

WERSHE SR. REJECTS DEAL

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ANN ARBOR -- About an hour after rejecting a plea bargain that could have meant a six-month term, **Richard Wershe Sr.** was convicted by a jury Friday of possessing 23 pistol silencers -- a federal offense carrying up to 10 years in prison.

Wershe is the father of **Richard Wershe Jr .**, 18, who is serving a life prison term for possession of eight kilos of cocaine.

The silencers were seized in an October 1987 raid by narcotics officers at the home of the elder **Wershe** 's mother on Detroit's east side.

Attorney William Bufalino II, who represented **Wershe** during the three-day trial before U.S. District Judge George LaPlata, said **Wershe** fired him after turning down the plea bargain.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Larry Bunting declined comment on the proposed plea, which called for **Wershe** to admit to possession of the silencers in return for the dropping of a pending charge against him of threatening a federal agent. **Wershe** would have been sentenced to 18 months in prison, with release coming after he served a third of it, in accord with federal prison rules, Bufalino said.

"I told him about it Thursday night. In the morning I asked him if he'd thought about it and he fired me."

Before the verdict was announced, **Wershe** made a statement in court explaining that he fired Bufalino because the plea discussions were held without him and because Bufalino, Detroit police and the federal government "suppressed important evidence."

Pleading "please give me my rights," **Wershe** said both he and his son have been victims of government persecution.

In his final argument to the jury, Bufalino said that the silencer charge was brought against the elder **Wershe** because of the notoriety of his son, known as White Boy Rick: "They're saying White Boy Rick, he's the bad kid, so we want you, the father, to pay the price."

Wershe is to be sentenced June 10

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