

Mistaken Identity

Prison gangs are a huge part of prison life, even though gang members only make up a small percentage of the prison population. At least in the federal system they are a small percentage.

The gangs are in all races and ethnic backgrounds. They have Vice Lords, Crips, Bloods, Gangster Disciples in the black community, just to name a few. The hispanics are more ethnically based; where your heritage is from leads you more to one group or another, like the G27's are usually Puerto Rican, Paisas are normally from Mexico but closer to Texas, where "South Siders" are typically southern California hispanic.

And of course the white community has their fair share of gangs as well. They have the Aryan Circle, Dirty White Boys, Soldiers of Aryan Culture, Skin Heads, The Brand and Aryan Brotherhood of Texas are some examples.

All this leads me to my most recent issue with administration and my current stint in the Special Housing Unit (23 hours lockdown - also known as "the hole" or segregation).

I've been locked up now for a little over 11 years and as a part of my original case the investigators believed that the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas - "ATB" was involved. They were not, but that wasn't important to me then and really isn't important to me now either except it has finally put me in "the hole". Let me explain.

In 2006 I was sentenced to 40 years for a "possession of a controlled substance" case involving methamphetamine. Due to the "length of sentence" I was sent to the United States Penitentiary in Pollock, Louisiana.

I arrived in January 2007. During the intake process I was asked: "Are you ABT?" And I said: "No!" They inspected me for tattoos, mostly looking for gang related ones usually called a "patch" similar to what a biker would put on his leather jacket so others will know where his loyalty lies.

This was actually very important at the time due to this institution recently under going a huge problem with the gang and non-gang (independent) members of the white community. The independents got rid of all gang members because of some prison political issues. And when I say "got rid of" I mean beat them, some worse then others, to get them off the compound.

So when I got there the independents were very adamant about seeing any tattoos too. They wanted to make sure a gang member didn't slip through the cracks in the administrative process. The administration didn't want any more blood shed so they kept the gangs away.

I was, however labeled as an ABT associate. This label can come from dozens of different reasons. Mine was from the one paragraph in my Pre-Sentence Report saying the ABT were a part of my case.

I stayed in U.S.P. Pollock for one month shy of five years. During that time the white gangs were slowly reintegrated back into the population and they had several issues over that time, usually with different groups of independent guys, like once a 10 on 12 melee between the ABT and Alabama guys (we usually hang out and back-up guys from our own state or area. Independent doesn't mean stupid.)

Even when the ATB got into some issues, I was never locked up or questioned because the administration knew I wasn't a gang member. I didn't go to the gang member meetings. I was never involved with gang violence. Nothing connected me to them, other then the associate "tag" due to my case.

In 2011, I was transferred in December to the Federal Correctional Institution in Three Rivers, Texas (FCI Three Rivers). And again I was questioned about my ABT affiliation. I explained that I'm NOT a gang member. They looked at my tattoos, or I should say, lack of tattoos and listed me in their book as an independent from Texas.

This institution also had the full range of white gangs. DWB (Dirty White Boys), AC (Aryan Circle), ABT (Aryan Brotherhood), SAC (Soldiers of Aryan Culture) and Skin Heads. I was never involved with any meetings, incidents, violence, etc. so nothing should have changed in the 4 years I was there.

In January 2016 I was transferred to MCFP Springfield. That's the United States Medical Center for Federal Prisoners Springfield, Missouri. I was approved to have a shoulder surgery so this is where they sent me.

Again I was questioned about this ABT association. I explained the same things as before, showed my chest, back, arms and legs, none of which contained a "patch" or any other tattoo that signifies a "white supremacist" mentality. No Nazi swastika, no "SS" lightning bolts, no Hitler portraits, etc. So they took my word for it and we moved on.

I had my surgery in August and was transferred again in January 2017 back to a regular institution, meaning a non-medical facility.

During my transfer I was sent to the Transfer Center in Oklahoma City, Ok. Intake was the same as always until the intake officer asked me if I was ABT. I told him "No", explained where the "association" came from and thought that would be the end of it. But this time he asked a question that hadn't been asked before. He said: "You get along with them?". Them meaning ABT. I said: "Yeah!". I've had ABT cellmates and I've been around them throughout my time in prison with no issues.

That was the end of the questioning and I was sent to the housing unit where I would stay for the next three weeks awaiting the transit to my final destination of this transfer, FCI Oakdale, Oakdale Louisiana.

During the time in the Transfer Center I learned that the ABT and AC were now at war. There was some sort of incident in one of the 17 federal penitentiaries between the two groups. It escalated to other prisons and before long there was a system wide order to not have those two groups on the same yard, housing unit in transit or federal holdover.

I thought nothing of this except to think that it must have cost the B.O.P a lot of money to move people around like that and designate all 116 federal facilities as either ABT or AC.

Then I show up here on February 7th 2017. I go through the intake process like I have a dozen times so far. The intake officer says: "So, you're ABT?" I say: "No." She says, "Well, it says here you're ABT, why would it say that?". So I go through the same spiel I've gone through in the past. I took off my shirt. I pulled up my pants legs. No patch.

She says: "Well, this is an AC yard. You can't walk here since you're ABT." I stop her by saying: "I'm not ABT, I already told you and you can see I don't have a patch so I CAN walk this yard." She says, "Look, I'm not going to argue with you. I'm going to put you in the SHU, then I'll investigate this. It shouldn't take long then I'll get you out."

I think "this sucks!", being in the SHU is never fun due to being locked in a 8x12 room for 23 hours a day, Monday through Friday, and 24 hours a day on the weekends. But I think it's only a couple days so I can deal with it.

A week goes by. I start seeing staff I recognize from my first institution, Pollock. They ask me why I'm back here (in the SHU). I explain the issue I'm having, and the response I get each time is the same, "you weren't a ABT in Pollock." So I tell them, "I'm still not, could

you PLEASE go explain that to the SIS (Special Investigation Services) so I can get out of here?"

Five officers or staff have come by that I know. Each has told me that they gave reports to the SIS. Guess what? They're still doing their investigation. What are they investigating? Well they tell me they are trying to prove I'm not an ABT member. So I asked them how can they prove that? They don't have an answer, because you can't prove a negative. They were doomed at the start.

Three weeks have gone by when the SHU Lieutenant tells me that I'm getting transferred. He says it'll take a few weeks to get the paperwork done, then I'll be gone back to the transfer center, then to my next location.

That was on a Monday. Tuesday morning I was told to pack my property to do a cell change. So my cellie and I packed up what little stuff we have and waited to get moved. After about an hour they come to my door and call me out of the cell.

They take me outside to the recreation area where there are two other guys already there, along with 4 staff members. The two guys are actually ABT members and the staff are three SIS officers and the SHU Lieutenant.

They proceed to tell the three of us that we are being released to the compound. And then give us a five minute speech on what they expect out of us and how we are to behave. Why the 180 degree turn around from the day before?

Well, the Federal government has it's own economic plan. Since there were two AC and two ABT at this institution, the ones who were here first were the ones that were getting to stay.

As soon as this facility identified me as an ABT member to tipped the scales and it's less expensive to transfer two then it is three so they locked the two Aryan Circle guys in

the SHU Tuesday morning and let the three of us out Tuesday afternoon.

Just like that, this place changes over from AC to ABT and since then they've had another member arrive.

That's the B.O.P. (Backwards on Purpose)