



'Junior' Gotti's mother lashes out at feds

'They're trying to kill him before trial!' she yells at NYC court hearing

The Associated Press

updated 5:34 p.m. ET, Fri., May 1, 2009

NEW YORK - The mother of Gambino crime family heir John "Junior" Gotti interrupted a hearing on her son's racketeering case Friday by telling a federal judge that the government is trying to kill him before he even gets to trial.

"Why don't you just hang him now!" Victoria Gotti shouted from the spectator section of a room in U.S. District Court in Manhattan.

She spoke out after Judge Kevin P. Castel asked lawyers at the end of the pretrial hearing whether there were any other matters to address.

"Excuse me, you honor, may I speak?" she asked as she stood up. "I'm his mother." The judge asked if she was a party to the proceedings. When she said she was not, he told her she could not speak.

Still, she asked him what he thought about perjury — a reference to claims a mob turncoat made that he had slept with her daughter, also named Victoria, the former star of the reality TV series "Growing up Gotti."

Then she made the reference to the hanging of her son and added: "They're trying to kill him before trial!"

Outside court she passed out copies of a lie-detector test in which the younger Victoria Gotti said she never slept with the turncoat, John Alite, a Gambino family associate.

She also told reporters that the government was trying to ruin her daughter's reputation in pursuit of a conviction of Gotti, 44.

"This trial is rigged before he sets foot in it," she said.

'A well-known name'

Before Victoria Gotti's outburst, the judge had rejected Gotti's request to have a public defender added to the case to assist his lawyer, Charles Carnesi. Castel said his review of Gotti's assets left him doubting he would qualify for a lawyer at taxpayer expense.

Carnesi said three trials for Gotti had taken a toll on the family's finances, forcing him to take out a \$250,000 loan at 14 percent interest.

Carnesi explained the high interest rate, saying: "Mr. Gotti's name, for better or worse, is a well-known name which causes lenders pause before they're willing to make a loan to him."

He said Gotti had to spend \$75,000 of the loan toward credit cards that have been used to pay the family's living expenses.

Carnesi told the judge he will file papers asking that the latest indictment be thrown out.

He said the charges brought in August were "from my view, basically the same indictment" as Gotti's previous three trials. Prosecutors have said Gotti assumed control of the powerful Gambino family after his father's 1992 conviction on racketeering and murder charges. His father died in prison.

'Hell without an asbestos suit'

The current indictment accuses Gotti of involvement in three slayings in the late 1980s and early 1990s and of possessing and trafficking more than 5 kilograms of cocaine.

Gotti is being held at a federal lockup in Brooklyn. He has been tried three times in Manhattan on racketeering charges for an alleged plot to kidnap Guardian Angels civilian patrol founder Curtis Sliwa. Trials in 2005 and 2006 ended in hung juries and mistrials after Gotti's lawyers argued he had long since retired from organized crime.

Federal prosecutors announced after the third trial that they were giving up.

The hearing Friday was attended by Sliwa, who wore his red Guardian Angels jacket.

Sliwa, who testified at the earlier trials about the kidnapping attempt, which left him with bullet wounds and continuing injuries, said he won't be satisfied until Gotti "follows his father to hell without an asbestos suit."

He noted that Castel is different from the judge who presided over Gotti's earlier trials and suggested it will make a difference in the outcome.

"He's got a tough judge, a no-nonsense judge," Sliwa said. "He's been stripped of his guardian angel."

More on: [John "Junior" Gotti](#)

Copyright 2009 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

URL: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/30522296/>

[MSN Privacy](#) . [Legal](#)

© 2009 MSNBC.com