



Department of Justice

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CLIFFORD HARRIS, a/k/a "T.I.," ARRESTED ON FEDERAL FIREARMS CHARGES

*Arrest Comes After Harris, a Convicted Felon,
Accepted Delivery of Machine Guns and Silencers;
Additional Guns Found In Harris' Vehicle and House*

Atlanta, GA - CLIFFORD HARRIS, 27, an entertainer also known as "T.I.," of College Park, Georgia, was arrested in Atlanta at approximately 2:30 p.m. today by agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), as he allegedly took possession of three machine guns and two silencers. Three other firearms were found in the vehicle HARRIS was driving. ATF also executed a federal search warrant at HARRIS' house at 429 Creekview Lane in College Park, finding six additional firearms in his bedroom closet.

United States Magistrate Judge Linda T. Walker issued a federal criminal complaint after the arrest and search, charging HARRIS with the felony offenses of (1) possession of unregistered machine guns [and silencers] and (2) possession of firearms by a convicted felon. HARRIS will be held in federal custody over the weekend and then will make his initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Alan J. Baverman at the United States Courthouse in Atlanta on Monday, October 15, at a time to be determined by the court. The United States Attorney's Office and ATF will hold a short news conference afterward at a location to be determined.

Copies of the search warrant and criminal complaint are electronically attached.

"Machine guns pose a serious danger to the community, which is why they are so carefully regulated," said David E. Nahmias, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia. "The last place machine guns should be is in the hands of a convicted felon, who cannot legally possess any kind of firearm. This convicted felon allegedly was trying to add several machine guns to an already large and entirely illegal arsenal of guns. Thanks to the good and quick work of ATF, he is now in custody and his firearms have been seized."

“This investigation developed very quickly,” said Vanessa McLemore, Special Agent in Charge of ATF’s Atlanta Division. “We learned only this Wednesday that the cooperating witness was allegedly buying the machine guns for Harris. The cooperating witness told Harris on Thursday that he had obtained the items, and on Friday Harris made it clear that he wanted them delivered to him today. Harris then agreed to meet and took possession of the machine guns this afternoon. He now faces serious federal charges and a potentially long prison sentence.”

According to U.S. Attorney Nahmias and the information filed in court: On October 2, 2007, an employee of a federal firearms licensee advised ATF that an individual was seeking to purchase a machine gun without registering the weapon as required by law. The individual was directed to an ATF agent acting in an undercover capacity, posing as a machine gun dealer. Last Wednesday, October 10, 2007, the individual was arrested by ATF after purchasing three unregistered machine guns and two silencers from the undercover agent in exchange for \$2,200 and a pistol. The individual then agreed to cooperate with ATF, including with respect to his purpose for obtaining the firearms.

The cooperating witness (CW) advised the agents that he was purchasing the machine guns on October 10 on behalf of CLIFFORD HARRIS, aka “T.I.,” an entertainer for whom the CW had been working as a bodyguard since July 2007. The CW admitted to straw purchasing about nine firearms for HARRIS and about 17 firearms for other persons on previous occasions. Firearm purchase records confirm that the CW has purchased about 25 firearms over the past 18 months. The CW said that HARRIS gave him cash to buy guns on four occasions. HARRIS asked the CW to purchase the firearms for him because HARRIS has a prior felony conviction and therefore cannot lawfully purchase or possess firearms under federal law, while the CW could lawfully obtain guns.

According to the CW, he purchased a Calico 9mm pistol on September 6, 2007, and delivered it to HARRIS at HARRIS’ house on Creekview Lane, where he also saw multiple firearms in a safe in the walk-in closet in HARRIS’ bedroom. The CW next purchased a Smith & Wesson .500 caliber revolver for HARRIS on September 18, 2007, delivering it to an associate of HARRIS’ to give to HARRIS. On or about September 26, 2007, the CW purchased seven more firearms, three rifles and four handguns, using \$7,000 in cash provided by HARRIS, and delivered the firearms to HARRIS at the Creekview Lane house.

Finally, last Wednesday, October 10, 2007, HARRIS arranged for the CW to pick up \$12,000 in cash from HARRIS’s bank, telling the CW to use the funds to purchase machine guns for HARRIS. The CW was arrested later that day when he attempted to purchase three machine guns and two silencers from the undercover ATF agent.

After agreeing to cooperate with ATF, the CW had a series of telephone calls with

HARRIS, which were recorded by ATF with the CW's consent. On Thursday, October 11, 2007, the CW called HARRIS to say that he had "everything for you," referring to the machine guns he was supposed to purchase on Harris' behalf; HARRIS replied affirmatively.

On Friday, October 12, 2007, HARRIS called the CW. The CW asked HARRIS when he wanted to take delivery of what the CW had, and HARRIS told the CW that he would take delivery today, Saturday, October 13, 2007.

After the CW left HARRIS a message this morning, shortly after noon HARRIS called the CW to arrange the pick up. At approximately 2:22 p.m., HARRIS met with the CW in a shopping center parking lot in midtown Atlanta to take possession of the firearms. The meeting was recorded by ATF. The CW entered the vehicle that HARRIS was driving and displayed to HARRIS the two silencers and three machine guns that the CW had purchased from the undercover ATF agent on October 10. When the CW explained the function of one silencer, HARRIS said "no flash, no bang." The CW and HARRIS also discussed the selector switch of one of the machine guns, which switches the gun from semi-automatic to fully automatic fire. HARRIS also asked the CW for "change leftover" from the \$12,000 that he provided the CW to purchase the firearms.

HARRIS was arrested without incident. A subsequent search of the vehicle located three other firearms, including one loaded gun tucked between the driver's seat where HARRIS had been sitting and the center console.

Shortly after the arrest, ATF agents executed a federal search warrant for HARRIS' house at 429 Creekview Lane in College Park. In a walk-in closet in HARRIS' bedroom, the agents found six more firearms (three rifles, two pistols, and a revolver), including three of the guns that the CW had said he purchased for and delivered to HARRIS in September. Five of the six guns were loaded.

Members of the public are reminded that the criminal complaint only contains charges. The defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the ATF, with assistance from the United States Marshals Service, the Atlanta Police Department, the Fulton County Police Department, and the Fulton County Sheriff's Department.

Assistant United States Attorneys Francey Hakes and Todd Alley are prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant

United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.