

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Inspector General

Inspector General



June 18, 2004

The Honorable Anthony A. Williams
Mayor
District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20004

RE: SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITY REPORT

Dear Mayor Williams:

This report is to inform you of the results of an investigation that was conducted by Criminal Investigator Diane Eichman, Office of the United States Attorney and Special Agent James Glymph, of this Office, concerning Eldred "E.J." Fornah, Paralegal Specialist, employed by the District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA).

On August 13, 2003, Fornah was indicted by a federal grand jury for his receipt of a bribe from John Bisong Atem, the owner of a business known as the American Immigration Agency (AIA). The AIA maintained an office in the District of Columbia.

The investigation revealed that on March 5, 2001, Bisong provided Fornah a check for \$1,500 that Fornah negotiated the next day. On March 6, 2001, Fornah in his capacity as an employee of DCRA, renewed or reinstated the registration of various fictitious corporations for Bisong.

On January 31, 2004, a federal jury sitting in the United States Court for the District of Columbia, returned a verdict of guilty against Fornah for receipt of a bribe by a government official. As a result, on June 14, 2004, The Honorable Judge Ricardo M. Urbina sentenced Fornah to three years in prison. Fornah was also fined \$7,500, ordered to pay \$3,215 in restitution, and a special assessment fee of \$100.

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If you need additional information, please contact me or Robert G. Andary, Assistant
Inspector General for Investigations, on (202) 727-1039.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Austin A. Andersen". The signature is written in black ink and extends across the width of the page.

Austin A. Andersen
Interim Inspector General
AAA/jg

Attachment



U.S. Department of Justice

Roscoe C. Howard, Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, June 14, 2003

For Information Contact Public Affairs
Channing Phillips (202) 514-6933

DCRA Official Sentenced to 3 Years in Prison for Receiving Bribe

Washington, D.C. - United States Attorney Kenneth L. Wainstein, and District of Columbia Acting Inspector General Austin Anderson, announced today that Eldred "E.J." Fornah, 54, of Rockville, Maryland, was sentenced to three years in prison by the Honorable Ricardo M. Urbina in connection with his conviction for receipt of a bribe by a public official. Fornah was also fined \$7,500, ordered to pay \$3,215 in restitution, and placed on a three year period of supervised release following his release from prison. In January, 2004, a federal jury sitting in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia returned a guilty verdict against Fornah.

Fornah was employed as a paralegal specialist in the Corporations Division of the District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs. Part of Fornah's job responsibilities at the DRCA were to ensure that an individual or business that sought to register a new corporation in the District of Columbia had submitted all the necessary documentation and fees to the Corporations Division. Corporate registrations are valid for two years. Every two years, a for profit corporation is required to submit a form entitled, "Two-Year Report For Foreign and Domestic Business Corporation," and to pay the associated filing fees. A non-profit corporation is required to submit every two years a form entitled, "Two-Year Report for Non-Profit Foreign and Domestic Corporation," and to pay the required filing fees. If a corporation does not submit the renewal form on or before the due date, the corporation's registration is revoked by the Corporations Division.

John Bisong, a/k/a John Bisong Atem, operated a business known as the American Immigration Agency (AIA) which maintained an office in the District of Columbia. AIA promised customers that, for a certain fee, it would obtain immigration documents that would allow them to work legally in the United States. To enable Bisong to submit the necessary paperwork to labor and immigration authorities, Bisong created certain corporations including: Global Computer Solutions; International Network Corporation; Christopher Columbus; Andrin Construction; RX Company; Parnass Oil Company; and United Nations Student Council. (Bisong was convicted of multiple counts of bank and immigration fraud following a jury trial in June, 2003 and was sentenced by Judge Urbina in April, 2004, to a 16 year term of imprisonment.)

On March 5, 2001, Bisong provided **Fornah** with a check for \$1,500 that **Fornah** cashed the next day. On March 6, 2001, **Fornah**, in his capacity as an employee of the District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, renewed or reinstated the registrations for Bisong's various corporations. The government's proof at trial established that – in exchange for the \$1,500 bribe payment – Bisong never paid and **Fornah** never collected the required fees associated with these renewals and reinstatements which aggregated to \$3,215.

In announcing today's sentence, U.S. Attorney Wainstein and Acting Inspector General Anderson commended the outstanding investigative work of Investigator Diane Eickman of the United States Attorney's Office, Special Agent James Glymph of the District of Columbia Office of Inspector General, Special Agent Joe Mizell of the Department of Homeland Security (formerly the INS), and Special Agent Andrew Shea of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. They also praised the work of paralegal specialist Jeanie Latimore-Brown. They also commended the work of former Assistant United States Attorney Elizabeth Coombe who investigated the case and Assistant United States Attorney Steven J. Durham who returned the indictment and prosecuted the case at trial.