

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

JOYCE E. DUDLEY
District Attorney



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RELEASE DATE

Joyce E. Dudley

APPROVED BY JOYCE E. DUDLEY, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Kimberly Siegel, Senior Deputy District Attorney

CONTACT (805) 568-2300

***** PRESS RELEASE *****

January 6, 2015

RE: *People v. Ryan Christopher Zietlow-Brown, Case Number 1397864*

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that 28-year old Ryan Christopher Zietlow-Brown pled no contest to felony charges of attempted murder and mayhem, and will be sentenced to 22 years 4 months in state prison. Zietlow-Brown also admitted a special allegation that he used a pair of scissors as a deadly weapon during the attacks and admitted he committed the offenses for the benefit of, at the direction of and in association with Neo Nazi Skinheads, a white supremacist gang. Zietlow-Brown further acknowledged that the offenses were hate crimes in violation of Penal Code section 422.75.

The crime occurred on August 12, 2011, during lunchtime on State Street in Santa Barbara. Testimony from witnesses at the preliminary hearing indicated the victim, an African-American, was walking on State Street with a Caucasian male. Both were singing a rap song by a well-known African-American rap group. Zietlow-Brown approached and asked the victim "if the boy [with him] was white," and the victim replied "yes, why are you asking?" Zietlow-Brown said, "tell him to[expletive] start acting like it." The victim told Zietlow-Brown to mind his own business and continued walking. As the two men were walking back to work, Zietlow-Brown approached them again, armed with a pair of scissors. Zietlow-Brown attacked the victim stabbing him multiple times in the head and then fled the area. Witnesses identified Zietlow-Brown and law enforcement subsequently arrested him. Witnesses described the assailant to police as a man with a shaved head and visible gang tattoos indicating his affiliation with Skinheads. In a subsequent search of his belongings, investigators located several items, pictures, and writings indicating his affiliation and association with the ideologically based white supremacist gang and its members.

Santa Barbara Police Department, led by Detective Ben Ahrens, investigated the case with the assistance of Simi Valley Police Department Detective Dan Swanson, an expert in White Supremacist gangs, and Santa Barbara County Jail Classification investigators.

The defendant will be sentenced on February 24, 2015, the Honorable Judge Brian Hill presiding.

SANTA BARBARA OFFICE
1112 Santa Barbara Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2300
Fax (805) 568-2453

SANTA MARIA OFFICE
312-D East Cook Street
Santa Maria, CA 93454
(805) 346-7540
Fax (805) 346-7588

LOMPOC OFFICE
115 Civic Center Plaza
Lompoc, CA 93436
(805) 737-7760
Fax (805) 737-7732