

# Moguls beat laundering case

NEW YORK (AP) - A hip hop music producer who cultivated a gangster image by taking the last name "Gotti" finally has something in common with the late Teflon Don: an acquittal.

A federal jury in Brooklyn found Irving "Irv Gotti" Lorenzo and his brother Christopher not guilty Friday of laundering piles of drug money for a notorious crack kingpin.

Jurors also acquitted the Lorenzos' record company, until recently known as Murder Inc., at a trial that was followed closely by some of the music industry's big stars.

Supporters in the gallery erupted in cheers after the acquittals were announced. Amid the jubilation, a small group of jurors asked that the Lorenzos and their mother be taken into an antechamber with them so they could congratulate them in private.

Irving Lorenzo's two lawyers then carried him out of



Murder Inc. rap record label head Irving 'Irv Gotti' Lorenzo, right, and his brother and business partner Christopher Lorenzo, exit Brooklyn federal court, on the second day of jury deliberations in their trial on money laundering on Friday in New York City.

the courthouse as he shouted: "We did it! We did it!"

Minutes later, he threw his arms around juror Gloria Menzies, who called the

brothers "my boys" and invited Irving to attend church with her.

"They had nothing to pin on these two guys," Menzies

said. "It was so weak."

Beaming, Lorenzo accepted her invitation and said the trial had brought him

(See Gotti, Page 4)

# Lionel Tate threatens suicide, hearing set

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)— Facing a possible life prison sentence, convicted child killer Lionel Tate won postponement of a Monday probation violation hearing after writing a letter to the presiding judge claiming that he is "hearing voices" and has contemplated suicide.

Broward County Circuit Judge Joel T. Lazarus granted Tate's handwritten request for a psychological examination and set a competency hearing for Dec. 19, which will determine whether Tate is capable of understanding the charges against him and their consequences.

Tate, once the youngest person in modern U.S. history sentenced to life in prison, is on probation for the 1999 killing of 6-year-old Tiffany Eunick, which happened when Tate was 12. Tate's lawyers initially claimed he accidentally killed the girl while imitating professional wrestling moves he saw on television.

Tate, now 18, is accused of violating terms of probation by allegedly robbing a pizza delivery man at gunpoint in May and possessing weapons, either of which could return him to prison for life. If Tate is found competent, his probation violation hearing would likely be rescheduled sometime in January.

In his letter to Lazarus dated Thursday, Tate com-

plained that his public defender, H. Dohn Williams, "doesn't know my mental condition" even though "I stated to him before that I was hearing voices and that I wanted to kill myself."

Tate also cited a Florida law by statute number requiring a psychological evaluation upon request, adding that Williams "stated to me that I don't have a problem. He is my attorney, not a doctor."

Asked to comment on Tate's claims, Williams said, "I can't tell you what Lionel thinks." Williams said a psychologist examined Tate over the weekend, but those preliminary results are confidential.

Broward County prosecutors declined comment.

Tate was found competent for legal purposes before he reached his plea agreement on second-degree murder charges in January 2004. That plea came three years after Tate's initial first-degree murder conviction and life sentence.

They were later thrown out by a Florida appeals court, in part because it was unclear from the court record whether Tate understood what was happening to him before and during trial when he was 13.

Tate has not attempted suicide in the Broward County jail, said sheriff's spokeswoman Liz Calzadilla-Fiallo. But he has had disciplinary problems

including belligerence, refusal to cooperate and "physical altercations and horseplay," she said, including an August incident in which he broke a jail window after repeatedly banging his fist on it. Tate has been charged with criminal mischief in that case.

Tate has also complained about his treatment by jail guards, which Calzadilla-Fiallo said is being investi-

gated by the Broward Sheriff's Office professional compliance unit. She declined to provide details of any incidents.

Last week, Tate wrote to Lazarus asking the judge to impose a media gag order and move the probation proceedings to a new location, arguing that intense publicity has made a fair hearing impossible. The judge refused that request.

# Residents return to Crescent City

NEW ORLEANS (AP) - A husband and wife who waited three months to see what Hurricane Katrina did to their neighborhood finally returned Thursday to find their blue, wood-frame house sitting in the front yard, three feet off its foundation.

Louis Phillips and Donna Williams were among those allowed access to the Lower Ninth Ward for the first time since Katrina struck Aug. 29. It was the last section the city to re-open, because of the maze of destruction wrought by the storm and floods after the London Avenue Canal levee breach.

Residents were allowed in for the day to collect what belongings they could before leaving. Until now, people had been able to view the destruction only on bus tours.

A long line of cars waited to pass a checkpoint at a school where the Red Cross was handing out water and snacks and providing mental health counselors to those who wanted them. Police officers and firefighters warned those entering that there was still dangerous debris and buildings on the verge of collapse.

Williams first tried to enter a house next door that the couple had been renovating, but she stopped at the front door.

"There's a lot of debris and dirt and nails on the floor," she said, fighting back tears.

Phillips tore the door off the other residence, entered and began tossing out clothes still in plastic dry cleaning bags, along with bits of furniture destroyed by floodwaters.

"Don't throw them out here," Williams said to her husband. "I don't want to look at them."

Frank Wingate, who had returned to inspect his mother's property, found her refrigerator balanced on the edge of a rooftop where it had floated during the flood. It was held partially in place by some of the few power lines that had not snapped during the storm.

"I don't think you're ever prepared," said Greg Pigford, a Salvation Army chaplain who accompanied some of the returning residents. "You can see it on TV, but when you see it for the first time up close, what was your home, it's a jolt."

The Lower Ninth Ward, one of the city's poorest sections, is part of the 40 percent of the city still without power, three months after Katrina hit. Thousands of

(See Return, Page 6)

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