

DRUG RING FIGURE GETS PRISON TERM

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Author: JOE SWICKARD Free Press Staff Writer

Reputed Young Boys Inc. enforcer Kurt (Kurt **McGurk**) Napier, named Detroit's Public Enemy No. 1 by the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, was sentenced Thursday to 20 to 40 years **in** prison for a 1983 **drug** war **shooting** .

Recorder's Court Judge Donald Hobson handed down the sentence, saying: "I've seen what dope's done to this community over the past 30 years . . . and somebody's got to stop it somewhere. I am not a one-man rampage, but somebody has to do something."

Napier, 20, one of the most notorious members of Young Boys, a Detroit area **drug** ring, was given an 18- to 40-year sentence for assault with intent to murder **in** the May 1983 **shooting** of Gregory Kendricks **in** a **drug** -related dispute. Napier was given another two-year sentence for using a firearm **in** the commission of a felony.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY W. Otis Culpepper, who appeared taken aback by the severity of the sentence, asked Hobson to ignore political pressures and publicity that had portrayed the Napier as "a Dillinger-like creature" and "do what is reasonable."

Napier "can't read, he can't write and he ain't pretty," Culpepper told Hobson, "but they wanted to execute this person **in** public. He's not anybody to brag on, but he was dealt a bad hand at the beginning."

Culpepper said society shared part of the responsibility by tantalizing young urban blacks with material luxuries while denying them the educational and employment opportunities to obtain those luxuries.

Chief Assistant Prosecutor Elliott Hall discounted Culpepper's assertions.

"We beg to differ," Hall said. "Despite problems of equal educational and employment opportunities, Mr. Napier had choices other than crime. His actions and criminal history justifies the sentence."

Hobson was unmoved by Culpepper's argument and said: "You play cards, and you know what to do with a bad hand. You throw it **in** ."

FACING A murder charge and two four-year **drug** sentences, Napier pleaded guilty two weeks ago to the assault and firearms charges for wounding Kendricks **in** the buttocks. Kendricks was shot the same day Joseph (Wamp) Brown was gunned down by two men he allegedly identified before dying as "Mohawk and **McGurk** -- Kurt **McGurk** ."

Napier is charged with first-degree murder **in** the Brown slaying. His first **trial** ended **in** a hung jury last year, and Maurice (Mohawk) Gibbs was acquitted **in** an earlier **trial** .

Brown and Kendricks were shot, authorities said, **in** a last violent outburst by **drug** dealers to settle old scores and forestall the rise of competitors before going to prison.

Hobson said, "It hurts to see a child" with such an extensive criminal record, including five years of involvement with Young Boys Inc.

But Hobson said before the sentencing that he had conducted an informal poll of the city's black funeral home operators to gauge the impact of **drugs** on those who die as teenagers or young adults.

"It is unscientific, but the response was that for people under the age of 26 years, 92 percent died directly or indirectly from narcotics. And that's staggering," Hobson said.

THOSE DEATHS, Hobson said, included overdoses, **drug** war **shootings** , holdups and burglaries that ended **in** death.

Outside court, Culpepper said: "I would just like the punishment to fit the crime, and I don't think it does **in** this case. Maybe this bloodletting will please somebody. Maybe the monster is satisfied. The monster is 'they,' as **in** 'they say Kurt **McGurk** is Public Enemy No. 1,' and 'they say he is a bad man.' "

Napier, then 18, was one of the Young Boys figures indicted by a federal grand jury **in** late 1982. He pleaded guilty but dropped from sight shortly before he was to surrender to federal authorities to serve a four-year prison term. He also **faces** a four-year sentence Hobson imposed **in** an earlier state **drug** case.

Until his arrest **in** November 1983 by suburban police after a high-speed chase, Napier was the object of a massive police search. He was charged, and later acquitted, of trying to murder a police officer while allegedly **shooting** his way out of a police trap.

While Napier was being sought, Detroit police homicide Inspector Gilbert Hill received several letters, signed with Napier's name, that taunted him and threatened him with death.

Culpepper that said Napier was **in** custody during many of those threats and that nothing directly tied his client to them.

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