## 27 Businesses In Montgomery Fined by INS; Feb. Immigrant Roundup Draws \$154,000 in Levies

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## **Body**

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service imposed <u>fines</u> totaling more than \$ <u>154,000</u> yesterday on <u>27</u> food service <u>businesses in Montgomery</u> County for hiring illegal workers and other violations.

The <u>fines</u>, announced at a news conference <u>in</u> Baltimore, were the result of a <u>February roundup in</u> which the <u>INS</u> arrested 75 illegal workers at 30 restaurants, bakeries and delis <u>in</u> Bethesda, Rockville and other <u>Montgomery</u> locations. Officials said a follow-up investigation revealed that employers at <u>27</u> of those <u>businesses</u> knew they had hired employees not authorized to work <u>in</u> the United States.

"We are aggressively pursuing employers who do not comply with the law, especially those who knowingly hire illegal workers," said Benedict Ferro, director of the agency's Baltimore District. "Employers who intentionally hire illegal workers take job opportunities away from legal workers, including the large legal *immigrant* community *in Montgomery* County. We are committed to restoring those job opportunities for legal workers and punishing employers who knowingly violate the law."

<u>In</u> addition to illegal hiring, the <u>businesses</u> were cited for failing to meet federal documentation and verification standards required of all employers.

Topping the list with the most violations, officials said, were: American City Diner, of Bethesda, with <u>fines</u> of \$ 17,350 for 82 employment verification violations, one knowing illegal hire and two arrests; La Parisienne Bakery Inc., of Rockville, with <u>fines</u> of \$ 13,650 for 55 verification violations, three knowing illegal hires and five arrests of illegal <u>immigrants</u>; and East End Cafe, of Bethesda, with \$ 6,800 <u>in</u> <u>fines</u> for 22 verification violations, one knowing illegal hire and two arrests.

Three of the <u>businesses</u> were <u>fined</u> for second violations: Parioli Ristorante, of Bethesda, was <u>fined</u> \$ <u>27</u>,800; Moby Dick House of Kabob, of Bethesda, was <u>fined</u> \$ 12,500; and Ichiban restaurant, of Gaithersburg, was <u>fined</u> \$ 8,600.

Several owners and managers of the raided restaurants were reached by telephone last night, but none was willing to comment on the *fines* or arrests.

Penalties for knowingly hiring an unauthorized worker can range from \$ 250 to \$ 10,000 per employee. *Fines* for failing to meet documentation and verification standards can run from \$ 100 to \$ 1,000 per employee.

The day-long series of raids, dubbed the Big Chill by immigration officials, extended from Bethesda to Gaithersburg. Its targets included delicatessens, bagel shops, sit-down restaurants and McDonald's franchises. Agents inspected 47 food establishments and detained 83 *immigrants*, eight of whom were released; *INS* officials said about half of

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the illegal <u>immigrants</u> arrested <u>in</u> the raids have left the country voluntarily or have been deported, while the rest are undergoing deportation proceedings.

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