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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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THREE MEN PLEAD GUILTY IN MACHINE GUN CASE

Baltimore, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced today that three Baltimore County men, Billie Ray Womble, age 43; Carl Rich, age 55; and David Wayne Fitch, age 45; pled guilty today to charges of possession of machine guns and the transfer of unregistered machine guns in violation of federal law.

According to the statement of facts presented to the court, Womble transferred nine AK-47's to Rich in March of this year. Rich in turn transferred five of the AK-47's to Fitch who in turn transferred or sold two of the machine guns.

Womble, Rich and Fitch face a maximum penalty of 10 years and a \$250,000 fine on each of the 3 counts of possession/transfer. Sentencing has been scheduled for September 16, 2003.

The criminal charges in this indictment are the result of a joint investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Baltimore County and Baltimore City Police Departments and the United States Attorney's Office. The investigation is still ongoing.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jane M. Erisman and Christopher J. Romano

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