

NEWS

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Willingboro Man Sentenced to 288 Months in Federal Prison for Two Gunpoint Bank Robberies

(More)

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CAMDEN – A 19-year-old Willingboro man was sentenced today to 288 months in federal prison for committing two armed and violent bank robberies, during one of which he discharged a firearm into a car he was attempting to steal, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Renée Marie Bumb also ordered Cordell Maurice Bines, formerly of Philadelphia, to pay restitution of \$46,348, representing the money stolen from the bank robberies and damage to property during the commission of other crimes. Bines was returned to federal custody, where he has been since his arrest on April 12, 2007.

At his plea hearing on Sept. 4, 2007, Bines pleaded guilty before Judge Bumb to a three-count Information, which charged him with two counts of bank robbery and one count of using, carrying and discharging a firearm during and in relation to the commission of a crime of violence.

“It seems that it was only a matter of time before someone was killed by Bines as his crimes escalated in intensity and violence,” said Christie. “The long sentence is very appropriate.”

Under the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, Bines faced a sentencing range of between 255 and 288 months in prison, and Judge Bumb sentenced him at the top of that range.

Bines admitted that on April 6, 2007, he robbed a Farmers & Mechanics Bank branch in Willingboro of approximately \$13,120. In committing the robbery, Bines admitted that he assaulted a bank teller by punching him. Bines also admitted that on April 12, 2007, he and an individual known to him as “Little Guy” robbed a Farmers & Mechanics Bank branch in Eastampton of approximately \$11,170. Bines admitted he again assaulted another bank teller by punching and kicking him.

Bines admitted that during both bank robberies, he was armed with a revolver and vaulted the bank counters while taking control over customers and bank employees through threats and use of physical violence. Bines admitted that the physical violence included kicking, punching and the pointing of firearms at victims, which put the life of another person in jeopardy.

Furthermore, Bines admitted that while escaping from the April 12 bank robbery, he fired a shot into a vehicle that he was attempting to steal from the owner. Bines admitted that after the failed carjacking attempt, he committed a home invasion in Eastampton, during which he assaulted a 59-year-old woman, locked her in a closet, and stole her vehicle.

Police were able to locate the stolen vehicle, which Bines was driving, through the vehicle's OnStar™ system. Bines then led North Hanover Township Police on a pursuit which ended when Bines crashed the stolen vehicle.

In imposing sentence, Judge Bumb took into consideration all the criminal conduct – so-called “relevant conduct” – not explicitly included in the charges to which Bines pleaded guilty.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Bumb consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, was not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI's South Jersey Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge J.P. Weis in Philadelphia, the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office, under the direction of Prosecutor Robert D. Bernardi, the Eastampton Police Department, under the direction of Chief Gerald D. Mingin, the Willingboro Police Department, under the direction of Public Safety Director Gregory Rucker, and the North Hanover Police Department, under the direction of Chief Mark Keubler, with the investigation of the case.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew Skahill of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: Christopher O'Malley, Esq. Asst. Federal Public Defender