

MURDER CHARGES DROPPED

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Milton (Butch) Jones, the man who revolutionized drug dealing with his creation of Young Boys Inc., walked out of Recorder's Court a free man Wednesday for the first time in almost a decade.

"It's about time," Jones said after Judge George Crockett II dismissed two first-degree **murder charges** against the one-time dope lord.

Crockett, acting on a motion from Jones' attorney Daniel Blank, ruled that the prosecution had violated the law in transferring Jones to and from federal prisons while pretrial issues in the **murder** cases were being argued through the appellate courts.

Blank argued that Jones, 37, should have remained in Michigan once local authorities took him out of federal prison in Arizona in 1988 to face the **murder charges**. Instead, Blank said, officials sent him back to Arizona during the appeals process.

"I know that everyone else will say this is a loophole or a technicality, but it is really a substantive issue of due process," Blank said. "Under the law, the state **charges** are supposed to be disposed of before he's shipped back. That wasn't done. You just can't keep running people back and forth."

Wayne County Prosecutor John O'Hair said Crockett's ruling, which also found that the prosecution delayed too long in bringing the case to trial, would be appealed immediately.

O'Hair contended the case was brought to court in sufficient time, despite numerous delays for appeals and motions.

Crockett had dismissed the **charges** two years ago, but appellate courts ordered them reinstated.

"There is no statute of limitations on first-degree **murder charges** -- and for good reason," O'Hair said. "Dragging a case out or delays shouldn't work in his favor."

Jones, who served eight years of a 12-year federal drug sentence and a 3 1/3-to-5-year state sentence for being an accessory to **murder**, was charged in 1988 with the fatal shootings of Dwayne Davis and Sidney Draper. He had completed those sentences and was being held on the **murder charges**, so Wednesday's court action freed him.

The men allegedly were killed -- Draper in 1980 and Davis in 1982 -- as federal authorities were preparing indictments against most of the upper echelon of Young Boys Inc. The gang leadership, investigators believe, was tightening its grip on the 300-member organization and settling old scores.

Founded in the late 1970s on Detroit's west side, Young Boys quickly grew into the city's premier drug distribution ring. The rise was marked by ruthless elimination of rivals and members who fell afoul of the gang.

Young Boys, federal officials said, marked a turning point in drug dealing by its wholesale recruitment of juveniles as street dealers, runners, lookouts and enforcers. The youths, some too young for a driver's license, earned cash bonuses and were rewarded with expensive goods while working their way up through the highly structured organization.

As Young Boys spread throughout other Michigan cities, the gang's structural model began appearing in other cities across the country.

Caption: Photo

: Milton (Butch) Jones ***

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