

## Hartford gang leader to be retried after hung jury

By Dave Collins

A hung jury in a murder case has dealt a blow to Connecticut prosecutors targeting a Hartford man who police say led an unusually violent street gang with a “hit squad” that was involved in numerous shootings and drug dealing in the city’s North End in 2007 and 2008.

Prosecutors intend to retry the case in February against Donald Raynor, 29, for the death of Delano Gray, 22.

A Hartford Superior Court judge declared a mistrial Tuesday because jurors couldn’t reach a unanimous verdict. Raynor remains detained on bail. He faces five other cases involving attempted murder and assault charges, in addition to two firearms cases.

City police allege Raynor, whose nickname was “Amen,” was the leader of the Money Green/Bedroc gang that controlled a nine-block-long area north of downtown Hartford. Police say Gray was a member of a rival gang, The Ave, and was killed in a

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Attorney for the Defense

drive-by shooting in June 2007 in what witnesses told police was a war between the two gangs.

A report released last December in a rare state grand jury investigation found probable cause to charge Raynor and other members of the Money Green/Bedroc gang with murder and attempted murder in several shootings. The report said Raynor apparently “is feared by rival gang members and members of the community, both because of a propensity for violence

with firearms and a devoted following he enjoys among Money Green/Bedroc members.”

In one of the worst incidents of violence in Hartford that police can remember, members of Money Green/Bedroc and the West Hell gangs got into a shootout at the end of the annual West Indian Day parade in August 2008, the grand jury report says. Money Green/Bedroc member

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Ezekiel Roberts was killed and six others were injured, including a 15-month-old girl and a 7-year-old boy. Raynor wasn't charged in the shootout.

Police say the parade shooting came weeks after Raynor and a fellow gang member tried to kill two West Hell members. An informant told police that after Roberts' death, he, Raynor and other Money Green/Bedroc members shot several West Hell members in retaliation, the grand jury report says.

Raynor has pleaded not guilty in all the cases against him. His lawyer, Norman Pattis, criticized the grand jury report.

"The grand jury report is an untested joke," Pattis said in an email to The Associated Press on Wednesday. "No one tested the evidence presented with cross examination."

Pattis added: "A jury heard what the state regards as its best case and could not convict."

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Patrick Griffin, the prosecutor in Raynor's murder trial and the grand jury investigation, didn't return messages seeking comment Wednesday.

Raynor had drug connections that sent kilograms of crack cocaine and heroin onto city streets and set up a hit squad to take care of rivals, the report says.

One reputed Money Green/Bedroc

member, Jose Rivera, is serving a 42-year prison sentence for a 2011 murder. He testified for the prosecution at Raynor's murder trial, saying he was with Raynor when Gray was killed and hoped his testimony led to a reduction in his prison sentence.

Police say Money Green/Bedroc enjoyed a long run under Raynor, but fell apart after Raynor and other gang leaders were arrested.

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