



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

February 13, 2004

Sales Executive Pleads Guilty to Tax Evasion

Jacksonville, Florida - United States Attorney Paul I. Perez today announced that Rupert Dennis Bazemore, a sixty-one year old resident of Orange Park, Florida, pleaded guilty to felony tax evasion. The maximum penalty Bazemore faces is five years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, an assessment of costs of prosecution, three years of supervised release, and a special assessment of \$100. In addition, under the terms of a plea agreement between Bazemore and the United States, Bazemore must file income tax returns and pay income taxes, including interest and penalties, for all outstanding tax years.

According to the plea agreement, Bazemore, who received substantial income from his employment as vice-president of sales for Wescom Products, Inc., failed to file tax returns or pay income taxes for the years 1998, 1999, and 2000. Bazemore evaded taxes for these years by submitting a false withholding exemption certificate to his employer, on which he claimed that he was exempt from income tax withholding. When Bazemore was

contacted by the Internal Revenue Service about his failure to file tax returns and pay taxes, he claimed, among other things, that he was not a citizen of the United States for tax purposes.

At his initial appearance in federal court on November 24, 2003, Bazemore refused to recognize the court's jurisdiction over him. At his plea hearing on February 13, 2004, however, Bazemore acknowledged the court's jurisdiction and admitted that he had knowingly and willfully evaded substantial income taxes that were due and owing to the Internal Revenue Service.

The case was investigated by the Criminal Investigation division of the Internal Revenue Service. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Scot Morris and Department of Justice Tax Division Trial Attorney Martha McIntosh.