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Partin Jury Told Of Pact Warning

ATLANTA, Ga. (AP) — A witness testified today he once advised a construction company against awarding a cement contract to a competitor of a businessman convicted of conspiring with Teamster leader Edward Partin to violate anti-trust laws.

But James H. "Buddy" Gill said that he did not tell the construction company that it should not do business with another competitor. He said his warning covered Altex Ready-Mix Concrete Co., whose owner had filed a 3 million civil suit against Partin and Ted F. Dunham Jr.

Gill, director of the Baton Rouge Industrial Contractors Association, said he warned that companies doing business with Altex could expect trouble from the Teamsters.

DUNHAM, A Baton Rouge concrete producer, was convicted last year of conspiring with Partin to take over the cement industry by harassing competitors with labor strife.

Gill took the stand as a special "court witness," allowing U.S. District Judge James F. Battin to conduct the initial examination. Partin is being tried on three counts of conspiring to violate antitrust laws and two counts of extortion.

The witness was asked if he had not told a federal grand jury that Dunham's competitors experienced frequent labor problems. "This is what other people in the area were saying and I believed it," he answered.

"It looked like everywhere he (Altex) went, he was having troubles," said Gill.

Gill's organization, which includes most of the area's largest contractors, helps members negotiate labor agreements with unions, including the Teamsters.

A GOVERNMENT witness testified last week that he talked to Gill in 1967 after his company received unusually high concrete bids for construction of a Gulf oil plant.

The witness said that as a result of his conversations with Gill and Dunham, he became convinced that if strikes were to be averted the contract for cement must be awarded to Dunham.

The government summoned 12 witnesses during the first week of the trial and attempted to establish that competitors of Dunham invariably experienced mysterious labor problems.

Dunham, the witnesses agreed, was generally spared strikes while stoppages closed down competitors for varying lengths of time.

THE DEFENSE sought to show through cross examination that Dunham got contracts because his company did good work and that he avoided strikes by treating his employees better.

The government plans to call at least 25 more witnesses before the defense begins presenting its case.