

U.S. jurors say man led abduction

A Chinatown boy was held for \$150,000. The N.J. man was convicted as the mastermind.

By Gary Cohn
PHILADELPHIA (AP) — A Ventnor, N.J., man was convicted yesterday of being the mastermind in the 1990 kidnaping of a Chinatown merchant's 3-year-old son.

Michael Chang, 44, was convicted by a U.S. District Court jury of conspiracy to kidnap, kidnaping and interstate demand for ransom. He was acquitted of a fourth charge, use of a gun in a violent crime.

The charges stemmed from the abduction of Andy Siu from his father's business in Philadelphia's Chinatown section on April 2, 1990. The boy was found safe three days later in a Carcliff, N.J., motel after the father paid a \$150,000 ransom.

Two men, Wei Hung Chen and Yan Ming Lin, were arrested near Baltimore the day the boy was found and pleaded guilty to kidnaping. Both men testified as key prosecution witnesses during the weeklong trial of Chang. They testified that Chang had hired them to carry out the abduction to get revenge for a business deal with Siu's father that went sour.

The jury reached its verdict after about a day and a half of deliberation. U.S. District Judge James T. Giles set sentencing for March 11. Chang, who remains in custody pending sentencing, faces a maximum term of life in prison.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Godshall, the prosecutor in the case, said he was "pleased with the jury verdict on the kidnaping. The evidence shows this guy was the mastermind behind the kidnaping."

Chang's attorney, Lee Mandell, said he was planned to appeal.

The crime, Philadelphia's first kidnap-for-ransom in at least 15 years, occurred about 6:15 p.m., when Andy Siu was snatched as he played with his brother Victor behind a large front window at his father's Tung Yute Bean Sprout Store in the 200 block of North 11th Street.

The boy's mother had been cooking dinner in a back room at the time. At first, she did not believe Victor's panicked description of the abduction. Minutes later, though, her husband, King Siu, received a telephone call. "We have your son. Don't call the police," said a male voice. Then the phone went dead.

King Siu, however, notified police. FBI agents installed a wiretap on the store's phone.

On April 5, 1990, Siu turned over \$100,000 to one of the kidnapers at the Chart House restaurant on Delaware Avenue in Philadelphia.

Chen and Lin pleaded guilty in November 1990 and agreed to help in the arrest and prosecution of Chang. They are awaiting sentencing. All of the ransom was recovered.

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