

State / National

Witness' credibility attacked as Brilab trial enters 7th week

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — An FBI agent, under close questioning by defense lawyers attacking the credibility of the Brilab prosecution's star witness, characterized convicted insurance swindler Joseph Hauser as a "good briber."

Agent William Fleming spent seven years tracking down Hauser and 14 months directing the actions of the swindler-turned-informant in the undercover operation.

Hauser was not present in federal court Monday but his name seldom was absent as attorneys for reputed Mafia don Carlos Marcello and four other defendants toiled to tear apart the government's case.

As the racketeering trial entered its seventh week, Fleming testified the government used Hauser in its investigation because he had proven himself "a good briber."

Hauser could have been sentenced in Arizona to 50 years in prison for diverting \$3.5 million in Teamster funds into his insurance company, Fleming said. However, the sentence was reduced to 30 months and a \$40,000 fine in return for a guilty plea and a promise to assist the agents in the sting operation.

"I felt that Mr. Hauser could be helpful to the United States government," the agent said. "Why?" asked Marcello's attorney Henry Gonzales. "Because he's a good briber," Fleming replied.

As part of a point-by-point attack on Hauser's credibility as a witness in the trial, Gonzales drew from Fleming the fact that two FBI agents were assigned to Hauser to make sure any testimony he gave was backed up by someone reliable. "Anytime you work with a person who has been convicted, you're going to have a credibility problem," Fleming said.

Gonzales outlined Hauser's convictions on felonies in Los Angeles and Phoenix. The insurance swindler was a "potential defendant" in grand jury investigations in Boston and Miami and was under investigation by the Internal Revenue Service, Gonzales said.

Fleming, however, said the absence of indictments in those investigations was not part of any plea-bargaining deal.

He described Brilab as an operation devised to "criminally involve" labor leaders with whom Hauser had dealt in the past.

"The idea," defense lawyer Michael Fawer offered, "was that you would unleash Joe Hauser on them for that purpose."

Fleming objected to the phrasing. "We were going to recontact people he'd paid in the past," he said.

Hauser is the key witness in the government's case against Marcello, former state Commissioner of Administration Charles Roemer, veteran state aide Aubrey Young, Washington lobbyist I. Irving Davidson and New Orleans attorney Vincent Marinello.

The five are accused of using bribes and kickbacks to win state insurance contracts. During the year-long undercover operation, Hauser and FBI agents posed as crooked insurance men offering cash in return for multi-million-dollar contracts.

State redistricting plans get lukewarm reception

United Press International
AUSTIN — In a scene reminiscent of a Christmas morning, senators and reporters ripped open packages that had been kept secret until the appointed time. None were overjoyed at what they found inside.

The packets contained two alternative plans for redrawing district lines according to the 1980 census. Details of the plans were kept secret until the close of the Monday meeting of the Senate and then packets containing the maps were quickly handed to each senator.

The staff of a Senate redistricting committee had offered senators alternative reapportionment plans in an effort to temper an anticipated hostile

reaction from those adversely affected by the redrawing of district lines.

The congressional redistricting plan would leave each of the state's 24 present congressional districts, but each of the senatorial redistricting plans pairs at least two senators into the same district.

The first of the plans would pair Republican Sen. Walter Mengden and Democratic Sen. Jack Ogg in Houston, and would place Sens. John Leedom and Dee Travis, both first term Republicans, in the same Dallas County district.

The second of the plans would pair Mengden with Sen. Mike Richards, R-Houston, but would not pair the Dallas senators.

75 march to protest jury failure to indict officers

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — About 75 protesters, angered by a special grand jury's failure to indict police officers in the shooting of three blacks, marched Tuesday on the district attorney's office and vowed to keep the controversy alive.

"There will be no more talk," said group leader Kalamu Ya Salaam. "There will be no more building housing Connick's offices. But when they found the doors locked, they moved in a double line to police headquarters. There they were halted at the entrance by two police officers.

The group returned to Connick's offices and milled about handing out leaflets until they disbanded. The demonstration lasted only 16 minutes but leaders of the Police Brutality Committee promised a larger, longer protest Sunday at 6 p.m. at the Fischer Housing Project in Algiers.

He said District Attorney Harry Connick, who expressed dissatisfaction with the grand jury's failure to indict, should file charges against the officers involved.

"Harry Connick is derelict in his duty if he knows some of the policemen were wrong and yet he refuses to file charges on them," Salaam said.

The marchers converged on the building housing Connick's offices. But when they found the doors locked, they moved in a double line to police headquarters. There they were halted at the entrance by two police officers.

The group returned to Connick's offices and milled about handing out leaflets until they disbanded. The demonstration lasted only 16 minutes but leaders of the Police Brutality Committee promised a larger, longer protest Sunday at 6 p.m. at the Fischer Housing Project in Algiers.

The shootings occurred on the project during raids seen by the killers of patrolman Green Neupert, 23. Police said each of the three victims tried to open on officers during the attempt.

Killed in the raids were Sgt. Lynn Singleton, her boyfriend Reginald Miles and James "Anche" Billy Jr. Police also killed fourth black, Raymond Ferdinand, in another incident. Ferdinand pulled a knife on them.

Police said Miles and Billy suspects in the murder of Neupert, whose body was found near the project a few days earlier.

In its 10-page report, the grand jury said there was "no legal basis for prosecuting anyone for the shootings. The panel met every day for 24 weeks and heard 88 cases since beginning its investigation Dec. 1.

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Test tube pregnancy is first U.S. success

United Press International
NORFOLK, Va. — The doctor who implanted the embryo resulting in the nation's first test tube pregnancy says the controversial procedure soon will be commonplace.

Dr. Howard Jones of the Eastern Virginia Medical School's in-vitro fertilization clinic announced Monday the first successful pregnancy in the United States through conception outside the womb.

The name of the woman, who was unable to become pregnant normally because her Fallopian tubes had been removed, was not released. Jones would not confirm reports the pregnancy began seven weeks ago, but he did say the period of "highest risk is behind us."

He said the scientific details and the current status of the prog-

ram would be reported "at appropriate medical meetings and journals," and the woman's identity would become known "in time" when she and her husband are ready to handle the press of publicity.

There have been only five documented births resulting from in-vitro fertilization, one in England and three in Australia. Jones said a report of a fifth test-tube baby in India had never been confirmed. "In vitro" means the fertilized in a petri dish and implanted in the woman.

The Virginia clinic had been trying unsuccessfully for more than a year to achieve a test tube pregnancy. Jones credited the achievement of his patient's menstrual cycle through injections of fertility drugs — "natural hormones" — for the breakthrough.

Dr. Martin Quigley, director of the nation's soon-to-be second test tube baby clinic at the University of Texas, described the Virginia clinic's pregnancy "a landmark in-vitro fertilization in America."

Even a staunch opponent of test tube fertilization, although Charles Dean of the Virginia Society for Human Fertility vowed to continue efforts to close down the clinic.

"Developments in the field of in-vitro fertilization are taking place at a very rapid rate," he said. "There is every reason to believe that in due time announcements of this kind will become commonplace."

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