

Manufacturing Broker Pleads Guilty in Conspiracy to Manufacture and Sell Counterfeit Goods - GSA Office of Inspector General

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Rhode Island

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Manufacturing Broker Pleads Guilty in Conspiracy to Manufacture and Sell Counterfeit Goods

PROVIDENCE – A Brooklyn, NY, businessman appeared before a U.S. District Court judge in Providence, R.I., on Tuesday and admitted that he brokered the manufacturing of counterfeit clothing, apparel and gear manufactured in China and Pakistan that was shipped to wholesalers in the United States for distribution. Some of the counterfeit items were distributed to members of the United States military.

Bernard Klein, 39, admitted that he conspired with New York wholesaler Ramin Kohanbash, 50, and at least one other person, to arrange the mass production of goods in China and Pakistan that carried counterfeit markings and labels identical to genuine trademarks registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

According to court documents, Klein was sent samples of genuine clothing, apparel, and gear by Kohanbash to be reproduced. Prior to the approval of mass production of the counterfeit goods, Klein emailed photographs of the goods, as well as hangtags and labels, to Kohanbash for approval. After making any changes ordered by Kohanbash, Klein facilitated the manufacturing of goods that contained counterfeit markings identical to genuine marks registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

According to information presented to the court, Klein and Kohanbash instructed the manufacturers on how to fold and package the counterfeit goods, and to affix removable "Made in China" stickers in order to avoid problems when shipments were inspected by U.S. Customs.

Among the counterfeit items produced in China and Pakistan and shipped to Kohanbash in the United States for distribution were counterfeit FREE® hoods, counterfeit Polartec® fleece shirts, and Gen III Level 7 parkas bearing counterfeit Primaloft® hangtags.

According to information presented to the court, in August 2018, 60 counterfeit Polartec® fleece shirts were shipped to a business in North Kingstown, RI, and in October 2018, counterfeit parkas and trousers were shipped to the Rhode Island National Guard in East Greenwich, RI. The parkas contained counterfeit Primaloft® hangtags and labels. Both shipments were the result of controlled purchases as part of the investigation.

Appearing Tuesday before U.S. District Court Judge William E. Smith, Klein pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail fraud, announced United States Attorney Aaron L. Weisman; Leigh-Alistair Barzey, Special Agent-in-Charge of Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Northeast Field Office; Special Agent in Charge Joseph P. Dattoria, General Services Administration Office of Inspector General, New England Regional Investigations Office; Resident Agent in Charge Michael D. Conner, Boston Fraud Resident Agency, US Army Criminal

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Investigation Command; Jason T. Hein, Special Agent in Charge, Air Force Office of Special Investigations, Office of Procurement Fraud Detachment 6, Joint Base Andrews, MD; Homeland Security Investigations Newark, NJ, Special Agent in Charge Jason J. Molina; and Troy Miller, Director of Customs and Border Protection, New York Field Office.

On June 13, 2019, Ramin Kohanbash pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and trafficking in counterfeit goods. At the time of his guilty plea, Kohanbash admitted that among the items he and others arranged to counterfeit were 200 military parkas of a type used by U.S. Air Force personnel stationed in Afghanistan. These parkas were falsely represented to be genuine Multicam®, a fabric which incorporates specialized near-infrared management technology designed to make the wearer more difficult to detect with equipment such as night-vision goggles.

Klein is scheduled to be sentenced on December 4, 2020. Kohanbash is scheduled to be sentenced on January 22, 2021.

The cases are being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Sandra R. Hebert, Zachary A. Cunha, and Lee H. Vilker.

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Source: U.S. Department of Justice [press release](#).