

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
401 Market Street, Fourth Floor
Camden, New Jersey 08101



Ralph J. Marra, Jr., Acting U.S. Attorney

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Assistant U.S. Attorneys
HOWARD WIENER
DIANA CARRIG
856-968-4926 and 856-968-4927, respectively

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Member of Camden Drug Organization Pleads Guilty to Conspiracy to Distribute Cocaine

(More)

Greg Reinert, PAO
Public Affairs Office

856-757-5233
973-645-2888

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CAMDEN – A Camden man pleaded guilty today for his role as a member of a major cocaine distribution organization in Camden, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr. announced.

Melvin Brown, 33, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Joseph E. Irenas to Count One of an Indictment, which was returned on April 25, 2007, that charges him with conspiring with Mack Jones, 35, a.k.a “Bear,” of Camden, and others to distribute and to possess with intent to distribute five or more kilograms of powder cocaine. Judge Irenas scheduled sentencing for Aug. 18.

At his plea hearing, Brown admitted that in 2001 and 2002, he performed various tasks for Jones in connection with the operation of Jones' drug trafficking organization. The evidence presented during Jones's trial last year, which resulted in Jones's conviction, established that by 2001 Jones had become a major drug dealer who sold kilogram quantities of cocaine to various customers. Furthermore, Jones was supplied with kilograms of cocaine by Raymond Morales, Brown admitted.

According to the Indictment, before Jones went to prison in January 2003 he gave Brown and other members of his drug-trafficking organization a cell phone to use to continue to purchase kilograms of cocaine from Morales. Brown admitted that in early 2003, he discussed with Morales the delivery of cocaine to the Jones drug-trafficking organization.

On March 7, 2008, after seven hours of deliberations, a jury convicted Jones, along with Jevon Lewis, 33, a.k.a. “V” and “Cool V,” of Cherry Hill, and Ahmed Judge, 31, a.k.a. “Edy” and “Bleek,” of Camden, of one count each of drug distribution conspiracy. Lewis and Judge were also convicted of one count each of murder while engaged in that conspiracy and murder in the course of a firearms offense. Judge was also convicted of one count of possession of a firearm by a previously convicted felon, for possessing the murder weapon. Currently, Jones is scheduled to be sentenced on for June 9, at which he faces a mandatory life sentence due to his two prior felony drug convictions.

Morales, 35, of Camden, who was the leader of a major Camden cocaine Continuing Criminal Enterprise (“CCE”), pleaded guilty on July 27, 2005, to a nine-count Superseding Information. The Superseding Information, which was unsealed on May 9, 2007, charged Morales with six counts of ordering a murder in the furtherance of a CCE; one count of witness tampering by ordering the attempted murder of a witness; one count of distribution and possession with intent to distribute over 500 grams of cocaine; and one count of being a principal administrator of a CCE that operated in Camden.

The charge to which Brown pleaded guilty carries a mandatory minimum penalty of 10 years in prison and a maximum penalty of life imprisonment with a fine of up to \$4 million.

In determining an actual sentence, Judge Irenas will consult 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, is 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.

Marra credited Special Agents of the DEA, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Gerard P. McAleer, in Newark, and Investigators with the Camden County Prosecutor's Office Homicide Unit, along with member agencies of the Philadelphia/Camden HIDTA Task Force, under the direction of Camden County Prosecutor Warren W. Faulk, and ATF Philadelphia Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Mark Potter, with developing the investigation which resulted in the various Indictments.

The Philadelphia/Camden HIDTA Task Force comprises the U.S. Attorneys' Offices for the Districts of New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania, The Camden County Prosecutor's Office, Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, DEA, FBI, ATF, Camden Police Department, New Jersey State Police, Philadelphia Police Department, New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice, Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office, Camden County Sheriff's Department, Delaware River Port Authority Police and the U.S. Marshal's Service.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Howard Wiener and Diana V. Carrig of the U.S. Attorney's Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: James R. Murphy, Esq. Princeton