



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

NEWS



Former Army Corps Of Engineers Employee Pleads Guilty To Accepting Bribes From Iraqi Contractors

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WASHINGTON - A former employee of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stationed in Baghdad, Iraq, pleaded guilty today to conspiring to receive bribes from Iraqi contractors involved in the U.S.-funded reconstruction efforts, announced U.S. Attorney Neil H. MacBride for the Eastern District of Virginia, Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, and Assistant Director in Charge James W. McJunkin of the FBI's Washington Field Office.

Thomas Aram Manok, 50, of Chantilly, Va., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Anthony J. Trenga in the Eastern District of Virginia. Sentencing has been scheduled for Dec. 9, 2011. Manok faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

According to court documents, Manok admitted to using his official position to conspire with Iraqi contractors to accept cash bribes in exchange for recommending that the Army Corps of Engineers approve contracts and other requests for payment submitted by the contractors to the U.S. government. According to court documents, in March and April 2010, Manok agreed to receive a \$10,000 payment from one such contractor who had been involved in constructing a kindergarten and girls' school in the Abu Ghraib neighborhood of Baghdad and had sought Manok's influence in having requests for payment approved by the Corps of Engineers. According to court documents, Manok was to receive an additional bribe payment from the contractor once the contractor's claim had been approved. Manok also admitted that he intended to conceal the payments from authorities by transferring them, via associates, from Iraq to Armenia.

This case was investigated by the FBI's Washington Field Office, the Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General, the Army Criminal Investigation Command and the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, as participants in the International Contract Corruption Task Force. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul J. Nathanson of the Eastern District of Virginia and Trial Attorney Mary Ann McCarthy of the Criminal Division's Fraud Section.