



Department of Justice

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18 Members and Associates of White Supremacist Gang Indicted for Racketeering and Drug Distribution

Contraband Cell Phones Used to Orchestrate Gang Operations

TULSA, Okla.— Eighteen members and associates of a white supremacist gang, the Universal Aryan Brotherhood, have been charged for their alleged roles in conspiring in a racketeering enterprise, kidnapping, and drug conspiracy.

The charges were announced at a press conference today in Tulsa by U.S. Attorney Trent Shores for the Northern District of Oklahoma, Special Agent in Charge Tamera Cantu of IRS-Criminal Investigation's Dallas Field Office, and Assistant Special Agent in Charge James M. Wright of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Dallas Field Office.

The indictment alleges the Universal Aryan Brotherhood (UAB) to be a racketeering enterprise which committed acts of murder, kidnapping, the trafficking of methamphetamine and firearms, money laundering, assault, and robbery throughout the State of Oklahoma. According to the indictment, the UAB is a "whites only" prison-based gang with members operating inside and outside of state prisons throughout Oklahoma.

"The Universal Aryan Brotherhood operated a lucrative criminal organization from within Oklahoma's prison walls using contraband cell phones," said U.S. Attorney Trent Shores. "The tools of their trade were hate, fear, affliction, and violence. This RICO prosecution seeks to dismantle their criminal operation. Justice is coming."

“Sending someone to prison should protect the public from danger,” said Assistant Attorney General Beth Williams of the Department of Justice’s Office of Legal Policy. “But as this indictment illustrates, the danger to the public from contraband cell phones in prisons is real. The Department is committed to working with our state and local partners, including state and local prisons, to thwart the use of contraband cell phones in prisons.”

Key players allegedly involved in UAB operations, include six inmates imprisoned in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary at McAlester—Mathew D. Abrego, 33; Christopher K. Baldwin, 39; Jeremy C. Anderson, 31; Johnny R. Jameson, 36; Robert W. Zeidler, 45; and James C. Taylor, 52. The men are alleged to have used contraband cell phones to communicate and further their enterprise. UAB conspirators also used social media and “kites” to carry out their operations.

As part of their operations, UAB members and associates are alleged to have participated in a significant and widespread methamphetamine distribution scheme directed by incarcerated UAB leaders using the cell phones. The United States alleges members laundered hundreds of thousands of dollars in illegal drug proceeds for the benefit of the UAB enterprise, using cash transfers, stored value cards, PayPal, and Walmart money transfers. Investigators from the IRS Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) helped trace the money trail.

“IRS Criminal Investigation is committed to using our financial expertise to unravel complex money laundering transactions and shed light on the profits of criminal organizations,” said Tamera Cantu, IRS-CI special agent in charge of the Dallas Field Office. “Criminal organizations such as these need money to achieve their objectives. This joint effort demonstrates our resolve to investigate financial offenses that fuel their unspeakable crimes.”

“This indictment following an extensive federal investigation accuses 18 UAB members of nine murders, car-jackings, kidnappings and other very serious charges,” said Katrina W. Berger, special agent in charge of HSI Dallas. “Homeland Security Investigations is committed to combatting these violent criminal organizations within our communities.”

The indictment alleges that nine individuals were murdered as part of the UAB’s racketeering operations, often upon the orders of the Main Council, the highest governing body of the UAB. Several victims include inmate Donald Jones who was stabbed to death in 2005 at the Oklahoma State Reformatory in retaliation against African American inmates, and Blake Ford and James Mask who were both murdered allegedly on orders from the UAB.

On May 31, 2011, Sufeng He, a 24- year-old student attending the University of Tulsa, was shot and killed during an attempted carjacking committed by a UAB member running from Tulsa police officers. Jason Harris was later murdered in Tulsa by UAB members during a kidnapping and robbery in 2017.

According to court documents, multiple kidnappings were also ordered in an effort to leverage and expand the UAB's power and operations throughout Oklahoma. Members and associates of the enterprise used kidnapping as a way to enforce discipline, recoup drugs and other debts, and to ensure the individuals were not cooperating with law enforcement.

Four suspects were apprehended Monday and Tuesday in Tulsa, while seven others have been transferred from Oklahoma Department of Corrections at McAlester. The remainder have been arrested or are in the custody of Department of Corrections or Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities.

The UAB was established in 1993 within the Oklahoma Department of Corrections and modeled itself after the principles and ideology of the Aryan Brotherhood, a California-based prison gang that formed in the 1960s.

HSI and IRS-CI led the investigation with assistance from the Tulsa County Sheriff's Office, the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, the Tulsa and Enid Police Departments, the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics (OBN), the U.S. Marshals Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF). Assistant U.S. Attorney Dennis A. Fries is prosecuting this case.

An indictment is merely an accusation and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law. This indictment, returned by a federal grand jury on Dec. 7, 2018, was unsealed on Feb. 20, 2019.