



U.S. Department of Justice

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June 4, 2009

Event: Guilty Verdict

Defendant: Adarus Mazio Black

**DETROIT MAN CONVICTED ON DRUG CONSPIRACY
AND ESCAPE CHARGES**

Adarus Mazio Black, 38, formerly of Detroit, Michigan, was found guilty in two separate trials on charges of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine and more than one thousand kilograms of marijuana and escape from federal custody, United States Attorney Terrence Berg announced today.

Mr. Berg was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Robert Corso, Drug Enforcement Administration and Marshal Robert Grubbs, U.S. Marshals Service, Detroit Office.

The trial on the drug charges began on May 19, 2009 before United States District Judge Marianne O. Battani. The jury deliberated for less than 2 hours before returning the guilty verdict on Friday, May 29, 2009. The trial on the escape charge began on June 1,

2009 and concluded today with the jury deliberating one hour before returning the guilty verdict.

United States Attorney Terrence Berg said, "This case shows the extreme and ugly measures drug traffickers will take to perpetuate their crimes and avoid getting caught – from killing witnesses and cohorts, to undergoing radical plastic surgery, to jumping out of prison vans onto I-94. These measures were not enough to keep Adarus Mazio Black from being brought to justice, however, thanks to the tenacious and untiring work of the DEA and the prosecutors of this case."

DEA Special Agent in Charge Robert L. Corso stated, "This is an important conviction, and is a prime example of the level of violator that is targeted by the DEA. Not only was this man a major drug dealer and responsible for multiple murders, but there were no limits to what he would do to avoid arrest and capture. This investigation took an abundance of patience and due diligence in order to come to this successful outcome, and metropolitan Detroit is a safer place with Adarus Mazio Black behind bars, hopefully for a very long time."

The evidence at the drug conspiracy trial showed that the defendant trafficked in hundreds of kilograms of cocaine and thousands of pounds of marijuana, generating millions of dollars in drug proceeds. On April 25, 2007, authorities seized over \$2.5 million of Black's drug proceeds in Tucson, Arizona.

The evidence at trial also showed that Black committed three murders of individuals he feared could testify against him. Federal authorities obtained an undercover video of a meeting between Black's partner and an informant, during which Black's partner stated that Black had killed a man because the man "had seen [Black's] face."

After the commission of these murders in Detroit, Black moved his drug operation to Tucson, but continued to ship thousands of pounds of marijuana to Detroit for distribution. Black then shipped millions of dollars back to Arizona in the undercarriages of buses carrying people he paid to pose as passengers.

Black used various aliases and obtained fraudulent drivers licenses in various names in Michigan, Arizona, and California. When Black left Detroit after he commissioned the murder of a federal informant in 2005, he went to Mexico and underwent a series of plastic surgeries to change the appearance of his face to avoid arrest and prosecution. Black also had his fingerprints surgically removed in Mexico to make his identification by law enforcement impossible. Black paid the surgeon in cash.

Black was arrested posing as one "Kevin Collins," in Corona, California, on October 25, 2007, by a Deputy U.S. Marshal from Detroit. Seized from Black's hideout were \$20,000 cash and a money counting machine.

The evidence at the trial on the escape charges, which concluded today, showed that on April 8, 2008, while in pretrial custody on his federal drug charges, Black leapt from a moving prisoner transport vehicle, while handcuffed and shackled, on Interstate I-94 and attempted to escape from the U.S. Marshals. At trial, Black testified and claimed that he jumped from the van because he was under duress and feared that U.S. Marshals were plotting to kill him.

Black is scheduled to be sentenced on September 8, 2009 at 3:00 pm.

Black faces a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of 20 years up to life on the drug charges and up to five years imprisonment on the escape charge, to be served consecutively. The actual sentence imposed if convicted would depend on a number of factors, including the defendant's criminal record (if any), and advisory Sentencing Guidelines.

The case was investigated by special agents of the DEA Drug Homicide Task Force and deputies from the U.S. Marshals Service. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys J. Michael Buckley and Daniel Lemisch.