

Undercover Agent Cleared in Bombing At Hobart College

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CANANDAIGUA, N. Y., Nov. 25—A special State Supreme Court grand jury today cleared Thomas (Tommy the Traveler) Tongyai, the controversial undercover sheriff's deputy, of any wrongdoing in the May fire-bombing of the Reserve Officers Training Corps building at Hobart College in nearby Geneva.

The grand jury, which has been in closed session since Sept. 16, refused to indict Mr. Tongyai, 27 years old, on charges of conspiracy to commit arson, criminal solicitation and criminal facilitation in the fire-bombing.

At the same time, the jurors handed up four sealed indictments stemming from the incident. State Supreme Court Justice Frederick M. Marshall said the indictments would remain sealed until the individuals named were in custody and arraigned next Tuesday.

Acquitted on Early Charge

Mr. Tongyai's role as an undercover agent for the Ontario County Sheriff's Department was disclosed after the police conducted a drug raid on the Hobart campus last June 5. During the raid, students surrounded three police cars and forced authorities to release three drug suspects.

In a trial last summer, Mr. Tongyai, whose full name is Mombuang Singkata Thomas Tongyai, was acquitted of a harassment charge brought by a Hobart student. He still faces a 19-count charge of accepting \$700 in unemployment checks while working for the Sheriff's office.

Governor Rockefeller ordered the grand jury investigation of the Hobart incidents after eight persons who were arrested on riot charges in June alleged that Mr. Tongyai had been an agent provocateur. They said he had posed as a radical and offered to teach them how to make fire bombs and how to acquire and use guns.

The grand jury report made no reference to public officials involved in the case and set no date for additional reports or indictments.

Sheriff Roy O. Morrow had been criticized for hiring Mr. Tongyai. He, in turn, said radical students at Hobart had made the charges against Mr. Tongyai in an attempt to deflect attention from the heavy drug use on the campus.

Nine other persons were cleared by the grand jury of criminal charges in connection with the fire-bombing and the drug raid the following month. All are, or were, students at Hobart.

Judge Marshall extended the term of the special grand jury through next Jan. 11. He said he would reconvene the special term of his court whenever the jury had something to report.

Mr. Tongyai, who is married and the father of a child, is studying police science at Finger Lakes Community College here. He said he planned a police career.