

Jury finds Hills man guilty of bribery

Two western Wayne County ex-Teamster officials are scheduled to be sentenced later this year following an eight-month trial that ended Friday in federal court.

Richard Fitzsimmons, 56, of Livonia, and Charles Collins, 42, of Plymouth, were convicted of racketeering and bribery charges by District Court Judge Ralph M. Freeman. Fitzsimmons is the son of the late

International Teamsters President Frank Fitzsimmons.

Fitzsimmons was convicted on one count each of conspiracy, racketeering and bribery. Collins was convicted on one count of racketeering, one count of conspiracy and four counts of bribery.

Roger Towne, 52, of Farmington Hills, also was found guilty of conspiracy and bribery charges and con-

spiracy to violate racketeering laws. Towne, who operates health care firms in the Metro Detroit area, was convicted of a racketeering charge. He, too, will be sentenced later this year.

THE CONVICTIONS stem from the awarding of Michigan Conference of Teamsters health care contracts in 1979. Fitzsimmons and Col-

lins were convicted in a scheme to steer union business to Delaware Professional Services Inc., a Chicago-based health-care company, in return for cash kickbacks and lavish vacations.

Towne was associated with Delaware Professional Services, which was awarded the health care contract in 1979.

The company received contracts

worth more than \$19 million from the Michigan Conference of Teamsters Welfare Fund. Collins was executive director of the fund. He is now in prison for lying to a grand jury that investigated the racketeering scheme. He was forced to resign his job after his conviction.

Fitzsimmons, who was forced to resign as vice-president of Teamsters Local 219 in 1980 after being convicted of accepting bribes, was fund administrator. Sentenced to 30 months in prison, he was paroled after 15 months. Both Fitzsimmons and Towne are free on bond pending sentencing by Judge Freeman.

THE CONTRACTS with Delaware provided more than 28,000 Michigan union members with medical, dental and optical benefits.

Each count of conspiracy and racketeering, under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) Act, carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$20,000 fine. The maximum sentence for a bribery conviction is three years and a fine of \$10,000.

The trial is the longest criminal prosecution in Federal Court in Detroit during the past 10 years. The three men were charged in a 40-page indictment in 1984. Also charged were Terrance Porter, 46, of Dearborn and Sol C. Schwartz, 68, of Chicago.

Porter was acquitted on charges of racketeering, conspiracy and bribery. Schwartz was acquitted of one racketeering charge but found guilty of racketeering conspiracy.

FEDERAL officials said the kickback scheme involved union funds from 1978 to 1982 and was uncovered by the FBI during secret tape recordings of Chicago businessmen

Allen Dorfman.

Dorfman, suspected by federal authorities of being a link between the Teamsters and organized crime, was fatally shot in the parking lot of suburban Chicago hotel in January 1983.

The tape recordings were played in court because Dorfman was named as an undetected co-conspirator in the case, along with Edward Brown, who owned Delaware Professional Services. Brown died of cancer two weeks before the Dec. 21, 1984 indictment.

4 suspected in Hills stickups

Four men have been charged in the armed robberies of three Farmington Hills fast-food restaurants Aug. 18-30.

Arraigned Aug. 30 before District Judge Michael Hand of Farmington, Damon Keith Lapsley, 25, of Detroit, pleaded not guilty to one count of

armed robbery and one count of possession of a firearm in the commission of a felony. Both charges stem from a stickup at Taco Bell, Eight and Grand River, Aug. 18.

Cash or surety bond was set at \$25,000, 10 percent of which was posted to gain release pending a pre-

liminary examination in 47th District Court. If convicted, Lapsley faces up to life in prison on the first charge and a mandatory two-year prison term on the second charge.

Arraigned Sept. 15 before Judge Hand, Dorlan Lamarr Price, 21, of Detroit, stood mute to one count of armed robbery for alleged involvement in a stickup at Wendy's, 12 Mile and Orchard Lake, Aug. 15. An innocent plea was entered in his behalf. Personal bond was set at \$5,000 pending a preliminary exam.

WARRANTS HAVE been issued charging Robert McKinley Gibson, 24, of Oak Park, in an armed robbery at Wendy's and his brother Reginald, 18, of Oak Park, in an armed robbery at McDonald's, 10 Mile and Grand River, Aug. 22.

Lapsley and Robert Gibson are being held in the Wayne County Jail in lieu of \$500,000 cash or surety bond following their arrest Sept. 9 for an alleged stickup of a Taylor supermarket. Both are awaiting trial in Wayne County Circuit Court. Innocent pleas were entered in their behalf at their arraignment Sept. 10. Taylor Detective David Hayne said.

Reginald Gibson is being held in the Wayne County Jail in lieu of \$500,000 bond for an alleged stickup Sept. 8 at a Bob Evans Family Restaurant in Taylor. A preliminary exam was scheduled for this week. An innocent plea was entered in his behalf Sept. 11, Hayne said.

At the time of the Taylor stickup,

Police probing ties in armed robberies

A man suspected of pulling at least five other stickups took \$69 at gunpoint from a clerk at Revco Drugs, 25870 Middlebelt, Sept. 22.

According to a Farmington Hills police report:

At 4 p.m., a man in his late 20s to early 30s approached the clerk and asked her to change a \$5 bill. He then demanded all the money in the cash register while putting a leather bag close to the clerk's face and implying a gun was inside. After grabbing money from the cash drawer as the clerk was closing the register, he left.

The man matches the description of the man who robbed the Courtyard Corner in Farmington Hills Sept. 15. He also matches the description of the man who recently pulled two stickups in Westland, one in Wayne and one in Livonia. In all cases, the method of operation also was simi-



A composite drawing of the suspect.

lar, Farmington Hills Detective Brian DeGrande said.

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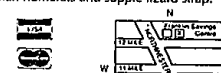
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