



Department of Justice

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TEXAS MAN ARRESTED AND CHARGED IN CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CASE

WASHINGTON – Mark Edwin Cairnes, 51, of Jonestown, Texas, has been charged with advertising, receiving and possessing child pornography, Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division and Acting U.S. Attorney John E. Murphy for the Western District of Texas announced today.

A grand jury in the Western District of Texas returned the indictment against Cairnes on July 21, 2009, which was unsealed today after his arrest yesterday in Jonestown. Cairnes is charged with five counts of advertising child pornography, two counts of receiving child pornography and one count of possessing child pornography. If convicted, Cairnes faces a mandatory minimum of 15 years in prison and a maximum of 30 years in prison for each count of advertising child pornography; a mandatory minimum of five years in prison and a maximum of 20 years in prison for each count of receiving child pornography; and a maximum of 10 years in prison for possessing child pornography. He also faces the possibility of a lifetime term of supervised release, as well as a fine of up to \$250,000. An indictment is merely a charge and defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Cairnes 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. Law enforcement has determined that the customers of the Web site were located in nearly 30 countries around the world, including the United States.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew B. Devlin of the Western District of Texas and Trial Attorney Alecia Riewerts Wolak of the Criminal Division’s Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section. The investigation is being handled by ICE.

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