

'LESSON TO YOUNG PEOPLE' \ EX-YOUNG BOYS CHIETAN BURIED

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Friday, August 16, 1985

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When **Raymond Peoples** ' steel-gray coffin was shut at 11:11 Thursday morning, a violent chapter in the notorious history of Young Boys Inc. was peacefully -- and almost apologetically - closed.

"Even though he took the wrong course in life, he realized his mistakes and his greatest ambition was to turn his life around," read an obituary about **Peoples** in the funeral program. "Hopefully, **Raymond** 's death will not be in vain, but rather a lesson to all young people, which is the way he would want it to be."

It was a recurring theme throughout the funeral service for **Peoples** , who authorities say was a co-founder and enforcer -- the brains and muscle -- behind Young Boys Inc., the heroin-trafficking ring that reportedly once sold an estimated \$400,000 of heroin a week in Detroit.

Peoples , 29, who was buried in Knollwood Memorial Park in Canton Township after a subdued funeral service at McFall Brothers Funeral Home on Dexter, was gunned down Saturday night on Detroit's west side.

"His efforts and ambitions were always in the interest of young people," read the obituary about the man who developed the drug ring that employed youths between 10 and 14 as bicycle- riding lookouts, drug dealers and street enforcers.

While rain poured from darkened skies outside the funeral home chapel, about 250 friends and family paid their final respects to **Peoples** , who was hunted by police as well as by drug-trade competitors and who was eulogized by Elder E.W. Sealy as "a young man of great talent, leadership and executive ability, whose efforts were misdirected."

PEOPLES , who had been released from federal prison to a halfway house in Detroit about three months ago after pleading guilty in 1983 to conspiracy to distribute heroin, was shot several times in the back as he sat in a car parked in the 2200 block of Sturtevant about 8:30 p.m. Saturday, police said. He died a short time later at Henry Ford Hospital.

Police said a gunman wearing a black hat and shirt and beige shorts walked up to the car, opened fire, and then walked away.

Mr. Sealy, of the City Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church, made several references in his eulogy to reported attempts recently by **Peoples** , the father of three children, to change his ways.

"His early training as a member of the Second Baptist Church and the prayers of a God-fearing mother and others . . . finally caught up with this young man," said Mr. Sealy. "It made him decide to turn his life around. There are probably present some individuals with whom he has talked and tried to convince that the way he had chosen . . . was leading only to ultimate sorrow."

Police said that **Peoples** had not been active in Young Boys since entering prison.

THE OBITUARY in the funeral program described **Peoples** as a youth who was active in church affairs, a member of the Boy Scouts and a graduate of Mackenzie High School.

Near the casket were floral arrangements in the shape of the Bible from "the block club and neighborhood"; in the shape of a heart, from his wife of 13 months, Michelle, and in the shape of a yellow car -- made of daisies -- whose ribbon read, "You were a real one, Ray."

One mourner simply signed the register, "Dude."

"When he got married, we knew he was trying to turn his life around," said Idell Smith, 23, of Detroit, who said she had known **Peoples** for about 10 years.

Ruth Madison, who said that her daughter once dated **Peoples** , called the media accounts of his involvement in Young Boys, "a lot of blown-up baloney."

Although police reported receiving death threats against some of the mourners, the funeral was undisturbed.

"That kingpin image," said a 40-year-old woman who asked not to be identified, " . . . he was more down than he was up. He told me he felt responsible for a lot of things going on today. I told him, 'You created a Frankenstein' and he said 'Yes.' "

"They ride in a Mercedes one year," she said quietly, "and then end up in Knollwood."

Caption: Photo Color CLARENCE TABB JR., Photo WILLIAM ARCHIE

Memo: Page 1; SHORTER VERSION IN METRO FINAL EDITION

Edition: STATE EDITION

Section: NWS

Page: 1A

Index Terms: DEATH ; RAYMOND PEOPLES; DRUG ; CRIME ; AGE

Record Number: 8502020592

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