



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
District of Minnesota

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**SEVEN MEMBERS OF MINNEAPOLIS-BASED GANG CHARGED IN 31-COUNT
INDICTMENT WITH CONSPIRACY TO DISTRIBUTE CRACK COCAINE
THROUGHOUT MINNESOTA**

United States Attorney Andrew M. Luger, Minneapolis Police Chief Janeé Harteau and FBI Special Agent in Charge Richard Thornton today announced a federal indictment charging seven members of the Taliban gang and the Young N Thuggin (YNT) gang with conspiring to distribute crack cocaine in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota.¹ The defendants include both leaders and other members of the two gangs. They are charged with conspiracy to distribute cocaine base (crack) and distribution of crack.

“Late last year we indicted more than a dozen members of two violent Minneapolis gangs, the 19-Dipset and Stick Up Boys,” said U.S. Attorney Luger. “We are today announcing a new indictment of their main rivals. Leaders and members of the Taliban and YNT are charged with using violence and intimidation to control a drug distribution operation stretching from Minneapolis to Fargo. Working closely with our law enforcement partners, we are continuing to investigate and stop drug dealers and the violence that too often accompanies their illegal activity.”

Minneapolis Police Chief Janeé Harteau said: “Today we see the results of a long term investigation into a violent street gang that has plagued the streets of Minneapolis for too long. As a result of our collaborative partnerships with our state and federal partners, several members of that gang are facing federal indictments for their long history of criminal activity. Today we say thank you to all of our partners for helping to make Minneapolis a safer city.”

“The FBI remains committed to combating gang violence and in keeping our streets safe,” said FBI Special Agent in Charge Richard Thornton. “Keeping citizens free from the specter of gang violence is a priority for the FBI and its local partners which comprise the Minnesota Safe Streets Task Force. The FBI and its partners in the Minnesota Safe Streets Task Force will

¹ The charges contained in the indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

continue to collaborate in targeting the worst offenders when it comes to gang violence in Minnesota."

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Superintendent Wade Setter said: "The BCA is committed to supporting multi-agency operations such as this. Today's events come as a result of our successful collaboration."

According to the indictment and documents filed in court, between January and December 2014, the defendants were organizers and members of two closely associated street gangs, the Taliban and the YNT. Some of the indicted co-conspirators had more influence in the gang, based on their seniority and criminal activity. The gang members use hand gestures, social media, and specific language to communicate amongst each other and to convey membership. They claim an area of north Minneapolis as their territory, and other north Minneapolis gangs, including the 19-Dipset and Stick Up Boys, as enemies.

According to the indictment and documents filed in court, the Taliban and YNT are organized for the purpose of making money by trafficking in illegal drugs, among other criminal activity. Members of the Taliban and YNT frequently travel to St. Cloud and Duluth, Minnesota, and to Fargo, North Dakota, to sell crack. Crack that the Taliban and YNT could sell in Minneapolis for \$20 could be sold for \$50 in Greater Minnesota and in North Dakota. Similarly, an amount of crack cocaine sold for \$150 in the Metro area would sell for between \$220 and \$250 in Greater Minnesota.

According to the indictment and documents filed in court, some of the members of the gang carry guns to protect themselves and their money while trafficking crack cocaine. They also use guns to both protect against attacks by rival gangs and to retaliate violently to threats or assaults by their rivals. Their use of weapons is intended to gain street supremacy and further the gang's ability to sell illegal drugs.

The indictment is the result of an investigation conducted by the Safe Streets Task Force, which is comprised of federal and local law enforcement agencies, including, but not limited to, the FBI, Minneapolis Police Department, Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and St. Paul Police Department. The St. Cloud Violent Crimes Task Force and the St. Cloud Police Department were a critical part of this investigation.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David Steinkamp.

Defendant Information:

LOUIS LEE FRASIER BANKS, a/k/a "G.I.," 25
Anoka County Jail

Charges:

- Conspiracy to Distribute Crack Cocaine, 1 count
- Distribution of Cocaine Base, 10 counts

- Possession with Intent to Distribute Cocaine Base, 1 count
- Possession of a Firearm During and in Relation to a Drug Trafficking Crime, 1 count
- Felon in Possession of a Firearm, 1 count

CARNEL LAVEL HARRISON, a/k/a “Boo Man,” 26
Unknown

Charges:

- Conspiracy to Distribute Crack Cocaine, 1 count
- Distribution of Cocaine Base, 4 counts
- Felon in Possession of a Firearm, 2 counts
- Distribution of Heroin, 1 count

DEJUAN PIERRE DARKYSE WASHINGTON, a/k/a “DJ,” 23
Unknown

Charges:

- Conspiracy to Distribute Crack Cocaine, 1 count
- Distribution of Cocaine Base, 3 counts
- Felon in Possession of a Firearm, 1 count

TERRELL VONSHAY ROBERSON, a/k/a “Get Right,” a/k/a “Slim,” 18
Unknown

Charges:

- Conspiracy to Distribute Crack Cocaine, 1 count
- Distribution of Cocaine Base, 5 counts
- Distribution of Heroin, 1 count

LAQUEDRICK LEMEL AS-SIDIQ, a/k/a “Quady,” a/k/a “C,” 25
Unknown

Charges:

- Conspiracy to Distribute Crack Cocaine, 1 count
- Distribution of Cocaine Base, 4 counts

DONTE TRAMAYNE SMITH, a/k/a “Five,” 25
Unknown

Charges:

- Conspiracy to Distribute Crack Cocaine, 1 count
- Distribution of Cocaine Base, 4 counts

CORTEZ DAVON BLAKEMORE, a/k/a “Tez,” 24

Minneapolis, Minn.

Charges:

- Felon in Possession of a Firearm

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