

## **WITNESSES CONSPIRED TO KILL , PROSECUTION SAYS 2 IMPLICATED IN REPUTED DRUG LORD'S SLAYING**

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In a last-minute surprise Thursday at the trial of Raed Jihad, the prosecution named its own star **witnesses** as coconspirators in the killing of their boss, reputed Detroit drug lord Harry Kalasho.

Assistant prosecutor Kenneth Simon, in his final argument, told jurors that Issam (Sam the Bull) Hermiz and Najah (Nick) Konja used Jihad in a plan **to** seize control of Kalasho's multimillion-dollar cocaine ring.

Simon said Jihad had been enlisted **to kill** Kalasho because he already "wanted **to** get Harry any way he could."

Defense lawyer David Griem called Simon's argument "a last-ditch effort **to** win this trial" and told the Recorder's Court jury "yesterday was Valentine's Day, but today is not April Fool's Day."

The jury is expected **to** begin deliberations today in the first-degree murder trial of Jihad, accused of gunning down Kalasho on Greendale Avenue near John R. Street in February 1989. Kalasho died three weeks later.

Konja and Hermiz both identified Jihad, 20, as the gunman who opened fire on Kalasho from a passing car as Kalasho left a house with them.

The two, who are facing trial in Florida on cocaine conspiracy charges, were lieutenants in the Kalasho organization who worked as his bodyguards but wanted Kalasho dead because he "was out of control," endangering profits by ordering murders and beheadings that drew police attention, Simon said.

Simon said Konja and Hermiz had **to** identify Jihad because Kalasho did not immediately die and they feared he would recover.

"Harry would have known them **to** be traitors, and they knew what they could expect at his hands," said Simon.

But Griem said, "Does that sound like a conspiracy or does that sound like they're trying **to** frame Raed Jihad?"

"We agree it was a set-up -- we disagree who did the shooting," he said.

He said Hermiz and Konja had Kalasho killed **to** take over the business and then framed Jihad **to** get rid of him because he was a federal informant.

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