



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

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For Immediate Release

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## **MEMBERS OF VIOLENT DRUG ORGANIZATION CHARGED WITH 12 MURDERS**

### **Indictment Charges Kaboni Savage With Arson Murders Of Family Of Six**

PHILADELPHIA - United States Attorney Laurie Magid, FBI Special Agent-in-Charge Janice Fedarcyk, Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham, Philadelphia Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey and IRS Acting Special Agent-in-Charge Troy Stemen today announced the filing of a 26-count superseding indictment<sup>1</sup> against Kaboni Savage, Lamont Lewis, Robert Merritt, and Steven Northington, charging each with conspiring to participate in a long-term, large-scale violent drug trafficking enterprise that operated primarily in the North Philadelphia area from at least late 1997 to August 2007 (“RICO” conspiracy). The superseding indictment alleges that Savage retaliated against his former associate, Eugene Coleman, who cooperated with federal law enforcement by promising to testify against him in a federal drug trial<sup>2</sup>, by firebombing Coleman’s family home on the 3200 block of N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, in Philadelphia, during the early morning hours of October 9, 2004. Killed in the fire were Coleman’s mother, Marcella Coleman (age 54); Coleman’s infant son, Damir Jenkins (15 months old); Marcella Coleman’s niece, Tameka Nash (age 34), and her daughter, Khadjah Nash (age 10); Marcella Coleman’s grandson Tahj Porchea (age 12); and a family friend, Sean Rodriguez (age 15).

The superseding indictment also charges Savage with 11 counts of murder in aid of racketeering activity and one count of conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering activity; Lewis with seven counts of murder in aid of racketeering activity, one count of conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering activity, and one count of assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering activity; Merritt with six counts of murder in aid of racketeering activity and one count of conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering

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<sup>1</sup>An Indictment or Information is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

<sup>2</sup> Savage and Northington were convicted at that trial along with three other defendants. Criminal No. 04 269.

activity; and Northington with two counts of murder in aid of racketeering activity. The superseding indictment further charges Savage, Lewis, and Merritt with tampering with and retaliating against witnesses, and using fire to commit a felony. Lewis is also charged with one count of interstate travel to commit murder-for-hire, two counts of use and carrying of a firearm in relation to a crime of violence, one count of use and carrying a firearm in relation to a drug trafficking crime, and four counts of distribution of “crack” cocaine base. The superseding indictment further alleges numerous explicit threats by the defendants to intimidate and dissuade witnesses from cooperating with law enforcement authorities.

“Kaboni Savage and his associates have repeatedly demonstrated a ruthless disregard for human life,” said Magid. “The twelve murders charged here involved cold blooded and calculated actions. We will prosecute these violent organizations - not only for their illegal drug trafficking - but also for their violent actions and we will not stop until we have achieved justice for all of their victims.”

“The FBI remains firmly committed to addressing the violence and crime that plague our neighborhoods, by not only apprehending those responsible for criminal activity but also by working to dismantle the gangs that use violence and murder to further their own criminal interests,” said Special Agent in Charge of the FBI’s Philadelphia Division Janice K. Fedarczyk. “Kaboni Savage and the others named in this indictment represent the worst of violent offenders in our city who must never be allowed to again terrorize and murder innocent citizens.”

The superseding indictment also alleges the following murders and shootings:

- ▶ the March 19, 1998, murder of Kenneth Lassiter, age 44, of Lansdale, PA, by Kaboni Savage, near the corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Butler Streets in Philadelphia;
- ▶ the August 2, 2000 murder of Mansur “Shafiq” Abdullah, age 22, of 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, by Kaboni Savage and Kareem Bluntly (now deceased). Abdullah was shot and his burned body was later recovered in the 4200 block of North Park Avenue, in Philadelphia;
- ▶ the September 13, 2001 murder of Carlton “Mohammed” Brown, age 27, of Darien Street, Philadelphia, by Lamont Lewis, at 2800 South 64<sup>th</sup> Street, in Philadelphia;
- ▶ the February 26, 2003 murder of Barry Parker, age 32, of Susquehanna Avenue, Philadelphia, by Kaboni Savage and Steven Northington, in the 3900 block of North Franklin Street, in Philadelphia;
- ▶ the March 14, 2003 murder of Tyrone Toliver, age 26, of Cherry Hill, NJ, by Kaboni Savage and Kareem Bluntly, in the 3500 block of North Palmetto Street in Philadelphia;

- ▶ the March 1, 2004 murder of Tybius Flowers, age 32, of K Street, by Kaboni Savage and Steven Northington, in the 3700 block of N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Philadelphia; and
- ▶ the July 25, 2007, shooting of AS, age 59, by Lamont Lewis, in North Philadelphia.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANTS

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR DATE OF BIRTH
KABONI SAVAGE	In federal custody, formerly of Darien Street, Philadelphia, PA	34
LAMONT LEWIS	In federal custody, formerly of Washington Avenue, Philadelphia, PA	32
ROBERT MERRITT	In federal custody, formerly of Alden Street, Philadelphia, PA	28
STEVEN NORTHINGTON	In federal custody, formerly of Wilkes Barre, PA	37

If convicted of all counts, each defendant faces a sentence of death or mandatory life imprisonment.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, the Philadelphia Police Department, the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, and the Maple Shade, New Jersey Police Department. The United States Bureau of Prisons, the United States Marshals Service, and HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) also assisted in the investigation. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys David E. Troyer and Christine E. Sykes.

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