



DALTON SMITH

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Baton Rouge Panel Ac-

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T.P. 4/17/69
By BILL NEIKIRK

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP)—
A five-man district court jury Wednesday night acquitted New Orleans contractor Dalton Smith of a public bribery charge.

The panel deliberated for an hour and 10 minutes before signaling that it was ready to report its decision.

Smith was charged with offering bribes to a former aid to Gov. John J. McKeithen and a Baton Rouge Teamsters official in connection with what the state alleged was a scheme to buy Teamsters Union President James R. Hoffa's way from prison.

THREE-DAY TRIAL

The panel retired shortly before 6 p.m. The trial lasted for three days.

The jury retired after hearing Dist. Court Judge Fred LeBlanc give it instructions on the public bribery statute for nearly two hours.

Smith, a New Orleans contractor, is accused of offering bribes to Aubrey Young, former aid to Gov. John J. McKeithen, and Baton Rouge Teamsters Union leader Edward Grady

Partin.

PURPOSE ALLEGED

The alleged purpose of the bribery attempts was to get Partin to change his testimony in the jury tampering trial of Teamsters Union President James Hoffa at Chattanooga, Tenn.

Only four witnesses were called during the three-day trial, and only one by the defense.

Asst. Dist. Atty. Ralph Roy said in his closing arguments: "The state has witnesses, sympathetic to the defendant."

He apparently referred to Smith's wife, called as a state witness, and Young, who had testified that he would like to see Smith be acquitted.

PROSECUTION HIT

Defense attorney Ossie Brown, in his closing arguments, attacked the prosecution for what he said was its failure to bring charges against others whom Partin said tried to bribe him.

Baton Rouge "is the best place in the world to have meetings if you've got influence," Brown told the jury.

He referred to the fact that only Smith was charged, while both Partin and Young testified others were involved in the bribery attempts, including representatives of Hoffa.

Brown added: "I believe I would come here to meet if I were a big-shot."

He noted that neither Partin nor Young had testified that Smith directly and personally offered them money.