

Department of Justice

United States Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr.
Western District of New York

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CONTACT: BARBARA BURNS
PHONE: (716) 843-5817
FAX: (716) 551-3051

11 ARRESTED IN MAJOR NARCOTICS ROUNDUP

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that a federal grand jury in Buffalo has returned an Indictment charging 11 defendants with various narcotics trafficking charges including conspiracy and distribution of cocaine and crack cocaine.

The Indictment specifically accuses Charles Palmer, 47, of Buffalo, N.Y.; George Krajas, 42, of Sloan, N.Y.; James Simmons, 37, of Machias, N.Y.; William Bart Alexander, 46, of Tonawanda, N.Y.; Timothy Borkowski, 54, Of Buffalo, N.Y.; Christopher Carluccio, 36, of Buffalo, N.Y.; Michael Smerka, 54, of Buffalo, N.Y.; Aleathea Stone, 39, of Buffalo, N.Y.; Vunnal Blair, 56, of Buffalo, N.Y.; Gregory Miller, 46, of Buffalo, N.Y.; and Charles Palmer, Jr., 27, of Buffalo, N.Y.; of conspiracy to distribute cocaine, crack cocaine, marijuana and hydrocodone. The charge carries a mandatory minimum of 10 years in prison, a maximum of life and a \$10,000,000 fine.

Charles Palmer and George Krajas are also charged with distributing cocaine, crack cocaine and marijuana, punishable by up to 20 years in prison and a \$1,000,000 fine. In addition, Palmer and Krajas are charged with maintaining a drug involved premises, carrying a penalty of up to 20 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine.

The Indictment alleges that the defendants were part of a conspiracy to distribute large quantities of cocaine and marijuana in Buffalo and Cheektowaga. The Indictment further alleges that Palmer and Krajas used an auto body shop at 2307 Broadway in Sloan for the purpose of storing and distributing their narcotics.

"Today's action marks the second significant law enforcement operation this week targeting those who would poison our neighborhoods with illegal narcotics," said U.S.

Attorney Hochul. "As these actions make clear, law enforcement will not rest until all who engage in such crimes are arrested and prosecuted."

The Indictments are the result of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Richard W. Kollmar, the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge John P. Gilbride, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, under the direction of Resident Agent in Charge Frank Christiano, the United States Marshals Service, under the direction of Acting Marshall Bryan Matthews, the NYS Police under the direction of Major Christopher Cummings, the NYS Division of Parole, Investigators of the Erie County District Attorney's Office, under the direction of District Attorney Frank Sedita, the Erie County Sheriff's Department, under the direction of Sheriff Timothy Howard, the Erie County Probation Department, the Buffalo Police Department, under the direction of Commissioner Daniel Derenda, the Cheektowaga Police Department, under the direction of Chief David Zack, the West Seneca Police Department, under the direction of Chief Edward Gehen, and the Amherst Police Department, under the direction of John Askey

The fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.