

The United States Attorney's Office

Southern District of Florida

Press Release

FORMER CABLE TELEVISION EXECUTIVE SENTENCED TO 108 MONTHS ON TAX AND FRAUD CHARGES

March 5, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

R. Alexander Acosta, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Charles E. Hunter, Acting Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division, Miami Office (IRS-CI), and Christopher Amato, Special Agent in Charge, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Southeast Field Office (DCIS), announced today's sentencing of defendant **Charles C. Hermanowski, a/k/a "John Stobierski,"** 73, formerly of Miami Beach, following his December 2006 guilty plea to 39 tax and fraud charges arising out of Hermanowski's operation of a series of Miami-based cable television companies.

Earlier today in federal court in Miami, United States District Judge Patricia A. Seitz sentenced Hermanowski to a 108-month term of imprisonment, a \$4 million fine, and a 3-year term of supervised release. Judge Seitz ordered Hermanowski to serve the first 6 months of his supervised release term on house arrest. Today's sentencing followed a two-day sentencing hearing that started last Friday, March 2, 2007.

On December 15, 2006, Hermanowski pled guilty to: two (2) counts of tax evasion (26 U.S.C. §7201); fourteen (14) counts of aiding and assisting in the preparation of false tax returns (26 U.S.C. §7206(2)); ten (10) counts of submitting false claims to the Department of Defense (18 U.S.C. §287); one (1) count of conspiring to commit mail fraud against cable television networks (18 U.S.C. §371); and twelve (12) counts of mail fraud through defrauding cable television networks (18 U.S.C. §1341).

Hermanowski's conviction was the result of a long-term investigation that started in March 1998. In July 2000, Hermanowski commenced steps that eventually resulted in him obtaining a Grenadian passport in the name of "John Stobierski," who was a deceased former neighbor. In December 2000, Hermanowski fled the United States, traveling to Canada via Barbados, and later fleeing to New Zealand. When he fled, Hermanowski was subject to a grand jury subpoena for samples of his handwriting. Judge Seitz found that Hermanowski obstructed justice through his various efforts to obstruct and impede the investigation and prosecution.

On January 30, 2002, agents from the Australian Federal Police apprehended Hermanowski in Sydney, Australia, where Hermanowski had been trying to obtain a Canadian visa in the name of "John Stobierski." After fighting extradition from Australia for over four years, Hermanowski was extradited back to the United States in late June 2006.

During the 1990s, Hermanowski operated Americable International, Inc., and a series of affiliates that provided cable television service to various U.S. military installations, as well as civilian customers. Hermanowski co-owned these companies with his wife. During the mid-1990s, Hermanowski oversaw a wide-ranging scheme to create scores of false accounting and financial documents to cover-up the diversion of approximately \$50 million for Hermanowski's personal use. As part of this scheme, Hermanowski directed company employees in the creation of a succession of false invoices and other false expenditure documents that were entered into company books and records. Hermanowski would have company employees write checks to "pay" these false expenditures, which Hermanowski would divert for his own use.

The diverted funds included over \$45 million dollars worth of company checks that Hermanowski had drawn to pay falsified company expenses. Hermanowski falsely endorsed these checks and deposited them into his account at Community Bank in Miami-Dade County. Approximately \$38 million of these checks corresponded to false invoices for non-existent construction expenses created at Hermanowski's direction. Another \$8 million consisted of proceeds of long-running scheme to defraud cable television networks, in