



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **For Immediate Release**

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### **VIOLENT BANK ROBBERS CONVICTED OF ARMED BANK ROBBERY**

Tampa, Florida - United States Attorney Paul I. Perez today announced that Chaddrick Levell Thomas, age 26, and Bobby Albritton, age 24, were found guilty on September 22, 2003 by a Federal Jury in Tampa of two armed bank robberies, two counts of using firearms during bank robberies and conspiring to use firearms during armed bank robberies. The armed bank robbery counts of which the defendants were found guilty carry a maximum sentence of 25 years' imprisonment, a fine up to \$250,000 and a five-year term of supervised release. The conspiracy count carries a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment, a fine up to \$250,000 and a three-year term of supervised release. The firearm counts each carry a consecutive term of imprisonment to the bank robberies and to each other, thus for the first firearms conviction, it carries a 27-year consecutive term of imprisonment, and for the second conviction, a 25-year consecutive term of imprisonment. Each firearm count also carries a fine up to \$250,000, and a term of supervised release of five years. A sentencing date has been set for January 8, 2004.

The defendants were indicted on April 23, 2003. Count One of the Indictment

charged that the defendants, on May 16, 2001, In Polk County, Florida, did knowingly, willfully, and by force, violence, and intimidation, take money from a bank employee, that is, approximately \$16,859.00, belonging to the Bank of America, 6990 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, Polk County, Florida, a bank whose deposits were insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and in committing the offense, the defendants did assault and put in jeopardy the life of the Bank of America employees and others by using a dangerous weapon, to wit: firearms. Counts Two and Three of the Indictment charged the defendants with using, carrying and possessing a firearm, that is, a handgun, during and in relation to and in furtherance of the Bank of America Bank robbery.

Count Five of the Indictment charged that the defendants, on June 12, 2001, in Polk County, Florida, did knowingly, willfully, and by force, violence, and intimidation, take money from a bank employee, that is, approximately \$5,065.00, belonging to the Sun Trust Bank, 400 North Church Avenue, Mulberry, Florida, a bank whose insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and in committing said offense, the defendants did assault and put in jeopardy the life of the Sun Trust Bank employees and others by using a dangerous weapon, to wit: firearms. Counts Six and Seven of the Indictment charged the defendants with using, carrying and possessing a firearm, that is, a handgun, during and in relation to and in furtherance of the Sun Trust Bank robbery.

Count Eight of the Indictment charged that the defendant conspired to use firearms during the Bank of America and Sun Trust Bank robberies.

According to testimony and evidence presented at trial, the defendants and others needed money so they decided to rob some banks. To disguise themselves and not leave fingerprints, they stole cars and wore wigs, hats, masks, bandannas, jackets and gloves.

The leader and organizer of this group was Thomas. They decided in these bank robberies that they would use firearms to let people know they meant business, put fear in the tellers, and if anyone resisted, they would have used the firearms.

On May 16, 2001, the defendants, along with two other co-defendants, using firearms, robbed the Bank of America in south Lakeland, Florida. They pointed their guns at everyone in the bank and demanded money. Thomas kept track of the time while the other three took money from the bank employees. Albritton, while getting money, struck a pregnant teller on the head because she was moving too slow, causing her to bleed profusely and go to the hospital.

On June 12, 2001, the defendants, along with four other co-defendants, robbed the Sun Trust Bank in Mulberry, Florida. Thomas had his two female cousins cased the bank out for him. After they cased the bank out for Thomas, the defendants and two other co-defendants entered the bank. They pointed their guns at everyone and demanded money. Thomas kept track of the time while the other three took money from the bank employees. After the robbery, a bank employee, based upon the stress and fear caused by the defendants and the robbery, had a heart attack that permanently damaged her heart.

This is another case indicted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative with strong support from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). U. S. Attorney Paul I. Perez is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials and calling our effort "Project Safe Neighborhoods - Operation HALT the Violence." The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns or explosives and then swiftly

prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

This case represents the culmination of a cooperative effort between the United States Attorney's Office, the Plant City Police Department, the Polk County Sheriff's Office, the State Attorney's Office for the Tenth Judicial District, the FBI and FDLE. Assistant United States Attorney John F. Rudy, III prosecuted the case.