

REPUTED DRUG ENFORCER SENTENCED IN SLAYING MISSING WITNESSES MEAN LESSER CHARGE

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Reputed drug gang enforcer **Louis McClaine** was sentenced Friday to two years in prison and two years' probation on an assault charge -- reduced from first-degree murder when four crucial witnesses dropped from sight -- for his role in the machine gun slaying of a Detroit narcotics dealer.

McClaine, 23, of Detroit, was allowed to plead guilty last month to charges of assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder and using a firearm in the commission of a felony after the murder case against him collapsed.

"The witnesses could not be located, and we could not proceed without them," said Timothy Kenny, head of the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office repeat offenders bureau.

The witnesses dropped from sight while the murder trial was pending before Recorder's Court Judge M. John Shamo.

McCLAINE was charged with the November 1984 machine gun killing of Richard White in front of White's home in the 600 block of Harmon.

According to earlier testimony, **McClaine** and Dennis (Frank Nitti) Franklin -- both reputed members of the A-Team, the enforcement arm of the Young Boys Inc. drug ring -- confronted White about a narcotics debt owed Franklin.

Witnesses said **McClaine** stood by with a machine gun while Franklin berated and then beat White with a another machine gun.

When White's family tried to intervene, witnesses said, both men opened fire, spraying the house and yard with bullets. White was killed with a bullet from Franklin's gun.

In a separate trial in March, Franklin -- paralyzed from the waist down in an assassination attempt while awaiting trial -- was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to from 60 to 100 years by Recorder's Court Judge James Chylinski.

On Friday, Shamo said sentence guidelines called for a minimum sentence of two to four years on the assault charge but that he supported Kenny's agreement to the two-year prison term followed by two years' probation.

"The ends of justice will be met by this sentence," Shamo said.

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