



Department of Justice

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ARYAN BROTHERHOOD OF TEXAS GANG MEMBER CONVICTED IN HOUSTON OF RACKETEERING CHARGES

WASHINGTON – Aryan Brotherhood of Texas (ABT) gang member David Harlow was found guilty today by Senior U.S. District Judge Ewing Werlein Jr. in Houston of racketeering aggravated assault and conspiracy to commit racketeering aggravated assault for his role in the 2008 beating of a gang prospect.

The guilty verdict was announced by Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Kenneth Magidson for the Southern District of Texas.

According to evidence presented at trial, Harlow, 43, aka “Bam Bam,” was a member of the ABT, a powerful race-based, state-wide organization that operated inside and outside of state and federal prisons and elsewhere in the United States. The evidence showed that the ABT was established in the early 1980s within the Texas prison system and modeled itself after and adopted many of the teachings and writings of the Aryan Brotherhood, a California-based prison gang that was formed in the California prison system during the 1960s. According to court filings, the ABT was primarily concerned with the protection of white inmates and white supremacy/separatism. Over time, however, the ABT expanded its criminal enterprise to include illegal activities for profit.

The evidence presented at trial also showed that the ABT enforced its rules and promoted discipline among its members, prospects and associates through murder, attempted murder, conspiracy to murder, assault, robbery and threats against those who violate the rules or pose a threat to the enterprise. Members, and oftentimes associates, are required to follow the orders of higher-ranking members, often referred to as “direct orders.”

Specifically, evidence presented at trial showed that Harlow, along with 11 fellow ABT gang members, participated in the beating of a prospective gang member at the home of an ABT gang leader – Steven Walter Cooke, 48, aka “Stainless” – in Tomball, Texas, on Sept. 22, 2008. The prospect, who sustained serious bodily injury, was beaten by gang members because he violated certain ABT rules of conduct.

All of Harlow’s 11 co-defendants, including Cooke, previously pleaded guilty to violent crimes in aid of racketeering.

Harlow faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. Sentencing for Harlow is scheduled for June 15, 2012, before Judge Werlein.

This case is being investigated by FBI's Multi-Agency Gang Task Force consisting of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the FBI; the U.S. Marshals Service; the Texas Rangers, the Texas Department of Public Safety; the Montgomery County, Texas, Precinct 4 Constables Office; the Montgomery County Sheriff's Department; the Houston Police Department-Gang Division; and the Harris County, Texas Sheriff's Office.

The case is being prosecuted by David Karpel of the Criminal Division's Organized Crime and Gang Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jay Hileman of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas.

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