

Death off table for gang leader - Detroit convict cleared of murder charges by admitting to running a criminal enterprise.

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DETROIT -- One of Detroit's most notorious drug **gang leaders** will avoid the **death** penalty under a plea agreement reached with federal prosecutors.

Milton "Butch" Jones, 50, the founder of Young Boys Inc., pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Ann Arbor Thursday to one count of running a continuing criminal enterprise. He could have been sentenced to **death** if convicted of two counts of drug-related murder in 1998. He was convicted of another drug-related murder in 1975.

William Sauget, an assistant U.S. attorney, told U.S. District Judge John Corbett O'Meara that Jones had been cooperating and that the government planned to seek a sentence of 30 years in prison when he is sentenced on April 6. As part of the deal, prosecutors will drop the **death** penalty request.

He wrote an autobiography in 1996, "Y.B.I.," in which he claimed he began his involvement in the drug trade at age 14 and made more than \$100,000 a week selling heroin. A former head of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency said in the mid-1990s that the **gang** was connected to at least 68 murders.

"Hell, somebody had to take over this city. Why not me?" Jones wrote in his self-published book. "It was just like any other business, such as Ford, or General Motors."

Young Boys Inc., the highly organized, profitable drug network Jones founded, used kids as young as 9 years old to sell drugs, terrorized neighborhoods and frustrated police as late as 1987.

Jones lived in Oak Park and expanded his drug crews into Pontiac and Flint. By the time he went to federal prison in 1983, Jones estimated he had squirreled away several million dollars, lost thousands in gambling, and had bought several houses and more than a dozen cars.

Jones used teens to sell drugs because they were difficult to prosecute and buffered **leaders**. The **gang** also gave top sellers cash bonuses and presents, such as fur trimmed leather coats that became extremely popular and known as Y.B.I. jackets. At its peak, Young Boys Inc. sold \$25,000 to \$30,000 a day per street corner.

After his release from federal prison in 1992, Jones moved to Pennsylvania and promised a life of honest work.

He and 13 others, including then-state Rep. Keith Stallworth, D-Detroit, were charged with conspiring to sell cocaine, heroin and marijuana. Stallworth later reached a plea deal with federal prosecutors. Federal prosecutors are still seeking the **death** penalty against two defendants.

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