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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
January 2019 Grand Jury

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Plaintiff,
v.
GUANGYAO YANG and
PEICHENG SHEN,
Defendants.

CR No. 19-**CR00107-SW**

I N D I C T M E N T

[18 U.S.C. § 1201(c): Conspiracy to Kidnap; 18 U.S.C. § 1201(a)(1): Kidnapping; 18 U.S.C. § 1951(a): Attempted Hobbs Act Extortion; 18 U.S.C. § 875(c): Threat by Foreign Communication; 18 U.S.C. §§ 2(a), (b): Aiding and Abetting and Causing an Act to Be Done]

The Grand Jury charges:

COUNT ONE

[18 U.S.C. § 1201(c)]

A. OBJECT OF THE CONSPIRACY

Beginning on an unknown date and continuing to on or about July 18, 2018, in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside Counties, within the Central District of California, and elsewhere, defendants GUANGYAO YANG ("YANG") and PEICHENG SHEN ("SHEN"), and others known and unknown to the Grand Jury, knowingly conspired and agreed with each

1 other to commit the offense of kidnapping, in violation of Title 18,
2 United States Code, Section 1201(a)(1).

3 B. MEANS BY WHICH THE OBJECT OF THE CONSPIRACY WAS TO BE
4 ACCOMPLISHED

5 The object of the conspiracy was to be accomplished, in
6 substance, as follows:

7 1. Defendant SHEN, using an alias, would meet with R.L. under
8 the false pretense of helping R.L. collect a debt from another
9 individual.

10 2. Defendant SHEN would transport R.L. from a location in San
11 Gabriel, California.

12 3. Defendants SHEN and YANG, and other unidentified
13 coconspirators, would forcibly hold and confine R.L. at a house in
14 Corona, California.

15 4. Defendants SHEN and YANG would use, or cause another to
16 use, a telephone to send a ransom demand for money to R.L.'s family
17 member along with photographs of R.L. restrained.

18 5. Defendants SHEN and YANG would conceal evidence of the
19 kidnapping.

20 C. OVERT ACTS

21 In furtherance of the conspiracy and to accomplish its object,
22 on or about the following dates, defendants SHEN and YANG, and others
23 known and unknown to the Grand Jury, committed various overt acts in
24 Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside Counties, within the Central
25 District of California, and elsewhere, including, but not limited to,
26 the following:

27 Overt Act No. 1: On or about July 4, 2018, using the alias
28 "DAVID," defendant SHEN met with R.L. in Irvine, California under the

1 false pretense of helping R.L. collect a debt from another
2 individual.

3 Overt Act No. 2: On or about July 14, 2018, using the alias
4 "DAVID," defendant SHEN met with R.L. in Pasadena, California under
5 the false pretense of helping R.L. collect a debt from another
6 individual.

7 Overt Act No. 3: On or about July 16, 2018, defendant SHEN
8 met with R.L. in San Gabriel, California under the false pretense of
9 helping R.L. collect a debt from another individual and transported
10 R.L. in a Toyota Sienna away from that location.

11 Overt Act No. 4: On or about July 16 and July 17, 2018,
12 defendants SHEN and YANG, and other unidentified coconspirators,
13 forcibly held R.L. at a house in Corona, California by binding his
14 legs together, taping his eyes, restraining his arms behind him, and
15 confining him in a closet.

16 Overt Act No. 5: On or about July 17, 2018, defendants SHEN
17 and YANG, or other unidentified coconspirators acting on defendants
18 SHEN and YANG's instruction, sent photographs of R.L. with his legs
19 bound, arms restrained, and eyes taped, to R.L.'s relative, via the
20 WeChat application on a telephone.

21 Overt Act No. 6: On or about July 17, 2018, defendants SHEN
22 and YANG called, or caused to be called, using a telephone, R.L.'s
23 relative with a demand for a \$2 million ransom payment in exchange
24 for R.L.'s life.

25 Overt Act No. 7: On or about July 17, 2018, defendants SHEN
26 and YANG instructed, or caused to be instructed, via messages sent
27 via the WeChat application on a telephone, R.L.'s relative to deposit
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1 the ransom payment into three Chinese bank accounts within three
2 hours.

3 Overt Act No. 8: On or about July 18, 2018, defendants SHEN
4 and YANG traveled to the approximate area of Mojave, California, to
5 bury or otherwise dispose of R.L.'s body or other physical evidence.

6 Overt Act No. 9: On or about July 18, 2018, defendant SHEN
7 arranged to re-carpet the closet of the Corona house in which R.L.
8 was held.

9 Overt Act No. 10: On or about July 18, 2018, defendant YANG
10 performed an Internet search to determine, in effect and substance,
11 how fast a corpse decomposes in soil.

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COUNT TWO

[18 U.S.C. §§ 1201(a)(1), 2(a)]

Beginning on an unknown date and continuing to on or about July 18, 2018, in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside Counties, within the Central District of California, and elsewhere, defendants GUANGYAO YANG and PEICHENG SHEN, each aiding and abetting the other, knowingly, willfully, and unlawfully seized, confined, inveigled, decoyed, kidnapped, abducted, and carried away and held for ransom and reward victim R.L., and used a means, facility, and instrumentality of interstate and foreign commerce, namely, a telephone, in committing and in furtherance of the commission of the offense.

COUNT THREE

[18 U.S.C. §§ 1951(a), 2(a)]

On or about July 17, 2018, in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside Counties, within the Central District of California, and elsewhere, defendants GUANGYAO YANG ("YANG") and PEICHENG SHEN ("SHEN"), each aiding and abetting the other, knowingly and with the intent to obtain property, attempted to obstruct, delay, and affect commerce and the movement of articles and commodities in commerce, by extortion, as those terms are defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 1951, in that defendants YANG and SHEN knowingly attempted to obtain property consisting of approximately \$2,000,000 from victim Y.L., with Y.L.'s consent induced by the wrongful use of force, violence, and fear, by threatening to kill victim Y.L.'s son, R.L. if Y.L. refused to transfer \$2,000,000 to three Chinese bank accounts.

COUNT FOUR

[18 U.S.C. §§ 875(c), 2(a), (b)]

On or about July 17, 2018, in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside Counties, within the Central District of California, defendants GUANGYAO YANG and PEICHENG SHEN, each aiding and abetting the other, with the intent to issue a threat and with knowledge that it would be viewed as a threat, knowingly transmitted and willfully caused to be

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1 transmitted in foreign commerce a verbal communication that contained
2 a true threat to injure the person of another, that is, a threat to
3 the life of victim R.L.

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6 A TRUE BILL

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8 151
9 Foreperson

10 NICOLA T. HANNA
11 United States Attorney

12 LAWRENCE S. MIDDLETON
13 Assistant United States Attorney
14 Chief, Criminal Division

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16 SCOTT M. GARRINGER
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