

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI  
WESTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATE OF AMERICA,	)	
	)	
Plaintiff(s),	)	Case No. 09-00121-01-CR-W-DGK
	)	
vs.	)	Date: 5/26/11
	)	
GILBERTO LARA-RUIZ,	)	
	)	
Defendant(s).	)	

JURY INSTRUCTIONS

## **INSTRUCTION NO. 1**

Ladies and gentlemen: I shall take a few moments now to give you some initial instructions about this case and about your duties as jurors. At the end of the trial I shall give you further instructions. I may also give you instructions during the trial. Unless I specifically tell you otherwise, all such instructions - both those I give you now and those I give you later - are equally binding on you and must be followed.

This is a criminal case, brought against the defendant by the United States Government. The defendant is charged with possession and use of firearms in furtherance of and during and in relation to drug trafficking crimes. Those charges are set forth in what is called an indictment, which reads as follows:

### **COUNT ONE**

On or between January 1, 2006 and December 30, 2006, in the Western District of Missouri, GILBERTO LARA-RUIZ, a/k/a "Hill", defendant herein, in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime for which he may be prosecuted in a court of the United States, distribution of methamphetamine, possessed at least one firearm, to wit: an AR-15 style rifle shown at his house in mid-2006, a black 9 mm semi-auto pistol traded for drug debt reduction and methamphetamine in mid-2006, and a black .32 caliber semi-auto pistol and a .22 caliber revolver traded for methamphetamine in 2006, all contrary to the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A)(i).

### **COUNT TWO**

On or about November 18, 2006, in the Western District of Missouri, GILBERTO LARA-RUIZ, a/k/a "Hill", defendant herein, during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime for which he may be prosecuted in a court of the United States, distribution of methamphetamine, used and discharged a firearm, to wit: a loaded handgun, all contrary to the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A)(iii).

You should understand that an indictment is simply an accusation. It is not evidence of anything. The defendant has pleaded not guilty, and is presumed to be innocent unless and until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

It will be your duty to decide from the evidence whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty of the crimes charged. From the evidence, you will decide what the facts are. You are entitled to consider that evidence in the light of your own observations and experiences in the affairs of life. You may use reason and common sense to draw deductions or conclusions from facts which have been established by the evidence. You will then apply those facts to the law which I give you in these and in my other instructions, and in that way reach your verdict. You are the sole judges of the facts, but you must follow my instructions, whether you agree with them or not. You have taken an oath to do so.

Do not allow sympathy or prejudice to influence you. The law demands of you a just verdict, unaffected by anything except the evidence, your common sense, and the law as I give it to you.

You should not take anything I may say or do during the trial as indicating what I think of the evidence or what I think your verdict should be.

Finally, please remember that only this defendant, not anyone else, is on trial here, and that this defendant is on trial only for the crimes charged, not for anything else.

## INSTRUCTION NO. 2

I have mentioned the word “evidence.” “Evidence” includes the testimony of witnesses, documents and other things received as exhibits, any facts that have been stipulated--that is, formally agreed to by the parties, and any facts that have been judicially noticed--that is, facts which I say you may, but are not required to, accept as true, even without evidence.

Certain things are not evidence. I shall list those things for you now:

1. Statements, arguments, questions and comments by lawyers representing the parties in the case are not evidence.

2. Objections are not evidence. Lawyers have a right to object when they believe something is improper. You should not be influenced by the objection. If I sustain an objection to a question, you must ignore the question and must not try to guess what the answer might have been.

3. Testimony that I strike from the record, or tell you to disregard, is not evidence and must not be considered.

4. Anything you see or hear about this case outside the courtroom is not evidence, unless I specifically tell you otherwise during the trial.

Furthermore, a particular item of evidence is sometimes received for a limited purpose only. That is, it can be used by you only for one particular purpose, and not for any other purpose. I will tell you when that occurs, and instruct you on the purposes for which the item can and cannot be used.

Finally, some of you may have heard the terms “direct evidence” and “circumstantial evidence.” You are instructed that you should not be concerned with those terms. The law

makes no distinction between direct and circumstantial evidence. You should give all evidence the weight and value you believe it is entitled to receive.

### **INSTRUCTION NO. 3**

In deciding what the facts are, you may have to decide what testimony you believe and what testimony you do not believe. You may believe all of what a witness said, or only part of it, or none of it.

In deciding what testimony of any witness to believe, consider the witness's intelligence, the opportunity the witness had to have seen or heard the things testified about, the witness's memory, any motives that witness may have for testifying a certain way, the manner of the witness while testifying, whether that witness said something different at an earlier time, the general reasonableness of the testimony, and the extent to which the testimony is consistent with other evidence that you believe.

#### **INSTRUCTION NO. 4**

At the end of the trial you must make your decision based on what you recall of the evidence. You will not have a written transcript to consult, and it may not be practical for the court reporter to read back lengthy testimony. You must pay close attention to the testimony as it is given.

If you wish, however, you may take notes to help you remember what witnesses said. If you do take notes, please keep them to yourself until you and your fellow jurors go to the jury room to decide the case. And do not let note-taking distract you so that you do not hear other answers by the witness.

When you leave at night, your notes will be secured and not read by anyone.

### **INSTRUCTION NO. 5**

During the trial it may be necessary for me to talk with the lawyers out of the hearing of the jury, either by having a bench conference here while the jury is present in the courtroom, or by calling a recess. Please understand that while you are waiting, we are working. The purpose of these conferences is to decide how certain evidence is to be treated under the rules of evidence, and to avoid confusion and error. We will, of course, do what we can to keep the number and length of these conferences to a minimum.



## INSTRUCTION NO. 6

To insure fairness, you as jurors must obey the following rules:

*First*, do not talk or communicate among yourselves about this case, or about anyone involved with it, until the end of the case when you go to the jury room to decide on your verdict.

*Second*, do not talk with anyone else about this case, or about anyone involved with it, until the trial has ended and you have been discharged as jurors.

*Third*, when you are outside the courtroom do not let anyone tell you anything about the case, or about anyone involved with it until the trial has ended and your verdict has been accepted by me. If someone should try to talk to you about the case during the trial, please report it to Ms. Francis immediately.

*Fourth*, during the trial you should not talk with or speak to any of the parties, lawyers or witnesses involved in this case -- you should not even pass the time of day with any of them. It is important not only that you do justice in this case, but that you also give the appearance of doing justice. If a person from one side of the case sees you talking to a person from the other side -- even if it is simply to pass the time of day -- an unwarranted and unnecessary suspicion about your fairness might be aroused. If any lawyer, party or witness does not speak to you when you pass in the hall, ride the elevator or the like, it is because they are directed not to talk to or visit with you.

*Fifth*, it may be necessary for you to tell your family, close friends, teachers, coworkers, or employer about your participation in this trial. You can explain when you are required to be in court and can warn them not to ask you about this case, tell you anything they know or think they know about this case, or discuss this case in your presence. You must not communicate with anyone or post information about the parties, witnesses, participants, charges, evidence, or

anything else related to this case. You must not tell anyone anything about the jury's deliberations in this case until after I accept your verdict or until I give you specific permission to do so. If you discuss the case with someone other than the other jurors during deliberations, it could create the perception that you have clearly decided the case or that you may be influenced in your verdict by their opinions. That would not be fair to the parties and it may result in the verdict being thrown out and the case having to be retried. During the trial, while you are in the courthouse and after you leave for the day, do not provide any information to anyone by any means about this case. Thus, for example, do not talk face-to-face or use any electronic device or media, such as the telephone, a cell or smart phone, Blackberry, PDA, computer, the Internet, any Internet service, any text or instant messaging service, any Internet chat room, blog, or Website such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, or Twitter, or any other way to communicate to anyone any information about this case until I accept your verdict.

*Sixth*, do not do any research -- on the Internet, in libraries, in the newspapers, or in any other way -- or make any investigation about this case on your own. Do not visit or view any place discussed in this case and do not use Internet programs or other device to search for or to view any place discussed in the testimony. Also, do not research any information about this case, the law, or the people involved, including the parties, the witnesses, the lawyers, or the judge.

*Seventh*, do not read any news stories or articles in print, or on the Internet, or in any blog, about the case, or about anyone involved with it, or listen to any radio or television reports about the case or about anyone involved with it. In fact, until the trial is over, I suggest that you avoid reading any newspapers or news journals at all, and avoid listening to any television or radio newscasts at all. I do not know whether there might be any news reports of this case, but if

there are, you might inadvertently find yourself reading or listening to something before you could do anything about it. If you want, you can have your spouse or a friend clip out any stories and set them aside to give you after the trial is over. I can assure you, however, that by the time you have heard the evidence in this case, you will know what you need to return a just verdict.

The parties have a right to have the case decided only on evidence they know about and that has been introduced here in court. If you do some research or investigation or experiment that we don't know about, then your verdict may be influenced by inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information that has not been tested by the trial process, including the oath to tell the truth and by cross-examination. All of the parties are entitled to a fair trial, rendered by an impartial jury, and you must conduct yourself so as to maintain the integrity of the trial process. If you decide a case based on information not presented in court, you will have denied the parties a fair trial in accordance with the rules of this country and you will have done an injustice. It is very important that you abide by these rules. Remember, you have taken an oath to abide by these rules and you must do so.

*Eighth*, do not make up your mind during the trial about what the verdict should be. Keep an open mind until after you have gone to the jury room to decide the case and you and your fellow jurors have discussed the evidence.

## **INSTRUCTION NO. 7**

The trial will proceed in the following manner:

First, the Government attorney will make an opening statement. Next the defendant's attorney may, but does not have to, make an opening statement. An opening statement is not evidence but is simply a summary of what the attorney expects the evidence to be.

The Government will then present its evidence and counsel for the defendant may cross-examine. Following the Government's case, the defendant may, but does not have to, present evidence, testify or call other witnesses. If the defendant calls witnesses, the Government counsel may cross-examine them.

After presentation of evidence is completed, the attorneys will make their closing arguments to summarize and interpret the evidence for you. As with opening statements, closing arguments are not evidence. The court will instruct you further on the law. After that you will retire to deliberate on your verdict.

## **INSTRUCTION NO. 8**

During this recess, and every other recess, do not discuss this case among yourselves or with anyone else, including your family and friends. Do not allow anyone to discuss the case with you or within your hearing. “Do not discuss” also means do not e-mail, send text messages, blog or engage in any other form of written, oral or electronic communication, as I instructed you before.

Do not read any newspaper or other written account, watch any televised account, or listen to any radio program about this trial. Do not conduct any Internet research or consult with any other sources about this case, the people involved in the case, or its general subject matter. You must keep your mind open and free of outside information. Only in this way will you be able to decide the case fairly based solely on the evidence and my instructions on the law. If you decide this case on anything else, you will have done an injustice. It is very important that you follow these instructions.

I may not repeat these things to you before every recess, but keep them in mind throughout the trial.

## INSTRUCTION NO. 9

Members of the jury, the instructions I gave you at the beginning of the trial and during the trial remain in effect. I now give you some additional instructions.

You must, of course, continue to follow the instructions I gave you earlier, as well as those I give you now. You must not single out some instructions and ignore others, because all are important. This is true even though some of those I gave you at the beginning of and during trial are not repeated here.

The instructions I am about to give you now are in writing and will be available to you in the jury room. I emphasize, however, that this does not mean they are more important than my earlier instructions. Again, *all* instructions, whenever given and whether in writing or not, must be followed.

### **INSTRUCTION NO. 10**

It is your duty to find from the evidence what the facts are. You will then apply the law, as I give it to you, to those facts. You must follow my instructions on the law, even if you thought the law was different or should be different.

Do not allow sympathy or prejudice to influence you. The law demands of you a just verdict, unaffected by anything except the evidence, your common sense, and the law as I give it to you.

## **INSTRUCTION NO. 11**

I have mentioned the word “evidence.” The “evidence” in this case consists of the testimony of witnesses, the documents and other things received as exhibits, the facts that have been stipulated -- this is, formally agreed to by the parties, and the facts that have been judicially noticed -- this is, facts which I say you may, but are not required to, accept as true, even without evidence.

You may use reason and common sense to draw deductions or conclusions from facts which have been established by the evidence in the case.

Certain things are not evidence. I shall list those things again for you now:

1. Statements, arguments, questions and comments by lawyers representing the parties in the case are not evidence.

2. Objections are not evidence. Lawyers have a right to object when they believe something is improper. You should not be influenced by the objection. If I sustained an objection to a question, you must ignore the question and must not try to guess what the answer might have been.

3. Testimony that I struck from the record, or told you to disregard, is not evidence and must not be considered.

4. Anything you saw or heard about this case outside the courtroom is not evidence.

Finally, if you were instructed that some evidence was received for a limited purpose only, you must follow that instruction.



## **INSTRUCTION NO. 12**

In deciding what the facts are, you may have to decide what testimony you believe and what testimony you do not believe. You may believe all of what a witness said, or only part of it, or none of it.

In deciding what testimony to believe, consider the witness's intelligence, the opportunity the witness had to have seen or heard the things testified about, the witness's memory, any motives that witness may have for testifying a certain way, the manner of the witness while testifying, whether that witness said something different at an earlier time, the general reasonableness of the testimony, and the extent to which the testimony is consistent with any evidence that you believe.

In deciding whether or not to believe a witness, keep in mind that people sometimes hear or see things differently and sometimes forget things. You need to consider therefore whether a contradiction is an innocent misrecollection or lapse of memory or an intentional falsehood, and that may depend on whether it has to do with an important fact or only a small detail.

### **INSTRUCTION NO. 13**

The indictment in this case charges the defendant with two different crimes. Under Count 1, the indictment charges that the defendant committed the crime of possession of firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

Under Count 2, the indictment charges that the defendant committed the crime of use of a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime. The defendant has pleaded not guilty to each of those charges.

As I told you at the beginning of the trial, an indictment is simply an accusation. It is not evidence of anything. To the contrary, the defendant is presumed to be innocent. Thus the defendant, even though charged, begins the trial with no evidence against him. The presumption of innocence alone is sufficient to find the defendant not guilty and can be overcome only if the Government proves, beyond a reasonable doubt, each element of the crime charged.

Keep in mind that each count charges a separate crime. You must consider each count separately, and return a separate verdict for each count.

#### **INSTRUCTION NO. 14**

You will note that the indictment charges that the offenses were committed “on or between” and “on or about” certain dates. Although it is necessary for the Government to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the offenses were committed on dates reasonably near the dates alleged in the indictment, it is not necessary for the Government to prove that the offenses were committed precisely on the dates charged.

### **INSTRUCTION NO. 15**

A reasonable doubt is a doubt based upon reason and common sense, and not the mere possibility of innocence. A reasonable doubt is the kind of doubt that would make a reasonable person hesitate to act. Proof beyond a reasonable doubt, therefore, must be proof of such a convincing character that a reasonable person would not hesitate to rely and act upon it. However, proof beyond a reasonable doubt does not mean proof beyond all possible doubt.

### **INSTRUCTION NO. 16**

Intent or knowledge may be proved like anything else. You may consider any statements made and acts done by the defendant, and all the facts and circumstances in evidence which may aid in a determination of the defendant's knowledge or intent.

You may, but are not required to, infer that a person intends the natural and probable consequences of acts knowingly done or knowingly omitted.

There is no burden upon a defendant to prove that he or she is innocent. Accordingly, the fact that the defendant did not testify must not be considered by you in any way, or even discussed, in arriving at your verdict.

### **INSTRUCTION NO. 17**

The law recognizes several kinds of possession. A person may have actual possession or constructive possession. A person may have sole or joint possession.

A person who knowingly has direct physical control over a thing, at a given time, is then in actual possession of it.

A person who, although not in actual possession, has both the power and the intention at a given time to exercise dominion or control over a thing, either directly or through another person or persons, is then in constructive possession of it.

If one person alone has actual or constructive possession of a thing, possession is sole. If two or more persons share actual or constructive possession of a thing, possession is joint.

Whenever the word “possession” has been used in these instructions it includes actual as well as constructive possession and also sole as well as joint possession.

**INSTRUCTION NO. 18**

**COUNT ONE**

The crime of possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime has two elements, which are:

*One*, the defendant committed the crime of distribution of methamphetamine; and

*Two*, that on or between January 1, 2006 and December 30, 2006, the defendant knowingly possessed firearms, to wit: an AR-15 style rifle shown at his house in mid-2006, a black 9 mm semi-auto pistol traded for drug debt reduction and methamphetamine in mid-2006, a black .32 caliber semi-auto pistol traded for methamphetamine in 2006, or a .22 caliber revolver traded for methamphetamine in 2006, in furtherance of the distribution of methamphetamine.

You must unanimously agree that at least one of these firearms was possessed in furtherance of the drug trafficking crime in order to find the defendant guilty.

The phrase “in furtherance of” should be given its plain meaning, that is, the act of furthering, advancing, or helping forward. The phrase “in furtherance of” is a requirement that the defendant possess the firearm with the intent that it advance, assist or help commit the crime, not that it actually did so.

If all of these elements have been proved beyond a reasonable doubt, then you must find defendant guilty of this crime; otherwise, you must find him not guilty. Please record your verdict on Verdict Form A.

**INSTRUCTION NO. 19**

**COUNT TWO**

The crime of using a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime has two elements, which are:

*One*, the defendant committed the crime of distribution of methamphetamine; and

*Two*, that on or about November 18, 2006, the defendant knowingly used a firearm, to wit: an unknown make and model handgun, during and in relation to the distribution of methamphetamine.

You must unanimously agree that the firearm was used during and in relation to the drug trafficking crime in order to find the defendant guilty.

The phrase “used a firearm” means that the firearm was actively employed in the course of the commission of the distribution of methamphetamine. You may find that a firearm was used during the course of commission of the distribution of methamphetamine if you find that it was brandished, displayed, used to strike someone or fired.

In determining whether the defendant used the firearm you may consider all the factors received in evidence in the case including the nature of the underlying drug trafficking crime alleged, the proximity of the defendant to the firearm, the usefulness of the firearm to the crime alleged, and the circumstances surrounding the presence of the firearm.

If all of the above elements have been proved beyond a reasonable doubt, then you must find defendant guilty of this crime; otherwise, you must find him not guilty. Please record your verdict on Verdict Form B.



## INSTRUCTION NO. 20

In conducting your deliberations and returning your verdict, there are certain rules you must follow. I shall list those rules for you now.

*First*, when you go to the jury room, you must select one of your members as your foreperson. That person will preside over your discussions and speak for you here in court.

*Second*, it is your duty, as jurors, to discuss this case with one another in the jury room. You should try to reach agreement if you can do so without violence to individual judgment, because a verdict - whether guilty or not guilty - must be unanimous.

Each of you must make your own conscientious decision, but only after you have considered all the evidence, discussed it fully with your fellow jurors, and listened to the views of your fellow jurors.

Do not be afraid to change your opinions if the discussion persuades you that you should. But do not come to a decision simply because other jurors think it is right, or simply to reach a verdict.

*Third*, if the defendant is found guilty, the sentence to be imposed is my responsibility. You may not consider punishment in any way in deciding whether the Government has proved its case beyond a reasonable doubt.

*Fourth*, if you need to communicate with me during your deliberations, you may send a note to me through Ms. Francis, signed by one or more jurors. I will respond as soon as possible either in writing or orally in open court. Remember that you should not tell anyone - including me - how your votes stand numerically.

*Fifth*, your verdict must be based solely on the evidence and on the law which I have given to you in my instructions. The verdict, whether guilty or not guilty, must be unanimous.

Nothing I have said or done is intended to suggest what your verdict should be - that is entirely for you to decide.

*Finally*, the verdict forms are simply the written notice of the decision that you reach in this case. You will take these forms to the jury room, and when each of you has agreed on the verdict, your foreperson will fill in the form, sign and date it, and advise Ms. Francis that you are ready to return to the courtroom.