

HUSBAND OF CHAMBERS BROTHERS WITNESS CHARGED IN THREATS

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The estranged husband of a prosecution witness at the **Chambers Brothers** trial has been charged with threatening his wife at gunpoint to discourage her from testifying in the drug case.

Charles Roberts, 21, of Detroit, who was arrested by federal agents Friday and is in the Wayne County jail, faces a detention hearing today before U.S. Magistrate Steven Pepe. Closing arguments are scheduled for today in the Chambers' U.S. District Court trial on charges of running what federal prosecutors say was one of the largest cocaine rings in Detroit history.

According to an affidavit from a federal agent, Roberts approached Janice Roberts, 19, of Detroit, Sept. 30 as she was leaving church about 11:30 a.m., put a handgun to her "head and told her that Larry (Marlow) Chambers had hired three killers to get her for her testimony."

Janice Roberts testified Oct. 5, saying she joined the drug ring in April 1986 and worked after school cutting crack cocaine at different gang houses.

Janice Roberts, who received immunity from prosecution in exchange for her testimony, said she quit the gang at the end of 1986 and fled to Ohio after Larry Chambers' girlfriend, Belinda Lumpkin, threatened to harm her baby.

Lumpkin, one of 10 defendants in the case, apparently suspected Roberts was co-operating with federal agents when she made the threat, Roberts said.

Charles Roberts' attorney, David Steingold, said his client is innocent.

The trial began Sept. 14 and has been marked by heavy courtroom security. The jury is to be sequestered at a downtown hotel during deliberations.

Larry and Billy Joe Chambers face up to life in prison if convicted of leading the cocaine ring. The other two brothers and the remaining defendants face up to 20 years in prison on the drug charges against them.

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