

## MAN GUILTY OF MURDER , COULD BE SENTENCED TO DEATH

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A federal jury convicted a Detroit **man** Monday **of** first-degree **murder** in a case that **could** result in the first federal **death** sentence in eastern Michigan in 61 years.

The 12-member jury deliberated 14 hours over three days before finding John (Bread) Bass, 34, **guilty of** cocaine trafficking and murdering the hit **man** who killed his half-brother in 1996.

Federal prosecutors accused Bass **of** ordering the killing **of** his half-brother Patrick (Ram) Webb **to** seize control **of** Webb's drug gang, then killing the triggerman, Armenty (Fat Moe) Shelton, **to** cover up Bass' involvement.

The jury convicted Webb **of** Shelton's killing but acquitted him in his half-brother's slaying.

Members **of** Bass' family wept after the verdict but wouldn't discuss it. Neither would federal prosecutors and defense lawyers, saying the case will continue.

"You're not done," U.S. District Judge Arthur Tarnow told the jury after it announced its decision. Tarnow directed jurors **to** return Wednesday **to** hear more testimony so they can decide whether Bass should **be sentenced to** life in prison without parole, or **death** .

Defense lawyers William Daniel and Andrea Lyon said they plan **to** spend Wednesday presenting witnesses **to** try **to** persuade jurors **to** spare Bass' life. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Michael Leibson and Kathryn McCarthy said they won't call any witnesses.

Prosecutors said Bass and Webb ran high-volume cocaine rings in Detroit; Pontiac; Canton, Ohio, and Muncie, Ind., from 1989 **to** 1997. The rings were known as the Dog Pound.

During the 5-day trial, prosecution witnesses testified that they saw Bass kill Shelton, but the evidence that he ordered Webb's killing wasn't as clear.

Michigan has a brief history when it comes **to** federal **death** penalty cases.

In July 1938, a Polish immigrant was hanged at the federal prison in Milan for killing a bystander during a bank robbery in Midland.

In August 1942, Detroit restaurant owner Max Stephan was **sentenced to death** for harboring a Nazi prisoner **of** war. President Franklin D. Roosevelt commuted the sentence **to** life in prison.

Last year, a federal jury in western Michigan **sentenced** Charles Gabrion II **to death** for killing a 19-year-old woman **to** prevent her from testifying against him in a rape case. He's on **death** row at a federal prison in Terre Haute, Ind.

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Caption: Photo

John Bass ran drug rings in Michigan and other states, officials say.

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