

TWO FACE FEDERAL CHARGES IN MARRIAGE FRAUD

Newsday.com

May 29, 2003

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (AP) _ Two California men are accused of running an immigration scam by arranging fraudulent marriages in Cambodia.

Tin Iv, 72, of Stockton, Calif., and Chan Champa, 28, Modesto, Calif., were arrested in California this week. They are charged with fraud and conspiracy to evade immigration laws in an 11-count indictment handed up by a federal grand jury in New Haven.

Federal prosecutors said U.S. citizens in California and Connecticut were paid to travel to Cambodia and marry Cambodian nationals, allowing the Cambodians to obtain U.S. immigrant visas. The U.S. citizens, including 15 from Connecticut, were allegedly paid cash for taking part in the marriage ceremonies.

Iv and Champa were accused of taking money from the families of the Cambodian nationals as payment for arranging the marriages. The indictment alleges that at least one person paid \$25,000 to Iv for two of his relatives in Cambodia.

The men allegedly told the U.S. citizens they would not have to live with their Cambodian spouse once they arrived in the United States, and would only have to stay married for a limited period of time.

Iv is named as a defendant in all 11 counts of the indictment and faces a maximum of 55 years in prison and \$2.75 million in fines. Champa is charged in one count and faces up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Champa was arrested Wednesday in Modesto. Iv surrendered to authorities on Thursday.

Both men are scheduled to appear in U.S. District Court in Hartford on June 5.

Copyright © 2003, The Associated Press