

Veterans Widen Quiz of Informer

By Timothy S. Robinson *8/14/73*
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GAINESVILLE, Fla., Aug. 10—Attempts to link a government informer to acts ranging from a planned takeover of the Washington Monument to the bombing of a building on the University of Arkansas campus were begun today by defense attorneys for eight antiwar protesters on trial here on riot conspiracy charges.

The attorneys were armed with a ruling by U.S. District Judge Winston E. Arnoff that allowed them to broaden their range of questioning beyond the conspiracy indictment to try to prove that William W. Lemmer acted as an agent-provocateur in this and previous cases.

Arnoff made the ruling after the defense questioned Lemmer out of the jury's presence during this morning's trial session. When the defense told the judge they could discredit Lemmer's testimony by presenting witnesses later, the jury was brought back into the courtroom and began hearing the informer's denials to the versions of each incident outlined by the defense.

However, Arnoff refused to allow the defense to use statements Lemmer had given a Vietnam Veterans Against the War/Winter Soldier probe of alleged U.S. war crimes in Southeast Asia.

Therefore, the jury will not hear Lemmer speak of atrocities that he said he committed in Vietnam, including splitting open bodies to insert the patch of his Army unit so their kills would be identified.

Defense attorneys had claimed that they could prove the testimony was largely untrue, based upon their knowledge of Lemmer's service duties in Vietnam.

According to the defense version of Lemmer's activities that were outlined to the jury, the informer was sent to several places across

the country by the FBI to infiltrate VVAW meetings.

Lemmer agreed that the FBI had paid his way to some of the meetings and reimbursed him for expenses for others. But he denied that he was given orders concerning what to do at the meetings.

Occasionally saying incredulously, "I beg your pardon, sir," when asked questions by defense lawyers concerning possible provocative acts, Lemmer denied that he:

- Participated in a bomb threat at the University of Arkansas in 1971 during a visit by former Secretary of State Dean Rusk. Lemmer said his "good friend" Mike Damron was arrested and convicted in the threat, however, after Lemmer told the FBI.

- Aided and abetted the bombing of a University of Arkansas building, for which a 17-year-old youth was convicted.

- Set up the arrest of four persons near Leavenworth, Kansas, who had harvested a marijuana crop with a car that belonged to him and a trailer rented in his name. The four, whom Lemmer said he had only met twice, had told him he could make \$5,000 for using his car on the weekend trip. All five were arrested and convicted but charges against Lemmer were dropped.

- Suggested that members of Vietnam Veterans Against the War supply guns to blacks in Cairo, Ill., during racial trouble there.

- Suggested that VVAW members carry rifles on a protest march in Springdale, Ark.

- Suggested that a Sears store be bombed during the Springdale march because it refused to allow a Vietnam veteran in a wheelchair to use a restroom there.

- Urged the VVAW to take over the Washington Monument "by any means necessary" during April, 1972, in protest against the war.

- Proposed the takeover of the ROTC building at the University of Maryland in order to get guns.

- Poured red dye in the Reflecting Pool during the same trip to Washington.

While Lemmer admitted knowledge of many events listed by the defense, his versions differed distinctly.

For example, Lemmer was asked if he lowered a flag at the Oklahoma State Capitol and ordered VVAW members to surround it.

"I lowered it to half mast and VVAW members surrounded it and saluted . . . in honor of people killed in Indochina," Lemmer said.

Once, when the defense asked Lemmer if he was the first person in a protest at Tinker AFB in Oklahoma to cross the line and get arrested for trespass, Lemmer smiled and said, "No, I was the second."