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Six Internet Fradusters Indicted In International Conspiracy To Steal More Than $10 Million From World's Largest Technology Distributor

LOS ANGELES -- A federal grand jury this morning indicted a Romanian computer hacker and five Americans on charges that they conspired to steal more than $10 million in computer equipment from Ingram Micro in Santa Ana, California, the largest technology distributor in the world.

The indictment alleges that Calin Mateias hacked into Ingram Micro's online ordering system and placed fraudulent orders for computers and computer equipment. He directed that the equipment be sent to dozens of addresses scattered throughout the United States as part of an Internet fraud ring.

The 14-count indictment charges:

1. Mateias, 24, of Bucharest, Romania, who used the online nickname "Dr. Mengele";
2. Olufemi Tinubu, 21, of Atlanta;
3. Tarion Finley, 20, also of Atlanta;
4. Valeriu Crisovan, 27, of Hallandale, Florida;
5. Jeremy Long, 28, of Richmond, Virginia; and
6. Warren Bailey, 21, of Anchorage, Alaska.

The five defendants in the United States will be ordered to appear in United States District Court in Los Angeles for arraignment later this month. The Justice Department is working closely with Romanian authorities to ensure that Mateias is brought to justice, whether in Romania or the United States.

According to the indictment, Mateias began hacking into Ingram Micro's online ordering system in 1999. Using information obtained from his illegal hacking activity, Mateias bypassed Ingram's online security safeguards, posed as legitimate customers and ordered computer equipment to be sent to Romania. When Ingram Micro blocked all shipments to the Eastern European country in early 1999, Mateias recruited Tinubu, Crisovan, Long and Bailey from Internet chat rooms to provide him with United States addresses to use as "mail drops" for the fraudulently ordered equipment. Crisovan, Tinubu, Finley and Long, in turn, recruited others, including high school students, to provide additional addresses and to accept the stolen merchandise. The defendants in

the United States would either sell the equipment and send the proceeds to Mateias, or they would repackage the equipment and send it to Romania.

Mateias and his co-conspirators allegedly fraudulently ordered more than $10 million in computer equipment from Ingram Micro. However, Ingram Micro was successful in intercepting nearly half the orders before the items were shipped.

All six defendants are charged with conspiring to commit mail fraud by causing Ingram Micro to ship computer equipment based on the false pretenses that the equipment was ordered by legitimate customers. In addition to the conspiracy count, Mateias is charged with 13 mail fraud counts; Tinubu and Finley are charged with three mail fraud counts; Crisovan is charged with six mail fraud counts; and Long is charged with four mail fraud counts for shipments.

An indictment contains allegations that a defendant has committed a crime. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. If convicted of all counts, Mateias faces a maximum statutory sentence of 90 years in federal prison; Tinubu faces a maximum statutory sentence of 35 years; Finley faces a maximum statutory sentence of 35 years; Crisovan faces a maximum statutory sentence of 35 years; Long faces a maximum statutory sentence of 25 years; and Bailey faces a maximum statutory sentence of five years.

This international investigation was handled by the Cyber Crimes Squad in the Los Angeles Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which received substantial assistance from the Romanian National Police and the FBI Legal Attache Office in Bucharest. Additionally, the FBI Field Offices in Atlanta; Richmond, Virginia; Miami; Chicago; Albuquerque, New Mexico; El Paso, Texas; Newark, New Jersey; Norfolk, Virginia; Omaha, Nebraska; San Francisco; Seattle; Tampa, Florida; Albany, New York; and San Diego assisted in the investigation.

In a separate case, the United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of Pennsylvania today announced the unsealing of an 11-count indictment charging Mateias in another scheme involving shipments of fraudulently ordered merchandise that was sent to co-conspirators in Pennsylvania, Georgia and Louisiana.

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