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Wesley Snipes' Tax Advisor Gets More Prison Time

Eddie Ray Kahn, the so-called tax expert who advised actor Wesley Snipes and 4,000 other clients on how to avoid paying taxes was sentenced to an another 20 years behind bars in addition to the 10 years originally meted to him as a co-defendant in Snipes' 2008 trial.

Kahn, 67, was convicted with three others from Florida for conspiracy in federal court in Washington. They operated for seven years from a second-floor office in downtown Mont Dora under the name of American Rights Litigators or the Guiding Light of God Ministries. The now defunct organization had extensive operations in all 50 states and boasted a clientele of 4,800 paying customers.

The organization was termed a 'tax defier' which prosecutors dubbed 'the Wal-Mart of tax fraud' because they sold schemes to help people evade taxes at bargain prices. Kahn's modus operandi was to help American Rights Litigators clients send in piles of 'frivolous letters instead of legitimate tax returns' forcing tax agents to respond to these thousands of pointless, harassing or intimidating documents, according to court papers by federal prosecutors. The tactic also included sending in fake bills of exchange as 'payment' for taxes which were printed by the thousands by Kahn's organization for as little as \$25 instead of real checks. For this, government attorneys labeled Kahn and his associates, 'paper terrorists'.

Kahn, a former Texas police officer who lives in a 5 acre rented property in Sorrento, taught his clients to apply to become one-person, religious organizations or 'overseers' as this would allow them to enjoy the same tax benefits and privileges as genuine religious groups and church leaders. In fact, Kahn appointed himself the Overseer of the Guiding Light of God Ministries and claimed to have taken a vow of poverty, donating all his proceeds to his ministry.

According to the government, an agent found evidence in Kahn's computer that he intended to cheat the government of \$1.1 billion in federal taxes payable by his clients. Actor Snipes was one of these clients, as were thousands of other professionals like recently-imprisoned dentist Mark S. Maggert of Fruitland Park. These were those who attended Kahn's seminars like the one called 'Having Fun with the Tax Man', read American Rights Litigators' newsletters and visited their website.

Snipes is currently fighting to avoid prison. Last month, he asked a federal judge to set aside his conviction and order a new trial. If the judge overrules his application, Snipes could face up to 36 months in prison.