

POLICE TIE ARREST TO CONTRACT KILLINGS

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The **arrest** of Reginald Brown, whom **police** call a professional hit man, may have smashed the city's only ring of full-time **contract** killers, Detroit **police** said Thursday.

Inspector Joel Gilliam of the narcotics section said Brown, 21, is thought **to** be the founder and leader of the Best Friends street gang.

The gang is "like **contract** killers for drug people," said Gilliam. "If you want somebody killed, these guys **contract to** do it. . . . They are not drug dealers."

Brown's **arrest** is expected **to** "nip in the bud a potentially very dangerous trend -- something like Murder Inc.," Gilliam said.

Brown was charged Wednesday with first-degree murder in the September 1986 slaying of Carlton Journey, 19. Last week, he was charged with first-degree murder in the Sept. 21 **killing** of Steve Rousell, **police** said. Brown faces a preliminary examination Monday in that case and Oct. 28 in Journey's death.

Police records show Brown has two prior convictions for assault and one for delivery of narcotics.

Brown is being held without bond in the Wayne County Jail.

MEANWHILE, ANOTHER **police** official said Thursday that Mark Anthony McCloud, 20, reputed among law enforcement officials **to** be a drug dealer, shot a Detroit man, Michael Braggs, 26, **to** death Sept. 24 over an alleged robbery just one week after being acquitted in an earlier drug-related triple slaying. McCloud has been charged with first-degree murder of Braggs.

"Braggs stole some of (McCloud's) drug money," said Inspector Gerald Stewart of the homicide section. "They kidnapped him out of his house and shot him."

McCloud was acquitted Sept. 17 in the March 2 machine gun slaying of two women and a man on the city's northwest side, but still faces obstruction of justice charges in the case. He is accused of threatening the chief witness against him.

Police officials contend that McCloud is the leader of a west side family that sells crack cocaine. Gilliam called McCloud's gang "known drug dealers" with "a string of dope houses" on the west side.

In addition **to** McCloud, those charged with first-degree murder and related felonies in Braggs' death are George Cheatham, 32, of Detroit; Kenny McCloud, 32, of Detroit; Carl James, 18, of Oak Park, and Scott Crump, 19, of Detroit. All face a preliminary examination Oct. 29.

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