



Department of Justice

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CARPINTERIA, CALIF., MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO MAILING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

WASHINGTON – Donald Charles Collier III, 45, of Carpinteria, Calif., pleaded guilty today before U.S. District Judge George H. Wu to one count of mailing child pornography, Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division Lanny A. Breuer and U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California Thomas P. O'Brien announced.

As part of his plea agreement, Collier admitted that he twice traveled to Europe in 2006, and during these trips participated in pre-arranged photo shoots during which he took pictures of seven girls who were between seven- and 14-years-old. The photo sessions were arranged by an individual in Italy who sold videos of child pornography through a Web site. Collier admitted that prior to these trips, he purchased a number of videos through this Web site. Through his plea agreement, Collier admitted that he took photos of the girls either partially or fully nude in provocative poses, and that many of the photos focused on the children's pubic region.

Collier admitted further that upon his return to the United States from the second European trip, he mailed a CD containing the images he produced to an individual in Europe. Collier was identified through Operation Joint Hammer, the U.S. component of an ongoing global enforcement operation targeting transnational rings of child pornographers. The operation already has led to the arrest of more than 60 people in the United States involved in the trade of child pornography.

Operation Joint Hammer was initiated through evidence developed by European law enforcement and shared with U.S. counterparts by Europol and Interpol. The European portion of this global enforcement effort, Operation Koala, was launched after the discovery of a handful of people in Europe who were molesting children and producing photographs of that abuse for commercial gain. Further investigation unveiled a number of online child pornography rings – some of which hosted dangerous offenders who not only traded child pornography, but who themselves sexually abused children. Law enforcement has determined that the customers of the Web site were located in nearly 30 countries around the world, including the United States.

Sentencing has been set for Aug. 31, 2009. At sentencing, Collier will face a mandatory minimum of five years and up to 20 years in prison as well as the possibility of a lifetime period of supervised release. He will also face a fine of up to \$250,000.

The case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kim Meyer of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California and Trial Attorney Alexandra Gelber of the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section.

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