

## **DEFENDANT ONLY SOUGHT FBI MONEY , COURT TOLD AGENT ANGERED STING RECRUITER, LAWYER SAYS**

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Tuesday, August 18, 1992  
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Willie Volsan knew the man asking him to help ship drugs and cash to Detroit was an undercover **FBI** agent, but played along to get the **money** the agent offered, Volsan's attorney argued Monday.

Timothy Murphy, summing up his case in closing arguments in federal court, said Volsan would be guilty if charged with conning the government out of the tens of thousands of dollars he collected.

"But he isn't charged with that," Murphy told the jury.

Volsan is one of eight people -- six of them current or former police officers -- charged with providing security escorts for undercover agents posing as Florida drug traffickers. With the officers standing by, the purported drug dealers unloaded shipments at City Airport and drove supposed drug **money** from Metro Airport to a Troy bank.

The **FBI** sting operation was designed to uncover suspected Detroit police corruption.

Volsan is charged with being the lead recruiter of officers, along with Sgt. James Harris, a former homicide investigator and bodyguard for Mayor Coleman Young and his family. Volsan is the father of Young's niece.

"The reason Mr. Volsan is not guilty is because he doesn't have the necessary criminal intent," said Murphy.

He said Volsan was angry because undercover **FBI** Special Agent Mike Castro had induced his heroin-addicted daughter, Cathy Curry, to leave drug treatment and paid her for entree to suspect officers.

But Assistant U.S. Attorney Lynn Helland scoffed at Volsan's claims, citing Volsan's apparent shock -- recorded in a tapped telephone call -- at the moment he was told Castro was really an **FBI** agent.

Helland called the evidence "overwhelming" against Volsan, who was secretly videotaped with Harris stuffing a \$50,000 cash payoff into his briefcase in a hotel meeting and listening through another meeting in which agents say explicitly, "we're in the drug business."

Helland also dismissed claims by other officers who admitted standing guard but said they didn't know the cargo. He said tapes and videos left no reasonable doubt.

"Each was presented with a clear choice," said Helland. "Each of the **defendants** , if honest, could have just walked away.

"What they did was take the **money** and run."

Attorneys for civilian Dwayne Thomas and Sgt. Charley Nichols argued the government had nothing to prove they knew about any drugs.

Nichols' attorney, William Swor, said his client was unable to hear an agent mention drugs at a secretly taped meeting at an Eastern Market restaurant just before a May 1991 shipment of 200 kilos of mostly-fake cocaine to City Airport.

Swor said Nichols, who followed a car caravan at a distance of several miles and never went to the airport or saw the satchels of sugar and cocaine, was used to making several thousand dollars moonlighting as security for visiting VIPs like boxer Larry Holmes.

Thomas' attorney, John Burns, said an undercover agent's reference to "100 keys" in front of Thomas at a single videotaped meeting didn't have to refer to 100 kilos of cocaine.

He described Volsan's pitch to his client as, "Hey, kid, want to make some **money** ? Come to this meeting with me and keep your mouth shut."

Closing arguments continue today.

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Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: NWS

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Index Terms: TRIAL ; TESTIMONY ; FBI; DRUG ; STING OPERATION

Record Number: 9201310139

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