

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Cumberland County Man Sentenced to 40 Months In Federal Prison for Selling Pipe Bombs

(More)

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CAMDEN – A Cumberland County man was sentenced to 40 months in federal prison today for selling pipe bombs to an undercover FBI agent, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Joseph H. Rodriguez also ordered Walter Ford, 23, of Upper Deerfield, to serve three years of supervised release upon the completion of his prison term.

On March 20, 2007, Ford pleaded guilty before Judge Rodriguez to a one-count Information that charged him with unlawful transfer of an explosive bomb.

At his plea hearing, Ford admitted that on May 23, 2006, he and another man sold a total of seven pipe bombs to an undercover agent for \$350. Ford admitted that one of the explosive devices was a pipe bomb made from a Co2 cylinder measuring approximately 9 inches long by 1.25 inches in diameter. The pipe bomb was wrapped in white tape with a fuse sticking out and contained black powder, Ford admitted. Ford admitted that he also sold the undercover agent six smaller pipe bombs made from copper tubing with crimped ends and fuses.

According to a criminal complaint signed on Nov. 27, 2006, Ford and co-defendant Samuel Finlaw, 26, of Upper Deerfield, sold explosive devices to a person who they later learned was an undercover FBI agent. According to the complaint, the undercover agent told Ford that he needed an explosive device to damage a motorcycle clubhouse and kill everyone inside.

On May 25, 2006, Ford and Finlaw were arrested by Special Agents of the FBI, ATF and NJ State Police. Finlaw pleaded guilty on March 20, 2007, to a one-count Information similarly charging him with unlawful transfer of an explosive bomb. Judge Rodriguez sentenced Finlaw to 27 months in prison on August 9.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Rodriguez consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI Atlantic City Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weyssan Dun, the ATF's Atlantic City Satellite Office, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Mark Potter, and the N.J. State

Police, under the direction of Colonel Rick Fuentes, Superintendent, with the investigation leading to the guilty plea.

The Government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew Skahill of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: Lori Koch, Esq. Assistant Federal Public Defender