

F.B.I CATCHES C.A.M.E.O. MEMBERS BRIBING PUBLIC OFFICIALS
RACKETEERING
NO SURPRIZE!

The Cleveland American Middle Organization (C.A.M.E.O.) is an Arab non registered political action committee that has specialized in bribing public officials for years. They dealt in cash, favors and intrigue.

Jeff Keith, as an attorney, was brought into what was billed as a legitimate project that would bring the nation's 13th minority bank to Cleveland, Ohio. The bank would have been a 1 billion dollar project that was endorsed by Bill Clinton, who was the President of the United States at the time.

When Jeff Keith learned that the President of C.A.M.E.O., Ed Farage intended to illegally divert funds from the bank to projects on the West Bank in the Middle East he backed out of the project.

Ed Farage was outraged! He threatened Keith with false indictments through his connections in Stephanie Tubbs Jones Prosecutor's Office if he did not get in line. Keith refused, halted the project and resigned from C.A.M.E.O. membership.

Ed Farage, backed up by his daughter, Beth Farage Swope, carried out the threat. They worked with C.A.M.E.O. member and Cleveland Policeman Joe Sadie to develop a scheme to scam the judicial system with Assistant Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Steven Dever and Dan Kovacic of the Cleveland Police.

They were all caught in the N.B.C. special entitled "Agent Provocateurs Fixing Cases in Cuyahoga County", which aired on April 25, 2001. Ed Farage testified that he had lost millions of dollars because of Keith's actions. Ironically, no one knew what he was talking about until now when C.A.M.E.O members are now all talking to their lawyers trying to figure a way out of being indicted!

2 will change pleas to guilty on corruption

PAT GALBINCEA
Plain Dealer Reporter

Two key figures in the long-running Cuyahoga County corruption scandal are ready to plead guilty to charges that they bribed county officials for jobs.

On Friday, a federal judge ordered a change of pleas hearing for Monday for Samir Mohammad and Hamdi Qasem, both implicated in the Cuyahoga County corruption investigation on racketeering and bribery charges.

Both had earlier pleaded not guilty to charges against them. In federal court, there are just two possible pleas — guilty or not guilty.

The trial of the two men was to have begun Monday in U.S. District Court in Akron with jury selection, but Judge Sara Lioi issued a notice that the two men are now set for a change of pleas at 8 a.m. on the same day in Cleveland.

Qasem's attorney, Brett Mancino, said Friday his client will change his plea to guilty to take a lesser punishment.

"Both men were offered a good opportunity, and in Qasem's case, he felt he wanted to avoid the risk of a trial," Mancino said.

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2 key figures to change pleas

"My client is 60 years old, and he said he felt what was offered was the best way to go."

Calls to Mohammad for comment were not returned. His attorney, Joseph A. Dubyak, was unavailable for comment, but Mancino said Mohammad was going to change his plea to guilty as well.

Mohammad is a former top aide to ex-Cuyahoga County Auditor Frank Russo. He is accused of paying a \$20,000 bribe in October 2003 to former County Commissioner Jimmy Dimora.

Prosecutors said the payment

was for a gambling trip to Windsor, Canada, with the hope of securing a job as deputy county administrator. Mohammad is also accused of bribing Russo to obtain jobs for friends and relatives and paying Russo to win himself the job of chief deputy auditor.

Mohammad failed to get the job as deputy county administrator, but later got the deputy auditor's job, a position that paid \$135,000 a year.

Qasem, a once-prominent leader in Northeast Ohio's Arab community, is a businessman who co-owns several gas stations with Mohammad.

Federal prosecutors added Qasem as a co-defendant to Mohammad's case last year, accusing Qasem of racketeering.

According to an indictment, Mohammad and Qasem offered "things of value" to Dimora, Russo

and other public officials in exchange for jobs and favorable personnel decisions.

Some of the beneficiaries belonged to the Cleveland American Middle East Organization, an Arab-American political action group, according to the indictment.

Qasem's son, Haddi, worked for Russo until 2008.

Russo has pleaded guilty to 21 corruption-related charges and is assisting federal officials in an attempt to reduce a 22-year prison sentence. He had been expected to testify against Mohammad and Qasem next week.

A jury convicted Dimora of racketeering and other corruption-related crimes earlier this year, and he was sentenced to 28 years in prison.

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