing large quantities of hashish, other controlled substances, and other contraband into the United States through John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York ("JFK"). The investigation was conducted by the New York Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Strike Force ("OCDESF"), comprised of agents and officers of the DEA,

the NYPD, the United States Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the New York State Police, the United States Marshals Service, the United States Secret Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The investigation has resulted in the indictment and successful prosecution of over 20 individuals, including overseas suppliers and local distributors, as well as the seizure of over 600 pounds of hashish and a significant quantity of narcotics proceeds, in both the United States and France.

GOLEMBIOWSKI, 66, resides in Bethpage, New York.

In addition to the prison term, Judge SWAIN ordered GOLEMBIOWSKI to pay a \$10,000 and more than \$2.5 million in forfeiture.

In sentencing the defendant, Judge SWAIN stated, "The crimes that you committed were serious ones, as you know, and the length of the sentence that you have received today reflects that. In committing these crimes, you took advantage of your position of trust and authority and you did put your community at risk. You disgraced yourself and you betrayed the trust of your country."

Mr. BHARARA praised the investigative work of the OCDESF; the Department of Homeland Security, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Office of Professional Responsibility, Investigations East; and the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigation, Philadelphia Field Office.

Assistant United States Attorneys GLEN G. MCGORTY, JEFFREY A. BROWN, and MARGARET GARNETT are in charge of the prosecution.

09-313

###