



*United States Attorney
Southern District of New York*

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**ARMED ROBBER CONVICTED FOR PARTICIPATION
IN NEW YORK CITY ROBBERY SPREE**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York announced that ZACHARY BALLARD, a/k/a "Zachary Balard," a/k/a "Little Zachary," a/k/a "Boobie," was found guilty late yesterday afternoon of robbery, firearms charges, and participating in a conspiracy to commit robbery, following a one-week jury trial before United States District Judge JED S. RAKOFF. According to the evidence at trial:

In October 2007, BALLARD and his accomplice ANTHONY STEELE robbed five New York City businesses at gunpoint. Their robbery spree followed a specific pattern: the defendants entered the businesses wearing hooded sweatshirts and baseball caps; demanded to talk to the store manager; and forced the store employees to open the safe and cash register. After taking the cash, the robbers ordered the employees to count to twenty and fled the scene.

For example, On October 14, 2007, BALLARD and STEEL robbed a Duane Reade located at 617 West 181st Street, in Manhattan. Just after 8:00 a.m., BALLARD approached the store's manager, racked his gun, pointed it at the manager, and demanded to be taken to the safe. The robbers forced the two Duane Reade employees into the store's office, where BALLARD kept his gun aimed at the manager's head and helped to empty the store's safe. A few weeks later, local television news stations aired video clips of BALLARD and his accomplices leaving the Duane Reade following the robbery. The broadcast of that news footage caused an anonymous tipster to phone the NYPD's Crime Stoppers leading to the identification of BALLARD and his accomplice.

On November 15, 2007, BALLARD was apprehended and arrested by the NYPD and ATF after attempting to outrun law enforcement by jumping out of an apartment window, falling three

stories, breaking through a wooden awning, and scaling multiple walls and barbed wire fences. BALLARD has been remanded since his arrest.

BALLARD, 27, of Brooklyn was convicted of three counts of robbery, three counts of brandishing a firearm during a robbery, and participating in a conspiracy to commit robbery. He faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 57 years' imprisonment and a maximum sentence of life. BALLARD is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge RAKOFF on November 12, 2007.

BALLARD'S accomplice, STEEL, 25, of Brooklyn pleaded guilty on May 9, 2008 to related conspiracy and firearms charges and is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge RAKOFF on August 26, 2008.

Mr. GARCIA praised the outstanding investigative work of the ATF and the NYPD.

Assistant United States Attorneys BENJAMIN A. NAFTALIS and REBECCA MONCK RICIGLIANO are in charge of the prosecution.

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