

## DETAILS GIVE CREDIBILITY TO NOTES ON STAR WITNESS

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He said the FBI was clueless.

He said the federal prosecutor who handled his case was stupid.

And he accused President George W. Bush of being a drug dealer.

Youssef Hmimssa, the government's **star witness** in last year's federal terrorism case, supposedly confided those things **to** infamous Detroit drug kingpin Milton (Butch) Jones when they bunked together at Wayne County Jail in December 2001. Jones took **notes** of their conversations and wrote a letter that month **to** federal prosecutors, possibly **to** receive consideration in his most recent drug case..

The **notes** don't contain any new revelations about the terrorism case, but defense lawyers say they strongly suggest that Hmimssa lied last month when he told a federal judge that he hadn't discussed his case with Jones. The lawyers said the **notes** contain **details** about Hmimssa that Jones wouldn't have known unless Hmimssa told him.

If Hmimssa was lying then, the lawyers contend, then his testimony that three defendants plotted terrorism also is suspect.

"Based **on** the **notes** , it's fairly obvious he lied in his testimony," deputy Federal Defender Richard Helfrick said Wednesday, a day after U.S. District Judge Gerald Rosen gave the **notes to** defense lawyers. "It's just a continuation of the lies he's been telling throughout the proceedings."

Hmimssa provided **details** about his 2001 arrest in Chicago for credit card fraud, how he tricked the Secret Service into believing he would cooperate with them and his impressions about how federal law enforcement officials, with whom he eventually cooperated, were handling the case against his former roommates, two of whom were convicted last June of supporting terrorism. He also said he fooled the FBI about his case, but didn't elaborate.

Defense lawyers have asked for a new trial, saying federal prosecutors withheld evidence helpful **to** the defense, including Jones' **notes** and letter.

Rosen is mulling the request. Soon, he is expected **to give** defense lawyers a transcript of a closed-door hearing in which he questioned Jones about his conversations with Hmimssa.

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