

DRUG GANG CASE MAY END IN DEATH

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Friday, February 7, 2003

Author: DAVID ASHENFELTER FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Federal prosecutors requested the death penalty on Thursday for **Milton** (Butch) **Jones** , cofounder of Young Boys Inc., the notorious Detroit drug gang.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Detroit also requested the death penalty for Raymond Canty and Eugene Mitchell who, with **Jones** , are accused in a drug and murder conspiracy case. The death penalty will be sought only if the men are convicted of any of the killings. The death penalty requests are expected to delay until later this year the trials that were scheduled to begin next month in Detroit federal court.

"The defendant has demonstrated a low potential for rehabilitation," the government said in its death penalty request for **Jones** .

Lawyers for the defendants said they believed the death penalty requests were ordered by U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft, possibly over the objection of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Detroit.

"I'm very disappointed and distressed that the federal government would move to seek the death penalty against someone in Michigan, which abolished the death penalty for state offenses over 150 years ago," said **Jones** ' lawyer, Harold Gurewitz of Detroit.

Canty's lawyer, Richard Lustig of Birmingham, said he doesn't think the U.S. Attorney's Office in Detroit recommended the death penalty, but that Ashcroft demanded it. Lustig said he was basing his opinion on comments the Detroit-based prosecutors made during a video conference with defense lawyers and Justice Department officials three months ago.

Mitchell's lawyer, Anthony Chambers of Detroit, said Ashcroft is trying to "Texanize Michigan" -- imposing the desires of states that have capital punishment laws on those that don't.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph Allen, in Detroit, said regulations prohibit him from discussing the office's recommendation.

Ashcroft has the authority to decide whether to seek the death penalty in federal cases.

As a criminal lawyer, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey Collins represented **Jones** . He opted out of the decision to seek the death penalty against **Jones** .

The Justice Department has authorized death penalty requests before in eastern Michigan, but later rescinded them when the defendants pleaded guilty. One man is on death row in a federal murder case in western Michigan.

Jones , Canty and Mitchell were among 14 people indicted in Detroit in June 2001 on charges of selling heroin, cocaine and marijuana during the 1990s. The gang allegedly used robberies, kidnappings and murders of rival drug traffickers.

Canty allegedly paid Mitchell \$10,000 to kill a competitor, Misha Dorsey, according to the government's request. **Jones** allegedly ordered the killings of rivals Mark Grice and Antoine Carruthers. Carruthers was tortured and shot twice in the head.

Jones was cofounder of Young Boys Inc., the notorious gang that dominated Detroit drug trafficking in the 1980s, by using underage boys as drug runners. **Jones** is credited with creating the model of highly organized drug gangs and has been referred to as the Henry Ford of the drug trafficking industry for revolutionizing the way drugs were sold on the street.

Jones , who served a 10-year prison sentence starting in the 1980s, wrote an autobiography about his time in Young Boys Inc., in 1996.

Contact DAVID ASHENFELTER at 313-223-4490 or ashenf@freepress.com.

Caption: **Milton** (Butch) **Jones** will face the death penalty in federal court.

Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: NWS

Page: 3B

Index Terms: MILTON (BUTCH) JONES; YOUNG BOYS INC ; REQUEST ; DEATH PENALTY

Record Number: 0302070698

Copyright (c) 2003 Detroit Free Press