

Transcript

March 14, 2013

Good afternoon, Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley. With me today is State Police Lieutenant Michael Kooney on my right; to my left is Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis; to his left is the Special Agent in Charge of the Secret Service Steve Ricciardi. The arrest that we are announcing today is the result of an extensive undercover operation involving frankly an outstanding collaborate effort among our local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

In many ways, this case illustrates the new face of crime. One that uses computers as the weapon of choice. One that robs people of their identities and their financial information instead of just their possessions.

Today we arrested Shahab David Yousheei. We believe that David Yousheei was the ringleader of an extensive criminal operation, and we allege that he led an extensive scheme in which he used stolen or fraudulent identities to open new mobile phone accounts. Runners who were paid by him used those accounts to obtain smartphones and other high-end electronics at discounted prices from stores across the Commonwealth. They would bring them back to him. He sold those electronic goods at a much higher price at Downtown Crossing and, we believe, also shipped some of those overseas.

In another scheme, he used stolen credit card numbers to create new credit cards, often mixing either stolen identities or fraudulent identities and legitimate credit card numbers, going so far as to use a credit card encoder to create official-looking but fraudulent credit cards with numbers that initially would scan and appear to be legitimate. He would use those credit cards to purchase merchandise and other gift cards, and then he would resell that merchandise for a profit.

Finally, only a few hours ago, just before arrest, Yousheei allegedly accepted and bought thousands of dollars of counterfeit money to further the schemes he had involved in this extensive network of creating identities that were false, trading it for real goods, spending that money, and frankly creating cash for himself.

With computers and other technology, we realize that criminals can in many ways expand their reach, network and invisibility beyond conventional criminal enterprises. The new technology of course is both a target, as it was in this instance, because it's very valuable on the open market, and it is also the manner and means in which the criminal activity takes place. Crimes like this impact not just the people whose identities or credit card numbers were stolen, but obviously the businesses that were robbed of their profits and their merchandise, and it serves to compromise business and public safety well beyond the immediate impact.

As such criminal enterprises evolve and grow, and the technology that they can take advantage of evolves, it is crucial that we in law enforcement are able to be trained, to be equipped and to work together to make sure that we can combat them. Today is an excellent example of that, and not only did our investigation into this involve new technologies, but it did involve some old-fashioned police work to

uncover and peel back the many layers behind this operation. It's a credit to the organizations that are represented with me here on this platform.

This defendant is innocent until proven guilty of these charges. This is the beginning of this investigation; it is active and ongoing. And I would now like to introduce Boston Commissioner Ed Davis.

Davis: Thank you, General, and good afternoon to everyone. I'd like to take a minute to thank Attorney General Coakley for her leadership on this complex investigation. Her office has coordinated the investigative assets of the Massachusetts State Police, the Boston Police and the Secret Service in this particular case, and we've uncovered wrongdoing that was centralized in a small shop on Washington Street.

This is an area we are very concerned about and an area that we pay close attention to. Our detectives had uncovered a fencing operation there where people were buying stolen jewelry and melting that jewelry down, and then through a deconfliction process, we realized the state police had a similar investigation into this electronic crime that was occurring.

So we joined forces. And I'd like to particularly point out special agent in charge Steve Ricciardi who runs the Secret Service here in Boston, who's been a tremendous partner with us on every investigation that we've done involving electronic crime. They do a fantastic job of helping us run these people down.

So today is a good day. We've taken a dangerous criminal off the street. The investigation is ongoing; more arrests are anticipated. And we're looking forward to continuing to keep pressure on those individuals who facilitate the bad acts of people who are breaking into homes and businesses and fencing their property, and also on this very important crime of identity theft—which is a relatively new crime for us, but something that needs to be paid close attention to as these criminals become more sophisticated. So I want to thank everybody for helping us and it's going to certainly help the safety in the City of Boston and Mayor Menino sends his regards and appreciation for the work that was done here.